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博 士 論 文

The Ethnography of Connections of  
Filipinos in Urban Kansai

2021 年 3 月

大阪大学大学院人間科学研究科  
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***For my Little Samurai Warrior,  
you will always be in my heart until it stops beating.***

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this dissertation has entailed me to do some deep reflections not only about the way that Filipinos in Urban Kansai live their lives, but also of my own. More than the tangible output, of which is this dissertation, is one that is not easily discernable, such as the continuous internal struggles and experience of the whole process. To say that my research project has engulfed my becoming is an understatement.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Keywords: active, Filipinos, Japan, life, living, performative

This dissertation is an ethnographic study that tackles how Filipinos in Urban Kansai, Japan perceive and manage their lives as migrants. The study explores how living performative and interactive lives play a part on how migrants are managing and coping with given social constraints and institutions. The study aims to supplement earlier findings in migration studies and migrant agency through emphasizing the migrants' practices of awareness, choice, and control during migration.

The study was conducted in Metro Osaka and its suburbs and Kyoto City and its suburbs in Kansai Region, Japan from 2015 to 2019. In order to accomplish the research objectives efficiently, I employ qualitative research methods, particularly doing participant-observation and non-structured interviews. I participated and joined many activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and spent an ample time with them.

The outcome of my research shows that the Filipino in Urban Kansai way of living is based on the migration experience. The Filipino migrants perform migration in their everyday through boundary creating, crossing and maintaining. The results show that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are regularly faced with various kinds of constraints that are connected to past and current contexts, but they are able to employ these to touch on the future. For them, the future not as end-directed, but implies a movement.

This study's results revolve around two main points. These are reflexivity and the relevance of participating in shared and communal activities by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Filipino migrants exhibit making personal choices. They are knowledgeable about what their options are and the possibilities of taking a particular option. They are able to comprehend the choices in relation to the understanding of one's self and of self-improvement.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai show more than just awareness and responses to external and structural forces. They are observed to be able to use such awareness for them to alter the external and structural forces and their situation. These show that the Filipino migrants' practices of how they think about and create their lives involve managing given social conditions and institutions into opening themselves into the world.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CFO	Commission of Filipinos Overseas
COVID-19	Novel Coronavirus Disease
GO	Government Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JFC	Japanese Filipino Children
JNTO	Japan National Tourism Organization
JPEPA	Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement
MEXT	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
MSO	Migrant Support Organization
NGO	Non-government organization
NPO	Non-profit organization
OPM	Original Pilipino Music
PCCC	Philippine Community Coordinating Council
PCG Osaka	Philippine Consulate General in Osaka
PLO	Philippine Labor Office
SBJ	Statistics Bureau of Japan
SNS	Social Networking Sites

## INTRODUCTION

The current discourse of migrant studies generally follows two approaches. First, is one that focuses on the primordial, and second is that of constructionism. Subsequently, two kinds of theories follow how the above discourses are understood. First, is the theory of origin and second, is theory of contract<sup>1</sup>. These could be observed in “institutionalization.” When something is said to be institutionalized, this means that it is established, standardized or regularized in practices or customs. An example from what we see taking place in our present times is that of the modern nation-state. The modern nation-state follows a framework where migrants undergo institutionalized practices of inclusion or exclusion in the receiving state. We can notice differentiated rights and privileges between migrants and those who are determined as citizens. Rights and privileges could be based on national origins, of which criteria is determined by the modern nation-state. On the other hand, we also observe in this situation how the theory of contract materializes when the modern nation-state creates regulations that when people abide by them, it could mean that that a social contract is entered between a person and the modern nation-state. This could be observed when the modern nation-state provides them with rights and privileges.

While these types of discourses are quite common especially among those involved in policymaking and the academic field of migrant studies, there are some aspects about migration that are not fully tackled by other scholars and experts who use these theories. One

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<sup>1</sup> Social contract thinking is said to date from the period of the Enlightenment, particularly by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. The premise is that society is best served if the government (or other types of institution) takes on executive or sovereign power with the consent of the people. Of recent, there have been discourses pertaining to the current pressures on social contract (Bergama, Gricius, and Tranakieva 2018-2019) and to build a “new” social contract to suit the current times (Morrison 2020, Papademetriou and Benton 2020, Bean, Cushing, Haynes, and Van Hook 1997) which is said to be characterized by increasing migrant flows and the refugees.

such angle that has been overlooked is considering migration as a lifestyle, which is in the sense of how migrants perceive their lives as a migrant and the way that migrants create and understand their life. In a rather limited and rigid view, the analytical concept of “lifestyle migration” is used by Benson and O’Reilly (2009) to refer to the search of a better way of life by the affluent and privileged. “Lifestyle migration” is said to emerge from individual motivation. Most of the cases studied under this concept are among the “white and Western” (Benson and Osbaldiston 2016: 408), such as mobility around the European Region, British migrants moving to rural France, Spain, Thailand and Malaysia, Swedish migrant women to Spain, and Swedish retirees practicing routinized and seasonal mobility between Sweden and Malta, among others (Benson 2011, Oliver and O’Reilly 2010, Lundstrom 2014, Akerlund and Sandberg 2015). Among the very few researches about migrants coming from Asia are that of Ono’s (2015) study of elderly Japanese moving to Malaysia upon retirement and Stones, Botterill, Lee and O’Reilly’s (2019) research on Hong Kong Chinese migrants to Mainland China. These illustrate how few attempts are made in discussing the topic of lifestyle process in migration, though there are a few that discuss “lifestyle migration” using the analytical concept mentioned earlier. The discussion of either migration as a lifestyle or “lifestyle migration” remains to be scarce in academic discourse pertaining to Asians, and close to lacking regarding Filipinos.

Thinking in terms of “lifestyle migration” insinuates that this is a type of migration. This means that there are other types existing such as those that do not pertain to “lifestyle migration.” An example of other types, and of which Filipino migration is more commonly thought as, is labor migration and economic migration. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) labor migrants are those who move for the purpose of employment. Economic migrants, on the other hand, are defined by the European

Commission as “a person who leaves their country of origin purely for economic reasons that are not in any way related to the refugee definition, in order to seek material improvements in their livelihood.”

However, looking at migration merely by type juxtaposition, such as through thinking what is and what is not, and whether Filipino migration fits one type over the other (or maybe even arguing that Filipino migration is a combination of two or more types), is not enough to describe Filipino migration. Meaning to say that even if we are to take this way of thinking of type labelling and categorizing and conclude through these that Filipino migrants begin their journey driven by economic reasons, these could still not be able to explain Filipinos in Urban Kansai migration in terms of how their life is perceived. These do not answer how migration is part of everyday living process.

In this study, I look at the way that migration becomes interconnected in the manner that Filipinos in Urban Kansai live their daily lives. Like the boundaries that they cross when they move from Philippines to Japan, I argue that Filipinos in Urban Kansai cross, maintain, and create boundaries as part of everyday living in Urban Kansai. In this study, the lifestyle process is tackled by looking at how migrants make choices in managing one's way life during migration in everyday scenarios in which boundaries are created, crossed and maintained. These include the aspects of inclusion and exclusion. I define boundary not just as an area that divides and indicates how something is different, but as an arena where boundary creating, crossing and maintaining happens. This may be seen in the following situation, for example, differences in sociocultural backgrounds may be thought of as a marker of a person's difference with another, however, as a consequence of migration, a person may decide to make friends and join groups with whom he or she thinks he or she has some similarities with. Others may choose to face situations and decide to maintain or keep some

habits and routines. Lavie and Swedenburg (2001: 15) comment that many studies on borders and diasporas tend to focus on the “processual shuttling” of peoples and capital between two distinct territories. They argue that such studies focus on the “shuttle” but overlook the “ride.” They maintain that border is a “process of deterritorialization.” It is described as a jumble of daily practices, in which not only “imaginative interminglings and happy hybridities are celebrated,” but are also equally depicted as “minefields and mobile territories of clashes.” I use migration in the sense of it being a continuous process and not limited to the physical movement of an individual to another location.

I would like to cite other examples on how the perception of how migrants live their lives has been neglected in discourses. For example, in discussions among policymakers and international relations experts regarding whether or not illegal migrants should be obligated to follow laws and regulations of their host country, the topic of migrant choice emerges. Discussion touch on the subsequent rights and privileges contained in the migrant choice on whether or not they follow laws and regulations of their host country. However, a viewpoint that has been unfortunately overlooked is whether or not how the choices made may be related to the migrants’ management of their way of living. The oversight may be attributed to disciplinary focus, however, even those among the social sciences are also guilty of such oversight.

In the fields of history, anthropology and sociology, that of nationalism and kinship being a product of institutionalization has been taken up well in prominent researches, such as those written by Benedict Anderson, Janet Carsten and Rhachel Parreñas. For example, Anderson argues that origins of national consciousness was a product of print capitalism and that the nation was imagined through language. In Carsten’s study of everyday life in a Malay fishing community and Parreñas’ study of Filipino migrants in Italy, the views that they hold

show reliance of intimacy to kinship structure, social duty and traditional obligation. Carsten's and Parreñas' work relies on standard family and kinship discourse in a very limited sense, hence the framework that they use are not able to fully describe migrants in the modern context and are not able to account for changes that are happening. The same could be said for Anderson's concepts, which while unarguably very elucidating, needs to be revisited and reconsidered to suit the current times. What I imply here is, similar to the earlier example, the aspects of individuals exhibiting control of their lives and making choices have been overlooked by Anderson, Carsten and Parreñas.

Recent studies have written on the potential of migrant agency. Examples of work that show these are the collection of journal articles in Filomeno Aguilar's (2002) "Filipinos in Global Migrations: At Home in the World." The journal articles that make up this body of work highlight how migrants are able to express their potentials despite and because of the conditions that they are in. Filipino migrants are described to find ways to assert meaning, intentionality, human agency, and have various modes of participation in global migration. Furthermore, Aguilar (2002: 11) relates that various modes of participation in global migrations are a product as well as a determinant of global migration structures. The conclusions in these studies imply that the Filipino migrants described in their research make choices, show control of their lives, and are able to reflect on what they do. Although the researches have been able to clarify situations where the migrant agency is performed, most have not been able to fully explain the ways how migrants make sense of their lives.

As an answer to the long-standing structure-agency dilemma, Anthony Giddens' (1984: 25) proposes on the use of structuration theory. Its main proposition is on a duality of structure by which "the structural properties of the social system are both the medium and the outcome of the practices they recursively organizing." This means that people shape

structure, however structure determines what people do. Giddens argues that structures are facilitating (both, enabling and constraining), hence give the 'knowledgeable' agent the capability to work in creative or formative ways and realize their goals. For Giddens (1991: 81), a lifestyle is created when individuals are able to choose within a plurality of possible options. Lifestyle is explained as a process wherein individuals comprise the choices that they take. Furthermore, these series of acts are said to be adhered to under circumstances of material constraints.

Our present situation is described by Giddens (1992: 15) to be as a period of modernity. He defines modernity as a "post-traditional order that is world-historical in impact." If we look around us we can observe that we are experiencing things in "real time." Meaning to say, we are able to monitor what is happening in various places in the world as they happen, even as we are miles away and in the comfort of our couches. We often hear the catchphrase of information being "right at your fingertips" especially to pertain to gathering information from the World Wide Web or internet. The phrase uses proximity to the body and the tactile senses to describe that information is easily within reach or obtainable. This means that information is available to anybody who seeks them. Also, the options available are varied. Our life at present is faster paced and "on the go" as we are not bounded by locational constraints to do the things that we have to do as we did in the past. That of being available "24/7" is characteristic of our present times. "24/7" is one of the standardized ways of describing time and stems from the 24 hours and 7 days duration that makes up one week.

In the above foregoing context are aspects of people being aware and reflexive. In Giddens' terms, this is called "the reflexive project of self." Being reflexive means that people have the capacity to be aware of the external and structural forces that shape their actions. It is believed that individuals are not only shaped by given social condition and institutions,



but they are also able to alter these and their situation. The awareness to various factors open possibilities for development. Giddens points out that being aware makes a person contemplate on what he/she wants for himself/herself. He adds that a person utilizes such knowing in order to strategize for the future. According to him, the integrated set of practices that an individual embraces as part of lifestyle are not only so that utilitarian needs are satisfied, but because they provide material to create a specific narrative of self-identity. The above descriptions of reflexivity by Giddens are what I apply in this study.

In “Conceptualizing International Labor: A Structuration Perspective,” a study that uses case study materials from the Philippines, Goss and Lindquist (1995: 345) argue that international migration is best examined as the expression of agents with specific interests and playing particular roles within an institutional environment, drawing knowledgably upon set of rules in order to increase access to resources. Their results show that Filipino migrants act strategically within the institution in order to advance their interests, however the capability of acting this out is differently distributed according to awareness of rules and access to resources, which are partially influenced by their position within other social institutions.

Generally, moving abroad has been said as an exhibition of human agency, and this is not limited among the so-called “lifestyle migrants” but among most of those who move. International migrants have been reported to say that moving provides them an opportunity to enjoy a variation in daily life and gives a new life context to be developed. Akerlund and Sandberg (2015) report that Swedes migrate to Malta as part of a strategy to increase the possibilities of enjoying a better life in the future. The Swedish migrants perceive that Malta offers them opportunity for a good quality of life where there are able to extend their finances through maximization of pension and improve their physical well-being by leading an active

and healthy way of life. Additionally, they were reported as having time for relaxation, being creative, and focusing on self-development. The migrants were described to focus on self-centered elements of a good life. Similarly, Ono (2015) reveals that international retirement migration to Malaysia amongst elderly Japanese is in pursuit of self-realization. By moving to Southeast Asia, Japanese retirees are able to enjoy more affordable leisure activities and prepare for old age. She reports that living in Malaysia opens the opportunity for hiring domestic workers and this liberates female Japanese retirement migrants from their gender roles and allows them to have more time for self-realization.

In a study conducted by Stones, Botterill, Lee, and O'Reilly (2019), the Hong Kong Chinese migrants to mainland China are described to belong to the "working-class." However, Hong Kong Chinese migrants to mainland China are revealed to exhibit "striking similarities" in committing to a better quality of life like their "white and Western" counterparts. A better quality of life for Hong Kong Chinese migrants are those that pertain to "everyday contentment." These involve "relaxation, the sensuous, familial closeness, and sometimes the desire for adventure, exploration, and the broadening of horizons" (48). The migrants are reportedly besieged by tensions between their culturally framed expectations and their actual lived experience in mainland China, however, although these limit the range of experiences and the forms of social support available to them, Hong Kong Chinese migrants show being able to retain relative socioeconomic and status advantages that they have. Their study is a development from earlier research on "lifestyle migration" as they have revised the idea in an earlier understanding that this form of migration involves only "affluent individuals." This opens a possibility to go beyond migration types and, instead, explore the ways of how migrants manage and understand their lives including examining how migration may be interconnected to their everyday lives.

Despite the fact that Filipinos are heavily involved in international migration, the aspect of Filipino migration as a continuous part of the everyday has been overlooked. This could be a consequence of the abovementioned definition of Benson and O'Reilly which postulates that "lifestyle migration" is limited to the economically privileged. As mentioned earlier, Filipinos have been mostly depicted as "labor migrants," hence the viewpoint that tackles how a migrant understands his or her life apart from economic factors may have been thought of as inappropriate for their case. Economic hardships are mostly highlighted in other studies as reasons for moving which result to insinuations that Filipino migrants do not have objectives of having a "better way of life" similar to migrants from Europe, Hong Kong, Japan, and Sweden. I argue in this study that such way of thinking is incorrect because Filipino migrants do have some similarities in aspirations; and, if only the Filipino migrants' daily lives are given more focus, their managing and understanding of their lives can be better understood.

I connect the abovementioned concepts of Giddens to some personalities who recognize themselves as Filipino and who are quite renowned in their respective fields in order to show the research potential of the topic of migration as a lifestyle among Filipinos. The four personalities are: (a) Sayaka Akimoto, (b) Akira Takayasu, (c) Leah Dizon, and (d) Apl de Ap. Both Akimoto and Takayasu live in Japan, Apl de Ap is based in the United States of America (USA), while Dizon shuttles back and forth in both the USA and Japan, depending on career opportunities. Their personal backgrounds and how they came to be where they are vary, but we can observe in the succeeding overview how doing the things that they do show them, and/or their Filipino parent, of making choices for themselves.

Sayaka Akimoto is a former member of a popular idol girl group named AKB48 and whose father is Japanese and mother is Filipino. While the circumstances to how Akimoto's

parents met have not been disclosed, specifically about how her parents started their relationship, whether they are legally married or not and how she acquired her Japanese citizenship, it is safe to assume that it is from being acknowledged by her Japanese national father. This is similar to Akira Takayasu, a professional sumo wrestler in the sense of the father being Japanese and the mother being Filipino. In Takayasu's case, according to Joaquin Henson (2012), Takayasu's Japanese father and Filipino mother met through the introduction of his mother's relative. After courtship through letters, his father proposed marriage to his mother and soon after they lived in Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan. Takayasu's mother is reported have operated three Filipino restaurants for a living.

Leah Dizon, on the other hand, is an interesting case. According to Victor Entertainment (n.d.), the company that handles her entertainment career in Japan, Dizon was born in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA. Her father is of half-Chinese and half-Filipino descent who worked as a pastor while her mother is of French descent. Dizon worked as a promotional model and eventually her photographs found their way online. This caught the attention of viewers from China and Japan who became her avid fans. This opened the doors for her to live in Japan upon Victor Entertainment's invitation. Then, Victor Entertainment signed her to a five-year contract.

Last is Apl de Ap, a globally renowned singer/rapper who is a member of the Grammy Award winning hip hop group, The Black Eyed Peas. Pinoy Stop Online (n.d.) reports that Apl de Ap's mother is Filipino while his father is an African-American airman who used to be stationed at Clark Air Base in the Philippines. His father left him and his mother shortly after his birth. An organization named The Pearl S. Buck Foundation whose advocacy is "to find a healthier living environment for young abandoned or orphaned American children" matched

him with a sponsor in the USA. Later on, this sponsor officially adopted him, hence Apl de Ap was able to move permanently to the USA.

Migration policies in Japan and the USA could not be any more different. According to the America Immigration Council, “Immigration to the United States is based upon the following principles: the reunification of families, admitting immigrants with skills that are valuable to the U.S. economy, protecting refugees, and promoting diversity.” On the other hand, Japan’s “immigration policies” are said to be restrictive. According to Akashi (2018), “immigration policies” as a term is used in the sense of accepting foreign nationals for permanent residence. He explains that while naturalisation process is available, the former citizenship of the person applying should be renounced upon naturalization to Japan because unlike in the case of the USA, Japanese are not allowed to hold dual citizenships. Another notable difference is that Japan is a *jus sanguinis* state, which means that nationality is deferred by blood, not by location of birth. This means that if a child is born in Japan and either of its parents is a Japanese national, then the child will have Japanese citizenship if acknowledge by either parent. However, if a child is born to Filipino parents living in Japan, the child is not automatically granted citizenship. These policies are commonly misunderstood by Filipinos.

How different immigration policies in USA and Japan are and how more difficult it is in Japan have been presented to show how Sayaka Akimoto, Akira Takayasu, Leah Dizon, and Apl de Ap’s individual stories and mobility patterns are different. But, what these four personalities do have in common is that they are examples of individuals who are born with one parent being Filipino and all four are thriving and employing choices and strategies for them to have a place in the world’s stage, or at least in the country where they are presently

settled. It also suggests that their or their parents' migration experience lives on and is interconnected to the way that they manage and understand their lives.

In this study, I examine how Filipino migrants think about their lives. I emphasize how they comprehend these through the way that they manage their way of living and how the migration experience is intertwined in their everyday lives. What the above narrations show is that there seems to be a potential in exploring the said topic among Filipinos. In this study, I cite cases that illustrate that Filipinos in Urban Kansai also aspire and do practices of managing their way of life through creating, crossing and maintaining of boundaries, and practicing situations of inclusion and exclusion. The particular reason for putting emphasis on boundaries is to show how these are locations that are in a dynamic state. I argue that Filipino migration is not limited to escaping economic hardship. I acknowledge that there are many Filipinos who migrate internationally as motivated by economic hardships, however, this alone does not paint the whole picture about Filipino migration. It is not whether or not migrants are particularly economically well-off in their country of origin rather that they are able to strategize, which includes negotiating and renegotiating, with the options available to them.

With regards to my position and that of my dissertation, meaning to say as to what approach I take, I view culture and society in a processual and dynamic way which suggests that my points of view lean towards constructionism. I view daily life as series of trajectories that are in a constant process and understand that an individual's self-narrative is constantly self-monitored through some form of awareness. This implies the possibility for an individual to develop. My dissertation aims to supplement earlier findings in migration studies and migrant agency through emphasizing control, choice, and reflexivity during migration. These are inspired by concepts of Giddens in agreement to the premise that our modern current

setting is bringing drastic changes in everyday life and individual experiences and that the present modern day complexities that we are in necessitate a rethinking and reconsideration of the basic premises on how life is understood.

To explore the way that Filipinos in Urban Kansai, Japan manage and understand their lives, I answer the following research questions:

1. In what conditions do Filipinos in Urban Kansai show being able to reflect upon and act on their and other peoples' actions and behaviour? In what everyday situations do they perform these?
2. How do Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage and understand their lives?
3. What strategies do Filipinos in Urban Kansai employ in managing their lives and cope with given social conditions and institutions in a Filipino community and Japanese society?
4. How are Filipinos in Urban Kansai reflexive with regards to Filipino identity?

I have presented the general background of my research. I mentioned that the angle of migration in reference to how life is comprehended and understood has not been tackled as much in academic discourse. In this dissertation, I refer to migration as part of the migrant lifestyle process in the sense of migration being interconnected to the everyday living of migrants. I will be using cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, Japan in the execution of this research. I argue that migration should look beyond understanding migration through "forms." For example, using "lifestyle migration" is a concept that is limited as it implies that movement is due to individual motivation and is a search for a better way of life of those who

are economically more affluent. I contend that looking at the process of everyday living of migrants and how they create and understand their life enables more illumination about them. I referred to Giddens' concept on reflexivity to suggest a possible view in re-examining migration. I suggest that these processes can be seen in everyday scenarios where boundaries are created, crossed, and maintained. I mention the conditions of modernity as a setting and is an acknowledgement that changes have happened and are constantly happening in the global and personal arena that necessitate us to reconsider and revisit those that we know or thought of as certain. These, together with the statement of gaps in previous work and limitations of theoretical approach, hopefully illuminate the significance of my research as timely and relevant, and locate my research within the discipline of anthropology and migration studies. This overview ends with an enumeration of the specific research questions that steer the exploration of my research topic. I now present the scope and limitations of my study in the proceeding section.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The main sites for my study are Metro Osaka and its suburbs and Kyoto City and its suburbs in Kansai Region, Japan because of the significant number of so-called "*Zainichi Firipinjin*" (literally translated as "Filipinos living in Japan") in this particular area according to the 2014 Japan Institute for Labour and Policy and Training report. Metro Osaka and its suburbs and Kyoto City and its suburbs are where my informants reside and where the activities that they engage in are mostly located.

This dissertation is a study that focuses on Filipinos in Urban Kansai and looks beyond the homogenous labels that other studies, especially those that migrant studies researches have adopted. Other work commonly use categories such as Filipino migrants, Japanese



Filipino Children (JFC), 1.5 generation, and the like, but fail to be more inclusive to those who fall within the grey areas, such as children born of Japanese and Filipino partnerships who come to Japan but do not live in Japan, and children born out of Filipino partnerships who live in Japan, to name a few. This dissertation aims to deviate from such practices by recognizing that migration is a complex and distinctive phenomenon that varies from one person to another, from one location to the next. This study is not intended to demarcate a particular group nor to classify them into migration types. It aims to provide an alternative way of looking at migration through focusing on the process about how to live.

The duration of staying in Urban Kansai is not a limiting criteria in this study because the engagements of short-term staying Filipinos in Urban Kansai and Japanese Filipino Children (JFC) who visit Urban Kansai and the possibility of their involvement in lifestyle strategies, such as creating new types of intimacies, are explored. However, while the duration of stay does not limit who the informants in my study are, time-related factor will be a criteria worth pondering for analytical consideration in relation to how life is created and thought of by Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

The term Japanese Filipino Children or JFC is used in this paper to state that the child or children have one parent who is Japanese and another who is Filipino. This does not in any way aim to lump JFCs into wholly homogenous social constructs as other researchers are doing but is a statement of the fact of them being born from such partnerships. The gender aspect in creating, maintaining and negotiating one's life is also examined. Currently, there are more Filipino women in Urban Kansai; however, there are also Filipino men who work in various jobs like the contractual trainees, boxers, and so on whose numbers rise in relation to Filipino women in Urban Kansai year by year. Aside from this, quality of intimacies of Filipinos in Urban Kansai with the locals are also explored. How these various actors conduct

themselves with each other is pondered in investigating the lifestyle process of Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

My participation in activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai has mainly been from being invited by members of government organizations (GOs) and Non-government organizations/non-profit organizations (NGOs/NPOs), personal acquaintances and my informants. The other activities that I have participated in have come to my knowledge through information disseminated in Social Networking Sites (SNS), particularly in Facebook, flyers distributed in previous events, and from invitations by university professors.

The data for analysis are gathered from ethnographical fieldwork, participant observation and personal narratives of informants. Some limitations that I encountered are language barriers not only in Japanese but in other Philippine languages such as *Bisaya*. Recent personal experiences pertaining to interpersonal relationships has made me empathize and be more attuned to the difficulties of loneliness and grief experienced by Filipinos in Japan. The reaching out to show support to me that I have experienced due to my unfortunate experience during the culminating year of my fieldwork has in a way shattered the outsider image as a “scholar with a relatively privileged personal background” who only joins activities to collect data to having a more intimate engagement of trust by them sharing more personal insights of relating their lives to my own.

### **Outline of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into eight parts. The Introduction explains the background and significance of the study. This section briefly describes approaches and theories being used in migrant studies. I mention known researches on migration and suggest that the studies have overlooked the perspective of migration as a lifestyle. I observe that although

previous researches have touched on aspects of control, choice and reflexivity, they have not ventured into discussing these aspects as part of how migrants contemplate about their lives. I define the concept “lifestyle migration” and cite cases from other researches in order to cite how this concept is limited in making us understand about the case of Filipino migrants. I clarify my position of diverging from this definition used by “lifestyle migration” proponents and, instead, I refer to “lifestyle” as everyday actions that are made in managing one’s way of life. I highlight how Filipinos in Urban Kansai perceive and understand their life. I briefly cite four Filipino personalities living in Japan and USA in the Introduction in order to illustrate that the topic of migration as part of the lifestyle process is a viable angle to consider about Filipino migration. The four Filipino personalities seem to exhibit control, choice and reflexivity, hence, I deem that cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai could also be investigated. I briefly refer to Giddens’ concepts of reflexivity and will be bringing this up, including his ideas on awareness, often in this study to examine how Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage and perceive their lives as migrants. This section also includes a brief definition of key words used in this dissertation. These key words are expounded in more detail in Chapters 1 and 2 and will come up in Chapter 6 as part of this dissertation’s discussion and analysis. This section presents the study’s main questions, significance, and clarifies the study’s scope and limitations.

Chapter 1 presents background information on Filipinos in Urban Kansai. In this chapter’s first two sections, I present Filipinos in Urban Kansai in the context of community and network. I introduce the activities where they meet and interact socially to provide a preliminary overview on their way of life and quality of relationships. I include an overview of general characteristics of Southeast Asian society and culture in order to suggest that Filipinos in Urban Kansai have similarities with accepted inclinations and features of Southeast Asian

society and culture. Furthermore, I aim that the presentation enables us to recognize the changes that occur at present from established inclinations and features. This is to provide a wider understanding of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and draws the attention to exhibitions of choice, control and reflexivity.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Methodology is divided into four parts. The first and second parts tackle known traditional habits and customs of Filipinos. I highlight changes in traditional habits and customs that have occurred. I relate to previous studies on Filipinos on this part of the chapter and take note of intimacies in families, kin and networks. Then, I relate this to how they make choices and manage one's way of life during everyday scenarios of migration. The rationale for this discussion is to suggest that the view of seeing migration as a lifestyle process in Filipinos in Urban Kansai is viable. Furthermore, it seems that the migrants perform boundary creating, crossing and maintaining as ways of creating life. I argue that migration is interconnected to the manner that Filipinos in Urban Kansai live their daily lives. I also briefly cite the preliminary data that I have gathered to support my suggestion. The third and fourth part of this chapter describes the methodology and research tools used in this dissertation. I describe social networking of Filipinos in Urban Kansai through recounts on how I created contacts and become involved among them. I cite the methods I employ in answering this dissertation's research questions. I end the chapter by referring to ethical considerations employed in this study.

Chapter 3 to 6 present the results of my study. Chapter 3 answers the first research objective of this dissertation which is to identify conditions of reflexivity among Filipinos in Urban Kansai. In answering the question, first, I clarify the definition of reflexivity. Second, I evaluate cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and highlight instances where they exhibit using choice, control, and reflexivity in their everyday living as migrants. Third, I describe how

Filipinos in Urban Kansai exhibit reflexivity. Identifying reflexivity in the process of living of Filipinos in Urban Kansai in this chapter enables me to probe more and answer the other research questions in my dissertation.

After making certain that Filipinos in Urban Kansai show reflexivity in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 illustrates how Filipinos in Urban Kansai create their life. In order to show this, I reflect on the aspects of awareness and strategies through citing from field data gathered from participant observation, interviews and personal conversations. The cases I refer to in this chapter illustrate how life is created by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. They show awareness to their actions and behaviour and they use strategies in dealing with them. I define strategy as actions made in order to reach a future goal. This chapter shows that the process of living of Filipinos in Urban Kansai is created through past experiences and day-to-day activities to the creation of strategies for the future.

With the topic of Chapter 4 on awareness and strategies as a departure point, Chapter 5 focuses on points that make up strategies, such as maintenance, negotiations and renegotiations. First, I identify social conditions and institutions that influence choices of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I examine how they are negotiated and renegotiated by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. In the previous chapters, external factors have been observed and noted of. These are kinship structure, social duty and traditional obligation. In addition to these are other factors that have come up in the cases mentioned in this chapter, such as life constraints, fatal moments, religion, and size of locational area. I examine how these factors shape lifestyle choices. I classify these social conditions and institutions into three categories: Social Duty and Obligation and Life Constraints and Fatal Moments. After the presentation of examples, I evaluate if the factors enumerated are relevant in the Filipino in Urban Kansai process of living, and if so, how Filipinos in Urban Kansai negotiate and renegotiate around

them. The cases I present in this chapter illustrate awareness and reflexivity of Filipinos in Urban Kansai in the continuous way that they construct narrations about themselves and others. This means that there are possibilities for them to shape events that they report, or the personal feelings that they articulate.

Chapter 6 is the discussion and analysis of this dissertation. The first part is an overview of the relevant findings of my study. The sections that make up this chapter are in response to my main research questions. First, I discuss how Filipinos in Urban Kansai perceive and manage their life as a migrant. Second, I present how the migrants perform their lives. Third, I discuss the strategies they do in managing and coping with social conditions and institutions in a Filipino community and Japanese society. And lastly, I discuss how reflexive they are in matters pertaining to Filipino identity.

The last part is the summary and conclusion of this dissertation, and recommendations for further studies.

## **CHAPTER 1: FILIPINOS IN URBAN KANSAI AND THEIR COMMUNITY, SOCIAL NETWORK, AND ACTIVITIES**

This chapter presents background information on Filipinos in Urban Kansai. In this chapter's first two sections, I present on Filipinos in Urban Kansai in the context of community and social network. I introduce the activities where they meet and interact socially to provide a preliminary background on their way of life and quality of relationships. Part of this chapter is an overview of what is known as general characteristics of Southeast Asia as a society and culture. This reason for this is to provide not only the background of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, but to also touch on some of its similarities with accepted characteristics of Southeast Asian society and culture. I refer to other studies on groups in Southeast Asia and relate these to "networks." I begin with a reference to "network" as an analytical concept and proceed with empirical data; later, I connect these back in order to illustrate how other researchers describe the knowledge of people and groups in Southeast Asia as "networks" of. This presentation does not mean that I fully rely on what is known and accepted in previous conducted work on Southeast Asia and embrace these unquestioningly, rather this will be used as a preliminary means in opening the discussion of the conditions of Filipinos in Urban Kansai in its existing context.

This chapter shows that the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community is comprised of three dimensions: first, as a group of individuals of similar ethnic background; second, in the sense of being tied to a place within which an individual is located; third, as an organization that individuals have formed and chose to belong to. The Filipino in Urban Kansai Community is part of the Filipino in Urban Kansai "Network", which comprises of persons and groups not only in Urban Kansai, but also in the Philippines, other parts of Japan, and other parts of the

world. The Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network” can be characterized by performances of actions of creating, crossing, and maintaining boundaries. This is observed to be made by Filipinos in Urban Kansai when they introduce themselves or are introduced to other people, when they focus on similarities that they have, and continue spend certain time with each other.

### **1.1. The Filipino in Urban Kansai Community**

This section, first, gives a brief overview of Kansai Region through presentation of general information. The objective for doing so is to present a picture of the region as diverse in terms of various aspects, such as natural wonders, culture, demographics, economic position, and modern influences. What comprises as Urban Kansai will also be delineated in order to highlight its difference from the mostly rural Kansai. I aim to present the image of Urban Kansai as being able to present a wider variety of options compared to other adjacent areas. This overview provides the backdrop to what I narrate about Filipinos in Urban Kansai in this study.

After this, I move to present background information on Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I start with a presentation of the context and factors that enable the movement of Filipinos to Kansai. Some historical background of Filipino presence in Urban Kansai and relevant government policies are referred to. Filipinos in Urban Kansai take part in various activities and these comprise the variety of contexts where they are able to meet and interact socially. Many of the activities that they participate in are planned by organizations that advocate the many agendas under the banner of migrant concerns, such as migrant spiritual well-being, physical and mental well-being, women empowerment, labor issues, among others. The operational definition to “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” is given towards the end of



this section. In brief, I refer to “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” as comprising of three dimensions: first, as a group of individuals of similar ethnic background; second, in the sense of being tied to a place within which an individual is located; and third, as an organization that individuals have formed and chose to belong to. Let us now start with describing the location that Filipinos in Urban Kansai chose to be in.

Kansai Region is located in Western Japan. It is made up of seven prefectures, namely Hyogo (兵庫県), Kyoto (京都府), Mie (三重県), Nara (奈良県), Osaka (大阪府), Shiga (滋賀県) and Wakayama (和歌山県). Kansai Region is Japan’s second most populous and economically important region. The region has varied geographical features such as rural coastlines in Wakayama and Northern Kyoto and the Kii Mountain Range (紀伊山地) that cuts through Mie and Nara. Compared to other regions in Japan (especially the northern regions), the winter season in Kansai is relatively milder; on the other hand, summers are very humid. Being surrounded by north, west and east mountains and located in a valley, Kyoto has a much harsher winter and summer. Important Japanese festivals are held in Kansai Region. Notable are the Gion Matsuri in Kyoto and Tenjin Matsuri in Osaka. The region attracts both domestic and international<sup>2</sup> tourists. Most places in Kansai are rural, while Osaka City and its suburbs, Kyoto City and its suburbs, and Kobe are urban. Different historical trajectories and influences in these urban areas account for them having some sort of an urban variety. Kobe has the air of Western influences, Kyoto retains its traditional Japanese appeal as a former ancient capital, and Osaka has the more pulsating vibe with its dizzying shopping labyrinths, neon lights and skyscrapers.

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<sup>2</sup> According to the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO, 日本政府観光局), Osaka (大阪府), Kyoto (京都府), Nara (奈良県), and Hyogo (兵庫県) garnered a big share of the visitor arrivals in 2019. The 2019 Visit Rate Ranking puts the aforementioned prefectures at rank 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Garnering the top spot is Japan’s capital city of Tokyo (東京都). Additionally, in January to September 2019, there were 402,119 visitors from the Philippines. The Philippines ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in terms of visitor arrivals in Japan in this given period.



Map 1. Japan and Kansai (inset). (Downloaded from [www.maps4news.com](http://www.maps4news.com))

According to the 2017 Statistics Bureau of Japan or SBJ (総務省統計局), there are more than 260,000 Filipino citizens in Japan. Of this number, 7,895 and 2,254 Filipinos live in prefectures of Osaka and Kyoto in Kansai Region, respectively (See Table 1). There are more females compared to males. Females accounted for 78% of Filipinos in Kyoto and 64% of Filipinos in Osaka based on data from the SBJ in 2016 (See Table 2). This glaring difference basing on the official records in terms of male and female percentage reflects roughly the same of those who participate in the myriad of activities, encounters, and interactions that I have joined in the duration of my fieldwork from 2015 to 2019. I use the term Urban Kansai to distinguish Metro Osaka (Osaka City and its suburbs) and Kyoto City and its suburbs from the other prefectures in the Kansai Region based on population size, number of government offices, number of organizations, number of establishments and industry type.

Prefecture	Number of Filipino Residents
Hyogo (兵庫県)	4,434
Kyoto (京都府)	2,254
Mie (三重県)	6,655

<b>Nara (奈良県)</b>	<b>749</b>
<b>Osaka (大阪府)</b>	<b>7,895</b>
<b>Shiga (滋賀県)</b>	<b>2,314</b>
<b>Wakayama (和歌山県)</b>	<b>748</b>

Table 1. Filipinos in Kansai Region (Source: Statistics Bureau of Japan 2017)

<b>Prefecture</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Kyoto (京都府)</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>1,747</b>
<b>Osaka (大阪府)</b>	<b>1,977</b>	<b>5,354</b>

Table 2. Filipinos in Kyoto and Osaka Prefectures According to Gender (Source: Statistics Bureau of Japan 2016)

To understand the numbers that I presented, I would like to narrate about the historical background of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and touch on recent developments in terms of government policies for context. The presence of Filipinos in Kansai have been noted from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, during this period, their numbers have only been miniscule. Their activities were mainly situated in the field of sports and music. While only few in number, these Filipinos became successful in these fields. Notable are Baby Gustillo and Fortunato Catalon in the field of boxing and track and field, respectively; and the Philippine (Manila) Jazz Band, Carl's Show Jazz Band and Conde Brothers in the field of music, among others. Their success have been able to catch the attention of Japanese media and public. News in both Japan and the Philippines reported on the Manila Jazz Band. The Philippine Free Press on July 21, 1921 reported on the Manila Jazz Band playing in Oriental Hotel in Kobe, Hyogo Prefecture. In February 15, 1922, The Japan Times and Mail has also reported on this

same jazz band providing music during a reception of an important gathering of government leaders, high officials and war veterans in the same hotel (Yu-Jose 2007).

A bigger wave of Filipinos, of whom the majority were women, arrived in Kansai under entertainer visa status to work as cultural performers during the 1980s. They are colloquially called “entertainers”, or the more condescending term given by fellow-Filipinos, *Japayuki* (literally meaning “to Japan”). While sounding like a neutral term, the word has become laden with negative meaning. Many from these group worked in hostess bars and pubs. These activities opened opportunities for intimate encounters with the locals. The nature of work and conditions of this group has spurred negative images from both lay persons and scholars alike, and the references range from descriptions as sex workers, victims, and “gold-diggers” (Duaqui 2014, Suzuki 2002, Takahata 2018). As of recent, counter portrayals of migrant agency and success have been able to catch on. These have somehow eased or reversed the stereotyped images of Filipinos in Japan.

The population of Filipinos in Osaka and Kyoto Prefectures continues to grow year after year (See Table 3). There was a dip in these numbers in 2005 because of stricter rules imposed by the Japan Immigration Control Act. After this period, their numbers began to rise again and continues to do so until 2019, when the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic hit the whole world and created a huge impact by limiting human mobility. This rise in numbers before 2020 may be attributed to the response to economic driven policies and agreements, such as the Japan-Philippine Partnership Agreement (JPEPA). As a result, those who are arriving in Urban Kansai hold numerous occupations compared to before. Filipinos come to Urban Kansai as technical trainees, nurses, caregivers, teachers, and students. Filipinos of Japanese descent, children born from partnerships of Filipinos and Japanese, and children born out of Filipino partnerships are also arriving. Aside from Filipinos who came as

entertainers during the 1980s and 1990s, these groups comprise of the Filipino community in Urban Kansai.

Census Year	Osaka (大阪府)	Kyoto (京都府)	Census Year	Osaka (大阪府)	Kyoto (京都府)
1986	876	221	2000	3,938	1,646
1988	1,308	337	2001	4,121	1,870
1990	1,649	612	2003	4,755	2,333
1992	2,034	660	2004	5,161	2,469
1994	2,345	850	2005	4,960	2,003
1996	2,620	858	2006	5,260	1,919
1997	2,837	1,002	2007	5,527	1,902
1998	3,159	1,151	2008	5,711	1,967
1999	3,392	1,292	2017	7,895	2,254

Table 3. Registered Filipino Residents in Osaka and Kyoto Prefectures from 1986 to 2017 (Source: Statistics Bureau of Japan)

In addition to understanding how historical background and government policies play a part in the influx of Filipinos to Japan, it is also essential to understand the context of how going to Japan entered the Filipino consciousness as a destination option. One that has been mentioned above are economic driven policies and agreements entered by both Japan and Philippine governments. These have opened the possibilities of having such option in the first place. It can also be mediated by the Japanese administration, such as in the example of active recruitment of Filipino women to serve as brides in Japan's rural areas during the mid-1980s in order to help alleviate Japan's dwindling rural population. The entry of these brides

coincided with the arrival of entertainers. In these cases, the role of media in both Philippines and Japan, should not be ignored as cautioned by Suzuki. Importantly, we should not overlook what happens in the personal level in terms of having knowledge about Japan and in choosing Japan an option.

My Filipino migrant informants in Urban Kansai shared to me their stories and cited how pioneers were later on followed by family, kin, neighbors, or friends, how their husbands or business partners were introduced to them by someone either closely related or not, how information regarding Japan government social support are sought from other Filipinos who they know, the locals in their community and other social connections. The above reveal that having contact persons is an important aspect in order to know more people Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

A migrants' community is able to provide migrants with options and opportunities, on the other hand they can also limit them. I briefly cite from related cases of migrants such as Hong Kong Chinese migrants to mainland China, Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong, and Filipino migrant women in a big city entertainment area in Nagoya, Japan to illustrate these. In Stones, Botterill, Lee, and O'Reilly's (2019) article, they observe that Hong Kong Chinese migrants who expressed the greatest sense of ease and contentment were those who were able to respond resourcefully to the particular trials of their socio-economic situation. These are realized through modest but active involvements with their new settings and through sustaining transnational connections and relationships. In a study about Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong, Constable (2002) reveals that migrant workers are able to alter gender and family roles and relations, as well as economic relations. Hong Kong is revealed to afford many Filipino migrant women a degree of personal and economic independence that many are hesitant to give up when they return to the Philippines. Also, Groves and Chang (2002)

illuminate that the case of Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong are a contradictory story because it is one of empowerment and also of submission. Filipino migrants are described as having relationships that continuously shift between these as they themselves change in their setting.

In Nagoya, Japan, Takahata (2018: 274) reveals that Filipino women are changing the identity of the entertainment area. According to her, the “multicultural projects” launched by the Japan government has enabled formation of “connective ethnic relations” between the locals and Filipino migrants to draw other people to the entertainment area. She discloses that in reaching the objective, the two groups vary on which aspect to emphasize on. For example, the important issues that Japanese locals focus on are “building a safe community” and increasing recognition of the entertainment area. On the other hand, the Filipino migrant women were seen as constructing the appearance of “Filipinos participating in and contributing to local community life.” She concludes that what the Filipino women do are part of “overcoming” the stereotypes of them as working in the “sex-industry.”

These examples, and those of Filipino in Urban Kansai that I will present later, tell us how migrants live their lives in places that they have moved to. It is important to note that migrant groups, although lumped into their ethnicity and may confusingly be thought to be homogenous, have varying backgrounds (ex. age, class, education, gender). These backgrounds, structural factors, and the conditions of the place where they live all merge in framing and influencing what they experience. These, in turn, provide them with available options in thinking of strategies and negotiating and renegotiating their given situation.

In the next section, “networks” as an analytical concept and its operationalization into common usage, will be discussed in order to further explore on the importance of these during mobility and in providing options to migrants. In the next section’s discussion, I

consider creating contacts in a traditional context and take note of present-day changes in them. Importantly, I also discuss these in relation to Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I return and continue with the Filipinos in Urban Kansai community and their activities.

It is generally known that compared to villages or rural areas, urban areas have more membership options to numerous kinds of voluntary organizations. Majority of the major activities that concerns the Filipino community in Kansai are either held in Osaka City or in Kyoto City. This despite there being more Filipinos who live in the prefectures of Mie (6,655), Shiga (2,314) and Hyogo (4,434) (Statistics Bureau of Japan 2017) (See Table 1). The geographical centrality of Osaka Prefecture and Kyoto Prefecture is a likely contributor to this; including hosting more “Filipino community organizations” or “Philippine community organizations” and the presence of more Philippine and Japanese government offices in the area.

“Filipino community organizations” and “Philippine community organizations,” or colloquially, “community,” are the terms that Filipinos in Urban Kansai use to describe the group or organization that they belong to. These organizations are usually an amalgamation of church-based groups, advocacy-oriented groups, and local community-based groups. These types can be tentatively classified based on an organizations’ main activities. Church-based groups’ center on the spiritual services of members and have activities such as liturgy and retreats/recollections which are characterized by meditation, silence, reflection and prayers as a way to achieve personal encounters with God; advocacy-oriented groups’ activities are cause-oriented and focus on alleviating conditions and empowering poor children, women who suffered from domestic violence, individuals suffering from bullying, suicide, racial discrimination, homesickness and unemployment, among others; and lastly, local community-based groups center on more miscellaneous activities such as assistance to



newcomers, basketball tournaments, Christmas parties, fashion shows and fund-raising activities, among others. The initial formation of “Filipino community organizations”, “Philippine community organizations” or “community” spring out of from any of three types; but, may later on show features of the other two types. For example, Filipinos in Urban Kansai who frequently meet in church may form a “Filipino community organization” based on their church-based affiliations and perform activities related to church matters. After which, it is possible that such organization would later perform activities that are characteristic of an advocacy-oriented group and/or a local community-based group.

Even as major and bigger activities shuttle mainly between Osaka and Kyoto, regular gatherings of Filipinos in Urban Kansai occur in each prefectural city’s local community center and Catholic or Christian church. Local community centers hold weekly Japanese language lessons and subject review classes. Catholic churches also see weekly to monthly participation in novenas, masses, birthday parties, and the street market. While not having as much attendees compared to Catholic churches, Christian churches also see substantial weekly participation in worship services. In cyberspace, many Filipinos in Urban Kansai log-in to their Facebook accounts at least once a day to post updates about themselves, share posts of other account holders, leave replies, comments, likes on their Facebook “friend’s” posts, and engage in chat, either individually or by group.

The rise in numbers of Filipinos in Kansai coincide with the formation of a number of “Filipino community organizations.” More specific interest groups have emerged lately, such as those involving hobbies, interests and job occupations. Four organizations have the word “international” as part to their names. There are also Kansai chapters of already established organizations from the Philippines such as Knights of Rizal, Kansai Chapter and Couples for Christ (CFC). Aims of forging “closer relationship” with “Japanese friends” or the local

population are being promoted more as of recent. Table 4 summarizes the “Filipino community groups and organizations” in Kansai from 1974 to 2019.

Organization Name	Year Established	Location
<b>1970s</b>		
Filipino Community in Kobe (FILCAK)	1974	Kobe City, Hyogo
<b>1980s</b>		
Filipino Students Association in Kansai (FILSAK)	1982	Kyoto/Osaka
Kansai Nippi Tomo no Kai (KNTK)	1984	Osaka City
Sama-sama Filipino Community	1985	Osaka City
Kyoto Pag-Asa Filipino Community (KPFC)	1985	Kyoto City
Knights of Rizal, Kansai Chapter	1985	Kobe City, Hyogo
Philippine Kobe (PhilKobe)	1986	Kobe City, Hyogo
Kusatsu Catholic Filipino Community	1989	Kusatsu City, Shiga
<b>1990s</b>		
San Lorenzo Ruiz Filipino-Japanese Community	1990	Suita City, Osaka
Kapatiran-Kyoto	1991	Kyoto City
Tanglaw Filipino Community	1991	Osaka City
Nara Mabuhay Community	1993	Nara City
Philippine Women's Association	1993	Osaka City
Kyoto Tango Filipino Community	1994	Tango, Kyoto
International Family Friendship in Kansai (IFFIK)	1994	Hirakata City, Osaka
Sacra Famiglia Filipino Community	1994	Osaka City
Sikap Maizuru Community	1995/1996	Maizuru City, Kyoto
Mikuni Filipino Christian Community	1995	Osaka City
Philippine Dance Company (PDC)	1995	Toyonaka City, Osaka
Hirakata Catholic International Community	1996	Hirakata City, Osaka
Yagi Filipino Community	1997	Kashiwara City, Nara
Kawachi Kayumanggi Dance Group	1997	Fuse Ward, Osaka City
Sakai Filipino Community	1998	Sakai City, Osaka
Osaka Mabuhay Community (OMC)	1999	Hirakata City, Osaka
<b>2000s</b>		
Filipiniana Community	2000	Takatsuki City, Osaka
Kalipunan ng mga Filipinong Nagkakaisa (KAPIN) Osaka Chapter	2000	Sakai City, Osaka
Society of Overseas Filipinos	2000	Osaka City
(North) Nara Filipino Community	2000	Nara City
Elim Osaka Chapter	2003	Moriguchi City, Osaka
St. Paul Amagasaki International Community	2005	Amagasaki City, Hyogo
Kyoto Association of Pinoy Scholars (KAPS)	2006	Kyoto City
Mother Earth Connection-Kyoto	2006	Kyoto City
St. Joseph Catholic Church Hikone Filipino Community	2007	Hikone, Shiga
Couples for Christ (CFC)	2007	Osaka City
Fukuchiyama San Lorenzo Community	2008	Fukuchiyama, Kyoto
Nagahama Catholic Filipino Community	2008	Nagahama, Shiga
Philippine Circle	2008	Nishinomiya City, Hyogo
Shiga Prefecture Filipino Community	2009/2010	Koka City, Shiga
<b>2010s</b>		
Otsu Catholic Filipino Community	2010	Otsu, Shiga
Japan-Philippines RUMS Club	2011	Osaka City
Kakogawa Catholic Church Community	2012	Kakogawa City, Hyogo
Filipino Students Society in Osaka (FILSO)	2013	Osaka
Southeast Asian Community (SEAC)	2013	Osaka
Filipino English Teachers in Japan (FETJ), Kyoto Chapter	2013	Kyoto City
Filipino English Teachers in Japan (FETJ), Osaka Chapter	2013	Osaka City
Philippine Women's Organization	2014	Kyoto City

<b>Kyoto Nambu Chiku International Communities</b>	2015	Kyoto City
<b>Masayang Tahanan</b>	2015	Kobe City, Hyogo
<b>Isang Lahi Filipino Christian Community</b>	2015	Hirakata City, Osaka
<b>Higashi-omi Catholic Filipino Community</b>	2017	Higashi-omi, Shiga
<b>Filipino Young at Heart's Club (FYAHC)</b>	2017	Toyonaka city, Osaka

Table 4. List of “Filipino Organizations” in Kansai from 1974 to 2019 Source: PCCC 2019 Report

From these, various overlapping levels of community emerge. First, community as a group of individuals of similar ethnic background that is, following Benedict Anderson, produced or invented through imagination, and second, in the sense of being tied to a place within which an individual is located and as seen, for example, in its usage in “local community”, and third, “community” as an organization that individuals have formed and chose to belong to. I would like to draw the attention to the reader to keep these dimensions in mind when I talk about the “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” in this study.

This “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” play a part in the personal level of having knowledge of Japan, most especially about Urban Kansai. The “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” provides Filipinos in Urban Kansai opportunities and options for managing one’s quality of life. These are key points that I refer again in the next chapters as these are important in discussing how Filipinos in Urban Kansai perceive and manage their lives as migrants. They seem to shows aspect of performing choices, awareness and control. For now, I would like to move to the next section to define and discuss about social “networks”, which is another important facet that should not be overlooked in the discussion of community.

This section presented an overview of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. It tackled their presence in Kansai from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century leading to their bigger numbers of recent. The conditions that made their number to continuously grow has also been mentioned together with its momentary halt during the middle 1990s due to factors, such as the Japan Immigration Control Act. In terms of the expansion of numbers in Kansai region, Filipinos in

Urban Kansai make use of contact persons such as pioneers, kin, acquaintances, and brokers, among others. It has been noted that during the time that has passed from their initial presence in Kansai that there are changes in various aspects: in their population being mostly males during their earlier appearance in Kansai to a now predominantly visible female population; in their being employed in various occupations at present compared to the past wherein they were mostly seen in sports, jazz music, night entertainment work; and, in being able to utilize varied strategies in entering and remaining in Japan also at present. The mode of exchange and communication that occurs in their community through various activities were also presented. These are made through community involvement in which knowing other people, as will be discussed next, are potentially central.

## **1.2. The Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network”**

This section discusses social “network” of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Filipinos in Urban Kansai recognize the word “network” and use this to pertain to individuals who may be of importance to them in their everyday life. They recognize the individuals who have introduced them to someone and they call these individuals and groups as their “network.” Their “network” is comprised of people who have been introduced to them by someone else and of which contact are maintained through various extents. The quality of relationships that Filipinos in Urban Kansai have with people in their social network vary in terms of degree, in other words, in their strength or weakness. The Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network” in the Philippines comprise of their friends and acquaintances; in addition to these, in Japan they include the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community (including pioneers), other Filipinos who visit Urban Kansai, Japanese locals, and other residents. Intermediaries or brokers who assist them in their move to Japan may also be part of one’s social “network” if information is sought from

them during the move. Generally, Filipinos in Urban Kansai do not use the term “network” to describe the members of their family. What they do is they use the ego-inclusive terms of either *kapamilya* (family) or *kamaganak* (relatives) to describe the individuals who they recognize as part of this group. The Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network” not only comprises of a social aspect, but also a commercial one. Social “network” of Filipinos in Urban Kansai grow bigger and wider as they know get to know more people. To summarize, the “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” are made up of who they know in Urban Kansai, while Filipinos in Urban Kansai “Network” include the “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” and those from elsewhere (Philippines and other countries). These are wide and freely extendible.

I present a conceptual definition of “network” and some key characteristics of Southeast Asian society and culture that have been highlighted by other prominent researchers, specifically that of being mobile, flexible and fluid (Kimura 2017, Kobayashi 2017, Nagasaka 2017). The objective for this is not only to show that such tendencies have also been observed and are seen to be shared with other communities in the Southeast Asian region, but also to highlight in later discussions that even with such similarities in pattern, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to depart from these established characteristics in how they categorize the relationships that they have with other people and as they strategize their daily lives. In doing so, we are able take into account the changes that are brought about by the present-day context and circumstances, as well as to take Urban Kansai in consideration as a backdrop setting to this. Through this, we are able to look into general conditions in a dynamic way through being attuned to the recent developments and the courses of action that individuals take as both a response and a symptom of present-day contexts and circumstances.

In the following description, “networks” are referred to in the conceptual sense as a way to describe what happens when person introduces oneself or becomes introduced to

another person, and after they somehow become familiar with each another, they are able to maintain some degree of recognition. In 『地域研究の問題と方法』 (Area Studies' Problems and Methods), Narifumi Tachimoto (1999: 216) enumerates on three meanings that arise when pertaining to a network society. First, as related to a computer-connected information network; second, as a trendy, newly created term called "networking," which concerns working towards or attempts for organization. Third, in its classical meaning which pertains to the relationship itself and not merely on group or organizational attributes. From these descriptions it can be understood that a network society is viewed as a social network in which the analytical focus is on connecting and joining in relationships that makes such network society closely connected.

The cases that I will be citing seem to focus on the individuals or groups who comprise of a migrants' "network." Although the researches also describe the actions or processes involved in "networking" aside from the individual or groups that connect them, they are not the highlight of the studies. To illustrate this are examples from other Southeast Asian groups. The cases that I present from the next paragraph show empirical examples of migrants or potential migrants using social networks in facilitating migration. While proceeding with the presentation of cases from other Southeast Asia groups, I bear in mind the descriptions of "network society" as given above.

Southeast Asia is popularly characterized as having tendencies to be mobile, flexible and fluid. I cite studies of Kimura, Kobayashi, and Nagasaka to illustrate how these characteristics were came up with. Kimura's study among peoples living in the borders of Upper Myanmar (Highland Burma) and China shows them to have the above tendencies of being mobile, flexible and fluid. For example, the Kachin, a group who engages in slash-and-burn agriculture were found to be able to change its attributes and imitate the neighboring

Chan, a migrant group in the Kachin adjacent area that engages in wetland agriculture and irrigation. Using stability and equilibrium as a reason to this phenomenon was cited as insufficient, hence various authors such as Leach, Nugent and Scott have tried to understand and provided models in explaining this phenomenon. Their explanations ranges from dynamic equilibrium model, political economic world system, and as a way to escape tyranny by fleeing into the highlands, respectively. Neighboring groups, political economic system and colonial powers were said to affect the people's identity. Whether or not these models were created in opposition or in complement to the other isn't the concern of this study, what I want to illustrate from these are that the aspects of mobility, flexibility and fluidity seem to play an important part in the process of being acquainted.

Another, interesting example cited in Kimura's work is on the topic of tribute relationship and domination during the colonial period, this will be described next. The groups in Upper Myanmar are reported to form part of a confederacy group in whose membership is represented by each group's head/chief. In these confederacy, power is not only placed on one entity because power is distributed; in addition, it is said that one or two heads/chiefs play an important role in their group for a given period. The chiefs/heads rotate from cooperation to conflict. During the British colonial rule, confusion emerged regarding the offer of tributes by the confederacy heads/chiefs to the British administration. For the British, the offer of tributes were interpreted as that the group were requesting their peoples to be subjects of Britain. However, the meaning of attribution or belongingness for the peoples of Upper Myanmar is completely different from that of the British's idea of dominated subjects. For the head/chief, the tributes were given merely for the head/chief to be able to have a better relationship with the colonial administration. Kimura's study demonstrated a view of a nation in terms of relationship dynamics between peoples from the highland and plains,

central and periphery, and peoples of Highland Burma and Chan migrants. Kobayashi and Nagasaka also reiterate such flexibility and fluidity in their study of Southeast Asia societies. These examples, including the next ones that I will cite, seem to give hints towards characterization of groups towards “outward expansion” which is described as getting to know more and more people, and is used as another way of describing the process of networking. In hindsight, they also show that compared to the Filipino in Urban Kansai migrants that I have presented in the previous section, these groups are influenced more by their structural context, although as we will see in next examples, some degree of reflexivity or negotiation are made, although on a discretely different mode of doing so compared to present-times. I draw attention to changes that occur depending on the situation.

Aside from flexibility and fluidity, the tendencies of mobility (not limited only in the physical sense, but also in terms of ideas) are given special emphasis in the separate studies of Kobayashi and Nagasaka. In 「重ねり合う村落と都市」 (Overlapping Rural and Urban), Kobayashi backgrounds Cambodia to be a generally rural country that experienced a momentary period of agricultural development in the Cambodia-Thailand border. During this period, Cambodians crossed their country’s boundaries into the Thailand capital of Bangkok in search for economic opportunities. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, immigrants from Vietnam and China (notably from Fujian and Canton province) are reported to have settled around the Tonle Sap Lake for trade. Intermarriages with the local women among traders who wanted to start life anew were also reported. Similar to Kimura’s observation of Upper Myanmar peoples’ penchant for fleeing, the same has also been noted by Kobayashi among the Khmer of Cambodia. He cites this to be a common Southeast Asian characteristic especially in times of uncertainty (2017: 48). Pol Pot’s domination is notoriously known to be a difficult period in Cambodian history. During this turbulent period in Cambodia, everyone



was forced to labor in the fields and people were forcibly moved from the urban to rural areas. This resulted to collapse of settlements, Buddhist temples, and families due to separation.

Kobayashi notes that ideas moved together with the people and this affected traditional worldview in the rural areas, later the said ideas returned back to urban areas (or wherever their place of origin was) as people moved again. After Pol Pot's collapse, people once again moved to be reunited with their families and neighbors. The collapse of the regime was also seen as an opportunity for a new start and many flocked to the urban areas from the rural areas. They occupied lots and structures that were not originally theirs as many of its previous original owners unfortunately died during forced labor. Similar to the past, many Cambodians started to go to their city's neighboring areas to work as laborers and to Thailand as factory workers. Recently, many gather to travel to South Korea through utilization of outside or foreign contacts such as brokers or agents to help in their travel. With the relatively recent introduction of a state-regulated system to manage movement, kin connections are said to not be as much as an important necessity. The informants of Kobayashi's study note that their "lifeworld" at present seems to be a much wider scope compared to that in the past. The informants cited continuous expansion of trade routes and migrant laborers going to Thailand to engage in seafaring in expounding their observations.

Nagasaka (2017) expounds on the Southeast Asian inclination for movement and networks in 「移動と伝統」 (Movement and Tradition). Aside from tackling the frequently noted inclination for moving, Nagasaka looks at traditional undertakings attributed to movement and emphasizes on the process of movement using various examples from peoples of Southeast Asia. Young males from the Iban of Borneo are reported to practice the undertaking of leaving their villages to be on a "journey" for a limited time frame that could actually go on for years and years before they are able to return to their original settlement.

This journey is regarded as a brave act among the Iban wherein young men search for prestige and fortune despite its high risk of dangers that may occur during their journey. Moving out of one's village also reportedly occurs among Sumatra's Minangkabao ethnic group. Among them, generational changes have been noted in the Minangkabao patterns of movement. From the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, scarcity of resources and dissatisfaction with one's leader led individuals to move out of their villages in order to start a new life in a new settlement. However, during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and thereafter, the Dutch colonial government have made the opening of new settlements difficult. It is from these conditions of passing of time that the process of movement is introduced by the author.

Nagasaka cites how the Iban and Minangkabao are able to accomplish moving through the help of pioneers and networks. Pioneers are the so-called individuals who have first started a new settlement in a new land and opened such land for use. During the Dutch colonial rule of Sumatra, young men from villages started to work in plantations and urban areas as merchants or craftsmen. The males who moved out of their villages were reported to be able to maintain their contacts with their hometown through various social networks and were able to sustain what Nagasaka calls a "circular type" of migration which lead to the rise of family units of migrants during the 1950s.

The above studies of Kimura, Kobayashi and Nagasaka reveal the relevance of creating and maintaining contact persons or groups in Southeast Asia, such as offering of tributes to colonial administration, power distribution, maintaining and creating relationships with neighboring groups and foreign colonizers, and utilization of brokers, state-regulated systems, pioneers, and "kindred." In the field of kinship anthropology, kindred is understood as provisional and unfixed since the consideration of who comprises as kindred vary from individual to individual. It is the individual that reckons such consideration. At this point, it is

important to emphasize recent observations such as the creation and utilization of new forms of networks, such as brokers and modern nation state systems (through administrative requirements), aside from traditional ones such as pioneers, and so-called “kindred.” Also, while most of the above examples are among groups located in mainland Southeast Asia, there are also an abundance of cases about maritime Southeast Asia that show inclinations of mobility, flexibility and fluidity, and most especially that which concerns contact persons or groups. I cite cases that have been written about social network in maritime Southeast Asia from the next paragraph in order to illustrate more on the process of expanding who one knows. The previous cases and those that will be presented next show how social networks are interconnected with migration.

The area called maritime Southeast Asia includes the countries of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and East Timor. The major groupings comprise of Sunda Islands (Greater and Lesser Sunda Islands) and Maluku Islands in the countries of Singapore, Indonesia East Malaysia and Brunei; Visayan Islands and Sulu Archipelago in the Philippines; and New Guinea. In terms of border crossings, it could easily be generalized that movement to places that share land borders are more heightened due to less difficulties compared to those separated by bodies of water. However, as has been pointed out by various scholars, people living in the islands of maritime Southeast Asia do not seem to be deterred by the risks of sea crossing and are depicted to be quite inclined similarly, or maybe even slightly more, with their mainland Southeast Asia counterparts. A perfect example to this is the so called “Sulu Archipelago Network,” of which comprises of the areas enumerated earlier.

Aside from what has already been mentioned, Nagasaka presents cases of potential migrants following pioneers and utilizing networks in the Philippines in his article through citing Koki Seki’s research on Cebu fisherfolks’ seasonal migration and Ikuya Tokoro’s research

on groups within the Sulu Archipelago Network. Following the steps of the pioneers and utilizing contact persons or groups (which may also include pioneers) are noted heavily among peoples of maritime Southeast Asia. How are social networks utilized during migration?

During the 1920s when fishing catch was low, the fisherfolk of Cebu practiced seasonal migration to the nearby island of Bohol. The scope extended wider and wider as the fisherfolk moved to other nearby areas, such as Negros Occidental and North Mindanao. Generally, kin relations are what comprise as their key persons. During the 1950s, state regulations in forestry which resulted in more numbers of individuals to engage in fishing occurred. This led to reduced quantity of fish and imposed regulations on fish trade (buying and selling). These conditions lead to two outcomes: first, the appearance of patrons as part of their social network, and second, the formation of villages in the area of destination. Patrons are described as wealthy, higher positioned individuals of whom support were sought by fisherfolk. Of course, the role of pioneers did not become eliminated with the appearance of patrons. Before movement, so-called “surveys” to a potential area were conducted by men. They went to check an area through experiencing the area first-hand for about a year and noting of important qualities, such as fish quantity and the living environment. If found to be suitable, their family follows them to this new area. Soon after, other kin and individuals (for example but not limited to, relatives, in-laws and acquaintances) from their hometown also arrived. This resulted to new types of relationships and economy. Other potential migrants analysed what other migrants did before them and they subsequently formed a “fisherfolk network.” In the new location, it is described that settlements are scattered in a wide area but are loosely connected. When difficulties occur, the whole cycle of moving out and starting anew happens again. An example is when population become more dense leading to the same

problems as previously encountered, such as lesser catch and when large scale fishing boats start to arrive. Then, people start to move out.

This movement is explained to work in a “circular path” through which the importance of creating, maintaining, and utilizing contact persons or groups in both hometown and area of destination is highlighted. For example, assistance given enables one’s social network to grow bigger and wider. This means that an individual who has moved through the assistance of contact persons or groups is also able to perform some similar type of assistance to those who want to follow his or her footsteps.

Basing on how they were narrated, the imagery of the process being circular may be befitting to describe “networks” in above cases. But as will be shown later, the cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai seem to be quite more complex hence a “circular path” may not be enough to describe important points that make Filipino migration a lifestyle, such as the voluntary membership of Filipinos in Urban Kansai in groups.

There are other metaphors that try to depict these variety of crossovers in the act of networking, such as spider’s web, electric telephone lines, fishing net, rail networks, neural networks, and information exchanges (Tachimoto 1999: 217). These depictions try to capture how a person is able to meet and know more and more people, which in effect, makes their identified contact persons or groups wider in scope and bigger in number.

What could be the relevance of having and knowing such large number of people during migration? Nagasaka reveals that having contact persons or groups lower a migrant’s costs and risks because of being able to get support and reliance from a wide range of kin relations, which include new friends and acquaintances. It is important to note that the classification of what falls as kin or non-kin among migrants are very vague. For example, kin terminology, aside from other modes, are used to suggest or remake a relationship regardless

of its quality. Furthermore, depending on difficulties in business and seasonal winds, mutual relationships may be truncated. This expansion and contraction is indicative of the flexible character of a “network society” as described by Tachimoto.

Knowing quite a good number of individuals is advantageous for migrants as it is assumed that they do not have any close kin with them in the place where they move to. Celero’s (2018: 223) research on the importance of migrant support organizations (MSOs) in Japan reveals that “in the absence of a state-level response to immigrants’ diverse needs, MSOs are working toward immigrants’ welfare through their activities and network ties to negotiate for immigrants’ position in society.” However, she adds, that this is changing because recent population trends in Japan show a growing number of newcomer families. This is said to be a result of Japanese-Filipino migration to Japan through citizenship and family unification track.

Even if there seem to be an emphasis in the above cited studies on Southeast Asian groups that the presence of contact persons or groups is before and during movement into the new settlement, how the process works could not be generalized to these. Among Filipinos in Urban Kansai, it seems that creating new contacts and maintaining previous ones continues into the everyday undertakings of a migrant well after the physical movement and are present in the future through strategies that they do. The examples of using kin terminology to suggest or remake relationships and voluntary membership in groups seems to also be observed among Filipinos in Urban Kansai, to some extent.

As I have mentioned in the previous section, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to get information, not only limited to social support that are available, but also about work, legal assistance and information, among others, from Filipino friends, locals in their community and other social connections, such as colleagues and acquaintances. Similar to the examples

that Nagasaka mentioned earlier, the people who Filipinos in Urban Kansai know grow wider and wider and as the time passes they get to know more people.

Some cases like these that I observed in my fieldwork (of which I will be presenting in more detail in Chapters 3 to 5) are when newly arrived Filipinos in Urban Kansai are introduced to individuals and groups who are thought to be essential in the present or future needs of the newly arrived, and the newly arrived themselves taking chances or risks in approaching acquaintances or experts who they consider as knowledgeable in the questions that they need answers of and for assistance. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are introduced to each other through individuals that they meet in activities.

Many of those holding important positions in community organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are those who have lived longer in Urban Kansai, ranging from ten years to more. They invite Filipinos who they recognize as new in Urban Kansai to activities. The newly arrived Filipinos are introduced to others or referred to the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community by those who arrived earlier than them. There are many, who after being introduced, continue to see each other in activities. Many of the newly arrived are able to get to know other people through participating in organizations, activities and regularly going to places of worship, such as Catholic (and to a lesser extent, Christian) churches. After the initial introduction, many Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to maintain being in contact with their acquaintances, mostly through SNS. Even in instances when direct contact is lost, in one way or another, a person may still get in touch with the person when sought. In other words, knowing other people can be through introductions by other people or can be actively sought for by the individual.

There are quite many scholars who have already conducted research on the role of the Catholic Church and the Filipino migrant community and “community organizations” and

they reveal the same things such as saying that the abovementioned places serve as places where people can be introduced to one other. This is not only in Japan, but in other places where there is a significant number of Filipinos, such as in Australia, Hong Kong, Italy, and the United States of America (Espiritu 2002a, Groves and Chang 2002, Ichikawa 2016, Saint-Blancat and Cancellieri 2014). Makoto Ichikawa's (2016) research on religious institutions' role in the lives of Filipino migrants in Australia and Japan showed that the Catholic Church in both countries serve non-religious functions through social and "psycho-emotional" support aside from providing for the spiritual needs of its church-goers.

A glimpse of how Filipinos in Urban Kansai describe about how they create, maintain and use their social networks can be seen in the following instances: when a newly arrived JFC shares that she likes going to church because she is able to meet other JFC who are in the same situation as hers during the after-mass service gatherings; and, when a Filipino graduate school student in Kyoto confides that he goes to a Christian church whenever he has the free time to be able to meet other Filipinos, especially during times that he feels lonely and longs for someone to speak with in Filipino. Another male student in Kyoto also shared being able to stay in the nunnery for a few months until he was able to save and pay for monthly apartment rental fees. This last example is rather peculiar as it is a generally known religious prohibition in Catholicism that males are not allowed inside the nunnery

In Chapters 3 to 5, which provide the results of this study, I show examples wherein Filipinos in Urban Kansai join activities of the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community and the Filipino in Urban Kansai "Network." These are in information dissemination events and meetings, singing competitions, bar-related sessions, religious masses, birthday parties, and activities in Facebook, an online SNS that is popular among Filipinos. Filipinos in Urban Kansai exhibit their ability to choose when to attend activities that are available. Not all go to



activities together and at the same time. Also, not everybody know each other, but are connected by at least one person. It only takes one individual at the very least, and then sooner or later, the number of people that someone knows snowball to many. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to create social networks with other individuals of different origins or backgrounds from them. Participation in activities allows them to create and maintain contacts in the Philippines and with Filipinos, other residents and, locals in their community.

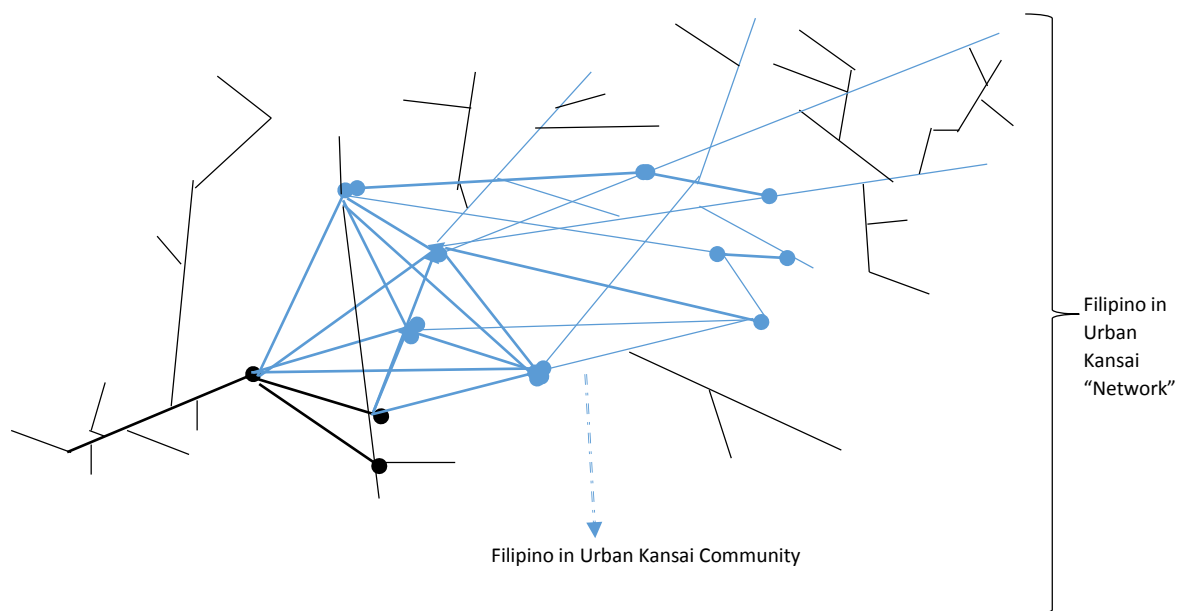


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community and Filipino in Urban Kansai "Networks."

From the above discussion, we are able to understand what the Filipino in Urban Kansai "Network" is. Filipino in Urban Kansai "Network" include the "Filipino in Urban Kansai Community" and those from elsewhere (ex. Philippines and other countries). It is a broad term encompassing the individuals who an individual has been introduced to and maintains some form of contact with. The Filipino in Urban Kansai "Network" is wide and freely extendible. There may be cases where a person may lose direct contact with a person part of the social network, but when sought, the possibilities for re-establishing contact is possible. The creation of a network may start with a few individuals, but since there are many available

activities for Filipinos in Urban Kansai, Filipinos are able to meet each other and these serve as opportunities that can widen whom they know. The social network of Filipinos in Urban Kansai may also be referred to as “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community.”

While the above studies from other authors are indeed very illuminating, this dissertation supplements what other studies on migration reveal by emphasizing how migration is part of the life process and everyday experiences of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The cited examples from other groups in Southeast Asia show us that Filipinos in Urban Kansai share general tendencies that have been said about the group, at the same time, the examples also reveal to us that there are differences among them. Similarities can be seen in referring to the past experiences and persons known prior to movement. The contacts with them are maintained by the migrants even as a person moves out to some place. They create new social contacts during migration. The context of migration in our present time offers various opportunities compared to what was accessible in the past. This opens more options to choose from. Filipinos of Urban Kansai seem to utilize their social contacts even more and show some form of control in how they live their lives. It seems to point to an interconnection of the past, present and future in the way that the migrants manage and understand their lives.

Another additional yet important point to add about what is being presented about community and networks and which could be a consideration to understand the view of migration as a lifestyle better, specifically in the practice of reflexivity and choice of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, is the dyadic nature of their relationships. We are able to understand what dyads are through Tachimoto’s elucidation of family units in Maritime Southeast Asia as them being a collection of dyads. In his study of Malay families, he explains that in a dyadic interaction “each two-way relationship is not shaped and made cohesive through one

standard of a family group. Rather, each asserts the quality of the relationship. It means that in such given relationship, each have nothing to do with the family in terms of its totality/entirety.” 「一つ一つの二者関係が家族集団という一つの規範によって形作られ、まとまりを与えられるのではなく、各々がその関係の質の主張し合い、その関係を通してか家族全体とは関わりを持たないということである。」 (1999: 163). What this means is that the self is premised on others; the source of an image of the individual carries attributes of a so-called two-way relationship or dyad. I also ponder about this thought in how this relates to choice and reflexivity.

Central to this dissertation's discussion of lifestyle is how the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community and the Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network” enable choice and reflexivity. In the above descriptions, I mention of the Filipinos of Urban Kansai's utility of choice in choosing what social network to belong to and when, including choosing what activities to go to. Migration is part of the everyday living process of Filipinos in Urban Kansai through boundary creating, crossing, and maintaining. Later in Chapter 4 and 5, I discuss the strategies that they employ on how to live in Urban Kansai as they strive in their everyday life. In doing so, they seem knowledgeable of options offered and the possibility of choosing from these. While the agency seems to play an active role, external influences are not totally eradicated. The intensity of the pervasiveness of external influences seem to depend on various considerations, such as socioeconomic factors. I expound about lifestyle, reflexivity and choice in Chapter 2 and discuss these among Filipinos in Urban Kansai in more detail. In Chapters 3 to 6 of this dissertation, I look at how the knowledge of various information are gathered from their community and social networks. It is probable that what migrants know open up a variety of lifestyle options for their choosing and play an important role in their lifestyle process.

As a result of what has been discussed, we are able to understand that social networks of Filipino migrants extend freely. We comprehend how they get to know more individuals through a visualization of the outermost edges of social networks as extending wider through empirical examples that show of traditional Southeast Asian tendencies of being mobile, fluid, and flexible. Yet, beyond tendencies, we also observe that possibility of making individual choices and notice that such emerge even more in the current times. I now depart from the description of attributes to give additional background on Filipinos in Urban Kansai through an overview of their activities. After which, we can finally move forward and discuss the results gathered to show ways in which migration is interconnected in the manner that Filipinos in Urban Kansai live their everyday lives. Through looking at activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, we may be able to understand more about migration as part of how they perceive and manage life, and subsequently will be able to answer the main research questions of this dissertation.

In this section, I presented a conceptual definition of what it means to be in a “network system”, Southeast Asian tendencies, and gave a brief background about social networks of Filipinos in Urban Kansai through empirical examples. I now move to enumerate the activities that Filipinos in Urban Kansai choose to preoccupy themselves in. From this, we are able to take note of the plurality of contexts in which actions are created and negotiated. I present the activities Filipinos in Urban Kansai in order to be able to assess how they serve as modes in which the aspect of choice with regards to performance of intimacies and creation of social networks are made. The activities serve as opportunities and at the same time provides limits. They are wherein Filipinos in Urban Kasai manage the narratives about themselves and their group as they go through their daily lives as migrants.

### **1.3. Activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai**

In this chapter's section 1.1, I have enumerated on activities that are organized by "community organizations" of Filipinos in Urban Kansai as a way to distinguish a particular type of organization. I have mentioned that although the organizations start with a particular objective, they later also touch on activities that are characteristic of other organizational types. In this section, I classify the activities that Filipinos in Urban Kansai go to into: (a) Collective Events, (b) Mundane Encounters, (c) Religious Activities, and (d) Cyberspace Interactions. The classification is to aid in later discussions as to what extent Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to make choices. This is also to examine if there are activities that attempt and maintain to be more traditional, and if negotiations to these are made. I use the above classifications for initial convenience of classification; however, these should not be taken as entirely separate and distinct from one another because, as has been found out in the duration of my research, extensions and overlaps in activities were seen to be more than common.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai are presented with a wide range of activities to choose from. The activities where Filipinos in Urban Kansai participate in are in: (a) cultural festivals, (b) sports festivals, (c) NGO/NPO-sponsored and GO-sponsored information dissemination events and meetings, (d) singing competitions, (e) bars, (f) religious masses, (g) birthday parties, and (h) on Facebook. As previously mentioned, the participants of the activities may differ from one activity to another. One may see themselves engaging in most activities, but some do not. There are no divisions by gender as explicit rules in order to participation in the activities that I have observed and participated in. The activities can be joined by both men and women. Some activities have restrictions of participation according to age. However,

because some Filipinos in Urban Kansai do not have anyone who they can think of and leave their children to, some mothers bring their children to events catered to adults, such as drinking parties held in bars. An individual participates according to his or her interests, in other words, their membership in activities are voluntary. The descriptions of the activities where activities occur are explained in the following paragraphs.

Collective Events are activities that are conducted as a group. Collective Events can be organized or spontaneous. Organized Collective Events have fixed dates and most occur once annually. Examples of Organized Collective Events are cultural festivals, sports festivals, information disseminations campaigns and singing contests. On the other hand, Spontaneous Collective Events do not have a fixed date and occur more often. Examples of Spontaneous Collective Events are gatherings of two or more individuals which do have prior planning such as hanging-out in bars or riverside banks and instant meet-ups.

Activities	
Face-to-face	Virtual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective Events (Organized Collective Events; Spontaneous Collective Events)</li> <li>• Mundane Encounters</li> <li>• Religious Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyberspace Interactions</li> </ul>

Table 5. Classification of Activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai

As previously mentioned, extensions and overlaps occur that make the classification of activities rather difficult. Attempts of setting “boundaries” through classifications are challenging especially when made on phenomena that feature some sort of extension and overlap. An example of these are in spur-of-the-moment decisions to hang-out or *tambay*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> From the English word “stand by.” *Tambay* used to have a connotation of being in between work. It is from the image of waiting next to a landline phone at home or on benches outside a variety store (*sari sari store*) for the result of one’s job application. While waiting for the phone call, a person uses his or her time for chats, drinking soft drinks or alcohol, or smoking cigarettes by one’s self, with another person or with a group. This can last for hours and hours. Nowadays in the Philippines, *tambay* refers to either the status of not doing

longer after an event. Another example of extension are in occurrences of personal encounters within or during Collective Events of which I classified as a Mundane Encounter. Another dilemma that I encountered was in classifying religious activities, such as Catholic masses and Christian worship services, because these may also be considered as Collective Events. I finally assigned it into a separate classification due to the regularity of them being held and its more directed spiritual goal.

Mundane Encounters are the so-called everyday interactions. They do not have a “special” location and time in the same manner as Organized Collective Events and Religious Activities do, such as being scheduled during time and in locations that have a cultural meaning. Examples of Mundane Encounters are personal encounters such as expected and unexpected visits, approaching someone, and touting. I classify these in this dissertation as encounters that take place between individuals.

Religious Activities are activities based on faith and spirituality that occur on a frequent basis such as Catholic masses and novenas and Christian worship services. While an individual may practice beliefs in one’s own way or do religious sharing with another person (which makes this action fall under Mundane Encounters), the presentation of faith may also be conducted as a group (which makes this fall under a Collective Event). These activities are all encompassed by their religious aspect, hence even if they do have extensions and overlaps with other classifications, I put them as separate for classification purposes in this dissertation.

Digital technology has aided in the ways that connections are made. Cyberspace interactions, through virtual connections, allowed extensions of activities that used to thrive

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anything (mostly implying being unemployed), or as with Filipinos in Urban Kansai, *tambay* is generally used to mean hanging-out.

on physical presence. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are generally adept with the use SNS, particularly of Facebook. Many Filipinos in Urban Kansai update their profiles more than once a day. The Facebook messaging application Messenger is utilized for communication and for formation of groups and sub-groups. Features of Cyberspace Interactions mimic the other activity types mentioned above and occur in extension and overlaps with them. What distinguishes Cyberspace Interactions from the other classifications are their virtual nature.

In order to understand such tendencies of extension more, and in addition to the description of Southeast Asian tendencies of mobility, fluidity, and flexibility presented in the previous section, I cite Tachimoto's three criteria on maritime Southeast Asian society. He describes maritime Southeast Asian society as having the tendencies to be dispersed/scattered, commercial, and chaining (126). In the case of the Sulu Archipelago Network, which comprises of parts of present-day Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines, the past history saw heightened network and economic activities in the area, such as marital ties, networks, and economic exchanges. Nagasaka (2017: 76-78) cites conditions such as the formation of modern nation-state borders to have shaped and changed the way that these relations are presently made. He explains that this does not mean that the former activities are not able continue anymore, but that divisions into boundaries have brought about country-specific differences in the price and type of commodities due to country-specific societal conditions and economic differences. People still continued to move for commerce, such as to take advantage of the differences of products and market value in the counties mentioned.

I briefly recall some points of what we know so far about Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The social networking patterns of Filipinos in Urban Kansai seem to follow Tachimoto's additional criteria in addition to aspects of mobility, fluidity, and flexibility. He relates that it can be said



that the “chain relationship” of expanding and contracting is fixed as an attribute; however, relationships are not solely for buying and selling and trade, but also for order to be kept or maintained. Tachimoto’s criteria of having the tendencies to be dispersed/scattered and chaining may be understood in reference to discussions earlier in this chapter, hence I want to focus on the remaining point which is on the tendency of being commercial. This aspect of commercialism is also very much pervasive among Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Commercialism seem to play a role in the strategies of living in Urban Kansai. I explain this briefly in the proceeding paragraphs.

In most of the activities of Filipinos of Urban Kansai, commercialism, or as colloquially used among them, *raket* are prevalent. Examples of commercialism among my informants include attending activities to get sign-ups from other Filipinos attending, sponsoring events to be able to secure booths in the entrance and special mentions during the event proper, installing mini variety store or *sari-sari* store inside their main business, such as in bars, restaurants, or *izakaya* (居酒屋), and online selling in Facebook, among others. My informants’ reveal being able to select in doing their business endeavors. I cite three examples from other examples that are given in the later chapters: these are cases of (a) an informant engaged in telecommunications business in Urban Kansai, (b) a mother who does street vending in the adjacent street of a Catholic Church in Osaka during Sundays, and (c) various activities in a Filipino-owned “*restobar*”<sup>4</sup> (shortened form of the English words restaurant and bar) in Nishinari Ward, Osaka.

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<sup>4</sup> *Restobar* is derived from the English words restaurant and bar. This type of establishment serves food and drinks the way usual restaurants do where a set menu is available for diners to choose from. These are cooked and eaten in the premises. Other diners who opt not to have meals and only orders drinks is also possible in the *restobar*, hence the bar category of the place. Premises that fall into the above description are commonly called *restobar* in the Philippines. *Restobars* in the Philippines are common places to hang out for drinking. Food are ordered only to serve as a match to the alcoholic drinks.

Demi is a Filipino woman in her late 40s who lives in Osaka and is engaged in telecommunications business. She admits to choosing not to be a member of any “community organization” for her to be able to attend more activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. She also picks a particular season and skips the colder winter months of January to March when going to Kyoto. Next, is a mother who goes to a Catholic Church with her two children during Sundays to engage in street vending in the church’s adjacent street. She utilises the time when mass is ongoing to sell outside on the streets and later, catches up (*habol*) to be with family and other Filipino churchgoers during after-mass activities, such as birthday parties. Last, are various activities in a Filipino-owned *izakaya* wherein services, such as quick loans or *pautang*, are operated and utilized by Filipinos living in the same area as the *izakaya*. Filipinos living in the area are observed to bring new clients to the said *izakaya*. Most of these Filipinos in Nishinari Ward do not to join “Filipino community organizations” and the activities of these organizations, yet they are able to spend a substantial amount of her time with other Filipinos and locals in the neighbourhood. In these given examples, we are able to get a suggestion on how contacts are utilized in commercialism together with the utilization of choice.

Strategies like these are nothing new, however, many modes have differed from that of the past. Nagasaka’s article shows how migration is able to be aggressively pursued through the utilization of social networks. He points out that a special feature of such type of community is that it is made up of migrants coming from a certain area’s segment that has migrated. However, he suggests that instead of thinking of a community only in terms of this “exceptional” condition, he asks that the societal structure’s main organizational elements in being a society may also be looked at. He suggests important elements to look at within the already known Southeast Asian inclination for movement. He urges to first look at the growth and developmental conditions brought about by history and from these, the expansion of

mobility of people in a traditional society can be understood. As a result, not only are the central provisions of traditional state characteristics can be observed, such as the flexibility of bilateral kinship system and power, and the boundaries of scope, but also how inclination to low population density and all these abovementioned conditions are mutually constructed at the same time. He argues that in such way, we are able to analyse a person's way of life in society.

In his article, Nagasaka (2017: 68) suggests that his enumerated cases of Iban and Minangkabao show how movement is a way of life and a possibility. I stand in agreement to some of the above proposals of Nagasaka and the Southeast Asian features that have been enumerated by various scholars and assert that taking up migration as a lifestyle process in our present times becomes even more significant. However, several thoughts to ponder, such as the following, come into mind as these are not fully tackled in Nagasaka's article. It is a wonder as to what extent is the making of choice in the Iban's and Minangkabao's exhibition of "outward expansion" or getting to know more and more people. How do these differ in our current context? While this dissertation does not answer the questions on the Iban's and Minangkabao as these are beyond this study's scope, these questions may be helpful and will be kept in mind in evaluating the case of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I examine the aspects of choice, reflexivity and lifestyle in detail in Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Methodology.

This section gave an overview of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and the activities in the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community and Filipino in Urban Kansai "Network." I described the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community and Filipino in Urban Kansai "Network." I discussed about so-called traditional conditions common to Southeast Asia. These revealed inclinations for movement, flexibility and fluidity, which subsequently makes a "network society" viable. The

overview of Urban Kansai, together with the presentation of the contexts to their influx in Urban Kansai and the context of Urban Kansai has shown how the conditions of Filipinos are similar but also differ from the Southeast Asian migrant groups. Various brief examples on Filipinos in Urban Kansai have given us suggestions on the presence of different options available to them and their being able to make preferences. It is likely that Filipinos in Urban Kansai create, cross and maintain boundaries and use these as strategies in the way that they live their lives as migrants.

## CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 1 showed an overview of Filipinos in Urban Kansai through three facets: in terms of a community, social network, and of their involvement activities as part of a community and social network. Cases of peoples of Southeast Asia were presented to highlight what are known to be traditional characteristics among peoples in the said region. These are of being mobile, fluid, and flexible. In addition to these characteristics, Maritime Southeast Asian groups (those from the islands of Southeast Asia) are also considered to have the tendencies to be dispersed/scattered, commercial, and chaining. Filipinos in Urban Kansai were seen to follow such characteristics, however differences were also noted in a many aspects. These differences were observed not only in social and economic conditions, such as institutionalized and administrative policies, but also in the responses or personal courses of action, especially when Filipinos in Urban Kansai create, cross and maintain boundaries in their everyday life. I suggested towards the end of Chapter 1 that these are possible indicators of active choice and control. Chapter 2 follows up on these wherein I aim to connect these topics to lifestyle process, choice, reflexivity in the context which they intersect, which is in migration.

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first and second parts aim to build on the discussion by presenting about traditional habits and customs and highlighting changes that have occurred in them. Giddens (1991: 145) explains that “the fixity of tradition does not derive from its accumulation of past wisdom; rather, coordination of the past is achieved through adherence to the normative precepts tradition incorporates.” I relate to previous studies on Filipinos on this part of the chapter and take note of intimacies in families, kin and networks. Then, I relate this to Filipino in Urban Kansai process of living which indicates

practices of making choices as part of the way of managing one's way of life. The rationale for this discussion is to suggest that migration interconnects in the way that Filipinos in Urban Kansai strategize and comprehend their lives of and the possibility of boundary creating, crossing and maintaining in their creation of lifestyle. I argue that migration is interconnected in the manner that Filipinos in Urban Kansai live their daily lives. The third part of this chapter tackles the methodology and research tools used in this dissertation. I narrate how I became involved with Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I cite the methods I employ in answering this dissertation's main objective and its subsequent research questions. I end the chapter by referring to ethical considerations employed in this study.

### **2.1. Traditional Habits and Customs of Filipinos: A Brief Overview**

According to Giddens (1991), modernity has brought about dilemmas in the way that the basic premises about life are understood, particularly on the connections between sociology and modern institutions. He explains that connections between these have become more complex and problematic and it has weakened traditional habits and customs. I take a look at Filipino migrants by citing brief case examples on what is believed to be the nature of Filipino relationships. This section revisits so-called traditional habits and customs of Filipinos as an overview to the changes and revisions that are happening at present in relation to trust, roles and obligations and strategies among Filipino migrants. Later in the section, I dwell on the possibility for this to be a background to the making of reflexive choices by Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

When talking about Filipino traditional habits and customs, the family as a unit, as well as other groups that they belong to, is often mentioned. The family as a unit has often been said to be the core of Philippine society. Wolf (2002: 348) reveals how the family unit is

thought of by children of Filipino immigrants to “offer an extremely magnetic and positive basis of Filipino identity,” yet at the same time can also be source of stress and alienation. For example, the second-generation children of Filipino migrants to the USA were observed that when asked about what it means to be “Filipino”, they referred to Filipino languages and culture with some kind of pride and respect. Wolf cites Espiritu’s study among Filipino migrants in San Diego, California of which results to the question of what it means to be “Filipino” are similar. The migrants in the latter study answered food and family closeness, and that both of these converged in family reunions and get-togethers. Aguilar (2002) suggests that this understanding stems from the “Asian Values” discourse wherein Asians are not supposed to be individualistic, rather are intertwined with corporate collectives such as family, clan, village, nation, or empire.

In the context of migration, Filipino migrants were often observed create and maintain intimacies with other groups aside from their immediate family unit. In many studies about overseas Filipinos, not only in Japan but in other parts of the world, groups and organizations have been given focus and pinpointed as important in the lives of overseas Filipinos in order to adapt well in their host society. Examples to these are church-based groups, advocacy-oriented groups, “community”-based groups and school-based groups, such as what I have enumerated in Chapter 1 as to what comprises of Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network.” In that chapter, I related to characteristics of them being mobile, fluid and flexible. These features create what could be said to be a rather convenient societal structure because they are voluntary and they are able to choose when and how to interact with others.

This inclination of getting to know more and more people is noted by children of Filipino immigrants in California, USA in the above mentioned study of Wolf who describe themselves of having a widely extended family and of keeping “in touch with 8th and 9th

cousins.” On their days-off from work usually during Sundays, Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong are observed to “fill the streets and squares of the central business district, chatting, laughing, and sharing photographs and letters” (Groves and Chang 2002: 322). This type of gathering of Filipinos is also observed in public places around the Lucky Plaza Mall in Orchard Road, Singapore.

These behaviour may be connected to how Filipinos kin relations are bilateral and cognatic, as is understood by anthropologists. In 「双方制と親縁性の文化」 (Cognate and Culture of Relatedness), Shimazono (2017) explains that being cognatic is not only in terms of the similar weight of acknowledgement of kin on the mother’s and father’s side, which is how a bilateral structure is understood, but also makes clear that the union between siblings has sociocultural implications. Cognatic structures are based on ego and not on descent. The Iban metaphor imagines this relationship units as concentric circles similar to ripples that are created when a stone is cast into water. The ripples that are created diminish as they go far, akin to how recognition of kin fades as the manner of connecting become more distant. The metaphor also implies of how social networks are able to extend wide.

How are intimacies, movement and making choices interconnected? I refer to our present situation. We enter our current century with migration unabated. While the year 2020, has seen an unceremonious halt of worldwide human mobility due to the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), research on the subject matter of migration still continues. The current situation has opened discussions on the role of human mobility to the pandemic issue not only among scholars, but also among laypersons. Not few are talks that involve speculations that outsiders, such as tourists, carry COVID-19 when they move around and spread them. The current situation has opened up concerns about movement and proximity and this seems to be changing the way that individuals interact with one another.



Conversations go as far as questioning about boundaries between other individuals and countries, and controlling movement. How people choose which way to act and the course of action to take in order to protect one's self from COVID-19 may be based on the quality of social relationships. For example are everyday actions such as hugging or taking off face masks when around family or close friends, but on the other hand, face masks and distance are kept with office colleagues, those who a person doesn't know and are thought of as foreign. These indicate that there are degrees of trust towards certain people and this seems to be related to the quality of intimacy that one has in relation to another person.

On another topic about intimacies, but continuing to what others evaluate as an unsatisfactory implication of migration by previous studies, is one that implies that migration has a negative effect by weakening of tradition or is a symptomatic accompaniment to it. Many are articles that allude to Filipinos overseas as victims of the global economy, how overseas care work or "affective labor" has led mothers to take care of other families and children instead of their own, separation of family members from each other, changes in family structures because of women working, and consequences of males remaining in the house instead of being the breadwinner, among others (Constable 2002, Espiritu 2002, Tadiar 2002, Piquro-Ballescas, Ballescas and Takamatsu, 2018). In Japan-related issues, cases where JFCs are left in the Philippines by their mothers and then later taken back to Japan are observed. Advocacy groups have taken this as a pressing concern that need to be addressed and subsequently insist on the importance of preservation of "tradition" by way of the "nuclear family" in referring to the issue. These points will be taken up again for discussion later as they seem to indicate the creation of new intimacies as a form of strategy. Particularly, it seems that the meaning of what comprises of as "tradition" seems to have been revised and recreated.

Migration has seen changes in organizational structure and also on the personal level. During migration, examples on the continuation of assistance is observed among siblings who have been separated due to movement to other locations (Parreñas 2015, Aguilar 2013). For example, in Cruz' (2020) study about "cousinship" and kinship ties in post-1945 central Philippines, he notes of individuals taking the responsibility for the education of siblings and relatives. Such exhibition of support is also observed by Parreñas to be performed by Filipino domestic workers in Italy during the mid-1990s. Sending remittances and *balikbayan boxes*<sup>5</sup> are noted to help in income generating activities and have been reported in studies as performances of care and intimacy (Alayon 2009, Camposano 2012, Patzer 2018). Goods and money are also extended to other kin such as parents and relatives, and at times also to neighbors in their hometown. This relates to Tachimoto's description of a dyad in Chapter 1, which explains on the self as premised on others and that there are no set standards as on what comprises a family unit of organization. Hence, to go as far as to say that individualism is absent among Filipinos, is to misunderstand how their social networks are created, crossed and maintained. Rather, according to Aguilar (2002: 32) Filipinos show "a type of individualism in which the self can be autonomous but, at the same time, dialectically intertwined with a wider group."

In this section, I have briefly discussed on what are said to be traditional habits and customs of Filipinos especially that of which pertains to self, family and social networks. As times passes, changes and revisions have been noted in the manner of which social networks

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<sup>5</sup> *Balikbayan boxes* are carton boxes made up of corrugated fiberboard that contains assorted imported goods packed by a person living abroad. These are sent or brought back to family and friends in the Philippines. *Balikbayan boxes* arrive in the Philippines through courier services or as a checked-in luggage of an individual returning to the Philippines. The practice of sending *balikbayan boxes* are claimed to be a performance of long distance intimacy (Parreñas 2005). In 2019, "door-to-door" rates for sending a 73x55x63cm *balikbayan box* in Japan ranges from 9,500 円 (to Manila) to 12,500 円 (to Mindanao). In the case of sending through courier services, the whole process from the time of picking-up the *balikbayan box* from the sender and its delivery to the recipient is estimated to take four to seven weeks.

are thought of and created, crossed and maintained. An example cited is when some advocacy groups on Japanese and Filipino related issues seem to rather incorrectly misunderstand or differently interpret what traditional family structures are in how situations brought about by recent circumstances are addressed. Also, results of research about Filipinos overseas show that migrants also exhibit being “self-centred and extremely individualistic,” specifically in terms of using migration to get away from parents, in-laws, siblings, spouses, and their children. These findings suggest that traditional habits and customs are undergoing some changes based on the current context. It is quite suggestive that new types of intimacies are devised in a migrant’s everyday as they face situations involving trust, strategies, and roles and obligations. With all these foregoing in mind, I now move into the next section to discuss on how migrants create and understand their life through everyday actions of choice, and control.

## **2.2. Everyday Actions of Choice, Control and Reflexivity**

In the Introduction, I briefly mentioned on “lifestyle migration” as an analytical concept which main concern is explaining what migration means to migrants. I reiterate that the direction of my research differs from this and my study focuses more about how everyday life is lived by a migrant rather than the meaning that migrants give about their movement into a new location. I argue that migration is interconnected with the everyday and that boundaries are created, crossed, and maintained as part of everyday living. Filipino migrants are able to do so when they do actions of choice, control and reflexivity.

Previous studies have focused on the role of the state and of the role of policies in tackling migration. As part of the long-standing agent-structure dilemma, recently, discourse has moved towards the view of migration as a complex process that not only includes a view

from the state, but also of other actors, such as the migrants themselves, migrant organizations, kin and networks. The importance of the so-called “migrant agency” has gathered interest in migrant studies. What such studies imply are that migrants are able to utilize their agency in making their own choices regarding decisions and exhibiting control of their lives. Aguilar (2002: 2) explains that “the migrant is seen not as a passive victim of structures, but as one with human agency and subjectivity who is able to navigate through and negotiate with formidable structural forces.” It is, however, necessary to take caution in suggesting that individuals or personal dispositions have become totally independent of its external influences. As has been defined previously, external influences are involvements that arise from kinship structures, social duty and traditional obligations. According to Giddens, this does not mean that the individual is entirely disconnected from global and external influences, rather, that they are more intertwined than ever before. He argues that modernity has increased interconnections between global influences and personal dispositions or what Giddens call “extensionality” and “intentionality,” respectively.

In the Introduction, I referred to Giddens’ structuration theory of which main premise is that structures are facilitating (both, enabling and constraining), therefore give the ‘knowledgeable’ agent the capability to work in creative or formative ways and realize their goals. Furthermore, that the capability of acting this out is differently distributed according to a person’s awareness of rules and access to resources, which are partially influenced by their position within other social institutions. In other words, individuals are able to practice reflexivity. These are what reflexivity supposes. To recall the definition that I gave on reflexivity in the Introduction, being reflexive means that people have the capacity to be aware of the given social conditions and institutions that shape their actions. It is believed that individuals are not only shaped by these social conditions and institutions, but they are

also able to alter these and their situation. The awareness to various factors open possibilities for development.

The condition of pronounced interconnections between global influences and personal dispositions reveal aspects of reflexivity. Through reflexivity, individuals are able to act out their human potentials within contextual limits. In the case of migrants, such can be exemplified in terms of how they participate in shaping migration practices over time. For example, discourses that use the theory of origin, such as state-level policies and legal terminologies/labels regarding migrants and migration, are pervasive, but, migrants are observed to be able to challenge or negotiate these. To cite an example on the topic of migrant “integration” in Japan is the Japanese government’s promotion of *tabunka kyosei* (多文化共生, multicultural coexistence) which proposes of “participation in all aspects of daily life” by Japanese and immigrants in one’s local community (Ager and Strang 2008: 177). The presence of multicultural centers in some cities in Japan are a testament to a local government’s cooperation to the administration’s objectives. In the previous chapter, I mentioned how multicultural centers are utilized by Filipinos in Urban Kansai in their activities, such as weekly language lessons and subject review classes, among others. Zulueta (2018: xvi) reveals that although promotion of *tabunka kyosei* is Japan-government-led, there are many examples where the activities are migrant-led, such as what was observed in activities of migrant organizations and migrant involvement in migrant welfare and incorporation. In a study among Filipino women in Oita Prefecture, Japan, Jabar (2018) reports that the Filipino migrants are able to exercise their agency in child upbringing. In Kanto Region, Japan, JFCs have been reported to use rap music as a strategy in creating a place for themselves in their host country (Duaqui 2018). As a supplement to these findings, I propose that new intimacies

are also created if we look at migrant activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai in their multiple contexts, and that making choices and asserting control are widely used by migrants.

The previously mentioned example on Parreñas' study about Filipino migrants in Italy regarding the observance of care and intimacy through sending *balikbayan boxes* are revealing about the process of reflexivity, specifically in the creation of new kinds of intimacies during migration. Her study mainly focuses on emotional strains between the Filipino migrant in Italy and children and family members left in their hometown in the Philippines. If we apply Giddens' take on the lifestyle process, the elements of choice, control and reflexivity seems likely to emerge.

How, we ask, are these elements of choice, control and reflexivity made in the everyday? I refer as an example to the often stated roles and responsibilities of migrants, which are a rather pervasive discourse in migrant research, specifically that of family duties. As have been presented earlier, looking after the needs of kin continue even as a Filipino migrant moves overseas. It used to be the case that men make up the majority of those working abroad. According to Margold (2002: 217), there is an expectation that prestige should be accorded to a traveller who has experienced life widely in Ilocos Region, Philippines. She relates this to the Ilokano epic poem called "*Biag ni Lam-ang*" ("Life of Lam-ang"), which talks about heroic quests of the protagonist, Lam-ang. She adds that cotemporary Ilokano women say that an ideal husband is one who attends to his household and familial duties, which importantly include securing their economic stability.

However, starting from 1992, Filipino women outnumbered men among newly hired land-based workers (as opposed to sea-based-related work) (Asis 2017). Furthermore, Asis reveals that Filipino women are visible in international migration as they make up the majority of permanent settlers and are prominent in "labor migration." Global economic conditions

have been said to shape these occurrence. Notable of these are Philippine migration policies that are tied to U.S. policies in the Asian Region, and those made between other countries such as country-specific economic agreements, among others<sup>6</sup>. Related to this context, Parreñas (2001) writes that gendered ideologies of “the family” blame the absence of Filipino migrant mothers more than Filipino migrant fathers because mothers are expected to perform roles of nurturance and love.

In Japan, such trend on the influx of female workers has been seen to occur much earlier, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, as driven by work in the entertainment sector. In these foregoing contexts, reflexivity is exhibited in terms of how new intimacies are created through new modes that were not existing before, such as regularly sending *balikbayan boxes*, remittances and daily communication online. These have become new means to express intimacy, or something that indicates a closeness in relationships. These above examples infuses new meanings to intimacy. Aguilar explains how remittances are able to alter initial family disapproval to the idea of a family member or kin working overseas and can also encourage distant relatives to look after the migrant as if the closeness in relationship has been there in the first place<sup>7</sup>. New modes have also emerged that enable monitoring of family members and maintaining expected roles and obligations.

Modes of communication at present are emerging and transforming. In the past, prepaid phone cards used to be purchased from telecommunication shops, or cheaper from

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<sup>6</sup> These are not detailed in this dissertation as it is outside the study’s scope. For a discussion on contract labor migration in the contemporary global context, see Gibson and Graham (2002); for studies on Japan-Philippine policy related issues, see Akashi (2018) and Faier (2009); for family immigration to the United States of America in the context of U.S. colonial policies, see Espiritu (2002b).

<sup>7</sup> Aguilar interestingly notes that sending of remittances have become standard features of internal migration, however, he compares that this does not appear in migration within national territories (for example, remittances does not appear to be commonly practiced by a laborer who works in a factory in Laguna province and lives away from family in Isabela province).

enterprising *kababayans* (compatriots), to make international calls and occasionally keep in touch with family and relatives in the Philippines. The number of minutes for talking depends on the amount of the prepaid phone card. Filipino migrants used to coordinate with family and kin in the Philippines on a selected day and time when they can conveniently talk to each other. It was not common for a group of family members to go together to a telephone booth in the center of town, or pay a visit to a better-off kin or neighbour with a landline phone, and then huddle together as a group while waiting for their time to talk to their overseas migrant kin. With the availability of internet services on smart phones, better wireless network connection and relatively cheaper monthly rates, there are now a variety of options for getting in touch with each other that are available. Personal smart phones can be acquired easily at present compared to that of the past. In the case of my informants in Urban Kansai, they are able to exploit social media to be able to talk to their children, family, and other kin in the Philippines on a daily basis, at the very least, or series of short contacts within the day. In this given example, they exhibit choice and control with their time on when they create contact with family, friends and kin.

In another article, Parreñas (2005) illustrates on “intensive mothering” to children and family being performed by Filipino mothers who work overseas. She defines “intensive mothering” as when mothers discipline and supervise their children through telecommunications on a very regular basis. Similarly, as emerged in my research findings, Filipinos in Urban Kansai use their ease of using SNS and penchant for posting daily updates to make monitoring their children and family in the Philippines much easier.

In important addition to the above is that even in these contemporary kinds of movement, the role of informal social networks still exists and persists, such as what have been cited of historically (Discussed in Chapter 1). Nagasaka’s findings reveal on the role of



informal social networks among Filipino migrants in Italy as a migrant strategy in challenging legality and illegality. In this, we are reminded that options available may differ due to country-specific conditions, such as in terms of the leniency showed by the Italian government in the treatment of border entries in the Filipino migrants in Italy's case. We are told that it is important not to overlook the local specific context that individuals contribute to and directly promote, and also that these may have global implications. The element of reflexivity is able to result to a continuous stream of migration. Aguilar (2002: 4) claims that collective efforts of individual migrants, in addition to their social networks, are able to change the mechanisms and institutions of migration. He says that migrants participate in restructuring the migration process on the personal level through different ways by which personal, gender, and national identities are challenged, reconfigured, and asserted.

Migration opens a wide array of options and possibilities for migrants. In addition, in our current period, what we know as knowledge can now be always open to revisions. Giddens explains that the creation of everyday knowledge is no longer limited to so-called experts or specialists; furthermore, such knowledge is not only a one-way process because the so-called specialist information are constantly reappropriated by lay actors as part of modernity's reflexivity. Meaning to say we now have multiple sources of authority which are often contested and negotiated. For example, in Goss and Lindquist's (1995) study about potential migrants in the Philippines, they reveal that individuals draw selectively on institutional roles and resources in order to fulfil their goals and inevitably reproduce the social system. They explain that when potential migrants, returned migrants, patrons and institutional agents take from rules and resources of diverse institutions, it is then that practices become institutionalized.

Giddens adds that reflexivity underscores the concept of risks. He explains that we are living in a period of “risk culture” in that overall riskiness of particular areas and modes of life have been reduced, however, new risks that may have been unknown in the past generations have emerged. Even in as much as there are progress in gathering and creating information, such as precision and quantification employed in risk assessment, risks are said to continue to persist and could not be avoided by anyone. Earlier, I have referred to risks in migration among Southeast Asian groups and how social networks are able to minimize them. I refer once more to the study of Goss and Lindquist about Filipinos migrants and quote on their work directly to give an example on risks in relation to migration and strategies by individuals:

“Institutional agents control knowledge about the risks and disappointments of international migration, but it is obviously in their interest to hide these from the potential migrant and to promote the advantages of overseas labor. The institution operates to facilitate overseas migration because brokers profit from the price potential migrants are willing to pay, whether in terms of material payment or social debt, while organizations such as recruiting agencies benefit from an advanced portion of the surplus value to be produced by the worker overseas. The state has more concern with the welfare of the potential migrant, but generally lacks the political and economic capacity to control the institution. Potential migrants are left to negotiate their way through this institution to obtain sufficient ‘presence’ in Manila, and then overseas, exploiting whatever knowledge of rules and access to resources that they can bring to bear (344).”

This means that how migration is lived is in the condition of a “risk society.” This necessitates having a calculative attitude to the open possibilities of action. This and the above notions of the lifestyle process are what I employ in examining lifestyle in migrant activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Activities are looked at as multiple options and contexts of the everyday. How a way of life is created and thought of will be looked at as characteristically related to, and will also be thought of as expressive of, these specific milieus of action. As such, the modes of how intimacies are made in the everyday are understood to be in potentially in a myriad of ways: as changing, creating, crossing and maintaining. I look at the lifestyle options such as decisions to become immersed in those activities and at the same time ponder how these are chosen at the expense of other possible alternatives by Filipino migrants. For migrants, making a place for themselves in host societies involve risks and therefore, necessitate strategies, such as the maintenance of networks and creation of new intimacies. I now move on to the next section to detail how I commenced my involvement in the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community.

### **2.3. Establishing Contacts**

I have discussed in Chapter 1 how social networks are relevant during mobility. I employed of the same when I started my research about Filipinos in Urban Kansai. This section narrates my experience in creating social contacts, which seems to resonate well with generally known Southeast Asian inclinations of mobility, flexibility and fluidity that were described earlier. I was able to know those who I do now through starting with a few individuals, and from them the number of Filipinos in Urban Kansai who I became acquainted with became more. Those who were introduced to me were also able to introduce me to other Filipinos who may or may not be known to the initial contact person. At the end of this

section, I cite the methods that I use in answering this dissertation's main objective and its subsequent research questions.

I was first acquainted with one of my key informants who I give the pseudonym, Ate Cara, when I was on a short-term visiting scholar program at Kyoto University from February to March 2015. Ate Cara is a Filipino single mother to four children with age around the mid-50s to early-60s. She preferred not to disclose her age so I approximate it to be around this range as her eldest son is in his early 30s and Ate Cara mentioned to me that she arrived in Japan in the 1990s as a cultural dancer. I chose to call her "Ate" as a form of respect for somebody older as is a common practice among Filipinos; for males, the term "*Kuya*" is used. Among those belonging to nearly (or approximately) the same age as hers or her contemporaries in terms of arrival in Urban Kansai, she is just referred to by her first name. It was during an on-campus symposium about Japanese Filipino Children (JFC) on my first day in the university where we became introduced to each other by my host supervisor. At that time, my main research topic was on JFC, music and identity.

Ate Cara is a well-known community leader in Kyoto who introduced me to singers based in Kyoto City and to various organizations and community leaders who either directly or indirectly work with Filipino-related causes. Aside from them, Ate Cara also introduced me to the president of an organization of Filipino university students who are mostly funded by the MEXT scholarship (and some, funded by private organizations) in Kyoto who promptly added me to their Facebook group page. It is through Ate Cara that I know the many Filipinos who I know in Urban Kansai now. This was through introduction or referrals (which is described by Filipinos in Urban Kansai using the Japanese term *shoukai*, 紹介,) from friends of friends (of friends). I was able to do participant observation in the various activities where Filipinos participate in through information given by her. She showed concern on the progress

of my data gathering and was constantly in touch with me on Facebook Messenger, the direct communication feature of Facebook, on matters about my daily life in Kyoto. “*Kilala mo na si OOO?*” (“Have you already met OOO?”), she would always ask me. When I shook my head to imply the negative she would tirelessly and enthusiastically grab my hand and lead me to the person. “*Halika, i-shoushoukai kita.*” (“Come, I will introduce you.”)<sup>8</sup>, she would say.

Hereon, I began to take note of how important it was to know somebody in getting into the Filipino community in Urban Kansai. It is to no surprise that she is described as “mother *ng mga* mother” (“mother of all mothers”) by her friend because of Ate Cara’s performance of culturally imagined constructs pertaining to motherhood in her ways of dealing with people. The manner which she took me under her wing and shared with me valuable information and time certainly made me feel that intimacy and care.

Some of my JFC informants were young children and were always with their mothers during research. I acquired their permission for me to conduct non-structured interviews with their children. While not the subject of my study during that time, I got to know the mothers more as well. I decided to include Filipino mothers in my research endeavours later. In the end, the research focus has changed once again to this at present wherein Filipinos in Urban Kansai in general and not just JFCs and/or their mothers are examined. The shift was brought about changes on my views regarding human mobility, intimacy and modernity during the course of my research.

After that two-month stint at Kyoto University, I went back to the Philippines while waiting for the Japan Government MEXT scholarship results. Luckily, I was able to get it. On

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<sup>8</sup> The way that the Japanese word *shoukai* is used in *i-shoushoukai* is constructed by Ate Cara through borrowing the Japanese word into Filipino grammar. Instances such as these are common in conversations with Filipinos in Urban Kansai where Japanese loan words are used instead of words in Filipino (or other Philippine languages and English). This was commonly observed even when the medium of conversation is Filipino.

September 25, 2015, I moved to Osaka to pursue my doctoral degree at Osaka University. The proximity of Osaka to Kyoto made it easy for me to continue being in touch with my previous informants who introduced me to “community organizations” based in Osaka.

During a singing competition called *Utawit* in Kyoto on September 27, 2015, Ate Cara introduced me to Atty. Jay who was quite well placed with people from the Philippine Consulate General in Osaka (PCG Osaka). He also serves as a chairperson of a council that coordinates Filipino organizations in Urban Kansai. Atty. Jay frequently invited me to gatherings and gave information about activities including the more “exclusive”<sup>9</sup> ones held at the PCG Osaka. From then on, I became acquainted with more organizers and met more Filipinos in Urban Kansai who act as my informants aside from being friends with. I was able to join more activities in both Kyoto and Osaka through them.

I met other Filipinos who do not join organizations of whose narratives were very valuable as they shed light on those who opt not join “community organizations” through my growing number of contacts. I have become aware of the presence of ruptures, such as disconnections and other non-harmonious aspects, and these have shaped the way I think of intimacy. Through the possibility of extending social networks as provided by digital technology, I am able to be in frequent contact with my informants through SNS, particularly on Facebook.

I became personally pleased with what I thought of was quite a relatively easy manner of establishing contacts with Filipinos in Urban Kansai as these fit my research objectives, particularly regarding my choice of approach for this study. I employed qualitative methods

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<sup>9</sup> These “exclusive” events can only be attended by those who were invited by someone connected to the office. The names of attendees are counterchecked on a printed sheet of paper during the registration period at the entrance of the venue before the event starts. The participants handwrite their signature on a space allotted in the same column as their names to indicate attendance.

in answering this dissertation's main objective. This was mainly conducted by doing participant observation and non-structured interviews. In total, I have been able to conduct interviews with 26 individuals whose age ranges from 8 to 70 years old. Five of these are JFC informants from the Philippines who regularly come to Japan as part of a theatre group that does performances in Urban Kansai until 2019. Overall, the occupations of my informants vary from being students, teachers, caregivers, nurses, engineers, trainees, businesspersons and office workers. A few also work in different kinds of jobs to make ends meet. From those who I have interviewed, five are key informants whose gender are a mix of both male and female individuals. Their profiles are summarized below. All personal names have been changed to pseudonyms for ethical considerations. This is applicable to personal names starting from the Introduction. Blanks in ages indicate that they were not revealed to me. Ages reflect the informant's age at the time of writing and not at the time it was disclosed to me.

Name	Age (2019)	Sex	Place of Residence	Occupation
Akiko	8	Female	Kyoto	Student
Kanako	11	Female	Kyoto	Student
Ate Cara		Female	Kyoto	Various
Atty. Jay		Male	Nara	Lawyer
Demi	47	Female	Osaka	Businesswoman
Haruka	13	Female	Kyoto	Student
Karla		Female	Osaka	<i>Izakaya</i> owner
Ate Sara	55	Female	Osaka	English Teacher
Meg	42	Female	Osaka	Office worker
Risa	42	Female	Osaka	Hotel staff/Caregiver/Businesswoman
Drew	30	Male	Kyoto	Boxer
Jeri	30	Female	Kyoto	Nurse
Harry	27	Male	Kyoto	Engineer
Ate Laisa	60	Female	Kyoto	Office worker
Abby	40	Female	Kyoto	Housewife
Nene	21	Female	Osaka	Student
Pamela	28	Female	Kyoto	Nurse
Sister Honey		Female	Kyoto	Religious worker
Ate Irene	41	Female	Kyoto	Caregiver
Ate Cindy	42	Female	Kyoto	Caregiver
Leni	15	Female	Manila	Student
Elma	18	Female	Laguna	Student
Onil	18	Male	Quezon City	Student
Keith	10	Male	Cavite	Student
Nobu	16	Male	Pasay City	Student
Johnny	32	Male	Kyoto	Boxer

Table 6. Profile of Informants

My informants are generally easy to be warm with and they freely share information about themselves. As researchers, we are always told to be careful that narratives should be taken with a grain of salt. However, we are also reminded by Anderson that imagining them does not mean that they are less powerful; they are not simply false any more than any other performance of creativity. Interviews were non-structured and very casual. My informants know that I was doing research because I asked for their consent. I identified myself at the point of introduction that I was a student doing research on this particular topic. The duration of interviews vary but were generally an hour at the very least. The time I spent in the activities depended on the length of the event which was generally one and a half at the minimum. The event could actually last for hours and hours depending on the flow of happenings which are usually spontaneously decided.

## **2.4. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are important due to the inherent power relations between the researcher/analyst and the participants in a project. I strictly followed the following:

### **1. Informed consent**

All of the interviews were held only after informed consent was obtained from the participant. Asking and obtaining consent were in verbal form because the informants were not comfortable in signing documents. Informants were informed about (a) the purpose of the research, expected duration, procedures and the implications of their involvement; (b) their right to decline to participate and to withdraw from the research once participation has begun; (b) the foreseeable consequences of declining or withdrawing; (d) reasonably foreseeable factors that may be expected to influence their willingness to participate such as potential risks, discomfort, or adverse effects; (e) any prospective research benefits; (f) limits



of confidentiality; (g) incentives for participation; and (h) whom to contact for questions about the study.

## 2. Privacy

I always asked for permission to use audio or video recorders and cameras during the duration of the interviews and in the documentation of activities. All images are the author's own except otherwise stated.

## 3. Confidentiality

All of the informant's names and photographs are used or reported with the informant's consent.

## 4. Benefits and reciprocity

Participants were compensated for the time contributed to the research. This compensation was not to influence the participants' decision on their participation on the research or his/her answers during the in-depth interviews.

### **CHAPTER 3: IDENTIFYING AND EXAMINING REFLEXIVITY IN THE CONDITIONS OF FILIPINOS IN URBAN KANSAI**

In Chapters 2.1. and 2.2., I presented about traditional habits and customs and highlight changes that have occurred in them. I related this to when a person makes choices as part of managing one's way of life during everyday scenarios. I argue that migration is interconnected to the manner that Filipinos in Urban Kansai live their daily lives. Part of the discussion in the previous chapter is an introduction of reflexivity. Chapter 3 tackles reflexivity and how life is lived in order to answer the preliminary research question of this dissertation which is to identify conditions of reflexivity and the way that Filipinos in Urban Kansai perceive and manage their lives. In order to answer the question, first, I reiterate and clarify the definition of reflexivity; second, I evaluate if conditions of Filipinos in Urban Kansai show reflexivity; and then, if there are, I describe examples wherein Filipinos in Urban Kansai exhibit reflexivity. After which, I relate reflexivity to migration as a life process through suggesting that Filipino migrants manage and understand life through exhibitions of boundary creating, crossing and maintaining in their everyday.

I narrate on three activities that show how boundaries are opening and that spaces are opening for this undertaking. The first two are events that were organized and the third is a spontaneous activity of hanging-out (*tambay*). There are common aspects shared in these three activities. The examples seem being made at the spur of the moment, but Filipinos in Urban Kansai show some sort of awareness and control to them. Also, Filipinos in Urban Kansai demonstrate getting to know a growing number of people, but there are also instances when they decide not to engage as much. These aspects seem to be suggestive of reflexivity

in that the elements of choice, self-observation and “continuous reconstruction” of self are made.

I reiterate the definition of reflexivity based on what has been presented in the previous chapters and to clarify some points about it. As mentioned in the Introduction and Chapter 2, being reflexive means that people have the capacity to be aware of the external and structural forces that shape their actions. It is believed that individuals are not only shaped by these external and structural forces, but they are also able to alter these and their situation. The awareness to various factors open possibilities for development. Reflexivity occurs as a never-ending process and is pervasive. In explaining about reflexivity in terms of “reflexivity of accounts” (or spoken data), according to Atkinson (2017: 81), “social actors’ accounts and narratives are shaped and ... these in turn shape the events that they report, or the personal feelings they express.”

Reflexive awareness is said to be a basic feature of human action that has become much prevalent in our modern times. The context of migration in our current times offer migrants with a wide array of options and possibilities. These diversity of options and possibilities are tied to structures that are described as both enabling and constraining. Starting from the next section, I present the results of this study that are based on data gathered from Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I observe Filipinos in Urban Kansai as being able to reflect upon their and other peoples’ actions and behaviour. The practice of having and utilizing social networks among the Filipinos of Urban Kansai is not only prevalent in present-day migration. However, there seem to be changes and revisions in the different modes available in creating intimacies, such as using short, daily conversations with one another, and in the specifics in the medium of *libre*, gifting and *utang na loob*. Social relationships are also said to be created through remittances, *balikbayan* boxes, and chats online. These results

show how the aspects of migration, which are boundary creation, crossing, and maintaining, are part of the everyday living process of Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

### **3.1. Reflecting Upon and Acting on Their and Other Peoples' Actions and Behaviour**

As mentioned in Chapter 1 when I previewed about Filipinos in Urban Kansai, many of them spend their “free time” in the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community. Free time is generally defined as time away from one’s work (occupation) and when one is “having fun.” Turner (1987: 25) elucidates this as a phase of marginality or liminality, wherein activities are “performed in privileged spaces and times set off from the periods and areas reserved for work, food and sleep. However, there is some difficulty of fitting the definition to the cases of Filipino migrants because for them, work and play intersect. As also presented in that chapter, there are a variety of activities that serve as options to choose from for them to participate in Urban Kansai. As will be shown later, various activities result to plural contexts and these have multiple modes that enable the creation of new acquaintances. Filipinos in Urban Kansai meet in many different occasions and their involvement in them are voluntary. In the earlier chapters, I have briefly mentioned on instances where Filipinos in Urban Kansai make their own choices. These are in examples of opting not to be members of “community organizations,” picking a particular season to interact with compatriots (*kababayans*), deciding when to contact family and kin in the Philippines, utilising the time for commercial, spiritual and social activities, and the goings-on of daily living with other Filipinos and locals in the same rundown area of Urban Kansai.

According to Giddens, making personal choices mean that given social conditions and institutions, such as kinship structures, social duty and traditional obligation, are becoming weaker and that there is a possibility that new type of intimacies are created aside from the

traditional types brought about by kinship structures, social duty and traditional obligations. I examine later if this pronouncement of Giddens is applicable to Filipinos in Urban Kansai and if there are points of departure to it.

I now move to describe the activities mentioned earlier in order to examine if reflexivity is present among Filipinos in Urban Kansai and then, later, this would also be used to examine the conditions on how they live life. As mentioned earlier, the three activities that I narrate in this section show common characteristics of seemingly being made at the spur of the moment; yet, Filipinos in Urban Kansai show some sort of awareness and control to them. Also, Filipinos in Urban Kansai demonstrate getting to know a growing number of people, but there are also instances when they decide not to engage as much.

First, I describe dance performances in a Philippine cultural activity called *Pinoy Fiesta*, second I narrate dance performances in a symposium, and third, I describe a spur-of-the-moment hanging-out (*tambay*) of a group of Filipinos in Kyoto. Aside from identifying points that demonstrate variety, I also want to draw attention to the accessibility of venue, convenience of travel and promotion of cultural diversity. This is to provide as a backdrop to their activities. These points imply that the activities are being held in a setting with an ease of transport and that places are easily reachable. The first two activities seem to be in response to the promotion of *tabunka kyosei* policies by the Japan government which are policies that are created in response to growing number of foreign migrant residents and awareness of their presence. The policies are relatively recent attempts to address this particular segment of Japan's population. In the examples given, I suggest that *tabunka kyosei* activities are migrant-led through migrant involvement.

In the first part of this section, I refer to examples that illustrate reflexivity in its more immediate sense as observed in making decisions that pertain to movement and behaviour.

It is important to point out that while immediacy is indeed part of reflexivity, reflexivity is more than a quick, automatic or habitual response to some stimulus. That of reflexivity has its hand in understanding one's self or self-improvement is also part of the description and will be tackled in later discussions in this section.

The event called *Pinoy Fiesta* (Philippine Festival) was jointly organized by two organizations. One is a local Filipino community organization based in a city in Osaka Prefecture, and the other is a larger council of organizations of Filipinos in the Kansai Region. The event occurred in May and coincided with when the *Santacruzán*<sup>10</sup>, a Catholic Filipino religious festivity, is held in the Philippines. The *Pinoy Fiesta* event was held in a room at multicultural center in a city in Osaka Prefecture. The building where the venue was held is connected to a train station of the Hankyu line. This makes the event venue accessible to participants coming from Osaka, Kyoto and Hyogo in the Kansai Region as these prefectures are served by the Hankyu train network. Train transfers from other train companies make the trip to the venue quite smooth and convenient. Few Filipinos in Urban Kansai bring their own cars and only do they bring along items that are bulky and difficult to hand carry. Going by train is the most common way for Filipinos in Urban Kansai to go to event venues. Riding trains is a very convenient way to go around in Japan. Trains in Japan are known to be on time, fast and cover many areas. Riding bikes and walking from one's house to the venue are also possible options especially if the distance is deemed reasonable by a person.

I easily found the multicultural center and the room where the *Pinoy Fiesta* was held. Triangle cut banners (*banderitas*) in multiple colors were hung on the ceiling and hand held

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<sup>10</sup> *Santacruzán*'s main highlight is the procession. Aside from being celebrated by Filipinos in the Philippines during May, it has also been reported to be celebrated by Filipinos living in various parts of the world. Saint-Blancat and Cancellieri's (2014) study on *Santacruzán* in Padua, Italy shows how the Italian setting affects the relationship between the sacred and the secular and between majority and minority religions in the urban conditions.

fans (*abaniko*) made of palm leaves (*anahaw*) were fixed on the room's walls. One corner of the room showcased popular Filipino childhood games such as *jackstone* and *sungka*. *Sungka* is a turn-based board game where the player who gets the most number of shells win. Pictures of famous Philippine landmarks, icons and images were plastered on another part of the wall. Each of these had their own descriptions written in English and not in Filipino or Japanese. Filipino party food staples such as deep fried spring rolls (*lumpia*), steamed rice, rice cakes (*bibingka*), fried chicken, dried fish (*tuyo*), boiled eggs, bread rolls (*pan de sal*), mixed nuts and drinks were prepared. The drinks served were in plastic PET bottles of green tea, barley tea, soda and water. Few participants brought home-cooked Filipino dishes, some bought cakes and pastries from Goldilocks (a popular Filipino bakery chain), while some brought supermarket-bought Japanese food such as *sushi*, boneless deep fried chicken (chicken *karaage*) and grilled eel (*unagi*). The trimmings and food served seemed to try to recreate the festive atmosphere of festivals in the Philippines. The usage of English instead of Filipino or Japanese may be aligned with *tabunka kyosei* promotion or also be for convenience by using a language thought to be common to the participants. I return and keep these observations in mind for discussion later in this section. I take note of how these descriptions could be indicative of migration as part of the everyday living process which is the theme in the next section. In the meantime, I continue with the narration of the dance performances.

There were five dance performances during the *Pinoy Fiesta* event. They were all danced in between the games played in the event except for one which became a spontaneous dance activity for all participants at the end of the festival. One of the dances was performed solo, another was performed by a mother-son pair and the rest were by groups of individuals who share similarities of life experiences as single mothers in Urban Kansai and a professional dance troupe comprised of Filipino women.

Enough time for practicing performances before events is a must for performances to have less errors at the time of presentation. However, in the case of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, practicing as a whole group may be difficult due to differences of schedules of the members. The lack of preparation is not a hindrance for Filipinos in Urban Kansai and they rarely refuse when asked to give performances such as singing and dancing. Impromptu performances are common not only during small gatherings but also during major events. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are more than happy to perform even when some errors occur. As the Filipinos often say, “the show must go on.”

A woman around her mid-40s who I know from my early research work in Kyoto but lives in North Osaka was part of a group who performed in *Pinoy Fiesta*. They named their group “Victorious Single Moms<sup>11</sup>.” Their group was formed specifically for the festival and is not a permanent dance group. Their group is made up of friends who knew each other through personal circumstances and some are members of the same organization. The woman who I spoke to claimed that they were doing their dances unsynchronized, she used the word *bara bara*<sup>12</sup> (バラバラ) in describing this. She shared that they have been practicing for quite some time, but admitted that the chances when they could all practice together were more infrequent due to the differences of free schedules of the members.

My initial impression to her saying this was in order to humble one’s self and as a forewarning to when mistakes occur. I will go back to this later as there seems to be more to this narration than what is seen at the surface level. I wonder to what extent is self-awareness

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<sup>11</sup> According to the International Organization for Migration Japan (in De Dios 2014), 84% of JFCs live only with their mothers. Major of these households are partly or fully dependent on government welfare.

<sup>12</sup> *Bara bara* is commonly used to describe situations where “anything goes” by Filipinos in the Philippines. While the word is a Japanese mimetic word, Filipinos use it with slight difference from the Japanese meaning which is mainly used a description of the state of being scattered or not in order.



generated when such statements are uttered and if from saying so she becomes more conscious of herself which results to a better performance. These also point to instances of creation, crossing and maintenance of boundaries, which are descriptions frequently attributed to migration. To return to my description of the event, I observed that eventually and despite of what I was told of, their group was able to perform satisfactorily and the audience visibly enjoyed.

During performances that catch the interests of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, Filipinos are seen to move their heads and clap their hands to the music. Some emulate the dance steps while sitting on their chairs. The “Victorious Single Moms” had this similar reception from their audience which led to one of their dances to be performed again. The second time was with most of the festival participants (including few Japanese guests) got out of their chairs to occupy the center of the room. No coercion was needed for them to dance because many willingly and happily volunteered themselves. The group members positioned themselves in front while the dance volunteers placed themselves on a location where they are able to see and follow the dance steps. Everybody was with wide smiles and glanced to the next person to them while dancing to the song “*Dahil Sayo*” by Iñigo Pascual, a Filipino celebrity in the Philippines. As soon as the music ended, most participants clapped their hands in euphoria, and the dance volunteers went back to their seats.

Philippine dances are performed only on certain occasions such as cultural festivals. They are not performed on one’s own; rather, are usually for shows with corresponding audiences. Many Filipinos learn the basic steps from lessons during one’s elementary or high school years in the Philippines, but few take on to pursue Philippine Dance as a hobby or for work in adulthood. This is indicative that its continuance later on in a person’s life is as a

matter of choice. The occasional experience with Philippine dances may also be a reason why the dances generate momentary interest even among Filipinos.

The dance performance of a professional group in *Pinoy Fiesta* was enjoyed by the festival participants. The group performed a dance medley of various Filipino folk dances like *carinosa* and *tinikling*<sup>13</sup>. *Tinikling* a form of Filipino folk dance which utilizes bamboos. The *tinikling* dance gathered interest from the audience. The festival participants looked awestruck by the graceful manner of dancing and the ease that the dancers made it seem to avoid their feet from being caught when the bamboo poles are struck together.



Pic. 1. *Tinikling*

After their performance, the members of the group asked the audience who wanted to try and dance *tinikling*. A handful from the audience stood up and volunteered themselves. Among those who tried dancing *tinikling* were a male teenager who initially impressed me to be timid, a female Japanese teenager who was brought to the event by a Filipino friend and a toddler.

The dance volunteers were guided by the dancer troupe to get into the tempo made by the beat of the bamboo poles. The pace started slow so as not to overwhelm the first

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<sup>13</sup> The *Tinikling* folk dance involves two people beating and sliding long bamboo poles on the ground and on each other. This is done in tandem with one or two dancers who step over and in between the bamboo poles while dancing. A more difficult level involves bringing two more bamboo poles in the dance.

timers. Those who did not volunteer themselves interestingly watched the spectacle. Many beamed when a female toddler ran from the arms of her mother to join the dancing. I interpreted that the toddler's participation in the dance was not thought of as a disturbance and was welcomed. I say this because her mother did not get her nor was she given back and the toddler was left to play and walk across the bamboo poles in emulation of the dancers.

From what I have noticed during my field observations, Filipinos in Urban Kansai rarely hesitate when asked to perform dances or songs in front of a crowd. Similar voluntary forms of participation are also observed when they hang-out with each other.

Extended time for *tambay* is a feature in many gatherings of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Spontaneous collective events are unplanned and made at the spur-of-the-moment. Spontaneous collective events can be extensions from organized collective events and religious activities or from one's dwelling. Spending time in groups more than the time expected is appreciated among Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The aspect of choice seems to suggest being part of the community beyond duties that are prescribed as a member of a "community organization" or any such kind of formal group. It connotes having sense of community by not being haughty (*mapagmataas*) through involving themselves in the activities of their community. It seems that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are aware of their actions and they do so by being able to make decisions for themselves. This suggests that there seems to be no element of coercion in doing what they do, who they want be with and at what particular time to interact.

Spontaneous activities generally have a relaxed atmosphere. Spontaneous activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are characterized by two or more of the following: sexual banters, loudness of voice, singing and dancing, eating, cigarette smoking and drinking of alcohol. Music, cigarettes, food and alcohol are shared with each other in these gatherings. For

example, those who smoke cigarettes do so in front of each other, even among those who do not smoke. Permission to smoke are never asked by the older women in their group. Cigarettes are just suddenly lighted. After an elder woman lights her stick of cigarette, cigarettes are offered to the rest by handing out the box to the group. I have not seen a young adult member start ahead to smoke when their older female leaders are around. Some young adult members consider it rude to refuse offers of cigarettes or alcohol. Some get a cigarette stick to light, but afterwards keep it on the ash tray burning by itself. No one really keeps an eye on one's cigarette smoking unlike the monitoring observed in alcohol drinking. A stick of cigarette can also be shared if one just wants to have a puff or two to show fellowship (*pakikisama*).

Filipinos in Urban Kansai extend the period when they are together in celebration of an event's completion. In the case of *Utawit* singing contest, which is a large event participated and attended by different groups from various places of Kansai, a huge group of over 200 people in one after-event gathering is not feasible after the main event, which is the singing contest. The number of attendees is too large to be accommodated in another venue and renting one entails additional financial cost. Furthermore, Filipinos in Urban Kansai also prefer to be with one's set of peer group (*barkada*) or organization when they *tambay*. This could be because they are able to do their after-event gatherings as they wish and according to interests. They can opt for dinner with their family in a restaurant, go to karaoke, drink in an *izakaya*, bar, club, or to just *tambay* at home. These after-event gatherings are not limited to contest winners and contestants. For those whose task in events are in organizing them, their after-event gatherings are made with their organization. This is not entirely exclusive to the organizers because friends and acquaintances are also invited to *tambay* with them if they do not have other plans.

In its simplest sense, we are able to see reflexivity in the above examples by Filipinos in Urban Kansai when they make immediate responses. These somewhat portray as if being “caught in the flow of the situation.” However, what I have been pondering is to what extent are Filipinos in Urban Kansai actually aware of their own actions in these types of situation. When they choose to voluntarily perform, to go on performing even if not part of the program of events, to choose to accept sudden invitations to *tambay*, to accept offers of alcohol and cigarettes all imply that even in spontaneous instances, it seems that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to make their own choices and exhibit having awareness of their and other’s actions. Whether these convincingly indicate “continuous reconstruction” or not does not seem to be clear in the above narratives, hence, I continue to describe more goings-on in the activities and cite from Facebook posts to tackle this matter further. “Continuous reconstruction” is the part of reflexivity where individuals are able to alter given social situations and institutions in a never-ending way.

The symposium about Filipinos in Kansai mentioned above wherein an impromptu collective performance was made is an event that is yearly held until 2019<sup>14</sup>. It was the third time when the symposium was held in 2019. The symposium used to be held every March at a convention center in Osaka. The hall where the symposium was held has a capacity to accommodate 200 people and the space is suitable to hold symposiums such of this kind. It has a stage and built in seats that are elevated towards the back. This layout enable audiences who are seating at the back to see the stage clearly. From its inception in 2017, the symposium’s theme revolved around the topic of “Reflecting on the Lives of Filipinos in Kansai.” The symposium has three to four Filipinos as panel speakers every year who talk

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<sup>14</sup> Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all planned activities of organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai have been cancelled in 2020 including this event.

about their experiences. The experiences that are mostly talked about by the speakers are on hardships that they faced in Japan and how they were overcome.

A printed program handed at the reception area when I attended in 2018 shows the symposium to be subdivided into seven parts. The program commences with a message from the current Consul General of the PCG Osaka. The second part of the event is a presentation of Philippine-Kansai Relations by the main organizer, the Philippine Community Coordinating Council (PCCC) a coordinating council of organizations in Kansai. Past and present projects that the organization are doing were presented as part of the event in order to facilitate the catchphrase they call "*ugnayan*." The activities of reaching out to other nationalities, specifically Japanese were reported.

What is this so-called *ugnayan*? The word *ugnayan* was not overtly used at the time of formation of community organizations of Filipinos in Kansai to describe their goals and mission/vision. This trend of using the term *ugnayan* emerged only quite recently. *Ugnayan* began to be used to describe the relationship of people in Kansai. This was instigated by the coordinating council in Kansai following the similar usage to how the Commission of Filipinos Overseas (CFO), a Philippine government agency, uses it, which is that to imply about a positive quality of relationships. The coordinating council in Kansai was formed when it saw the need for different Filipino organizations to get together. They aspire for creating social relationships not just among Filipinos having similar interests and backgrounds and/or those living near each other in Kansai, but with the Japanese, as well. They thought that *ugnayan* enable social contacts to be much wider and the quality of intimacies to be better. They try to accomplish this through communicating with other people and groups, and through joining activities of other Filipino communities and church groups in various parts of Kansai. This is through holding various events where individuals and groups can participate in. These events

are held not only in and among Filipinos in Japan, but also in the Philippines. The undertaking of reaching out to Japanese and other ethnic groups in Urban Kansai are part of the coordinating council's objectives.

Another objective that the coordinating council often declares is to “challenge and change the clichéd image of Filipinos in Japan.” What this image is about is never mentioned to me directly in my personal conversations with the organizers, official statements, and the symposium itself. This left me thinking on why so and if such omission is part of the objective for changing the image that they allude to. This “image” can be pictured through various studies, such as in Nobue Suzuki's (2002: 176) “Women Imagined, Women Imaging: Re/presentations of Filipinas in Japan since the 1980s” where she writes that Filipinos in Japan, specifically Filipino women, used to be strongly associated as night work entertainers and opportunistic brides. It can be understood from the association and description that the stereotyped representation of a Filipino woman in Japan is on the unpalatable and negative sense. Obviously, images would not be a pressing concern that need to be “challenged and changed” if they were good to begin with. The strategies used by the Philippine Community Coordinating Council in order to “challenge and change the clichéd image of Filipinos in Japan” are the following activities that they choose to do in the symposium. I cite directly from a report about their activities that the council distributed online:

“The presentation of diverse existence of the Filipinos in Kansai in the first two *Kapighans* consisted of: 1. Short video presentations on the historical links (from 16th century till 20th century) between the Philippines and Kansai, 2. Powerpoint presentation on the activities of the Filipino communities and individuals, 3. Short video presentation on the activities of the PCCC, 4.

Powerpoint presentation on the different ways by which Japanese individuals, groups and institutions have established *ugnayan* (relationship) with the Filipinos in Kansai and in the Philippines. (PCCC 2019: 10)”

From the above, we can understand how the organization attempts to “counter the stereotyped image of Filipinos in Kansai” and this is mainly through highlighting diversity of Filipinos in Kansai in events and activities that they organize. The council claims that the appearance of diversity of Filipinos in Kansai enables better understanding of Filipinos in Kansai to the Japanese. They aspire that the symposium would be a venue for exchanges of opinions and ideas between Japanese and Filipinos, especially those that concern the various problems that foreigners in Japan face. Starting from when the symposium began in 2017, the panel speakers that the organization picked to give talks have a composition of holding a variety of occupations, such as a university student, engineer, nurse, mother of two daughters in movie and modelling industries in Japan, medical doctor and university professors. Joining these roster are two JFCs who work for an NGO and labor union. This is an example of the event organizers’ attempt to show diversity of Filipinos in Kansai and is consistent with their group objectives as mentioned above. What could be understood from these are that images of diversity of Filipinos in Kansai are used as a means to promote the slogan of *ugnayan*.

Interestingly, despite the big population size of Filipinos entrants who came to Japan as entertainers<sup>15</sup> during the 1980s, there is an absence of narratives of former night entertainment workers among the symposium panel speakers. As I thought, the absence could be in line with the aforementioned objective of changing the stereotyped image of

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<sup>15</sup> According to Akashi (2018: 10), “the number of entrants who held ‘entertainment’ status in 1991 was 89,572; of these, 56,851 were Filipinos. Excluding 1995 and 1996, the trend in which Filipinos made up over half of the foreign entertainers working in Japan continued until 2005.”



Filipinos in Kansai. Atty. Jay, the council head, later on confirmed this to me and explained that through presenting Filipinos in Japan are have various backgrounds, Filipinos in Kansai will feel better about themselves and will not be ashamed of being Filipino.

After the symposium has ended, the gathering continued to a post-event dinner at a popular Italian restaurant chain near the venue. Herein, a group of about 30 Filipinos and handful of Japanese who were all still at the height of being ecstatic from the event, suddenly began to passionately chant: “*ugnayan, ugnayan!*” upon the instigation of Atty. Jay. As expected, there were looks of alarm and strange glances directed towards the group’s tables from the other restaurant patrons. Other restaurant patrons immediately gave side looks with eyebrows furrowed at the group. It seemed that such bold and loud pronouncements do not commonly happen in Urban Kansai, much less in a family restaurant. Atty. Jay quickly put his pointing finger across his lips and signalled the group to quiet down upon seeing that their group seemed to have caused a disturbance to other patrons of the restaurant. This directive of quieting down was promptly followed by everybody.

The above narratives on what commenced in the symposium and also the occurrences that happened in the restaurant may be a good example to illustrate the aspect called “continuous reconstruction in reflexivity,” specifically which pertains to creating and maintaining “images.” I also relate this later to a Filipino-migrant oriented newspaper in Japan’s choice of what narratives to publish about Filipinos living in Japan. This and what I have observed in the symposium seems to point to reflexivity in that there is constant remaking of what it means to be Filipino. Also, getting to know many people seem indicative of “continuous reconstruction in reflexivity” through creation of new intimacies by Filipinos in Urban Kansai, such as what is enabled by using the *ugnayan* slogan.

During my fieldwork, I have often observed what could be said to be exhibitions of “hospitality and generosity” to younger organization members by older and more financially capable female organization members. I refer to after-mass gatherings to illustrate getting to know large number of people and the possibilities of creating new intimacies through availability of various modes of doing so. The following narratives describe on how “hospitality and generosity” is performed in a Filipino community in Kyoto.

Most community organization leaders of Filipino in Urban Kansai are led by middle-aged women. Their occupations vary, but many have experiences of working in the night entertainment industry, which Filipinos in Urban Kansai refer to as *pang-gabi*<sup>16</sup>. Other community or organization leaders are caregivers, interpreters and office workers, among other types of work. Most lived in Urban Kansai for more than 10 years. Many of them have families of their own and raise bicultural children, but there are also a handful who are single. There are many cases of single mothers, many among them are divorced from their Japanese husbands or estranged from their former partners.

I refer to my field notes pertaining to series of Facebook conversations between a Filipino male in his 30s who works as a sparring partner for Japanese boxers in training and a middle-aged Filipino woman who is a community leader in Kyoto. The conversations in Facebook are set open for public viewing, which mean that the account holders have set their accounts to be available for access even to those who are not in their list of “friends” in Facebook. I use these as examples to illustrate about hospitality and generosity. I aim to show the modes to which intimacies are created and illustrate these as examples that show that

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<sup>16</sup> *Pang-gabi* refers to the night period of the day. Although generally thought to mean sex work and hostess work, *pang-gabi* work does not necessarily mean these. *Pang-gabi* work include other types of jobs in night establishments, such as singing, dancing, dishwashing, cleaning, cooking, taking orders, cashiering, among others.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai exhibit conditions of reflexivity during migration. Dyadic relations in the form of debt of gratitude or *utang na loob* seem to be exhibited in the social relationships of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. *Utang na loob* can be understood as being dyadic or in a two-way relationship similar to how dyadic is defined and explained in Chapter 1. This means that *utang na loob* as a two-way relationship varies from person to person, however, there is no standard criteria set in the quality of each two-way relationship. For Filipinos, there is a cultural value attached to *utang na loob*.

In Urban Kansai, new members of organizations are regularly invited by organization leaders to attend weekly masses in Catholic or Christian churches. Most of the new members are young adults in their 20s and early 30s. Their relationships seem to become more solidified through after-mass gatherings when the group regularly do activities together, such as to going out for food and drinks. Occasionally, they also have out-of-town activities, such as picnics and swimming. When they are with their organization leaders, new members pay minimally or none which is exemplified as being treated or *nalilibre* in Filipino. It is not expected that the newer and younger members give back to their leaders in the same exact manner such as paying and shouldering the costs incurred by their leaders. What they do is to help out whenever needed. Their relationship seem to exhibit debt of gratitude (*utang na loob*) to being treated and presented gifts. I cite the following example from my field notes when a young male heeded an emergency call for assistance from his organization leader:

*“Sino kaya ang puwede ngayon para samahan kami ng anak ko?”* (“Who is available right now to join me and my daughter?”), a female community leader posted in Facebook one early weekday evening.

I thought that she would not be able to find anybody as it was a weekday and the request seemed to be so urgent. I found out after a few hours that she was able to find someone to assist her when I saw a post from our common Facebook friend, a Filipino male who newly arrived in Kyoto and who regularly goes to the same Catholic Church that the community leader goes. What he posted were pictures of them with the community leader's daughter having dinner in a restaurant together.

*"Oishikatta. Tanoshikatta. Maraming salamat sa dinner!"* ("The food was delicious. I had fun. Thank you so much for the dinner!"), the accompanying caption to the pictures read.

To which the community leader replied, *"Maraming salamat din sa pag-sama kahit biglaan."* ("Thank you for accompanying us as well despite it being so sudden.").

Aside from such gestures of treating newer members when they go out, gifts may also be given to new members during special occasions, such as birthdays and Christmas. The same person who responded to the organization leader's immediate call for shopping assistance posted his wish of receiving a new smartphone on his Facebook account a few weeks before Christmas.

*"Kung meron jan (sic) ang may mabuting loob, kahit ito lang sana sa Pasko."*

("If there is somebody out there with a kind heart, just this would do as a

Christmas gift.”), he posted together with a picture of a Huawei Mate 20 Pro, a smartphone that costs 124,000 ¥ during its initial release in December 2018.

I initially thought that the post was made in jest as the price range of the smartphone was relatively on the higher end. The result to this post was that he was able to receive the same phone he mentioned during their community Christmas Party in Kyoto. I learned of this as he happily posted his gratitude to the unnamed sponsor in his Facebook account.

One of the older members intimated to me that this kind of exhibition of hospitality and generosity in treating and gifting is most especially bestowed to the newer, younger members because they are thought of as new to Urban Kansai and in the process of getting used to life in their new setting. She expounds that younger members are thought of as unstable and still adjusting to life in Japan. I thought that this indicated that older leaders play some sort of roles and perform responsibilities to the to newer younger members through a combination of various modes of achieving intimacy, such as regularly hanging out (*tambay*), gifting and treating (*nalilibre*).

New members gradually become part of the Filipino community and their organization as they become more regular church goers. In doing so, they get to know one another through spending lots of time together. As they become more at ease with each another, they start opening up and sharing personal stories about themselves. They seem to demonstrate concern about each other by supporting each other not only during difficult times, such as sickness or death of a loved one in the Philippines, but also during joyful moments. They do this by talking to each other about personal experiences and revealing about what they think.

They offer and give advice and encouragement to each other. They relate what is told to them by sharing about their own personal experiences. Furthermore, their presence in church and collective activities seem to illustrate to their being part of a community through what could be thought of as creating, crossing and maintaining boundaries in everyday scenarios. They do these voluntarily, in terms of choosing to include one's self with a group and show being aware of their and other peoples' actions and behavior.

The illustration of above activities show being made at the spur of the moment, yet Filipinos in Urban Kansai show some sort of awareness and control to them. They also get to know a growing number of people, but, as I will show in later examples, there are also instances when they decide not to engage as much. The example illustrate that Filipinos in Urban Kansai exhibit conditions of reflexivity. I highlighted aspects of multiple options and making choices, awareness, and continuity as to how they exhibit reflexivity in their everyday life as migrants.

For example, Philippine dances which are thought to be expressions of Philippine tradition are seen to persist up until present in activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Performing Philippine dances is made as an interest or occupational choice and not something that is characteristically known by all Filipinos. Meaning to say, these are "adopted" rather than "handed down," and may be subject to certain factors. The choice of when to perform Philippine dances depends on a person, but this is also enabled and constrained by social conditions like life constraints and fatal moments. In Chapter 1, I mentioned that a big wave of Filipino women arrived in Japan to work as cultural performers during the 1980s. Hence while a dance group member exhibits control over life choices, it is important to also think of that these performances are done through interplays with conditions brought about by the

historical contexts of migration and global economic developments and that migrants are able to strategize from what is available to them.

Another condition is when members of the “Victorious Single Moms” dance group choose the times on when to engage with each other. They make do with what is available. On another level of understanding reflexivity is choosing and awareness. Choosing when to interact is illustrative of awareness. Awareness of the self opens potentials of getting better. Giddens elaborates that being aware makes an individual ponder on what he/she wants for himself/herself and this is when self-development starts. He adds that an individual uses self-awareness in order to effectively plan ahead. Potential changes start from “heightened awareness of thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations” (Giddens 1991: 71). A crucial aspect that is interconnected with awareness that we should take extra care not to overlook is that of regularity or continuity.

As mentioned earlier, reflexivity is not only limited to being a quick, automatic or habitual response, but necessitates continuity. Giddens argues that the individual is involved in the active process of shaping social interaction. I have observed continuity in Filipinos in Urban Kansai with the way that “images” of Filipinos in Japan are created and recreated, crossed and maintained, such as in the promotion of *ugnayan*, and creation of new intimacies. In the symposium mentioned above, alternative or new representations of Filipinos in Japan are explicitly being promoted through the slogan of *ugnayan*. In Duaqui’s (2014: 37) study, “Successful Portrayals of Filipina Migrants in a Filipino Newspaper in Japan,” *Jeepney Press*, a migrant oriented newspaper circulated in Tokyo and “few key cities” in Japan, is also shown to do the same when they publish life stories that center on “agency and empowerment” of Filipino women “amidst their marginal position in Japan.” These examples are indicative of continuously reconstructing the phenomenon they describe. What I have also observed as

immediate quieting down of the group in a family restaurant after they were incited to chant “*ugnayan, ugnayan!*” is a testament to continuous reconstruction of what Filipino ideals are. The promotion of *ugnayan* among Filipinos, locals and other nationalities is, therefore, a continuous process, that is interrelated to the creation of new intimacies.

As opposed to what Giddens supposes that external conditions, such as kinship structures, social duty and traditional obligation, are becoming weaker, in Urban Kansai, tradition and external factors still continue to persist. This could be seen in the current promotion of *tabunka kyosei* and in maintaining social duty and traditional obligation. To answer this dilemma, is to look at migration as a life process. When looking at migration as way of how to live, it is necessary to do while thinking of it in the current context of modernity. Modernity has changed the basic premises on how we understand society and culture, hence a renewed way of addressing life’s new complexities is necessary. According to Giddens, in conditions of high modernity, we have no choice but to choose. How in the cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai is migration part of their everyday living process? To what extent are individuals aware of their and other peoples’ actions and behavior? What are the strategies that Filipinos in Urban Kansai employ in their daily lives? I answer these questions and discuss these as part of the migrants’ way of managing and perceiving their lives in Chapter 4; but before these, I examine how migration plays a part in how migrants’ lives are lived through their examples of reflexivity and then based on my field observations and field notes, I identify examples where migration is part of the way of creating and understanding lifestyle.

### **3.2. Boundary Creating, Crossing, and Maintaining in the Everyday**

I have presented examples to show that conditions to which Filipinos in Urban Kansai are reflexive in the recently concluded section. In order to move forward in our discussion, I



now present examples of where we are able to identify migration as a lifestyle in the cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I use the definition of lifestyle that I gave earlier, which is as a perception for life and process to live and discuss how we are able to determine how migration is connected to it. The key descriptions that I look at in the examples that I give are on creating, crossing, and maintaining boundaries in the everyday of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Part of these key descriptions are aspects of exclusion and inclusion.

I connect the key descriptions to Giddens' elucidation about living life. I reflect on the points that he raises in order to identify this in the context of migration. The points he mention center on the availability of a variety of choices, differentiation between the public and private domains, contextual nature of once-assured beliefs, prevalence of mediated experience, and transformation of intimacy. It is important to keep in mind that decisions and actions of actors are made under conditions of material constraint when pertaining to the life process as there are dangers of this aspect being overlooked especially with much of the emphasis given on options and choices. This means that while it must be true that we live in a period that offers wide variety of options than before, Giddens (1991: 86) explains that "not all choices are open to anyone, or people take all decisions about options in *full* realization of the range of the range of feasible alternatives" (*italics mine*). I suppose that this means that there is no choice but to choose; but at the same time, the ways of choosing may vary from individual to individual based on the context of one's social situation including its concomitant deprivations.

In case examples of Filipinos in Urban Kansai that have been presented in the previous section, I have noted of the changes that occur in the discourse in the being of Filipino and in the modes in creating new intimacies. That of tradition and external constraints, such as rules and obligations, emerged in the abovementioned examples, such as what was seen in the

promotion of *ugnayan* as a means of presentation on what it means to be Filipino in Urban Kansai to other groups and in the inclusion of newly arrived Filipinos into the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community through regularly spending time with each other.

These occurrences seem to be a dilemma to Giddens' ideas because he states that "lifestyle is not a term which has much applicability to traditional cultures" (1991: 81). How can the cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai then be explained? Giddens makes clear that it does not mean that tradition is wholly inexistent in modernity; in fact, he argues that traditions continue but these are merely choices among a wide range of options. This in itself makes it different from conditions of the past or among those where traditional cultures and external constraints are dominant. If we think of the cases in terms of how migration is part of the everyday, the case of Filipinos in Urban Kansai might be understood better. This means that for the Filipino in Urban Kansai cases to be understood in the aspect of migration, the process of how their way of life is made may be considered by connecting these to creating, crossing, and maintaining of boundaries. To illustrate an example, the tradition that persists in the current context can be looked at as a crossing of boundaries. The crossing of boundary which is generally how the migration act is commonly described may be used understand the criteria about life process that Giddens enumerates.

Another criteria about how life is created and understood to which Giddens enumerates is "segmentation" or the differentiation between the public and private domains. We may be able to see features of segmentation in the example where performing Philippine dance is as part of work or occupation. To be able to understand this in the process of living is to look at performing Philippine dance in relation to availability of other potential work. It is said that the choice of a particular segment, such as type of work, is just one of the many habits that an individual establishes in one's everyday life. As suggested earlier, what is

available in a setting and if a person is able to gain access to them are important factors to consider. While not being able to see full alternatives in its entirety, there is said to be some sort of exhibition of a more or less deliberate rejection of widely circulated types of behaviour or representation.

A hypothetical example on segmentation and boundary crossing in a literal and a metaphorical sense is the following commonly heard narratives of Filipino migrants to Japan: for example, a Filipino woman may decide to ignore the warnings heard about going to Japan for work. These warnings can be picked from a variety of ways: from media (for example, television, radio, newspaper, and social media) that report news stories about Filipino women being duped by brokers by letting them work for lower wages than what was promised or as sex workers instead of the initial job offered, general reception of people in the Philippines that a Filipino woman working in Japan is an “entertainer” (in its broad sense of meaning), expectation of fulfilment of traditional gender roles and obligations, or advocacy groups who push on with their agenda by highlighting on exploitations and abuses experienced by Filipino workers. Faced with these, the Filipino woman might decide to stick with her decision to move to Japan. She may, then, take on alternative options to be able to distinguish herself from other Filipinos by taking on different lifestyle patterns such as dressing differently, avoiding smoking, speaking English, or choosing a certain group to belong to.

This hypothetical example does not only show elements of boundary crossing, but also exemplifies boundary creating as a strategy of living life in Urban Kansai and as a way to achieve differentiation from other Filipinos. In this case, how life is managed and comprehended may be a strategy to deliberately exclude one’s self from dominant images through chosen actions and behaviour.

In addition, differentiation between the public and private domains or segmentation becomes possible because of the existence of plural contexts of actions. What I observe among Filipinos in Urban Kansai is that they align themselves with multiple memberships. Hence, boundary creating and crossing could also involve inclusion. Importantly, what this means is that lifestyle choices and activities of an individual may have distinctive forms of chosen behaviour. For example, a Filipino woman may work in the night entertainment industry and offer sex-related services, but may also be a devoted member of a church choir, a member of an organization advocating for the cause of women or may do part-time work as a caregiver for the aged. Each of these are segments or slices of an individual's overall activities. In the course of an individual's daily activities, they move from different contexts of boundary creating and crossing which open the possibilities of an individual to reflexively ponder about his or her own life. For example, while servicing a client in a bar, an individual might be reminded of a homily given in church about moral transgressions or their family back in the Philippines. In these type of scenario, feelings of discomfort may arise that can lead an individual to rethink his or her life. Similar to what the previously discussed aspect of continuous reconstruction supposes, the narratives are said to be always open to changes and an individual has at least some grasp of the accessible options to him or her.

It is observable nowadays compared to the past how people are moving from being relatively closely connected in terms of physical range and living most of daily life in the confines of a small community into what we can convincingly describe as diverse and segmented period at present. Multiple memberships supposes plural contexts, and to which plural contexts, Giddens points, shapes knowledge or beliefs that we once thought of might already be certain. He argues that the conditions that are exhibited during our present times show that the objectives of Enlightenment, that is replacing what is abstract and speculative

has failed; he believes that methodological doubt is actually more and more pervasive. Doubt our current period is to think that all knowledge is a form of hypothesis, open to revision and may at some point be abandoned.

In connecting this to the previous examples, we can understand that group membership, what it is to be Filipino, and the inclusions of who the target groups in *ugnayan* are is not fixed. I mentioned in the previous section how ideals of what it means to be Filipino is a continuous undertaking. With modernity's reflexivity operating on methodological doubt, it seems that there can be no sole expert or authority on knowledge production. A so-called reliable authority is only so up until a certain time. Concurrently, the descriptions of group membership, what it is to be Filipino and what *ugnayan* is are as multiple possibilities of which the current description lasts until the time that it does. The sudden shift on what behaviour to display in terms of what to emphasize as Filipino characteristics to other groups show how such ideals are made by a variety of knowledge producers. *Ugnayan* may be instigated by government organization, migrant groups, the migrants themselves and as well as the locals. The often appearing words like various, variety, plural, and multiple, among others, also imply that authorities and experts are also in these conditions which illustrate the myriad of information where an individual can gather information.

Activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai seem to enable the obtainability of many modes, such as what has been narrated in the *Pinoy Fiesta* cultural festival. I refer to activities in the event in order to expound on the topic of mediation of experience. To understand this concept clearer, the aspect of separation of time and space and its subsequent recombination should first be understood. According to Giddens, coordination of the actions of human beings while being physically absent from each other is part of how we live our lives at

present. To put it simply, the time of when the activities are made are directly connected to the where they are held, but not in the way that means the mediation of place is crucial.

For example, the *Pinoy Fiesta* emulation of *Santacruzán* and some traditional Philippine dances are not exactly faithful reproductions of traditional and religious festivals of the Philippines. Maintaining authenticity is difficult and cannot be ascertained. However, the reenactment of these activities in a particular room in a local multicultural center in Urban Kansai is not what is important, but its medium. Filipino food and drinks, games, dance performances, and festival atmosphere create facets of mediated experience. These series of activities are, to borrow how one of the “Victorious Single Moms” describe their dance, *bara bara*. They occur as having a “collage effect” which means that the activities (as media presentation) take the form of side-by-side occurrences that share nothing aside from them being a collection of “traditional” Philippine non-material and material culture. Joining *Santacruzán* parades, having Goldilocks cakes, dancing *tinikling* are certainly not something that Filipinos in Urban Kansai do on a daily basis, but are routinely encountered in their events. These interconnect with their everyday migrant realities in living in Urban Kansai. This means that even if they do not exactly occur in their life, these may intrude in their daily consciousness by an individual’s awareness of them. For example, they may relate these to similarities or differences of what they come across in daily life, such as in moments of reminiscing, daily conversations with other people, among others.

To cite another example on boundary crossing, creating and maintaining is the current way that Filipinos in Urban Kansai interact others. I briefly recall the changes in modes of communication that were mentioned in Chapter 2. It was mentioned in that chapter that migrants used to be able to talk to family and friends in the Philippines while being overseas by using pre-purchased cards on landline phones. Talking to each other could not be on a daily

basis in the past as there are more factors to consider. The specific time when the family could gather have to be carefully decided. Also, it becomes a little complicated if the family in the Philippines do not have their own landline phone service at home. In this case, the time they choose should suit an appropriate moment of when to borrow from someone who has a landline phone, which means that the available time of the person being asked of is considered. There are other options that are available, such as using a telephone booth, but the time to go should be carefully adjusted to when the telephone booths are open. Not all telephone booths are available for the whole day in the Philippines, nor are they available in small municipalities. Some are installed inside a telecommunication shop, therefore the telephone booth's operation follows the shop's operation hours. If living in a municipality without one, there is no choice but to resort to a trip to the nearby city in order to be able to talk with a family or friend calling from overseas.

I compare the above description to how it is now. As stated previously, digital technology has transformed ways of communication and subsequently, how intimacies are created. I also mentioned how Filipinos in Urban Kansai are generally adept with the use of SNS, such as Facebook. The use of digital technology has made contacting family and friends who live not only in the Philippines and Japan but from all over the world much more convenient. When a person initiates a conversation is not anymore limited to time and place as before. A person can post a message in Facebook or leave direct messages in Facebook Messenger, and then can receive it anytime and anywhere as long as internet connection is available. We see the above conditions to be what enables occurrences of immediate response and heightened level of interaction possible, such as the example given earlier where a new organization member was able to respond to his organization leader even in such short notice. Cheaper data services and smartphone plans have sprouted

to make having a personally-owned smartphone with internet connection more available to more people. Also, not having available internet data is not so much of a problem in the Philippines as before anymore Facebook can be accessed in the Philippines without incurring any data charges or costs. This service is called “free data” in the Philippines and offered by the two major telecommunication providers in the Philippines: Globe Telecom and Smart Communication.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai exhibit choice and control with their time on when they create contact with family, friends and kin. Utilizing and maintaining social networks are nothing entirely new and have already been observed and expounded on in previous studies on Southeast Asia and Maritime Southeast Asia. In these body of work, it was revealed that during movement, wide range of kin relations, which include new friends and acquaintances, assist one another. Other social networks that were revealed in previous research are people from the same hometown of origin, brokers, and pioneers, among others. Therefore, the practice of having and utilizing social networks among the Filipinos of Urban Kansai is not only prevalent in present-day migration. However, what we are able to ascertain is the changes and revisions that occur, specifically in the different modes available in creating relationships such as using short, daily conversations with one another, and in the specifics in the medium of *libre*, gifting and *utang na loob*. Intimacies are also said to be created through remittances, *balikbayan* boxes, and chats online.

Through the above discussions related to Giddens’ concept of how life is lived which is based on the availability of having a variety of choices in modernity, differentiation between the public and private domains, contextual nature of once-assured of beliefs, prevalence of mediated experience, and transformation of intimacy, I was able to identify cases of where migration is embedded in the manner of while Filipino migrants live their lives in Urban



Kansai. The results seem to tell us the Filipino in Urban Kansai way of demonstrating reflexivity. Filipinos in Urban Kansai do boundary creating, crossing, and maintaining in their everyday life as migrants in Urban Kansai. From these enumeration of examples of their reflexivity, we can now move to the next chapter to examine the process of lifestyle. The next chapter focuses on how Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage their lives. To answer this, I explore the extent that individuals are aware of their options and choices, and these include the strategies that they employ.

#### **CHAPTER 4: HOW FILIPINOS IN URBAN KANSAI MANAGE THEIR LIVES**

Through the above discussions on Filipinos in Urban Kansai using Giddens' aspects of the life process, which are the availability of various options, differentiation between the public and private domains, contextual nature of once-assured beliefs, prevalence of mediated experience, and transformation of intimacy, cases where migration play part of the life process of Filipinos in Urban Kansai came to be identified. The examples that were given in the last chapter illustrate how Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to participate in shaping the meaning of being Filipino, migration practices, and creating new intimacies over time through modes that are available to them. The results from last chapter show that the lives of Filipinos in Urban Kansai has migration interconnected in it through everyday activities of boundary creating, crossing, and maintaining. I continue with my exploration how Filipino migrants live their lives by extending the discussion to the process of living by using the findings of the previous chapter as a departing point. The objective of this chapter is to show how Filipinos in Urban Kansai create a lifestyle. In order to show this, I reflect on the aspects of awareness and strategies. As mentioned in the previous section, awareness makes self-development possible. Awareness is also connected to individual's action of making choices, showing reflexivity, and the continuity of making choices as part of reflexivity. This means that when aware, an individual may be able ponder on what is lacking, one's desires, and are able to address this lack or aspirations. It opens up opportunities for an individual to effectively plan ahead. This is where the aspect of strategy comes in. Strategies may be explored and decided on by a person in order to achieve one's goals. I look at strategies made in the context of being a Filipino migrant in Urban Kansai.

In order for us to be able to investigate awareness and strategies in their place in the process of living of Filipinos in Urban Kansai further, I cite from field data gathered from participant observation, interviews and personal conversations. These cases that I narrate show examples that seem to point that how life of Filipinos in Urban Kansai is created is through boundary creating, crossing, and maintaining. This chapter shows that the Filipino migrant life processes involves connecting past experiences and day-to-day activities to the creation of strategies for the future. In the first example, I narrate how hobbies and preferences are talked about by a Filipino woman (Ate Sara) who works as a junior high school English teacher in Osaka. I draw attention to how she actively thinks about her hobbies and preferences and compares these to that of other Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The second example is the case of a singer (Tita Anna) who used to go to Japan with her band during the early 1980s to perform in hotel lounges who is conscious of using polite form of Japanese when interacting with their audience. In the last example, I cite an interview with a Filipino woman (Karla) who runs an *izakaya* in Nishinari Ward, Osaka. The *izakaya* owner professes of not being part of any “community organization” of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I ponder on her narrations about her saying so and juxtapose them to her participation in other activities in Nishinari Ward. I take note of the strategies involved in the creation and understanding of her life as a Filipino migrant in Urban Kansai and highlight these in the last part of this chapter.

#### **4.1. The Filipino in Urban Kansai Management and Understanding of their Migrant Lives**

This section narrates three cases of Filipino women in Urban Kansai in order to illuminate the process of how Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage their lives. The cases are looked at in the context of migration. It seems that migration plays a part on how life is lived in Urban Kansai. The first case that I present is on Ate Sara. I refer to her narrations as they

show mindfulness of what she wants to portray about herself as a Filipino migrant in Japan. Like the other cases presented in the chapter, Ate Sara is able to show cognizance of her situation and the general social position of Filipino migrants in Japan. These are interconnected to the way that Filipinos in Urban Kansai live and the strategies available to them that they choose to do.

Ate Sara is a 55 year old Filipino woman who lives with her two sons in a rented high-rise apartment in Osaka. She works as an English teacher in a junior high school in Osaka. We immediately got into a pleasant conversation when we first met which is in an event for Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Being *Ilokano*<sup>17</sup> became a point of commonality. Although coming from different provinces (her being from Baguio City in the Cordillera Administrative Region and my being able to trace my roots to Ilocos Sur, Pangasinan and being raised in Isabela), having something in common that we can refer to became the starting point of our conversations. We did not converse in *Ilokano*, the regional language of the Ilocos Region, but rather in English as she seemed to prefer this medium better and I am also more comfortable with it. However, we did use some *Ilokano* words, although these were rather sparing. I thought this to be part of continuous monitoring or validating of self-made claims of being *Ilokano* and awareness in making one's narratives consistent.

One of the first impressions I had with Ate Sara, is that she presents herself in three ways: as religious, politically aware of issues in the Philippines, and having hobbies and interests that seem to differ from many Filipinos in Urban Kansai who I have met. I explain

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<sup>17</sup> *Ilokanos* are one of the Philippines' ethnolinguistic groups. Most reside in the Ilocos Region which is located in the North-western part of Luzon Island in the Philippines. Ilokano population are also populous in adjacent regions, such as Cagayan Valley and Cordillera Administrative Region. *Ilokano* is also the term used to refer to the language of the region. Many Ilokanos moved to Hawaii, USA in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to work in sugar plantations. During the middle part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, many also relocated to Mindanao Island, which is located in Southern Philippines. Until up to present, their population continuous to thrive in these aforementioned areas.

the reasons to my impressions as I go along with my descriptions. Ate Sara is an active member of a Christian group and as a vocal supporter of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. Disregarding Ate Sara's political comments against politicians and political parties in the Philippines who are not allied with the government which can get quite critical, conversations with her are mostly encouraging and pleasant. She enthusiastically talks about her faith to anybody who cares to listen. She tries to uplift other Filipinos in Kansai through giving spiritual support, life advice, and sharing life's lessons by quoting from the bible. Most of the time, Ate Sara has pocket-sized pamphlets of biblical teachings with her that she hands out to those she has relatively long conversations with during gatherings of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. She also invites other Filipinos who see meets in Filipino in Urban Kansai events who she thinks might be interested to join her in a Facebook online prayer group that she is an active member of.

Ate Sara claims to enjoy the good things in life. She talks about being fond of short distance weekend trips. She divulges to enjoy travelling on her own. She shares that she is able to get good travel deals by going to travel agencies to look around for travel information after her teaching work. She explains that she invites her Filipino friends to go with her; however, they always give her excuses on why they are not able to join her. Despite claiming to like solo travel, Ate Sara articulates her annoyance of being turned down and her friends' inability to spend time with her in going out for weekend trips. She reveals that instead of travelling, her friends use their money to send *balikbayan* boxes to the Philippines, go to parties and drink in bars. Such activities, she claims, that she does not enjoy doing. Aside from weekend trips, Ate Sara's other hobbies include cooking, baking and interior decorating. She shares pictures of these activities on her Facebook account on an almost a daily basis.

Her habit of posting cooked meals and baked dessert seems to differ from what I have observed as SNS posting habits of other Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Many Filipinos in Urban Kansai post food and baked products on their Facebook accounts mainly to market them. In other words, for commercial purposes. To cite an example of differences in using SNS, is an instance in Facebook when I “liked” a picture of a Filipino dish and commented on it looking delicious. After I did, the Filipino woman who owns the account immediately sent me a private message in Facebook Messenger if I wanted to order the dish whose picture I “liked” and other Filipino dishes that she cooks.

I thought this to be the main difference compared to the case of Ate Sara’s, wherein cooking and baking are referred to as a hobby. But, if we are to go with the definition of lifestyle as a process on how life is lived, these examples are in themselves examples of living a certain way of life, even as their modes to doing so differ. Both situations show utilization of Facebook as a medium for their individual objectives. How a medium is employed is of an individual’s own choosing.

Going back to Ate Sara, what struck me in my conversations with her is how she seemed to consciously distance herself from the so-called Filipino-in-Japan stereotypical image, which is similar in allusion to how it was previously discussed in the last chapter as an “image” that needs to be “challenged and changed”. What impressed upon me was the way that she emphasized her preferences of hobbies and interests. As I noticed, she has a habit of pointing out how different she is from other Filipinos in Japan by professing to like different things from most and she made sure that I understood these by her repeating them often. I also noticed her choice of using English more often. I thought about this in comparison to other Filipinos in Urban Kansai who, while able to understand English, have a harder time speaking it. Using a surface level type of reasoning, this could easily be attributed as due to

less English usage (therefore, less practice) compared to speaking Japanese in their daily living. But, another and deeper way of looking at this is the angle of the level of awareness of doing so in creating and understanding her life as a Filipino migrant in Japan.

What also created quite an impression on me are her frequent mentions of graduating college from an “exclusive school in Manila” in every opportunity that she can get. I thought of the meaning what she meant by “exclusive school” because in Filipino parlance “exclusive school” could imply two things. First, that of being from a school whose student population is limited to either females or males (colloquially called in the Philippines “all-girls school” or “all-boys school, respectively). Second and in addition to the former, it may also mean a school of the more financially well-off. I found out later in our conversations when she revealed the college name that the college she referred to was “exclusive” in the sense that the college was limited to female students. However, I felt that Ate Sara was also trying to ride on the latter meaning. I say this by basing on the whole narrative of how she presents herself which seem to infer having middle-class background through consistency of her choice of hobbies, interests, and her insinuations of not needing to regularly remit money and send *balikbayan* boxes to family and relatives the Philippines. These implied not having financial obligations to family in the Philippines like many Filipinos in Urban Kansai do. In addition to why I thought so, is her locational reference to the Philippine’s capital city, Manila. Manila shares the typical image of other large cities in the world which is as a cosmopolitan, urban jungle. Living in Manila entails a higher cost of living compared to other Philippine cities. The reference to the country’s capital seems to be part her self-narrative. She (or her family) is able to afford for her to move to live in the country capital city of Manila from Baguio to study for college. Baguio and Manila is 244.8 kilometers away from each other and may be reached

by means of privately-owned vehicles or buses. Importantly, we may also be able to infer from the above as to how aware she is in choosing what to present about herself.

Similar to Ate Sara's case is another case that I briefly narrate as an example of how life is created by a Filipino in Japan. Tita<sup>18</sup> Anna is a singer and is now in her mid-50s. She used to go to Japan with her band during the early 1980s to perform in hotel lounges. If Ate Sara is observed to prefer using English and to enjoy hobbies and interests that she claims as different from most Filipinos in Urban Kansai, in Tita Anna's case, it is her awareness of being more careful when speaking in Japanese. Tita Anna divulged being conscious when she addressed their band's audience and making sure that she uses the polite form of Japanese. She said that she was cautious to refrain from using Japanese expressions that are attributed to male speech in order to distinguish her from "entertainers" who work in hostess clubs and who, she said, picked-up the said expressions through banters with male guests.

We can see from the cases of Ate Sara and Tita Anna how Filipinos in Urban Kansai are aware of their options and of choosing from these. But, before it may be mistakenly assumed that lifestyle mainly involves things that are affluent or "trendy," I present this in terms of a process, specifically on how life is created and perceived by Filipinos living in Nishinari Ward, Osaka. I will first describe the location to create the atmosphere of the place as a way to illustrate that lifestyle is not limited to the above stated assumption. As I have defined earlier, the life process also refers to decisions that are made and the actions in situations of extreme material constraints. I refer to lifestyle as a process related to one's way of life and not as a type of migration. After giving an overview of Nishinari Ward in the next paragraph, I retell

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<sup>18</sup> I use the term *Tita* instead of *Ate* to address Tita Anna because she is a woman whose generation is older relative to mine. To compare this to the usage of *Ate*, *Ate* is used as a term for a woman in the same generation, but may be older in age.



the thoughts of a Filipino *izakaya* owner about the symposium mentioned in the previous chapter. Lastly, I recount on daily or routine happenings among the locals in Nishinari Ward.

Nishinari Ward is frequently dubbed as the “most dangerous place in Japan” and “Japan’s biggest slum area” due to repetitive riots, presence of organized crime groups, high rate of tuberculosis, mugging, presence of a red light district, and the highest concentration of homeless persons in Japan of whom the majority are elderly males. Many Japanese who I have spoken to are familiar of the place, but claim to have never been to the area and do not have any intention of doing so. I have received warnings every time I mention that I have been going to Nishinari Ward for research from both of my Japanese and Filipinos acquaintances.

The Nishinari Ward population is dense with 25,000 to 30,000 individuals living in an area of about 500 to 800 square meters (Suzuki 2014, Yamaguchi 2014). Their actual number is unknown because many of them are not listed on the residential registration (Suzuki 2014). It is a volatile environment that sees a frequent stream of police doing rounds. One easily sees the difference of this area from the usual neon-lit, modern images of Osaka. Even with this unpleasant image, given that this place is in Japan, the term “dangerous” is still is relative and the area is still and may be a lot safer than most countries in the world (Yamaguchi 2014).

This is an area of people of low economic status and while very much visible in its literal meaning, it also exhibits a kind of invisibility. The place (and the people) are hidden in the sense that the location is reported to not even printed on official maps (Yamaguchi 2014). Furthermore, Yamaguchi (2014) reports, that a movie about the ward, entitled “Fragile”, was supposed to screen in the Osaka Asian Film Festival in 2014, but was pulled out by the director who accused the city organizers of censorship. It is said that this is how the government deliberately keeps them hidden and well within social control. Individuals also opt to keep

themselves officially by not registering themselves even if it means not being able to receive government welfare. Identification is rarely checked, hence the anonymity (Suzuki 2014).

Restobar Cute is located in a row of stores in a shopping street (商店街, *shoutengai*) just off a subway station in Nishinari Ward. The place is a mix of restaurant/bar/*sari-sari* (neighborhood variety) store for Philippine goods and is owned and managed by Karla, a Filipina from Samar. *Restobars* and *sari-sari* stores are widespread in the Philippines and built separately from each other. On the other hand, *sari-sari* stores are places that sell a wide variety of miscellaneous goods, usually food, drinks, snacks and daily household items. The items in *sari-sari* stores are usually packed or repackaged in small quantities. In the Philippines, *sari-sari* stores are extensions of one's house and are located in the part of a house which fronts a street. *Sari-sari* stores in Urban Kansai retain the feature of selling a variety of items, but not in the small portions as they are sold in *sari-sari* stores in the Philippines. In the Philippines, *restobars* are places to hang out for drinking. In Urban Kansai, hybrids of *izakaya* (居酒屋) and *sari-sari* store rolled into one are common. Karla's establishment also fits the description of an *izakaya*, by being a place to stay to have alcoholic drinks, as per the word's direct Japanese translation. I use *restobar* and *izakaya* interchangeably because of these characteristics. The owner also calls her establishment using the two terms interchangeably.

In the *izakaya* to assist Karla is another Filipina single mother like Karla. Restobar Cute was relocated to its present area in the *shoutengai* from its previous location near a park, also in Nishinari Ward. Karla claims that her store's location is much better now even if the space of the previous place was bigger. She opines that the shopping street location sees more foot traffic. She additionally shares that since it is not far away from the previous location, the customers from the previous location are able to follow her in the new location.

Karla shared with me her opinion on the symposium on Filipinos in Kansai described in the previous chapter. “*Masyado namang seryoso yun.*” (“That event is way too serious.”), she comments. She explained that the level of discussion in such kind of events is “high” for her mental abilities to grasp and said that if she attends, it must be very difficult for her to understand what are talked about in the symposium. It appeared later in our conversation that she does not get any information on information dissemination events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. However, she mulls, that maybe even if she does get invited, she will not be able to attend because the time when the symposium happens does not bode well with her work schedule. Her *izakaya* operation hours overlaps with the time when the symposium is held. Karla intimated that even if she does not go to events of organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, she spends time with friends. In particular, she mentions her Japanese friend who she introduced as to have used to work with her in a club and other Filipinos in Nishinari Ward. She adds that her Filipino friends in Nishinari Ward are also not members of Filipino organizations and church groups. Let us now take a look of the goings on in Restobar Cute to have an idea of the Filipino way of life in Nishinari Ward.

Restobar Cute primarily services as an establishment that serves popular Filipino cuisine, Philippine and Japanese brand alcohol, and *otsumami* (おつまみ, alcohol-paired snacks). It is open from 6pm until 2am every day except during Sundays. The store’s opening hours are perfectly timed to when office workers are off from work to drop by, have dinner, relaxing conversations and friendly banters before finally heading home. The seating arrangement of the place has only counter seats which make the people inside to be in close proximity with each other. Diners are able to chat freely and make friendly banters with other people in the *izakaya*. The customers face Karla and her assistant as Karla and her assistant cook and prepare drinks behind the counter. Majority of the diners are low-waged salary men

who live around the area. They drop by for a few bottles of alcoholic drinks, to which Karla claims to be cheaper in price compared to other bars within the vicinity. The place has a very casual and relaxed set up and many customers linger and chat.

To take advantage of the niche market of Filipino migrant clientele, Karla's also has a *sari-sari* store in a small space at the edge of the *izakaya*. The *sari-sari* store serves as a go-to for Filipinos in the vicinity to easily purchase staple Philippine products that are not readily available in the Japanese market. Like in *sari-sari* stores in the Philippines, credit is possible especially if a good seller and buyer relationship is established. In the Philippines, this relationship is called *suki* relationship. This will be discussed later as a form of strategy of Filipinos in Urban Kansai in Chapter 4.3. This type of relationship and the informal economy of lending money are also observed in Restobar Cute.

The permanent location and almost daily opening hours of Restobar Cute makes this marked among Filipinos in Nishinari Ward as a possible place to find support when the need arises. Nishinari Ward is considered as a depressed part of Osaka by many Japanese locals because of the location's unfortunate image; but, for Filipinos who live in the area, it is a haven and a security blanket to know that there is a place where a compatriot may be in during a certain time of the day. Access to Restobar Cute is very easy. As a communal space, everyone can just enter. This is unlike in private homes where the home owner can just ignore the doorbell when it chimes and pretend not to be home to avoid being coerced to help. Those with security cameras and door peepholes may also choose to whom they open their doors to in the private homes. I cite a case of a Filipino woman being able to get a quick loans from Karla in Restobar Cute in order to give an example of daily goings-on, availability and utilization of options, and of the quality of intimacies.

During one of my visits and just a few minutes after the store opened, a woman came barging in and speaking in Filipino. She was waving a watch to the owner and asked for a quick loan in the amount of 10,000 ¥. The woman seemed to be known to Karla because she forewent the usual pleasantries that are commonly made by those who do not know each other well. She hurriedly told Karla that she was in the middle of a *pachinko* game (パチンコ, a gambling game played in arcades) but has run out of money. She continued to explain this to be the reason why she was suddenly pawning her daughter's watch. She claimed that the watch costs 70,000 ¥. Without even verifying the watch's nor the story's authenticity, Karla lent her 10,000 ¥. There was no additional paperwork involved. Karla took the watch and at the same time told the woman to pay the money back as soon as possible. The woman nodded, gave her thanks and hurriedly went out of the door. The transaction went like this:

*“Uy, pahiram nga saglit. May babalikan lang ako sa pachinko.”* (“Hey, can I borrow money just for a short while? I just need to get back at something in the pachinko.”), the woman asked Karla.

There was a moment of no response from Karla as she was still surprised from the sudden entrance of the woman in her *izakaya*.

*“Ito o, sa anak ko nga ito eh. Swarovski ito... pitong lapad<sup>19</sup> yan pero isang lapad lang kailangan ko. Ibabalik ko din agad. May babalikan lang talaga ako.”*

(“Here, this is actually my child's. This is a Swarovski... it costs 70,000 ¥ but I

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<sup>19</sup> *Lapad* is a Filipino colloquial counting counter synonymous to *man* (万) in Japanese. For example, *isang lapad* (one *lapad*) is equivalent to 10,000 ¥.

only need 10,000 ¥. I will give the money back as soon as possible. I just need to get back to my game.”), the woman promised at the same time already handing Karla a watch across the counter.

Karla replied with furrowed brows, “*Ibalik mo agad, ha?*” (“Please return the money immediately, okay?”). Then, Karla handed the woman one 10,000 ¥ bill.

“*Arigatou ne.*” (“Thank you.”), the woman happily replied and went out immediately as soon as she received the money.

This transaction happened all less than three minutes. I thought that loaning money in other circumstances would not have been this easy especially if done through formal channels. Getting loans in Japan is difficult for migrants wherein banks favor salaried individuals who work in large companies. Aside from this is another hindrance where such services are not directly advertised in a language that is easily understandable to migrants (Tanikawa 2008).

It seems that for Filipinos in Urban Kansai who live in constrictive conditions such as described previously, knowing other fellow Filipinos serve as advantageous safety nets. In the previous chapter, I narrated how newly arrived Filipinos in Urban Kansai are invited to join activities in the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community. Their importance knowing other fellow Filipinos are notable in case of emergencies, like the need for quick money. In the previous chapter, I have also narrated how newly arrived Filipinos in Urban Kansai are invited by members of Filipino organizations to join activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and are introduced to other Filipinos. It is interesting how the place is being variedly appropriated as

a *restobar*, *izakaya*, and *sari-sari store* by Karla and Nishinari Ward locals. And, also as a quick pawnshop and a place for *tambay*. Like Ate Sara and Tita Anna, the Filipinos in Nishinari Ward are aware of options and of choosing from what is available. We can now comprehend much better that even in situations with constraints, life management is very much being done by Filipinos living in Nishinari Ward, Osaka through creative means. I return to recount what I have written on my field notes and draw attention to the different types of relationships that are possibly created as we continue with the happenings in Nishinari Ward:

I was amused by the quick loaning that I witnessed, to which Karla commented, "*Hay naku, ganyan talaga yun...*" ("Oh well, she is really like that...").

"*Swarovski naman eh.*" ("At least it is a Swarovski."), I answered, trying to reassure her.

"*Di ko naman kelangan ito. Ang dami-dami ko nang ganito. Kahit naman mas mahal, mas gusto ko pa din ang pera para may panggamit dito. Madami ang 'di na nagtutubos.*" ("I do not really need this. I already have lots of these things. Even if this is more expensive, I need cash more so I can use it here (in the store). Many do not get back the items they leave."), Karla sighed while putting the watch in a drawer.

I thought that she sounded a little annoyed by the unexpected visit; however, it also seems that Karla is aware of the accompaniments of having a business venture and the possibilities of being someone to run to during emergencies by fellow Filipinos who live in Nishinari Ward. The woman who came in seemed to expect that the loan transaction would

not be turned down, hence, the casual and quick manner on how the exchange was made. I notice how introductory pleasantries were lacking and the manner for asking a loan was very direct. These reveal to us the type of intimacies that are created when social functions become merged with commercial aspects. I would like to go back to this point again later.

As we see, Filipinos in Nishinari Ward do not live in complete isolation even if they do not join activities sponsored by organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, such as symposiums. Most have Japanese friends and acquaintances who they are in close contact with. As mentioned, Karla has a close Japanese female friend who she became acquainted with when they worked in the same club about a decade ago. Karla shares that they decided to open up separate *izakaya* of their own in Nishinari Ward when they left their previous work. This Japanese friend of hers visits Restobar Cute every day for a drink and chat before heading to her own bar. She pays Karla before heading out, however, there are times when she does not. For example, there are occasions when 10,000 ¥ is paid to Karla to which change to it cannot immediately be given because the *izakaya* has just opened and there are no other transactions yet. Even if change were available, these are kept to give priority to other customers who might come and pay using a large bill. The flow of money between Karla and her friend are not tracked by both of them in the same manner that Karla tracks on the orders of other customers in her *izakaya*.

Aside from these daily activities that center mostly around the *izakaya*, Karla and her friend enjoy travelling together. Her friend has visited Samar, Karla's home province in the Philippines many times in the past. They often do road trips around Japan along with other Japanese and Filipino friends when their *izakaya* are closed on Sundays or on Japanese national holidays. Karla also spends lots of time in her friend's house. When her Japanese friend gave birth, Karla would take pictures of the baby and share it on her Facebook account.



Karla posts videos of her with the baby on Facebook. The videos show her playing, singing English nursery rhymes and speaking to the baby in English. This performance of intimacy is akin to what Filipino women do when playing with babies in the Philippines, especially if they are familiar to the baby's parents and family.

Restobar Cute's customers are usually limited to those living in Nishinari Ward or Filipinos living in Urban Kansai, but once or twice a year few Filipino seamen who dock in the Osaka pier for a day or two also drop by Restobar Cute. These Filipino seamen do not know the area but are brought by a common friend of Karla to Nishinari Ward. When the individuals are more than the available seating of Restobar Cute can fit, they are brought by Karla to her Japanese friend's *izakaya* because of it being bigger in size. Karla shared that her Japanese friend charges the Filipino seamen cheaper sets than what is given to other customers.

The above narrations reveal to us of the social relationships of the people in Nishinari Ward as some sort of social and commercial network. Their close proximity of living near each other enables them to be able to be involved in each other's activities. They patronize each other's personal and commercial activities. We are able to observe ease in movement in terms of going in and out of Karla's *restobar*. In regards to taking items and money from each other, the ease that they do so seem to vary depending on the type of relationship one has. Costs incurred by *restobar* customers are immediately listed down; on the other hand, there is no documentary paperwork involved in the quick loan and money is not also tracked among those who a person knows well. Discounts may be given to new customers who come upon referrals, especially if they come with the person who referred them to the establishment. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are knowledgeable of the constraints, options available, and the advantages included. I discuss more on intimacy as strategy in the context of migration in the later section of this chapter.

Like I have been always saying, Filipinos in Urban Kansai's are aware of their options and actions. From such awareness, they decide on what options to take and employ in their life strategies. These take part in continuous reconstruction of the self and living in general. Continuous reconstruction is also exemplified in the cases of Ate Sara and Tita Anna when they show keen awareness to what they utter about themselves. They use hobbies, interests, and language to manage their lives as Filipino migrants in Urban Kansai. If we recall the cases cited in the previous chapters to those describe in this chapter, we can say that having awareness does not seem to be uncommon among Filipinos of Urban Kansai. But, we are still left with questions as to which level does awareness occur and in what instances do they vary. If we look at these and past examples that I have given about Filipinos in Urban Kansai, the level of awareness seems to quite be heightened. I continue to the next section to delve more on the topic of awareness.

#### **4.2. Awareness of Everyday Routines**

In the previous chapter, I mentioned about reflexive awareness. In the period of modernity, reflexive awareness is said to be much regularized as part of the everyday, or in Giddens' word of describing it, institutionalized. In the cases presented in the previous section, we notice how Ate Sara, Tita Anna and Karla are able to monitor the contexts of their undertakings as characteristic of doing what they do. When asked for more explanations, they are usually able to give answers and interpretations such as to why things happen the way they are and their reasons on why they do as they say so.

Giddens reminds us that the level of knowledgeability of human agents is not only confined to as what is earlier described, which is that of exhibiting "discursive consciousness" to the contexts of one's actions. He explains that knowledge happens in the level of "practical

consciousness.” “Practical consciousness” is when actions, such as making choices, are interconnected with the continuing parts of daily life. This means that the cases presented may also be considered as made in the level of the “non-conscious.” “Non-conscious” is different from that of being unconscious because as Giddens describes, the unconscious type of cognition defy “being brought into consciousness, and appear there only in a distorted or transposed way” (1991: 36). The levels of awareness in cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai definitely seem not to fit this definition of unconsciousness because I have noted quite regularly that the level of awareness of Filipinos in Urban Kansai seems to be heightened. With the consideration of the aspect of “practical consciousness,” the process of lifestyle could be made more understandable. Additionally, the above stated cases of Ate Sara, Tita Anna and Karla reveals how the choices made may actually not be in terms of these being thought with heightened awareness as if this is their primary preoccupation, but that these may also be potentially made in a manner of not being on top of a person’s mind all of the time. This means that these may also be thought of as habits or routinized practices.

If we recall from Chapters 2 and 3, I presented how life is composed of a unified set of practices which an individual undertakes in order to fulfil practical needs and give material form to one’s particular narrative of self-identity. These can be thought of as a process that is made over and over again, in other words as routinely made on a regular basis. In simple terms, as how to live life. In one of the cases presented in the previous section, the junior high-school English teacher, Ate Sara’s narrations show how her actions are not just one-off happenings with the overall way that she presents herself. Her religiosity, political leaning, hobbies of cooking and travel, and her preference of not regularly sending *balikbayan* boxes to the Philippines and drinking in bars are all part of how she forms her narrative of self. These all follow her preferred trajectory of her life as a Filipino migrant in Urban Kansai. Of course,

in our present context, a wider array of means are available in the management of one's narrative. Because of modes varying and frequently changing, how one creates narratives are also subject to changes and revisions. Furthermore, preferences may also be influenced by external conditions, such as social and economic conditions, tradition, and roles and obligations.

Similarly, examples of Karla in Nishinari Ward show her actions and behaviour as part of daily routines that mostly occur in the context of working in Restobar Cute. Giddens admits that compared to non-work contexts, the sphere of work is "more dominated by economic compulsion and that styles of behaviour in the workplace are less subject to the control of the individual." (1991: 81). However, he also explains that work is not wholly separate from being part of the variety of options because the choice of work and work environment are part of what constitutes how one's life is created and perceived. Going back to the case of Karla, we observe how Karla seems to have already formed strong opinions about symposiums. Her reluctance to joining them emerges in our talks and she exhibits being quite aware of her comprehensive abilities by citing low educational level and relating this to the type of work that she does. Although claiming to not be part of any organization of Filipinos, we see how she is somewhat aware of the objectives of the symposium and has decided that these do not fit her way of life.

How Karla and other Filipinos in Urban Kansai form this way of thinking and how they are presented can reveal to us how being aware of one's self and others form part of routines that are more or less in an ordered pattern. When presented with a what-if situation if when Karla is invited to the symposium, she shows commitment to her everyday routine and still surmises that she would not be able to go. If we follow Giddens' concept on "practical

consciousness,” this supposes that habits and routines are not automatically and unconsciously made, but one that follows a “non-conscious” vigilance in its maintenance.

I once again reiterate that self-awareness opens possibilities of getting better. These can be in maintenance and revisions or negotiations of one’s narratives and choices. It is said that in doing so, it is necessary to utilize various strategies, such as what Ate Sara, Tita Anna and Karla do. They are observed to maintain parts of how their life is made, in keeping up with what they present about themselves as Filipino migrants in Urban Kansai. But, strategies apart from maintaining may also be possible. I use their cases once again, including those that have been previously presented in other chapters, in the following section where I discuss on the employment of strategies in its part in the life process.

#### **4.3. Boundary Creating, Crossing, and Maintaining as a Strategy**

Based on the previous chapter’s discussion, we can say that Filipinos in Urban Kansai show at least some kind of awareness to maintain consistency in their actions and behavior. We know that their choices that they do come in the midst of varied options available. These options are modes that Filipinos in Urban Kansai use in everyday life. I have discussed in earlier chapters how the present condition of modernity is able to make options more available compared to what can be seen in traditional societies and that life is created through habitual or routinized daily practices. One characteristic of these habitual and routinized patterns are that these are used as strategical means of preparing courses of forthcoming actions in consistent with one’s narrative of self. It has been mentioned in previous chapters that undertakings like these indicate that the actions are reflexive. Boundaries that they have set for themselves (for example, beliefs, opinions, ideals) may be created, crossed and

maintained as part of one's strategy for living. Furthermore, habitual and routinized patterns may be subject to change depending on one's current state of thinking.

Giddens explains that strategizing or planning for the future necessitates a specific mode of organizing time. He cites personal experience as timing device as an example and explains that the creation of this is based on what an individual thinks as significant in his or her life. If we look at personal experience as timing device in connection to the cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, statements such as "*Noong dumating ako sa Japan.*" ("When I arrived in Japan.") or "When I was studying in an exclusive school." come up as time reference markers. An individual is also seen to make change in time reference markers at a later time when there are changes in one's life such as, "*Noong lumipat kami dito.*" ("When we moved to this new location."). This suggests that the new time reference markers may have taken over the previous one in terms of importance. Time reference markers can also be given by referring to direct (or indirect happenings), what has been previously described as mediated experience, such as "*Noong Yolanda.*" ("During Typhoon Yolanda."), a Category 5 super typhoon that devastated the Philippines in 2013.

Time references such as these can be used to understand how individuals interpret their past, are aware of their present situation, and how they strategize for the future. It is said that for an individual to strategize for the future is to contemplate past experiences. In terms of strategizing, utilization of options through planning and preparation are made not only by the affluent, but also by those in constrictive conditions such as what was narrated in Nishinari Ward. Among Filipinos in Nishinari Ward, physical proximity and commercialism are observed to be interconnected to social relationships and the quality of intimacies in the way that everyday life is strategized.

The woman who pawned her daughter's watch to Karla may be interpreted to be in some kind of financial situation. As I have not made contact with her for interviews, we can only make assumptions based on Karla's revelations about the person. We know that she has to return immediately to her pachinko game and that the item she pawned is her daughter's. She is described by Karla as "she is really like that..." ("*ganyan talaga yun*") in reference to the woman's barging in and getting a quick loan. Following our earlier discussion, we can see how the reply of "*ganyan talaga yun*" indicates reference to something similar that may have happened in the past and/or is routinely recurring. The difficult situations that migrants face as part of everyday realities are revealed in the example. We may also assume it must be difficult for the woman to utilize formal money lending channels to acquire money immediately, hence her decision to go to a compatriot's *izakaya* at the time knows the *izakaya* to be opened for the day. We can say that whatever constraints that the woman faces, she seems somewhat aware of available options, including the risks involved, and practices control in choosing an option to acquire money. The above example illustrates how strategies that an individual utilize are partly dependent on the means available, of one's socioeconomic conditions. They are habitual, and stem from previous experiences.

Even if locals in Nishinari Ward do not join events and organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, they nevertheless seem to be familiar with issues pertaining to being migrants in Japan. They are aware of images about Filipinos in Japan and its connection to night entertainment work. Their familiarity to these seem to affect their everyday actions. Of course, with respect to awareness affecting everyday actions, are a variety of ways as to what they could do with information they come across. Even not doing anything about the information that becomes known to them is also a choice in itself on how life is lived. An example where Filipinos in Urban Kansai act on issues pertaining to the elevation of the image

of Filipinos in Japan is when they use information known and decide to become active through furthering advocacies or to seek organizations and events that they could participate in Urban Kansai. These could also be as exemplified in the cases of Ate Sara and Tita Anna in their choice of hobbies and language used. On the other hand, in the case of Karla, the *izakaya* owner in Nishinari Ward, it seems apparent that her impression about symposiums have already been forged a long time ago. To recall, she cites her *izakaya* business operation hours as to why she is not able to go to symposiums and her own gauging of her abilities. However, it cannot be conclusively said that she is not doing anything to challenge how images of Filipino in Japan are just because the choices and patterns of how she lives her life are not in the same way that Ate Sara and Tita Anna do theirs. It could be possible that Karla may be doing her own way of confronting images of Filipino in Japan through other modes in her activities, such as those regarding her work, friendships with Japanese, and relationships with Filipinos in Nishinari Ward, among other habitual and routine activities. As has been often pointed out, in our current times, we are presented with a variety of options of which we are able to utilize for whatever objectives we aim for and there is no similar way that a person chooses to how live in terms of its totality.

Individuals explore options and create their strategies based on social circumstances. This poses as a dilemma to how networks are understood. Networks are not what they used to be, so does this mean that the network itself is not the same as well? I cite an example in the creation of intimacies. As we understand from earlier presentation, creating networks are nothing new. Utilization of social networks have been in existence in Southeast Asian pre-modern migration contexts, however, as has been explained, the modes available now are what make them different from that of the past. Various strategies have been observed to be utilized in creating new types of intimacies. Making use of social relationships can also be seen



as a form of strategy. In the cases presented about Filipinos in Urban Kansai, there seems to be a crossing or recombination of traditional and modern elements. Examples are in the cases of a new organization member and an organization leader and Filipinos living in Nishinari Ward. In that of the new organization member and an organization leader, the social economic backgrounds and positions connected to them that are attributed and normative in the Philippines are challenged when in Urban Kansai. The mostly female organization leaders are able to take on decision making roles through exhibitions of financial wealth. These displays of generosity and the association of generosity to fondness may have been picked up by the women from what they have heard from other Filipino women in Urban Kansai or personal experiences with Japanese clients who would give Filipino women who work in bars and clubs with expensive presents. Filipino men in the Philippines usually do not like it when they are gifted more and say that it is hurtful for their ego if a women gives presents that they cannot repay with a more expensive one. This is considered as an upfront to their maleness ("*nakakalalake*"). However, the new organization members show acting in between Filipino and Japanese culture when they exhibit boundary creating, crossing, and maintaining.

Boundary crossing have can be seen in the activities of Filipino migrants in Urban Kansai. Inclinations to being commercial has also been observed by Tachimoto (1999) and Ichikawa (2015) in their discussion of maritime trading in Southeast Asia. *Suki* relationships been exhaustively studied in by Wickberg (1965), Davis (1973) and Dannhauser (1983). Wickberg accounts of *suki* relationships in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century wherein preferential treatment were accorded by Chinese traders to their customers in the Philippines; these were particularly exemplified through credit flows and introduction of other individuals to people. At present, the *suki* relationships initially practiced by Chinese traders to their customers in

the Philippines are a continuing and prevalent business strategy in the Philippines and also among Filipinos in Urban Kansai involved in business. How does *suki* relationship become a form of strategy among Filipinos in Urban Kansai in the context of migration when we see that it has been already prevalent before? I refer to similarities and differences of this medium at present from that of the past.

What could be observed from Filipinos is that making *utang* (personal loans) can be made relatively easily, however, they are usually the last to be appropriated for in times of payment. Among Filipinos who lend money, the expression “*Madaling magpautang, mahirap maningil.*” (“It is easy to lend money, but difficult to get collect it back.”) is commonly heard as a grievance among lenders. What may be seen implied is that *suki* relationship functions not only as a commercial strategy, but also has overtones of being personal or intimate. Filipinos in Urban Kansai exemplify this when they able to take advantage of persons who they get acquainted with, especially if the relationships between them are perceived to be of good quality. I once again recall the quick loaning in Nishinari Ward and look at it as a strategy that connects commercialism with social relationships.

In my narration of the quick loan in Chapter 4.1., Karla, the *izakaya* owner shared that she has accumulated so many pawned items that she wishes that they be claimed by their original owners so she can use the money that they return to her for her *izakaya*. While many do not claim their items and return Karla’s money back, we can see how Filipino migrants are able to perform their obligations in the *suki* relationship when they introduce Restobar Cute to other people and bring groups of people with them to the Restobar Cute. Also in the narration are revelations that there are times where groups are large that Karla’s place cannot accommodate them. This was shown case of Filipino seamen who dock in Osaka port once or twice yearly. In such instances, Karla takes them to her Japanese friend’s *izakaya* that is

located also in Nishinari Ward. The quality of relationships of Filipinos in Urban Kansai with the locals are also difficult to ignore. In Nishinari Ward, old customers choose to follow Karla in her new location, which Karla reveals to be not that far from the previous location. Her relationship with her Japanese friends is narrated to be good and they are able to spend ample of time together. The type of social relationships depicted above show a complex intertwining of commercialism and social relationships. They are attained through various means, such as patronizing each other's business, engaging in money borrowing and loaning, spending time often, doing activities together, and sharing the same experiences as migrants in Urban Kansai.

The *suki* relationship reported by Wickberg during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where Chinese traders were described to allow credits to their customers is similar to what we observe in Nishinari Ward where loans and discounts are given. However, what may be different is that in Nishinari Ward, the criteria of who customer to prefer may vary depending on the quality of social relationships. This may be incorrectly thought of to be as solely governed by given social situations and institutions such as kinship structure, social duty or traditional obligation. For example, using what I mentioned earlier in the example of *utang na loob* in the case of an organization leader and new member, such examples seem to indicate being traditional in the way that given social conditions and institutions persist in maintaining obligations, but we should not forget that it cannot be solely obligations that factor in in the way that life is lived because the current conditions enable the migrants having some forms of control, such as making selections. This is unlike in the past where external factors completely dominate.

Therefore, the examples of those with loans to Karla bringing in new diners to Restobar Cute and Karla's somewhat fictive kin relationship with her Japanese friend may be seen as indicators of new modes to create intimacies in strategizing life as a migrant. It may

imply an extension of the commercial aspect of a *suki* relationship. Unlike in what was reported in the past where relationships are mostly in due to external criteria, and that commercialism is a separate arena from this, the cases presented above seem to point to a crossing or recombination of these. It could be said that migration is deeply interrelated with how Filipinos in Urban Kansai strategize their everyday.

Also, Wickberg suggests that the objective of Chinese traders in their utilization of *suki* relationship was to assure of economic monopoly in their area of operations. This seems to be lacking in Nishinari Ward. Why do I say so? First, with the ever pervasive options possible in modernity, the goal of economic monopoly cannot be as feasible today as in 19<sup>th</sup> century Philippines. Second, we have seen that the *suki* relationship is are not just a purely commercial or social in Nishinari Ward, but has follows the modern framework of ways of living being in a constant recreation. To recall from earlier discussions, I have pointed that being in a period of modernity supposes that matters that have been perceived as absolute in the past are now open to revision. Social relationships also follow such tendencies of now being more mobile, unsettled, and open. Giddens' argument is that "relationships exists solely for whatever rewards that relationship can deliver." (1991: 6).

For example, Karla's Japanese *izakaya* customers show being committed when they follow her to her new location especially if we consider that there are many options available of where to dine. The individuals who bring in diners do not do so out of a written or verbal contract between them and Karla, but they do so as one's choice. This means that even the customers who seem committed to Restobar Cute may in the future stop patronizing Restobar Cute and move to a new one if they decide to do so. The trust given to those pawning items and close friends may also cease when daily experience will later make it difficult to continue doing so.

Giddens has enumerated on core elements of a relationship in the modern context, and these are: (a) not being anchored in external conditions of economic or social life; (b) sought only for what it can bring to the partners involved; (c) reflexively organized in an open fashion and continuous basis; (d) commitment; (e) focused on intimacy; (f) depends on mutual trust between partners; and (g) negotiated through linked processes of self-exploration and development of intimacy with the other (1991: 88-97). Except for the first point, most of the points raised by Giddens resonate with the case of Filipinos in Urban Kansai

I would like to explore more and continue with the theme of strategies and will view strategies as a form of negotiations in the next chapter. As we see, most of the core elements of a relationship that Giddens enumerates are shown to have converging points with the examples given above. However, among Filipinos in Urban Kansai, we observe that external factors frequently persist. Giddens explains that these are not the dominant forces that they were compared to that of the past, but we see them still pervasive among Filipinos of Urban Kansai such as in *utang na loob*, *suki* relationship, *ugnayan*, and in other type of intimacies. The strategies made by Filipinos in Urban Kansai on tackling intimacies and external factors may be looked at as part of the process of creation of life. These strategies show how boundaries are created, crossed, and maintained. Are there other factors aside from what has been seen, such as socioeconomic factors and roles and obligations, which are interconnected to how life is made and comprehended? It is important to answer how these and other factors influence the way of living of Filipinos in Urban Kansai in order for us to be able to understand how Filipinos in Urban Kansai choose options in midst of the given social context and structures. From these we may be able to know the extent to which negotiations are made or are not made. In general, we may be able to understand the manner as to which the Filipino in Urban Kansai life is lived more completely.



## **CHAPTER 5: NEGOTIATING HOW LIFE IS MANAGED AND PERCEIVED**

In the previous chapter, we have seen the basics of how life is created by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. We have seen how the management of their life are based on past experiences and continue to one's present through an individual's self-awareness, and these become part of strategizing the future. These have been observed when Ate Sara, Tita Anna and Karla share their narratives and strategies that they do. The previous chapter has also revealed on day-to-day strategies to which the quality of intimacies of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and Japanese in their community are based. The modes that Filipinos in Urban Kansai employ show them doing so in characteristic of being in migration. This is when they do so during instances of boundary creating, crossing, and maintaining in their everyday activities. Regarding this, we frequently observe that the given contexts and institutions seem to continuously pervade in the Filipinos in Urban Kansai way of life. The factors that are seen pervasive are social and economic factors and social roles and obligations. Their regular recurrence in the case of Filipinos in Urban Kansai seems to beg for further exploration. We recall in previous chapters that such occurrences of intimacies bounded by tradition are supposed to be absent in modern conditions, as Giddens supposes. However, he justifies that these happen in the modern settings by existing as a crossing or recombination of traditional and modern. He explains that what differs is that in our present times, people have more control of their lives and there are more choices available. However, the above justifications still feels quite insufficient and needs more exploration. From these arises questions, such as the following: What are other factors that influence lifestyle aside from the economic, social roles and obligations? How are these negotiated by Filipinos in Urban Kansai?

I answer the given questions by presenting examples: (a) cases that show knowing other Filipinos in Urban Kansai as a strategy, (b) musings of Filipino women about membership in Filipino community organizations in Urban Kansai, (c) rationalization given by a community leader on their choice of events and activities for Filipinos in Urban Kansai, and (d) my observations to what I thought seemed to be exhibitions good quality of relationships by a group from Kyoto in an indoor sports festival. I continue to refer to the previous cases that have already been presented in the earlier chapters. The commonality of the cases that I present are that, in one way or another, they show that the strategies, such as maintenance, negotiation and renegotiation, are available, chosen and taken in the context of their being Filipino migrants in Urban Kansai. They utilize various strategies in order for them to control their situation. Filipinos in Urban Kansai show awareness of their situation in a continuous way as seen with the way that they construct self-narratives. In turn, they are able to shape events that they report, or the personal feelings that they articulate.

Aside from the external factors that have been observed as pervasive, such as economic factors, kinship structure, social duty and traditional obligation, in this chapter, I draw attention to life constraints, fatal moments, religion, and size of locational area as possible additional factors that shape lifestyle. After the presentation of cases, I evaluate if these may be relevant factors in creating, crossing, and maintaining a way of life, and if so, how Filipinos in Urban Kansai negotiate around them as migrants.

### **5.1. Making Negotiations as a Filipino Migrant**

Filipinos in Urban Kansai are not ignorant to the advantages that they can get out of their social networks. Of course, the turning down of requests may happen; however, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are aware of these possibilities and prefer “to try” (*“subukan”*) as these



present opportunities with potential advantages. A popular Filipino adage to picture the general Filipino reception about trying is “*Walang mawawala kung susubukan*” (“Nothing is lost if tried.”). Filipinos in Urban Kansai are aware that not all requests can be accommodated and show being thankful when these are granted. I first present a case of a Filipino single-mother in Kyoto who I call Ate Cindy to give an example of how Filipinos in Urban Kansai face the predicaments brought by life constraints, fatal moments and the general conditions of being a Filipino migrant in Urban Kansai.

Ate Cindy is a 42-year old single mother to two daughters who lives with her in an apartment complex building in Kyoto City. She first arrived in Japan as an entertainer and now works part-time as a caregiver. Ate Cindy’s narrates that her situation was tough in the past because the father of her children left her and their two daughters, who she describes to be only toddlers at that time. Ate Cindy shared that she did not know what to do with her life. Ate Cindy eventually made the decision to leave her daughters with relatives in Cagayan de Oro in the Philippines while she continued to work in Japan. She described her work in a club to be unstable and which introduced her to vices like smoking, drinking and trying illegal drugs. “*Lubog na lubog ako.*” (“I was in deep.”), Ate Cindy recollected of her previous situation. Ate Cindy has a relatively better life now compared to the past. Both of her children reunited with her in Kyoto in 2014 and the children were finally granted their Japanese nationality.

Ate Cindy is vocal about out her desire to win the Kyoto qualifying round of a Japan-wide singing competition called *Utawit*<sup>20</sup>. She joined the singing contest a handful of times to no avail. She eventually won *Utawit* after a series of tries during the early period that I was conducting my fieldwork. She intimated to me how she boldly approached a professional

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<sup>20</sup> *Utawit* was created in 2004 by the groups Jeepney Press, *Samahang Pilipino* and *Teatro Kanto*. The event also has support from the Philippine Embassy through the Philippine Labor Office (PLO). The event name *Utawit* is a combination of words that mean song in Japanese and Filipino.

Filipino singer to ask for singing lessons and get coaching from her. "*Kinapalan ko na mukha ko.*" ("I thickened my face."), she describes of what she did to express her being assertive.

The professional singer she mentions is also from Kyoto like her and is a regular judge in singing competitions in Kansai. The singer is quite renowned among Filipinos in Kansai. Her most popular song is known and is a frequent request for her to sing in events of Filipinos in Kansai. She has released albums and is a regular performer in jazz halls in Kobe, Osaka and Kyoto.

Ate Cindy is aware that her habits of performing on stage is "bar-like", as her close friend often point this out to her. What her friend refers to being "bar-like" is Ate Cindy's gestures and actions when she performs, which are described to be "*magaslaw*" in Filipino. This means that they are immodest, vulgar, and rough. Her hip movements, glances, and arm gestures are described as sexually suggestive. It is from Ate Cindy's awareness of her habitual *magaslaw* gestures and actions that made her contemplate that these are not appropriate. She thought her habits while performing have to be changed for her to win *Utawit*. It was from this that Ate Cindy decided to approach the professional singer. She describes the professional singer as an acquaintance of hers through the singer's frequent presence in events of Filipinos in Kansai. Ate Cindy confided how she hoped that the singer would recognize her from her previous participation in *Utawit*. She said that apart from requests of pictures together, which the singer gladly grants to Filipinos in Urban Kansai who ask, theirs is not really a close relationship. In the end, Ate Cindy related how she was surprised and is grateful that the singer agreed to give her free singing lessons. She recounted to me how the singer invited her to where she lived for the singing lessons.

*“Ang bait ni Miss<sup>21</sup> Beth. Pinapunta niya ako sa bahay niya para mag-practice.*

*Sabi niya okay naman daw yung napili kong kanta. Pero sabi niya maganda daw kung baguhin ko yung sa intro.”* (“Miss Beth is really so nice. She invited me to her house to practice. She told me that the song that I chose was good, but suggested that it would be better if I change the first part of the song.”), Ate Cindy narrated after I asked her how her practices were going.

*“Wow! Ang bait naman...”* (“Wow! That is so nice of her...”), I interjected.

*“Oo nga e. Salamat talaga...salamat talaga at may tumutulong. Sana para sa akin na ito ngayon...”* (Isn’t she? I am really, really thankful that there are people who help me. I hope that this is my year to win.”), Ate Cindy wishfully prayed.

According to Ate Cindy, the singer shared her tips to improve her singing style, specifically for it to be more appropriate for singing contests and not be *magaslaw*. The “intro” that the singer suggested for Ate Cindy to adjust was the lyrics part in the beginning of the song, which the singer suggested could be better if changed to its “Christian version.” The “Christian version” of the song is sang as a praise to God, a revised version of the original and differs from the original which is a song addressed to a lover. Ate Cindy thought that this was a good suggestion to take as it resonated with the ups and downs in her life.

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<sup>21</sup> The term *Miss* is given to woman based one’s perceived social and economic standing relative to the person. Unlike *Ate* and *Tita*, which are terms based on the same and higher generational level, respectively, *Miss* has implications of putting the person attributed to the term in a higher social and economic standing in relation to the speaker.

Ate Cindy is not able to go to masses every Sunday in the Catholic Church, but like many Filipino Catholics in Urban Kansai, she has set up a space for religious icons in a visible area in her apartment. The area in her living room has a picture of Mother Mary and prayer booklets. Nearby this area are certificates and trophies that she has acquired and accumulated from joining singing contests.

Ate Cindy recalls that it was generous for the singer to accommodate her. She adds that the singer also patiently gave the correct vocal treatment to the song. Ate Cindy claimed that these has entirely improved her singing style which she says made her win the *Utawit* Kyoto Regional Qualifying Rounds in that year.

Ate Cindy's strategy of trying to ask support from a professional singer with the knowledge of the possibilities that she might be turned down is one that has shown positive end results. However, not all forms of getting out of one's comfort zone through trying things in which results are not clear end up this way and requests may not be granted. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are aware of such possibility. However, during constraints, they decide to try their luck to ask rather than not trying at all. There seems to be some negotiations to how requests are decided for on the part of the person asked for support. Since I was not able to interview the singer, we may be able to see the side of a person asked for support through the case of a woman who is asked by some Filipinos in Urban Kansai if she is able to lend them money. I narrate the dilemma on whether to lend money, or not, to acquaintances by Demi. Demi is a Filipino woman who has a telecommunications business and goes to events to get new applicants to sign-up with her business. She is married to a Japanese man who she met when he worked in the Philippines. They live in Osaka and have no children.

While walking from Kyoto Station to the venue of a Christmas party, Demi narrated how the past few days have not really been good to her. She shared that she has received

quite a number of calls from Filipino friends and acquaintances the week prior. The calls' content were all the same, which was asking her if she can lend money (*pautang*) to them.

*"Alam mo ba sis<sup>22</sup>, nung isang araw ang dami daming tumatawag sa akin para utangan ako."* ("You know what sis, there were so many people calling me up the other day to ask if I could lend them money."), Demi shared.

*"Baka naman talagang nangangailangan. Kilala mo ba mga yun?"* ("Maybe they must really be in need. Do you know them well?"), I asked.

*"Kilala naman. Pero alam mo yun. Yung sunod-sunod. Parang kimochi warui ba..."* ("I do. But you know. It all happened on the same day. So it just feels so unpleasant..."), Demi answered.

*"Mayaman ka kasi."* ("That is because you are rich."), I joked, trying to make the situation lighter.

*"Hindi ko pa nga sila pinapansin."* ("I have not responded to any of them yet."), Demi sighed.

This tells us that social relationships of Filipinos in Urban Kansai involve constant creation and recreation, crossing, and maintaining. This means that individual behavior and

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<sup>22</sup> *Sis* is from the English word "sister." For Filipinos, *sis* is a term of endearment given to women who are perceived to be of equal standing in relation to them. It is more frequently heard among women. Men do not usually use term *sis* to refer to other women even if equal in terms of social and economic standing. However, men who are openly *bading* (gay) may be referred to as *sis* by close friends. The usage of *sis* is different to *Sister*, which is another terminology frequently heard among Filipinos in Urban Kansai. *Sister* is usually used as religious reference, as is attached before the names of nuns or other laypersons who act out religious or spiritual roles in Urban Kansai.

lifestyle are by no means unrelated to social institutions and constraints, however within these constraints, individuals have the power to control their situation. I have narrated in Chapter 2 how knowing a large number of compatriots (*kababayans*) is an advantage in migration and that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are continuously introduced to each other. Some Filipinos in Urban Kansai seek fellow Filipinos. Even those who have few things in common spend some time with each other.

The cases narrated above seem to point that some sort of negotiations are being made by Demi to deal with her acquaintances who called her up. Demi goes to events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai to meet Filipinos and takes the opportunity to get sign-ups for her business. It indicates that the transactions put the people involved into a dyadic relation. The situation seemed to be a dilemma for Demi because the situation prompted her to contemplate on what to do. The decision that she made is to avoid her callers for the meantime and stall giving decisions regarding their request to lend money. I recount on some conversations that Demi and I had, including other two Filipino women to cite more examples on making negotiations in the form of boundary creation and maintenance in reference to membership in Filipino organizations in Urban Kansai.

As have been observed in the previous chapter in the cases of Ate Sara (junior high school teacher), Tita Anna (former hotel lounge jazz singer) and Karla (owner of an *izakaya* in Nishinari Ward), strategies, such as negotiations, are a continuous feature in maintaining one's self-narrative. We have we observe that the creation of intimacies by Filipinos in Urban Kansai may have the possibility of being advantageous. The next example I present shows how social relationships are negotiated by using means such as opting not to become official members of community organizations and momentary not joining activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Data for this section are from my interviews with three Filipino women who

often go to events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, but who claim of not being members to organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

In the previous chapter, I referred to a Filipino *izakaya* owner in Nishinari Ward and her reluctance in joining symposiums that are organized by organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The *izakaya* owner also shared that she is not member of them, nor are the Filipinos that she knows in Nishinari Ward. In the following examples, statements of not being a member to organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and distancing of one's self by not joining activities is proclaimed by Ate Laiza, a 60-year-old office worker who is a long-time resident of Japan, Demi and another Filipino woman who used to be active in an organization.

Although very active in events and seen in many Filipino gatherings in Kyoto, Ate Laiza divulges that she is not a member of any Filipino community group. "*Sa Simbahan ako.*" ("I am with the Church."), she clarified to me when I exclaimed that I thought that she was member of the organization to which her friend is a president of. They were often seen together, hence I initially assumed that Ate Laiza was a member of her friend's organization. Ate Laiza explained to me that she believes that her maintaining to be as affiliated with just the Catholic Church, and other Filipinos knowing about her position, is convenient. She justified that this way, she is not identified with one community organization. Ate Laiza thought that being affiliated with a community organization may lead to actually limiting her engagements with other Filipino groups in Urban Kansai.

Ate Laiza pointed to the absence of her close friend, the organization president leader, in the Christmas party that we were currently attending at that time to explain herself further. She divulged that her friend's absence was due to the fissures between her friend's organization and the event organizer of the Christmas party. Ate Laiza added that her non-

membership status to any community organization makes it possible for her to go to any event of whatever Filipino organization that she wishes.

This same reason was seconded by Demi. Demi echoed that she strives to be “neutral” or not to take sides. She explained herself by pointing to disputes, such as what Ate Laisa has mentioned, and opined of her not liking that such quarrels happen between some Filipino community organizations in Urban Kansai. She referred to the advantages of being a non-member to any organization as beneficial for her *raket*. Like Ate Laisa who earlier declared of her affiliation to be solely with the Catholic Church, Demi cited being able to freely go from one event to another even if these are hosted by different opposing organizations. She thought that this way, she is able to have wider options and more opportunities to meet more people for potential sign-ups to her telecommunications business.

Similar to Ate Laisa’s and Demi’s cases, is a narration of another Filipino woman who lives in Kyoto who claims that she was once active in an organization of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, but, for the time being she has chosen not to be active. She shared that the decision to momentarily disassociate herself with her former group was in order to stay away from the bickering between organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. “*Lie-low muna ako.*” (“I decided to lie-low in the meantime.”), she relates of her current position in her organization.

The above narratives indicate examples about the quality of intimacies among Filipinos in Urban Kansai and the various negotiations that migrants do in relation to managing their daily lives. They illustrate how social relationships are created, crossed and maintained in the context of the everyday. These are depicted to be in a frequent state of adjustments depending on situations that necessitate them through making actions that are in between Filipino culture and Japanese culture. I recount an earlier example on the promotion of *ugnayan* in the symposium from Chapter 3. In that example, a council that sees through



organizations of Filipinos in Urban Kansai pushes for regular participation in shared activities among Filipinos in Urban Kansai and also with the Japanese locals in order to facilitate understanding among groups. However, as is pointed in the above examples, there is also an angle where involvement in the Filipino in Urban Kansai Community is thought of and understood by migrants as a means of everyday strategy that is regularly negotiated.

Other such types of negotiations can also be observed in the creation of events by the organizers. I refer to a case that shows rationalization of a community organization leader as to why events and activities for Filipinos in Urban Kansai are created the way they are.

As has been mentioned earlier, the symposium where *ugnayan* is promoted follows the similar usage by the Commission of Filipinos Overseas (CFO), a Philippine government agency. It also seems to follow the multicultural coexistence policies of the Japan government's *tabunka kyosei* framework. This framework promotes the "participation in all aspects of daily life" by Japanese and immigrants in one's local community (Ager and Strang 2008: 177). Organizers of events Filipinos in Urban Kansai explain that the information campaigns that they conduct are those that could benefit Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Examples of information campaigns that are held in local multicultural centers in Urban Kansai are those that tackle topics on health awareness, disaster preparedness and basic workers' rights.

I was able to attend an information campaign held at a local multicultural center in a city in Osaka Prefecture. The information campaign was on disaster preparedness and basic workers' rights. It was held in the same venue as the *Pinoy Fiesta* event that I narrated in Chapter 3. Compared to the *Pinoy Fiesta* which I described as having a parade, food, games, and dances as part of the activities, the information campaign is one where attendees have to sit and listen to guest speakers for two to three hours. There were Filipino snacks like rice cakes (*bibingka*) and cold drinks (*palamig*) that members of the organization who sponsored

the event served during the halfway mark of the event. The number of participants in the information campaign are few and their number did not reach 15 people. Of this number, 10 or so individuals are the organizing group's members who attended to support and boost the numbers. This is less than a quarter of those who attended the *Pinoy Fiesta*, which indicates that the information dissemination campaign sees less interest among Filipino migrants in Urban Kansai.

*"Para sa kanila din naman yun."* ("The events are for their benefit."), a Filipino woman who is a community organization leader and office employee of a Philippine government office in Osaka replied to me when I told her about my observation that there seemed to be few attendees to the information dissemination event that her group organized. She divulged that she is aware that such events are not popular with Filipinos in Urban Kansai and shared that part of their strategy to entice more Filipinos in Urban Kansai to attend is through serving snacks and drinks. She revealed that one of the events that her group conducts, *Zumba* (dance exercise) events see more participants than the information dissemination events that they conduct.

From what we can see, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are more inclined to join activities that they can actively participate. They seem to want to be able to move around and perform. Activities that entail performance and movement are preferred more than listening to talks and going to symposiums. Organizers seem to try to balance these by giving what they think is relevant information to them as migrants at the same time incorporating creative ways that they make them attend the events.

The next example I cite is from a whole-day indoor sports festival held in a municipal gymnasium in a city in Osaka Prefecture. I cite the case to give an example on the quality of intimacy exhibited by a group from Kyoto. I also refer to this case later to examine if having a

smaller area where they revolve around may be a factor to them being able to take part in many shared activities.

Sports Festivals, called *undoukai* (運動会) in Japanese, are held in Japan every year from the months of September to October. The Philippine community in Kansai Region celebrates *undoukai* which is named as Indoor Sports Festival in the announcements that were disseminated by the organizer and its member organizations. The *undoukai* is organized by a council that coordinates various Filipinos organizations in the region. Although having a given name, the event is preferred to be called colloquially as *undoukai* by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. This event is participated by Filipino organizations from the prefectures of Kansai Region. Some Japanese who support migrant causes and/or have Filipino acquaintances also participate in the sports festivities. Representatives from Philippine government offices based in Osaka usually attend and join for the whole-day. In 2018, a Cambodian woman who was invited by a Filipino woman was present in the festivity.

A group from Kyoto came to the *undoukai* with a huge and visible contingent. All were wearing white shirts with “KYOTO” printed at the back. For those who did not have the printed shirt, a computer printed paper was instead attached to their shirt with a pin. There were many of them to be accommodated in the reception area at the same time for registration and *undoukai* team assignment<sup>23</sup> so some of them entered the gym first to lay their bags down. Two young adult male members of the group hanged a big white banner with “KYOTO” written in big bold letters on a wall near their desired spot.

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<sup>23</sup> A person can belong to one of the four teams: Red, White, Yellow or Blue. The team colors are derived from the Philippine flag which is made up of these four colors. Before leaving the reception, each *undoukai* participant is given a long piece of colored cloth (either red, white, yellow or blue) to be tied to any visible part of his or her body as an indication of *undoukai* team membership.



Pic. 2. *Undoukai*

The way that they related to each other seemed to imply that they have spent an ample amount of time together. For example, when they spoke to each other it was devoid of formalities and very casual across ages and genders. The atmosphere was boisterous, lively and at times loud. Like the previous groups who came before them to the venue, many of them complained on why they had to be separated into different teams. They thought that they would be playing as one team with the group they came with. Many requested if they could transfer to a particular team so they could be with their friends. One even remarked that she should be with a friend in the same team or else the friend would not want to continue her participation in the sports festival.

The team selection rules were reiterated and explained to them. The reaction to this was that many started to draw balls many times over until they could get the team color that they desired to be in. Having done so, the group from Kyoto managed to pick white balls which was in sync with what they were already wearing and the banner that they brought. With this type of team selection, it was bound that numbers would not be even between teams. Those in the White Team had more numbers than the other teams (Teams Red, Blue, and Yellow), so some had to be moved to a team which had fewer members. While there are some who

moved out to resolve the imbalance, many of those from this Kyoto group remained on the White Team.

It is important to note that the members of this Kyoto group all go to the same Catholic Church in downtown Kyoto. It seems that the Catholic Church in downtown Kyoto opens the opportunity for them to see each other regularly. The Catholic Church in downtown Kyoto is not only pervasive in their activities, but also in facilitating the regularity of when the group meet. While the role of the church in instigating the formation of Filipino organizations in Kansai is a factor to consider, geography could also be seen to be a possible consideration in the quality of intimacies are that way and subsequently how a life of a migrant is lived. I compare Catholic Church groups in the main locations of investigation: Metro Osaka and its suburbs and Kyoto City and its suburbs. Geographical/physical location may be a contributing factor to one's way of living and creation of relationships. I refer to my observations of Catholic Church groups from the locations stated.

That of the group in Kyoto seems to have spent ample time and many activities together as has been narrated the earlier. In contrast to them, Catholic Church-based groups in Osaka, while very friendly and supportive of each other, have not exhibited the same quality of relationship that is built from spending lots of time together as what I have described with the group from Kyoto. To cite a reason to this, I refer to descriptions relevant to their daily activities and their location.

Kyoto, compared to Osaka, is a much compact city. Most activities happen in the downtown area. Biking around to go from one place to another is easily done. This makes going from activities to activities easy and without a cost. On the other hand, biking from one place to another is more challenging in Osaka. An example to this is the immediate response

given by a new member to his organization leader when the latter asked for immediate shopping assistance in shopping through a Facebook post as cited in an earlier chapter.

Aside from being smaller, Kyoto has only one major Catholic Church that is located in the center of the city. This is unlike in Osaka which is geographically bigger and has more Catholic Churches. Having a local church makes the possibility of forming separate groups according to their immediate area much higher. For their spiritual needs, Filipinos in Osaka go to where it is more convenient for them and are not limited to go to one central church. The presence of more local Catholic Churches in their vicinity makes Filipinos in Osaka not see the need to go to other locations. They only do so when there are special events or when their friends invite them.

It is noteworthy to add that there is another Catholic Church in Kyoto Prefecture located in Uji City. Uji City is located towards the south of Kyoto City. From downtown Kyoto, it takes one bus or train transfer to be able to reach Uji Station, the trip takes from 45 minutes to an hour depending on the combination of mode of transportation used. Filipinos from Uji City attend masses in their city's Catholic Church. They also have their own church-affiliated organization. Compared to the membership of Filipinos going to the downtown Catholic Church in Kyoto City, the membership in Uji City is much smaller.

In addition to what has been mentioned about the possibility of walking and biking in Kyoto that enables movement to be easy, is that the Catholic Church's location is right downtown. It is just a few minutes' walk away for Filipino off-church bonding to places such as a bar owned by their community leader, a Japanese-Filipino-owned bar or along the banks of the Kamo River. During favorable weather, Filipinos who come from church sometimes hang-out on the river banks with convenience store-bought snacks and drinks. Community organizations, apart from church-based ones, have their offices located in Kyoto City. These

geographical and physical features seems to enable bigger possibilities for them to meet regularly, and at the same time are able to offer Filipino migrants with a myriad of options.

From what we can see from the above cases, there are factors that emerge that influence the life process of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. It has been known from the previous discussion that social conditions and institutions, such as kinship structure, social duty and traditional obligation, are pervasive. From what has been shown, other factors such as life constraints, fatal moments, religion, and size of locational area also seem to play a part in the management of one's life. I discuss these in the follow section. Afterwards, I examine the negotiations that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to do in respect of prevailing conditions.

## **5.2. Factors that Influence the Filipino in Urban Kansai Life Process**

There are external factors that have emerged in the previous chapters that regularly appear in the everyday living of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. For example and as has been cited in the Introduction, government policies such as economy driven policies and agreements between Japan and the Philippines play a part in the entrance of Filipinos to Japan. In Chapter 2, global economic conditions have been presented to give context to Filipino migration in general and also Filipino migration to Japan. Basing on field data about Filipinos in Urban Kansai, the social contexts and structures that my informants show some degree of knowledge of when they make life decisions and do their daily routines are those that have something to do with their kinship relationships, social duty and traditional obligation. In this current chapter, the cases that I have presented reveal that other factors, in addition to the above, seem to play a role on the way that the migrants create and comprehend life. These are life constraints, fatal moments, religion, and size of locational area. I recall examples on which these factors are seen and discuss these in this section. I enumerate and describe the

ways that these given social conditions and institutions influence the way of life of Filipinos in Urban Kansai and, in the next section, I explore the ways of how Filipinos in Urban Kansai negotiate them.

I classify the factors that influence the way that the Filipino migrant life is lived to which they show some heightened awareness of into two categories: (a) Social Duty and Obligation and (b) Life Constraints and Fatal Moments. Kinship structures, religion, social duty and traditional obligation are lumped together as part of Social Duty and Obligation because of their commonality of being structures and practices that are thought to have cultural value and show some degree of being institutionalized. Under Life Constraints and Fatal Moments are impediments that impose a restriction on how action and behavior are made and fatal moments, which are happenings and circumstances that are exceptionally significant for a person or group. Among Filipinos in Urban Kansai, migration can be said to be the fateful moment to which other fateful moments are connected. I observed that the size of locational area may also be a factor to consider as there seems to be a correlation between the size of locational area and the ease that two groups of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to come in regular contact with each other. Admittedly, the size of locational area is not as pervasive as the two factors earlier mentioned in the data that I gathered among Filipinos in Urban Kansai and it seems that more research is necessary for this to be conclusively said as a factor in managing one's way of life. There, however, seems to be some relevance in it as a factor in influencing the process of life of which can be tackled separately for further research.

The first factor that emerge as pervasive in activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are kinship structure of Filipinos, religion, social duty and traditional obligation. There are two aspects that also emerge: fictive and real. In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, I have mentioned that Filipinos are described to have a bilateral and cognatic kinship structure. Having this type



of structure is characterized as being mobile, flexible and fluid as noted by many scholars on Southeast Asia, such as Tachimoto and Shimazono. In the foregoing, in what ways do these characteristics influence the way that Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage and think about their lives? I cite examples from cases from other researches and my own field data and relate them to the structural characteristics mentioned.

Urban Kansai satisfies conditions of being in a modern setting. In Chapter 1, the Kansai Region, of which Urban Kansai comprises of, is described as diverse in terms of various aspects, such as natural wonders, culture, demographics, economic position, and modern influences. Urban Kansai present wider kinds of options compared to other adjacent areas. These are in terms of availability of various options to choose from to suit whichever aspect of how to live. Life in Urban Kansai is characterized by fast-paced movement, ease of access, convenience of travel and intensified promotion of *tabunka kyosei* policies in response to the growing number of foreign migrant residents and awareness of their presence.

In this setting, we observe from the cases presented that Filipinos in Urban Kansai continue with tendencies of getting to know more and more people by spending lots of their time together in activities made as a group. They are able to maintain their intimacies with kin in the Philippines on various degrees, such as when they do daily contacts in SNS, send remittances and *balikbayan* boxes. But, at the same time, they are also observed to involve themselves in other memberships in Urban Kansai. Similar to what other scholars have earlier observed from Filipino migrants in other parts of the world, maintaining “family duty” by Filipinos in Urban Kansai is also apparent. Many Filipinos in Urban Kansai continue to provide financial assistance and keep in touch with their kin in the Philippines. I have mentioned previously how they utilize SNS to communicate and monitor their children and family in the Philippines. This illustrate that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to continue with being a

sister, mother, or daughter, and at the same time, they also create and maintain various positions as necessitated by their various memberships in organizations.

In the cases that I presented about Filipinos and in other related research work on them, it is observed that family matters are highly considered during migration. For example, when family matters are reflected on when choosing from the options available to them. Thinking about family matters when making decisions have also often come up in related work about Filipinos living in various parts of the world, such as in Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Taiwan, and the USA. Many Filipino migrants reason out that their decision to move abroad is for the betterment of their family and children. Those who returned to their hometowns, either for short vacations or permanently ("*for good*"<sup>24</sup>), also reason out their family or children welfare as why they did what they did.

The visits to family in children in the Philippines can be seen as a way of creating and maintaining social relationships. Common during homecomings of Filipinos are parties or celebrations where large group of family members and friends gather to eat, drink and do other forms of merriment. During this celebration, Filipinos from abroad hand out money or items from where they come from called *pasalubong*<sup>25</sup>. While *pasalubong* may be thought of by Filipinos as a noun that could have similar usage to the word "souvenir" in English, *pasalubong* may be also interpreted as means to illustrate the crossing or joining of the places

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<sup>24</sup> Generally, "for good" pertains to permanence of an action, however, among Filipinos, the phrase "*for good*" is used to describe a stage in one's movement. It implies a return and has an assumed or planned finality in the action. However, the actuality of whether or not the return is final is uncertain. While the phrase is commonly heard among those who move out of their family or hometown, it may also be generally used to mean returning to a previous situation or as before. For example, "I am in the Philippines *for good*." or "The couple resolved their differences *for good*." In Filipino usage, there also seems to be a connotation that to return is pleasant.

<sup>25</sup> The prefix *pa-* in Filipino means being bestowed or given an object or action, while as a separate word *salubong* means meet or welcome. When these *pa-* and *salubong* are put together, the act of *salubong* turns into an object relating to it (Caballar 2017).

pertinent to the Filipino migrant. Bestowing of items enable the Filipino migrant's family members and friends in one's hometown in the Philippines to have a piece of the migrant experience.

Filipino migrants exhibit trying to or being able to maintain their "family duty" as a reason of being and/or even as they are far away from their family. Of course, personal interests have also often come up in the narratives of migrants. The purpose for mentioning these is to illustrate that references to one's family are frequently cited in Filipino migration discourse. It is important to note that enactment of social duty and traditional obligation and kinship structures overlap with each other. For example, personal family conditions may influence how traditional obligations are upheld by the migrant. For example, regular calls and conversations may be made by a Filipino migrant to create or maintain one's position in the family as a decision maker despite of physical absence.

What I mean when kinship structures pervade in the choices that Filipinos in Urban Kansai make is in terms of how they create and maintain intimacies with their family, friends and personal or business acquaintances. For example, if we recall, creating and maintaining new contacts through knowing key persons have been noted as a strategy during migration even in the past. In Chapter 1.2., I mentioned that common among potential migrants in Southeast Asian is the utilization of social networks, such as pioneers, kin, patrons, brokers, and the like before, during, and after the physical movement. The strategy of maintaining and creating new relationships is said to lower the migrant's costs and risks because of being able to get support from a wide and big number of people. The premise is that support can be acquired from their social networks when sought.

In modern day migration, being introduced to social networks could similarly be a strategy in living. Filipinos in Urban Kansai do not refer to members of their family as social

“network.” Their lives in Urban Kansai comprise of various individuals and groups who seem to be of importance to their daily lives as migrants and with whom which they spend ample time with. Examples when social networks are used in Urban Kansai are when they get information about daily life, help newly arrived Filipinos to settle in Urban Kansai, help *kababayan* during times of constraints, and when they want to achieve personal objectives and goals. It is important to note that the membership of Filipinos in Urban Kansai to their organizations are voluntary. This could be juxtaposed with that of mothers and their offspring, and full siblings, who are mostly thought of to have relationships described as closely related by having blood in common, thus the practice of makings choice is absent.

Adhering to social duty and obligation persists in the way that Filipinos in Urban Kansai interact with each another. Notable are the actions of middle-aged Filipino women towards Filipinos who have newly arrived in Urban Kansai. Most of the middle aged Filipino women have stayed longer in Japan and hold leadership positions in community organizations and most are conversant in Japanese. Examples of when new members are supported and assisted by older leaders are when they are invited to activities where new members may be able to meet other Filipinos in Urban Kansai. They are introduced to other individuals. Some middle aged Filipino women treat new members with gifts and pay for their expenses when they hang out together. Generally, the well-being (for example, physical, emotional, spiritual) of those who are new are looked after by those who are older and more experienced than them in Japan. When Filipinos in Urban Kansai are in need of money, they are able to request for quick loans from other Filipinos in Urban Kansai who they think might have money to spare. In Chapter 4, I narrated the quick loaning in an *izakaya* in Nishinari Ward in Osaka. Aside from monetary assistance, experts are also sought by Filipinos in Urban Kansai for

personal goals. Earlier in this chapter, I narrated the case of a frequent contestant to a singing contest who sought assistance from a professional singer in order to improve her singing style.

Support and assistance are not solely on a person to person level and among those who are members of community organizations. The Catholic Church, and to some extent Christian churches and groups, fulfil social roles to Filipinos migrants, aside from the obvious spiritual roles. It is quite common to see Filipinos migrants taking part in activities held in religious venues. These are not only religion-related activities, but also other activities sponsored by the Catholic Church which may not be based on religion, such as Philippine national celebrations and birthday parties. In Chapter 3, I cited a Filipino religious festival called *Santacruzán* that was held as part of the *Pinoy Fiesta* cultural event in a city in Osaka Prefecture. *Santacruzán* is also celebrated by Filipinos in other parts of the world.

When Filipinos in Urban Kansai experience life constraints, the church does not only provide spiritual support, but also performs various social functions to the migrants. They open opportunities that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to take and utilize in many resourceful ways. In Chapter 1, I cited a JFC and Filipino graduate student going to a place of worship to seek other Filipinos and the company of those who they have some similarities (in the broad and subjective sense) with. Another male Filipino student in Kyoto who encountered financial trouble in his initial months in Japan, shared to have stayed in a nunnery for a few months until he could save for an apartment. This is despite the common knowledge that males are not allowed in nunneries as part of religious prohibition. He described his situation as “*kinupkop*<sup>26</sup> *ako ng mga Sisters*.” (“I was adopted by the Sisters.”).

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<sup>26</sup> The Filipino word “*kinupkop*” is directly translated in various dictionaries into English as “to be cared for, be given protection or be adopted.” However, what is missing from these direct translations is where the word is derived from, which is in the imagery of keeping something or putting something close to one’s chest.

Furthermore, Catholic Churches in Urban Kansai regularly host birthday parties for their Filipino churchgoers. A room is assigned in the church compound or building where Filipinos can meet outside of mass hours. Sundays are also used by enterprising Filipinos in Urban Kansai for sidewalk vending in the street nearest to the vicinity of church for them to sell items from the Philippines that are not available in the supermarkets in Urban Kansai.

Aside from the above, there are also some Japanese locals who have taken up Filipino migrant-related advocacies. Japan government-promoted multicultural coexistence policies are taken up in cities in Urban Kansai. These are able to provide varied degrees of support and assistance to Filipinos in Urban Kansai, such as acting as translators, holding Japanese language classes, translating official documents or announcements from Japanese to English or Filipino, organizing cultural festivals when Filipinos in Urban Kansai can meet other foreign residents, among others.

The cases I narrated about Filipinos in Urban Kansai show how actions of supporting and assisting is not one way, as in patrons or pioneers assisting potential migrants or organization leaders helping new members. While not being in a financially and emotionally stable condition compared those who have stayed longer in Urban Kansai, new members help other Filipinos in Urban Kansai, their organization leaders, and their organization in ways that they can, or “pay it forward” to other Filipinos who are newer than them to Urban Kansai. In Chapter 3, I narrated about a newly arrived Filipino male in Kyoto who was able to respond quickly to a request for shopping assistance of a community leader. In Nishinari Ward, cases where Filipino migrants who are able to get loans and then later, they bring in new referrals or customers to an *izakaya* owned by the person who they borrowed money from has also been reported.

Social duty and obligations could be observed among family members, Filipino in Urban Kansai Community and the Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network” in the Philippines. The social duty and obligations become more apparent during challenges, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic situation. In an information shared by a resource speaker affiliated with a council that spearheads Filipino community organizations in Kansai in an online event hosted by the CFO sometime in October 2020, most middle-aged Filipinos in Kansai have divulged about being worried about the COVID-19 pandemic. They reveal that their salaries have become lower and they are not able to provide financial support to their families in the Philippines compared to the pre-COVID-19 situation. Many of Filipinos in Kansai are engaged in part time work, and own or work in bars and *izakayas*. Unfortunately, bar and *izakaya* operations have declined as social distancing<sup>27</sup> became a counter measure to COVID-19. These have eased for a few months in Japan’s summer season, but the Japanese government has again requested that the establishments close at 9 in the evening due to an upsurge in the number COVID-19-infected individuals in the last quarter of 2020 (The Asahi Shimbun, December 15, 2020).

Filipino migrants are usually reported to rationalize their movement to other countries as part of “household strategy.” Herein, economic rewards that a Filipino migrant receives by working abroad are sent to family in the Philippines in the form of remittances and *balikbayan* boxes, and also in the handing out of *pasalubong* when they go back to their hometowns. According to an information shared by the resource speaker mentioned earlier, Filipinos in Urban Kansai feel worried of them not being able to alleviate the situation of their families in the Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because the family and other social networks

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<sup>27</sup> As part of social distancing in Japan, the Japan Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare (厚生労働省) has suggested three points called “3 C’s” (3 密) to avoid during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are closed spaces (密閉), crowds (密集), and close-contact settings (密接).

have in some ways taken part with their being in Japan, Filipinos in Urban Kansai may see it as necessary that their social duty and obligations are maintained even during the pandemic times. From these statements, of which may be judged as a re-articulation of the obvious, we can see that memberships in Urban Kansai are not strictly confined among kin. Furthermore, the mode of intimacies with family, friends and acquaintances are also subject to various transformations. This could also be seen to transpire the other way around, wherein to live life as a migrant in Urban Kansai is interconnected to the community that they moved out from. I will be discussing negotiations in intimacies, and the other factors, from Chapter 5.3. For now, I continue with presenting the next factor, Life Constraints and Fatal Moments.

According to Giddens fateful moments are happenings and circumstances that are exceptionally significant for an individual or a group. These could either be in a desired or undesired outcome that was faced. On the other hand, life constraints are impediments that impose a restriction on how action and behavior are made. Life constraints and fatal moments that a person experiences are said to lead individuals to take decisions that are significant for their goals or future outcomes.

It is rather common to hear about the various kinds of hardships that Filipino migrants face that led to their move and also about their continuing struggle abroad. News reports in the Philippines regularly report on unpleasant conditions of migrants. Examples are when there are reports that highlight the death of a migrant worker either by being killed by his or her employer or due to suicide, how migrants are treated as slaves or sexually abused, and the loneliness of being away from family only to find out that the money that they remitted has been squandered by family members. Common in the academic discourse is to tackle these in relation to its historical context.



In the case of Filipino migration to Japan, Yu and Zulueta (2014: x) report that feminization of migration of Japan started decades after Japan's defeat in World War II. Migration of women increased during Japan's so-called "bubble-era." As the Philippines became embroiled in unemployment and foreign debts in the 1970s, a policy of labor migration was created by the Marcos government to address this economic problem. In 1979, the number of Filipino women who entered Japan breached 10,000 for the first time where many worked as entertainers (Suzuki 2002: 177).

Filipinos in Urban Kansai do not articulate their situation in the same way as migrant studies researchers and scholars do, such as by citing globalizing influences and relating these to their condition, but Filipinos in Urban Kansai are generally aware of their situation by living and experiencing the consequences of their being migrants in Urban Kansai. I cite from cases that I have presented to illustrate how life constraints and fatal moments form part of the Filipino in Urban Kansai way of life through the situation of the "Victorious Single Moms, Ate Cindy's experience of her and her children being left behind by her partner and her relating these to present or later actions, and how Filipinos in Urban Kansai negotiate the so-called "image" of Filipinos in Japan. Common to the cases are some sort of marginalization related to migration. The experiences and occurrences take place in the context of migration to Japan.

According to the PCCC 2019 report, the problems faced by Filipinos in Kansai have changed. Many of the problems of Filipinos in Kansai during the 1980s to early 1990s were on entertainer-related work. Visa problems, specifically those which pertain to overstaying were also common during that period. The report also reveals that at present, the problems besetting Filipinos in Kansai are mostly related to divorce, ageing, conditions of newly-arrived children from the Philippines and their parents (usually mothers), and issues that involve the growing number of trainees and caregivers recruited from the Philippines.

Many of the activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are related to the issues and experiences that they face. The problems enumerated in the report reveal about the everyday lives of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The acknowledgment and enumeration of problems help us understand the negotiations that Filipinos in Urban Kansai do in living life as a Filipino migrant in Urban Kansai. I cite an example that shows how life situations and experiences are given emphasis by Filipinos in Urban Kansai through the cases of a dance group “Victorious Single Moms,” a group of women who presented a dance in a cultural festival called *Pinoy Fiesta*, and of Ate Cindy, the woman who sought for help from a professional singer to help her in her quest of winning a singing contest.

In the 2013 Trends in Divorces and Percent Distribution by Nationality of Wife and Husband of the Statistics Bureau of Japan, it is cited that divorce percentage of Japanese husband and Filipino wife is 29.8% of the total number of Japanese husband to foreign wife divorces. This is second compared to Japanese men and Chinese women divorces which is at 38.5%. The numbers presented by the SBJ verifies the report by the PCCC that divorce is an issue among Filipinos in Kansai.

As mentioned earlier, this situation cannot be looked on its own without connecting them to global economic conditions and historical conditions. Global economic conditions and historical conditions play a part in the possibilities that make migration a lifestyle. Both enable and constrain. Although, as was also revealed earlier, migrants are able to act out their subjectivities in their given situations. I have cited in Chapter 4 how Filipinos in Urban Kansai show awareness and create strategies in response to their situation. In that chapter, “time markers” and “practical awareness” were mentioned; these were presented as elements that may be able to show what particular periods in life are significant to a person.

Naming one's group can also be related to "time markers" in that they are based on personal experience. The naming of a group as "Victorious Single Moms" reveal to us how the dance group highlights what they want to portray as their present situation to other people. Their group name is also a marker of what they have in common. The adjective used to describe their condition of being "victorious" may also reveal of their past experiences. The specifics of what each of the group members have gone through is not directly mentioned by them. However, there are narratives that many Filipinos in Urban Kansai, especially Filipino women, have in common that Filipinos in Urban Kansai have heard of such kind of stories so many times, but with different actors involved and slight variations in the specific details.

Common among Filipinos in Urban Kansai are stories of Filipino women being left behind by their Japanese partners or being divorced from husbands, many suffer from bad marriages, domestic violence, and raise children on their own. All these while trying to support their families in the Philippines financially. Their position as migrants in Urban Kansai is one that is made up of everyday struggles of being in a foreign land. Their everyday realities are depicted by their being away from their families, cultural and language barriers, and challenges in daily transactions that for locals may be simple to do. In addition to personal difficulties related to intimacies, everyday migrant realities enable the Filipinos in Urban Kansai to explore options and make negotiations in managing their everyday living. They use their situation as a course to how to live their lives in Urban Kansai, such as in voluntarily joining and being active in advocacy or interest groups. There are some who, like the Filipino women discussed in the Chapter 4, use hobbies, interests, language preferences, and intimacies with other Filipinos and locals in managing their everyday lives. JFCs also use their experiences and involve themselves in supporting other JFCs and Filipinos in Urban Kansai. They seek out other JFCs in church, Filipino community organizations, and events of Filipinos

in Urban Kansai. There are some JFCs that did not experience the physical movement to Urban Kansai themselves, but their way of life is seen to also be contextualized by migration. There are also many Filipinos in Urban Kansai who do not have direct experiences to the more difficult conditions that their compatriots (*kababayans*) have experienced, but they are also affected by them.

This could be referred to what Giddens calls “mediated experience.” According to Giddens (1991: 4), “mediated experience” is the influence on distant happenings on proximate events.” In the cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, they are able to experience events that may actually be external and remote to them through news, symposiums, activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, and information from other Filipinos in Urban Kansai and the locals. External and remote as these distant happenings are, they are able enter routinely in the everyday activities of Filipino migrants. We see this happening when some stories become commonly heard and they have reached some familiarity to them. There are many experiences such as that which may be rare in the everyday life of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, like murder or suicide of a compatriot in Japan, and crimes involving JFCs. But, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to encounter these in social media, news reports, and conversations, and these makes them routinely encounter the happenings. An example is a case called Lapin Case which happened in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture in 1988 to 1989. This case highlighted the sexual, physical and economic abuses committed to Filipino women who worked in a bar. This is one that hounds the collective imagination, especially of those who have stayed longer in Urban Kansai. This means that living life in Urban Kansai offers access to contexts which a Filipino migrant may not personally come into contact; however, the boundaries between contexts are crossed as part of their everyday living.

The promotion of *ugnayan* in the symposium held in Osaka, which was narrated in Chapter 3, and of which slogan is also used in other activities organized by the organizations that are overseen by a council, is another example that show that life constraints and fateful moments are part of migrant life. These do not mean that Filipino migrants in Urban Kansai live unpleasant lives. As what has been narrated in the case examples, these factors are interconnected with their everyday lives, and Filipino migrants are able to manage their lives in these contexts through various strategies, such as negotiations.

The above illustrate the Filipino in Urban Kansai in various contexts as to which their everyday life is lived. The various conditions (ex. activities, experiences, options, situations) can be said to be the multiple modes that are able to make Filipinos in Urban “directly” experience occurrences that are happening in other places and give them access to have audiences that are not in close proximity to them. The Filipino in Urban Kansai everyday living seems to be characterized by experience, particularly the migration experience.

As was shown in the descriptions in Chapter 5.1., there are some instances as to which smaller size of an area where Filipinos interact seem to enable them to spend more time with each other and, subsequently, have more shared activities done together. An illustration of this is in the example cited in this chapter about a group from Kyoto in an *undoukai*. I observed that compared to other groups of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, the group from Kyoto seem to exhibit unity and portray having similar identification. Specific examples to which are when the group from Kyoto wore T-shirts of the same color and lettering to indicate affiliation, came to the *undoukai* venue together, and brought a banner with them which was set up in the venue. Apart from these, another example from the previous chapters when Filipinos in Nishinari Ward were observed to freely enter an *izakaya* owned by a Filipino woman. While not as conclusive as the two factors discussed previously, that of size of place where people

interact could also be possibly looked at in enabling crossing, creating and maintaining boundaries for further research.

In midst of social duties and obligations pertaining to being a mother, sister, or daughter, life constraints such as economic challenges, and fatal moments pertaining their personal relationships that shape their way of life, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to make strategies for what is forthcoming. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are observed to use different kinds of strategies in living their daily lives. These are through maintaining habits and routines and negotiating them. Though these are different ways of strategizing, both maintaining and negotiating may be performed to address a given situation, thus maintaining could be also part of negotiating. I discuss how they are able to do so by making negotiations to external factors.

### **5.3. Negotiating External Factors**

Filipinos in Urban Kansai have been observed to utilize different kinds of strategies in their everyday living. Making strategies serve as opportunities for Filipino migrants to be able to control their situation in various extents. The ways in which they do is discussed in this section. Filipinos in Urban Kansai perform two types of strategies: maintaining and negotiating. Maintaining supposes that habits and routines are kept, while negotiating are done with some changes, such as creations and/or crossings and recombinations in habits and routines, or temporarily doing something that is not part of one's habit and routine. Maintaining can also be considered as negotiating if this is done in conjunction with creating and crossing to address a situation.

Below is a diagram on the types of strategies that Filipinos in Urban Kansai utilize and possible outcomes to them, such as including and excluding. In Chapter 4.3., I mentioned that

they are able to do so by being responsive of themselves and of other's actions and behaviour. They show how previous experiences are interconnected with their present, and they use them to think of the future. The strategies that they employ show how migration is intertwined with their everyday experiences through boundary creating, crossing, and maintaining. These are characteristics of migration that I borrowed because they may also be used to describe the Filipino in Urban Kansai life process. I talked about how Filipinos in Urban Kansai make references to past experiences, how interaction with *kababayans* and Japanese locals are managed through habits and routines, and how they are able to use various modes that are available to create and maintain intimacies. Crossings or recombination are also observed among them when they extend personal relationships to commercial ones, and the other way around. Most of these are in negotiations that are related to social relationships. I would like to focus on how, at times, the strategies that they do are conflicting and this makes managing them necessary.

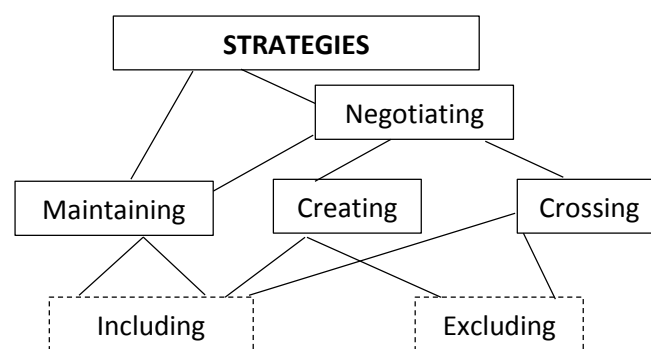


Figure 2. Strategies that Filipinos in Urban Kansai do to manage their everyday lives.

What is observable among Filipinos in Urban Kansai are their negotiations in relation to intimacies. In Chapter 2, Filipinos were described to belong to a type of individualism where they are autonomous, yet are interconnected to the wider group that they belong to. This is how their dyadic relationship is characterized, as the self as premised on others. Furthermore,

in Chapter 5.2., I have pointed that the mode of intimacies of Filipinos in Urban Kansai with family, friends and acquaintances are subject to various transformations. Creation or revisions in the modes of intimacies are also observed among the people from the community that a Filipino in Urban Kansai moved out from in the Philippines. How they are living their life as a migrant in Urban Kansai is connected to the community that they moved out from. Examples to show this were noted in situations where contacts with family and friends that were initiated in the Philippines are not cut-off upon movement to Urban Kansai. Through social media, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to see things as they happen in the Philippines and elsewhere, they are able to talk to members of their family and friends anytime they want. Social media enables having a “mediated experience” wherein physical proximity is not necessary in order to be able to experience things.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai hold multiple memberships in their community to which they join voluntarily. This means that the memberships that they have in them are mobile, unsettled and open. This is the first example of negotiation in intimacies that I observed them to practice. For example, there are some Filipinos who choose not to be members of “Filipino community organizations,” but even so, they are members of the “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” and Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network.” In Chapter 1, I have described the “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” to be comprised of who Filipino migrants know in Urban Kansai; on the other hand, the Filipino in Urban Kansai “Network” include the “Filipino in Urban Kansai Community” and those from elsewhere (Philippines and other countries). There are times when Filipinos in Urban Kansai who actively participate in activities stop their participation in activities for Filipinos for the time being. Their management of membership in organizations and events could be a form of strategy in living their everyday lives as migrants.



The flexibility of how Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage interactions with other Filipinos in Urban Kansai, other residents and Japanese locals illustrate how their social relationships are a dynamic process. Furthermore, the temporary halting and absence made by some individuals in participating in events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai is an example of what was earlier mentioned about the individual and wider group being interconnected.

A paradox seems to arise in being absent to events and disassociating with “Filipino community organizations” on one hand, and maintaining good relations through spending lots of time together in activities on the other. However, for Filipinos in Urban Kansai, this strategy is logical because, as they are able to explain, they are able to avoid warring factions within “Filipino community organizations,” and subsequently, it presents the possibility for Filipinos in Urban Kansai to join more activities with more groups in Urban Kansai.

This practice illustrates a type of flexibility in managing social networks. The practice show both aspects of excluding and including may happen in the same situation. It is excluding in the literal sense of being absent in activities and claiming not to be a member of an organization. On the other hand, it is including in the way that the individuals who practice excluding are able to include and spread out to participate in more activities and know a wider number of Filipinos in Urban Kansai without the limits of being tied to a single organization.

Second, the social relationships of Filipinos in Urban Kansai show crossing or combining of personal relationships with commercial ones. I have mentioned earlier that participation in events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai give Filipino migrants the opportunity for them to spend time and be familiar with *kababayans*. The events that Filipinos in Urban Kansai go to show aspects of commercialism.

To cite examples, it is a common feature for booths to be set up in an event venue entrance and close to the organizer’s reception area. Within the event itself are frequent

mentions of sponsors who donated money or items for an event's undertaking. If there is a program of activity available for distribution in the reception, these, too, will have the logo or name of the sponsors printed on them. It is common to be approached by a smiling Filipino and then be later asked to sign up for a certain migrant service that is being offered (for example, telecommunications services, banking services, insurance, and remittance services, among others) during events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Those engaged in commercialism start with approaching someone and engaging in personal conversations with the person, and after a few minutes, the particular business or agenda will be mentioned and offered. The chats continue for a few more minutes after the commercial aspect has ended, after which the business person moves to the next person to approach and talk to. The newly acquainted are able to spend some time together when the time allotted in events are extended through extra hours of leisurely hanging-out such as drinking, *tambay* in river banks, and karaoke sessions, among others. These may take place some months even after the initial business transaction has transpired.

Even religious events see some commercialism occurring in them. Actually, explicit forms of commercialism are not allowed inside Catholic Churches in Urban Kansai and in the other events held in church event halls, but these are allowed on the street nearest the church. For example, the booths that offer migrant services that are commonly seen in most events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are absent in church events.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai also congregate in birthday parties or other events held in church event halls after masses have ended. Commercialism is observed in the following instances: in street vending during Sundays when masses are held; in conversations among Filipinos during after-mass gatherings that later on segue to talk about condominium units available for sale in Metro Manila, health supplements and skin care, among others; and, in

discreetly handing flyers about one's business venture. There are some Filipinos in Urban Kansai who do not attend masses during Sundays, but use the time for commercial purposes such as selling on a street near a Catholic Church. Some Filipinos in Urban Kansai go for the sole purpose of buying Philippine brand commodities and Filipino food in the street market. Some of them do show up in the after-mass gatherings held in a separate hall in a Catholic Church's compound or building to meet and chat with family members and relatives, friends and other church mates. While these individuals are not able to go to the mass itself, they join birthday celebrations, Philippine National festivities such as Philippine Independence Day, and other activities with other Filipinos in church.

For business needs, Filipino migrants are able to employ the "Filipino in Urban Kansai Community" and Filipino in Urban Kansai "Network." Their relationships are characterized to lean more towards a personal relationship, rather than an impersonal relationship. However, both of these coexist. Being in a personal relationship among Filipinos in Urban Kansai means that sufficient time are spent together and that there is some kind of value and meaning in their relationships beyond commercial transactions. For example, the exchanges described in the cases in Nishinari Ward differ from what can be seen in exchanges in pawnshops. Unlike in pawnshop exchanges, the *pautang* observed in Nishinari Ward necessitates having a personal relationship, such as having some good quality of relationships between the people involved for the transactions to be more successful. The actions of the Filipinos towards each other in this case that I narrated seem to imply that the Filipinos involved in the transaction must have known each other for a long time based on the way that they talked to each other and talked about another person in his or her absence.

*Suki* relationships persists in the business relationships of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. In Chapter 4, these have been initially noted to occur starting from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century by

Chinese traders who gave preferential treatment to their clients in the Philippines. The present-day *suki* relationships turns out to have characteristics that are different compared to that of *suki* relationships in the past. In Chapter 4, I noted how *suki* relationship is described to be mainly as a strategy used for commerce, however, among Filipinos in Nishinari Ward these seem to some cultural value attached to it. The context of having more variety of who or what store to patronize at present also means that cultural value is needed for transactions to be continuous.

Providing *utang* to *kababayan* may be interpreted as a social duty or obligation in two cases that I have narrated. The first narration is when a Filipino woman suddenly enters an *izakaya* in Nishinari Ward and the Filipino *izakaya* owner takes the pawned watch of her neighbor and lends her money. The *izakaya* owner divulges that it is the woman's habit to do so, hence implying that she has known the person for some time and is aware about the other person's personal characteristics. I have also narrated a case of when series of phone calls regarding requests for *utang* from Filipinos in Urban Kansai led a Filipino woman who goes to events to get sign-ups from other Filipinos to verbalize her unpleasant feeling about being asked to lend money to which she described and verbalized in Japanese as "*kimochi warui*." She decided to momentarily not reply to her callers. These examples seem to imply that it may be a social duty or obligation to provide *utang* to Filipinos in Urban Kansai who one knows of, especially if they have been personally sought and if the personal background or circumstances of the one asking for the request are known to them. It may be assumed that providing help to *kababayans* an inescapable obligation among Filipinos in Urban Kansai. However, we may also notice that while both succumbed to lending in the end, decisions such as these have undergone some awareness and pondering regarding the strategies that they are to take and make.

The context to which the Filipino in Urban Kansai life is lived shows aspects of flexibility and openness in the sense that even if personal relationships combine with business relationships, it is not always the case that continuous patronage of one's business automatically results. There are many options that are available in Urban Kansai to which Filipinos can choose regarding how to go through everyday life. An example is the possibility that regular *izakaya* customers may just easily patronize other *izakaya* because they are presented with variety and/or they simply decided to do so. This means that the continuity of business patronage by a customer is an exhibition of control in one aspect of their daily lives through aware actions of choosing. These illustrate that a customer's patronage to a business is not just an outcome of external factors, such being beholden to one person due to knowing the person for a long time or doing many activities together. This also could be so, but as we have seen, that of constant negotiations in the maintenance of intimacies are made by Filipinos in Urban Kansai that should not be overlooked.

Apart from the above are other observations in the way that Filipino in Urban Kansai perceive and manage their way of life. Filipinos in Urban Kansai take church-going as a lifestyle. They use church-going activities as one way of managing their lives in Urban Kansai. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are aware that going to church has some advantages for them. Examples to this are when a JFC goes to church to be around those with similar experience and background as her. Another is when a Filipino graduate student goes to a Christian service and describes himself as a "social Christian." Among Filipinos, it is common to hear the word "social" being added before a word to imply that these are performed as part of group socialization and not as one's routine or habit.

The third other means of which Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage and negotiate intimacies are in creating and having "fictive relationships." Fictive relationships are locally

recognized forms of being related to each other. These are utilized frequently in the management of personal and commercial relationships. An example is the usage of referential terms as a strategy in creating relationships. The terminology of addressing each other, such as *sis*, *ate*, *kuya*, *Madam*, among others (See Table 7), are used to imply something about the quality of intimacies, such as to imply familiarity and good relations between them. Filipinos in Urban Kansai recreate the original usage of the kinship terms, occupational titles, rank-based terms, and identifying terms into their current situation. For example, kinship terms which are originally used to depict “shared bodily substance based on ancestry” (Lambert 2000: 74) between persons are recreated by Filipinos in Urban Kansai to mean that the other person is familiar or known to them, they have good relations between them, and good intentions in mind.

Current terminologies that Filipinos in Urban Kansai use that they have borrowed from kinship terms commonly used by Filipinos are *ate*, *kuya*, *kapatid*, *tito*, and *tita*. Filipinos use the words *ate* and *kuya* to refer to older female sibling and male sibling, respectively. They may also be used to refer to a person who is older but in the same generation relative to the speaker. The English kinship term referring to female sibling, “*sister*,” has also entered common usage among Filipinos to mean either female sibling or friend. Filipinos both use the word “*sister*” and its clipped form “*sis*” to refer to either female sibling or friend. *Kapatid* refers to sibling. Compared to *ate* and *kuya*, it is a self-inclusive term and is gender-neutral. While it can also be used to refer to older siblings, it is generally used to refer to a younger sibling.

As of recent, both Catholic and Christian groups have started to call those who they see in church as *kapatid* to connote similarity of being members of the same religious group. Catholic priests and nuns, who Filipinos refer to as *Father* and *Sister*, respectively, refer to

churchgoers as *kapatid*, but they are referred back as *Father* and *Sister* by their church members.

*Tito* and *tita* is generally is used to refer to mother's brother or father's brother and mother's sister or father's sister, respectively; however, the terms are also used to call persons who are thought to be a generation older relative to the speaker. *Mother* is used to describe the woman who one is born from, similar to its usage in English. However, Filipinos also use the word in jest and endearment to describe and call older women who provide them with life advice and guidance.

Occupational titles based on how they are used in the Philippines are retained in Urban Kansai when one wants to give emphasis on one's occupation or profession as a way of putting the person attributed or referred to in high regard. The Japanese word "*sensei*" is also used to address Filipinos in Urban Kansai who are engaged in teaching jobs. The rank-based terms *sir*, *miss*, *madam* are also of similar usage as to how they are used in the Philippines, which is to connote differences in socioeconomic standing and/or being polite to the person being addressed to. These terminologies are borrowed from the English language.

The identifying terms, *alaga*, *JFC*, *Japino*, *Pinoy*, *Pinay*, *Kababayan*, and *Kabayan*, are also similar to how they are used in the Philippines, except for *haafu* which is a Japanese word borrowed from the English word "half." In Japan, *haafu* (ハーフ) is used to describe a person who has mixed ethnic background and may have derogatory undertones. *Japino* is from two words "Japanese" and "Filipino" and has meanings similar to *JFC* and *haafu*, in terms of implying that a person has both Japanese and Filipino background. *Pinoy* and *Pinay* are terms used to describe people from the Philippines in a more colloquial manner compared to the term *Filipino*. On the other hand, *kababayan*, and *kabayan* have nuances that stress on location. It is a self-inclusive term used to address or describe a Filipino compatriot in a

location outside of the Philippines. Among Filipinos in Urban Kansai, the usage of these identifying terms do not have negative meaning.

The table below is a summary of how Filipinos in Urban Kansai call each other and how terms are used among them:

Term	Usage
<b>(Given Name or Nickname of the Person)</b>	Connotes being equal in terms of social and economic standing.
<b><i>Sis</i></b>	Term of endearment given to women who are perceived to be of equal standing in relation to the female speaker. It implies a familiarity similar to close friends and connotes having a good relationship. The term is more frequently heard among women. Men do not usually use term <i>sis</i> to refer to other women even if equal in terms of social and economic standing. However, men who are openly <i>bading</i> (gay) may be referred to as <i>sis</i> by close friends. Usually used by itself and not attached to the name of a person.
<b><i>Ate, Kuya, Kapatid</i></b>	<i>Ate</i> and <i>kuya</i> is used before a person's given name (or nickname) or by itself. It is used to connote some form of respect for somebody older. <i>Ate</i> is used before a woman's name, on the other hand <i>Kuya</i> is used before a man's name. It is usually used before the name of someone thought to be of the same generation in relation to the speaker. But it may sometimes be used before the name of someone a generation or two older to give an impression that the person being referred to is thought to be of the same generation as the speaker, hence, younger than he or she actually is and may be used for flattery. <i>Kapatid</i> has similar in usage to <i>ate</i> and <i>kuya</i> in its reference to siblingship. However, it differs in that it is person-inclusive, gender neutral, and assumes that the addressed is of the same age or younger. <i>Kapatid</i> has entered usage in religion-related contexts to address those who regularly attend Catholic masses, Christian services and other religious activities.
<b><i>Tita, Tito</i></b>	Used before a person's given name (or nickname) or by itself. It is used to connote some form of respect for somebody older. <i>Tita</i> is used before a woman's name, on the other hand <i>Tito</i> is used before a man's name. It is usually used to call someone who is thought to be a generation or two older than the speaker. Some individuals who do not want their generation to be explicitly highlighted request that they be called <i>Ate</i> or <i>Kuya</i> or just be referred to their given names (or nicknames).
<b><i>Miss, Sir</i></b>	Used before a person's given name (or nickname) to connote higher social status in relation to the speaker. <i>Miss</i> is used for female, while <i>Sir</i> is used for male.



<b><i>Madam</i></b>	Used before a person's given name (or nickname) or by itself to connote higher social or economic status of a woman being referred to in relation to the speaker.
<b>Occupational Title of the Person (ex. <i>Attorney, Sister, Prof, Sensei</i>)</b>	Used before a person's given name (or nickname) or by itself. It is used to show recognition to the professional accomplishments of the person the term is related to.
<b><i>Mother</i></b>	Term given to describe a woman who actively supports (ex. emotionally, financially, etc.) Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The term is used by itself without the person's given name.
<b><i>Alaga</i></b>	Used to describe a person who is supported (ex. emotionally, financially, etc.) by someone. The term is used by itself.
<b><i>JFC, Haafu, Japino</i></b>	Terms used to describe a child or children of both Japanese and Filipino background. The term is used by itself.
<b><i>Pinoy, Pinay</i></b>	Both <i>Pinoy</i> and <i>Pinay</i> is used to describe an individual or group from the Philippines. <i>Pinoy</i> can be used to refer to either a man or woman from the Philippines, however, <i>Pinay</i> is only used to refer to a woman from the Philippines.
<b><i>Kababayan, Kabayan</i></b>	<i>Kababayan</i> means compatriot or a person from the same country as one is from. A fellow-Filipino abroad. It is rarely used to refer to compatriots in the Philippines, apart from politicians who use the term to address constituents in the Philippines when they give speeches. <i>Kabayan</i> is used to address another person when the name of the person is not known, but is recognized as Filipino through hearing a certain Filipino language being used, manner of dressing, tell-tale symbols (ex. being seen with a Philippine passport, wearing Philippines-specific brand products or logos, etc.).

Table 7. Terms that Filipinos in Urban Kansai use to call other Filipinos in Urban Kansai

The terms, particularly the identifying terms that Filipinos in Urban Kansai use are indicative of their current situation, to which the migration experience is central. This migration experience also serves as the context to the emergence of new types intimacies. Filipinos in Urban Kansai cross and recombine terminologies that they are already familiar with in order to describe the intimacies that are created in the course of their daily living. While many of the above terms are similar to how they are used in the Philippines, the frequency of how some terms are used in Urban Kansai is reflective of their experience as Filipino migrants in Urban Kansai. They are also indicative of what recurs more among them

that, of course, may be different from Filipinos in the Philippines and in other parts of the world. For example, *kabayan* and *kababayan* may be generally heard among Filipinos abroad, but this is not commonly heard among Filipinos in the Philippines. Also, how individuals of mixed backgrounds are referred to differ. For example, *haafu* in Japan and *half* used elsewhere may have a different connotation, although both may refer to persons of mixed backgrounds. The usage of *haafu* among Filipinos in Urban Kansai implies that the person referred to is part Japanese. *Haafu* does not seem to be used by Filipinos in Urban Kansai to describe a person of Filipino-Chinese and Filipino-American background in Urban Kansai. These are simply referred to as Filipino-Chinese, Filipino-American or *Fil-am* or mentioning that the father (or rarely, mother) is from a particular country or of a particular nationality. An example is the phrase “*Kano* (Filipino colloquial term for American, but may refer to a person with the physical appearance of having fair skin, light brown or blond hair and blue eyes) *tatay niya*.” (“His/her father is American.”).

In relation to the three examples of negotiations in intimacies that were observed and presented above, is what Giddens (1991: 85) refers to as life planning or ways of preparing one’s future actions through self-narratives. In Chapter 3, I have referred to cases that show how Filipinos in Urban Kansai exhibit reflexivity. The examples revealed that the migration experience provides opportunities for Filipinos in Urban Kansai to understand one’s self and improve. The activities that Filipinos in Urban Kansai organize and that they, locals, other residents and visitors to Urban Kansai participate are means to perform being Filipino. Like the examples given in this chapter, they show various negotiations on this issue. The presentation of being Filipino may come from official sources, such as government agencies, however, these seem to be largely shaped by the Filipinos in Urban Kansai themselves.

Furthermore, these do not have to be anchored on current, traditional and historical contexts of the Philippines, but are, of course, connected with Japan and the Japanese, as well.

For example, an organization whose advocacy is on issues involving Filipino women who have previously worked as entertainers in Japan and their children insinuate that the “family” should comprise of both spouses and their children, in other words and using kinship terminology, being a “nuclear family.” The group promote this in the events that they organize in both Japan and the Philippines. An example of one of their activities is a musical performance that is performed in Japan and the Philippines. This advocacy group has its own theatre group composed of JFCs. Five JFCs who are members of the group are brought to Japan for the play and other activities pertaining to the organization’s advocacies. In Japan, the musical is performed in many different venues in Urban Kansai. In 2018, they performed in Aichi, Kyoto, Osaka, Yokohama, Saitama, Tokyo, Chiba and Niigata prefectures; while in 2019, it was staged in Osaka, Kyoto, Yokohama, Tokyo, Chiba, Nagano and Niigata prefectures. The theatre group performs in elementary schools, universities and partner organizations around Japan. Courtesy calls to the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo are also conducted every time that they are in Japan.

According to the playbill, the musical is “is a story about a creature that is the fruit of the love between two different species, a dog and a crane who went on a journey to find her true identity. She left her family to look for her true father and encountered obstacles on her way to meeting him. But, in the end she was able to meet her father and was accepted and loved.” The musical play plot resonates well with the experiences of many JFCs in the Philippines and Japan. Studies report that problems of settling in a host country are common among transnational migrants and juvenile Filipino students in Japan (Miyahara 2005, Yamoto 2014). In Japan, cases of Japanese Filipino Youth or JFYs who suffer bullying and racism in

schools have been reported (Bonifacio 2011) together with problems in employment, intimacy expectations and unstable identities (Hara 2013). Prior to 2010, the theatre group used different stories every year in the staging of their musical. From 2010 to present, they have been using the current plot which was written for them by JFC playwright living in the Philippines. The language used in the play switch between English and Japanese and has translations flashed simultaneously from an overhead projector.

Many Filipino mothers who were hard-up in life in Urban Kansai brought their children back to the Philippines to be cared for by their mother or relatives. An example of this is the case of a former entertainer who I narrated earlier in this chapter who wanted to win a singing contest and sought help from a professional singer to improve her singing skills. Among Filipinos in Urban Kansai who have their children with them, they show their value for their natal families in the Philippines by regularly sending them *balikbayan* boxes and remittances. The Junior High School English teacher who I introduced in Chapter 4 also comments on the regularity that her friends send *balikbayan* boxes and remittances. The teacher adds that the practice is used as an excuse for them not being able to join her in her travels because they use the money for sending to family.

The above descriptions are in contrast with urban Japanese families who tend to be nuclear (Suzuki 2002: 186). The aforementioned organization has strong local ties in Japan and may have influenced the way that parent-child separation is understood. This affirms what I have stated earlier that the locals' ideas and perceptions on relationships also intersect with how Filipinos understand being Filipino. Hence, what the group advocates in their events about what a Filipino family is may not reflect the current situation of a Filipino migrant family. What they advocate seems to be patterned from Japanese ideals of a nuclear family rather than of a Filipino family.

In Chapter 3, I have presented on the promotion of the slogan “*ugnayan*” in events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Its promotion started from usage of a Philippine government agency that caters to Filipinos overseas. In Urban Kansai, this was picked up by the council that is directly connected to the government agency and they have since used this as a slogan or catchphrase in the events that they organize for Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The catchphrase has gained traction of usage in events of Filipino community organizations when officers of the council use it in event opening remarks.

The council translates the word “*ugnayan*” to “relationship” and 人々の関係 (*hito bito no kankei*), in English and Japanese, respectively. The word sounds general in meaning in the Filipino, English and Japanese languages, however, what the council additionally highlights in it are creating and maintaining good relationships among groups, most especially between Filipinos and Japanese, through understanding that Filipinos in Kansai are “diverse.” The council and their member organizations highlight the so-called diversity of Filipinos in Urban Kansai through events such as symposiums, cultural festivals, sports festivals, and singing competitions, among others. They use the events to introduce or make known that Filipinos in Urban Kansai hold various occupations and backgrounds of origin, but at the same time, they also emphasize some characteristics that Filipinos in Urban Kansai share, such as love for performing, involvement in communal activities, cheerfulness, and being able to overcome difficulties in life. They also choose what not put emphasis on and restrain. All these, however, are subject to negotiations by the migrants, as what has been presented above. Negotiations do not only come from Filipinos in Urban Kansai who are not members of Filipino community organizations, but also from the organization members and their members themselves. Like in the above given example on the ideals of a Filipino family being penetrated

by local ideals of a Japanese family, the same also seems to occur on what it is to be Filipino in Urban Kansai.

This chapter revealed that aside from social and economic factors and social roles and obligations, life constraints, fatal moments and religion play a significant part in the way that Filipinos live their lives in Urban Kansai. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to strategize these give social situations and structures and negotiate them through maintaining, creating and crossing. Their creation of narratives and experiences as a migrant are reflexively interconnected with each other.

## **CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS: THE FILIPINOS IN URBAN KANSAI LIFE PROCESS AS BASED ON THE MIGRATION EXPERIENCE**

In the first part of this dissertation, I described how migration as a lifestyle has been overlooked in migrant studies. There are, however, studies that have been conducted on the topic of “lifestyle migration.” Prominent among these are studies conducted by Karen O’Reilly and Michaela Benson. This form of migration insinuates that people move mainly due to individual motivation. This particular form of migration is described to be made in search for a better life by those who are economically more affluent. Studies on “lifestyle migration” have mostly been conducted among the “white and Western” (Benson and Osbaldiston 2016: 408) and a few among East Asian migrants, specifically those from Hong Kong (Stones, Botterill, Lee and O’Reilly 2019) and Japan (Ono 2015). I argue that discussing migration in terms of types is narrow and may not be suitable to describe the process of how migrants live their lives because studies like this focus mainly on the reasons for movement and mostly relate these only up until their present situation.

Similarly, most studies conducted on Filipino migrants are in relation to the reasons that have pushed them to go abroad. Such studies emphasize that Filipinos leave the Philippines mainly for economic reasons and in order to seek for material improvement in their livelihood. This kind of portrayal is common among those doing research that examine the results of international labor on national economies, communities and households, such as in the studies conducted by Akashi (2018), San Jose (2018), and Vilog (2018), and also prevalent among those who singly focus on the structural factors that operate in migration, such as the differences in socioeconomic development levels between the sending and receiving countries. I argue that while this is true and that many Filipinos do go overseas for economic

reasons and that structural factors do play an role in migration, such lumping of migrants into migrant forms and focusing on structural factors alone may not be able to provide us with sufficient insight with regards to the migrants' understanding and managing of their everyday lives.

It is for these reasons that I propose considering the view of Filipino migration as a lifestyle in terms of a process in order to supplement the results of previous researches that have been conducted on Filipino migrants. This means that I define lifestyle not only as one that is practiced by affluent groups or any group, but lifestyle as a perception of one's way of living. I argue that migration is connected to the manner that Filipinos live their daily lives. I narrate cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai to show the process of their everyday living. In the Introduction, I listed four research questions that guide me towards a revised way of looking at Filipino migration. I re-enumerate these below to quickly recall them.

1. In what conditions do Filipinos in Urban Kansai show being able to reflect upon and act on their and other peoples' actions and behaviour? In what everyday situations do they perform these?
2. How do Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage and understand their lives?
3. What strategies do Filipinos in Urban Kansai employ in managing their lives and cope with given social conditions and institutions in a Filipino community and Japanese society?
4. How are Filipinos in Urban Kansai reflexive with regards to Filipino identity?



The outcome of my research shows that the Filipino in Urban Kansai way of living is based on the migration experience. The Filipino migrants perform migration in their everyday through boundary creating, crossing and maintaining. This is consistent with the viewpoint that migration is not just a one-off happening based on the physical movement of a person to another location, but is a continuous process.

The results that were revealed in Chapters 3 to 5 show that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are regularly faced with various kinds of constraints that are connected to past and current contexts, but they are able to employ these to touch on the future. I mention the future not as end-directed, but to imply a movement. In Ingold's (2011: 4) terms as "dwelling" or "becoming within the continuum of the lifeworld." Social conditions and institutions serve as the backdrop to how Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage and perceive their lives. These social conditions of Filipino migrants are highlighted quite much in media, especially in news reports in the Philippines, as Tadiar (2002: 269) also observes. This is to the extent that not much thought is given about migrants having the potential to be active agents. Furthermore, stories that focus on being victims remain strong in the narratives used by organizations based in both Japan and the Philippines who advocate for women and their children's causes. Many of the advocacy groups problematize about a given social situation and try to take on a commanding role in managing migrants. This has also been noted by Celero in her study of migrant support organizations (MSOs) wherein she writes that:

"MSOs have labored toward directing families on how to 'become and do family' by channelling resources for practicing parenthood, (re)constructing family relationships, unifying the voices of families with common struggles, and reorienting them on the ideals of a 'good' family'(2018: 237)."

This dissertation acknowledges the constraints brought about by social conditions and institutions, however, the migrants do not just accept them, but are able to actively and expertly manage them. These were observed in the way that they relate to other Filipinos in Urban Kansai and Japanese locals and through their actions in the events where they go to. They are observed to involve themselves with other individuals, groups, and activities in a voluntarily manner.

It is worth retelling the context that enable Filipino migrants to be able to take on an active role. Our present time has enabled the possibility to have many options available compared before, there are more activities and organizations that cater to specific interests of people. Furthermore, places are easier to go to, hence, are more accessible. Transportation and communication fees are also much cheaper compared to what it costs in the past. These are conditions that are interconnected to the way that Filipino migrants understand and create their lives.

The topics and activities in the events organized for Filipino migrants and the narratives that were shared by Filipinos in Urban Kansai are revealing of their general concerns. The general concerns of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are those about dealing with stereotypes related to their work, reaching out to get to know compatriots (*kababayans*) in Urban Kansai and the locals, being involved in matters in their immediate community, and knowing and relaying to *kababayans* what is available for them in Urban Kansai to take advantage of, among others. The results also indicate that they are able to use events as means of managing the past. As a result, for Filipinos in Urban Kansai, the past, present and future are bound together in their everyday lives.

Filipino migrants exhibit making personal choices. They are knowledgeable about what their options are and the possibilities of taking a particular option. They are able to comprehend the choices in relation to the understanding of one's self and of self-improvement.

This study's results revolve around two main points. These are reflexivity and the relevance of participating in shared and communal activities by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. I refer to these in the following sections and relate to the results to be able to examine the implications of my research results to current discourse migration studies. I have divided the sections into discussion topics that answer this study's main research questions.

### **6.1. Migrants' Perception and Management of their Lives as Migrants**

The study's results that were presented from Chapters 3 to 5 reveal how Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage and perceive their lives as migrants and the process involved in managing and perceiving their lives. Chapter 3, in which field data from two Filipino organization-led events and one spontaneous event were narrated, reveals that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to reflect upon and act on their and other peoples' actions and behaviour. In other words, they show some kind of awareness and control of their and other peoples' actions and behaviour. They are informed about their current situation and are able to give reasons to articulate how they arrived at their present condition.

These resonate with Giddens' concept of reflexivity, which is defined as being aware of the external and structural forces that shape peoples' actions. People are not only shaped by external and structural forces, but they are also able to alter these given social contexts and institutions and, subsequently, their situation.

Reflexivity can be seen among Filipino migrants during spur of the moment situations, such as when they are invited and asked to join activities of compatriots. Examples of activities that they do together with fellow Filipinos are participating in formal organization-led events, hanging-out, and shopping, among others. Filipinos in Urban Kansai spend lots of time with compatriots and they get to know a growing number of people from them. Their actions show not just in being “caught in the flow of the situation,” but also that they are able to decide for their own as to what degrees they involve themselves with other individuals or groups. In other words, their participation or engagements are voluntary.

Additionally, data from Chapter 4 reveals that Filipino migrants’ performances of reflecting upon and acting on their and other peoples’ actions and behaviour are not limited to spur of the moment situations, but also happen as part of the continuity of everyday living. Filipinos in Urban Kansai practice reflexivity in their everyday by showing some degree of awareness in maintaining the consistency of their actions and behaviour. These consequently form part of their continuing self-narratives. In Chapter 4, I provided individual cases of four Filipino women who all showed awareness of them managing their everyday lives as migrants by employing different kinds of strategies. The women described differ on how they see themselves as Filipino migrants in Urban Kansai. One woman describes herself to practice different hobbies and interests from that of other Filipinos, another woman thinks of herself as not being highly educated, hence, sees attending symposiums organized by formal organizations is not suitable to her, and one woman distinguishes herself from other singers in Japan through using polite forms of Japanese. Despite the variances on how they see themselves as Filipinos in Urban Kansai, what is common among them is that they are performing actions of managing self-narratives, making themselves better, and these enable them to plan ahead. The specifics of strategies differ depending on the previous and present

experiences of an individual. However, Filipino migrants perceive their lives as being able to be managed and controlled, regardless of given material constraints that occur.

An example that recurs frequently in the cases is about managing social relationships. Filipinos migrants are able to employ various means that are obtainable to them to handle matters pertaining to social relationships. In Chapter 1, I presented studies about groups in Southeast Asia that show how having and utilizing social networks are thought of advantageous during migration. A comparison of these to the cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai reveal that there have been changes and revisions in managing intimacies. Changes and revisions in their actions can be seen in making short, daily conversations with family, kin, friends and acquaintances, and in the specifics of doing *libre*, gifting and *utang na loob*. Intimacies are also said to be created and recreated through remittances, *balikbayan* boxes, and chats online.

The present period seems to have enabled Filipinos in Urban Kansai to be able to have the availability of various means for them to choose from and utilize in their everyday and of which have not been available in the past. These means have made changes with some aspects of how of daily living is performed. An example is the employment of digital technology which enables migrants to maintain interactions with family and friends nowadays even if they are far apart. New means has also enabled the creation of new social relationships with those who they happen to meet or are introduced to while in Urban Kansai. Giddens proclaims that the present period is one where “tradition” has no place in and is supposed to be absent in modern conditions. However and as mentioned earlier, this is not true for Filipinos in Urban Kansai, because “social roles and obligations” are seen to strongly persist and play a continuing part in the their everyday living as migrants. In spite and because of

these, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are seen utilize external factors to manage the past with their present lives and then reflect on these for the future.

Changes in the ways of doing activities with compatriots has also been observed with other migrant groups to manage the changes in social conditions and institutions. In a study on Slovene immigration to Argentina during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Slovenes were reported by Candellero, Horst, and Sukich (2018) to establish various organizations for the purpose of mutual aid and gathering. They recount that mutual aid societies grew in Argentina in parallel with the state and facilitated to channel the demands and respond to the varied needs of the immigrants. Changes in the socio-historical context in both the Argentinian and international occurred. As a response, various survival strategies became employed. These were in form of the following:

“...artistic and cultural activities for children evidenced in the concrete stage built in the backyard, the kitchen linked to the balls and concerts, the construction of the main hall for social gatherings, the practice of sports reflected in the basketball court, etc. (Candellero, Horst, and Sukich 2018: 10)”

What these tell us is that migrants are expertly able to decide for themselves and they are able to employ creative means in dealing with external factors as ways of managing life. Thus, it is outdated to rely on the so-called “push factors,” which are aspects that make migrants leave their place of origin, and “pull factors,” which are what draws them to a certain place, as a way of explaining migration.

That of migrants being active and that migration is a continuous process can also be understood from a research on Hong Kong migrants observed by Stones, Botterill, Lee and

O'Reilly (2019: 50-51) who reveal that Hong Kong migrants to Mainland China are able to inhabit at least two geographical locations. They explain that these locations exist together in the migrants' "habitus, memories, and imaginations" and in some instances, they physically inhabit both locations for shorter or longer durations. Importantly, they add that all migrants have "marks, traits, memories, and images" of the place that they moved out from and carry these to their new, everyday lives. They conclude by saying that the migrants "actively sustain connections between the two worlds, of continuing to nurture relationships embedded in the past, still touching the present."

Filipinos in Urban Kansai also show some similar features with the Hong Kong migrants to Mainland China, particularly when they make complex negotiations in their everyday living. This adds credence to my proposal that we are able to understand more about migration when migration is viewed as a process on how to live, rather than just adopting migration type classifications, thinking of on external factors as limiting, and focusing on the reasons for movement.

It is important not to overlook perceptions about the future as part of the process. Filipinos in Urban Kansai were seen to differ from Hong Kong migrants in that the future is also connected to their migrant lives, apart from past and present structural contexts. Filipinos in Urban Kansai show many instances of being able to use their awareness of the past and present in order to strategize for the future. These indicate having control, not only on occurrences at present, but also for what is upcoming, whether in the immediate future or much longer.

Takahata (2018: 274) revealed that Filipino migrant women in Sakae-Higashi, Nagoya do their part of "overcoming" the stereotypes of them as working in the "sex-industry" by taking part in changing the identity of the entertainment area in Nagoya, to which many live

and work. They are able to do so by constructing the appearance of “Filipinos participating in and contributing to local community life.” According to Merriam-Webster Online Thesaurus, “overcoming” is “to achieve a victory over something.”

I deem that instead of “overcoming,” it may be more appropriate to use the word “managing” to describe the cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. “Overcoming” has overtones of it being final or leading to finality. However, from what I have observed, the migrant experience is not only a one time moment of physical movement and it does not only involve the person who moved out of a community. Rather, the migrant experience extends from the person who made the move to the people and community that a migrant moved out of. The migrant experience reveals itself in everyday situations. This is consistent to what I have stated regarding my position in the Introduction of this dissertation, where I articulated that the migration lifestyle is a processual and continuous process.

In Jabar’s (2018) study on parenting experiences of Filipino mothers in Oita Prefecture, Japan, he concludes that there are some mothers who were conscious of instilling Filipino cultural values and practices in their children. However, there were also cases that make it challenging to teach Filipino culture to children, such as when the Japanese father resist to the idea of Filipino culture being taught to their children and the strong influence of the school. Jabar notes that intercultural parenting exists although it seems not pronounced because “one parent many decide to simply silence their culture in favour of the other as a matter of choice or as a matter of chance” (153). Whatever it may be, what these indicate is how the parenting experiences of the Filipino women are performances of negotiation embroiled in the processes on migration.

Jabar has not included the viewpoints of children nor their fathers in his study. In this respect, I cite from studies conducted by Espiritu (2002) on the construction of identities of



children of professional immigrants from the Philippines in the USA. She uses life stories of second-generation Filipinos living in San Diego County, California. She concludes that the Filipino-Americans concurrently confront two situations: first, is with political pressure to assimilate, and second, the racism that signals to them that they will never be accepted. She adds that her Filipino American informants use strategies “to construct distinct new cultures to subcultures and to rework dominant ideologies about their place in US society” (170).

Similar to Filipinos in Urban Kansai, the actors in the two studies show both dynamism and continuity of the migration experience with their lives. The aspect of dynamism is an admittance that changes may happen in the way that their lives are perceived and the way that narratives are constructed. Furthermore, there is an aspect of continuity in the sense that the migration experience somehow finds its way to be part of the way that one lives his or her life. The making of Filipino migrant lives are made in dialogue with this experience.

## **6.2. Living Performative and Interactive Lives**

The Filipino in Urban Kansai way of life is a way of life where being performative and interactive is a common practice. Among Filipinos in Urban Kansai, being performative and interactive occurs in two dimensions. First, when Filipino migrants actively participate in activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai in the literal sense, and, second, in that their participation in events allow them to express what they perceive about being Filipino.

In Chapter 1, I enumerated the different types of activities that are available in Urban Kansai. I described that the activities are conducted with extensions and overlaps with each other. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are observed to go to these events voluntarily. The activities are varied and their participants do not compose of the same people all the time. However, there are some individuals who attend certain events more regularly. Also, there are activities

where Filipinos heavily participate in, such as religious masses and services, dance activities, and cultural festivals, which serve as activities where they are able to meet a bigger number of compatriots.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai are observed to enjoy participating in events to which they are able to show their love for performing, such as dancing, singing, cooking, and preparing and doing activities. In Chapter 3, I narrated about dance activities in cultural festivals and symposium where most Filipino migrants who were present joined. It is a characteristic for activities of Filipinos to have song and dance performances regardless of the main agenda or topic of the event. Whether the dances were planned or spontaneous, accurate or not, or synchronized in steps or not, did not seem to matter. Filipinos in Urban Kansai show no hesitation in performing.

I have described in Chapter 1 how Filipinos are able to be acquainted with compatriots in Urban Kansai and how they are able to create and maintain relationships with them. Integral in this process are spending lots of time with each other and having shared experiences. Those who have stayed longer in Urban Kansai look after the welfare of those who are new. Many of those who have stayed longer in Japan have reached some security in living and hold key positions in community organization. They frequently invite newly arrived Filipinos to join in activities and they shoulder the most of the costs. In Chapter 3, I suggested that acting out their actions in activities that are conducted as a group solidifies the quality of intimacies of the people concerned. As the newly arrived Filipinos spend more time with compatriots in the community or organization, they get to know more about each other and start revealing about themselves to others. They begin to talk about themselves to other individuals. The people who are being confided to listen and relate the topics talked about to

themselves. They do not keep their thoughts to themselves, but share their personal experiences to others.

In a study conducted by Balgoa (2016-2017: 115) among Filipino migrants and their participation in a big Philippine Festival called Barrio Fiesta held in Yokohama, Japan, she reveals how “signs and symbols” are employed to promote unity and similarities among Filipinos in Japan. In the case of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, shared experiences as a result of doing activities together frequently are what enable the cohesiveness in the quality of their relationships. My findings among Filipino migrants echoes Victor Turner and Richard Schechner, who both put importance on performance. For them, the “working” is more important than the “work.” Also, more than having a sense of unity and similarity is an objective. Filipinos in Urban Kansai showed playing an active role in managing and sustaining their self-narratives as well as other personal goals. Indeed, as Turner (1987: 24) writes “cultural performances are not simple reflectors or expressions of culture or even of changing culture” but may themselves be active agencies of change.”

How Filipinos in Urban Kansai interact with others is interconnected with how lives are managed and understood. Their actions are not merely responses, but much more. An example is in the interest of fulfilling goals or objectives. In Chapter 5, I have noted of how Filipino migrants are able to use participation in activities as a way of managing not only business matters, but also relationships. How they understand relationships of Filipinos in Urban Kansai reflects on their practices of dealing with each other. They show understanding that relationships are nurtured through their participation in one another’s affairs and they also know that these can be momentarily truncated at will. They understand that relationships that are temporarily halted could be reignited again. They are aware that in

Urban Kansai, the importance of knowing more individuals is more advantageous than commitment to few people.

The performances of interactions of Filipinos in Urban Kansai with others are what sustain their social networks. Active involvements in different activities act as areas where migrants may be able to intersect and meet. To recall, not all Filipino migrants go to activities together and at the same time. They also do not know everybody who they see in an event. However, they are connected by at least one individual. They are introduced to other people at the same time when they become more acquainted. This is how Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to create social networks with other people of which origins and backgrounds are different from them.

Examples like these have also been noted by Bagley, Madrid and Bolitho (2002) in their research on Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong. The Filipino workers in their study were observed use their gatherings during their days off from work to be able to make their lives as overseas workers more acceptable and tolerable. Bagley, Madrid and Bolitho have observed that Filipinos interacting with fellow Filipinos in public squares enable awareness of assistance that they can get from formal institutions, support from informal groups, and practices of mutual counselling and nurturing.

Goss and Lindquist's (1995) study on Filipino migration reveal on interactions in social networks. While Goss and Lindquist focus more on migrant networks rather than the performances and interactions that are made by the migrant networks, their descriptions are able to show the engagements that happen as a result of interactions. They relate to social networks as:

“...webs of interpersonal interactions, commonly comprise of relatives, friends, or other associations forged through social and economic activities that act conduits through which information, influences, and resources flow. (329)”

That of having dyadic relations, as a “self that is premised on others” as Tachimoto elucidates, can be understood more with the view of how intimacies are created and sustained by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Additionally, through using the point of view where life processes are highlighted, we are able to understand that the processes involved in managing their relationships include making strong assertions in the performances of human agency.

Another point of divergence of Balgoa’s findings from mine is when she states that when it comes to “self-processing and self-examination,” which emphasizes on differences rather than similarities of Filipino migrants in Japan, is that these happen within the confines of religion-related activities. These findings seem to disagree with the case of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, specifically with how she understands how activities are. As I have narrated in Chapter 1, activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai frequently have extensions and overlaps with each other. Hence, there are difficulties of concluding that one activity is entirely independent of another. Filipinos in Urban Kansai, reflect upon and act on their and other peoples’ actions and behaviour, not in one segment of their lives, such as religion, but as continuing in their everyday.

Stones, Botterill, Lee, and O’Reilly (2019: 62) write that the continuity of the past into the present provides migrants with social and psychological resources to sustain their current lives. Filipinos in Urban Kansai also actively participate in events that are sponsored by their local government. Many of these are held in multicultural centers and offer services and activities, such as Japanese language classes, subject review classes, and events that bolster

mingling with other foreign residents. Even as they form new relationships with other people in Urban Kansai, Filipino migrants do not cut their relationships with people in their hometowns. They actively maintain their contacts with them through regular use of Facebook. They are able to renew their relationships through regular returns and they bring their children back to be introduced to family, kin, and friends. As I have noted earlier, the migration experience is not just experienced by the one who left. These also become part of the everyday life of those back in a migrant's place of origin through shared experiences brought about by tokens, such as *pasalubong* or stories of live abroad, among others. The experiences are able to extend into the imaginings of those in a migrant's hometown and they also take part in the migration process.

How to induce active participation from migrants with one's local community has been an important concern as of recent. Measures that are made to tackle these have been implemented by government organizations (GOs) and non-government organizations (NGOs). Some examples using their respective key slogans are Canada's multiculturalism, Japan's *tabunka kyosei*, and the Filipino in Urban Kansai's *ugnayan*. In the Canadian context, multiculturalism as an official policy is premised under having a multiracial, multi-ethnic, liberal society. It aims to resolve ethnic and cultural divisions through welcoming diverse immigrants and valuing their cultures (Thobani 2007: 44). On the other hand, "migrant "integration" in Japan is framed according to the Japanese government's promotion of *tabunka kyosei* (多文化共生, multicultural coexistence) which proposes of "participation in all aspects of daily life" by Japanese and immigrants in one's local community (Ager and Strang 2008: 177). In the case of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, *ugnayan* began to be used to describe the relationship of people. The use of the catchphrase is instigated by the coordinating council in Kansai following the similar usage with how a Philippine government agency uses it, which is

that to imply about a positive quality of relationships. They aspire for creating social relationships not just among Filipinos, but with the Japanese, as well. They perceive that activities of *ugnayan* enable social contacts to be much wider and the quality of intimacies to be better. GOs and NGOs have created programs and policies as measures with varying degrees of creativity. Earlier in Chapter 6.1., I cited a study about Filipino migrant women in Nagoya who were described by Takahata (2018: 274) to be “participating and contributing” in their community.” Studies such as this show how migrants manage state-level policies. In the following section, I discuss how Filipinos in Urban Kansai practice their agency in managing and coping their lives in a Filipino community and Japanese society.

### **6.3. Managing and Coping**

Chapters 4 and 5 show an interplay of various elements that form part of the Filipino in Urban Kansai lifestyle. In Chapter 5, I have enumerated how Filipinos employ strategies and manage various external factors that continuously exist in their lives in Urban Kansai, such as social and economic factors and social roles and obligations, life constraints, fatal moments and religion. It was observed that Filipino in Urban Kansai shape social structures and, at the same time, the structures determine what people do. The cases that have been presented in this study show that structures are facilitating, in both enabling and constraining ways, to which Filipinos in Urban Kansai show being able to manage well in the course of their everyday living. More than these, they are also taken as opportunities for betterment and growth.

The Filipino migrants were observed to transcend given social conditions and institutions. The previous section discussed the migrants’ way of living performative and interactive lives. It is through actively participating that they are able to manage and cope with given social conditions and institutions in the Filipino community and Japanese society.

In regards to their participation in the Filipinos community, Filipinos in Urban Kansai were observed to go beyond from similar membership in organizations into having a more intimate type of relationship with other people through frequently and actively engaging.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai are reported to create relationships through involvement with other people. Their initial introductions are made through a commonly known person or through approaching a compatriot and introducing one's self. In the latter, Filipinos in Urban Kansai usually mention people who they think the person who they are conversing with knows. They highlight common backgrounds, experiences and interests during their conversations. Importantly they do many activities together. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are also able to create relationships with Japanese locals through having shared experiences. They are active and visible in the Japanese society through the nature of their work (eg. caregivers, teachers, *izakaya* workers, host/hostess workers, among others) and through community participation, such as joining Obon Festival dances, community beautification projects, responding to *tabunka kyosei* projects of the local government, among others (PCCC 2018, Suzuki 2002, Takahata 2018). Their being performative and interactive allow them to have more control of their lives. Being performative and interactive also facilitate them to go beyond initial differences on socioeconomic background with fellow Filipinos. As a result, Filipinos in Urban Kansai do not limit their movement to compatriots and they are able to engage with the Japanese society as well as with other foreign residents.

The cases of Filipinos in Urban Kansai have revealed some departure with regards to descriptions about modern conditions, strategizing and social networking which open new ways for these concepts to be thought of. A revitalized way with which these concepts may be understood are conditions are as choices instead of limits, and strategies are as



opportunities rather than responses. Also, this could be with regards to how the existence of “tradition” in our present time is understood.

In the earlier chapters, that of our present-day context as corresponding to what Giddens has expounded about modernity has been acknowledged. These are seen in easily observable features, such as in the availability of myriad of options to which people voluntarily choose and do, the fast-paced lifestyle, ease of accessibility of going to places, and the idea that living in the modern times releases people from traditional content. One aspect of which I have often commented as a divergence from the Filipinos in Urban Kansai case is that “tradition” continues in the everyday living of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. These are through the persistence of “social roles and obligations,” such as being financial supporters to family and kin, providing care and nurturance to children left behind in one’s hometown, Filipinos in Urban Kansai who have stayed longer looking after the newly arrived Filipinos, among others.

In these situations, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are seen to manage the past with their present lives and then reflect on these for the future. For Filipino migrants, “traditional” aspects do not get in the way of their exercising their migrant agency to manage and cope with their conditions.

Giddens (2017) explains these occurrences are due to “cosmopolitan overload.” He argues that modernity has given rise to “counter trends,” such as reverting to sectional divisions and ideology, return of nationalism, and emergence of religious fundamentalism. However, his enumerations do not seem suitable for Filipinos in Urban Kansai as their performances of their lives do not seem to be “counter trends.”

The view of religion as a counter-discourse has been reported among Ghanaian Pentecostals in London by Daswani (2010: 181) among which he describes as employing

religion in order to understand their present and to look “beyond” the nation-state, the world, and towards and “elsewhere.” Like Filipinos in Urban Kansai, Ghanaian Pentecostals in London use performance and interaction and are forward-looking. Ghanaian migrants are reported to use “participation in technologies of self-transformation and (through) performances such as prayer and evangelization” to “help” their host country.

In Urban Kansai, the Japanese locals play an active role in the way that the Filipino migrants understand and perceive daily living. They serve as mediators of Filipinos to other Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Examples were reported with how newly arrived Filipinos in Urban Kansai are introduced by Japanese individuals to Filipino community organizations, and brought to the local Catholic Church or Filipino in Urban Kansai events. The multicultural centers that work under the auspices of the local government and follow *tabunka kyosei* policies also affect the choice of what Filipinos in Urban Kansai show about themselves. Therefore, what the migrants present about themselves are within what they think might be tasteful or tolerable to the locals.

The Japanese locals are part of the process of reflexivity of living and Filipinos in Urban Kansai are attuned to what the locals think. The cases that I have narrated show that Filipinos are aware of how locals perceive them, such as having the stereotype images of Filipinos in Japan. They manage and cope by being attuned to their behaviour, such as using a particular language, doing certain hobbies/interests, among others. They are able to control behaviour and movement, such as being loud and chatty.

Unlike the Ghanaian migrants in London, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are visible and participate in the Japanese society. This may be a point of important consideration as to why the function of Pentecostal activities and Filipinos in Urban Kansai activities differ. Filipinos in Urban Kansai continue performing social expectations as part of everyday management and

survival, but not as a counter discourse to provide explanation to unite them with each other and the Japanese society. Filipinos in Urban Kansai have many opportunities of doing things together and their interactions with each other are not minimal and occasional. Daswani explains that what was missing in London was a sense of “closeness” or intimacy. “Closeness” or intimacy are aspects that Filipino relationships in Urban Kansai seem characteristic of as they are seen to have a strong social network based on their frequent engagements in various activities and with one another.

Furthermore, rather than as being pushed or constrained to action, Filipino migrants do what they do mainly because they want to. Hence, highlight is given to their abilities of performing a choice. Saying these does not simplify the Filipino in Urban Kansai case by being naïve to the social context and institutions involved in the life process. What these tell us is that their performances of strategizing have some complexity to it. They are not just responses, but are taken as opportunities. Filipino migrants are shown to have given much thought in managing and negotiating their lives. Therefore, for them, their conditions are not limiting to the extent that people have no other choices of tackling life. The conditions are not just as “given,” but also a situation which they voluntary opted to be into and have created.

Performing “social roles and obligations” are performed out of choice by the Filipino migrants themselves. Hence, “social roles and obligations” should not merely be thought of as something that migrants were forcibly given or a situation which they have no control of that they aspire to escape from through moving abroad. Furthermore, many Filipinos in Urban Kansai were observed to voluntary seek ways in which they may be able to act out their “social roles and obligations.”

These are performances of reflexivity. Filipino migrants are reflexive by making use of the opportunities that come their way and show being able to control their given situation.

Chapters 4 and 5 reveal strategies that Filipinos in Urban Kansai employ. In Chapter 5, I have listed strategies that Filipinos in Urban Kansai utilize and these are through maintaining and negotiating. They perform these strategies in overlap with each other. The extent to how negotiations are made depends on socioeconomic conditions, but Filipino migrants always have something in response to constraints.

The results above seem to indicate that the process to which Filipinos in Urban Kansai live their lives is a relationship between social structures and their everyday experiences. Goss and Lindquist's (1995: 345) study about Filipino migrants reveal that they act strategically within the institution in order to advance their interests. They argue that the capability of acting this out is differently distributed according to awareness of rules and access to resources. These are partially influenced by their position within other social institutions. As I have discussed, Goss and Lindquist's pronouncements may be true to some extent. However, since the aspect of reflexivity has emerged very often throughout the research, we have to rethink what Goss and Lindquist say about agency and structure. Filipinos in Urban Kansai show more than just awareness and responses to external and structural forces. They are observed to be able to use such awareness for them to alter the external and structural forces and their situation. These show that the Filipino migrants' practices of how they think about and create their lives involve managing given social conditions and institutions into opening themselves into the world.

#### **6.4. The Filipino Identity in their Lifestyle**

The above discussions reveal how the Filipino in Urban Kansai way of life is perceived and managed by the migrants. The key results of this study show the importance of performing and interacting in the Filipino in Urban Kansai's everyday, thus it is necessary to

give a clarification of Filipino identity in their lifestyle. The evaluation of the results of this study reveals that Filipino in Urban Kansai identity is reflexive and flexible. The Filipino identity progresses in a similar manner to the way that Filipino migrants live their lives, which is as a life choice. This implies that the Filipino identity works as a “becoming.”

This understanding of the Filipino migrant life runs in some accordance to the way that Ingold (2011) thinks about life. He argues for the recognition of life’s continuous ability to overtake the “destinations” that show up in the life course. He explains that the principle of life does not begin “here” or end “there,” or connect a point of origin with a final destination. Instead, he explains, life keeps on going. Ingold’s pronouncements of life as being a movement of opening and not a closure resonates well with Filipinos in Urban Kansai. In the previous section, I have mentioned that Filipino migrants take given contexts and conditions as opportunities.

In accordance to these, the “Filipino identity” is “lived along the lines.” Filipinos in Urban Kansai participate in a myriad of events in which various activities are conducted. My observations of activities and informants’ narratives that I have presented from Chapters 3 to 5 show that each of the activities demonstrate varieties of how being Filipino is perceived. This means that what is highlighted about being Filipino vary from occasion to occasion, and from person to person. The way that Filipino identity is perceived moves along overlapping characteristics of being active, creative, united, diverse, autonomous, flexible, free-spirited, disciplined, private, and commercial, among others. All these features work in tandem with each another and are carried over to another in the production of Filipino identity.

These point to the idea that the Filipino identity is not bounded to the primordial. According to Orgtega y Gasset (1941), primacy is of life itself. The Filipino identity occurs with some perpetual and never-ending making of themselves. The narrations that the Filipino

migrants give about themselves and my observations of their performances show that how they live life is by doing continuous managing and exploring of possibilities. Ingold explains life as a process in the following:

“Humanity...does not come in pre-packaged with species membership, nor does it come from having been born into a particular culture or society. It is rather something we have continually to work at. (2011: 7)”

Using the above notion, a consideration of social network is also necessary. Meanings are made through movement. For example, perceiving and creating concepts, such as Filipino identity, occurs as an evolving tapestry on which the migrants, locals, other residents, and other conditions, are all embroiled in. Therefore, to think using the regular agency-structure dichotomy may ignore the relations along which connections are connected.

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study examined how migration is part of the everyday living process of migrants. It used data from ethnographical fieldwork, participant observation and personal narratives of informants. Research was conducted among Filipinos in Urban Kansai, Japan from 2015 to 2019. In order to investigate how migration is part of the everyday living process of migrants, I explored how Filipino migrants think about their lives and investigated how they comprehend about their lives through performances and interactions.

The findings in this dissertation show that for Filipinos in Urban Kansai, the migration experience is embroiled in the process of their daily living. The migration experience is interconnected with how Filipinos in Urban Kansai perceive their lives as migrants. The migration experience is also interconnected with how the migrants manage their lives. Filipinos in Urban Kansai live their lives showing aspects of reflexivity. Results revealed that Filipino migrants practice making choices and having control of their daily lives. Specifically, they show being able to reflect upon and act on their and other peoples' actions and behaviour. These are not just one-off incidences, but are conducted continuously.

It was observed that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are aware of their social situations and, to certain degrees, how institutions shape these. Nevertheless, they are able to manage and cope with external factors and various constraints through making strategies. Examples are in employing various means available to them. Filipino migrants were observed to create new intimacies, manage intimacies, and practice "becoming" Filipino, among others. They are able to employ their knowledge to develop themselves. They utilize external factors to manage the past with their present lives and then reflect on these for the future.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage and cope with social conditions and structures through various strategies. They perform two types of strategies: maintaining and negotiating. Maintaining supposes that habits and routines are kept, while negotiating are done with some changes, such as creations and/or crossings and recombinations in habits and routines, or temporarily doing something that is not part of one's habit and routine. Maintaining can also be considered as negotiating if this is done in conjunction with creating and crossing to address a situation.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai instil "closeness" or create intimate relationships with another through shared experiences. The frequency of which they spend time with each another enable these shared experiences. Filipino migrants are observed to go to a myriad of events and activities in Urban Kansai and these open the opportunities for them to be able to meet compatriots, locals, and other individuals and groups of people. The migration experience extends from the person who literally made the physical move into the people around him or her. Filipinos in Urban Kansai were observed to constantly and repeatedly redraw the "boundaries" of their community through everyday interactions with people and their activities in events. It is through such ways that the migration experience lives on.

The Philippines is a major labor exporter and Filipinos can be found in about 180 countries around the world. They are a culturally and linguistically diverse group. However, this diversity is not in the primordial ethnic sense. Having ties with foreign countries has a great influence in their lives, especially if we are to take into account that they have many relatives and friends living overseas. This study adopts the perspective of lifestyle awareness, choice and control and without identifying or saying that the movements of Filipinos to other countries as immigrants are performances of "Filipinoness" at the onset. It is revealed that



those who cannot be categorized as “Filipino migrants” define who they are and seek their own way of living.

Japanese locals also play a role in how Filipinos in Urban Kansai understand themselves. They play an active role, such as serving as mediators of Filipinos to other Filipinos in Urban Kansai, recreating and suggesting ways to which a Filipino “family” should be, among others. Local multicultural centers that work under the support of the Japan government also affect what Filipinos in Urban Kansai reveal and display about themselves in the Japanese society. These are within what they think might be tasteful or tolerable to the locals.

The findings of my research are significant in the field of migrant studies because it adds to our understanding about the intricacies of how migrants’ lives are lived. This research was able to exhibit how going beyond thinking in terms of migration types into examining practices and performances, in other words, being able to explain the process of living life, may be able provide more information about migrants.

This research highlights migrants playing an active role. The Filipino migrants show performing more than awareness and responding to situations. It refocuses the idea of migration as a lifestyle back to what is relevant, which is living life itself. Aside from being able to narrate the process involved in the way that Filipino migrants perceive and manage their lives, my research also opens some possibilities of challenging some concepts and ideas related to the migrant studies discourse.

The nature of Filipino migrants’ social network is characterized by being open. These openness of social networks is an attempt to overcome the institutional framework that attracts foreign residents while forcing a primordial identity as espoused by *tabunka kyosei* policies in the Japanese society. Filipinos in Urban Kansai do try to break the barrier between them and the Japanese society while using the slogan of *tabunka kyosei*, hence, it is also

possible for them to reshape these “boundaries.” This is possible because their openness allows them to have numerous choices.

The results of the relevance of shared experiences by Filipino migrants that are nurtured by spending time with each other may open the possibility of my study to be extended into further research. My study of Filipinos in Urban Kansai indicate instances of time and space separation, hence, is a topic that can be explored further. In the case of Filipino migrants, time and space did not seem to be essentially linked through place. The conditions of migration has facilitated time markers to not be necessarily connected to where actions are made. I highlighted in the cases I presented in the result chapters how places have been appropriated differently by Filipinos in Urban Kansai, such as using *izakaya* as a place to get loans and credit, going to cultural events for business transactions, the Catholic Church hosting personal celebrations (such as, birthday parties) and Philippine official holidays and national commemorations. Apart from these, the availability of digital technology as means that were not available in the past has emerged and has changed the way that people interact with each other. These are areas which can be explored more as my findings seem to show instances time and space separation and may have some similarities with other Filipino migrants and other migrant groups in other parts of the world.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai deviate from Giddens’ descriptions of a modern context because the context in which they live their lives still show elements of being “traditional.” However, Filipinos in Urban Kansai are able to show reflexivity in managing these with their lives. Their being active as described by their living performative and active lives makes them tackle social conditions and structures as opportunities instead as limits. As a result, they are able to personally grow and develop.

Using the above notion, a consideration of social network is also necessary. Meanings, such as those related to Filipino identity, are made through movement. They transpire as an evolving tapestry on which the migrants, locals, other residents, and other social conditions and institutions, are all interconnected in.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: *PINOY FIESTA*

The event called *Pinoy Fiesta* (Philippine Festival) was jointly organized by two organizations. One is a local Filipino community organization based in a city in Osaka Prefecture, and the other is a larger organization of Filipinos from Osaka and neighboring prefectures in Kansai. The event occurred in May and coincided with the *Santacruzán*, a Catholic Filipino religious festivity. The event was held in a room at multicultural center in a city in Osaka Prefecture. The building where the venue was held is connected to a train station of the Hankyu line. This makes the event venue accessible to participants coming from Osaka, Kyoto and Hyogo in the Kansai Region as these prefectures are served by the Hankyu train network. Train transfers from other train companies make the trip to the venue quite smooth and convenient. Few bring their own cars and only do so when items that are bulky and/or many are brought along. Going by train is the most common way for Filipinos in Urban Kansai to go to event venues. Riding trains in Japan is a very convenient way to go around. Trains in Japan are known to be on time, fast and cover many areas. Riding bikes and walking from one's house to the venue is also possible but only for short distances.

I easily found the multicultural center and the room where the *Pinoy Fiesta* was held. Triangle cut banners (*banderitas*) in multiple colors were hanged on the ceiling and hand held fans (*abaniko*) made of palm leaves (*anahaw*) were fixed on the room's walls. The trimmings seemed to try to recreate the festive atmosphere of festivals in the Philippines. One corner of the room showcased popular Filipino childhood games such as jackstone and *sungka*. *Sungka* is a turn-based board game where the player who gets the most number of shells win. Pictures of famous Philippine landmarks, icons and images were plastered on another part of the wall. Each of these had their own descriptions written in English.

#### **Last-minute Preparations**

Upon arriving at the *Pinoy Fiesta* venue, I immediately looked for the woman who invited me to greet her and at the same time to make her know that I kept my promise to attend. It was easy to find her because the room where the *Pinoy Fiesta* was held was small, it could only probably hold 40 people at the maximum. She was going in and out of the kitchen connected to the room and I freely entered the kitchen to see what I could do to help. The kitchen had about ten cooking stoves. Two stoves were attached to dishwashing sinks which made food preparation for large gatherings efficient.

There were five adult women in the modern-styled kitchen. They were preparing Filipino party food staples such as deep fried spring rolls (*lumpia*), steamed rice, rice cakes (*bibingka*), fried chicken, dried fish (*tuyo*), boiled eggs, bread rolls (*pan de sal*), mixed nuts and drinks. The drinks served were in plastic PET bottles of green tea, barley tea, soda and water. There were no men in the kitchen. Apart from these five women in the kitchen, there was a constant stream of women (some with little children tagging along) who came in and out to prepare food that they brought. Few brought home cooked Filipino dishes, some bought cakes and pastries from Goldilocks (a Filipino bakery chain), while some brought supermarket-bought Japanese food such as sushi, boneless deep fried chicken (chicken *karaage*) and grilled eel

(*unagi*). The event was announced to be potluck but most of the main dishes served were cooked in the venue.

Some men who arrived early were in the room and seated on chairs lining the perimeter of the room. Adult men, some who were Japanese, tended to their children or chatted with other adult women. As with most activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, people who do not have Filipino backgrounds are welcome to attend. There were Japanese who came with their Filipino wives and children, or were invited by friends. Some Japanese who attended work at the multicultural center where the *Pinoy Fiesta* was held. One of them gave welcome remarks in Japanese before to start the celebration. His message was translated into Filipino by a Japanese woman. I saw two guests of Caucasian descent who came during the latter part of the event when games were already being played.

To make an event accessible, the convenience of going to a venue is carefully considered. Being in an inconvenient location may impact attendance to events. A mark of a successful organized collective event is one that has garnered a significant number of attendees. Making known of one's attendance signifies that an event is worthy of the person's time. An individual's participation to a collective activity is highly appreciated.

Like many events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, the *Pinoy Fiesta* sees more female participants. This can be attributed to the percentage of Filipino females to males population in Urban Kansai. While division of labor do not have explicit rules according to gender, only women cook the kitchen. The event notice called for potluck but many preferred to cook instead. While women prepare food, men sit in the room waiting. Some attend to children. Child care is performed by both men and women. Both males and females mix socially. The event is promoted to be free and open to all nationalities but majority are Filipinos.

Having a shared experience among festival attendees seemed to be a clear objective of the event. This theme also emerges through the rest of the *Pinoy Fiesta* activities of eating, playing games, singing and dancing.

### ***"Boodle Fight"***

The food cooked in the kitchen and those that were brought by some participants were brought out from the kitchen to the room by women. The women carefully transferred food and walked towards the center of the room where a large rectangular table was fixed. Smaller size tables were used and connected to form this large rectangular table. Whole banana leaves were laid on top of the table to serve as placemats on which the food were laid and arranged by the women.



Pic. 3. Pinoy Fiesta “boodle fight”

There are no chairs surrounding the table. There are no individual plates nor fork and spoon to use and food is to be eaten by hand. Plastic hand gloves were available for those who do not want to get their hands soiled. Paper napkins were also available. Food is eaten at the same time by all event participants while standing in front of the table. People are free to position themselves wherever they want in front of the table and can go around it to get food they like or to chat with someone. Participants take their time eating and chatting. There are lots of laughter being shared during the meal. Later in the feast, a pot of stew made of peanut sauce (*kare kare*) was brought out. “*Paano kakainin yan?*” (“How do we eat that?”), somebody asked. A collective sigh of relief could almost be heard when disposable paper bowls and plastic spoons were finally brought out by one of the women.

This type of eating is reminiscent of the military style eating called “*boodle fight*” and is not a common way of eating everyday meals by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Eating in “*boodle fight*” style became a fad in the Philippine restaurant scene in the past decade and is popular among group gatherings.

During everyday situations of eating in one’s dwelling, there are chairs to sit on and different food are placed in separate bowls that are positioned on the center of a table. These dishes have separate serving spoons. Even among kin, one should not use his or her own utensil to get a portion of the dish on the center. This is considered as bad manners. Serving spoons are used for this purpose. An individual has his or her own plate or bowl and uses fork and spoon or chopsticks to eat. While eating together is an ideal, work shifts of some family members hinder these. Some children make their own food and eat by themselves.

### **Pinoy Fiesta Games**

After everyone finished their meal, each one segregated their food left overs, plastics utensils and paper bowls into separately labelled plastic garbage bags. The table was dismantled by both adult men and women. This was to make way for the second part of the event which composed of games and song and dance performances. After everybody settled themselves to their seats, the host went to the front to address everybody. “*Sana nabusog kayo. Susunod ay ang palaro para naman mabawasan ang ating timbang!*” (“I hope everybody was satisfied with the meal. We shall now begin with the games for us to lose the excess calories!”). The audience laughed and eagerly looked as the host pointed to a table arranged with snacks,

candies and assorted personal care items. These prizes were for both the winners and participants of the games.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai look forward to events that have activities where they can participate. They want to be able to move around and perform. Activities that entail performance and movement are preferred more than listening to talks and going to symposiums. Even after events are over, many stay around the venue to help put things back to its proper order.

The games played in the *Pinoy Fiesta* are common in Filipino gatherings. There were two types of games played. The first type are games where everybody can participate. The second type are games that are taken part of by either willingly volunteering oneself or joining as a result of urges by the host or friends. BINGO and “Where are you from?” comprise of the first type, while “Hit the Box or Pull the Rope”, “Bring Me”, *pabitin*, and “Longest Line” form the second type.

In events like the *Pinoy Fiesta* wherein the whole family are encouraged to attend, most of the games played are for children (ex. “Hit the Box or Pull the Rope”, “Bring Me”, and *pabitin* games). However, there are also games where adults can participate, in such cases both children and adults play as a team (ex. “Longest Line” game). Children and adults do teamwork in taking off outerwear, belt, socks, shoelaces and shoes that they have with them to form the longest line. Adults gamely reach out items to children that are asked by the host during the “Bring me” game (ex. “Bring me a ballpen.”). Mothers encourage their children not to be shy (*mahiyain*). Being confident is a highly admired characteristic. Filipinos in Urban Kansai voice out appreciation to this by calling a child a smart or bright kid (*batang bibo*). Spoiling the fun of others is frowned upon. Reminders to this are often pronounced in the statement: “*Bawal ang KJ* (killjoy)”. Fellowship (*pakikisama*) is admired and promoted.

Guests of other nationalities are invited to participate in games but are not pressured if they refuse to. In the case of the two Caucasians who came when the games were already being held, they were first guided to the kitchen to eat by the Filipino friends who invited them. There were still some food left from the boodle fight. They came back to the room to watch the games after having their meal.

The games “Hit the Box or Pull the Rope” and *pabitin* were played in improvised fashion in the *Pinoy Fiesta*. In order to avoid accidents, hanging materials from the ceiling was not allowed by the management of the multicultural center. To make the games playable, two men were called to stand on top of chairs to raise the bamboo frame holding assorted items up to near the ceiling.



Pic. 4. Pabitin

If simply by judging the easiness that people share conversations and laughter during the meals and games, it may seem that people in the party have known each other for long periods of time. The atmosphere belies the fact that not everybody in the party are well acquainted. There are those who regularly see each other as members of the same organization but there are some who participated in the *Pinoy Fiesta* for the first time through invitation by friends (of friends). Even if Filipinos see each other in events in Urban Kansai, they may not necessarily talk to each other often and are just familiar faces. As an ice breaker to stimulate talking to each other, a sheet of paper with a map of the Philippines printed on was distributed to everybody. This was for the game called “Where are you from?”

The mechanics of the game is to talk to the most number of people in the venue. Names and respective provinces of origin of individuals are listed on the same paper that was distributed. There is no restriction to how long one has actually spoken with each other as long as the required information is given. However, this will be tested by introducing the people included on one’s list to everybody by the end of the program. The winner is determined not only through the number of names that has been collected but through actual recognition of the person from the crowd. The game serves as an ice breaker to develop networks with other people aside from one’s own group.

Enthusiastic participation are observed even among those who do not take part directly in the games through supports of encouragement and/or giving instructions and hints. This part of the event always arouses engagement. Singing and/or dance performances are always almost present in events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. In the *Pinoy Fiesta*, games had dance numbers in between them.

### **Dancing Together**

Filipinos in Urban Kansai rarely hesitate when asked to perform dances or songs in front of a crowd. Sharing one’s talents is a means of incorporation that is further emphasized by collective performances of singing and/or dancing.

There were five dance performances during the *Pinoy Fiesta*. Four were interspersed with the games and one was a spontaneous dance activity at the end of the festival. One of these were performed solo, while the rest were by a mother-son pair and by groups.



Enough time for practicing performances before events is a must for performances to have less errors at the time of presentation. However, among Filipinos of Urban Kansai, practicing as a whole group may be difficult due to differences of schedules of the members. The lack of preparation is not a hindrance for Filipinos in Urban Kansai to share their talents. Impromptu performances are common not only during small gatherings but also during major events. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are more than happy to perform even when some errors occur. As the Filipinos often say, “the show must go on”.

A woman who I know from my early research work in Kyoto was part of a group who performed in *Pinoy Fiesta*. They named their group “Victorious Single Moms.” This group was formed specifically for the festival and not as a permanent dance group. Their group is made up of friends who knew each other through personal circumstances or as members of the same organization.

The woman who I spoke to claimed that they were doing their dances unsynchronized (ハバラ, bara bara). She shared that they have been practicing for quite some time then admitted that the chances when they could all practice together were more infrequent due to the differences of free schedules of the members. Despite of what I was told, their group was able to perform satisfactorily and the audience visibly enjoyed.

During performances that catch the interests of Filipinos in Urban Kansai, Filipinos are seen to move their heads and clap their hands to the music. Some emulate the dance steps while sitting on their chairs. The “Victorious Single Moms” had this similar reception which lead to one of their dances to be performed again. The second time was with most of the festival participants (including few Japanese guests) who got out of their chairs to occupy the center of the room. No coercion was needed to dance because many willingly and happily did so. The group members positioned themselves in front while the others placed themselves to a location when they are able to see and follow the dance steps. Smiles were shared while everybody was dancing to “*Dahil Sayo*” by Iñigo Pascual, a Filipino celebrity. As soon as the music ended, everybody clapped their hands in euphoria and went back to their seats.

Performances are rarely interrupted as they are ongoing and interrupting is considered rude. However, unspoken rules such as this occur more among adults and in major events and digressions do happen. Teasing during performances have been observed among teenagers and among those with close relationships.

During the *Pinoy Fiesta*, a female teenager with outgoing and cheerful disposition who I call Nene was relentlessly teased by her brothers who tried to make her forget her dance steps. The teasing was not seen as a concern by others watching. The adults did not give any warnings to the boys to stop with their teasing. Nene tried her best not to be distracted and went on with her performance. Comments were given pertaining to Nene’s confidence. The boys are known to Nene because they were siblings.

Philippine dances are performed only on certain occasions such as cultural festivals. They are not performed on one’s own; rather, are usually for shows with corresponding audiences. Many Filipinos learn the basic steps from lessons during one’s elementary or high school years in the Philippines but few take on to pursue Philippine Dance as a hobby or for work in

adulthood. The occasional experience with Philippine dances also generates momentary interest even among Filipinos.

The dance performance of a professional group in *Pinoy Fiesta* was enjoyed by festival participants. The group performed a dance medley of various Filipino folk dances like *carinosa* and *tinikling*. *Tinikling* a form of Filipino folk dance which utilizes bamboos. What became of particular interest to the audience was *tinikling*. The festival participants were awestruck by the graceful manner of dancing and the ease that the dancers made it seem to avoid their feet from being caught when the bamboo poles are struck together.

After their performance, the members of the group asked the audience who wanted to try *tinikling*. A handful from the audience stood up and volunteered themselves. Among those who tried *tinikling* were a male teenager who I initially thought to be timid, a female Japanese teenager who was brought by Nene (the young female performer discussed previously) and a toddler.

The volunteers were guided by the dancers to get into the tempo made by the beat of the bamboo poles. The pace started slow so as not to overwhelm the first timers. Those who did not volunteer themselves interestingly watched the spectacle. Many beamed when a female toddler ran from the arms of her mother to join the dancing. The toddler's participation was not thought of as a disturbance and was welcomed. Her mother did not get her nor was she given back. The toddler was left to play and walk across the bamboo poles in emulation of the dancers.

### **Social control**

Traditional Filipino characteristics that were once thought as desirable change as time passes. Children and Filipino youth are now encouraged not to be shy (*mahiyain*). Being smart (*batang bibo*), rather than being timid in one's behavior, has become more approved. Most comments are indirect and directness is more commonly observed to be given by those who are much older (*mas nakatatanda*) or those with closer connections.

Nene was chatting loudly and was swaying her skirt as she passed by. She was wearing a traditional Filipino attire called *baro't saya*, a white flowing blouse partnered with a maxi floral skirt. Many *Pinoy Fiesta* participants changed their Filipino traditional attire to modern wear when the games started but Nene remained dressed in hers. She managed to be visible by doing things that made people notice her. Her childlike movements seemed not to go with her outfit. Her behavior received calls from older Filipino women and her brothers to tease her to be more demure (*mahinhin*) or be more *dalagang Pilipina* (literally young Filipino lady), which meant to act or behave more modestly.

The people who took noticed and gave banters were people who Nene already knew. Such remarks are left to older people who Filipinos defer to because of their belief that being wiser comes with age.

My not wearing *Filipiniana* or any type of traditional Filipino attire to the event was frequently noticed even at the start of the festival. Those who knew me in the venue greeted me and continued to note that I should already be changing clothes for the mini parade held very

soon. I just kept silent but made an excuse to those who persisted that I did not bring any with me to Japan.

I wish I had worn *Filipiniana* because even the little children were wearing *baro't saya* and *barong tagalog*. I admit to have felt a little out of place. The clothes that some used were not really traditional Filipino attire. One group of women just wore a large piece of green cloth to make into *malong*. The cloth material was used in varied ways, some wrapped it around the body to form a dress and some around their waist to form a skirt. The cloth that the group used were not even the traditional prints from Mindanao where *malong*-wearing in the Philippine is more common. Such show the resourcefulness of the group to be able to comply with the call to wear traditional Filipino attire during the event.

No matter how I initially assumed that that my attendance to events were for research purposes, as a Filipino in Urban Kansai it is very important that I should comply with rules, instructions and deportment. My lapses made clear to me that it is not merely one's presence to events that mark connections of Filipinos in Urban Kansai but that of performing together (ex. dressing in *Filipiniana*, doing *boodle fight*, playing games, dancing, among others) are much more important.

## **APPENDIX B: SYMPOSIUM ABOUT FILIPINOS IN KANSAI**

This symposium about Filipinos in Kansai was held for the third time in 2019. It is held every March at a convention center in Osaka. The hall which the symposium was held has a capacity to accommodate 200 people and the space is suitable to hold symposiums such of this kind. It has a stage and built in seats that are elevated as you move towards the back. This enable audiences who are seating at the back to see the stage clearly. From its inception in 2017, the symposium's theme revolved around the topic of "Reflecting on the Lives of Filipinos in Kansai." The symposium has three to four Filipinos as panel speakers who talk about their experiences. The experiences that are mostly shared are on hardships faced and how they were overcome.

A printed program handed at the reception area shows the symposium to be subdivided into seven parts. The program commences with a message from the current Consul General of the PCG Osaka. The second part is a presentation of Philippine-Kansai Relations by the main organizer, a coordinating council of organizations in Kansai. Past and present projects that the organization are executing to facilitate *ugnayan* (connections) among Filipinos were presented. The activities of reaching out to other nationalities, specifically Japanese were reported.

The audience listens intently during the welcome remarks and presentation. They do not talk to each other. Compared to the more relaxed and free atmosphere of the *Pinoy Fiesta* (See Appendix A) and *Undoukai* (See Appendix E), behavior in the symposium is more restrained. There are momentary comments to each other by seatmates but these do not escalate into long conversations.

Singing intermission numbers were showcased after the presentation. The intermission numbers lightened the serious mood of the previous presentation. Individual presentations of the speakers followed after and then another round of intermission numbers ensued. As

soon as intermission numbers were over, the audience settled down to ask questions to the speakers. Time was almost going beyond the reserved schedule for the venue so the open forum was quite hurried. The event was concluded through closing remarks given by a representative from a government organization catering to international residents of Osaka City.

Even if the symposium has ended, the gathering continued to a post-event dinner at a popular Italian restaurant chain near the venue. Herein, a group of about 30 Filipinos and handful of Japanese who were all still at the height of being ecstatic from a successful event, suddenly began passionately chanting "*ugnayan, ugnayan!*" As expected, there were looks of alarm and strange glances directed towards the group's tables from the other restaurant patrons. Such bold and loud pronouncements do not commonly happen in Urban Kansai, much less in a family restaurant.

The explicit promotion of connections are not as unyielding as it seems. The same group promoting *ugnayan* similarly insists on diversity depending on the situation. The quality of relationships of Filipinos in Urban Kansai can be flexible and boundaries are permeable. Connections of Filipinos in Urban Kansai show dualistic flexibility of *ugnayan* and diversity and this attests to its dynamism.

### **Diversity in Incorporation**

The word *ugnayan* was not overtly used at the time of formation of organizations of Filipinos in Kansai to describe their goals and mission/vision. This trend emerged only quite recently. *Ugnayan* began to be used to describe the connections and networks of Filipinos in Kansai. This was instigated by a coordinating council in Kansai. This coordinating council was formed when it saw the need for different Filipino organizations to get together. Good relations are not just aspired among Filipinos having similar interests and backgrounds and/or those living near each other in Kansai. *Ugnayan* is aspired through creating contacts with other Filipino communities and church groups in various parts of Kansai through participating in diverse events. These events have included not only Filipinos in Japan, but also extends to events in the Philippines. The undertaking of reaching out to Japanese and other ethnic groups in Urban Kansai are part of the coordinating council's objectives.

Another objective of the coordinating council is to challenge and change the clichéd image of Filipinos in Japan. Filipinos in Japan, specifically Filipino women, used to be strongly associated as night work entertainers and opportunistic brides (Suzuki 2002).

Images of diversity of Filipinos in Kansai are promoted at same time as *ugnayan*. Through presentation of diversity, the organization is able to "counter the stereotyped image of Filipinos in Kansai." The council claims that the appearance of diversity of Filipinos in Kansai enables better understanding of Filipinos in Kansai to the Japanese. They aspire that the symposium would be a venue for exchanges of opinions and ideas between Japanese and Filipinos especially concerning the various problems that foreigners in Japan face.

The panel speakers and moderators show diversity of Filipinos in Kansai in terms of their occupations, such as a university student, engineer, nurse, mother of two daughters in movie

and modelling industries in Japan, medical doctor and university professors. Joining the roster are two JFCs who work for an NGO and labor union.

Despite the big population size of Filipinos entrants who came to Japan as entertainers, there is an absence of narratives of former night entertainment workers among the symposium panel speakers. The absence could be in line with the aforementioned objective of changing the stereotyped image of Filipinos in Kansai. Atty. Jay, the council head, confirms this and explains that through this, Filipinos in Kansai will feel better about themselves and will not be ashamed of being Filipino.

### **Symposium Intermission Numbers**

The numerous song and dance intermission numbers serve as a “cultural component” in the program. Performances were interestingly placed before and after the presentation of the panel speakers. These types of song and dance performances are always well-received by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The change in mood from a serious to a more relaxed one is noticeable. These are moments when the audience takes a break from listening intently to presentations. Some use the time to stand and stretch or to go out for toilet or cigarette breaks. Those who remain in the hall eagerly listen to performances. Their faces also show a change to being livelier. More body movements are observed such as clapping one’s hands and swaying one’s head. Some sing along with the performers. While not exactly talking too much to be able to disrupt the performance, the audience (especially those seated farther from the stage) can temporarily have brief chats with their seatmates.

The inclusion of Japanese singers among the roster of performers can be seen in some events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The creation of connections with Japanese through music is in line with the council’s often-mentioned objectives of creating *ugnayan*.

One who is regularly seen joining Filipino-organized singing contests and was also present in this symposium is Mr. Tanaka. Mr. Tanaka is a 58 year old Japanese from Shiga Prefecture. Mr. Tanaka narrated to me that he started to become familiar with the Philippines when the company he worked for started hiring Filipinos in 2012. From that time on, he learned more about the Philippines through travel, food and music. He became particularly fond of Filipino songs through his staff. He divulged that Filipino songs would often be sung when they go out for after-work karaoke. Mr. Tanaka has since been regularly invited to other Filipino related events in Kansai to render singing performances.

Many Filipinos in the audience found Mr. Tanaka’s performances nostalgic and were impressed by his being able to sing Filipino songs. A woman sitting near me uttered, “*Wow! Buti pa siya, alam niya yung mga lumang kanta...*” (“Wow! It is amazing that he knows the old Filipino songs even if he is Japanese...”). Many sang along and swayed their heads. There are few who wiped their tears. Reactions to Mr. Tanaka’s performance are seen with appreciation. Comments such as “*Ang galing noh?*” (“Impressive, right?”) and “*Nakakatuwa naman...*” (“This is so nice...”) are often heard from the unexpected choice of song that he sang.

Mr. Tanaka is encouraged by his Filipino work subordinates to join Filipino events in Kansai, including a Japan-wide singing competition for Filipinos and Japanese called *Utawit*. The show

of support to Mr. Tanaka by his mostly young adult Filipino subordinates are manifested by them joining Mr. Tanaka to events of Filipinos in Kansai.

This narration shows that the process of getting to know other Filipinos in Urban Kansai are not limited and do not only circulate among themselves. Intimacies are influenced by locals and other nationalities. In this recently concluded example, a Japanese becomes an intermediary for connections of Filipinos to other Filipinos in Urban Kansai. One of the subordinates divulged to me that they would not have been able to go to the events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai if not for Mr. Tanaka's invitation. She further shares that they do not get much information about events by not being part of Filipino community organizations and church groups. Sharing of music, time, and information coupled with demonstration of care through support work together towards incorporation.

Similar to collective dances, such as that described in the *Pinoy Fiesta*, the symposium also had its own impromptu collective performance. This time a song with the title of "*Isang Mundo, Isang Awit*" (One World, One Song") was sung. The last group of performers asked everybody in the audience to stand up and sing along with them. While not stated as part of the program, such occurrences of impromptu collective performances seem to be expected in events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. The event host or performers (of both singing and dancing) prepare for encores in case the moment calls for it.



Pic. 5. Symposium Intermission Number

The lyrics of the aforementioned song was ready and began to be projected in PowerPoint. Not everybody in the audience was familiar with the song. Some were off-tune but this did not seem to matter. The audience, both Filipinos and Japanese, were off their seats as they sang together. Many smiled at each other as they sang. Some had their arms around each other's waist or shoulders. Many clapped along and swayed their bodies.

I talked to few Japanese who attended the symposium regarding the staging of symposiums with intermissions numbers. They were quite surprised that intermission numbers and collective dancing and singing are performed in information dissemination campaigns of Filipinos. I was told that such numerous song presentations and dance numbers were peculiar for such a serious event. They shared that these did not happen in Japanese symposiums.

While unexpected, the Japanese admitted that the intermission numbers made the symposium's atmosphere fun and engaging.

Apart from what is observed that inclusion of musical performances serve as accommodation to the general interests of the Filipino audience, what is again illuminated are how shared performances of singing and dancing are an important part of incorporation of Filipinos in Urban Kansai

#### **APPENDIX C: *TAMBAY***

A popular place to hang-out after events is a bar owned by Japanese-Filipinos in downtown Kyoto. The place is easily accessible from the Catholic Church. An organization leader has her own bar nearby, but opening it will entail her and her members to do everything by themselves. Visibly tired from an event that they organized that has just ended, going to the leader's bar is not really the best option. It was decided that going to another bar is more practical where they can be relaxed and served.

The bar is located at the back alley of the main Kawaramachi area where other watering holes are also located. It used to occupy the space of a building's first floor. Due to the influx of more patrons, the owners decided to move to the second floor of a nearby building. The bar serves mostly Filipino food. Philippine brands of alcohol are also available apart from Japanese alcohol brands, hard liquor and cocktails. In mid-2018, a mini variety (*sari-sari*) store has been set up at the rear end of the bar selling Philippine products. The opening hours of the mini grocery coincides with the bar's opening hours of six in the evening until dawn.

While most customers are Filipinos, the composition of clients are international. Groups come in even without a Filipino in their group. In their Facebook page, the bar touts itself as an "international bar." The pictures posted show its clients to be a mix of people from various countries. Reviews are also from all over the world.

Lights are dim in the bar and the music (either canned or karaoke singing) blares loudly from the speakers. The bar has tables for pairs or groups. Those coming alone can sit in the counter seats. Conversations are difficult as voices have to compete with the music. The bar features open karaoke. At times people stand up to dance along with a person from their group who sings. Those who are not part of the group watch the performance with amusement.

Before one starts singing, a customer should first choose a song from the song list which is built in a control panel. A song is searched by typing either the song title or name of artist. After the song is found, tapping on it enables the song to be on queue. Another person who likes to sing follows the same procedure on the same control panel. When the song comes up, it is played in the whole bar. One's singing can be heard all throughout. The next singer waits for his or her requested song to be played before getting hold of the microphone. The control panel and microphones are passed around the bar. There are no private rooms in the bar. The time for singing ends with the bar's closing time which is usually at one to three in the morning. This is unlike in karaoke rooms where the sharing of songs are limited to those in the same group and time is limited to a pre-determined time.

One of the regulars who assists in the bar is a constant supporter of the *Utawit* singing contest in Kyoto. He was a previous contestant who won. He joins the event almost every year to give

an intermission number and serve as a judge. While he did not win the *Utawit* grand finals held in Tokyo, he has had many television exposures in Japan. A notable example is winning the 2018 Song for Japan Nodojiman the World (a popular singing competition aired in Nippon TV, a Japanese national television network) with his group named Team Philippine All Stars.

His conduct in the bar is welcoming and hospitable. Such traits are quite anticipated from someone working in a place where good relations are built from having a pleasant experience. He smiles and taps on the shoulders of some customers upon seeing them. He does this most especially with those who he knows as a personal friend or acquaintance for a long time. Filipinos who live in Kyoto and who are regulars of the bar get extra food on the bar's account. These examples show maintenance of current relationships. Good connections are also established and aimed for even with new customers.

One of the non-winners in a singing contest held before we went to the bar knew of the bar staff's popularity and wanted to have a duet with him. She asked the group with her to record a live video of their performance so she could share it to her Facebook account. It is not unusual for this staff to grant duets. Part of his job is to sing apart from taking and serving orders. Many guests show surprise with his good singing voice especially those who are not familiar of his singing background.

Upon knowing that the woman who requested for a duet was one of the contest participants to which he was a judge, he slightly bows his head and apologizes to her. He claims to have given her high scores but deduces that she probably lost on account of another judge's scores. There is no way to verify this because judge's score sheets are anonymous. Such statements are ways in maintaining good relations in response to an awkward situation. Vulnerabilities of intimacies among Filipinos in Urban Kansai necessitate a conscious care in maintaining and creating them.

#### **APPENDIX D: UTAWIT SINGING CONTEST**

Singing competitions are popular among Filipinos in Urban Kansai in terms of participation and attendance. The singing competition I describe is a Japan-wide contest called *Utawit*. I show how connections of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are made through activities related to the singing competition.

According to an article in online Filipino community newspaper, Jeepney Press (<http://jeepney-press.blogspot.com/2014/05/centerfold.html>), *Utawit* was created in 2004 by the groups Jeepney Press, Samahang Pilipino and Teatro Kanto. The event also has support from the Philippine Embassy through the Philippine Labor Office (PLO). The event name *Utawit* is a combination of words that mean song in Japanese and Filipino. These are *uta* (歌) and *awit*, respectively. The singing contest initially aimed to serve as a venue for former Filipino singers to showcase their talents. At present, not only former entertainers join the competition but also students, office workers, caregivers, trainees and so on. The target contestants have changed to include Filipinos of various occupations in Japan. Aside from this, the competition has also seen participation from Japanese nationals. In its early years, the contest used to only be a competition utilizing songs composed and sang by Filipinos, but now Japanese songs can also be sung in the competition. The explanation given for the inclusion of Japanese nationals and their music is:



“to foster unity and cooperation between Filipinos and Japanese nationals in Japan...It aims to promote Filipino talents on the mainstream level while enriching cross-cultural appreciation of Filipino and Japanese music. Utawit is also a charitable event that hopes to generate financial resources to charitable groups in the Philippines” (Jeepney Press, 2014).

Apart from Kyoto, Regional Qualifying Rounds are held in parts of Japan such as in Hokkaido, Morioka, Nagano, Shizuoka, Nagoya, and Fukuoka. The *Utawit* that I narrate is specifically that of the Kansai Regional Qualifying Rounds held in Kyoto.

### **Utawit’s Location among Filipinos in Urban Kansai**

The staging of *Utawit* is a community affair. Together with the main organizing group based in Kyoto are church groups and some members of the organization of Filipino scholars (all based in Kyoto) who volunteer their services in the staging of the contest. The main organizers are mostly headed by middle-aged Filipino women. This community activism makes the mostly migrant Filipino women take the lead roles and transcend from traditional and marginal roles into actors who perform wider community duties and management. During the event day, a handful of young male members receive instructions from their female leaders to help in all-around tasks such as showing people to their seats, taking pictures, manning the registration booth, handing of program guides and any kind of support that might be needed.

Information about the contest are frequently posted by the organization’s Facebook group administrator three to four months prior to the event. The contest is also announced during Sundays in a Catholic church located in downtown Kyoto after masses are held. This way, information can be shared to Filipinos in Kyoto who are not members of organizations. Volunteers are also recruited personally or through direct messages in Messenger. Help are sought from individuals who event organizers are already acquainted with. Same as in the other organized collective events, the act of volunteering is initiated by asking someone known to the person asking. Rare, but possible, are volunteers in the sense of its common understanding where individuals who have never been connected present themselves to assist.

While not everyone religiously watches the singing contest every year, the contest is well-known to Filipinos in Urban Kansai. As soon as it is announced after mass, it creates a certain buzz of excitement among the churchgoers. Filipinos in Urban Kansai talk about the contest in their gatherings even if the event has no set schedule yet and even if it is still a year to its expected date. Filipinos in Urban Kansai expect *Utawit* to take place because of the regularity that they observe it being held in Kyoto. The *Utawit* is a venue where core activities that are significant in process of being a community of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are created.

When Filipinos in Urban Kansai hang-out or “*tambay*” for karaoke, they tease each other that their singing abilities enable them to join *Utawit*. Some make serious suggestions for somebody to consider joining the contest when they hear someone with a good singing voice. Calls for singing contestants are also made through Facebook. It is also quite common for organization leaders to ask younger or newer members to join the contest if they are heard to have the potential. “*Aawitan*” is a Filipino word that means “to sing to” but is also used as

a metaphor that means “to persuade.” Potential contestants are persuaded (*aawitan*) to join and share their talents. Potential contestants are told not to keep their talents to themselves. While those asked can refuse, refusing is seen to be an act of non-fellowship.

Some friends drop by a contestant’s house during singing practices. They give comments about the singing practices. When someone joins *Utawit* as a contestant it is not only the contestant and the direct family who are involved, but also one’s friends and community or church organization. Huge contingent of supporters come from the various Kansai prefectures for support. The 280 seating capacity of the *Utawit* event hall in downtown Kyoto is able to accommodate the large delegation of family, friends and organization mates.

The area around the venue in downtown Kyoto becomes busier during the day of the Kansai Regional Qualifying Rounds for *Utawit*. Filipinos from all over Kansai come to watch and give support to a family member or friend joining the competition. Some Japanese also attend. The competition is held on Sundays to give more opportunities for people to come and watch. Most of the organization members go to a Catholic church located near the venue and the *Utawit* is conveniently timed after the English Mass that Filipinos in Kyoto regularly go to. The singing contest starts at one in the afternoon so the Catholic flock can walk to the venue after congregating in mass. Those with no plans are asked to tag along, (“*Halika, sama ka na.*”). Tagging along and *tambay* are activities that indicate that one is part of the community. Constant non-participation is construed as being higher in rank (“*mapagmataas*”). Filipinos in Urban Kansai appreciate those who are able spend time with them and join them in their activities.

### **The Persistence of *Raketeers***

The venues where activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are held are pervaded by entrepreneurship or personal businesses (*raket*). Organizations that Filipinos in Urban Kansai are members of are not income generating. It is difficult to stage big events without sponsors sharing the costs. Sponsorships are given in the form of money or prizes (ex. Shinkansen/bullet train tickets, free shipping of *balikbayan* boxes, roundtrip airfare to the Philippines). Sponsorships are important in making events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai successful. Money and other contributions are also donated by individual persons. Major sponsors have advertisements of their company shown during breaks. Both individual and company sponsors are frequently acknowledged in events. Their names and company logos are printed on the event program. Exchange deals underlie Organizer-Sponsor relationships. Support through money or goods are given but this is not a completely altruistic act. Sponsoring events have benefits to individual or company sponsors but returns may be non-immediate.

Roughly around 30 minutes before the show starts, the seats slowly become filled. Many opt to stay inside not just to secure seats for a better view of the stage but also to get away from the persistent calls from staff manning the event’s sponsor’s promotion booths. The booths are located outside of the hall. They tout migrant related services such as remittance services, job opportunities in Japan, condominium units and vacation houses in the Philippines, and telecommunications services.

Some *Utawit* audiences try to escape being offered by individuals engaged in entrepreneurship or sales (*raketeers*) by hurriedly going inside the hall. Most Filipinos in Urban Kansai are accommodating when approached by sales persons. Filipinos are generally supportive of businesses of fellow Filipinos but incessant sign-ups to services that they already have are pronounced to be tiring. Filipinos in Urban Kansai express that it is taxing to sign forms over and over and it takes time to accomplish. Many are careful of signing forms that may be used to their disadvantage later on. Many Filipinos in Urban Kansai try to avoid being sales talked by politely saying that they have already enrolled in the service provided. Some do give in to sign-up when the *raketeer* explains that previous enrolment is not a hindrance and that the *raketeer* only needs the completely filled-in forms for incentives.

Filipinos in Urban Kansai are wary of scams made by other Filipinos in Japan such as those captured in videos shared among Filipinos in Japan through Facebook. The videos show young adult Filipino women asking for charity donations near train station entrances in various high density areas in Japan. They approach Japanese for money. These *raketeers* could not speak Japanese, hence are immediately assumed to be newcomers (*bagong salta*) by Filipinos in Japan. To communicate, they hand papers written in Japanese to passersby.

Filipinos in Japan who confronted the *raketeers* note how the supposed charity is a scam due to failure of the *raketeers* to give convincing and sufficient explanations about their operations. These *raketeers* are not members of any formal Filipino organization or church group in Japan, hence the added doubts about them. Nobody seems to personally know them. Violent reactions and displeasure are strongly voiced against the *raketeers'* getting money from Japanese and using it for themselves instead of going to charity organizations as they claim. Filipinos in Urban Kansai remark how these group tarnishes the good image that Filipinos in Japan have rebuilt. *Raketeers* of this type are disclaimed and are called an embarrassment to Filipinos in Japan. Filipinos in Urban Kansai exclaim that they work very hard to earn money while this type of *raketeers* take the easy route. Neither incorporation, sharing nor caring are made with them so these *raketeers* are considered to be unknown outsiders and are viewed with great suspicion by Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

Frequent joining activities of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are used to bolster both business networks and personal endeavors. This is exemplified in the cases of Demi and Ina, a Filipino graduate student in Kyoto. Demi goes to collective events to get sign-ups for her telecommunications and money remittance service business. Demi also sponsors events in order to get mentions and visibility and is one of the regular *Utawit* sponsors. Demi times her participation and visits when there are big gatherings of Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Ina also uses informal networks in case of future needs.

*"Nag-sign ka din? Yung isa nga ang kulit-kulit. Sinabi ko naman 'di ako nag-papadala ng pera sa Pilipinas."* ("Did you sign up too? There was one who was so insistent even if I said that I do not send money to the Philippines."), I asked Ina while filling-in the Western Union form after a sales person approached me in one event.

*"Ako din e. Pero, oo... Kasi malay mo baka kasi kakailanganin ko din sila sa susunod."* ("Me too. But yes, because who knows... Maybe I might need them in the future."), Ina answered.

## Modes of Watching Contests

The inside of the hall also sees a bustle of activity. The atmosphere is festive and peals of laughter and chatter fill the venue. Friends are seated together. Many of them easily occupy rows of seats because of their big number. There are those who bring children and are seated beside them. Those coming to the venue alone momentarily stop by the entrance to scour the faces in the crowd to check if anyone is familiar. When they see somebody who they know, they quickly approach the group and seat with them. Animated talks continue but these die quickly when the hosts of the show appear on stage. This signals that the competition is about to start.

The rule and mode of watching performances in a quiet manner that is common as viewing etiquette in Japan is also observed among the *Utawit* audience. Reminders to these are very frequently given by the hosts. The audience are told not to go out, stand or walk around the hall when a performance has started. This is so that the contestant performing will not be distracted. In 2018, placards of these same reminders were printed and held up instead of the hosts' frequent reminders. However, since the audience are seated according to one's set of friends, chatting after a contestant's performance persists.

Before the actual singing performances, bursts of loud cheers of encouragement cut through and break the relatively quiet atmosphere. "*Go, OOO!*" and the like are shouted by some group of supporters. This do not violate the set mode of watching because the cheers are shouted only as their favored contestant (usually one's family or peer) approaches the stage. The contestant has not started singing yet. Cheering is mostly performed by newer and younger adult members from the organization in charge of *Utawit*.

Such fervent cheers have not been observed during the *Utawit* held in 2015 to 2017. The *barkada* (peer group) were from the same cohesive group in the *undoukai*. Other audience members seemed to be surprised and gave amused smiles and momentary glances to their display of high levels of enthusiasm. The group were not prevented from cheering by either the hosts or fellow audiences. Filipinos in Urban Kansai like to be interactive during performances. They like having their presence felt as illustrated in the activities that they do. Being interactive is a way of expressing good connections.

The nature of contests and competitions posit it to having only one winner. During these occasions, connections of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are tested. Contests show the fragility and vulnerability of intimacies. Cutthroat competition is very visible, not only among contestants. As representative of various groups in Kansai, the competition among *Utawit* contestants flow into community organizations.

Audience members call contestants or groups based on the places in Kansai that they are from. Exclamations of "*Ang daming taga-Shiga ngayon ah!*" ("There is a large contingent from Shiga this time around."), "*Siya yung tiga-Osaka na sumali na rin dati.*" (She is the one from Osaka from who also joined last time.), and the like have been heard being uttered. It is important to note that even with statements that show awareness of differences, the *Utawit* audience members are respectful of each other. Cordial smiles are easily shared with one another.

The fragility of the situation suggests that maintaining good relations among Filipinos in Kansai to be an everyday work. In Filipino contests, non-winners or individuals who are displeased by results go around their networks to voice their opinions. Occasionally, thoughts are also shared with acquaintances. Competition results are usually not reversed but hearing that other people agree to what they say serves to be some sort of validation. It makes non-winners feel better to vent off steam. Whether the other person truly shares their opinions do not matter. Usually, the other person agrees to the sentiments, but many also pretend to do so. This way, further strains in connections are avoided.

The *Utawit* competition illustrates how Filipinos in Urban Kansai manage what they imagine as Filipino qualities such as being active, passion for performances of singing and dancing, and making conversations. In different levels, these qualities play part in their daily process of living. They are manifested differently according to different contexts. Most of the time, performances of singing and dancing are highly encouraged. On the other hand, being active and fondness of making conversations appear to be more controlled on whether it should be expressed or withheld.

Awareness of differences through regionalism and prefecturalism are observed among Filipinos in Urban Kansai. This awareness has also been noted in the “Where Are You From?” game in *Pinoy Fiesta*. Filipinos in Urban Kansai are conscious of the desires to incorporate but are also very much aware of their differences. However, they were also observed to make extra efforts to make another feel at ease and more comfortable.

## **APPENDIX E: *UNDOKAI***

The Philippine community in Kansai Region celebrates *undoukai* which is named as Indoor Sports Festival in announcements disseminated by the organizer and its member organizations. The *undoukai* is organized by an umbrella organization that coordinates various Filipinos organizations in the region. Although having a given name, the event is preferred to be called colloquially as *undoukai* by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. This event is participated by Filipino organizations from the prefectures of Kansai Region. Some Japanese who support migrant causes and/or have Filipino friends also participate in the sports festivities. Representatives from Philippine government offices based in Osaka are present and join the whole-day event. In 2018, a Cambodian who was invited by a Filipino friend was present in the festivity.

### **Of Volunteering**

Two weeks prior to the *undoukai*, I have been sent instructions through Facebook Messenger on what to bring apart from a reminder of an earlier meeting time for volunteers on the event day. The message reiterated to bring “indoor shoes”. I was confused as to what these were as there was nothing like these in the Philippines. Answers to my questions were vaguely described as “*basta yung puwede sa loob na sapatos*” (“shoes that can be brought indoors”) or “*malinis na sapatos*” (“clean shoes”). Still confused, I used Google and the top searches that came up was *uwabaki* (上履き). I sent a picture of this for confirmation but was told that I would be needing rubber shoes because of the sports activities. I finally figured out that “indoor shoes” meant unsoiled, newly washed rubber shoes or one that have not been used

outdoors prior to the event. As the *undoukai* was held indoors, it follows the same set of rules on entering homes in Japan wherein footwear from outside are not to be stepped inside.

As instructed, I went to the venue which was at a municipal gymnasium in a city in Osaka before nine in the morning. I was asked to volunteer by one of the host organization's officers a month before. I was requested if I could help and volunteer with various tasks that might be needed on the day of the sports festival. I voiced out my willingness to this request. They knew what I was doing research on and thought that I would be very interested in their activities.

I initially expected and looked forward to participate in the games. However, I was not able to do so because I was on the sidelines filling up various types work. It was a very exhausting day as I was pulled to do one type of work after another with almost no time to rest for the whole day event except for lunch time. When the day was over, I just consoled myself that I was able to see how the event was conducted not only on a sports festival participant level but also on the organizers side of things.

I pondered on this experience and its place in the process of living. I saw myself as someone who thought needed special treatment by being a PhD student and assumed it. I thought that by self-proclaiming myself as a researcher that special treatment will be given. This was a clear naivety on my part and apparently not what ensued. The frustrations (kept only to myself) that I felt clearly showed that at that time I did not see myself as part of the community even if I actively participate in communal events. I showed lack of humility by not acknowledging the duties that are part of what it means to be connected among Filipinos in Urban Kansai which is sharing of labor.

Participation in communal labor during events is valued. Filipinos in Urban Kansai often remind each other that everybody is equal in Urban Kansai no matter what that person's background is in the Philippines ("*Dito, pantay-pantay tayo.*").

### ***Raket* and Entrepreneurial Opportunities**

The reception area was not yet set-up so one of the organization's officers, a Filipino woman, gave instructions to arrange tables and chairs near the gym's entrance. Demi, a Filipina in her 40s who is married to a Japanese, and I were called to do the task. After leaving our bags in a small room where other organization officers gathered, we did as told. Demi came with her husband to the municipal gymnasium but he left soon after. She divulged that she came to the sports festival to get sign-ups for her telecommunication services business. She shared that she also often sponsors events of Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

Social spaces of Filipinos in Urban Kansai are pervaded by entrepreneurship or personal businesses (*raket*) such as Demi's. In this same event, some Filipinos were selling lunch boxes and drinks. Food in the lunch boxes that were sold were Filipino dishes such as stew (*menudo*) and noodles (*palabok*). *Rakets* are well-patronized by Filipinos in Urban Kansai. Token buying of items, even if not immediately needed, is common. The items purchased do not have to be the most expensive one, even the cheapest is well-appreciated by the seller. This kind of accommodation does not only show balanced reciprocity through market exchanges but also

illustrate care in supporting a compatriot's (*kababayan*) business ventures. For Filipinos in Urban Kansai, *raket* is a means of being acquainted.

### Forming Teams

Most Filipinos are known to come to event meeting places later after the set meeting time even when in Japan, a habit known as "Filipino Time." For this reason, event organizers often put an allowance of an hour or more before the actual time that the event starts. True enough, after an hour from the time that was announced, people came in little by little. Many of them were wearing T-shirts that indicated their membership to their respective organizations.

Demi and I were almost finished inflating balloons needed for games when people started to arrive so I moved to the reception area to assist while Demi went to find prospective persons for her business, "*Sis, raraket muna ako ha.*" ("Sis, I will just go around for my business."). *Undoukai* participants formed two lines towards the reception table and wrote their names and membership affiliation during their turn. After listing these information, each person had to take a ball out from a basket. The color of the ball that they pick represents their team in the *undoukai*. This information was promptly added beside their names which indicated that a person has registered to the event and has a team.

A person can belong to one of the four teams: Red, White, Yellow or Blue. The team colors are derived from the Philippine flag which is made up of these four colors. Before leaving the reception, each *undoukai* participants are given a long piece of colored cloth (either red, white, yellow or blue) to be tied to any visible part of their body as an indication of their *undoukai* team membership.

This segregation into groups came unexpected. Many grumbled with being put into teams depending on what color a person draws. Some wanted to remain with fellow organization members or the friends who they came to the *undoukai* with.

Nothing much could be done with some of participants' displeasure as rules were already planned and set by the organizers. After picking their respective sports festival team colors, the *undoukai* participants finally entered the gym. They settled themselves on a desired spot and remained huddled with their own groups while waiting for the event to start. Some participants like Nene, her brothers and other males were more physically active and brought out a basketball to play with.

### Group Cohesiveness

A group from Kyoto came with a huge and visible contingent. All were wearing white shirts with "KYOTO" printed at the back. For those who did not have the printed shirt, a computer printed paper was instead attached. There were many of them to be accommodated in the reception area at the same time so some entered the gym first to put their bags down. Two young adult male members of the group hanged a big white banner with "KYOTO" written in big bold letters on a wall near their desired spot.

The cohesiveness of this group was apparent. The way that they spoke to each other was devoid of formalities and very casual across ages and genders. The atmosphere was

boisterous, lively and at times loud. Like the previous groups who came before them, many of them complained on why they had to be separated into different teams. They thought that they would be playing as one team with the group they came with. Many requested if they could transfer to a particular team so they could be with their friends. One even remarked that she should be with a friend in the same team or else the friend would not want to continue her participation in the sports festival.

The team selection rules were reiterated and explained. The reaction to this was that many started to draw balls many times over until they could get the team color that they desired to be in. Having done so, the group from Kyoto managed to pick white balls which was in sync with what they were already wearing and their banner. With this type of team selection, it was bound that numbers would not be even between teams. Those in the White Team had more numbers than the other teams so some had to be moved to a team which had fewer members. While there are some who had to move out to resolve the imbalance, many of those from this Kyoto group remained on the White Team.

## **APPENDIX F: ACTIVITIES IN CHURCH AND ITS VICINITY**

A frequent question that I get when I talk about my research is where I can find Filipinos in Urban Kansai. To which I answer rather quickly, “That is easy, go to a church.” Usually the person who asks the question nods in agreement and gives his or her own account of seeing Filipinos in churches. Descriptions from the previous chapters show that there are many other venues to find Filipinos in Urban Kansai; however masses are a good place to start because of the significant number of Filipino attendees and its more regular occurrence.

While there is only one Filipino Christian organization listed on Table 4. Filipino Organizations in Kansai from 1974 to 2019, it is important to note that some Filipinos also go to Christian churches for worship and not just the Catholic Church. The ones who prefer to go for Christian worship are noticeably a much younger crowd than the ones who go to the Catholic Church. There are also many young adults in the Catholic Church but there are more middle-aged to older Filipinos who attend with their family. There are also more Japanese young adults who go by themselves in Christian churches. I did not see this trend in Catholic Churches as many of the Japanese who go there are older men who are married to Filipino women.

The atmosphere of Christian services are different from Catholic masses. In a Christian service in Kobe in Hyogo Prefecture, lights are dimmed immediately at the start of the services. The lights are only focused on the stage. Worship songs are played by a live band on stage to which lots of clapping and dancing from the worshipers ensue. In contrast, Catholic masses are very solemn. The rituals are fixed and are almost never changing for decades already. Catholic masses in Urban Kansai do not differ from masses conducted in the Philippines. The order of prayers, hymns, kneeling, holding hands and sitting down are done exactly the same in every mass. I could spot many Catholics who automatically kneel or reach out one’s hand without the priest telling to them to do so.

The love for movement that Filipinos in Urban Kansai exhibit are prevented in Catholic masses. Talking to each other is prohibited during masses. Some tend to forget to put their cellular phones on silent mode. Occasionally, SMS notifications or calls resonate and break the mass’ solemnity. On instances such as this, the phone owner immediately locates his or



her phone, turns it off and silently bows his or her head in apology. On the other hand, in some Christian services in Urban Kansai, people talk, dance and move around. The music played is very loud. I heard one comment of the service being “like in a dance club.”

Commensality is performed in both Catholic masses and Christian services. Commensality in the Catholic Church is performed during the services by receiving small white flat circular wafers (*hostia*) from a priest and also after the mass through birthday celebrations. Drinks and snacks are served during and after Christian services. While they do not celebrate birthday parties together, there are English conversation activities that precede Christian services where worshippers mingle. The presence of English conversation activities makes the services appealing for those who like to learn English to attend. This and the more entertaining atmosphere may be a considerable factor to why there are more Japanese young adults and young adults in general who to attend Christian services compared to Catholic masses.

These activities are in extension of the traditional ways of providing for the spiritual needs of churchgoers. They show enhanced ways of fostering incorporation among Filipinos in Urban Kansai and the local populace. Like in the previous examples of Japanese attending Catholic and Christian churches, a Christian Church in Kyoto also sees attendance from people of various nationalities. While not as big as the downtown Catholic Church group, the Filipino community in this Christian Church is hugely represented relative to other attendees. This Christian Church holds services in Filipino every third Sunday of the month.

One graduate school student in Kyoto describes of his going to church as a social Christian. He further explains that he does not strictly practice being a Christian. He treats the church as a venue for him to be able to meet other Filipinos. He goes whenever he has free time. He also goes when he feels lonely and longs for someone to talk to in Filipino. He divulges that there are many like him who are a social Christians.

If there are “social Christians” as the graduate student described, the same can also be seen of Catholics. Ate Cindy, a single mother to two girls, and her close friend and neighbour who is also a Filipino single mother to one girl, frequent the downtown Catholic Church in Kyoto. They both give credit for the church in keeping them and their children grounded in faith. Both Filipino mothers divulged that they are not deeply religious but now that their daughters are in Japan, they believe that going to church every Sunday is advantageous. They both agreed that doing so will make their children practice and continue the Filipino values that they left behind when they were being raised by their relatives in the Philippines.

Even at times when they could not accompany their children to church, the children go by themselves by bus. One of the children shared that she likes going to church because it makes her meet other JFCs who are in the same situation as hers during the after-mass gatherings.

Most after-mass gatherings take longer than the actual mass. Masses take roughly an hour in duration. It can be longer if the priest decides to make his homily long and many Filipinos dislike this, “*Ang haba naman ng sermon ni Father kanina...*” (“Father’s homily was so long a while ago...”), “*Naku, siya yung pari na ang haba-haba manermon*” (“Oh no, he is the priest who takes too long finish his homily.”). Time inside the church can also be extended when there are community announcements and second (or third) calls for donations. Some Catholic

Filipinos in Urban Kansai who do not have much money to share anticipate the second (or third) calls for donations. Instead of putting a large amount of money during the in-mass donation, they divide the donation into two (or three). This brings the total to same as when there is only one call for donations. It is embarrassing to be noticed not putting money inside the bag at all.

After masses are over, many Filipinos move to a church hall which is in a separate location from where masses are held. After-mass gatherings are occasions where Filipinos in Urban Kansai can relax after the strict observance of rituals during masses.

### **Birthday Parties in Church**

Filipino birthday celebrants for a given month hold en masse celebrations in Catholic Churches in Urban Kansai. The schedule varies from church to church but are always during Sundays after mass. During a scheduled after-mass birthday party, special prayers for the birthday celebrants are included in the mass proper. The schedule is already set but reminders are given by a community leader or the priest. The occurrence of the party is always announced after mass before the churchgoers dissolve. It is open to all members of the Catholic flock, but only very few from other nationalities attend. This is despite going to mass at the same time that Filipinos do. Most who attend are Japanese who are married to Filipinos. Furthermore, other nationalities do not hold after-mass gatherings in the church halls like Filipinos do.

During after-mass birthday celebrations, food and drinks are prepared and brought by the birthday celebrants or their parents. If the celebrants are children, the food are prepared by their parents, specifically the mothers. If there are many individuals having birthdays in a month, an individual does not have to shoulder the whole party. Bringing one dish per birthday celebrant is enough. Some celebrants who have more financial capabilities bring more food and drinks to share.

Crudeness has already been often mentioned as a negotiated behavior that can reflect one's level of connections. In a small space where migrants of different backgrounds come together, ruptures such as linguistic, social and spatial forms of avoidance behavior and differentiation may be difficult to avert. I refer to my notes on a birthday party in a Catholic Church in Osaka.

One of the birthday celebrants was a young girl whose parents are both medical doctors in Osaka. When the churchgoers arrived in the church hall, food and drinks were already prepared on a table positioned at the front area. They found a place to sit and waited for others to arrive. When it seemed that there would be no one joining the party, the priest stood up in front together with all the birthday celebrants. The party participants formed a half-circle around them. Then the priest made a sign of the cross to which everybody followed. The priest gave his prayers and well-wishes to the birthday celebrants then gave graces to the meal. He made another sign of the cross as a sign of ending the prayers. This action was again emulated by the rest of the group.

After giving blessing to the birthday celebrants and saying graces, the priest announced that everybody in the party are now able to eat. One of the birthday celebrant's parents (the

medical doctors) remained in front while people lined up to the table to get paper plates and plastic utensils. A male relative of theirs came to the room with boxes of pizza in tow. These were laid on the same table where the rest of the other food were. The birthday celebrant's parents did not take part of the queue and were talking and engaging with other people. They were one of the hosts of the event as it was their daughter's birthday.

Extended families are seated next to each other. Many reserve seats for a family members who come in late. One informant has a large family in Osaka. She shared that her mother first came to Japan "decades ago." When her mother became relatively settled in Osaka, her mother invited her sisters (MZ) and brothers (MB) to follow. They live in various parts of Osaka but see each other in church every Sunday. Because masses prohibit behavior that disrupts its solemnity, their family do not get to mingle as much during mass. After-mass gatherings become a chance for them to have some sort of a family reunion.

Their interaction can be characterized as loud, full of banters, giving stories about one's recent experiences and constant put downs. Filipino is widely used among them including the children. The use of Japanese among adults and children is sparse even among those whose Japanese husbands were with the group. Their family employed of a wider space by their occupying many seats. They kept on standing up to go around to talk to a family member or to other church mates. Like in family reunions, younger children were running around and playing with each other. They also played with other children including the young birthday celebrant described above. The older members tried to stop them when they became rowdier to no avail. Then, they resigned and continued their conversations with other adults in the party.

This is in stark contrast to the family of one the birthday celebrants. The couple's (the medical doctors') other children and relatives, all young adults, preferred to stay away from the scene after preparing the food and drinks that they brought on the center table. They seated themselves further away from the main group. They gathered at the end of the room towards the entrance and preferred to interact only among themselves. Apart from spatial distancing, they talked in English which is a mark of differentiation especially when most of the attendees communicated in Filipino. I refer to my observations of the birthday party:

The pizza that one of them bought from Costco easily ran out. Many of the party attendees immediately took a piece or two for themselves. One of the birthday celebrant's male family member looked unhappy and was frowning as he cleared out the empty pizza boxes from the table. His look of disdain to those he was serving meal portions to was apparent. He went back to his relatives who were huddled away after clearing the empty boxes. He was greeted by one of the women in their group when he approached:

"Did you see that? They are like dogs."

To which another agreed and smugly added, "Yeah, I cannot understand how they can call themselves Christians and act like that."

I noticed that they did not eat anything from the party.

Performances of avoidance and difference are apparent in this example. There is a clear lack of close intimacies between this birthday celebrant's relatives and their church mates.

Fellowship entails having shared experiences. Physical presence is not enough and that participation and performance in activities are the most important element in the incorporation of Filipinos in Urban Kansai.

The act of eating together and feeding are activities that are indicative of good relations.. Without even referring to the comments of the birthday celebrant's relatives, the behavior that they exhibited indicates of their weak connections to the other people in the party. The parents of the birthday celebrant can be let off for not eating with the party participants because they were entertaining their guests; however, the relatives have less reasons not to partake in the eating. The spatial distancing and preference of language reflects of their difference.

### **Sidewalk Vending**

The persistence of *rakets* are also pervasive in some Catholic Churches that Filipinos go to. While not religious in content, sidewalk vending is timed during masses and within the vicinity of the church.

During Sundays, a day when the Catholics go to church to attend mass, the streets where Catholic Churches are located see its own action. Automobiles are parked inside the church. An automobile's trunk is opened and the contents are carried from the church's parking lot to its adjacent street little by little. Filipino adults and able-bodied children carry big plastic bags, plastic boxes, blue vinyl mats, stools and foldable tables. They first scout a good area where to settle themselves. Locating themselves near the church's entrance is favorable but Filipinos usually walk the length of the street to scout for better deals so any spot will do.

The vendors are all Filipinos and are positioned in close distance to each other. They are in good terms with each other even if the products that they sell are similar. They chat with each other on the sidewalk while looking after their goods as masses are ongoing inside of the church. Most Filipino churchgoers buy from them after the mass has ended but some Filipinos who do not attend masses also go solely for purchasing items in the Sunday sidewalk market. To take advantage of this, many of the vendors try to set-up their goods before the masses start.

Products that are sold vary. There are many who sell Philippine brand daily food necessities such as sardines, *sinigang* (sour soup) mix, *toyo* (soy sauce), banana ketchup and the like. Philippine brand daily-living products such as papaya soap, skin whiteners (*pampaputi*), shampoo, soap and the like are also available. Food is also marketed. Many of the vendors bring home-cooked Filipino meals, snacks and pastries, all of which are pre-packed in little portions in microwavable plastic containers and are ready to eat.

Not all members of big families who go together stay on the sidewalk, one or two remain stay with their mothers to assist while the rest enter and attend mass. Like the *suki* relationship described in Nishinari Ward (Chapters 4 and 5), the same also operates in the Sunday sidewalk market. The *suki* relationship that is in the Sunday sidewalk market is among regular buyers and sellers. *Suki* buyers prefer buying from their *suki* sellers. The relationship continues even if the prices of their *suki* seller are a little higher than other sellers. Because of temporary set-up of the Sunday market, only those who know each other very personally are able to make

*utang* (credits). I personally have not witnessed *utang* in Sunday sidewalk markets during my fieldwork. Those who do not have *suki* are not constrained to patronize a seller but they may miss out on freebies, add-ons (*dagdag*) or discounts that mark the attainment of this relationship.

Many of the vendors try to finish their business early and catch-up (*habol*) with the religious activities in church. They see to it that their relationships are more than *raket* reasons and go beyond the streets into the church.

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