

Industrialization, class structure, and social mobility in postwar Japan¹

ABSTRACT

This study examines intergenerational class mobility in Japan using cross-national comparisons with Western nations and cross-temporal comparisons of five national surveys conducted in postwar Japan. Cross-national comparisons highlight the similarity in relative mobility pattern between Japan and Western nations and at the same time the Japanese distinctiveness in absolute mobility rates especially regarding the demographic character of the Japanese manual working class. The results of cross-temporal comparisons of mobility pattern report some systematic trends in total mobility, inflow and outflow rates, reflecting the Japanese experience of late but rapid industrialization. The pattern of association between class origin and class destination, however, was stable in postwar Japan. It is therefore the combination of distinctive absolute mobility rates and similar relative mobility rates that characterizes the Japanese mobility pattern in comparison with the Western experience. Furthermore, Japan's distinctive pattern of postwar social mobility is characterized by a combination of rapidly changing absolute mobility rates and comparatively stable relative mobility rates.

KEYWORDS: Social mobility; industrialization; class structure; Japan; cross-national comparison; trend

The importance of Japan as a critical case for current theories of industrial society has received wide recognition in recent decades. Theories of industrial society claim that a high-technology and industrial economy has a profound effect on social structure and process. Therefore, they expect a large degree of uniformity among all industrial societies (Kerr 1983). However, while Japan has industrialized, and successfully so, it is open to empirical investigation whether industrialism has in fact brought about the postulated range of changes in contemporary Japanese society. This study will analyse empirical data on social mobility in Japan and other industrial nations in order to examine whether a distinctive pattern of intergenerational mobility can be found in Japan vis-à-vis the Western experience. I will

also examine trends in social mobility in postwar Japan in order to verify the hypotheses about long-term trends in mobility among industrial nations.

SOCIAL MOBILITY IN INDUSTRIAL NATIONS

This section reviews a number of theories about social mobility among industrial nations. I would like to outline four prevalent hypotheses or predictions implicit in the works of many social scientists. These hypotheses, I must emphasize, are not stated explicitly in the works of the authors cited below and should be understood as derivable propositions from their studies (see Goldthorpe 1985 and Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992 for further discussions on these hypotheses and different versions).

The first argument concerning mobility in industrial nations examined in this study is proposed by Lipset and Zetterburg (1959), American and Swedish sociologists. Their hypothesis was that, once societies reached a certain level of industrial development, they would all have relatively high social mobility. Furthermore, they claimed that 'the overall pattern of social mobility appears to be much the same in the industrial societies of various Western countries' (Lipset and Zetterburg 1959: 13).

Lipset and Zetterburg used three occupational categories – non-manual, manual and farm – and reported outflow mobility rates, which were computed from the three by three mobility tables of various industrial nations, including Japan. The pattern of outflow rates was broadly similar across industrial nations, and they concluded that this similarity was related to generally convergent class structures across nations, a trend associated with industrialization. It should be noted that they were primarily concerned with the amount of total and outflow mobility rather than the openness or fluidity among industrial nations. If we adopt the standpoint of Lipset and Zetterburg, Japanese social mobility, at least as reflected in outflow mobility rates, should not be any different from those in other industrial nations. This is the first hypothesis which I intend to evaluate in this study.

Lipset and Zetterberg (1959) also argued that, when a society moves from a 'pre-industrial' stage to an 'industrial' stage, it experiences an historic increase in the rates of social mobility due to the sudden transformation of industrial and occupational structures. Following urbanization and the expansion of the secondary and tertiary industrial sectors, a massive generational shift of population can be discerned from the farming to the industrial sector.

The writings of Japanese historians (see, for example, Mitani 1977) suggest that a rapidly increasing rate of mobility took place following the transition from a 'feudal' society to a 'capitalist industrial' society in Meiji Japan and similarly during the period of rapid economic development in the 1950s (see also Yasuda 1971; Tominaga 1992). Therefore, from this first

hypothesis, we would expect to see a dramatic increase in mobility rates in the 1950s and early 1960s when Japan became a truly 'mature' industrial nation.

The second hypothesis about social mobility among industrial nations is one advanced by Featherman, Jones, and Hauser (1975), who explicitly reformulated the argument proposed by Lipset and Zetterburg (hereafter called FJH hypothesis). Using mobility data from Australia and the USA, they contradicted Lipset and Zetterburg by saying that the 'phenotypical pattern of mobility (observed mobility)' (Featherman, Jones, and Hauser 1975: 340) including total and outflow mobility rates, varies across industrial societies, depending on the rate of change in the industrial and occupational structure, technological advancement, demographic shifts, and other factors (see also Grusky and Hauser 1984).

Featherman, Jones, and Hauser, however, found cross-national similarity in mobility rates in the 'genotypical' pattern of 'circulation mobility' (op. cit.: 340) or the association between class origin and class destination, as expressed by relative mobility rates or odds ratios. The innovative aspect of their hypothesis is the distinction between the observed 'phenotypical' mobility and the relative chances of mobility. The former is affected by a range of exogenous factors while the latter represents fluidity and openness, net of those factors. Their hypothesis, therefore, states that the pattern of fluidity and the extent of openness are basically the same among industrial societies. From this hypothesis, there is no reason to believe that the Japanese pattern of fluidity should be at all distinctive; Japan is just another industrial society.

Furthermore, Featherman, Jones and Hauser (1975: 340) claimed that among societies with 'nuclear families and market economies', relative chances of mobility and immobility are characterized by a cross-temporal stability. Although occupational and class structures may change as societies industrialize, the underlying mobility regimes, or what they called 'genotypical' level of fluidity, will remain unchanged in industrial nations. The allocation of class positions continues to be affected by social origin, and there is not a trend toward greater openness among industrial nations. Similarly, Sorokin (1959 [1927]), in his classical study of mobility, suggested that mobility rates fluctuate without any noticeable trends among industrial societies. In the short term, there might be some fluctuations in mobility rates mainly due to contingent historical events. Over the long term, however, a society is marked by stability and 'no perpetual trend in the fluctuations' (Sorokin 1959[1927]: 63). Therefore, according to this second hypothesis, we would expect no change in relative mobility rates in postwar Japan (see also Kojima and Hamana 1984; Kanomata 1987, 1997; Imada 1989, 1997; Seiyama et. al. 1990; Hara and Seiyama 1999).

The third hypothesis under consideration was put forward by a number of sociologists in the USA (e.g., Blau and Duncan 1967; Bell 1973; Treiman 1970, 1977; Treiman and Yip 1989). These studies emphasize the logic of

industrialism, suggesting that all industrial societies converge in a uniform direction. In particular, their hypothesis claims that industrial societies exhibit higher rates of mobility and more open opportunities than pre-industrial societies, and that mobility rates increase steadily as societies industrialize, establishing a positive correlation between industrialization and social mobility.

The industrialism hypothesis predicts an increase in both the absolute amount of mobility, as measured by total, inflow and outflow rates, and the relative chances of mobility as measured by odds ratios, but what is most important is the prediction that industrialization produces greater openness in society. The process of industrialization, which accompanies urbanization and the spread of education, transforms the principle of allocation of human resources from particularistic criteria to universalistic ones (Parsons 1951; Levy 1966). Individuals are matched to jobs according to their talent and achievement – primarily educational attainment – and not because of their social origins. As societies become more developed economically, Treiman (1970) argues, meritocratic forms of social selection replace selection based on ascriptive criteria, thereby creating greater openness and fluidity in industrial societies.

A number of American and Japanese scholars who subscribed to modernization theory (see, for example, some essays in Jansen 1965, Ward 1967, and Dore 1967) suggested that postwar Japan had caught up to the Western nations in using achievement as the major criteria in assigning individuals to social positions. According to Tominaga (1979: 63), a ‘rapid and consistent increase’ in mobility rates is found in postwar Japan; following rapid industrialization, the society was consequently becoming more and more open during this period. As a result, this third hypothesis predicts a continuous increase in relative mobility rates in postwar Japanese social structure. Furthermore, according to this hypothesis, societies show different rates of mobility, both absolute and relative, depending on the level of industrialization. Therefore, we expect that Japanese society, which has reached a very mature level of industrialization, should show greater openness and fluidity than some other industrial nations that have attained lower level of industrialization.

Finally, we turn to a fourth hypothesis regarding trends in social mobility in postwar Japan. This hypothesis may be called the ‘post-industrial rigidification’ thesis. A number of Japanese social scientists (Ozawa 1985; Naoi 1990) have reported increasing levels of inequality over the course of the 1980s. Naoi (1989), for example, showed that income inequality among Japanese wage-earners’ households increased in the late 1970s and 1980s after a steady decline and some fluctuations during the 1960s and early 1970s. Because skyrocketing housing and land prices proved too expensive for the ‘middle class’ in the 1970s, a new kind of inequality based on home and land ownership appears to have emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s, and the barriers to class mobility seem to have increased (Ozawa 1985). Tachibanaki (1996, 1998) also reports increasing inequality

in income and assets, especially in land and stock ownership, during the bubble economy of the late 1980s. Following this fourth hypothesis, we should observe a trend of decreasing relative mobility chances in Japan during the 1980s.

In the following analysis section, I will use empirical data on intergenerational class mobility in postwar Japan and other countries in order to evaluate these four hypotheses. It should be noted, however, that some of the hypotheses are not necessarily incompatible with each other. For example, it is possible to observe a historic increase in observed mobility rates in 1950s and at the same time to report declining relative mobility chances in 1980s. However, the prediction of increasing openness and the hypothesis of stability in mobility chances are not compatible.

DATA AND VARIABLES

The Japanese data come from the Social Stratification and Mobility (SSM) surveys conducted in Japan every ten years since 1955.² These surveys are unique in that they were conducted every decade from 1955 to 1995 with virtually the same questions on core items including labour market information and data on the social background of respondents. Therefore, these surveys allow cross-temporal comparison using the same variables. Western data come from the CASMIN (Comparative Analysis of Social Mobility in Industrial Nations) project data file and from the tables reported in Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman (1989). The CASMIN file contains the recoding of unit-record data of national surveys which were conducted in the 1970s in various industrial nations (for details of CASMIN data file, see Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Konig, Luttinger and Muller 1988). Ten Western nations are examined in this study: England and Wales (1972), France (1970), Hungary (1973), the Republic of Ireland (1973–74), Northern Ireland (1973–74), Poland (1972), Scotland (1974–75), Sweden (1974), the USA (1973) and the former West Germany (1976–78). I also obtained from Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman (1989) intergenerational tables in the 1980s for Britain (1983 and 1986), Hungary (1986), Poland (1982 and 1986), Sweden (1982), the USA (1984, 1985 and 1986), and the former West Germany (1982 and 1984).³

The analysis is restricted to male respondents aged 20 to 64, except for the Western data in the 1980s where the age range is 21 to 64. This study uses two variables: class origin and class destination. Class origin refers to the class of the respondent's father, and class destination refers to the respondent's class at the time of the survey.⁴ The analysis is based on the six-category version of Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero class schema (Erikson, Goldthorpe, and Portocarero 1979): the professional managerial class or the 'service class' (I+II), the routine non-manual class (III), the petty bourgeoisie (IVab), the farming class (IVc+VIIf), the skilled manual class (V+VI), and the unskilled manual class (VIIa).⁵

CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISONS OF SOCIAL MOBILITY

Absolute Mobility

The first set of analyses reports absolute mobility rates. I begin with total mobility rates: the proportion of respondents whose class destination is different from their fathers' class. As shown in Table I, in the Japanese 6 by 6 intergenerational mobility table, the total mobility rate is 68.2 per cent in the 1970s and 69.3 per cent in the 1980s. Western rates range from 53.5 per cent in Ireland in 1973-74 to 72.9 per cent in Hungary in 1986. The Japanese rate is within the Western range but is located at the higher end of the distribution. Along with Hungary, Sweden and the USA, more than two-thirds of the respondents experienced a change of class position between the two generations. Therefore, as far as the total amount of mobility is concerned, Japan is more mobile than many Western nations but not exceptionally mobile.

Before moving to discuss outflow and inflow rates, I report the cross-national comparisons of class destination and class origin distributions. Table II shows the distribution of class destination and class origin for Japan in 1975 and 1985, along with the proportions for Western nations. The rates for individual Western nation are not shown, but instead the lowest and the highest values among the nations are indicated as the range. When the Japanese proportion is outside the Western range, an asterisk is placed on the proportion.

Japanese distributions show some distinctive patterns in comparison with

TABLE I: *Cross-national comparisons of total mobility*

<i>1970s</i>	
Japan (1975)	0.682
England-Wales (1972)	0.639
France (1970)	0.635
Hungary (1973)	0.685
Ireland (1973-4)	0.535
Northern Ireland (1973-4)	0.611
Poland (1972)	0.571
Scotland (1974-5)	0.635
Sweden (1974)	0.717
USA (1973)	0.720
Former West Germany (1976-8)	0.614
<i>1980s</i>	
Japan (1985)	0.693
Britain (1983, 1986)	0.649
Hungary (1986)	0.729
Poland (1982, 1986)	0.575
Sweden (1982)	0.697
USA (1984, 1985, 1986)	0.669
Former West Germany (1982, 1984)	0.617

TABLE II: *Distribution of class origin and class destination in Japan and the Western range*

	I+II	III	IVab	IVc+VIIIb	V+VI	VIIa
<i>Class destination</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.220	0.139*	0.176*	0.144	0.188*	0.133*
Western range	0.137-0.282	0.025-0.113	0.017-0.102	0.031-0.281	0.200-0.373	0.182-0.292
1980s						
Japan	0.290	0.133*	0.186*	0.063	0.197*	0.131
Western range	0.204-0.373	0.047-0.104	0.027-0.089	0.024-0.210	0.201-0.437	0.064-0.290
<i>Class origin</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.141	0.0047	0.254*	0.445	0.062*	0.050*
Western range	0.060-0.141	0.023-0.087	0.031-0.137	0.082-0.572	0.138-0.390	0.146-0.261
1980s						
Japan	0.173	0.052	0.267*	0.346	0.097*	0.066*
Western range	0.116-0.273	0.031-0.064	0.025-0.122	0.067-0.464	0.149-0.378	0.082-0.244

Note.

*Where Japanese proportion lies outside the Western range.

Western nations. First, the share of the petty bourgeoisie (IVab) is consistently large in Japan both in the 1970s and the 1980s. This sector is primarily composed of urban shopholders and owners of small-scale firms in the manufacturing sector which often engage in subcontracting relationships with larger firms. The number of small-scale employers with 1–4 employees did not decrease even during the high-speed economic growth period of the 1960s and 1970s (Patrick and Rohlen 1987). Second, the proportion of skilled and non-skilled manual workers is consistently small in Japan. In the class origin distribution, the proportion is small at the expense of the large farming class; in the class destination distribution, the proportion is small because of the relatively large white-collar sector (class I+II and III). This feature is unsurprising. Because of the rapid industrialization and urbanization in postwar Japan, processes which took place in an extremely short time period, blue-collar and white-collar employment expanded nearly simultaneously. Third, the routine non-manual class (III) occupies a large share of the Japanese class destination distribution because of Japanese firms' practice of using clerical work as a training ground for future male managers (Ishida 1993).

Table III presents outflow rates for Japan along with the range for Western nations. The first major finding from this table is that Western rates vary considerably, and that many ranges are wide, often exceeding 20 percentage points. This suggests that Western nations differ widely among themselves. The outflow rates are by no means uniform among Western societies. Second, even so, Japan often falls outside the Western range. Japan appears to be more different among the Western nations. Of the 36 possible outflow rates that could be computed from the 6 by 6 intergenerational mobility tables, Japanese values are outside the Western range 19 times in the 1970s and 16 times in the 1980s; in other words, about half of the Japanese rates are clearly different from those of Western nations. More importantly, the values which fall outside the Western pattern are systematic.

Many Japanese values which are located outside the range involve the outflows to class III (the routine non-manual class), class IVab (the petty bourgeoisie), class V/VI (the skilled working class), and class VIIa (the non-skilled working class). The outflows to class III and IVab are almost always higher than those of Western nations, and the outflows to class V/VI and VIIa tend to be lower than those of Western nations. This systematic pattern is directly related to the particular shape of class structure in Japan. As shown in Table II, the Japanese class destination is marked by a relatively large class III and IVab and relatively small class V/VI and VIIa, compared with Western nations.

Table IV presents inflow rates for Japan and the corresponding Western range. The findings of inflow rates parallel in many ways those of outflow rates. Many Western ranges are wide, and they are often wider than those of outflow rates. Japanese values often fall outside of the Western range: 18 out of the 36 inflow rates in the 1970s and 16 out of the 36 in the 1980s.

TABLE III: Cross-national comparisons of outflow rates

From class origin	Outflow rates to class destination					
	I+II	III	IVab	IVc+VIIIb	V+VI	VIIa
<i>I+II</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.467*	0.186*	0.158*	0.028	0.107*	0.054*
Western range	0.527-0.605	0.014-0.034	0.010-0.073	0.009-0.033	0.117-0.252	0.065-0.134
1980s						
Japan	0.544	0.201*	0.090*	0*	0.105	0.060
Western range	0.443-0.649	0.036-0.147	0.029-0.084	0.009-0.036	0.084-0.327	0.029-0.193
<i>III</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.257	0.276*	0.152*	0.048	0.143*	0.124
Western range	0.211-0.409	0.033-0.241	0.013-0.117	0.008-0.069	0.181-0.412	0.107-0.257
1980s						
Japan	0.340	0.250*	0.130*	0.010*	0.180	0.090
Western range	0.323-0.506	0.063-0.238	0.024-0.084	0.012-0.017	0.172-0.480	0.055-0.132
<i>IVab</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.214*	0.170*	0.305*	0.028	0.175	0.107*
Western range	0.221-0.353	0.029-0.126	0.075-0.276	0.018-0.099	0.151-0.329	0.135-0.201
1980s						
Japan	0.263*	0.109	0.335*	0.012	0.181*	0.101
Western range	0.263-0.424	0.030-0.119	0.040-0.268	0.011-0.119	0.203-0.374	0.074-0.191
<i>IVc+VIIIb</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.149	0.094*	0.128*	0.285	0.177	0.167
Western range	0.067-0.151	0.026-0.074	0.013-0.097	0.151-0.567	0.083-0.273	0.157-0.341
1980s						
Japan	0.210	0.078*	0.169*	0.163	0.220	0.159
Western range	0.120-0.226	0.035-0.051	0.024-0.098	0.139-0.399	0.195-0.335	0.078-0.329
<i>V+VI</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.179	0.171*	0.121*	0.029	0.386	0.114*
Western range	0.146-0.270	0.023-0.112	0.016-0.103	0.007-0.040	0.299-0.514	0.180-0.280
1980s						
Japan	0.258	0.188*	0.097*	0.016	0.328	0.118
Western range	0.184-0.292	0.043-0.122	0.033-0.082	0.005-0.043	0.306-0.624	0.048-0.234
<i>VIIa</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.204	0.088	0.097*	0.035	0.363	0.212*
Western range	0.088-0.206	0.024-0.119	0.009-0.074	0.011-0.078	0.268-0.461	0.259-0.394
1980s						
Japan	0.165	0.173*	0.102*	0.024	0.197*	0.339
Western range	0.146-0.305	0.032-0.143	0.012-0.090	0.006-0.074	0.211-0.571	0.088-0.366

Note

*Where Japanese proportion lies out of the Western range.

These deviations from the Western values show a systematic pattern. Inflows from class IVab are almost always higher, and inflows from the two divisions of the working class, class V+V and VIIa, are almost always lower in Japan than in Europe. Again, these features are related to the shape of the Japanese class origin distribution. It is also important to note that the number of Japanese rates falling outside the Western range fell from 18 in the 1970s to 16 in the 1980s. This suggests that the Japanese distinctiveness appears to be less salient in the 1980s. However, systematic deviations that are observed in the Japanese rates still remain evident even in the 1980s.

When both outflow and inflow mobility patterns are taken together, a distinctive feature of the Japanese industrial working class seems to emerge. The Japanese working class, that is, class V+VI and VIIa, can be characterized by a very low level of self-recruitment. The percentage of manual workers whose fathers were also manual workers is only 19 per cent in 1975 and 24 per cent in 1985 in Japan; whereas in the West, the percentages range from 46 per cent in Hungary to 76 per cent in Britain in the 1980s.⁶ The Japanese working class is extensively recruited from the farming class (IVc+VIIIb) or the petty bourgeoisie (class IVab): 63 per cent of the working class came from these origins in 1985. The corresponding figures for the Western nations range from 13 per cent in Britain to 45 per cent in Hungary in the 1980s. Therefore, the recruitment into the Japanese working class appears to be from much more diverse class origins than the working class in the West.

Moreover, the Japanese working class can also be characterized by a very low level of intergenerational stability. With regard to outflow rates, 53 per cent in 1975 and 48 per cent in 1985 of the sons of the Japanese working class remained in working-class positions. The corresponding figures in the West range from 52 per cent in Sweden to 72 per cent in Hungary in the 1980s. The sons of the Japanese working class are more likely to be found in either the routine non-manual class or the petty bourgeoisie than the sons of the working class in the West. Therefore, when we take into account both its low level of self-recruitment and its low level of intergenerational stability, the Japanese working class seems to possess a very weak demographic stability or 'demographic identity', at least in comparison with the working class in the West (Goldthorpe 1982, 2000; Ishida, Goldthorpe, and Erikson 1991). It is important to notice that the lack of a core working-class sector which forms a stable collectivity within the Japanese class structure is probably responsible for the weak working-class consciousness and the corresponding prevalence of 'middle-class' consciousness that are often reported in the media and scholarly work (e.g., Murakami 1984).

In summary, the findings from the analyses of absolute rates do not provide support for the sociological prediction about social mobility and industrialization proposed by Lipset and Zetterberg (1959). Their prediction that all industrial societies exhibit similar outflow rates is hardly consistent with these findings. Western nations appear to differ among themselves, and Japan appears to be more different still, widening the

TABLE IV: Cross-national comparisons of inflow rates

To class destination	I+II	III	IVab	Inflow rates from class origin IVc+VIIIb	V+VI	VIIa
<i>I+II</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.300	0.055	0.247*	0.300	0.051*	0.047*
Western range	0.211-0.327	0.027-0.124	0.046-0.168	0.039-0.338	0.151-0.339	0.074-0.171
1980s						
Japan	0.324	0.061	0.242*	0.250	0.086*	0.038*
Western range	0.245-0.404	0.058-0.087	0.035-0.150	0.039-0.273	0.127-0.314	0.074-0.219
<i>III</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.188*	0.093	0.310*	0.300	0.077*	0.032*
Western range	0.043-0.177	0.030-0.154	0.073-0.193	0.049-0.603	0.131-0.373	0.123-0.268
1980s						
Japan	0.261	0.098	0.219*	0.203	0.133	0.086
Western range	0.087-0.338	0.033-0.128	0.016-0.160	0.037-0.373	0.109-0.366	0.071-0.306
<i>IVab</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.126	0.040	0.439*	0.323	0.043*	0.028*
Western range	0.038-0.142	0.022-0.076	0.183-0.386	0.096-0.470	0.071-0.335	0.057-0.247
1980s						
Japan	0.084*	0.036	0.480*	0.315	0.050*	0.036
Western range	0.125-0.311	0.022-0.051	0.072-0.468	0.056-0.361	0.063-0.313	0.025-0.245
<i>IVc+VIIb</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.028	0.016	0.050	0.882	0.012	0.012*
Western range	0.004-0.047	0.003-0.024	0.010-0.065	0.697-0.926	0.005-0.092	0.026-0.082
1980s						
Japan	0*	0.008	0.049	0.893*	0.025*	0.025
Western range	0.019-0.080	0.003-0.021	0.014-0.082	0.655-0.880	0.040-0.145	0.021-0.163
<i>V+VI</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.081	0.036	0.238*	0.420*	0.128*	0.097*
Western range	0.035-0.085	0.023-0.098	0.030-0.114	0.058-0.406	0.221-0.487	0.172-0.327
1980s						
Japan	0.092	0.047	0.245*	0.388*	0.161*	0.066*
Western range	0.049-0.139	0.016-0.053	0.019-0.141	0.054-0.356	0.209-0.488	0.107-0.298
<i>VIIa</i>						
1970s						
Japan	0.057	0.044	0.205*	0.560	0.054*	0.081*
Western range	0.020-0.073	0.023-0.065	0.031-0.092	0.094-0.561	0.086-0.431	0.166-0.428
1980s						
Japan	0.079	0.036	0.206*	0.421	0.087*	0.171
Western range	0.053-0.159	0.017-0.041	0.029-0.081	0.075-0.567	0.122-0.409	0.111-0.347

Note.

*Where Japanese proportion lies outside the Western range.

Western range of outflow rates. The shape of class structure of each society, which is not uniform across industrial nations, clearly influences these rates.

Relative Mobility

The examination of relative mobility is directed to empirically evaluate the FJH hypothesis. In order to operationalize the notion of cross-national similarity in 'genotypical' levels of relative mobility chances, Ishida and his colleagues (Ishida, Goldthorpe, and Erikson 1991; Ishida, Muller, and Ridge 1995; Ishida 1998, forthcoming) have applied the conceptual model of 'core social fluidity' developed by Erikson and Goldthorpe (1987a, 1987b, 1992) to Japanese and European mobility tables. The model of core fluidity claims that across industrial societies there exists a large common element in relative mobility patterns. If there are differences among nations, these should be understood in reference to the core pattern, a well-defined common theme, rather than by comparing a set of individual nations separately.

The model of core fluidity that is represented by a topological kind of log-linear model (Hout 1983) is composed of different effects that purport to capture different aspects of mobility: the inheritance effect, the hierarchy effect, the sector effect and the affinity effect. These effects are informed by sociological ideas about the process of intergenerational mobility in industrial nations, and the core model implies that these effects operate in mobility tables that can be constructed from any industrial nation. When the core model was applied to the Japanese table, there were some deviations from the core model, but the extent of deviations was not larger than that observed among European nations. Therefore, it was not possible to reject the FJH hypothesis on the basis of the lack of the fit of the core model (for details, see Ishida, Goldthorpe, and Erikson 1991; Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Ishida 1998, forthcoming).

In order to supplement these analyses reported in previous work, Table V shows the Japanese values and the Western range for the selected log odds ratios computed from the mobility tables. I computed interstitial odds ratios, that is, odds ratios computed from a pair of adjacent cells.⁷ These 25 odds ratios compose what Goodman (1978) calls the basic set of odds ratios whose values reproduce the pattern of association in the table. Of the 25 odds ratios, the Japanese values are outside the Western range for only six cases in the 1970s and for only three cases in the 1980s. If we recall the results of the comparison of outflow and inflow rates, the Japanese rates fell outside the Western range for 50 per cent of the cases in the 1970s and 42 per cent in the 1980s. It is striking, therefore, that as far as the relative rates as measured by odds ratios are concerned, Japan does not seem to be different from the West. Furthermore, among the nine outlying Japanese cases, none of them are closer to zero, indicating more fluidity in Japan. The 'contours' of fluidity in the Japanese mobility table can be

TABLE V: *Interstitial log odds ratios for Japan and the Western range*

Cell	1970s		1980s	
	Japan	Western range	Japan	Western range
(1,2)(1,2)	0.9911	0.3226 - 1.855	0.6863	-0.8621 - 1.3740
(1,2)(2,3)	-0.4292	-0.6977 - 0.383	0.1496*	-1.6660 - -0.3281
(1,2)(3,4)	0.5516	-1.386 - 1.194	--	-0.6061 - 1.2530
(1,2)(4,5)	-0.2305	-0.2789 - 1.121	--	0.1054 - 1.2010
(1,2)(5,6)	0.5500	-0.1418 - 0.6301	-0.1335	-0.8109 - 0.4490
(2,3)(1,2)	-0.3008	-0.7131 - 0.7	-0.5724	-1.9460 - 0.8025
(2,3)(2,3)	1.179	0.7732 - 2.002	1.7760	0.9426 - 2.7350
(2,3)(3,4)	-1.223	-1.764 - 0.4376	-0.7908	-2.2250 - 1.0500
(2,3)(4,5)	0.7340*	-1.222 - 0.4484	-0.1495	-2.4060 - -0.0690
(2,3)(5,6)	-0.3512*	-0.2414 - 0.619	0.1118	-1.1650 - 0.6834
(3,4)(1,2)	-0.2246*	-0.0194 - 1.174	-0.1105	-0.5849 - 1.1730
(3,4)(2,3)	-0.2756	-1.245 - -0.0766	-0.3460	-0.6842 - 0.4418
(3,4)(3,4)	3.183	2.332 - 5.495	3.3200	1.5490 - 4.0310
(3,4)(4,5)	-2.305	-1.687 - -3.952	-2.4420	-2.9210 - -1.1840
(3,4)(5,6)	0.4361	0.2834 - 0.8588	0.2544	0.0305 - 0.8344
(4,5)(1,2)	0.4131*	-0.7522 - -0.04455	0.6456	-0.3046 - 0.9323
(4,5)(2,3)	-0.6536	-1.215 - 0.02903	-1.4120	-1.7950 - 0.4308
(4,5)(3,4)	-2.244	-3.570 - -2.230	-1.7560	-3.4700 - -1.0380
(4,5)(4,5)	3.076	2.648 - 5.695	2.7130	1.8330 - 4.0690
(4,5)(5,6)	-1.158	-1.339 - -0.5012	-0.6928	-1.1070 - -0.3102
(5,6)(1,2)	-0.7921*	0.0165 - 0.3803	0.3914*	-0.3390 - 0.3355
(5,6)(2,3)	0.4402*	-0.4453 - 0.2591	0.1099	-1.4700 - 0.4796
(5,6)(3,4)	0.4353	-0.1364 - 1.239	0.3254	-0.6931 - 1.6780
(5,6)(4,5)	-0.2754	-2.366 - -0.1613	-0.8920	-0.9127 - -0.3338
(5,6)(5,6)	0.6809	0.2082 - 1.002	1.5620*	0.2758 - 1.0890

Not. -- Odds ratios cannot be computed (see text).

*Where Japanese proportion lies outside the Western range

characterized by a pattern similar to those found in the Western tables, and the Japanese outlying cases are not in the direction of greater openness.

I also conducted pairwise comparisons of these odds ratios between Japan and a particular Western nation to determine whether the Japanese values are closer to zero than those of Western nations; if the log of odds ratios were zero, it implies the absence of an association between class origin and class destination. The purpose of this exercise is to examine whether the Japanese log odds ratios are closer to zero than the corresponding values in the West, which would suggest that Japan is more fluid and open than the West. Comparisons with most Western nations show, however, that while almost half of the values are closer to zero in Japan, the other half are not. In other words, Japanese society is not particularly fluid or open based on an examination of the basic set of odds ratios, even though some Western nations have lower levels of industrialization.

In summary, our results can be regarded as consistent with the FJH hypothesis which claims a basic similarity in relative mobility regimes

among industrial nations. If our results from the Western nations are taken as lending support to the FJH hypothesis, then there should not be any problem for the FJH hypothesis to accommodate the Japanese case. Japan does not deviate from the core pattern of social fluidity any more than Western nations do. There is no clear evidence to suggest that Japanese society is more fluid and open than Western societies.

CROSS-TEMPORAL COMPARISONS OF SOCIAL MOBILITY

Absolute Mobility

I begin my cross-temporal analysis with the examination of the trends in the distributions of class origin and class destination. Table VI presents these distributions for five survey years. The distributions of class destination reflect the (male) class structure of Japanese society at the times of the surveys. The most obvious trend in the class destination distribution is the rapid contraction of the farming class in postwar Japan. In particular, it reduced its share in the class structure dramatically from 40 per cent in 1955 to 20 per cent in 1965. It continued its contraction until 1985 at the rate of about 7 per cent every year. The skilled working class expanded dramatically from 9 per cent in 1955 to 17 per cent in 1965 and thereafter reached the peak at 20 per cent in 1985. Both the farming class and the skilled working class experienced major transformations from 1955 to 1965. It is probably safe to say, therefore, that Japanese society underwent a drastic change in the labour market from 1955 to 1965. The change largely corresponds to the rapid movement of people from the rural areas to urban industrial sectors.

Another obvious trend apparent in the distributions of class destination relates to the professional managerial class: it has expanded steadily from 1955 to 1995. In 1955, the upper white-collar sector claimed only 10 per cent of the share in class structure whereas by 1995 it had grown to the largest group with a share of 36 per cent. Indeed, what is apparent in the trend of class destination distributions is that the expansion of the white-collar sector, namely the professional managerial class, took place almost at the same time as that of the blue-collar sector, namely the skilled manual workers. In response to the major flow of people from the rural farming sector, both the white-collar and the blue-collar sectors absorbed these migrants to the urban areas. Unlike many other industrial nations which went through the expansion of the blue-collar sector first and followed with that of the white-collar sector, Japanese society experienced the expansions almost simultaneously in one stage due to rapid postwar industrialization.

In contrast, the percentages of the routine non-manual class (III), the petty bourgeoisie (IVab), and the non-skilled working class (VIIa) remained fairly stable across survey years. In particular, it is worth noting that there is no sign of the declining significance of the petty bourgeoisie

TABLE VI: *Distribution of class destination and class origin by survey year and total mobility rate in Japan*

	I+II	III	IVab	IVc+VIIf	V+VI	VIIa	Total mobility
<i>Class destination</i>							
1955	0.103	0.124	0.186	0.398	0.094	0.095	0.490
1965	0.186	0.141	0.180	0.202	0.166	0.125	0.639
1975	0.220	0.139	0.176	0.144	0.188	0.133	0.682
1985	0.290	0.133	0.186	0.063	0.197	0.131	0.693
1995	0.360	0.105	0.187	0.046	0.187	0.116	0.690
<i>Class origin</i>							
1955	0.080	0.038	0.232	0.573	0.028	0.049	
1965	0.115	0.040	0.253	0.486	0.068	0.038	
1975	0.141	0.047	0.254	0.445	0.063	0.050	
1985	0.173	0.052	0.267	0.346	0.097	0.066	
1995	0.217	0.047	0.270	0.274	0.115	0.077	

sector in postwar Japanese class structure. Small proprietors constituted about one-fifth of the active male labour force throughout the 1950s to 1990s. We have already observed the relatively large petty bourgeoisie sector in Japan in the 1970s, compared to those in our Western nations. The persistence of this sector across survey years suggests that the importance of this sector within the class structure is not limited to 1975. The share of the non-skilled working class remained stable at about 10 per cent. This trend suggests that this class never expanded to constitute a demographically significant group in Japan, unlike many industrial nations where the non-skilled working class was at one time the major social force within the class structure.

The distributions of class origin do not represent the class structure of any given time period, because the age of the fathers varies substantially and men who did not have a son never appear in the distributions (Blau and Duncan 1967). Instead, they show how the origins of the respondents in a particular survey year have changed over time.⁸ In these data, the observable changes parallel those noted in the class destination distribution: the contraction of the farming class and the corresponding increase in the shares of the skilled working class and the professional managerial class. Compared with the class destination distributions, however, there seems to be a time-lag in the changes in the distribution. The gradual decline of the farming class was observed from 1955 to 1995, and the increase in the share of the professional managerial class took place gradually. In contrast, the share of the skilled working class increased most rapidly from 1975 to 1985.

Total mobility rates for the five survey years are shown on the last column of Table VI. The rate increased dramatically from 1955 to 1965

and continued to increase modestly until 1985. From 1985 to 1995, there is a slight decline in the total mobility rate. The trend is parallel to the changes in the class origin and class destination distributions. In 1955, nearly 60 per cent of the fathers were engaged in primary production, and 40 per cent of the respondents were in the farming class (IVc+VIIb). A large share of the farming class in both generations implied high inter-generational inheritance. However, rapid contraction from 1955 to 1965 of the farm sector both in the class origin and class destination distributions meant mobility out of the farming class, and the total mobility rate jumped from 49 per cent in 1955 to 64 per cent in 1965. This finding is consistent with the prediction by Lipset and Zetterburg about the historic increase in mobility rate when a society enters a mature industrial stage.

Table VII presents outflow mobility rates which are computed from the 6 by 6 Japanese mobility tables for the five survey years. Features of cross-temporal changes across survey years more or less correspond to the characteristics of the changes in the class destination distributions. Outflows to the farming class (IVc+VIIb) decreased dramatically during the 40-year span, especially from 1955 to 1965. On the other hand, outflows to the professional managerial class increased steadily. Outflow rates to the petty bourgeoisie remained generally stable throughout the period. Table VIII presents inflow mobility rates for the five survey years. Trends in inflow rates, in general, parallel those in outflow rates, but they are much less apparent. There is a tendency for inflows from the farming class to decline and inflows from the professional managerial class to increase.

We have already learned the distinctive feature of the Japanese manual working class (class V/VI and VIIa) in comparison with Western nations: a weak demographic stability or 'demographic identity'. It is therefore important to examine whether this feature has changed over the course of economic development in postwar Japan. When we look at outflow rates, the percentage of the sons of working-class fathers who are found in the working class was stable at around 50 per cent from 1955 (51 per cent) to 1975 (53 per cent), but the percentage dropped below 50 per cent in 1985 (48 per cent) and 1995 (45 per cent). In other words, intergenerational stability of the Japanese working class has weakened in postwar Japan from 1975 to 1995. This trend is accompanied by the steadily increasing percentage of the sons of the working class joining the professional managerial class; more and more sons of the working class are moving into the upper white-collar sector (21 per cent in 1955 to 46 per cent in 1995).

From the inflow recruitment perspective, the percentage of self-recruitment into the manual working class also shows an increasing trend. Self-recruitment is more or less in the range of 20 per cent from 1955 to 1975 while there is an increase in 1985 (24 per cent) and in 1995 (28 per cent). There is a corresponding declining trend in the share of the farming class. However, the distinctive inflow pattern in Japan, *vis-à-vis* the West, is still apparent in 1995. The petty bourgeoisie (IVab) and the farming class account for more than the majority (55 per cent) of the class origin among

TABLE VII: *Cross-temporal comparisons of outflow rates in Japan*

From class origin	Outflow rates to class destination					
	I+II	III	IVab	IVc+VIIb	V+VI	VIIa
<i>I+II</i>						
1955	0.403	0.257	0.118	0.125	0.056	0.042
1965	0.461	0.211	0.118	0.044	0.098	0.069
1975	0.467	0.186	0.158	0.028	0.107	0.054
1985	0.544	0.201	0.090	0.000	0.105	0.060
1995	0.603	0.106	0.111	0.005	0.114	0.061
<i>III</i>						
1955	0.145	0.319	0.203	0.116	0.101	0.116
1965	0.329	0.286	0.143	0.043	0.086	0.114
1975	0.257	0.276	0.152	0.048	0.143	0.124
1985	0.340	0.250	0.130	0.010	0.180	0.090
1995	0.430	0.174	0.116	0.012	0.174	0.093
<i>IVab</i>						
1955	0.116	0.190	0.356	0.086	0.152	0.100
1965	0.145	0.201	0.342	0.047	0.163	0.101
1975	0.214	0.170	0.305	0.028	0.175	0.107
1985	0.263	0.109	0.335	0.012	0.181	0.101
1995	0.298	0.095	0.304	0.006	0.191	0.105
<i>IVc+VIIb</i>						
1955	0.059	0.063	0.128	0.621	0.058	0.071
1965	0.133	0.081	0.129	0.362	0.160	0.135
1975	0.148	0.094	0.128	0.285	0.177	0.167
1985	0.210	0.078	0.169	0.163	0.220	0.159
1995	0.244	0.080	0.212	0.148	0.170	0.144
<i>V+VI</i>						
1955	0.059	0.157	0.176	0.039	0.353	0.216
1965	0.183	0.142	0.117	0.050	0.350	0.158
1975	0.179	0.171	0.121	0.029	0.386	0.114
1985	0.258	0.183	0.097	0.016	0.328	0.118
1995	0.343	0.133	0.086	0.005	0.295	0.138
<i>VIIa</i>						
1955	0.067	0.146	0.157	0.146	0.135	0.348
1965	0.149	0.149	0.090	0.119	0.224	0.269
1975	0.204	0.088	0.097	0.035	0.363	0.212
1985	0.165	0.173	0.102	0.024	0.197	0.339
1995	0.293	0.143	0.086	0.014	0.279	0.186

the working class. In other words, the recruitment into the working class is still predominantly from the self-employment sector even in 1995. Furthermore, the recruitment into the working class from the white-collar sector (class I+II and III) increased steadily from 8 per cent in 1955 to 17 per cent in 1995. The working class is recruited extensively from other classes even in 1995.

In summary, the distinctive feature of the Japanese manual working class that was highlighted in the cross-national comparison is reconfirmed in the

TABLE VIII: *Cross-temporal comparisons of inflow rates in Japan*

To class destination	Inflow rates from class origin					
	I+II	III	IVab	IVc+VIIb	V+VI	VIIa
<i>I+II</i>						
1955	0.310	0.053	0.262	0.326	0.016	0.032
1965	0.287	0.070	0.198	0.348	0.067	0.030
1975	0.300	0.055	0.247	0.300	0.051	0.047
1985	0.324	0.061	0.242	0.250	0.086	0.038
1995	0.362	0.056	0.224	0.186	0.110	0.062
<i>III</i>						
1955	0.164	0.098	0.356	0.289	0.036	0.058
1965	0.172	0.080	0.360	0.280	0.068	0.040
1975	0.188	0.093	0.310	0.300	0.077	0.032
1985	0.262	0.098	0.219	0.203	0.133	0.086
1995	0.219	0.078	0.245	0.208	0.146	0.104
<i>IVab</i>						
1955	0.050	0.042	0.445	0.395	0.027	0.042
1965	0.075	0.031	0.481	0.349	0.044	0.019
1975	0.126	0.040	0.439	0.323	0.043	0.028
1985	0.084	0.036	0.479	0.315	0.050	0.036
1995	0.129	0.029	0.441	0.312	0.053	0.035
<i>IVc+VIIb</i>						
1955	0.025	0.011	0.050	0.893	0.003	0.018
1965	0.025	0.008	0.059	0.869	0.017	0.022
1975	0.028	0.016	0.050	0.882	0.012	0.012
1985	0.000	0.008	0.049	0.893	0.025	0.025
1995	0.024	0.012	0.036	0.892	0.012	0.024
<i>V+VI</i>						
1955	0.047	0.041	0.379	0.355	0.107	0.071
1965	0.068	0.020	0.248	0.469	0.143	0.051
1975	0.081	0.036	0.238	0.420	0.128	0.097
1985	0.092	0.047	0.245	0.388	0.161	0.066
1995	0.132	0.044	0.276	0.250	0.182	0.115
<i>VIIa</i>						
1955	0.035	0.047	0.244	0.430	0.064	0.180
1965	0.064	0.036	0.205	0.527	0.086	0.082
1975	0.057	0.044	0.205	0.560	0.054	0.081
1985	0.079	0.036	0.206	0.421	0.087	0.171
1995	0.114	0.038	0.246	0.341	0.137	0.123

cross-temporal analysis. A low level of intergenerational stability and self-recruitment characterizes the Japanese working class throughout the postwar period. There is no noticeable trend for the Japanese working class to become demographically more stable. Although the rate of self-recruitment increased from 1975 to 1995, the intergenerational stability of the working class has clearly weakened from 1975 to 1995. The Japanese manual working class never had the opportunity to fully develop its 'demographic identity' in the postwar period.

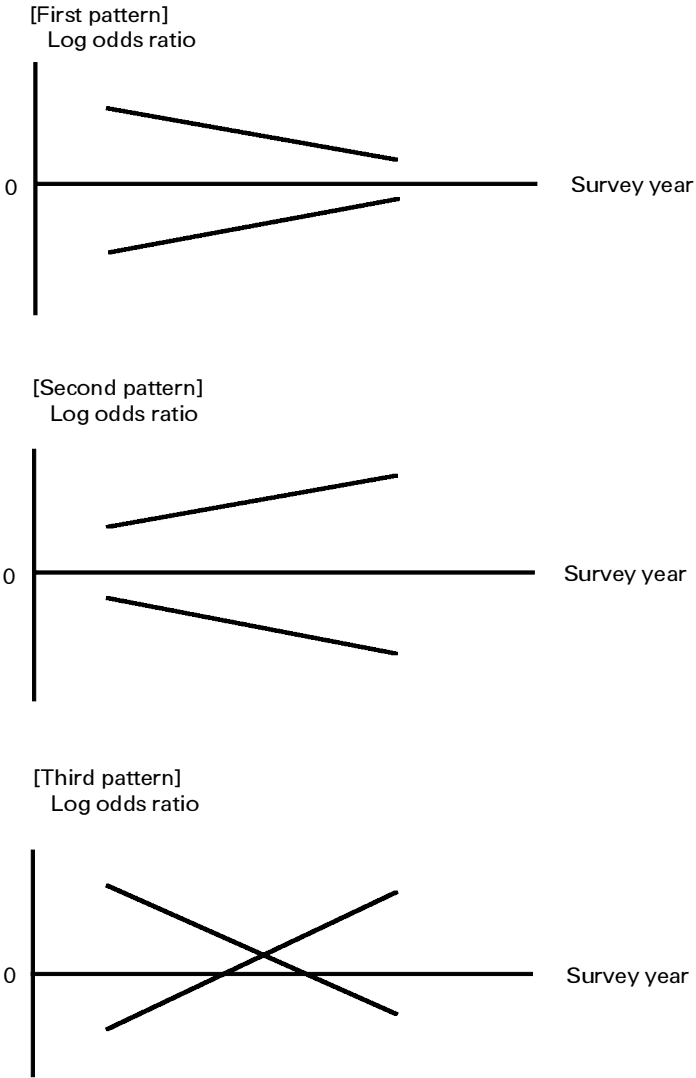
Relative Mobility

Ishida (1998) applied the core social fluidity model to the intergenerational class mobility tables generated from the 1955 to 1995 SSM surveys.⁹ When the effects representing inheritance, hierarchy and affinity were fixed across survey years (the constant social fluidity model using effect matrices), the model did not produce an acceptable fit, suggesting that there were some changes in the pattern of association between class origin and class destination. However, among the 55 possible parameters (11 separate effects times 5 years) that may vary across years, there were only seven parameters which were significantly different from the constant social fluidity model. In other words, the departures from the constant fluidity model are not pervasive. Furthermore, deviations were not of a systematic kind. For every survey year, there was at least one parameter which differed significantly from the constant social fluidity model, but these deviations did not imply any tendency for greater openness across the survey years. If anything, the results are consistent with Sorokin's prediction of 'trendless fluctuation'.

In another effort to detect any change that may have taken place, including minor ones in the odds ratio pattern, I examined the trend of all the individual odds ratios. I report below the results of comparing all of the 225 odds ratios that can be computed from the 6 by 6 table across the pair of survey years. Odds ratios fall into three distinct patterns, as shown in Figure I. The first pattern characterizes cases where the odds ratio moves closer to 1.0 or the log of the odds ratio moves closer to zero. This trend suggests an increasing fluidity from one year to the next. The second pattern is the exact opposite, where the log of the odds ratio diverges increasingly from zero between two survey years, thereby indicating a trend of decreasing fluidity. The third pattern occurs when the log of the odds ratio goes through zero. The log of the odds ratio becomes closer to zero and then away from zero, as shown in the last panel of Figure I.

The bottom part of Figure I presents the results of classifying every pair of odds ratio into one of the patterns shown in Figure I and computing the proportion of three patterns. From 1955 to 1965, of the 225 log of the odds ratios, 54 per cent moved toward zero, 31 per cent moved away from zero, and the remaining 15 per cent crossing zero. The majority of odds ratios show a trend of increasing fluidity and openness. Although the majority of individual odds ratios moved in the direction of greater openness, the global test of constancy in odds ratio pattern from 1955 to 1995, that is, the fit of the constant social fluidity model, is fairly good, especially given the large sample size ($G^2 = 134.3$, $df = 100$, $p = .013$). Therefore, there seems to be stability in the overall odds ratio pattern in postwar Japan.

From 1965 to 1975, the modal pattern is that of increasing fluidity but these odds ratios constitute less than the majority. From 1975 to 1985, the



Classification of the trend in odds ratios for different periods

	1955-65	1965-75	1975-85	1985-95
[First Pattern]	54%	44%	34%	49%
[Second Pattern]	31%	41%	45%	35%
[Third Pattern]	15%	15%	21%	16%
Uni-diff G ²	2.498	0.005	2.417	2.915
Parameter	-0.106	-0.004	0.114	-0.137
St. error	(0.065)	(0.069)	(0.072)	(0.080)

FIGURE I: Three patterns of the trend in log odds ratios

trend is reversed; the modal pattern is that of a decreasing fluidity. Finally, from 1985 to 1995, the trend is reversed again with a modal pattern of increasing fluidity. The reversed trend from 1975 to 1985 appears to support the 'post-industrial rigidification' thesis. However, we should interpret these fluctuations with caution because, as mentioned above, the fit of the constant social fluidity (CSF) model, which imposes all the odds ratios to be the same for all survey years, is good. If we apply the constant social fluidity model excluding 1955, the fit is even better ($G^2 = 94.15$, $df = 75$, $p = .067$). Therefore, the apparent change in the direction of trend from 1975 to 1985 may not be real.

I have also introduced a UNIDIFF model (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Xie 1992) in order to examine whether all the odds ratios are moving uniformly in one direction (instead of analysing separately 225 odds ratios).¹⁰ The uniform difference parameters and fit statistics between adjacent years are shown at the very bottom of Figure I.¹¹ As indicated by the parameter estimates, the direction of the parameters are consistent with the findings analysing separately 225 odds ratios: an increase in fluidity from 1955 to 1975, a decrease in fluidity from 1975 to 1985, followed by an increase in fluidity. Furthermore, none of the UNIDIFF models improves fit significantly, as shown in G-square statistics.¹² These results do not support the industrialism hypothesis which predicted a general and consistent trend towards greater openness and fluidity.

In summary, the overall picture which emerges from all these analyses of relative mobility is that the pattern of relative mobility does not show any noticeable trend and thus is fairly stable in postwar Japan. Therefore, the predictions by Sorokin and FJH are consistent with our findings.

CONCLUSION

This study examined intergenerational class mobility in Japan using cross-national comparisons with Western nations and cross-temporal comparisons of five national surveys conducted in postwar Japan. Cross-national comparisons highlighted both the similarity of the mobility pattern in Japan and the distinctive Japanese pattern of mobility. When we focused on relative mobility rates, as expressed in the odds ratio pattern, Japan did not deviate from the core social fluidity pattern any more than Western nations did. Japanese deviations may be seen as representing another national variation of the common fluidity pattern, rather than as forming a distinctive type which is different from all other Western nations. These results may be taken as lending support to the prediction of a basic similarity in relative mobility rates among industrial nations proposed by Featherman, Jones, and Hauser.

However, when we focused on absolute mobility rates, a different picture emerged. Regarding inflow and outflow rates, Western nations differed among themselves and Japan appeared to be even more different. The conclusion which can be derived from the analyses of these absolute rates is

that of cross-national variation, rather than of similarity. In particular, the Japanese working class is characterized by its low level of intergenerational stability and its low level of intergenerational self-recruitment, compared with the working class in Western nations. The demographic character of the Japanese working class is clearly separated from that of the Western working classes.

The results of cross-temporal comparisons of mobility pattern in postwar Japan parallel in many ways those of cross-national comparisons. Absolute mobility rates showed some systematic trends across the five survey years. Total mobility rates increased sharply from 1955 to 1965 and continued to increase modestly until 1985. Outflow rates to the farming class decreased dramatically during the 40-year span, especially from 1955 to 1965, while outflow rates to the professional managerial class increased steadily. Inflow rates followed a very similar trend. In contrast, relative mobility rates did not show any noticeable trend and were fairly stable.

Japanese society has experienced dramatic and rapid changes in its class structure both among the sons' and the fathers' generations. In particular, by following the path of late but rapid industrialization, rapid contraction of the farming sector was accompanied by the expansion of both the blue-collar industrial sector and the white-collar sector almost at the same time. This particular path of development sets Japan apart from Western nations. In most Western cases, the decline in agriculture was accompanied chiefly by the growth of the industrial working class, with the white-collar expansion only occurring at the later stage. The Japanese experience of industrialization is therefore directly responsible for the distinctive character of the Japanese working class and the changes in absolute mobility rates across survey years.

All in all, it is the *combination* of distinctive absolute mobility rates and similar relative mobility rates that characterizes the Japanese mobility pattern in comparison with the Western experience. Furthermore, it is the *combination* of rapidly changing absolute mobility rates and stability in relative mobility rates that characterizes the postwar Japanese mobility experience. Therefore, we do not have any simple answers to the questions of whether social mobility in Japan is different from that in Western nations or of whether the mobility rates changed in postwar Japan. We must distinguish the types of mobility – absolute and relative – and, depending on the type of mobility, we arrive at different conclusions. And the most important conclusion is perhaps that two types of mobility had to be a paired concept. Discussion of one type of mobility is not sufficient; both are crucial to an adequate account of social mobility in industrial nations.

Only after we take into account both absolute and relative mobility pattern do we fully understand the relationship between social change and social mobility in postwar Japan. Cross-national similarity and cross-temporal stability is found within the context of rapidly changing composition of the Japanese social structure. Similarity and distinctiveness,

change and stability, coexist and simultaneously characterize social mobility pattern in postwar Japan.

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NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the meeting of the International Sociological Association, Research Committee on Social Stratification in Madison, Wisconsin, USA, August 11–14, 1999. The author is grateful to the participants of the meeting and in particular to Michael Hout, John Logan, and Robert Mare, for their comments. The author also thanks the Editors and Journal Manager of the *BJS*, and anonymous reviewers for the guidelines of the revision; the members of the 1995 SSM Research Committee, especially Junsuke Hara, Kenji Hashimoto, Hyeon Suk Jeong, Nobuo Kanomata, Kazuo Seiyama and Sawako Shirahase, for their support; and David Leheny and Leonard Schoppa for their editorial assistance. This paper draws heavily from the analyses reported in my Japanese article (Ishida 2000).

2. I am grateful to the 1995 Social Stratification and Mobility Survey (SSM) Research Committee for allowing me to use the SSM surveys.

3. In order to avoid sparse tables, I have combined tables from multiple years. For example, tables generated from the General Social Survey conducted in 1984, 1985 and 1986 in the USA are combined into a single table with a larger sample size.

4. The father's class in the Japanese data sets is determined by the father's main employment. This is because information on the father's employment when the respondent was about 15 was only available in 1975 and 1985. An additional word of caution is required in the use of the 1955 SSM survey. It did not ask the question of managerial status to the respondent nor to the father. Consequently, the proportion of the professional managerial class is probably slightly underestimated at the

expense of the routine non-manual class because some clerical job holders might have been lower managers. Similarly, the proportion of the skilled manual workers is probably slightly underestimated at the expense of the non-skilled manual workers because some manual workers in class VIIa might have held the status of foreman, which entitles them to be assigned in class V. Western data sets defined the father's class when the respondent was at about the age of 14 or 15.

5. For details of class schema, see Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992, chapter 2). For justification of collapsing the full 10-category version of the class schema, see Ganzeboom, Luijkx, and Treiman (1989). On the use of more disaggregated tables, see Hout and Hauser (1992). On service class, see Goldthorpe (1982).

6. These figures are not reported in the inflow and outflow tables. They are computed after combining class V+VI and VIIa.

7. Odds ratios involving zero cell are excluded from the computation.

8. It should be remembered that the operationalization of the class variable is slightly different in 1955. The managerial status variable was not available in 1955.

9. It should be noticed that Ishida (1998) used the same surveys but the age range was 30 to 64 because his paper also examined the associations between class origin and education and between education and class destination. In order to ensure that the respondents completed schooling, he restricted his sample to those who were 30 years of age and older. The operationalization of the father's class also differed: in 1975 and 1985 he used information on the father's employment when the respondent was 15 years old, rather

than information on the father's main employment.

10. I am grateful to Robert Erikson and Yu Xie for sharing their GLIM macro programs with me.

11. I have also applied the UNI-DIFF model to the data on five years using 1955 as a base year, and obtained similar results.

12. The UNI-DIFF model introduces an additional parameter to the independence model, so the test of improvement in fit appears to be a one-degree-of-freedom test. However, because UNI-DIFF parameters are estimated by an iterative procedure using starting values derived from the data, there are grounds to believe that more than one degree of freedom is taken up (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992: 94, note 27). However, using one or two degrees of freedom does not make any difference to our results.

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