

# Changing Process of Projected Image of Canada in Japanese Package Tour Brochures

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## Introduction

Package tours have played an important role in Japanese outbound tourism. Historically, mass tourism in Japan resulted from the prevalence of reasonable package tours and the appreciation of the Japanese yen. From the 1970s to the present day, the ratio of tourists using such tours has accounted for approximately 50% of Japanese outbound travelers (Figure 1). In particular, full package tourists comprise more than 80% of total Japanese package tourists to Canada (Japan Tourist Bureau 2006).

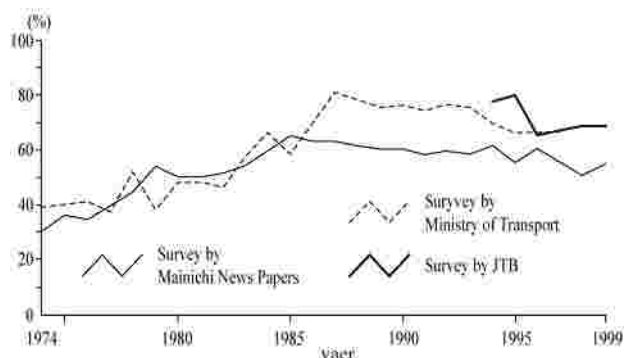


Figure 1. The utilization ratio of overseas package tours in Japan (1974-1999)

(Source: White paper on tourism, On Japanese overseas air travelers, JTB Report: all about Japanese overseas travelers)

The images depicted in tour brochures carry significance in terms of destination marketing. The images projected by the brochures reflect the operators' attitude toward the destination, and therefore, influence the tourists' decisions regarding the places to visit (Wicks and Schuett 1991).

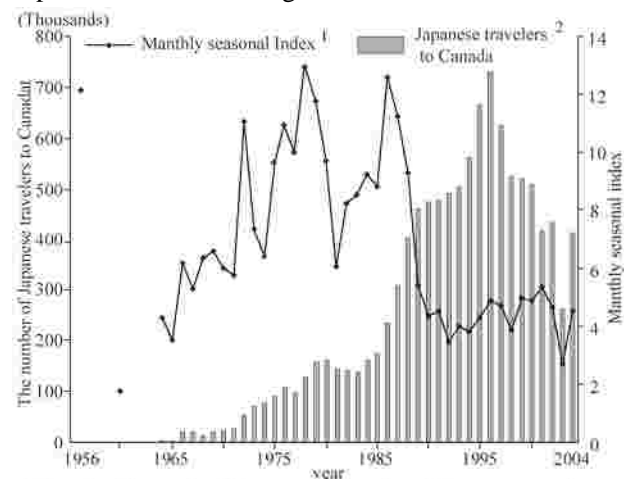
Therefore, many papers pertaining to destination images have focused on the perceived destination image (Bramwell and Rawding 1996). 142 literatures regarding the perceived destination image were released during 1973-2000 (Pike 2002), while few studies have been conducted on the projected destination image (e.g., Dilley 1986, Marsh 1986, Marti 1993, Ross 1994, Pritchard and Morgan 1996, Yamakawa 1998, Santos 1998). Although the principles of an image are transferable (Hunt 1975), most literatures on the projected image have focused on it at a given time. Moreover, there is insufficient knowledge regarding the relationship between the projected image and package tours.

This study aims to examine the changing process

of the projected image of Canada in Japanese package tour brochures, with focus on the relationships among tourist growth, tour operation, and tour route.

## Japanese Travelers to Canada

Due to the deregulation imposed on overseas travel in 1964, there was an increase in the number of Japanese travelers to Canada (Figure 2). In fact, Japanese tourism to Canada boomed twice; the first boom occurred approximately in the mid-1970s, and it was influenced by the depiction of Canada in the Japanese movie and song.



1 The ratio of the number of Japanese traveler to Canada in maximum month to that in minimum month.

2 The number before 1997 represents that of entry into Canada, while the number after 1997 shows that of overnight visitors to Canada.

Figure 2. Japanese traveler to Canada (1956-2004)

(Source: Canadian Tourism Commission)

Although this tourism plateaued in the early 1980s, the appreciation of the Japanese yen again boosted the number of travelers to Canada. Around the same time, the development of the Whistler resorts reduced the gap between the peak and the off-peak seasons. In addition, in 1987, Canada working holiday program began in Japan. This year can be referred to as the "second travel boom to Canada." As the number of Japanese travelers grew rapidly, two associations of Japanese tour companies were established in Canada. The first was that of Japanese local tour operators and the second, that of Japanese wholesalers of package tours.

Following the boom, the number of travelers visiting Canada has stabilized at the present level, except for a decline due to the terrorist attacks in 2001, the Iraq War, and the SARS epidemic in 2003.

## History of JALPAK

JALPAK is a subsidiary of Japan Airlines (JAL) and the second largest wholesaler of package tours in Japan. In 1964, JAL launched the overseas package tours named “JALPAK.” This is the first overseas package tour to be offered by a Japanese travel company. In 1969, JAL established a subsidiary tour operator, “Japan Creative Tours (JCT)” in Japan. JCT set up its local subsidiary, “Pacifco Creative Service (PCS)” in Vancouver and the U.S. in 1974 and 1970, respectively. In 2001, PCS altered its name to JALPAK International.

In Japan, JCT initiated a new tour called “AVA” for media channels in 1987. In 1991, JCT altered its name to JALPAK and launched a new tour called “T’II.”

The local operators of the package tours “JALPAK,” “AVA,” and “T’II” were changed by their establishment. Until 1975, the Canada tours were operated by JAL’s San Francisco office and other local operators in Vancouver. However, the local subsidiary in Vancouver started undertaking the tour operations from 1974.

## Analysis of JALPAK Package Tour Brochures

### Data

The years 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 are selected as the sample years for this study. Most tour companies in Japan do not retain their brochures due to insufficient space in their small offices. JALPAK is probably the only company that archives its brochures.

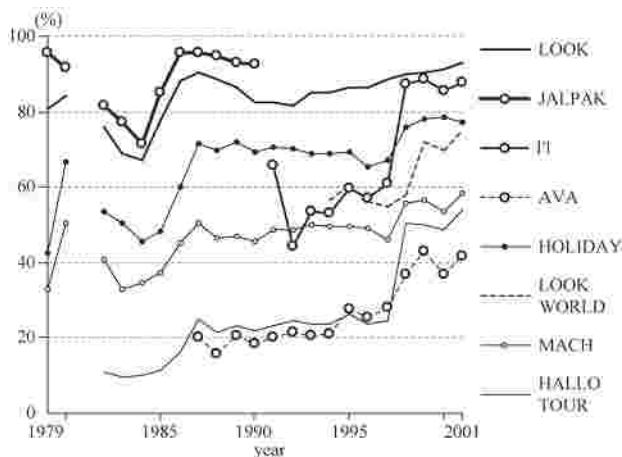


Figure 3. The recognition ratio of package tours offered in Japan (1979-2001)

(Source: On Japanese overseas air travelers)

Historically, JALPAK had been one of the most popular tour brands in Japan (Figure 3). After the brand name was changed, JALPAK’s successor “T’II” became the second-most popular brand in Japan.

## Methodology

In this study, Canada tours are defined as those supplying accommodations in Canada. Places offering overnight accommodation, flows, and operation seasons of the tour routes in each sample year were identified from the brochures. The pictures on the brochures were classified by size into five scales: smaller than one-eighth the area of a page; smaller than one-fourth the area of a page but bigger than one-eighth of a page; smaller than half the area of a page but bigger than one-fourth of a page; smaller than a page but bigger than half a page; bigger than a page. In addition, the theme of each picture was judged in terms of its component as follows: mountains, waterfalls, accommodations, built environment, flowers, and others. The locations of the pictures were also identified.

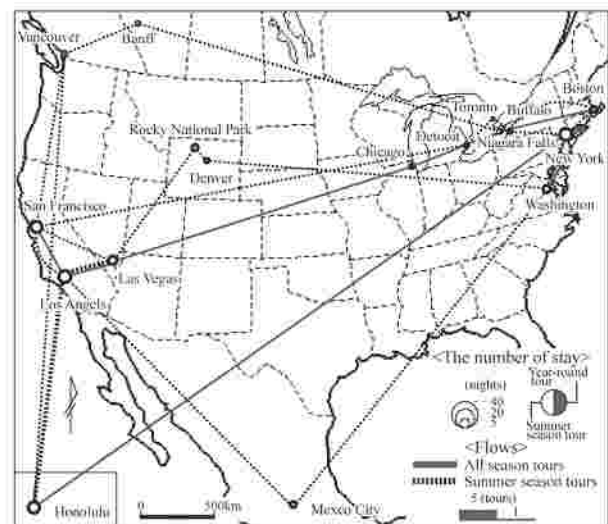


Figure 4. The Canada tour routes in JALPAK tour brochures (1970)

(Source: JALPAK)

## Result

1970. There were only four types of Canada tours (Figure 4). Three of them were transcontinental tours; the fourth was a tour of the West Coast. Places offering overnight accommodation would be distributed along the East Coast and the West Coast. All the tours supplied accommodations at San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Honolulu. Three tours provided accommodations at Niagara Falls, New York, Washington, and Las Vegas. In terms of seasonality, three out of four were summer tours, while one was an all-season tour. Hence, Canada tours represented a strong seasonality, particularly in the West Canada tour as compared to the East Canada tour. Therefore, Canada was merely a destination of the North America tour in 1970.

There were only two pictures in the brochures of this year. The first was a lake recreation scene depicting the Canadian Rockies, while the second showed Niagara Falls. The themes of these pictures were very typical,

similar to those of the other years. In addition, both of them featured nature in summer. This was because summer season tours mainly comprised the Canada tour. In this way, in 1970, Canada was projected as a destination characterized by rich nature that could be enjoyed in summer.

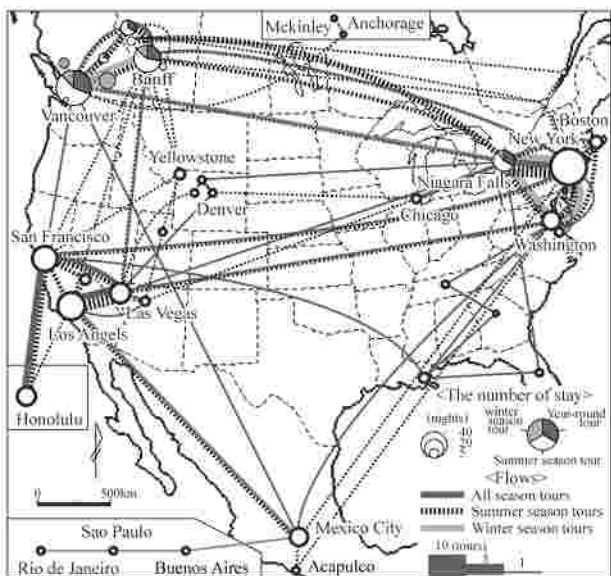


Figure 5. The Canada tour routes in JALPAK tour brochures (1980) (Source: JALPAK)

1980. The brochures of the year 1980 listed 46 types of Canada tours (Figure 5), in which West Canada had become a main destination. The Canadian destinations were combined with those in North and Middle America. Most of these tours were operated in the summer season. Various new destinations, such as those in West Canada, Alaska, the middle U.S., and Middle and South America, were added at this time. Consequently, Canada became a part of the destinations on the North and South America tours.

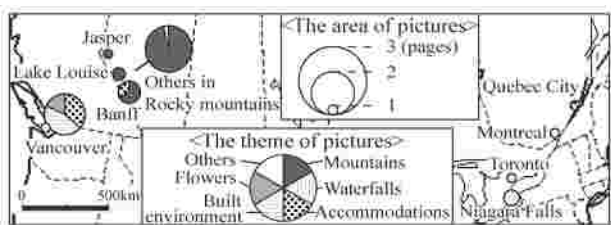


Figure 6. The pictures of Canada in JALPAK tour brochures (1980) (Source: JALPAK)

There were 32 pictures in the brochures of 1980 (Figure 6). The pictures of West Canada, especially those of the Canadian Rockies and Vancouver, accounted for a significant share of the total area. However, the area of the pictures depicting East Canada is much smaller than those depicting West Canada, and their themes are also considerably different. Hence, West Canada was principally projected, with different themes—for example, Vancouver as a city, the Rockies as mountains.

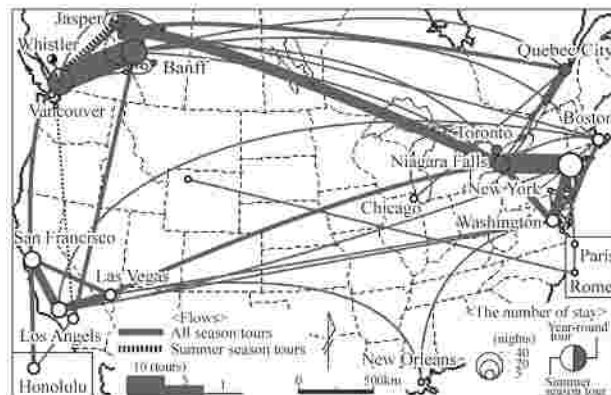


Figure 7. The Canada tour routes in JALPAK tour brochures (1990) (Source: JALPAK)

1990. There were 34 types of tours in the brochure of the year 1990 (Figure 7). East Canadian destinations were more prevalent than before. The distributional area of destinations other than Canada had decreased; they were limited to those within the U.S. Almost all the tours were all-season tours. Thus, Canada had become a year-round destination.

The brochure of this year contained 45 pictures (Figure 8). Pictures of the Canadian Rockies, especially Lake Louise, dominated the total area. However, there was also an increase in the depiction of the East Canadian destinations whose themes comprised cities. In this way, different aspects of Canada came to be projected.

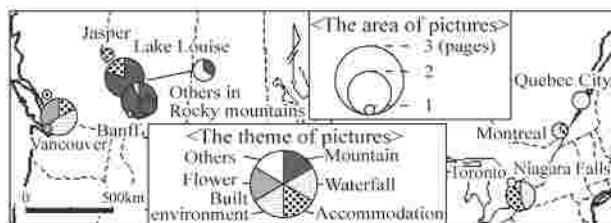


Figure 8. The pictures of Canada in JALPAK tour brochures (1990) (Source: JALPAK)

2000. There were 46 tours in the brochures of the year 2000 (Figure 9). There was a decrease in the number of destinations other than Canada. Many tours were all-season tours. Hence, Canada tours had become increasingly independent of the destinations in the U.S.

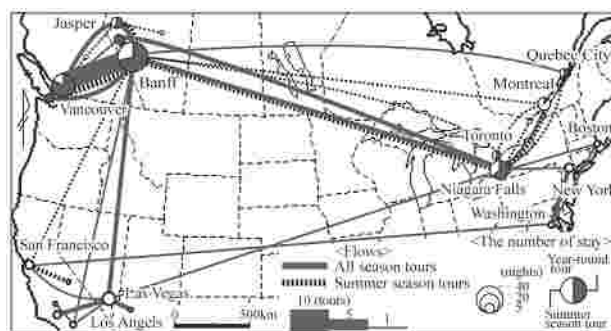


Figure 9. The Canada tour routes in JALPAK tour brochures (2000) (Source: JALPAK)

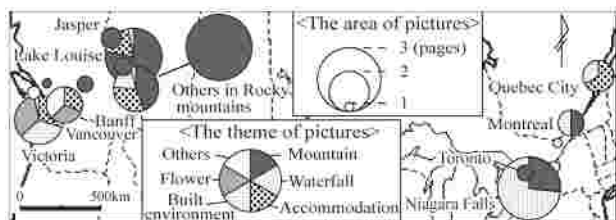


Figure 10. The pictures of Canada in JALPAK tour brochures (2000)  
(Source: JALPAK)

There were 53 pictures in the brochures of this year (Figure 10). The area of almost all the pictures of the Canadian destinations had increased. For the first time ever, that of Victoria was larger than that of Vancouver. In terms of theme, the accommodation pictures covered a much larger area than before. In this way, Canada had been projected in detail.

## Conclusion

This study identified the diversification and detailization of the image of Canada as it was projected in Japanese package tour brochures. This diversification and detailization were influenced by four intricately intertwined factors.

The first factor is tourism product development in Canada, which was brought about by three other factors. This has increased the number of destinations projected.

The second is the localization of the operations, which has allowed the tour operators to buy reasonable local travel units and collect local information. Therefore, these operators could diversify and detailize the pictures.

The third factor is the decline in seasonal difference, mainly caused by the second factor, by which it became necessary to conduct year-round tours so as to maintain the local operators. Therefore, Canada began to be projected as a year-round destination.

The fourth factor is the phasing out of destinations other than Canada in the tour, which means that the destinations of Canadian tours have narrowed from within North, Middle, and South America including Hawaii to just within Canada and the U.S. This has further resulted in diversifying and detailizing the pictures of Canada.

A further examination and analysis of the tour companies' strategic intents is likely to afford some new perspectives regarding the changes in the projected image of Canada as a tourist destination.

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