Who Are "The Japanese"?: Negotiation of Identity Among Nikkei in Brazil

Chihiro Nagasue

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WHO ARE “THE JAPANESE”? : NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITY AMONG NIKKEI IN BRAZIL

by

Chihiro Nagasue

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
Department of Anthropology

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
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Chihiro Nagasue
When Japanese immigrants arrived in Brazil in the beginning of the 20th century, they recognized, for the first time, that they were “Japanese” and different from other ethnic people since it was rare for them to meet ethnically foreign people in Japan. In the ethnically and linguistically foreign country of Brazil, the Nikkei have had to constantly redefine their identity by resisting and accommodating dominant pressures and ideologies such as the Brazilian assimilation policies before and during the Second World War as well as the essentialist ideology of Nihonjinron (what it means to be Japanese). As a result of globalization, Nikkei in contemporary Brazil have had increasingly more contact with Japanese people from/in Japan as well as information and goods from Japan. This increased contact with Japan has made the Nikkei realize that they are not only different from the Brazilians but are also different from Japanese in Japan. In spite of this fact, some Nikkei attempt to recreate their image of Japan and what it means to be Japanese for reasons of nostalgia and in order to benefit from the positive image of the Japanese and Nikkei in Brazil, while at the same time other Nikkei feel negative about the oppressive and idealized notion of Japaneseness. Nikkei identity depends on both historical factors and individual life experiences.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The relationship that has developed between Japan and Brazil is complex, in part due to a long history of transnational migration between the two countries. This relationship was stimulated to a certain extent by a need to overcome the economic crisis and overpopulation in Japan at the beginning of the 20th century. As a result, Japan instated an important new emigration policy. Japan sent millions of immigrants to various countries in the Americas as well as Asia and Micronesia. Among those countries, Brazil was the most accessible because Brazil was searching for alternative labor sources to work on the coffee plantations after the abolition of slavery. As a result, Brazil today contains the largest population of people of Japanese descent and their descendants (Nikkei) outside of Japan. However, since the end of the 1980s, due to recent economic instability in Brazil and a labor shortage in Japan, many Nikkei have returned to their ancestors’ homeland. In both Brazil and Japan, Nikkei have had to negotiate their “Japanese” identities through a process of resistance and accommodation to the dominant groups’ treatment of them in their everyday lives.

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1 Initially, the Japanese government sent emigrants to the U.S. both in Hawaii and on the mainland. However due to the various anti-Japanese movements that officially started in 1905 such as the segregation of Japanese pupils in public schools in San Francisco (1906), Japan looked to alternative countries. The Immigration Act of 1924, which prohibited the entry of all Japanese immigrants to the U.S., terminated Japanese immigration to U.S. From the following year, the Japanese government intensely encouraged people to immigrate to Brazil with financial support such as paying traveling expenses for the immigrants.

2 In Brazil, slavery was abolished in 1850 officially. However, due to the demand of slaves among plantation owners, slaves did not become free in practice until 1888.

3 The International Nikkei Research Project (INRP), which consists of various academics and researchers involved with Nikkei issues defines Nikkei as “a person or persons of Japanese descent, and their descendants, who emigrated from Japan and who created unique communities and lifestyles within the societies in which they now live” (Hirabayashi et al, 2002:19). This concept also includes those who return to Japan for temporary employment opportunities, and also includes the population of part-Japanese descent.
While doing research in Brazil, I often heard informants brag about their Japanese heritage saying such things as, “We are more Japanese than the Japanese in Japan.” Even though they have made this claim, their sense of belonging to Japan, Japanese culture, and identity has changed frequently throughout their lives. For example, after WWII many Nikkei felt negatively about their Japanese background because Japan lost the war. However, due to Japanese economic growth in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s (and the consequent admiration that many Brazilians then had for Japan) many Nikkei now have a stronger and more positive attitude towards their Japanese background. Even though some individuals may not have wanted to identify themselves as Japanese prior to this period of high growth in Japan, these same individuals now proudly self-identify as Japanese. Similarly, although some outsiders may not view the Nikkei as Japanese previously, they now label the same group of people as Japanese.4 In this way, the concept of “Japanese” has changed over time to reflect various historical, political, and cultural events.

More interesting is how Japanese immigrants, Japanese-Brazilians born in Brazil, and non-Nikkei Brazilians (Brazilians who don’t have Japanese ancestors) are referred to and categorized depending on the speaker. Maeyama (1996: 238) introduces a useful table (reproduced below; Table 1) of relative terms that illustrate this situation. In this table, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the “Nikkeijin” is described in the same way by Maeyama as Nikkei is defined by the International Nikkei Research Project (INRP), as I mentioned earlier. However, some anthropologists refrain from using the term “Nikkeijin” for first generation immigrants

4 In fact, there is a group, that consists of Japanese and Nikkei in both Japan and abroad, who pressure the Japanese government to extend the generational availability of working visas from the current system of a three-year-visa for Nikkei Nisei and a one-year-visa for Nikkei Sansei, in order to allow the younger generations of Nikkei (3rd & 4th generations etc) to work in Japan. The concept behind this argument is that Nikkei can fit in the Japanese society better than non-Nikkei. This system would then further give preference to Nikkei over non-Nikkei, which in turn would work to further homogenize the Japanese nation and still response to the urgent labor shortage.
Table 1
Relative Terms used by *Nikkei* and non-*Nikkei* Brazilians

Categorizer (Speaker)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categorized</th>
<th>Nikkei born in Japan (Japanese immigrants)</th>
<th>Nikkei born in Brazil (Japanese)</th>
<th>Non-Nikkei Brazilian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nikkei born in Japan (Japanese immigrants)</td>
<td><em>Nipponjin</em> (Japanese) <em>Issei</em> <em>(1</em>&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; generation)</td>
<td><em>Japonês</em> (Japanese) <em>Issei</em> <em>(1</em>&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; generation)</td>
<td><em>Japonês</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikkei born in Brazil</td>
<td><em>Nisei</em> <em>(2</em>&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; generation) <em>Sansei</em> <em>(3</em>&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; generation) <em>Nikkeijin</em> (Nikkei)</td>
<td><em>Nisei</em> <em>(2</em>&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; generation) <em>Sansei</em> <em>(3</em>&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; generation) <em>Nihonjin</em> (Japanese) <em>Brasileiro</em> (Brazilian)</td>
<td><em>Japonês</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Nikkei Brazilian</td>
<td><em>Gaijin</em> (Foreigner) <em>Burajirujin</em> (Brazilian)</td>
<td><em>Gaijin</em> (Foreigner) <em>Brasileiro</em> (Brazilian)</td>
<td><em>Brasileiro</em> (Brazilian)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maeyama (1996:238)

because the first generation does not refer to themselves as "Nikkeijin." Primarily because many of them still retain Japanese nationality and hold many of the same privileges as Japanese in Japan such as the right to work in Japan and vote for Japanese governors.⁵

In this thesis, to avoid terminological confusion, I use the term *Nikkei* as opposed to *Nikkeijin* following the INRP’s definition to refer to both Japanese immigrants who were born in Japan and Japanese-Brazilians who were born in Brazil. Furthermore, I will use "Nikkei *issei*" for Japanese immigrants born in Japan, and "Nikkei *nisei/sansei*" for second/third generation of Japanese who were born in Brazil.

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⁵ For more discussion, see Roth (2002) and Lesser (2002).
only when I want to distinguish them from one another. I will use the word “returnee(s)” to describe Japanese-Brazilians who work in Japan, and use the term “non-Nikkei Brazilians” for Brazilians who don’t have Japanese ancestors. There has been some disparity between how speakers categorize themselves (self-identity) and how they are categorized by others (social-identity), which is precisely what has made the study of Nikkei identity most interesting. Based on a six-month ethnographic project in Brazil, this thesis examines how Nikkei negotiate their identities in their everyday lives and how historical events have affected the formation of identity. This project is important because it gives a voice to those who have not been discussed in former literature and further shows how theories on nationalism, identity formation, and globalization help us to understand individual Nikkei identity formation.

In recent years, the Nikkei have been the topic of much research. Several books on Nikkei have been published in English (See Linger 2000; Komai 2001; Lone 2001; Sellek 2001; Yamashita 2001; Roth 2002; Douglass and Roberts 2003; Tsuda 2003; De Carvalho 2003; Lesser 2003). Previously, the majority of books on Nikkei focused on their lives in Brazil; however, current studies direct their attention towards returnees’ experiences in Japan. It continues to remain important to do research regarding the lives of Nikkei who have remained in or returned to Brazil to see how

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6 Tsuda stated “The self (or self-identity) is the aspect of identity that is experienced and developed internally through the individual’s own subjective perceptions and experiences of the social environment. However, an identity is also externally defined by others in accordance with standardized cultural norms and social roles, which can be called the individual’s social identity.” (2003: 9-10)

7 Although I am not aware of all the reasons for this change in focus, I think that it is partially because of the rapidly growing number of Nikkei in Japan, which resulted from the Japanese government’s revision of the Immigration Control Law in 1990. Due to the government’s unapologetically xenophobic preference of Nikkei over non-Nikkei as potential employees, the law allowed foreign-born Nikkei to work in Japan for long-term periods. In 2000, the United Nations estimated that Japan needed to employ 600,000 laborers from abroad every year from 1995 to 2050 in order to maintain its economy due to Japan’s declining birth rates and its increasingly aging population. This flow of laborers from overseas has affected and will affect Japanese society in various areas such as the medical, educational, and political fields.
globalization processes affect individuals' identities. Therefore, this thesis will place the majority of its emphasis on studying identity within the context of Brazil.

Because the Nikkei nisei and sansei (second and third generations) are the ones who have had the opportunity to leave Brazil for the pursuit of work in Japan,⁸ the current trend which examines returnees in Japan consequently only focuses on these Nikkei Nisei and Sansei. The Nikkei issei and portions of the younger generations who have remained in Brazil have consequently been left under examined. In this thesis, I will focus on Nikkei Issei and Nisei who have sought to fit into the culture of Brazil, by confronting both prejudice and discrimination while still attempting to maintain their ethnic identity.

There has not been much scholarship published by Nikkei about their experiences in Brazil. The majority of Nikkei issei encouraged their children to study applied subjects such as medicine, engineering, and computer science to survive in their new country. Consequently, few people have taken social science courses, which would allow them to see the socially and culturally constructed aspects of their lives. Furthermore, some of the Nikkei issei and nisei did not have the opportunity to learn how to read and write in both Japanese and Portuguese during the course of their lives because of the poverty that characterized the early settlement years (explained further later). Through my thesis, I hope to give voice to these individuals who have not had the opportunity to publish their experiences.

The majority of the Nikkei issei are between 60-80 years old (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002: 63).⁹ Moreover, there is a very limited number of living Nikkei Issei who immigrated to Brazil before WWII. A substantial number of

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⁸ Before the Immigration Control Law in 1990, which allowed foreign-born Nikkei to obtain visas to work in Japan for long-term periods, only Nikkei Issei and dual citizenship people could utilize their Japanese nationality to work in Japan.

⁹ I conducted research on daily life of Nikkei with another anthropologist and native researchers. I will explain this research further in the methodology section.
these valuable informants have already or will soon pass away due to old age. Therefore it is impossible to get as much information about them now as was possible in the past. In fact, some informants regretted that I was not there at least a couple years earlier because I couldn’t meet some Nikkei leaders (who recently died) who would have been able to provide me with more comprehensive information. This thesis is also important because it gives a voice to a population that is rapidly disappearing.

Because male authors have written the majority of the literature about Nikkei, I believe that I, as a Japanese woman and partial outsider, can offer a unique perspective on the Nikkei community. Christena Turner, who conducted participant observation among Japanese industrial workers in Japan, discusses the advantage of being a female researcher:

There is very clear gender segregation in most situations in Japan and a high consciousness of gendered differences in language and cultural practice. One of the consequences of this situation is that women are less threatening because they are less powerful. Another consequence is that a female researcher has the freedom to speak to women and to men alone or in groups, whereas it is more difficult for men to speak either to a woman alone or even to small groups (1995:27).

Even though the above quote is written about research experience in Japan, I believe the same is true of my experience in Brazil. Informants often told me that they opened the steel gates in front of their homes (which are usually used for crime prevention) and allowed me, a stranger, to enter their houses for research because I was a Japanese woman. Some of them honestly admitted that they would have never opened the gates for male Brazilians because of prejudices. Also, because I was a researcher who was additionally a partial outsider, visiting all the way from Japan,
part of the JICA\textsuperscript{10} project, and wearing a nametag from the trusted Nikkei institution (Bunkyo), my research appeared to be more official and professional than that of my native researcher counterparts. As a result, I was received with admiration and respect, and further was allowed to ask questions of a personal and financial nature that were not accepted when asked by my native counterparts.

Although the focus is on Nikkei (both those who have been to Japan for work as returnees and those who have never been to Japan) in Brazil rather than returnees in Japan, I do need to talk briefly about the returnees working in Japan. The majority of them repeatedly go back and forth between Brazil and Japan. This phenomenon significantly affects the structure of Nikkei communities and identity within Brazil. In fact, among the Nikkei households in Brazil that we researched, 31.7\% of the households contained individuals who had previously worked in Japan as returnees (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002: 84). It is necessary for my research to include those returnees who experienced work in Japan. The reason I also look at returnees in Japan is to see the gap between the image that they had about Japan / the Japanese before and after they went to Japan. In Brazil, Nikkei often hold positive images of Japan and the Japanese because of the favorable images presented by global mass media. Similarly, Brazilians as a whole have admiration for Japan and Nikkei due to their post-war economic success. However, although Nikkei in Brazil are seen as “Japanese” (positive) due to their physical appearance, they are conversely seen negatively as “foreigners” in Japan because of their cultural differences (Linger 2001; Tsuda 2003). Because of this juxtaposition of identity in Japan and Brazil, I examined the effect that having lived in Japan has on Nikkei who now live in Brazil.

\textsuperscript{10} It is an abbreviation of Japan International Cooperation Agency, which is a Japanese governmental organization.
In order to fully understand my investigation of *Nikkei* identity formation, I would first like to explain my roles as a researcher in the field and explain how I collected the data used in this thesis. In the following chapter, I will examine the history of Japanese immigration focusing on the *Nikkei Issei*’s early settlement and their responses to the Brazilian assimilation policies. I will also discuss the current cultural, political and economic conditions of both Brazil and Japan. In chapter three, I will examine the existing literature on *Nikkei* and theoretical literature on identity, nationalism, and globalization. I believe these to be major factors contributing to the construction of *Nikkei* identity. In chapter four, I will demonstrate how *Nikkei* have responded to globalization, and its influences on identity formation. I will show this through an analysis of daily life in which many *Nikkei* receive both Brazilian cultural influences (because they live in Brazil) and Japanese influences (through family, community, and global mass media) simultaneously. I will also examine how *Nikkei* make use of various ethnic events to emphasize (to Brazilians) the distinctive character of Japanese culture and additionally enhance the ethnic consciousness among the *Nikkei* by localizing (reconstructing) what they believe to be the original Japanese’s traditions of Japan. Finally in the last chapter, I will reiterate the major themes of my thesis and conclude by suggesting areas of future research.

**Research Settings and Methods**

I conducted six months of research in Brazil from February to August 2001. As a researcher for *Centro de Estudos Nippo Brasileiros* (Sao Paulo Arts and Science Institute), I examined *Nikkei* daily life in coordination with another anthropologist, native *Nikkei* and non-*Nikkei* Brazilian researchers. The questionnaires we used for this survey were about daily life such as sports and ethnic customs, *dekasegi* (to go to
Japan as returnees), the lifestyle of seniors (those who were older than 65 years old), and identity. Identity questionnaires were about the individuals' perception of the Japanese in Japan, the Nikkei in Brazil, and other ethnic groups in Brazil. These questionnaires also delved into how the respondents characterized and viewed themselves. We distributed these questionnaires to Nikkei of both Japanese and part-Japanese descent. When informants wanted us to write down their answers for them, we read the questions for the informants and wrote down the informants' answers. When we didn’t have enough time to do this, or certain informants were not at homes, we left the questionnaires and went back to the households to pick up the questionnaires later.

Furthermore, I conducted fieldwork in four representative Nikkei communities in southern Brazil, where I relied upon the questionnaires mentioned above and personal interviews. I was also employed as a clerical assistant in the office of a Nikkei institution called Federação das Associações de Províncias do Japão (Federal Association of Japanese Provinces in Brazil) in the city of Sao Paulo, which enabled me to listen to the life histories and current life conditions of the older Nikkei. My main duty was to help Nikkei issei, who had been away from Japan for more than 50 years, apply for a program that allows some of them to visit Japan temporarily with the Japanese foreign ministry’s financial support. I intervieweed them and composed application forms (such as resume and family information) for them. I also conducted participant observation, while working as a staff member during several Nikkei events planned and run by this institution (the Federal Association of Japanese Provinces in Brazil). I intervieweed participants in local religious organizations and a women’s English club.
To conduct the research, the Sao Paulo Arts and Science Institutes chose four representative *Nikkei* communities as sample sites: Vila Carrão (in the city of Sao Paulo), Suzano-Fukuhaku (neighboring region within the larger city of Sao Paulo), Maringá city (in Parana State), and Aliança (in up-country in Sao Paulo State). These four sites represent a diverse cross-section of the larger *Nikkei* community. Vila Carrão has an Okinawan population that has a unique cultural identity in contrast to mainland Japanese, while Suzano-Fukuhaku is undergoing a period of population decline (often seen in agricultural areas) due to urbanization. Maringá city, on the other hand, shows the vitality of younger generations in urban area, while Aliança is one of the oldest settlement areas pioneered for the purpose of permanent settlement.

Vila Carrão, is located on the outer edge of downtown Sao Paulo, where two kinds of Japanese ethnic groups have coexisted along with non-*Nikkei* Brazilians: Japanese immigrants from the mainland and Okinawans from the Okinawa prefecture. Currently, it is estimated that there are 1000 households of immigrants from the Japanese mainland and their descendents, and approximately the same number of Okinawans. Among them, there are about 450 to 500 households that are members of the Japanese immigrants’ association and a similar number of Okinawans that are members of the Okinawans’ association in this district. From these member households, the institute chose research households randomly and collected data from

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11 Okinawa is geographically distant from mainland Japan, and it used to belong to both China and Japan in the 15th century, and was conquered by mainland Japanese in the 17th century. The dialect spoken among older generations is beyond Japanese mainlanders’ understanding, and also their traditional clothing, dance, music, and religion are different from those of the mainland Japanese. Okinawa was the only Japanese home island to be invaded during the war, and at that time, Japanese armies abandoned Okinawa so that Okinawans fought against the American military only by themselves. When it was under the control of the U.S., they insisted that they were Japanese, and when they were subordinate to Japan, they insisted that they were Okinawans. Okinawa sent one of the largest immigrant populations among prefectures in Japan to Brazil due to its economic instability. Many who immigrated after WWII brought their American passports, and subsequently became Japanese citizens officially in Brazil when the administration of Okinawa was returned to Japan in 1972. Even after that, some continue to insist that they are not Japanese, but Okinawans. Consequently, there are still marriage taboos between Okinawans and Japanese mainlanders in Brazil.
236 households. Immigrants from mainland Japan and Okinawa have different aspects in terms of their histories, cultures, and ethnic identities.

The second research site, Fukuhaku, is in the city of Suzano that is located 34 km (21 miles) east of the city of Sao Paulo. We researched all of the Nikkei households (134 households) in the area. The Nikkei community shares similar problems with other agriculturally based Nikkei communities: the outflow of younger generations into cities, the shift from agricultural work to other occupations, the return-migration to Japan (returnees), and the declining birthrates and aging of the population. In addition, Fukuhaku has problems of public security because the surrounding area of the village had become an economically depressed region after the state of Sao Paulo requisitioned the area for building a dam. Theft is an everyday affair here and burglary often occurs in this area, but then, these are shared problems with many places in Brazil.\textsuperscript{12}

The third research site, Maringá, is a city located in the northwest portion of Parana state. In contrast to rural agricultural areas, it has more young people, continued population growth, and no impoverished neighborhoods or squatter communities.\textsuperscript{13} There are 4000-5000 Nikkei households in this city, and most of them are associated with self-employed businesses and agriculture. There are approximately 1000 Nikkei households involved in the local Nikkei association. For

\textsuperscript{12} As a result of crime, the Fukuhaku region had started a crime prevention program encompassing the whole community level. Because of the local association's request, we researched the condition of individual home crime prevention, looking at things such as security fences, anti-crime sirens, and the number of guard dogs. Adachi (1997) also talks about use of dogs as crime prevention rather than as pets. When I researched in Fukuhaku, I was very scared of those dogs because they all seemed to bark at me in fierce chorus. The most ferocious dogs are tied to stakes and reside in front of the main entrances of the houses. I was very afraid to walk through these dogs as I tried to get from the car to individuals' homes. Because of the crime in this neighborhood and the ferocity of the dogs, I would have been too afraid to conduct research if the local leaders (who assisted me in my research) and household owners' had not helped me and assured me of my safety.

\textsuperscript{13} According to a local Nikkei leader, only those who afford the property can move into this city. Also, when squatters try to come into the city, the police evict these people and move them away from the city immediately.
purposes of the Institute’s research, we chose households randomly from the members of the association and collected data from 271 homes. Although the population of Nikkei is only about six percent in this city, a large number engage in specialist personnel / professional jobs such as physicians, lawyers, businessmen, and professors. The percentages of those who engage in these jobs are higher than other Nikkei communities, but they, like other Nikkei, still spend their savings on their children’s education rather than on anything else.

The fourth research site, Aliança, is located 600 km (373 miles) west of Sao Paulo city. In contrast to other Nikkei communities where Nikkei issei experienced contract work in the early period of their settlement and considered their immigration to Brazil as a temporary state, Aliança contains the oldest communities built for permanent residence. Some Nikkei employers provide houses for their non-Nikkei Brazilian farming employees on their land. We researched 185 Nikkei households, which constituted all of the Nikkei households in this area, including both members and non-members of the local Nikkei associations.

In both the agricultural villages of Suzano-Fukuhaku and Aliança, we conducted research in all of the Nikkei households in these areas. However, in Sao Paulo and Maringá, we chose research households randomly from the local Nikkei associations’ member lists. Because the membership in Nikkei associations tends to consist of more issei and nisei than younger generations, we realized our research may have focused more exclusively on these households and therefore may have been biased towards this older population. To overcome the problem, we used

14 Also, at one point, this city had nine Nikkei city council members (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002: 28).
15 There are three communities in this area; Daiichi Aliança (the First Aliança) which was originally settled by immigrants from Nagano prefecture, Daini Aliança (the Second Aliança) which was settled by immigrants from Tottori prefecture, and Daisan Aliança (the Third Aliança) which was settled by immigrants from Toyama prefecture in Japan.
supplementary survey questions to research the children of the issei and nisei generation (who don’t live with parents) along with the survey questions for the family of the households.

In each of the sites, we received help from the local Nikkei leaders and associations. In both Vila Carrão area and Maringá city, we sent letters to the Nikkei households to ask for their cooperation with the research. After a week or so, we called individual homes to confirm whether they were willing to participate in the research and if so, to make an appointment for the researcher to visit. In the Suzano-Fukuhaku region and Aliança, the leaders of the Nikkei communities asked the members of the communities to cooperate with the researchers. The leaders also set up a schedule for us to visit the individual households of willing participants. The Nikkei Associations’ help was very beneficial in introducing us to individual households and helping to establish good relationships with interviewees. These associations, which are locally trusted among the Nikkei, were highly supportive and indispensable in the promotion of the research project.

Also, the leaders of these communities assisted in making our research easier. In the beginning of the research, a Japanese anthropologist, Dr. Mori, who has studied Okinawans for years in Brazil, introduced me to a couple of community leaders. Although I had some difficulty getting to know some of the Okinawans initially, when I told them that I knew Dr. Mori or that I knew some of the community leaders, attitudes changed dramatically. As a result, most of the Okinawan people were

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16 In these two agricultural areas, neighboring houses are set far apart from one another due to the large fields. Also sometimes the gates to the farms are a long way away from the actual housing buildings (at times maybe even miles away). Without local leaders’ patient help in giving rides to each household, researching in such areas would have been much more difficult.

17 This was because I appeared to be of mainland Japanese descent and spoke standard Japanese. Some Okinawan people, believing that they are distinct from mainland Japanese, were initially hesitant to participate in my research. The perceived difference between mainland Japanese and Okinawans has been explained in several sources (i.e. Mori 2003).
willing to either call or give me a ride to the next Okinawan household that I was going to research. This generosity eased the process of gaining both physical and social access to other Okinawan homes. This research project itself was carried out between April 2001 and August 2001. Some of the results of this research project were analyzed and published by Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros in 2002, and I will be using this published research for my thesis.

In addition, I was able to engage in participant observation while I worked as a clerical assistant in the adjacent office called Federação das Associações de Provinças do Japão no Brasil (Federal Association of Japanese provinces in Brazil). This office was in a building that houses a number of independent Nikkei institutions such as a Nikkei community center with its unofficial ties to the Japanese government, a hospital, museum, an information center for those who want to work in Japan, a welfare office, a women's group, language classes, and various cultural classes. This building is located in the Nikkei town, Liberdade, where various Nikkei shops, theatres, travel agencies, hotels, restaurants, bars, newspaper offices and provincial offices stand. The office where I was employed plans various Nikkei events, and leads the community as one of the three main Nikkei organizations. It works in close cooperation with an affiliated organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan. Workers in this office also tend to individuals' various needs, such as helping to do paperwork in order to send materials to Japan, showing how to attach documents to email, checking zip codes and addresses in Japan and Brazil, and becoming conversation partners for those who stopped by. Because of the convenient location of the office and its accessibility, I met and offered some of these services to various

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18 The subway station, Liberdade, is located only one-stop south of the Sé (center of the city). Liberdade is considered a Japanese ethnic town, similar to Little Tokyo in Los Angeles. In contrast to the past, there are currently an increasing number of non-Nikkei owned buildings run by Koreans and Chinese.
kinds of people, who were mainly local residents, but also tourists and important people in the Nikkei community. There were some differences in academic background, class, and age among the people with whom I interacted at the office, however, almost all of them were Japanese and Nikkei, and they spoke either Japanese or Portuguese, or both.

I also attended Nikkei evangelical church services. I mainly participated in a Nikkei Free Methodist church’s services and events, and I also visited several other churches’ (Free Methodist, Baptist, Assembly, Pentecostal). Furthermore, I went to Catholic churches, Buddhist temples, and Shinto shrines, and talked to some priests and believers. The religious institutions were accessible because they tended to be open to outsiders. Although religion is not one of the main foci of this thesis, I did notice that religion plays a considerable role in the creation of identity. Therefore, I will briefly talk about the role of religion in the lives of the Nikkei because some immigrants turn to religion as a way to counter isolation and marginalization in Brazil (Mizuki 1978).

Finally, I also attended a women’s English club once a week, which catered to primarily white Brazilians, who often spoke about the various problems they had. The majority of the women were middle to upper-middle class, and their ages ranged from 20s to 40s. From my personal interviews, I was able to hear how non-Nikkei Brazilians see Nikkei.

In addition to the fieldwork I already conducted, I am currently a member of a volunteer group, the Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan. This is an umbrella organization for Japanese volunteer groups who work with immigrant populations in Japan. I keep abreast of current migrant issues through their monthly newsletter. In July 2003, I met a committee member of this volunteer group, and received
permission to join their mailing list. This mailing list deals with various issues related to the lives of immigrants in Japan. This group is very active and sends over one hundred emails a month. The content of some of these emails is very private, such as the specifics of ongoing lawsuit cases. These emails allow me to hear peoples' voices in a distant area. Additionally, I continue to keep in touch with some people I interacted with in Brazil by letters and emails, which allows me to continue to learn about their current conditions.

In this thesis, I would like to show how the Nikkei's identity has changed throughout their history in Brazil and how it is expressed in their daily lives. They constantly redefine their identity by resisting and accommodating the dominant pressures and ideologies such as the Brazilian assimilation policies during the prewar period and the ideology of Nihonjinron (what it is to be Japanese). Through an examination of nationalism and globalization, this thesis will demonstrate how Nikkei identity has historically changed and most importantly prove that it continues to be negotiated via a process of resistance and accommodation in daily life.

In the next chapter, in order to fully understand these current conditions in the Nikkei communities, I will examine the history of Japanese immigration. I will pay attention to Japanese nationalism in Meiji period, which significantly affected lives of Nikkei in Brazil. I will also talk about Brazilian assimilation policies and the Nikkei responses to them. In addition, I will discuss Nikkei social mobility, and the current trend of return migration to Japan, which has resulted from the prolonged Brazilian economic depression and a labor shortage in Japan.
CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CURRENT CONDITIONS
OF BRAZIL AND JAPAN

Introduction

During the Meiji period (1868-1912), the Japanese government fostered a passionate sense of Japanese nationalism. This strongly affected the Japanese population including those who would eventually become the Nikkei because of the exclusive character of Japanese identity inherent in the nationalism that the Meiji government promoted. Growing up during this intense period of nationalism, and then moving to a new nation that was geographically and culturally isolated from the homeland, forced many Nikkei to negotiate their ethnic identities between two culturally and politically diverse countries. As an ethnic minority, the Nikkei both resisted against and accommodated to the dominant Brazilian society. Consequently, some Nikkei intensified their Japanese nationalism while others tried to incorporate the Nikkei communities into Brazilian society as a way of complying with the demands of the oppressive assimilation policies. Nikkei have been subjected to a variety of changing Brazilian attitudes that have reflected Nikkei social mobility, Japan’s changing status in the world, and the changing relationship between Brazil and Japan. ¹ In this chapter, I will discuss the historical, political, and economic conditions that arose in Japan and Brazil. By paying particular attention to the effects of the extreme nationalisms promoted by both countries, I will examine how the Nikkei have redefined their identity.

¹ This concept is reinforced by Tsuda (2001b).
The Economic and Political Conditions in the Late 19th Century and the Early 20th Century in Japan

In this section, I will examine the Meiji government's creation of Japanese national identity, and demonstrate how this permeated the lives of the Japanese immigrants and their descendants. At the end of the 19th century, Japan opened its ports to foreign countries after more than two centuries of seclusion as mandated by the Tokugawa regime and its samurai (warriors) led government. From 1868 to 1912, revolutionaries took political power from the Tokugawa family and restored the Meiji emperor as the nominal head of the country and created a new centralized government. Although these new leaders had some ideas about the future of the new nation, they did not have any concrete constructive programs that would be suitable for, or adapted to, the situation presented by the new age of modernization (Inoue 1965). In order to organize and modernize Japanese society, the Meiji government sent delegates abroad to observe the socio-political and educational systems of Western countries. Japanese officials were eager to copy Western practices that they thought would be beneficial to Japan.

The Japanese political leaders changed governmental institutions, prepared to enter international politics, and created a new constitution, which would require the populace of Japan to attend school, serve in the military, and pay taxes. Also, this new constitution advocated the sovereignty of the monarchy. The first prime minister of the Meiji period, Hirobumi Ito has been quoted as writing the following in a letter in 1880s.

We need a basis for our new state. The Western nations have this in an amalgam that is Christian in origin...But with us Buddhism has declined, shintoism is not powerful enough. We need a cornerstone for our country. What is our cornerstone? That is a problem we have to solve. If there is no cornerstone, politics will fall into the hands of the masses, the government will become powerless, and the country
will be ruined. The one institution we can use to become the cornerstone is the imperial house (Jansen 1982:10).

Thus, the leaders tried to unite Japan by making the emperor the cornerstone of the nation. Not only did they write that sovereignty resides in the emperor, but also they made him the military’s commander. Moreover, the elites reintroduced the age-old idea that Japanese emperors are the descendents of the sun goddess.²

Until the Meiji period, the notion of nation-state was unknown to the Japanese people (Lie 2001). However, during the Meiji period, cultural and political elites promoted the idea that the Japanese people were members of the family-nation and therefore tied to the divine (emperor’s) origin. They created an image that “we” Japanese are members of an extended family that perpetuated its lineage through Japanese blood.³ Earl further explains the Japanese notion of family-state;

Japan is a patriarchal state, in which everyone is related and the imperial house is the main or head family. The emperor is the supreme father, and loyalty to him, or patriotism, becomes the highest form of Filial Piety. Because of the command of Amaterasu, this structure is both sacred and eternal; compliance with its requirements is the obligation and deepest wish of every Japanese (1964: 236-37).⁴

Although Japan tried to modernize by adopting Western ideas, this transition did not occur as smoothly as intended. As a result of the sudden move towards Westernization and the intense pressures on Japan to accept Christian missionaries and unfair treaties, the Japanese government tried to unite the nation through nationalism. It was believed that it was important to learn (or adopt) Western

² According to Earhart (1982), Shinto is Japan’s indigenous religion, that has many deities, and Amaterasu is an essential one. Amaterasu is (mythically) believed to be the Sun Goddess, and the Japanese emperor is believed to be the direct descendent of this god.
³ I will explain the notion of “Japanese blood” in Chapter 3.
⁴ Along with Shinto, which the Meiji government actively promoted to the people, the government utilized other religious ideas to unify the nation and gain the acceptance of the people. Confucianism was well adapted to Japanese society because of Confucianism’s emphasis on social hierarchy, which worked well to create harmony by recognizing each person’s status. Confucianism was also well suited to Buddhism in Japan because the Japanese people already accepted the idea of filial piety. These ideologies were used to encourage the people to become dependent on their nation and to become good members of society; like good children of their parents.
knowledge, but that it was essential to hold onto the “original Japanese spirit.” The dual principles were a typical phenomenon at that time in Japan; adopting Western civilization while reaffirming Japan’s moral and ethical traditions which would ultimately result in a moral, ethical and modern nation, unified under the emperor.

The government tried to make the Japanese people recognize themselves as part of the nation; a Japanese nation led by the emperor, a sovereign leader of the state.

In order to create this sense of national spirit, the emperor visited communities throughout Japan. These trips were successful in securing people’s hearts and loyalty especially in politically unstable provincial communities. By having the emperor meet with the rural people, many of whom had never seen him, the government further aimed to demonstrate the emperor’s authority. Moreover, these visits were effective in deifying the emperor because his visits, which included a march or parade, became ritualized. Also, in order to ensure that the Japanese people recognized that they were under the direct rule of the emperor, the portrait of the emperor was imbued with the same reverence as that of the emperor himself. The government created a series of rituals related to the handling of the emperor’s portrait in an attempt to further maintain dedication to the emperor and the empire\(^5\) (Tagi 1988). All of this was done in an attempt to unify the nation and increase nationalism under a newly recognized and deified emperor.

Additionally, the Meiji government tried to instill national identity, reverence for the emperor and unquestioning loyalty to the state through the education system. In schools, the Japanese language was renamed “Kokugo,” which literally means

\(^5\) A copy of the emperor’s photograph was respected as much as the person. A portrait of the emperor was given to each school and official institutions that requested one. The process by which portraits were requested articulated and fixed the social hierarchical structure. If a school wanted to receive a portrait, the department of the imperial household first had to give it to the department of education, where it was then given to the prefecture, to the district and finally to the school. At every stop in the hierarchical process, the portrait was received with special rituals and respects (Tagi 1988).
“National language.” This action was done in an attempt to create a modern nation­-state whose population would speak a single national language. Both the portrait of the emperor and the Imperial Rescript⁶ on Education were hung in every school, and pupils were required to bow before them and read the script aloud. The content of the rescript was intended to “enlighten” the people and instruct them on how to be good people (filial), good subjects (loyal), useful members (educated), and patriotic citizens (offer themselves to the state)—all in the name of serving the emperor. Since the emperor was considered to be a “manifest god,” veneration of the emperor and the emperor’s portrait and the rescript were all used to train the people to be absolutely loyal to the state (Earhart 1997). Thus, adoration of the emperor became the major element of Japanese national identity, which Nikkei would hold onto for years after they had immigrated to Brazil.

Struggle among Peasants in Japan

As mentioned earlier, the government adopted a military conscription system, and required children to attend elementary school. Not only did peasants lose their children’s labor, they also had to pay up to 0.5 yen per child every month in school fees.⁷ The average annual income of a family was 21 yen in 1878 (Inoue 1965:136, Imin Hachijyu-nen-shi Hensan linkai 1991:24) and, because peasants often had several children, the costs of education to the family were immense. Furthermore, the tax system was revised; the peasants used to pay a percentage of their harvest (predominately rice) as tribute, however under the new system they had to pay a higher (monetary) land tax. This revision to the tax system was made so that the

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⁶ Japan’s newly adopted technologies from Western countries such as nationwide transportation (new roads and railways), communication and printing technologies made it possible to distribute the portraits and scripts throughout Japan.

⁷ They had to pay tuition for elementary school until 1900 when it became free.
government could receive money even during years of poor harvest. These land taxes were used to finance the new government. Due to these financial burdens placed on the people, many peasants lost their land. In 1883, 33,845 peasants lost their land, in 1884, over 70,000, and in 1885, 108,055 peasants had their lands taken away by the government (Adachi 1997, Inoue 1965).

Around this time, farmers constituted about 70 percent of the total potential labor population, and the majority of these farmers were peasant-farmers. The tax collected from peasants became a major resource for industrialization, which emphasized the manufacture of military equipment (military ship, artillery, guns, military attire, etc.). Moreover, some of the land collected from peasants (who could not pay their taxes) was transformed into industrial areas. The peasants who had either lost their jobs/land or were agricultural workers who became seasonal wage laborers in these new industrial areas (Duus 1998, Inoue 1965).

Furthermore, during this period, Japan engaged in two wars: the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Although Japan won both wars, participation in these wars left Japan with a large international debt, and created high rates of inflation. As shown, although the government adopted modern social, political and educational systems, the economy system was not ready to function with these new systems.

Only ten years after the Russo-Japanese War started, Japan also contributed to World War I by exporting crops and arms to Europe. Japan itself did not sustain any physical damage to its land as a result of the war, but the Japanese people suffered from the increased domestic price of farm products. This was unmistakably reflected

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8 Some farmers and people who worked on farms went to industrial areas during the winter to find jobs, because there were few available jobs on farms when crops were not being planted, tended or harvested.
9 The Sino-Japanese War resulted in a 40% increase in land tax and provincial tax, and the Russo-Japanese War left Japan with an international debt that was six times as large as the total national income gained from the land tax in 1914 (Inoue 1965: 112).
in the price of rice,\(^{10}\) which led to the nation-wide rice riots of 1918. As the price of products hiked in Europe, the local Japanese merchants put the same prices on products in Japan to make profit (Adachi 1997). The life of the Japanese people became even harder than it had been before the war. Just five years after the rice riots, the great Earthquake of 1923 destroyed the extended Tokyo area, which was the major economic center of Japan. Before Japan even had time to recover economically from the crises of war and natural disaster, it was hit by the worldwide financial panic of 1929.

Because of the high taxes and the instability of their economic lives, many farmers could not pay taxes, and consequently, were forced to give up their land to the Meiji government. Those who lost their land had to move out of their villages and into the cities to look for new jobs. The situation was more severe for second and third sons of the family. In Japan, usually the first son of the family was obligated to succeed and take care of the ancestor’s land and ashes, whereas the other sons would work for the first son, or have to find other work for themselves. Although there are some first son immigrants, most of the immigrants who went to Brazil were the younger male siblings. Because of all these terrible economic situation, approximately 190,000 Japanese, especially peasants, emigrated from Japan to Brazil between 1908 and 1942, with 70 percent emigrating between 1926 and 1935 (Smith 1979:53).

In the next section, I will discuss the conditions in Brazil, the major host country of Japanese immigrants. Focusing on the political and economic situation of this country during the 19\(^{th}\) century and early 20\(^{th}\) century, I will explain the reasons why so many Japanese immigrated to Brazil.

\(^{10}\) Price of rice increased dramatically in 1918: 1.8 litters of rice cost 0.2 yen in March, 0.4 yen in July, and in some areas 0.5 yen in the beginning of August (Inoue 1965:136).
Because of the pressure from the European abolitionist movement, Brazil officially stopped importing slaves from Africa by 1850. However, plantation owners still depended on slaves for the majority of plantation work, and therefore, in practice, continued to bring some slaves from Africa until 1888. During this period in Brazil’s history, the government was dependent on coffee for its national income, so they began to invite immigrants from Europe to make up for the shortage of workers.

On the plantations, the plantation owners and supervisors did not treat the immigrants any differently from how they had previously treated the slaves; they had to engage in the same hard work, and their living quarters were those formally occupied by the slaves. Thus, many European immigrant contract workers often went to their consulates asking for permission to go back to their home countries even before their contracts ended. As a result of numerous complaints by the immigrants, European countries decided to prohibit emigration to Brazil. Germany prohibited emigration from 1859 to 1896, France from 1875 to 1908, and Italy from 1889 to 1891 (Adachi 1997; Lesser 1999).

Originally, the Brazilian elites wanted only European immigrants in their country (Lesser 1999, 2003; Tsuda 2001b). This is because they believed in the ideology of racial superiority of European races. As a result, they wanted to transform the population from a racially-mixed Brazilian people into white people. However, because of the declining number of European immigrants, Brazil needed to accept alternative immigrants from Asia to meet its labor needs (Lesser 1999). Some Brazilian officials felt that it was dangerous to mix the racially inferior yellow race

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11 This idea stemmed from Lamarckian eugenics, which theorized that cultural and biological traits could be gained through contact with different populations, or environments. Therefore, the Brazilian officials favored European immigrants, because by putting the Brazilian population in contact with the white Europeans this could potentially result in a “whiten” of their nationals (Stepan, 1991).
with the Brazilian population because it would undermine their plan to whiten their
nation (Lesser 1999; Tsuda 2001b). It was believed that the Asian immigrants would
“pollute” the race (Lesser 2003: 8). However, other Brazilian elites believed that
Japanese immigrants would contribute to the Brazilian economy with their military
power and technological advancements due to their recent victories in two wars (Sino-
Japanese and the Russo-Japanese wars) and their country’s rapidly developing
industrialization. Because of their perceived benefit to Brazil, in 1908, the first
Japanese immigrants arrived in Brazil. Little did they know that they would suffer the
same fate as the earlier European immigrants who had served as replacements for the
slaves.

Immigration from Japan to Brazil

During and after the Meiji period, the Japanese government encouraged its
people to emigrate abroad. The purpose was not only to alleviate increasing domestic
population but also to secure territories rich in resources necessary to Japanese
growing industrialism. When the Meiji government’s delegates went to Western
countries, they learned that these countries were importing raw materials from their
colonies and then exporting manufactured products back to those colonies. The
delegates thought that this system would be beneficial for Japan (Inoue 1965). Thus,
Japan sent its citizens not only to North and South America, but also to Southeast
Asia, continental Asia, Taiwan, Sakhalin, and Micronesian countries. By 1990, over

12 In fact, when Japan and Brazil decided to support immigration between the countries, they both
hoped immigration and the resulting economic and political ties would give rise to an increase in trade
(Lesser 1999).
13 Among these areas, Taiwan became a Japanese colony after Sino-Japanese war, as did Sakhalin after
Russo-Japanese war. Also, Japan invaded Korea, and the Japanese army occupied Manchuria. The
Japanese government and private immigration companies peopled those areas with Japanese citizens,
who were mostly peasants (just like those sent to Brazil), however the context of populating these areas
was different from emigration to other countries like Brazil. It was aggression resulted in the taking of
90 percent of the Japanese emigrants living outside of Japan, were in North and South Americas (Befu 2002). Japanese emigration to the U.S, on both Hawaii and the mainland is relatively well known. However, little is known about emigration to Brazil.¹⁴ This is surprising because Brazil has the largest population of Nikkei outside of Japan, receiving 188,985 Japanese immigrants before WWII and 71,372 after the war (Yano 2002:67). Before Brazil became the main destination for Japanese immigrants, the United States was the main destination. However, Japanese immigration to the U.S. ended altogether due to various anti-Japanese movements, which officially started in 1905, and was solidified by the Immigration Act of 1924. Because of this, the Japanese government increasingly encouraged people to immigrate to Brazil and occasionally even supported them financially (Lesser 1999).

Although the Japanese immigrants went to both the U.S. and Brazil for the same reasons, those who went to Brazil shared one unique characteristic that immigrants to the U.S. did not. The majority of immigrants to Brazil, especially before the war, immigrated with their families. As mentioned earlier, the conditions on coffee plantations were not suitable for European immigrants and the coffee economy was not stable. As a result, many immigrants wandered from place to place looking for better conditions. Because coffee planters thought that if immigrants had their families with them they would not run away as easily, Brazil required newcomers to immigrate as a family with at least three members.¹⁵ In order to meet this requirement, some Japanese emigrants sought to increase their family size through pseudo-marriage and/or adoption. Although many of these families separated

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¹⁴ Besides immigration to Brazil, the other Japanese immigrants settled in various other Latin American countries: Mexico 15,338, Peru 35,685, Chile 552, Cuba 616, Argentina 6,604, Panama 456, Bolivia 6,579, Dominican Republic 1,390, Paraguay 10,321, and other countries 1,473 (Yano, 2002:67).

¹⁵ They did not count children under twelve years old because small children could not work as adults.
after their first contracts ended in Brazil, some individuals remarried. It was also stated that the majority of husbands who had either been divorced or widowed were unable to financially support themselves without a wife’s physical labor, financial income (gained through labor) and emotional support. Therefore the only way for widows or the divorced to survive was through remarriage. Family immigration and secondarily remarriage were very important elements in the lives of Japanese immigrants; I will talk more about this in the next section.

Early Nikkei Settlers’ Solidarity and Isolation in Brazil

The required immigration of families was one of the most important elements for Nikkei as they attempted to adjust themselves to an unknown country. Family immigration made it possible for Nikkei issei who had settled in the new land to have their children marry other Nikkei. Additionally family immigration worked as a buffer to the stresses in the new country, immigrants had their family for emotional, and physical support (Maeyama 2001). Although these behaviors contradict the original Nikkei goal of short-term immigration, families were important when many of them realized that they would not be able to return to Japan quickly. There are several reasons for this. First, the plantation system did not work as well they thought it would. Before they immigrated, private immigration companies often, without detailed research, advertised tempting wages in order to promote immigration (Wakatsuki, 2001). Second, the coffee economy was unstable. Around the time when the Japanese immigrants arrived in Brazil, the coffee economy was in

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16 In other countries the majority of Japanese immigrants were males, and there were few Japanese women for these men to marry; they either did not marry, relied on picture brides, or had to marry someone who was not Japanese. In Brazil however both men and women had arrived together, therefore there was an increased ability to have Nikkei to Nikkei marriages.

17 Most of the immigrants intended to immigrate to Brazil only for short term, and hoped to make a lot of money and to return home with honors.
depression due to bad crops, overproduction, and the 1929 world financial crisis (Maeyama 1982). Third, the plantation owners ran the shops, which were the only ones that these immigrants were able to patronize. This was significant because most of the newly arrived immigrants did not have much cash, which meant they were in debt even before they had earned any money. The prices in these plantation shops were also higher than those in regular shops. When the Japanese immigrants made their contracts, they were unaware that they were going to spend most of their wages for basic necessities, and they were surprised to find out that at the end of the contract year they had little, if any money, saved. As a result, some Japanese immigrants rioted or protested, or escaped from plantations in the middle of the night. Thus, instead of renewing their contracts, most of the immigrants rented or bought fields after they had finished their initial contract period. It was easy for the immigrants to rent or own fields and become independent farmers around this time. Because the depression in the coffee economy, land was divided into small plots and sold very cheaply.

The Japanese immigrants not only did not know Portuguese but they were also unfamiliar with the physical geography of Brazil, so they tended to act in groups in order to support each other when they looked for land. They had to depend on a limited number of individuals who were able to interpret Portuguese, (although even these people’s language skills were very limited) and were willing to share information (such as contract terms, family register, etc.) and help each other in various other ways. Consequently, many Nikkei rented fields near one another. At

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18 The Japanese plantation workers were upset not only due to their low wages and growing debt but also because life on the plantation was severe. My informants told me that a bell controlled their behavior: a bell in the morning woke them up, a second bell meant they had to start to work, etc. If they stayed in their cabins as a result of illness, the supervisors (with weapons) brought them to the fields forcefully. For more details about the Japanese immigrants' slave-like experiences in plantations, see Maeyama (1982) and Handa (1987).
this point, most of the *Nikkei* settlers did not give up the idea of returning to Japan, however they had to admit that they were going to be in Brazil for an extended period of time. This was the beginning of the formation of Japanese communities. *Nikkei* settlers often maintained social distance between themselves and the non-*Nikkei* Brazilians, in part, because they hoped to eventually return to Japan. Therefore it became important to establish *Nikkei* schools in their communities and provide their children with a Japanese education, including instruction in the Japanese language, customs, and ethics.

The *Nikkei* schools played very important roles in the formation of *Nikkei* community activities and the reinforcement of their ethnic identity. These schools were called "*Nihon Gakko*" (School of Japan), and were places not only to study the Japanese language, but also to participate in Japanese cultural activities and sports. Additionally, they also provided a place for children as well as adults to learn "to be Japanese" spiritually. Since approximately three-fourths of the Japanese immigrants arrived in Brazil between 1926 and 1935 before the war (Smith 1979: 53), Japanese nationalism, which centered on loyalty to the emperor, was highly influential. In these ‘schools of Japan,’ they practiced the same things that they would have done if they were in Japan, such as veneration of the emperor’s picture and the recitation of the Imperial Rescript of Education. The local *Nikkei* associations, which ran the ‘Schools of Japan,’ also planned various *Nikkei* activities such as celebrating the anniversary of colonization, the emperor’s birthday festival, athletic festivals

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19 This custom still currently exists in Brazil. In major institutions, there are portraits of the emperor and empress. In contemporary post-WWII Japan however, it is very rare to see these pictures. I was surprised to see these pictures in the office and at the entrance to the building where I worked. I asked about the reason for this to a recent *Nikkei* immigrant. He said that they would get in trouble as a *Nikkei* institute if they did not have them.

20 These events were held in commemoration of their colonizing settlement in that region. They usually offer silent prayer for those who died previously in the region, sing national anthems of either or both countries, listen to some local leaders’ speeches, give awards to people of merit, etc. (For
(undōkai), Sumo festivals, and baseball games. At all of these events, the attendants bowed in front of the emperor’s portrait, read the Imperial Rescript of Education, and sang the song *kimigayo*\(^{21}\) in unison. In some special ceremonies like graduation, not only the students but also all the members of the communities practiced the ritual of “reverence towards the emperor’s palace,” which has also been called reverence towards the east, ultimately meaning reverence towards Japan. These activities were open to all the Japanese communities (often times mandatory), and everyone was expected to act like an “authentic Japanese” and an “authentic human being” while attending. According to members of the *Nikkei* community, those who did not participate in these events were not considered members of the *Nikkei* community nor were they considered to be “Japanese.” Also, because most *Nikkei* immigrants hoped to go back to Japan eventually and also because many of the immigrants were not the first sons of their families, they did not bring their ancestors’ ashes or tablets with them. Therefore in these *Nikkei* communities, emperor worship took the place of ancestor worship and became the primary form of ethnic and formal religious expression.\(^{22}\) These various ethnic activities and rituals, which focused primarily on reverence of emperor, both modified and reconstructed Japanese ethnic identity, and served to unify a sense of community between these *Nikkei* immigrants. (Maeyama 2001; Reichl 1995).

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\(^{21}\) *Kimigayo* was originally a song to praise the emperor. It has been used like a national anthem for a long time, however there has been a huge controversy with regard to the song and *Hinomaru* (rising sun flag), because some Japanese people and Asian countries feel uncomfortable with this practice because they were used as symbols during the various invasions in the Meiji period. In regardless of the controversy, the Japanese government established *Kimigayo* and *Hinomaru* as the Japanese national anthem and the national flag by law in 1999.

\(^{22}\) This is because the Japanese are all supposed to be members of an extended family, with the ancestors of the emperor being the spiritual fathers of the Japanese people. The emperor represented both the ancestors of the past and in a way symbolically represented the ancestors of the recent past (Reichl 1995).
Nikkei Community during the Brazilian Assimilation Policies

Japan’s changing position as a world power as well as Japanese immigrants’ unassimilated attitude towards Brazilian society led the Brazilian elites to fear the Nikkei as their “yellow peril,” and as unwelcome immigrants. As the Japanese military aggressively expanded its imperialist vision in the early 20th century, Japan was increasingly considered by many countries to be a global threat. As mentioned earlier, Japan intensively promoted immigration during 1920s and 1930s. Half of the total number of immigrants who arrived in Brazil at this time were Japanese\(^23\) (Tsuda ibid). According to Lesser (1999), articles that appeared in the Brazilian press in the 1930s viewed Japanese immigration as the Japanese imperialist government’s secret attempt to colonize Brazil, and they compared this to Japan’s invasion of Manchuria. The Nikkei behavior seemed to prove these ideas; the Nikkei acted in groups, lived in their isolated communities, and participated in activities that reaffirmed their Japanese identity. They did not assimilate into Brazilian society because the Nikkei had hoped to eventually return to Japan. These attitudes not only caused the Brazilian officials to fear the Nikkei but also made them see the Nikkei as unwelcome immigrants. Plus, there were still debates that the Japanese race was an inferior one. Moreover, the Brazilian elites originally assumed that the Nikkei would remain on the coffee plantations as contract workers, but some of them rioted and protested, and many of them had started to become independent farmers. The Brazilians understood these behaviors to be a sign that the Nikkei were going to become part of the middle class and thereby invade the social position which the Brazilian’s had not intended (Maeyama 1982). They feared that the Nikkei were now going to take over Brazil

\(^{23}\) In 1933, 53.2% of the total immigrants were Nikkei. In 1934, there were 53 countries, which had send immigrants to Brazil. From these numbers, we can see proportionately how large the number of Nikkei was compared to that of immigrants from other countries, which had arrived in Brazil during this decade (Maeyama 1982: 87).
(Lesser 1999). As a result, there was an increase in immigration restrictions and a rise in the number of discriminatory Brazilian government policies. Some elites still supported the Nikkei, believing them to be industrious and diligent, and a contribution to Brazil’s economic growth. However, the Brazilian government revised its Constitution in 1934 modeling one of the policies after U.S. laws. This new constitution established a quota system, which limited the number of immigrants from any one country; allowing only two percent of the number of immigrants, who had arrived in the last fifty years, from each nation (Lesser ibid). Although this revision applied to immigrants from every country, in reality it was aimed at restricting the number of Nikkei (Lesser ibid).

At the end of 1937, the Brazilian dictator Vargas established the Estado Novo (New State), which aimed to change Brazil into a modern, economically growing nation-state. This was to be done by uniting and enhancing state power and promoting national consolidation. This new regime started to create various new assimilation policies, the so-called “Brazilianization campaign.” All the schools in agricultural communities had to teach all subjects in Portuguese, school administrators had to be Brazilian (nationality) born in Brazil, teaching foreign languages to students under 14 years old was prohibited, textbooks in elementary schools had to be written in Portuguese, and the history and geography of Brazil became compulsory subjects (Maeyama 1996). Because of this, approximately 600 “Schools of Japan” were closed. Publications written in foreign languages were banned. Four daily Japanese newspapers, which had more than 50,000 subscribers, had disappeared by August 1941 (De Carvalho 2003; Maeyama 1982, 1996). Also,

24 The Immigration Act of 1924, which forbade the entry of all Japanese immigrants to the U.S.
25 In the state of Sao Paulo, ‘agricultural communities’ implies all the areas except for Sao Paulo city and Santos City (Maeyama 1996).
laws were passed that aimed to repatriate immigrants and journalists who were accused of having offended the “dignity of Brazil” (Lesser 1999). Laws were also passed to stop immigrants from living in ethnically concentrated areas, and all land purchases by immigrants had to be approved by the Immigration and Colonization Council. The Ministry of War drafted immigrants’ children and assigned them to regions outside of their parents’ communities.

Around this time, many of the Nikkei considered returning to Japan, not only because they felt oppressed by the assimilation policies but also because they wanted to serve Japan’s imperialist expansion and be part of the resettling of newly obtained colonies like Manchuria. However, this rarely happened because most people did not have enough money to go back, and a Japanese consular in Sao Paulo persuaded many of them to remain in Brazil permanently and assimilate into the Brazilian society. He said that the Nikkei did not have to worry about going to Japan because Japan was powerful enough without their help. Additionally he stated the Japanese government would not accept their applications for resettlement because they had already adapted to the Latin American climate and the government did not want to spend the effort to readjust them to the drastically different climate that would be found in areas like Manchuria (Maeyama 1982).

Vargas tried to maintain relations with both the Allied and Axis powers until Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. At that moment, Brazil moved closer to the Allied side, and eventually, declared war against Japan. This resulted in the Vargas regime becoming much harsher and oppressive to the Nikkei. This

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26 The government stated that thirty percent of all agricultural area residents had to be Brazilian, and no more than 25 percent of these residents could of one particular nationality (Lesser 1999).
27 According to a study conducted in one Nikkei community in 1939, about 90% of the Nikkei hoped to be repatriation (Lesser 1999:130)
28 Because of the war, officials in Japanese consulate left Brazil. Nikkei who were born during WWII could not register as Japanese and as a result only have Brazilian nationality (Page 1994).
included Nikkei losing their freedom to travel in Brazil, a prohibition on meetings of more than three Nikkei and a further prohibition on the use of the Japanese language outside the home (Maeyama 1979). Although the Japanese government denied that they had an imperialistic purpose in Brazil, a further intensification of anti-Japanese movements occurred. This fear of Japanese imperialism even led to unsubstantiated reports of an imminent Japanese military attack (in collaboration with Nikkei) on the state of Sao Paulo and the Brazilian coast. Vargas even went so far as to force Nikkei to move away from areas defined as "strategic." This forced movement was intensified after five cargo boats were torpedoed outside of Santos harbor in July 1943. As a consequence of this attack, Vargas ordered all residents who had Axis passports, including around four thousand Nikkei, to move from the coastal areas into the interior regions of Brazil, within 24 hours.\(^{29}\) Unsubstantiated reports appeared almost daily in Brazilian newspapers pertaining to arrest of Nikkei in Brazil who were believed to have served as spies for the Japanese military. Police harassment frequently occurred, and Nikkei homes were often invaded in a search for subversive and/or suspicious materials (Tsuda 2001).

Two Types of Responses by Nikkei toward the Assimilation Policies

Facing adversity in a foreign (enemy) country, Nikkei responded to the dominant Brazilian oppression in two different ways. Some people tried to accommodate the dominant Brazilian society, believing that becoming incorporated into Brazilian society would temper the increasingly adverse situation. Conversely, others resisted against the dominant pressure by defending their national identity and some even grew increasingly nationalist Japanese at this time.

\(^{29}\) Because of the time restriction, most individuals were unable to pack and bring their furniture and many of their personal possessions.
Those who had the will and ability to fit into Brazilian society tried to avoid the Brazilian discriminatory attitude towards the *Nikkei* through accommodation and integration. The number of individuals who reacted in this more accommodating manner was few and they were mostly *Nikkei nisei* (second generation), who had been educated in Brazilian schools in urban areas. They knew Brazilian culture and language very well, and had already incorporated themselves into Brazilian society. These individuals formed the *Liga Estudantina Nippo-Brasileira de Sao Paulo* (Japanese-Brazilian Student League of Sao Paulo)\(^{30}\) in 1934, and convened meetings and published newspapers and magazines to promote peace between *Nikkei* and Brazilian society through an accommodative approach. They claimed that they had, over the years, developed a loyalty to Brazil and were in a stage of identity transformation from Japanese to Brazilian, and further their children would no doubt be completely Brazilian. There were debates even among these accommodating groups as to the extent that they should pursue acculturation. Some denied anything “Japanese,” while others sought more dual or in-between identities. However all remained united in the idea that Brazil was their homeland and that they would stay there permanently (Tsuda 2001; Lesser 1999; Maeyama 2001). This organization was dissolved when WWII started in 1941.

On the other hand, however, the majority of *Nikkei* responded to the Brazilian assimilation policies with resistance and behaved in more “Japanese” ways, although they initially tried to refrain from visibly expressing their cultural and ethnic solidarity. They did not want to draw further attention from the Brazilian government, which would only advance the already widespread and popular anti-Japanese sentiments

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\(^{30}\) According to Maeyama (1996), due to the constriction of the assimilation policy, they renamed the organization to *Liga Estudantina de Sao Paulo* (Student League of Sao Paulo), dropping word *Nippo* in 1940.
In order to hide their national sentiments, emperor worship was not practiced publicly and was only informally practiced in the home. Japanese education was conducted at home or underground (Maeyama 2001). Because most Nikkei (even the nisei) had grown up in and/or lived rural isolated communities, they primarily learned the Japanese language and had practiced Japanese traditions, they were not competent in their use of the Portuguese language and had a hard time adapting to the new restrictions which placed an emphasis on adherence to the norms of Brazilian culture and society.

The forced assimilation policies were a highly visible manifestation of the government’s growing fear of the threat that Nikkei immigrants were believed to pose. The Brazilianization campaign and anti-Japanese movements effectively led to an increase in the identification of ethnic difference and reinforced the minority status of Nikkei. This consequently reified and increased loyalty to Japan and the emperor. As Lesser wrote: “The social and ethnic tension created by the anti-Japanese attitudes led members of the Nikkei community to strike back against the public order by becoming increasingly ‘Japanese’” (2003: 10).

For these reasons, the discriminatory ethnic policies of the Brazilian government were not only privately violated, but Emperor worship itself became a more visible and active expression of nationalist identity. Moreover, many of those who took an increasingly Japanese nationalistic stance formed secret societies that were eventually unified by the Shindo Renmei. Their purpose was to return the Nikkei to their truly ‘Japanese’ ways. This meant fostering an increased Japanese nationalist spirit by working to maintain Japanese spirit, culture, language, and most

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Shindo Renmei was formed around the end of the war. Shindo is composed of Shin meaning the emperor’s servants (subjects), and do, which means the way; this is similar to Bushi-do, which means the way of warrior (Samurai). Renmei means league. Therefore, Shindo Renmei is an organization dedicated to upholding the ideals of proper conduct, which the emperor’s servants (subjects) follow.
importantly the veneration of the Emperor. *Nikkei* commonly considered racial mixture by marriage to be ethnic suicide because it would pollute/dilute Japanese blood. Likewise, the main leader of *Shindo Renmei* preached the importance of ethnic homogeneity (Maeyama 1982). *Shindo Renmei* encouraged practices that are very similar to the claims of ethnic and biological distinctiveness found in *Nihonjinron*. This organization tried to unify the communities by promoting emperor worship, anti-assimilation, and stressed strong Japanese self-identification among the *Nikkei*. Since the Japanese language newspapers were banned, the main sources of information available to *Nikkei* came from short-wave radio, Brazilian radio, word-of-mouth, and handbills written in Japanese. Of these, the last two informal sources were most important (Maeyama 1982). Leaders of the *Shindo Renmei* spread their ideas and the information that they received from the short-wave radio transmissions through the handbills. Because the transmissions across short wave radios were of very low quality, most people relied on the *Shindo Renmei* groups and their interpretations of the news from and about Japan. These groups also discouraged *Nikkei* from believing what the Brazilian press said (Reichl 1995).

There were two factions in *Nikkei* communities after WWII, those that believed that Japan had won the war, led by *Shindo Renmei* and called *Kachi-gumi* (the Victory group) and those who recognized Japan’s loss called *Make-gumi* (the Defeat group). Between 1945 and 1946, 95% of the *Nikkei* in Brazil were members

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32 *Nihonjinron* is an ideology that makes the claim that the Japanese are a homogeneous superior people who speak Japanese, and this ideology emphasizes the supremacy of the Japanese spirit and culture.

33 Short-wave radios were confiscated whenever found by the police, but some *Nikkei* illegally kept them secretly.

34 News on short-wave radios talked only of Japan’s victories until the end of the war when the Emperor announced Japan’s defeat. Not only were the emperor’s words difficult to understand, the quality of the short-wave radio was awful, so the announcements were very choppy. Because the people replaced the missing words with imagination and faith, the news was interpreted in a variety of different way (Takahashi 1990).
of Kachi-gumi (Maeyama 1982: 179). Some Shindo Renmei members terrorized and assassinated\(^{35}\) those Nikkei who recognized that Japan had lost because they thought that this belief was not faithful to Japan and the Emperor. At the community level, the members of the Victory group commonly ostracized members of the Defeat group.\(^{36}\) Until both the leaders of Shindo Renmei and the members who had committed the assassinations were arrested, the leaders of Defeat group had to be protected by the Brazilian police. Many of the members of Defeat group were educated in and familiar with the Brazilian language and current affairs in Brazilian societies. As a result they were better informed about world events (they did not have to rely on second hand information from the Shindo Renmei) and activists within the Defeat group tried to persuade the Victory group, using a propaganda pamphlet called Shuho (Weekly Report) that Japan had lost the war. Although the active and therefore visible members of the Defeat group faced the danger of assassination, they continued to try to persuade the Victory group. They thought that the Shindo Renmei’s fanatic actions were a very shameful thing for the Nikkei to do, and they were afraid that the Shindo Renmei’s actions would lead to adverse effects on the Nikkei communities.

Both groups did in some ways similarly embrace and cherish their Japanese identity, however, their actions were different: Shindo Renmei did not want to accept the fact that Japan had lost and insisted that they were Japanese who just happened to live outside of Japan, while on the other hand the Defeat group attempted to retain aspects of their Japanese identity while at the same time accommodating to Brazilian society.

\(^{35}\) From March 1946 to January 1947, Shindo Renmei members were accused (although many of the claims were not substantiated) of 41 crimes, of these 16 people (15 of them were Japanese) were killed, 11 people seriously injured, and several people were slightly injured (Maeyama 1982: 225).

\(^{36}\) Also, among the Nikkei communities, rumors often appeared that a Japanese ship (led by either a member of Emperor’s family or a ex-foreign minister) would come to take their compatriots in Brazil back to Japan. More than 2000 Nikkei came to the city of Sao Paulo from the inner areas of the state to look for the ship. Some of them even sold their property in order to be prepared to return to the home country. This rumor sporadically reappeared for decades after the war (Maeyama 1982).
The uncompromising belief that Japan was victorious in World War II remained with Shindo Renmei leaders for years after the war despite attempts by both Brazilian and Japanese authorities to convince them as of the truth (Tsuda 2001). Some Nikkei changed from favoring Japanese nationalism to promoting Brazilian nationalism, and rejected most things Japanese after the confusion created by Victory group and Defeat group's differing messages. Also some Nikkei, especially members of nisei (second generation), began to have a negative feeling about their Japanese background after WWII. However, gradually an increase number of Nikkei started to reconstruct their identity; they could actively accommodate Brazilian society while at the same time remain ethnically Japanese. This is especially evident after the 1960s when Japan was beginning to become economically successful (Maeyama 2001). The rift between the groups is not as prevalent or visible as it was, however, among the older generations who lived through the war there is still an underlying resentment between the groups.

After WWII until Present Day

Following the peace treaty of 1952 between Japan and Brazil, (which officially ended the war between the countries and restored relations), immigration from Japan to Brazil began anew (Lone 2001). After the end of the war in Japan, birth rates increased very rapidly, and many soldiers and Japanese citizens who settled in Asian countries (such as Manchuria and Korea) came back to Japan. This rapid and dramatic population increase resulted in shortages of food and other

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37 In 1952, 25% of the Nikkei population in Brazil still believed Japan was victorious in WWII (Page 1994).
38 The Okinawans' immigration to Brazil resumed around 1948. Immigration here started early because this area was under the control of the United States (Azuma 2002).
39 From 1947 to 1949, natural population growth rate was 2%, this number only included birth and death within Japan and neglected the population grown that resulted from the return of Japanese who had been abroad. This rate was the highest since Meiji period (Wakatsuki 2001). When just using the 2% figure it becomes apparent that the total population increased by at least 1.5 times in 21 years after the war, and had doubled by 36 years.
resources. Consequently, the Japanese government decided that overseas emigration would help to solve the population problem (Wakatsuki 2001). Compared to the pre-war immigrants, post-war immigrants believed they were settling in Brazil permanently. Some of them had even bought land from private Japanese immigration companies while they were still in Japan, and then quickly joined Nikkei communities after they arrived in Brazil. The post-war immigrants went to Brazil with financial support from the Japanese government. Among them, there were engineers and young men trained to be farmers who immigrated in order to contribute to the growth of Brazilian industrialization and agriculture.\footnote{Among the post-war immigrants, there were also many atomic bomb victims who had been discriminated against in Japanese society. Many of them were not able to get jobs, and even their family members who had not victims of radiation were discriminated against.} There were still a few Nikkei who attempted to go back to Japan, but what they saw in Japan was hopelessly devastated cities damaged during the war, and as a result decided to stay in Brazil permanently. In the end, more than 90% of the Nikkei (both pre-war and post-war) remained in Brazil (Maeyama 2001: 74).

For the Nikkei who had decided to settle in Brazil permanently, they directed many of their hopes towards ensuring that their children would become economically successful. Consequently they tended to spend most of their savings on the education of their children. About 20% of the Nikkei are university educated while only 6% of the entire Brazilian populace had been university educated by 1992 (Tsuda 2003: 66).\footnote{However, there is a large gap between siblings of Nikkei. Older siblings have usually had to help their parents’ jobs, while younger siblings went on to higher education and later went on to be part of the higher economic classes (Maeyama 2001).} Although the population of the Nikkei is less than 1% of the total Brazilian population, they represent more than 10% of the population in many universities. This is especially true in the engineering departments, where it is not rare to hear that Nikkei represent one-third of the students (Maeyama 2001: 27). Ten percent of the...
lecturers at the prestigious University of Sao Paulo (USP) are of Japanese descent (Lone 2001: 3). In Brazil, I often heard a popular ethnic joke about Nikkei, “If you want to enter the University of Sao Paulo, kill a Japanese.”\textsuperscript{42} Nikkei brag about their children going to or having graduated from USP, and I met Nikkei who went to cram schools for a couple of years in order to pass entrance exam for USP. Many of them wanted to go to USP so that they would later have a better chance of job security.

In 1934, only eight percent lived in cities while a full 92% of the Nikkei populace lived in rural agricultural villages and engaged in agriculture, and in 1958, 49% of the Nikkei lived in cities, and by 1987, 89.2% were estimated to live in urban areas (Maeyama 2001:24). In correlation with urbanization, Nikkei have experienced a significant increase in social mobility (Maeyama 2001). They have become predominantly middle class, with 43.3% working as professionals, managers, or office workers, and another 20.9% in private business (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 1990: 17). Maeyama (2001) says that although most of the Nikkei state that their motivation behind moving to urban areas had been for their children’s education, he believes that commerce in urban areas also worked to pull the population into the cities. This was further reinforced as the government gave priority to industrial rather than agricultural activities in the rural areas (Maeyama 2001). Data from a research project that I participated in indicated that higher incomes were available in cities while conversely lower incomes were found in the rural agricultural areas (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002: 41).

\textsuperscript{42} Lesser (2003), Maeyama (2001) and Tsuda (2003) also mention this ethnic joke.
Current Conditions of Nikkei in Brazil

Approximately 80 years after the first wave of Japanese emigration to Brazil, there was an ironic twist of fate for the Nikkei. Due to the shrinking economy in Brazil and abundant high-paying factory jobs in Japan, some Nikkei decided to go back across the Pacific Ocean; this time the situation was reversed and the people were immigrating to Japan.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, the Brazilian economy has entered a prolonged and severe period of crisis and depression. The country suffers from foreign debt, enormous hyperinflation, and increasing underemployment and unemployment. Brazil’s external debt had increased to $123.9 billion by 1987, while the annual economic growth rate continued to remain very weak, in spite of a short-lived growth in the mid-1980s. Between the beginning of the 1980s and the early 1990s, incredible rates of hyperinflation hit Brazil in three successive waves, which became higher and higher each time, reaching a 2,000 percent annual rate by 1993. By 1991, the combined rates of unemployment and underemployment reached 15 percent (Tsuda 2003).

The government ineffectively tried to revive the economy and control hyperinflation by instituting various economic plans, which unfortunately sometimes produced opposite effect. In the 1980s, the Brazilian finance minister was changed more than 10 times (Tsuda 2001b). The actual value of wages became almost worthless due to the endless effects of hyperinflation, even despite the indexing of salaries. This situation was made even worse when the market for professional and highly skilled job dried up. This made it increasingly difficult even for certain well educated, middle-class Nikkei to find satisfying jobs that fit with their high qualifications and income expectations.
Compared to the people who were at lower economic levels, the majority of the *Nikkei* had not suffered as much from the Brazilian economic crisis. However, because of their comparatively high socioeconomic status, it was even harder for them to accept the lower wages and living standards during the depression.

According to our survey, 3.7% of those who went to work in Japan had earned less than minimum salary while in Brazil, 43.1% earned between 1 to 5 times more than the minimum, 27.5% earned 5 to 10 times more, 18.3% earned 10-20 times more, and 7.3% earned more than 20 times more (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002: 91).

These statistics reveal the fact that, comparatively, *Nikkei* did not suffer the same economic hardships that affected the rest of the Brazilian population. However, many *Nikkei* still wished to improve better their financial situations and therefore decided to go to Japan in search of a larger income, which they would later be able to use in Brazil. In fact, according to our survey, the most important objectives for going to work in Japan were to learn about ancestor's country and its culture, open a new business, buy a house or car, save money for educational purposes, and earn money for living expenses (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros, 2002: 88). As Tsuda (2003) has written many people are motivated to migrate not because they do not have enough money to live but because the amount of money that they have does not meet their expectations. As a result many *Nikkei* migrate with the hope that when they return to Brazil they will be able to afford and attain the lifestyle that they desire.

**Conclusion**

As we can see, many Japanese immigrated to Brazil due to economic hardship during and after the Meiji period. Since the majority of the pre-war Japanese
immigrants received an education under the nationalist agenda fostered by the Japanese government, this experience widely affected their lives in Brazil. Japan’s military expansion was considered to be a global threat in the first half of the 20th century, which led the Brazilian government to make some restrictions against the Nikkei. When the Nikkei were faced with the Brazilian assimilation policies, the majority of them resisted against the restrictions by becoming more loyal to Japan and the Emperor, although there were a few Nikkei who tried to accommodate to Brazilian society. After WWII, most of the Nikkei realized that they would not be able to go back to Japan, and instead they tried to be successful in the Brazilian society. Later on, because of the Nikkei social mobility within the society and Japan’s new global economic position, Nikkei lives became much easier in Brazil. However, due to the current economic depression in Brazil, many of Nikkei have decided to go back to Japan in order to earn money. They have done this so that they would be able to have better lives when they eventually would return to Brazil. As it is possible to see, the Nikkei have experienced so many dramatic changes in their lives within only a single century.
CHAPTER 3

INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS (THEORY AND NIKKEI RESEARCH)

My intellectual concern with the transnational migration of the Nikkei appears at the intersection of three lines of theory (nationalism, identity, and globalization) and research. Nationalism and identity are the main themes of this chapter, and I will illustrate how globalization has had a profound influence in both of these perspectives.

Nationalism

Nationalism is important for understanding my project on Nikkei identity because I saw the significant influence that nationalism had on the construction of identities of the Nikkei I interacted with during my research. To examine nationalism, it is necessary to compare the commonly shared notion of both Japanese national identity as seen in the influential yet essentialist body of literature entitled “Nihonjinron (Theory of Japanese Uniqueness)” to the popularly shared notion of Brazilian national identity. Nihonjinron is an ideology that outlines what it means to be Japanese by asserting and reinforcing what is believed to be Japan’s superiority and homogeneity. This ideology has been reproduced and consumed for a long time in Japan despite many researchers’ criticism of its irrationality and elitism. I use Nihonjinron in my thesis because the reason behind its continued prevalence explains the popular idea that the Japanese are a distinct and ‘homogeneous’ race, and also because its influence is prevalent in the Nikkeis’ conception of what it means to be “Japanese”.

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Since the Meiji Restoration (1868),\textsuperscript{1} the ideology of Nihonjinron has become popular every time that Japan has experienced dramatic social changes such as political change, war, and rapid economic growth. In the midst of these social changes, many Japanese eagerly sought to understand what it meant to be Japanese and how they were different from others (Sahashi 1980). This eagerness accelerated after Japan’s loss of WWII, when a huge number of Nihonjinron books\textsuperscript{2} were published (and consumed) in both Japanese and English.

Befu (1987; 1993), an anthropologist who has examined the notions of Nihonjinron systematically and critically, outlines the core claims of Nihonjinron. He explains that this ideology postulates that the Japanese people belong to the Japanese race, which is superior to other races. They speak the Japanese language, which contains the elements of Japanese culture and the Japanese spirit. Additionally the Japanese people have become a unique, successful, unified, harmonious, and efficient nation. In short, Nihonjinron emphasizes the Japanese peoples’ homogeneity, proposing that Japanese peoples’ blood, land, culture, and language are a superior combination of traits, which are believed to be a unique feature of the Japanese. These homogeneous traits are placed in contrast to the assumed heterogeneity of the West. A salient feature of this idea is expressed in the concepts of “Japanese race” and “Japanese blood.” Of course there is no pure “race,” but some Japanese as well as Western academic and non-academic authors have used the words “Japanese race” to try to show the exclusive “natural and biological superiority” of the Japanese.

\textsuperscript{1} Meiji Restoration (1868) is a political transformation from warrior (samurai)-headed government to an emperor-headed government. The resulting period was called Meiji period (1868-1912), which was the time when Japan tried to modernize its country by adopting Western ideas. Also, it was the time when Japan tried to nationalize its country by creating new social and economic systems and enforcing militarism in response to the country’s sudden Westernization.

\textsuperscript{2} Between 1945 and 1978, there were about 700 books on Nihonjinron published (Kowner, 2002).
Yoshino (1998) is an anthropologist who has critically examined *Nihonjinron* throughout his academic career. He explains that the notion of Japanese blood is strongly related to the image that “the Japanese” are members of the extended family or lineage. In the Meiji period, cultural and political elites reinforced the idea that the Japanese emperors are the descendents of the sun goddess, and they also invented the notion of Japan as a “family-nation” of a divine emperor’s origin. Therefore, by blood, the Japanese as the members of the family-nation were imagined to be related to one another, and ultimately to the emperor. The Japanese informants in Yoshino’s account explained that they are unable to see the Koreans and Chinese in Japan as Japanese, no matter how long they live in Japan and no matter how much they may look similar to the Japanese, because they don’t have Japanese blood. In this way, Japanese blood has been used as a symbol of the boundary between ‘we, the Japanese’ and ‘others,’ and denotes the exclusive supremacy of Japanese heritage.3

The purpose of *Nihonjinron* was “to enlighten the masses” by creating nationalistic feelings, which was believed to help resist the further Westernization of Japan. This ideology has been written about and expounded upon by academics and non-academics and by both Japanese and non-Japanese authors. The most notorious publications in this genre are Nakane Chie’s “Japanese Society” (1970) that emphasizes social “hierarchy,” and Takeo Doi’s “Anatomy of Dependence” (1973) that stresses the emotion of “*amae*,” dependency. These publications and other works on *Nihonjinron* have been criticized because of the weakness of their methodology (Yoshino 1992; Sugimoto and Mouer 1982) and irrational ethnocentric thinking (Kowner 2002). *Nihonjinron* overlooks class, gender, and regional variations, and

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3 The exclusiveness of “Japanese blood” is also seen in the Japan’s employment of *jus sanguine*, with reference to nationality. No matter where children are born, they receive their parents’ nationality, based on their family lines.
ignores the existence of minorities (ibid). Moreover, this literature tends to emphasize Japan’s uniqueness through comparisons only to the West (Befu 1987; Kowner 2002).

Although many researchers have criticized the ideology of Nihonjinron, the ideas of homogeneous, harmonious, and group orientated people touted in Nihonjinron are commonly shared notions of Japanese uniqueness among Japanese lay people. The majority of Nikkei do not explicitly know the literature on Nihonjinron, but this ideology has influenced the notion of idealized Japaneseness among them. Also, as I mentioned earlier, the ideology of Nihonjinron grew to be well accepted among the Japanese especially during times of dramatic social change as a way to understand what it means to be Japanese (Sahashi 1980). Correspondingly, it would have been natural for the Nikkei to become eager to understand what it means to be Japanese and how they are distinct from others as a way to understand and create their social, cultural, and racial position in the foreign country of Brazil.

In contrast, the idealized notion of Brazilian identity is harmonious heterogeneity. Linger (2001), an anthropologist whose focus is Latin American studies and who did fieldwork in Japan on Nikkei, says that the narrative of identity in Brazil is generally thought to be a non-racist and non-blood-based narrative of identity. He mentions Freyre’s classic historical ethnography The Masters and the Slaves (1956 [1933]), which he claims portrays Brazil’s plantation in the 16th century as a racial and cultural fusion of Portuguese, native Brazilians, and Africans. Linger asserts that this anti-racist story has been controversial yet widely accepted. However

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4 In Brazil, the majority of the Nikkei would not have read the books I mentioned above because it is very costly to buy books from Japan. According to my informants, they do however read magazines like Bungeishuju, which include ideas derived from Nihonjinron because magazines are much cheaper and more accessible in Brazil.

5 Brazil’s non-racist and non-blood-based inclusive narratives can be also seen in the notion of jus soli, with reference to nationality. No matter what the parents’ nationalities are, their children can obtain the nationalities of their birth countries. Therefore, in contrast to the difficulty of obtaining Japanese nationality, it is easy for Nikkeis to become “Brazilians” in terms of nationality, and which has greatly influenced the sense of belonging and identity (Sakakibara 2001).
many people do consider this story to be a myth because, in reality, there was a time when Brazil refused to accept certain ethnic immigrants in the country. Moreover, the concept of race has led to the creation of a racially based social hierarchy. Although some people believe in the idealized racial harmony, in reality, the situation has been much different. Many people are still influenced by a belief that some people are inferior because they belong to a particular race. Also, currently in southern Brazil, where the new immigrant populations have settled, there are various ethnic neighborhoods and towns, along with festivals, which illustrate the manifest cultural uniqueness of these distinct peoples.

Even though the notions of the homogeneous Japanese and the harmoniously heterogeneous Brazilians are myths, I think these ideologies are still influential to Nikkei notions of identity. According to Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros (1990), 42% of the third generation and 61.62% of the fourth generation of Nikkei are the result of ethnic intermarriages. From these statistics we can see that although many leaders of the Nikkei communities and older generations have celebrated the maintenance of Japanese cultural and racial homogeneity, in reality the situation has been different. Furthermore, the existence of visible Japanese and other ethnic communities suggests that the harmonious heterogeneity of the Brazilian notion of identity may not be as strong as it was once believed. As we can see, there are idealized notions of ethnic and national identity, which are influential but do not necessarily dictate reality.

The next aspect of nationalism that I will discuss is what Tsuda has termed “deterritorialized nationalism.” Tsuda, an anthropologist who conducted fieldwork in both Brazil and Japan, claims that when immigrants go abroad and become new ethnic

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6 People of African descent are considered to be inferior while whites are the top of the social hierarchy; Japanese people sit between these two.
minorities in a host society, they sometimes develop a much stronger sense of belonging and loyalty towards their home country than they had before their emigration (2001b; 2003). This kind of nationalism is called “deterritorialized nationalism,” and reflects the notion that national sentiments become enhanced and articulated outside the territorial boundaries of the home country.

Maeyama (2001) also developed an example of this theory although he did not state it as explicitly as Tsuda. He asserts that Japanese immigrants recognized their ethnicity for the first time when they immigrated to Brazil because in Japan it was rare to have ethnically foreign neighbors. Once they went to Brazil and interacted with Brazilians, they began to become aware of their physical and cultural differences from Brazilians. Maeyama (ibid) shows an example of the Japanese immigrants’ recognition of their difference. When Japanese immigrants engaged in plantation work, there were also many immigrants from different countries engaged in the work. In this situation, other immigrants called Japanese immigrants “japones” and expected them to behave as “japones.” Individual Japanese were considered to represent “japones” behavior. As a result, the Japanese immigrants began to behave in a manner that fit the image of “japones” because of social pressure to fit this image and also so that they did not undermine Japanese identity (as seen in Nihonjinron). This recognition of difference, along with Brazil’s assimilation policies, led them to intensify their national sentiments. Also, as I mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, when the assimilation policies were first instated, Nikkei communities refrained from cultural practices that would reveal their Japanese loyalties in order to avoid generating anti-Japanese feelings. However, as the government policies and anti-Japanese xenophobia became more intense during WWII, most Nikkei communities responded by strengthening their Japanese nationalistic and patriotic sentiments (Tsuda, 2001b).
The next feature of nationalism I want to discuss is the idea of “imagined communities.” I use Anderson’s (1991) term “imagined communities” because I want to emphasize that Nikkei are not a bounded community. However, Nikkei attempt to create a community-like feeling of solidarity, which allows individuals to believe that they are part of both the larger Nikkei communities in Brazil and Japanese communities in Japan. Nikkei newspapers facilitate this sense of a community-like feeling with Japanese language articles about Japan and Nikkei communities (which I will talk about more in Chapter 4). According to Anderson (1991), print media helps to create a sense that individuals belong to a real and connected community. This community may not actually be a tangible one, but can be envisioned through the written word. Print media creates an arena where geographically disconnected people can read about commonly shared experiences. Furthermore, people who have never met one another can maintain a sense of compatriotism, assured that they share the same language.

Anderson’s idea is very relevant to the study of the situation in Nikkei communities in Brazil. Before media networks and technology were developed, the main source of information was local Nikkei-owned and published newspapers, which were based on information from short-wave radio broadcasts and books and magazines sent from Japan. Since most Nikkei immigrants were literate only in Japanese, they were not highly influenced by the dominant Brazilian print media. Japanese-language print media has played an active role in the promotion of Japanese nationalism in Brazil. The Nikkei newspapers kept people informed about what was going on in Japan and the Nikkei communities, and this media also encouraged

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7 The strong influence that print media had is apparent in the Nikkei communities after the war. Japanese language newspaper was banned in 1941 and resumed in 1946. After the war, there was only one newspaper company to talk openly about Japan’s defeat while several other presses invented stories about Japan’s victory. The majority of Nikkei believed that Japan won the war not only because
immigrants to be respectable citizens through the promotion of themes found in the ideology of *Nihonjinron* (Takahashi 1990; Maeyama 1982, 2001; Lesser 1999). And even now, the *Nikkei* newspapers provide information about *Nikkei* communities (*colônia*) and Japan, which help *Nikkei* imagine that they belong to both of them.

Anderson says that speaking a common language is the key to compatriotism. This idea can also be found in *Nihonjinron*, which describes speaking the Japanese language as an essential element of what it means to be Japanese. As I explained earlier in Chapter 2, after the Meiji Restoration years, which was a time when Japan was actively trying to modernize, the Japanese language was renamed *kokugo* (national language) and was considered to have been imbued with elements of Japanese culture and the Japanese spirit. Since the majority of Japanese people who immigrated to Brazil left Japan between 1926 and 1935, these people were still in Japan during the nationalistic fervor. It follows then that most *Nikkei* communities built *Nihon Gakkō* (schools of Japan) where they taught the Japanese language as well as Japanese culture and spiritual practices.

In addition to Anderson’s idea of the role of print media in nationalism, Hosokawa’s (1999) emphasis on ethnic entertainment and cultural activities and Appadurai’s (1996) focus on electronic media are significant for understanding how the *Nikkei* maintain a sense of community. Hosokawa has illustrated how both Japanese films sent from Japan, and those films made locally were aired in *Nikkei* communities, which in turn allowed *Nikkei* to maintain the idea that they still belonged to one of Japan’s communities. He also says that by just listening to the Japanese language, *Nikkei* feel secure even though they are in a linguistically foreign

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many newspapers reinforced the ideas, but also because these same newspapers wrote what *Nikkei* preferred to read (hear). *Nikkei* did not want to believe news articles that said that Japan lost. Similarly, the majority of *Nikkei* sometimes ostracized those who subscribed to the newspaper that talked about Japan’s loss.
country. These films help to solidify a feeling of cultural nostalgia even in those individuals who share few commonalities except for their Japanese origins. Appadurai says that electronic media such as cinema, television, computers, and telephones, and especially films and videos have similar or stronger effects than print media because they are more powerful ways of engaging peoples’ imaginations.

Some issei and nisei Nikkei were and are illiterate in Japanese because they didn’t have the opportunity to attend school since their impoverished families relied upon their labor as children. Also if they lived in a community that had few Nikkei, there would not be a school to teach Japanese. Therefore, for these people, films played an even more important role than print media. According to Hosokawa, the most popular films were those that were related to the image of the “Japanese mother” as beautiful, diligent, honest, kind, and patient, who also bears misfortune. Also, he says that Japanese war films (which depicted fictionalized accounts of wars won by the Japanese) aroused feelings of national sentiment. These films were very popular and were played repeatedly in many communities. By combining the ideas of Anderson, Hosokawa, and Appadurai, I argue that print media, entertainment/cultural activities, and a shared language continue to play important roles in allowing people to hold on to their sense of belonging to the larger Japanese community.

Identity

The second line of thought relevant to this study is the literature on identity. I rely on Kondo’s (1990) idea of identity because she emphasizes that identity is situational, which I think fits well into the Nikkei “crafting” of identity. Kondo says that identity is not a fixed “thing,” but is changeable depending on everyday situations. For example, she worked in a confectionary company in Japan and saw her
informants at times complain about the difficult nature of the work, and at other times express pride in their company. Even though their personal opinions differed about the company from day to day, they represented the company and their work in a positive way to people outside of the company. Therefore, at work, an individual may negatively identify with work and the company, however outside of this environment they replace the negative identification with a positive one that reflects well on both themselves as workers and the company. In the same way, according to Lesser (1999), Nikkei also switch their identity in their daily lives. Although some Nikkei may personally feel negatively about their Japanese background, they emphasize it when it is economically, politically, or socially beneficial to utilize the stereotype that Japanese people are honest, hardworking, and responsible.8

Kondo (ibid) uses the terms “self” and “other,” which are changeable depending on who is being perceived as “self” and who is “other.” According to Kondo, identity is crafted through the relationship of self and other (which are both situational), and also identity is formed by a power negotiation between “self” and “other” in everyday situations. She talks about how a chief in the Japanese sweets section of a Japanese confectionary company constructs his identity in the hierarchical workplace. She says that he tailors his behavior to suit the expectations of his co-workers and consequently acts severe, and quiet because of the traditional image of an artisan. In order to utilize this stereotype as a way to maintain his own position of power, he reinforces the stereotype by acting out the characteristics of this image. This self-presentation of identity acts as a means to reinforce the expectations of others, and therefore it recreates a power relationship between the chief and

8 Although Lesser limits his argument to examples of racially mixed Nikkei, from my fieldwork experience, I think it applies both Nikkei of part-Japanese descent and full-Japanese descent.
subordinate workers (or junior staff) that is necessary to maintain the social hierarchy of the workplace.

There are important similarities and shared ideas among the theories of Kondo and Maeyama (2001), who has studied transnational migration. As a Japanese anthropologist who lived in Brazil for 13 years and studied Nikkei for more than forty years, Maeyama claims that identity is a cognitive process of defining and categorizing the "self" in relation to the "other." He uses "self" and "other" in the same way that Kondo does. While Kondo claims that identity is situational in everyday life, Maeyama asserts that identity is situational throughout individuals’ lives depending on the changing historical events and outside pressures. He explained that many Japanese immigrants retain their loyalty to Japan in their hearts although Brazil tried to assimilate them during WWII. However, after Japan lost the war, some young Nikkei began to feel negatively about their ethnic background because although before the war they were taught that Japan was powerful, after the war, they were both devastated by Japan’s loss and by what they learned about Japan’s flaws and misbehavior. These individuals prior to WWII had persistently resisted the Brazilian assimilation policies because they were still loyal to Japan. However, when Japan lost the war they felt that they themselves were also failures, and in the same way, the dominant Brazilians saw the Nikkei as failures. In this way, identity is situational throughout the individuals’ life depending on the historical events. Identity is a product of interaction between self and other, as illustrated in the young Nikkei transformation of identity as a product of their interaction with the assimilation policies in the Brazilian mainstream.

Similar to Kondo’s idea that identity is formed through the power relationship between self and other, Constable (1997) shows how dis-empowered people respond
to people in power. Constable discusses identity and power relationships from a transnational perspective. Constable was greatly influenced by James Scott’s (1985, 1990) seminal work on everyday forms of resistance and accommodation. Based on her fieldwork in Hong Kong where she studied Filipino immigrants, she claims that dis-empowered Filipino maids respond to their dominant Chinese employers through both resistance and accommodation to their work requirements and the owners’ harsh treatment. For example, the Filipino maids gossiped about their Chinese employers and customers in Tagalog because they could not understand the language. However, Filipino maids cannot entirely resist because they depend on their employers. Therefore, they have to accommodate to their social situation. One example of their accommodation is listening to the Chinese employers’ demands that they should not litter, loiter, and wear sexy clothing, but rather strive to be dainty, demure, and punctual. The Filipino maids published magazines that have articles that explain why the Filipino maids should accommodate to the demands of their Chinese employers. It is the goal that their magazines will change the Filipino maids’ behavior so that the Chinese employers will have a better image of them. A more extreme example of how Filipino maids try to accommodate to their assigned position is the way in which they sometimes watch over each other encouraging or disciplining themselves. These acts of resistance and accommodation allow the workers to deal with the stresses of their lives without either totally compromising their identity or rejecting their situation to the extent that it would negatively affect their work opportunities.

These practices of resistance and accommodation are also seen among the Nikkei. According to Maeyama (2001), early Japanese immigrants put the Japanese emperor’s picture in their houses for worship and in order to maintain their Japanese ethnic identity. At the same time, some of them also put the Brazilian president’s
picture in their houses as a means of camouflage during times when the Brazilian assimilation policy was intensive. These attitudes illustrate that Nikkei secretly resist against the Brazilian mainstream by worshipping the Japanese emperor’s picture and they also accommodate by hanging the Brazilian president’s picture. As Kondo says, because of the power relationship between minority Nikkei and majority Brazilians, it was important for Nikkei individuals to appear to actively embrace assimilation while they secretly retained aspects of their former loyalties.

An integration of these theories of identity negotiation is important to the main ideas of my research. From Kondo, Maeyama, and Constable’s work on identity, I argue that identity is characterized as a negotiation of the concepts of "self" and "other," and is mediated through the accommodation and resistance to the implications of perceived powerful concepts (such as essentialist Nihonjinron, the narratives of Brazilian identity, and Brazilian assimilation policy) both in daily life and throughout the individuals’ lifetime.

Finally, the issue of self-reflexivity is also important when analyzing identity formation. While I was researching in Brazil, because I am Japanese, I was confronted with my informants’ expectations of an idealized notion of what it means to be Japanese (Nihonjinron). Kondo (1990) and Tsuda (2003) argue that fieldwork involves a constant negotiation of the identities of both the anthropologist and the informants. Kondo and Tsuda, both Japanese Americans who have conducted fieldwork in Japan, say that they encountered conflict in the negotiation of their self-identity and social-identity. This was due to the fact that they tried to take on identities that would be more acceptable to natives and better allow them to fit in among them. Because I am a woman, I was often asked and expected to be one of the
ladies⁹ at the reception desk during Nikkei events as is often expected of women in Japan. Although I had some good experiences working as a receptionist, I was troubled by the fact that this role was considered, without question, to be women’s work.

Kondo (1990) says that the anthropologist’s process of self-adjustment/self-development in the field results in a deep understanding of the other. Because of my age, I was often mistaken as Nikkei nisei (second generation) or sansei (third generation) in Brazil. One day, when I was unable to answer a Nikkei issei’s (first generation Japanese immigrant’s) question concerning an upcoming event (which my boss (issei) was in charge of), he lashed out at me. He said, “Nisei don’t know anything!!” His attitude reflected how some Nikkei issei look down upon Nikkei nisei because some issei believe themselves to be more Japanese and therefore superior to the nisei. I could empathize to some degree with how Nikkei nisei feel about this treatment in their daily lives.

Although it is dangerous to project an anthropologist’s experience directly onto the other, it is still important to see the how an anthropologist’s view changes in the field. Furthermore, through my unique position as a “partial outsider,” my experiences (although somewhat different from those of my informants) reflect an important aspect of the struggle with identity. Todorov (1995) describes self-reflexivity based on the circular relationship between self knowledge and knowledge of others as follows:

The process can be described in these terms: knowledge of others depends on my own identity. But this knowledge of the other in turn determines my knowledge of myself. Since knowledge of oneself transforms the identity of this self, the entire process begins again:

⁹ In Japanese, this role is called uketukejō, which literally means uketsuke (reception) jō (young lady). The work for the “ladies” at the reception desk is usually to receive entrance fees, hand out programs, give information, etc. In Japan, reception work is largely considered to be women’s work.
new knowledge of the other, new knowledge of the self, and so on to infinity (1995: 15).

During my fieldwork I was in a constant process of identity transformation, both because of the negotiation of anthropologist / informant identity, and because of the negotiation of self-identity and social-identity. Although my experiences may have been different from those of my informants, I believe that there are still important parallels to make between my experiences and those of my informants, based on commonly shared Japanese ethnicity.

Globalization

Finally, the third line of thought relevant to this study is the literature on globalization. Globalization has affected Nikkei sense of nationalism (both national identity and the idea of imagined communities) and their crafting of identity. According to Tsuda, the definition of globalization is “the movement and flow of goods, people, information, and images across national borders, which causes the world to become increasingly interconnected as a single place” (2003: 356). I think that this is the commonly understood picture of globalization, but I would not say, simply, that everywhere in the world is becoming homogenized. As Appadurai (1996) cautions, it is important to examine the indiginization and localities’ responses to globalization because it provides opportunities for Nikkei to reconsider their ethnic identity and/or intensify their localized nationalism. The Nikkei claim that “We are more Japanese than Japanese in Japan” illustrates their sense of localized Japanese national identity in comparison to the Japanese in Japan, who they felt had changed significantly due to Japan’s modernization (westernization).

Tsuda (2003) claims that the current growth of globalization has created a gap between noncontiguous globalization and contiguous globalization, which actively
leads *Nikkei* to reconsider their ethnic identity. He says that noncontiguous globalization is the flow of information and images across countries. Contiguous globalization involves the actual physical movement of people, goods, and capital across national borders. In general, he says, noncontiguous globalization tends to draw out more positive responses among local societies and produce more transnational identifications than contiguous globalization. Contiguous globalization, on the other hand, tends to lead to negative local reactions and defensive nationalist identities. In fact, noncontiguous globalization often provides only fragmented and disembodied images about other countries that are separated from their original contexts. Although Tsuda discusses these two different forms of globalization and their consequences, as we will see, there are alternative reactions to globalization.

The increase of the global media network (noncontiguous globalization) allows local *Nikkei* to see and hear about Japan, which often produces favorable images of Japan, and reproduces the idea of imagined communities that encompass Japan and *Nikkei* communities abroad. This draws a large number of *Nikkei* out from their communities, prompting them to migrate to Japan for work. Most *Nikkei*, before they go to Japan, see themselves as ethnically Japanese and have positive feelings about their heritage because of the Brazilian and imported Japanese media's favorable information about Japan. However, once they go to Japan, they have actual interaction (contiguous globalization) with Japanese people, and they are often marginalized and discriminated against by the Japanese. Being treated as foreigners by Japanese in Japan due to their cultural differences and imperfect use of Japanese, many *Nikkei* suffered an identity shock (Linger 2000, Tsuda 2003, Tsuji et al. 2001). Furthermore, many *Nikkei* begin to recognize their Brazilian national sentiments and resist against the Japanese in Japan by acting more Brazilian (Linger ibid, Tsuda ibid).
Tusda (ibid) calls this phenomenon “deteriorialized nationalism.” Thus, globalization strongly influences *Nikkei* sense of nationalism and national identity. In Brazil, for *Nikkei*, the Japanese in Japan were *Nikkei* compatriots, but in Japan, they became their “others.” In this way, *Nikkei* identities are changeable depending on situation, which are affected by globalization.

This next aspect of globalization that I will discuss is the influences of globalization on localities, which are again by no means always positive. Appadurai (1996) argues that negative local responses to globalization can either undermine or intensify local identities. He discusses the fact that global forces can destroy localities, or that local communities can become more conscious of themselves due to their different experiences with the foreign powers. This often can strengthen people’s resistance against new forces and also reinforce a sense of local nationalism.

Appadurai’s description of the local negative response to globalization also applies to the situation of *Nikkei* who, because of globalization, have had more chances to see Japanese people from Japan including expatriates (who work in multinational companies in Brazil), tourists, and exchange students. Some of these Japanese dye their hair and use katakana words,\(^\text{10}\) which many older *Nikkei* do not know, and others who just do not act in the idealized “Japanese way.” For *Nikkei*, black hair as well as black eyes is their trademark as “japonês” in Brazil. Also, stories told about the Japanese by returnees who have come back from Japan make some *Nikkei* reconsider their cultural/ethnic identities. In fact, I often heard that some *Nikkei* were annoyed by these returnees, claim that “*Nihon no nihonjin wa dandan dameni nattekiteiru. Nihonjin tositeno daijina monowo wakatteinai.*” (“Japanese people have changed in a negative way. They no longer cherish their respectable

\(^{10}\) Katakana words are foreign adopted words especially from English
Japanese heritage” [as seen in *Nihonjinron*]). In this way, the relentless globalization processes do not always homogenize or weaken localities, and may instead intensify local identities and even lead people to reconsider their nationalistic feelings.

In this chapter, I have examined how globalization affects *Nikkei* nationalism and identity formation, and how these three processes are intertwined. Because of globalization, especially global media (incontiguous globalization), *Nikkei* maintain their sense of compatriotism with the Japanese in Japan. However, globalization also has led many *Nikkei* to realize that they are different from the Japanese in Japan in variety of ways, as a result of actual contact with them (contiguous globalization). In the next chapter, I will analyze the significant effect that globalization, specifically the role of electronic mass media, ethnic events, and entertainments, have had on the everyday lives of *Nikkei* and on their subsequent reconsideration of identity.
CHAPTER 4
NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITY

In this chapter, using the grounded data that I collected from my fieldwork, I will examine how those theories of nationalism, identity, and globalization that I discussed in the previous chapter help us to understand individual Nikkei lives and their crafting of identities. As we will see both print and electronic media along with entertainment have played an important role in the way that Nikkei have created ‘imagined communities’. Moreover I will demonstrate how, through a process of resistance and accommodation, they have responded to Nihonjinron and both contiguous and noncontiguous globalization.

I will examine Nikkei identity by looking at different generations of Japanese immigrants (issei, nisei, and sansei) to illustrate how each of these generations differs in terms of how identity is formed. Nikkei identity is also influenced by other factors such as their residence location (e.g. either in agricultural rural area, cities, Nikkei community or not) and how they grew up (e.g. in an extended family, nuclear family, or racially mix family or not) because these affect how they experience life and how they create their identity. Some of these will be discussed in this chapter however my argument will mostly be framed through an analysis of generational differences, because the Nikkei belong to specific socially recognized and defined generations (some commonly used terms are issei, nisei, sansei, and nāo sei1), which carry with

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1 In Japanese, some Nikkei ask, “Nansei? (What generation?). Some Nikkei jokingly answer, “Nāo sei (I don’t know)” in Portuguese because the terms sound so similar. Some Nikkei do not know what generations they are because their parents are not necessarily same generations and not how to describe with generation the children belong to (for example, father is issei and mother is nisei). Also nowadays, there are returnees children who are born in Japan. They are not sure if they should call the children issei because they were born in Japan, or sansei /yonsei (the forth generation) because their parents are Nikkei nisei/sansei.
them specific social and cultural implications which are not found in Japan and are, therefore, unique to the construction of Nikkei identity.

Additionally, I will talk about the connection that is made between the Nikkei communities and Japan through various cultural practices and especially as a result of the kenjinkai (associations based on prefecture). Also, I will relate the experiences of my informants’ immigration to Brazil because they serve as the point of disconnection from Japan, which initiated the process of identity formation in the new country. These stories are important because they show their motivation for immigration, feelings of nostalgia, and address the fears that many of the immigrants have faced, which have in turn shaped the ways that these people have viewed their experiences in Brazil and images they have retained of Japan. Moreover, in this chapter, I will show that there is a difference between how Japan has been imagined (idealized) by the Nikkei and the reality faced by returnees and the effect that their experiences have had on the other Nikkei in Brazil. As will be shown, some individuals are saddened by how contemporary Japan differs from their idealized and nostalgic view of Japan. As a consequence, some Nikkei try to reconstruct their image of Japan and what it means to be Japanese through various practices, events, and customs. However, I will additionally show that while some Nikkei construct their identity based on an idealized and nostalgic view of Japan, they simultaneously derive much of their identity from colônia\(^2\) and their experiences in their new homeland.

\(\text{Issei (First Generation)}\)

**Importance of Kenjinkai and Home Prefecture for Nikkei Issei's**

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\(^2\) This term means rural agricultural community. When this term is used, it implies Nikkei homeland in Brazil. This term will be explained further later in this chapter.
When I was in Brazil, I researched *Nikkei* communities with local researchers and also worked at the office of *Federação das Associações de Províncias do Japão no Brasil* (Federal Association of Japanese provinces in Brazil). In Brazil, there are 47 *kenjinkai*, which are associations of people who had emigrated from particular prefectures in Japan. For example, if somebody was from Nagasaki prefecture, that person would belong to the Nagasaki *kenjinkai* in Brazil, and additionally their descendants would also belong to this association. These *kenjinkai* have strong ties with the prefectures back in Japan. In Japan there are 47 prefectures, which correspond to the 47 *kenjinkai* in Brazil. The office I worked at was the unifying organization for all of the *kenjinkai*.

Among *Nikkei issei*, it is very common when meeting new people to ask which prefecture a person is from or which *kenjinkai* they belong. Many *Nikkei* have stereotypical images of the people from each prefecture. For example, men from Kumamoto prefecture are considered to be chauvinistic and people from Okinawa prefecture are considered to have a strong sense of solidarity among their communities. At the office I worked, one guest asked my boss where he was from because of his unique accent. After they found out that they were from the same prefecture, they suddenly got very familiar with one another and began to talk about their precise regional stories. Since I am from Hokkaido prefecture, some of the *Nikkei issei* did not refer to me by name but called me “Hokkaido *no neechan* (sister from Hokkaido),” and tried to attribute my behavior (nature) based on their image of the nature of people from Hokkaido. During my research and at the office, I was often told that “My ----(daughter in law or somebody) is from Hokkaido, you should

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3 *Kenjinkai* also occur in the Japanese communities in many other countries such as U.S., Peru, and Argentina.
4 Kumamoto prefecture is in Kyushu, which is the south of Japan. In Japan, there is a common saying “Kyushu danji” which literally mean “Kyushu boy” and implies chauvinistic male.
meet her (him).” Often time, Nikkei people tried to make generalization about me and how I was similar to other people from Hokkaido.

When kenjinkai host special events or celebrate their anniversary of establishment, they often invite people from their original prefecture in Japan. One news article I read explained about the 45th anniversary of the Kumamoto kenjinkai establishment in Brazil, and discussed the important people who visited from the Kumamoto kenjinkai in U.S.A. and Kumamoto prefecture in Japan (Nikkei shimbun, Aug. 28, 2003).

The stereotypical images of Nikkei people are also based on which colônia (Brazilian rural agricultural community) they are from and what agricultural crops they produce. This is because some colônias have been established by people from the same prefecture, and therefore the people in the communities are perceived to share many similar characteristics (identity). For example, one of my research sites, Aliança region, consists of three communities; Daiichi Aliança (the First Aliança) which was originally settled by immigrants from Nagano prefecture, Daini Aliança (the Second Aliança) which was settled by immigrants from Tottori prefecture, and Daisan Aliança (the Third Aliança) which was settled by immigrants from Toyama prefecture in Japan. These three communities grew different agricultural crops, and because agricultural crops have different characteristics, people who grow these crops as a result act in different ways. For example, if one community mainly grew cotton, people in the community had to be financially prudent because the cotton economy is not stable compared to other agricultural crops and is dramatically influenced by weather. Therefore, people in this community are considered prudent (or even stingy) because there is no guarantee that they will be financially successful year to year. In this way, Nikkei generalize about the characteristics of other Nikkei based on home
prefecture, *kenjinkai*, and *colônia*. As I will show later these and other images and stereotypes have been further produced and reinforced by media.

*Nikkei Issei Stories of Immigration*

Stories of immigration are important to understand *issei*’s identity because their decisions to immigrate to Brazil was a big turning point in their lives. This experience is something that neither the *nisei* nor the *sansei* encounter in their lives and is therefore unique to the *issei*.

The office where I worked was one of the big three local *Nikkei* organizations. As an organization that unifies all the *kenjinkai*, it planned *Nikkei* events and festivals, arranged annual and periodic meetings of *Nikkei* leaders, and additionally helped *Nikkei* with various official paper work. My main job was to serve as one of the mediators between the Association for Overseas Japanese in Japan, which was closely affiliated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and *Nikkei* in Brazil. I interviewed *Nikkei* and sent their stories to the Association for Overseas Japanese for publication in the association’s periodicals. The association sends periodicals to various Japanese communities abroad. One of the topics I dealt with was about some *Nikkei* who attended the unveiling ceremony of the immigration monument in Kobe. Kobe was one of the main ports where many of the Japanese immigrants had departed from. An immigration camp, where the Japanese immigrants stayed at before their departure, still remains in Kobe. A short time before I worked in the office, this

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5 There were two ports to that were used for immigration: one was Kobe and the other was Yokohama.
6 There is movement among Japanese immigrants to preserve the camp as an immigration museum even though some people want to tear it down to make a different building. One informant has summed up the main argument of why it is important to preserve this site: “The Kobe port has changed so much, but I think it is important to preserve the camp as a museum in its current location, not only for ourselves, but also for *nisei, sansei, and yonsei* (fourth generation), who are of Japanese blood, to learn about those who went abroad and had difficulties in foreign countries. We should not let our experiences be forgotten, because it is the history of our lives.”
The decision to immigrate to Brazil was not only made as the result of economically hard conditions in Japan. The informant below provides an alternative reason of immigration. She also vividly remember the sad experience of her stay on the immigration ship, which illustrates the condition on the ship and fear of the trip to Brazil, which were shared by other immigrants.

I remembered the day we departed. My mother and sisters cried a lot, but I felt something fresh and lively. My father was the only son and my grandparents thought that he was spoiled. So, they recommended him to go to Brazil for a while because it was good for him to experience some hardship. Since my father was the only son (who was supposed to inherit the family land), they made him leave my brothers (his sons) to make sure that my father would return to Japan eventually. Our ship was the "Hawaii maru" (which was the name of the ship), but it was also called "cholera maru" because everyone got cholera on the ship because of its uncleanliness. It took about two months to get to Santos, and on the way there, we saw how the dead people were thrown into the ocean. It was so hard because we got seasickness and my mother had to hold my baby sister and take care of her. So many hard things happened and even more happened after
we arrived, demo yoku gambatta to omou (but I think we did our best). (81-year-old Nikkei issei woman who emigrated from Japan at age 12.)

From the interviews with Nikkei, I could see how ambivalent many of them felt about their departures from Japan. They worried about their new lives, but at the same time held onto dreams about these new lives would evolve. The story below shows the sense of hope that was shared by many immigrants about their imagined new life in a new land.

I stayed in the camp for one week before the departure. We (picture brides) had a meeting in the morning and studied Portuguese in the afternoon everyday. The last night before we departed from Kobe, we went to see the night view of the city. Before the departure, I told my mother that I was not going to cry. Everyone on the shore who had come to send us off was crying. I didn’t cry when people called from shore to wish me off, but my tears came up when my mother called my name. I pretended to drop my handkerchief by accident, and as I pick it up, I dried my eyes quickly. I smiled to everyone when I stood up again. I was really courageous then. I brought a big Nara prefecture flag with me to show my future husband when I arrived in Santos. (64-year-old Nikkei issei woman who emigrated after WWII at age 25 as a picture bride)

Many Nikkei issei remember their childhood (or younger days) so clearly and they were so willing to share their experiences with me. They were happy to hear that their stories would be remembered and wanted to talk about various aspects of their lives.

Relationship of Nikkei Issei with Their Relatives in Japan

Other than the interview for the periodicals, I spent most of my time working on a program that allowed Japanese immigrants who had been away from Japan for more than 50 years to visit Japan for one to two months. This program was sponsored by the Association for Overseas Japanese and financed by the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs in Japan. I interviewed and composed application forms, such as resumes and family information for Japanese immigrant applicants. I also helped the applicants prepare additional documents such as how to find out where they could get pictures for passports, how to get a passport from the consulate and family registers in Japan, and how to contact their kenjinkai to ask for recommendations for them.

One of the most difficult things was to find guarantors in Japan for their visiting. Some of their children worked in Japan, but most of their children also are Brazilian nationals and could not be their guarantors due to their unstable working status. At the office, we had to ask either the children’s bosses who were Japanese or find somebody else. Although some of them maintain contact with their family (such as children or nephew/niece who work in Japan as returnees) in Japan, many of them have lost contact with their Japanese relatives who had remained in Japan while they had immigrated to Brazil. Even if they used to have contact with their relatives in Japan, when their parents died, they allowed their relationship to falter. Some Nikkei applicants did not want to depend on their relatives because they were afraid that their stay with Japanese relatives would inconvenience them (meiwaku o kakeru). Other people felt ashamed or bad about visiting their relatives. During my research in different fieldsites and my work at the office, I often heard that Nikkei issei and their returnee children had unhappy experiences when they visited their Japanese relatives in Japan. “You lied to us. You said emigration was only temporary and you would come back with some wealth. Why are you here now so late? What face can you

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7 A guarantor is an individual who states that they are willing to take responsibility for the person who will be traveling to and staying in Japan.
show to us?” These are the typical expressions that some Nikkei received from their Japanese relatives either directly or indirectly.8

Nostalgia

Since the office where I worked was in the midst of the Nikkei town, Liberdade,9 and we dealt with many Nikkei events such as park golf matches for senior citizens, short and long trips for Nikkei, election of Japanese officials by Nikkei issei, and Nikkei festivals, some Nikkei issei came to the office not only for taking care of their practical needs, but also for simply talking to someone in the office to help alleviate their loneliness. I met many Nikkei issei who couldn’t communicate with their children and grandchildren very well because of language difficulties even if they lived together.10 Also, even if they could communicate, Nikkei issei and younger generations often did not share interest in the same topics. As one of the Nikkei issei said with a delightful smile, “Visiting this office is like visiting Japan!” I think that one of the main reasons that many Nikkei issei came to the office and Liberdade, was because they longed for Japan and wanted to address their nostalgia. Many issei assumed that I was Nikkei nisei or sansei and were very surprised to hear me speak Japanese. They felt happy hearing me speak, saying “It is a good day today since I saw such a young Nikkei who could speak such good Japanese!” For some older Nikkei, listening and speaking Japanese made them feel comforted. Both during

8 Those Nikkei (including returnees) were afraid that they would be looked down upon by the Japanese relatives since they left Japan when Japan was economically depressed, and now they came back to Japan when Japan is economically successful. One of my informants was told by a relative that he was just motivated by money and did not put any effort into overcoming the hardness they faced in either Japan or Brazil.  
9 As I mentioned earlier, Liberdade is a Japanese ethnic region. Older Nikkei can use Japanese language at places like the post office, pharmacies, hospital, grocery stores, restaurants, churches, stationary shops, and almost all kinds of stores and institutions there. The center plaza of Liberdade is a place where many old Nikkei from local neighborhoods come to sit, relax and converse with each other.  
10 Because of the difficultness of language, some churches I visited had different services for Japanese speakers and Portuguese speakers within the same buildings.
my research in fieldsites and in the office, *Nikkei* informants liked conversing with me, because I was young, from Japan, had some shared knowledge of Japan, and moreover I spoke the Japanese language. Some of them who learned that I was studying them, urged me to write down what they were talking about. A couple of *Nikkei* asked me “Don’t you want to write this down?” when my pen stopped while they were talking.\(^{11}\) Thus, some of them wanted not only to talk about their lives, but also want me to record their life stories.

*Nikkei Japanese Language Newspapers*

*Nikkei* Japanese language newspapers played very important role especially for *Nikkei issei* in maintaining the connection to Japan. In the past, there were several Japanese language newspapers, however because of the decreased demand, there are currently only two *Nikkei* newspapers published in Brazil.\(^{12}\) However, these two publications still print over 10,000 copies everyday (Tuesday to Saturday). Even though the *Nikkei* are not able to maintain a physical connection to Japan, they are able to keep up to date on news from Japan. These newspapers talk about popular events such as baseball and sumo in Japan, which are also popular in the *Nikkei* communities. Additionally, they talk about Japanese national news in great detail such as earthquakes and emperor’s family. At one time, these newspapers used to encourage return migration, however, because many returnees have faced difficulties after Japan’s economic bubble burst, they do not emphasize return migration as much. Never the less, they continue to provide some information that is helpful in finding jobs in Japan, such as mentioning skills that are currently sought after in the Japanese

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\(^{11}\) I sometimes wrote down what my informants said in front of them, but other times, I wrote things down after they left.

\(^{12}\) In order to attract the younger generations, the newspapers also print a few pages of articles written in Portuguese.
job market. Additionally, they talk about the experiences that returnees have had in Japan. However, these newspapers do not only present an idealized notion of Japan because they also talk about discrimination. This is important because many Nikkei have idealized notion of Japan and these articles help to prepare them for or introduce them to the reality of the situation in Japan.

As Anderson (1991) notes, print media helps people who never meet each other to hold a sense of compatriotism. These Nikkei newspapers play important roles for older Nikkei who might not go to Japan again but still want to keep abreast about Japanese news so that they can relate to Japan. As Kondo (1990) says, identity is situational, and these newspaper articles address Japan in terms of both self and other. News that deals with popularly shared topics make Nikkei feel that the Japanese are the same “self.” Conversely, articles that talk about discrimination highlight the way in which the Nikkei are different from the Japanese and therefore Japan can be seen as “other.” In relation to an article about opposition to the Japanese flag as a national symbol and the governors visit Yasukuni shrine, one Nikkei issei said to me, “I can’t believe that (some) Japanese people cannot accept the Japanese flag as their national flag and the importance of the Yasukuni shrine. These are very important for Japanese spirit.” These statements seem to indicate that this person retains a strong sense of national identity that he feels has been lost by some Japanese people. As a result of the fact that he lives in Brazil rather than Japan and has not had the same experiences as the people in Japan, he does not share their social and political views. Because the Nikkei have lived in different social and political circumstances, their

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13 Yasukuni Shrine is a Shinto shrine, which enshrines the spirits of people who died for Japan especially during the wars since the Meiji period. Visits to Yasukuni Shrine, the Japanese flag and anthem, are controversial because they symbolize Japan’s colonial and wartime aggression to both some Japanese and people from other Asian countries. There are additionally controversial because religion and politics are supposed to be separated according to the Japanese peace constitution.
views at times differ from those of the people in Japan, and accordingly due to these differing viewpoints, they may see the Japanese in terms of “other” rather than “self”.

Newspapers also address another important facet of Nikkei identity; the notion of imagined communities. The newspapers often inform people as to what is going on in various Nikkei communities in Brazil such as Japanese speech contests, Karaoke singing contests, Nikkei festivals, kimono fashion show, and Japanese poetry meetings. They also have a general news page about Nikkei communities such as criminal affairs and accidents that Nikkei are involved in. Nikkei as well as Nikkei newspapers often use the word “colônia” which means areas where immigrants had turned the previously unsettled wilderness into agricultural communities. When the newspapers use the term, colônia, they imply that it is the Nikkei homeland in Brazil. The world colônia literally means colony in English, and when used by the Nikkei, it encompasses all of Nikkei communities. This term is used to denote a community of individuals who have shared many experiences; starting with immigration and plantation work, to the settlement and creation of new agricultural areas wherein they had suffered from some diseases like malaria, under the Brazilian assimilation policies, and during the confusion after the Second World War. All of these common experiences have allowed Nikkei to imagine that they belong to the imagined extended Nikkei community “colônia.”

Nikkei newspapers also provide international (or world) news and Brazilian news translated from articles in Brazilian newspapers. Those are very important for older Nikkei who cannot read Portuguese to understand current affairs. The Brazilian government sometimes makes important decisions very suddenly. For example, when I was in Brazil, the state government decided to make a policy that individual households have to reduce their electricity use by 20% from the previous month due
to an electricity shortage, and those who did otherwise would be subjected to a fine. The state government said that the policy would start in two weeks. If monolingual Nikkei didn’t have information sources like Nikkei newspapers, they would be unaware of sudden policy changes like this. As we can see, the newspaper plays multiple important roles: keeping people in touch with Japan while at the same time highlighting the struggles that returnees have had in Japan, and also informing them about what is going on in the Nikkei communities and larger Brazilian communities (or current affair of non-Nikkei Brazilian communities) in Brazil.

*Nikkei* Ethnic Entertainment

Other ways that the older Nikkei try to address their nostalgia is through Nikkei cultural events. As Hosokawa (1999) says entertainment is used to create a sense of compatriotism between the Nikkei and the Japanese in Japan. For those Nikkei who are illiterate, cultural events are a more effective way than newspapers for Nikkei to find a connection to Japan. A lot of Nikkei cultural events, and seminars are held on daily basis in the Bunkyo14 building. One of the biggest events I attended was the Geinōsai (Performing art festival), which was held at an auditorium in the building. Predominantly older Nikkei held various performances such as a dance, gagaku,15 minyou (folk song), drum, karaoke, shamisen (Japanese style folk guitar), shigin (recitation of Chinese poem), etc. Nikkei seniors in a Nikkei nursing home were invited to the festival and sat in the front row. This festival was held mostly for those older Nikkei, and the emcee used only Japanese language.

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14 A building that contains a number of independent Nikkei institutions. The office where I worked was located inside of this building.
15 Gagaku is a reenacted preservation of ancient Japanese court dance and music.
An *issei* woman who attended the festival stated that, “When I first attended these performance festivals years ago, I never imagined that I would be able to see these performances all the way in Brazil. They are so similar to those that I used to see back in Japan.” I think that they want to see “the same performance” which they used to see in Japan, which is not necessarily, the same as current performances in Japan. Hosokawa (1999) has said that *Nikkei* use images of their homeland, such as the performances as a way to maintain their notion of ethnic Japanese identity. These performances help to bind the older *Nikkei* together and create a strong sense of nostalgia.

Thus, for *issei*, *kenjinkai* and *colônia* are important for retaining identity because they can interact with people from the same home prefecture and participate in local activities through the *kenjinkai*. This is significant for *issei*’s identity formation because *nisei* and *sansei* were not born in a prefecture in Japan, therefore *kenjinkai* does not play as much of a significant role for them. *Colônia* is also important for *issei* because most of those Japanese immigrants who departed from Japan (as I have shown immigration stories) experienced the hardship of work on plantations, and created their hometowns in Brazil, *colônias*. *Colônia* is meaningful for *issei* because it reminds them of their shared experiences. It is also important for *nisei* and *sansei*, but not as meaningful as it is for *issei* because *colônia* does not remind them of their shared immigration experiences. Also, because of urbanization, some *nisei* and *sansei* have not lived in ethnic Japanese *colônia*. Moreover, for *issei* who speak Japanese, newspapers written in Japanese as well as ethnic entertainments in the Japanese language are a very important source of connection between themselves and Japan. These are not as important to the *nisei* and *sansei* because they primarily speak Portuguese. As we can see, most of the *Nikkei issei*’s identity is
related to their nostalgia for Japan. However it is not as strong for the nisei and sansei because they have grown up in Brazil where issei already paved the way for the Nikkei communities.

**Relationship between Issei and Nisei (or Younger Generation), and Its Influence on Nikkei Communities**

The leaders of kenjinkai associations and other local Nikkei associations often said that they used to have a lot of members, but nowadays the numbers are declining especially among the younger generations. It is not very beneficial for young people to belong to these associations anymore. It used to be that young people met future spouses through their Nikkei activities (this practice also helped to maintain racial homogeneity since the majority of Nikkei hoped to return Japan eventually). Also, Nikkei associations were exclusive and those people who married a non-Nikkei Brazilians or who were of mixed decent had a hard time fitting in the Nikkei association (due to the racial exclusivity promoted in Nihonjinron). Moreover, because many issei degrade nisei they did not want to pass on their leadership to nisei or younger generations. Some issei retain their leadership positions in kenjinkai even after they get very old, and they continue to plan events and customs, which do not appeal to the younger generations who view issei as being too close minded. However, there are still some younger members who are able to benefit from their participation in the organization, as some kenjinkai finance some exchange students’ travel to and study in Japan. However, these opportunities are very competitive and applicants have to take a Japanese language exam and interview.

Active membership in Nikkei associations has declined also because both younger and middle aged people have been going to Japan to work as returnees. One of the Nikkei leaders claimed that, “Individual Nikkei become wealthy because they
work in Japan, but Nikkei communities as a whole become weak. When the returnees come back to Brazil, they don’t want to come back to our association anymore. They don’t need our help, and no longer interact with us. And eventually, they go to Japan again for work.”

Some other Nikkei leaders have indicated that racially mixed marriages have drained members from Nikkei associations. They also said that members of mix-marriage households are less likely to pursue Japanese customs and traditions such as cooking Japanese food and teaching Japanese values to their children. In fact, I remember my co-researcher’s words after we researched a mixed marriage household. “Oh, he didn’t have to take a black woman from nordeste (Northeast region of Brazil) as his wife. It is such a pity.” From my co-researchers words, it sounded like he not only pitied the fact that a Nikkei was married to person of a different ethnicity but was biased against certain ethnic people. It appears that mix-marriage couples retreat from Japanese associations and, in turn, the members of the associations reject mix-marriage couples because of their ideal of racial homogeneity.

Nisei (Second Generation)

“No-Good Nisei”

As I mentioned earlier, some issei retain their leadership positions in Nikkei associations even after they grow very old. This is because of their biased idea that nisei are not capable of leading Nikkei communities in the “Japanese” way. Some Nikkei issei think that the Japanese language skills and cultural knowledge of Nikkei

16 In some Nikkei evangelical churches, I met some active non-Nikkei Brazilian members and children of intermarriage, but other than those places, I didn’t meet non-Nikkei Brazilian or mix racial Nikkei in Nikkei organizations.

17 This was the only case I saw of a Nikkei married to a black Brazilian during my research; more often I saw marriages between Nikkei and white Brazilian or mestizo Brazilian.
nisei are limited, and that nisei do not meet the image of idealized Japanese. It is, in part due to the fact that, some nisei (especially older siblings) had to help their parents’ work, when they were poor, and did not have the chance to receive a formal education. Also, because of the Brazilian assimilation policies, it was difficult for many nisei to obtain Japanese language skills and culture. Some nisei blame their issei parents for their (nisei) lack of education because it was the parents’ decision to immigrate to Brazil and their fault that they lived in poverty. Although there are some reasons behind the lack of competence that the nisei in Japanese cultural and linguistic skills, many issei still make the generalization that the nisei as flunkies or “no-good” Japanese. When one Nikkei nisei did not turn in our research questionnaire on time, my issei co-researcher reasoned, “Nisei is Brazilian, so they don’t care about time and are not responsible.” Sometimes when Nikkei nisei do things improperly, Nikkei issei label (all) nisei as “dame na nisei (no-good nisei)”. Some nisei only use Portuguese (even if they can speak Japanese well) and do not behave in the idealized “Japanese” way as espoused in Nihonjinron, as act of resistance against the issei’s categorization that all nisei are ‘no-good’, and also as a way to resist against the dominant Japanese nationalistic ideology of Nihonjinron. Although they may be criticized for not speaking in Japanese, they do not expose themselves to the repeated criticisms they would receive if they were to speak it wrong. However, the issei are not as fluent in Portuguese as the nisei and therefore by using Portuguese instead of Japanese they demonstrate that they have this superior language ability over the issei.

Use of the Japanese and Portuguese Languages

One nisei informant (79 years old) said that he felt very ashamed at local Nikkei community meetings because other people’s Japanese skills were very good,
and because of this he sometimes felt reluctant to attend those Nikkei gatherings. To improve his Japanese skill, he practiced writing Japanese every morning for one hour. I was very impressed to see the piles of his notebooks filled with Japanese in his home. Even so, he continues to never want to write in Japanese throughout our correspondence for over two years after I left Brazil.

At another occasion when I helped at the reception desk at a Nikkei meeting, I encountered a situation where the leader of the meeting required all the Nikkei attendants to write down their names in kanji\(^\text{18}\) for registration (or attendance sheet, or name list for the meeting). Some Nikkei leaders might take it granted that Nikkei should be able to write their name in kanji, but it is very unrealistic idea and in fact made some nisei attendants angry. I thought this requirement might even result in some nisei or those who do not perfectly fit the image of idealized Japanese want to maintain distance from Nikkei gatherings.

In Brazil, my friend told me that Brazilians judge peoples’ proficiency in using Portuguese. If somebody cannot pronounce Brazilian words well or use grammar correctly, they are considered uneducated and lower class. In fact, in my second month in Brazil, a Nikkei sansei slightly said to me, “Oh, you still cannot speak Portuguese well!” A Nikkei issei who immigrated to Brazil in his youth\(^\text{19}\) told me that some Nikkei criticize his Portuguese proficiency and he didn’t like that. In fact, some of my Nikkei informants told me that they did not teach their children

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\(^{18}\) Kanji is one of the Japanese alphabets originally imported from China. It is the most difficult alphabets because the alphabet is read differently and the meaning of the alphabet slightly changes depending on the sentence and which other kanji are used together as compound kanji. Some nisei don’t know how to write their name in kanji. Other nisei do not even have a kanji version of their name.

\(^{19}\) This person is sometimes categorized as nisei. The term nisei refers to the second generation of Japanese immigrants, but it sometimes includes the Nikkei issei who immigrated to Brazil when they were still early teens or younger. These Nikkei issei are called jun-nisei (quasi-nisei) because of their ability to quickly adapt to the new language and culture, moreover their way of thinking is similar to nisei who are born in Brazil.
Japanese because they were afraid that their children would have a strange accent when they spoke Portuguese if they spoke Japanese in their everyday lives.

Conversely, although the use of Japanese can be considered a hindrance to the *Nikkei* use of Portuguese, it is interesting to note that simultaneously there is a judgment of *Nikkei* who do not proficiently use Japanese. I think this notion of language proficiency as status symbol, has affected the Japanese language in Brazil in two juxtaposed yet similar ways. At one moment, the Japanese language is devalued because it is perceived as negatively effecting the pronunciation and use of Portuguese, and at the same time some *Nikkei* worry about their Japanese language proficiency. Even though *Nikkei* worry that the Japanese language is affecting their use of Portuguese, they still maintain an idealized notion of Japanese identity, which encompasses their use of the Japanese language. For the older generations to consider themselves to be Japanese they must be able to speak Japanese. This situation highlights an important duality in the lives of many *Nikkei*, the importance of fitting into (accommodating to) Brazilian society, while at the same time maintaining their Japanese identity (which conversely serves as a form of resistance to Brazilian society).

The Ambivalent Feelings that *Nisei* Have about the Expectations *Nikkei* Place on Them

Although some *Nikkei nisei* resist against *Nikkei issei* as well as notion of what it means to be Japanese (*Nihonjinron*), they do not entirely reject them. Some *Nikkei nisei* in their late 20s to early 40s expressed envy of me because my family did not restrict my of study and future job. One *Nikkei* woman in her 20s said that she was jealous of me because was able to choose anthropology as my course of study, or not many *Nikkei* get to choose what they want to study no matter how much they desire it.
She said that she had to choose computer science as her major because her parents expected her to be marketable.

Some *Nikkei nisei* had difficulty in finding the idealized *Nikkei* spouse. In reality, currently almost half of the marriages of *Nikkei* are intermarriages with non-*Nikkei* Brazilians (Tsuda 2003: 81); however, intermarriage is still discouraged among the *Nikkei* although not as much as before (Tsuda 2003, Smith 1979, Reichl 1995). In fact, compared to *Nikkei* people in other countries, the intermarriage rate of *Nikkei* in Brazil is lower. For example, the Japanese-Americans intermarriage rate reached 75% by 2000 (Tsuda 2003: 81). The current trend of working in Japan has also encouraged *Nikkei* to maintain racial homogeneity in order to better fit into the Japanese society. One *Nikkei nisei* woman in her 30s had been dating a non-*Nikkei* Brazilian for years, however she still cannot reconcile to the decision to marry him because of her parents expectations, community pressure and her own uncertainties. I met many women in their 20s - 40s, who had not married for similar reasons. The current flow of return migration is also an important factor in the situation because many Japanese men leave Brazil and are therefore not available for marriage.

*Sansei* (Third Generation)

Among the *sansei* that I interacted with in Brazil, I saw many of them showing off their Japanese backgrounds. They do not necessarily speak Japanese, which is touted in the *Nihonjinron* ideology, but they seem to emphasize what they believe to be Japanese and what is considered to be Japanese in Brazilian society.

Near my host parents' neighborhood, there are several relatively prestigious private schools. It was trendy among the younger *Nikkei* to walk in groups with other *Nikkei* and to get together only with *Nikkei* friends. They said that they feel more
comfortable when they interact with Nikkei because of their shared culture. This trend among sansei was discussed in a Brazilian news article (Folhateen 2000). The article says that some sansei form groups only with other sansei, because they do not accept other ethnic groups and do not date gaijin (Brazilians). This article also discusses the fact that some sansei think that being Japonês is cool, and emphasize the fact that they are Japonês.

The fact that they “walk in groups” and “do not accept other ethnic groups” are common images that many Brazilians have about the Japonês (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002). These generalizations are reinforced by the fact that some sansei tend to emphasize their Japanese ethnicity and act in ways that fit the Brazilians stereotypical images of the Japonês. In fact, in one of my research sites, Maringá, I met young sansei and yonsei (fourth generation) who were proudly showing off the Japanese products that they owned such as popular singers’ music CDs, video tapes, comics, and Sanrio goods like “hello kitty.” They told me that they learn about popular trends and products in Japan from the internet and their friends who went to Japan with returnee parents and / or other friends in Japan, sent or brought Japanese products for them. Contiguous globalization along with noncontiguous globalization appears to produce positive images of different countries in this situation.

Sansei’s practice of what they believed to be Japanese is also seen in the religious sphere. In one of the research sites, I visited a Nikkei Buddhist temple one Sunday. In Japan, Buddhist temples do not have regular services for believers (Earhart 1982) and people are not usually able to recite Buddhist prayers. However, some Nikkei meet in the temple every Sunday, which is very similar to the Brazilian Catholics who go to church every Sunday. Moreover, they also have fellowship time
after worship just like Catholics do. It appears to me that these *Nikkei*, although practicing Buddhism, have mimicked some of the structures of Brazilian Catholic practice. The way that these *Nikkei* practice Japanese Buddhism is much more serious than Japanese in Japan. In fact, at this temple, the *Nikkei* not only learn Japanese language but also about the ‘Japanese spirit’ through Buddhist practice (many things they teach at this temple reflect the ideology of *Nihonjinron*, and the leader of this temple is a very nationalistic *sansei*). The way that the *Nikkei* seriously practice Buddhism is one way in which they practice “Japanese” culture more seriously than Japanese in Japan (as mentioned earlier). Even though their version of Buddhist practice is different from that in Japan, the *Nikkei* are emphasizing what they think is an important Japanese religious / cultural practice. They are ‘more Japanese than the Japanese’ in a way because they emphasize the importance of a practice that has been downplayed in contemporary Japan.

The way in which some *Nikkei* have stressed what they believe to be essential Japanese practices and behaviors has led some *Nikkei* to feel disappointed when they meet Japanese people from Japan and see how these people’s behaviors do not meet their expectations. One *sansei* in his forties told me about his disappointment with the Japanese exchange students who stayed in his home. He was disappointed because these students did not behave in the manner he expected. He felt that they often talked about inappropriate topics in public, did not show enough respect, and neglected to help out with chores in the home. Because he usually stressed to his children the importance of properly greeting people, respecting one’s seniors, and helping with household chores, he was very shocked at the Japanese students’

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20 The similarities between Buddhist and Catholic practices in Brazil are very interesting, but due to restrictions with the amount of time I was able to spend at the temple I was unable to study this topic in depth. This would be an interesting topic of future research because I think that this topic demonstrates one way in which the *Nikkei* have adapted their religious practices as a way to accommodate Brazilian society. It also may show how cultural / religious practices have changed as a result of globalization.
behavior. Even after he found out the difference between the Japanese in Japan and *Nikkei*, he still practices and encourages others to behave as respectable *Nikkei* who have a label of “Japanese guaranteed.”\(^{21}\) This relates back to Tsuda’s theory of contiguous globalization, where physical contact with foreign people can lead local people to create negative images of foreigners. The gap between the positive images that *Nikkei* hold for Japan (and Japanese practices) and the negative images that they receive from physical contact with the Japanese had led many *Nikkei* to the belief that they are in many ways different from Japanese in Japan. Because of the gaps, these *Nikkei* become even more conscious about their identity, which sometimes enhances their local identity (local nationalism), relating back to Appadurai’s (1996) local response to globalization. The expression “We are more Japanese than the Japanese in Japan” is a reflection of the *Nikkei*’s recognition that their identity is different from (or superior to) that of Japanese in Japan.

The Idealized Image of Japan vs *Nikkei* Experiences in Japan as Returnees

As mentioned earlier, many images of Japan that the *nisei* and *sansei* hold have been fueled by three main sources: Japan’s postwar economic success, which is regularly praised by Brazilians; the positive stereotypical image of *Nikkei* in Brazil commonly called “Japanese guaranteed”; and the global media sent from Japan, which only shows a partial or idealized image of Japan. In this section, I will talk about how media has affected the way that *Nikkei* view Japan and how images of Japan are negotiated through actual contact with the Japanese.

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\(^{21}\) The positive image of *Nikkei* is seen in a popular ethnic expression called “Japanese guaranteed.” It means that *Nikkei* are guaranteed because they are honest, responsible, and so on. It used to be considered that people could trust *Nikkei* without question because of these stereotypical traits. In this way, being ethnically Japanese was beneficial for *Nikkei*. In fact, when I was in Brazil, I received many benefits because of my ethnicity. When I shopped in the *Liberdade* area, and I didn’t have enough money to buy certain products, shopkeepers trusted that I would bring the remaining payment to them the next time I was in the area.
Positive Images of Japan

Our research showed that approximately one-third of Nikkei households had the NHK satellite network (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002: 45). NHK is an abbreviation of Nippon Hoso Kyokai (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), and it provides the Japanese both inside and outside of Japan with public broadcasting that is similar to the way that the BBC is used in English speaking countries. This media network started shortly before I researched in Brazil and the number of viewers has most likely increased since then. This network has allowed individuals to watch Japanese news and TV shows simultaneously in households both in Japan and abroad. However, it is important to know that watching only TV programs (especially NHK TV programs) does not mean that they are able to view all the aspects of life in Japan. NHK is the oldest TV station in Japan, and NHK TV programs are publicly financed rather than commercially. Because of this, the programs are not affected by sponsoring companies’ purposes. The NHK, because it does not receive its funding from companies, does not have to show as much popular entertainment programs and as a result shows more educational, traditional, and cultural aspects of Japan. Other people watch Japanese movies and videotapes, but they are also partial images of Japan.

The Nikkei returnees often carry these positive images with them when they go to Japan. However, when they get to Japan they often encounter a situation very different from the one that they expected and face discrimination. The difference between the ideal and reality, like in the other examples I have mentioned, has made the Nikkei realize how different they are from the Japanese in Japan. Some of the informants who had worked in Japan as returnees, told me about their perception of Japanese in Japan.
Negative Experiences in Japan

A *nisei* woman told me about her experience in Japan. “When I lost my way in Japan and wanted to know where I was, I asked directions from a Japanese person. But he just pointed to a street sign. If I were able to read the signs, I wouldn’t have asked for his help. In Brazil, people usually take you to your destination. After that, I was very picky about who I would ask, and looked for Japanese people who looked like they would be kind.”

A *sansei* said, “Why do Japanese people look down on us even though we are same descendents of Japanese ancestors, and why do they treat the Americans so nice and listen to their requirements even though they ruined Japan during the war?”

A *Nissei* couple that had never been to Japan but whose children work in Japan said to me, “When Japanese people come to Brazil, we prepare many things and give a very nice welcome because they are our compatriots. But when we went to Japan, the Japanese people looked at us with contempt, especially when we could not speak fluent Japanese.

These returnees stories in Japan emphasize the gap between the idealized images of the Japanese and actual encounters with Japanese people in Japan. The *Nikkei* who have stayed in Brazil learn vicariously, through the returnee’s stories, about the ways they are different from the Japanese in Japan. In this way, both contiguous globalization, like the returnees’ experiences in Japan and noncontiguous globalization, like global media, affect *Nikkei* formation of identity. Moreover, the gap between contiguous globalization and noncontiguous globalization made the *Nikkei* become more conscious of their local identity.
Crafting of Japanese identity through Cultural Events

Some of the Nikkei ethnic events are associated with Nikkei ethnic identity. Festivals, such as the Festival do japão (Festival of Japan), which was run by the organization that I worked for, are a good example of this. Compared to other events that were mostly led by older generations, younger Nikkei nisei and sansei played a central role in planning the festival. The festival was held for three days, and usually attended by approximately 300,000 people including both Nikkei and non-Nikkei Brazilians. This number is increasing every year. The festival is not only sponsored by Nikkei organizations and companies, but also by Japanese and Brazilian organizations and companies. The events of the festival are occasionally broadcasted on Brazilian TV news.

A lot of Nikkei cultural circles (such as tea ceremony and origami circle), companies, religious groups, and kenjinkai had booths at the festival site. They sold local specialty dishes (unique to the prefectures they had come from in Japan) such as dango-jiru by Ooita kenjinkai, and Takoyaki by Hyogo kenjinkai. This might be compared with how people from Louisiana sell Cajun food and people from Massachusetts sell Clam Chowder at festivals. Along with the local special dishes at the booths, there were special shows that took place on a main stage. These included Okinawan drums and dancing by members of Okinawa kenjinkai, demonstrations of kata (a Japanese traditional martial art form) by members of the Aikido and Karate associations, and music shows by Nikkei singers. These festival events helped to remind Nikkei issei of their home prefectures in Japan, and for the younger Nikkei generations, it was a chance for them to be introduced to, and reminded of, their

22 Approximately 400 Japanese people came all the way from Japan to the festival. Among them, were members of parliaments and prefecture mayors.
ethnic heritage. Being a Japanese from contemporary Japan, I noticed some differences between Nikkei and Japanese cultural practices. For example, in Japan, making New Year rice cakes is seasonal, only done around the New Year. Some Nikkei demonstrated how to make this food at the festival (in July) without explaining that it is only seasonally made in Japan. However, both Brazilians and Nikkei come to the festival and expect to see “Japanese” culture, and these festival serve as a way for the Nikkei to reaffirm and celebrate their ethnic identity to outsiders (non-Nikkei Brazilians). The Festival do japão is the biggest ethnic Nikkei festival in Brazil, and there are a lot of similar types of festivals in many Japanese communities in Brazil.

Kelly (1990) talks about how Japanese identity is created and justified through the media. He provides examples of how a festival in a rural Japanese community has been made famous because of the medias portrayal of it as a ‘traditional’ festival, even though in reality the festival has continuously changed. He says that there is not a big difference between life in rural communities and cities, but people hold on the idea of ‘traditional Japanese culture’. Even though the ‘tradition’ portrayed by these festivals is not really authentic, the festivals serve to indulge the nostalgic desires of peoples, who are no longer able to experience ‘traditional’ Japanese festivals in their daily lives. The media plays the role of propagating and reinforcing this nostalgic view of ‘traditional’ Japanese by broadcasting it as ‘authentic’ to the nation. The Festival do japão appears to fit Kelly’s argument because this Nikkei festival provides ‘traditional’ image of Japanese culture for those who want to see it even though the Nikkei festival’s representation of Japanese culture has changed over time.

I also attended a wedding reception of a Nikkei leader’s son. Although this wedding is not representative of all Nikkei weddings, it still shows how the notion of “Japanese culture” plays an important role in the wedding and the Nikkei community
and its leaders’ expectations of Nikkei marriage. The reception that I attended was held at a biggest Nikkei building in the city. During the wedding reception I witnessed several exaggerations of “Japaneseness”, which were meant to reinforce the fact that this was a Japanese rather than Brazilian wedding. At the entrance of the building, there was a sign that read, “Wedding reception of the Akasaka family and Suzuki family.” This sign reflects the very traditional idea in Japan, a marriage is not only an individual concern, it is also a bond between two families; is common to have this type of sign in Japan. However, on the wall behind the newlyweds, there were big drop signs that read, “groom Edison Akasaka” and “bride Regina Suzuki” in Japanese that had been written with a calligraphy brush and sumi (ink). It really looked like it was a “Japanese” custom however this type of display is not common in weddings in Japan but is rather found at other events such as speech contests.

A non-Nikkei Brazilian singer sang songs in both Japanese and Portuguese through the Karaoke machine as background music for the reception. Karaoke has been very popular in Japan, and has become popular with both Nikkei and non-Nikkei Brazilian. A Nikkei emcee led the reception in both Japanese and Portuguese. Most of the guest speakers gave speeches in Japanese for the newlyweds even though the newlyweds who were sansei could not understand Japanese. One of the guest speakers could not speak Japanese fluently, but he still tried to give a speech in Japanese by reading his notes falteringly. I wondered why they stuck with the Japanese language even though most of the attendants there knew Portuguese better.

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23 Every Sunday, there are always Karaoke contests in many communities run by the Nikkei organizations. In the Karaoke contest, they have competition system similar to the Japanese sumo racket. There are several different ranks in the contests. People start from the beginner rank, and they can advance to one rank higher after they win a couple of times within the rank. Many of the Karaoke songs are Japanese songs, but people who cannot understand Japanese can still sing the songs because the words are written in romanization which is similar to Portuguese in terms of pronunciation. In Brazil, there is a nation-wide Karaoke competition every year run by the Nikkei organizations. Only the champions from all regions in Brazil are allowed to join this championship. Attendants are mostly Nikkei, but there are also non-Nikkei Brazilians. For a more detailed description about Karaoke in Brazil, see Hosokawa (1995).
than Japanese. One of the Nikkei attendants addressed my question bluntly stating, “Sore ga Nihonjin\textsuperscript{24} no kekkonsiki! (That is the way a “Japanese” reception is!)” This attendant and other Nikkei attendants who sat near me proudly explained some characteristics of a Nikkei wedding reception in comparison to that of non-Nikkei Brazilians. At Nikkei receptions, the speeches are long, but the guests listen to the speeches very quietly with respect, and on the other hand, at non-Nikkei Brazilian receptions, guests are loud. They also mentioned proudly and confidently that Nikkei do not select their food from the buffet until the newlyweds has finished picking out their food, and on the other hand, at non-Nikkei Brazilian receptions, people begin eating food soon after they enter the hall and do not wait until the newlyweds and their family have had a chance to get food. They also said that non-Nikkei Brazilian attendants praise Nikkei weddings, because of the orderliness and respect they see at these ceremonies.

The guests at the wedding I attended clearly emphasized the difference between Nikkei weddings and non-Nikkei weddings. It appears that the Nikkei attendants, through an unconscious cooperation and adherence to “Japanese” customs, tried to create an idealized “Japanese” reception, in order to both show off the Nikkei wedding reception to non-Nikkei Brazilians, and to reinforce a sense of shared “Japanese” identity between the Nikkei guests (even though some Nikkei attendants especially newlyweds do not understand the Japanese drop signs, Japanese songs, and the speeches in Japanese.) By doing so, the Nikkei reiterated their perceived image of “Japanese” customs and ethnic identity.

Ethnic cultural events, in this case a wedding reception, play two important roles: one is for the Nikkei to identify themselves as ‘Japanese’ and the other is for

\textsuperscript{24} Many Nikkei call themselves Nihonjin (Japanese) regardless of generation.
*Nikkei* to propagate their uniqueness to non-*Nikkei* Brazilians. Similar to Kondo's (1990) example of the chief artisan who behaved as a ‘traditional’ chief artisan, because his junior co-worker expected him to, in order to maintain power in the hierarchical workplace, the *Nikkei* behave in a "Japanese” way as is expected by non-*Nikkei* Brazilians because this allows the *Nikkei* to maintain their positive minority status in Brazilian society.

In this chapter I have tried to demonstrate the various ways in which the *Nikkei* construct and negotiate their identity in Brazil. There are several main points of concern in the construction of identity in the *Nikkei* communities. First, there are differences between the way in which the different generations perceive their place within the *Nikkei* community, Brazilian society, and Japanese culture. Second, the interaction with Japanese from Japan, both in Brazil, such as the case of the exchange students, and in Japan, as experienced by the returnees, has brought to light the ways in which the *Nikkei* are different from the Japanese in Japan, and as a result has strengthened *Nikkei* local identity. Third, the construction of ‘Japanese’ identity, although at times based on a nostalgic or idealized views of ‘Japanese-ness’, plays an important role in both maintaining cultural ties to Japan, and additionally helps to set the *Nikkei* apart from the larger Brazilian society. The *Nikkei* are neither totally ‘Japanese’ nor ‘Brazilian’ rather their identity is based upon a negotiation of various situational ‘selves’ and ‘others’. 
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this last chapter, I will conclude by reviewing the major arguments related to the crafting of Nikkei identity based on anthropological theories of nationalism, identity, and globalization. My study is intended to support these theories and moreover enrich and expand the data currently available in field of Nikkei studies. Additionally, I will also suggest future areas of research that I feel would facilitate a comprehensive understanding of Nikkei identity.

National Identity / Nihonjinron

For many Japanese immigrants, coming to Brazil was the first time that they realized that they were “Japanese.” Contact with other ethnic groups made them aware of how physically and culturally distinct they were (Maeyama 2001). This experience as well as the external pressure of discrimination and assimilation policies in Brazil destabilized many immigrants’ identity (Tsuda 2003). As Sahashi (1980) stated the Japanese in Japan were eager to learn about what it meant to be Japanese during periods of social changes, in the same way, the Nikkei used their experiences in a foreign country as a way to further explore their “Japanese” identity and construct their social, cultural, and racial position in the foreign country, Brazil. Although the ideology of Nihonjinron has been criticized by academics, it has provided the Nikkei with a sense of moral support, because even during times of difficulty they were able to reassure themselves that they were an ethnically homogeneous and culturally superior people. Because of the superiority they felt as “Japanese”, derived from Nihonjinron, and their loyalty to Japan, the Nikkei retained a sense of Japanese
national identity especially around the time of WWII. In fact, they strengthened their Japanese identity more and more as they faced discrimination and the Brazilian assimilation policies by resisting against the dominant Brazilian society.

However, after the war, most of the Nikkei decided to settle in Brazil permanently. In order to be successful in, and in order to fit into the Brazilian society, they needed to accommodate to Brazilian society. Also, as more Nikkei moved into cities which were more racially and culturally diverse than the ethnically isolated rural agricultural communities (colônia), it became difficult for some Nikkei to maintain their idealized notion of “Japanese.” The idea of Nihonjinron became a strong pressure on some Nikkei especially the nisei who could understand, but could not live up to, the expectations of their issei parents due to the extent that they had become assimilated into Brazilian culture. However, some Nikkei did utilize the stereotypical image of japonês, which is similar to many of the traits discussed in Nihonjinron such as speaking the Japanese language and “Japanese culture” (which Brazilians expect Nikkei to practice) in order to maintain their positive ethnic position in Brazilian society. Even though Nihonjinron has been used as both emotional support and for practical social benefit, it has also been stressful for some Nikkei, especially the nisei, because of their inability to fully live up the image posited by the ideology and the resulting criticisms they received such as being labeled as a ‘no-good nisei’. In this way, the Nikkei have negotiated their identity by both resisting against and accommodating to dominant ideas such as Nihonjinron and the Brazilian assimilation policies.
Imagined Communities

As an ethnic minority in Brazil, individual Nikkei have strived to find belonging and as a result have created imagined communities, which have allowed individuals to feel that they are a part of other and at times distant communities in both Japan and colônia. As Anderson (1991) says print media has helped people retain a sense of compatriotism even if they are never able to physically meet one another. The Nikkei newspapers have played a very important role in keeping the Nikkei connected to Japan as well as colônia. Moreover, ethnic entertainment / cultural activities (Hosokawa 1999) and current innovation of electronic media (Appadurai 1996) have further facilitated the ability of the Nikkei to relate to their distant compatriots. Among the Nikkei who are able to speak only Japanese, just listening to the Japanese language is comforting and fuels their nostalgic longing for Japan. Hearing the Japanese language is especially consoling because Brazil is a linguistically foreign country and also some of them are unable to communicate with their family members (who speak Portuguese). Ethnic entertainment as well as cultural activities (conducted in the Japanese language), which are often considered to be traditional, or even stereotypical, representations of Japanese culture are also important for the Nikkei to relate themselves to their idealized image of both Japan and colônia. In this way, print media as well as ethnic entertainment / cultural activities and electronic media play an important role because they are a means by which individuals are able to imagine their own personal connection to other Japanese and Nikkei communities. Print / electronic media as well as entertainment /cultural activities are important for the role they play in the crafting of Nikkei national identity.
Influence of Globalization on individual *Nikkei* Identities and Local Nationalism

Globalization has had an effect on ethnic identity among the *Nikkei*. The current trend of working in Japan as returnees in part has been influenced by global media, which has served to attract the *Nikkei* Japan. The trend of return migration has been made easier by advances in transportation; air travel has replace travel by boat, which has decreased the time it takes to get to Japan. Additionally, air travel over the years has become much more affordable and moreover the number of flights between Japan and Brazil has increased.

Ethnic events such as festivals and art performances have intensified ethnic identity. Especially the *Festival do japão* which is one of the largest *Nikkei* festivals. This festival has been enabled by the transnational relationship between *kenjinkai* in Brazil and prefectures in Japan, and also through the financial support from institutions and companies in both countries. Some of the *Nikkei* with whom I met, acknowledged that many of the ‘Japanese’ customs / fashions in Brazil are different form those of Japan, and recognize that the image of ‘Japaneseness’ they portray is not the same as it is currently in Japan. These *Nikkei* do not try to keep up with the current cultural trends in Japan and instead persist with their, at times nostalgic, image of Japan. By doing so, many *Nikkei* have become conscious of the differences between the Japanese and themselves, and this at times has resulted in a strengthening resistance to the changing values and popular cultural fashions of Japan.

As we can see, globalization has had an effect on the *Nikkei* sense of belonging and ethnic identity. Although the *Nikkei* version of ‘Japaneseness’ is different from that in contemporary Japan, the *Nikkei* are attempting to recreate their image of ‘Japan’ and what it means to be ‘Japanese’. Even though the *Nikkei* image of ‘Japaneseness’ is different from that in Japan, the image they are reproducing or
‘crafting’ is important because it helps to set them apart from the larger Brazilian society. This is important because, by showing that they are still ‘Japanese’, which carries a positive cultural stereotype, many Nikkei are working to preserve their identity and their resulting privileged social position.

Overall

Immigration to Brazil started in the early 20th century because of the difficult economic situation in Japan. When they reached Brazil they quickly realized how different the Japanese were from the other Brazilian ethnic groups. Moreover as a result of discrimination, and assimilation policies the Nikkei began to engage in a process of accommodation and resistance. Because they both accommodated to and resisted against Brazilian society, the Nikkei were able to retain some of their ideologies (Nihonjinron) and culture and at the same time adapt to their new environment enough that they began to feel less discrimination. During and after the war, a rivalry began between Nikkei groups; some people believed that Japan had really won the war and remained very nationalistic and loyal to Japan, while other recognized Japan’s loss and began to reject elements of Japanese culture and or adapt more to Brazilian society. Also after the war, because Japan was becoming economically successful, the Japanese and Nikkei began to be respected, and some positive stereotypes about them began to emerge. While all of this was happening, there began to be an identity split between the generations, as a result of accommodation, and changing social values in Brazil and Japan. As a result, there has been tension between the generations, focusing on intermarriage, use of the Japanese language, and the retention of aspect of ‘Japanese culture’. Nikkei identity has become even more complex due to the experiences of the returnees in Japan, who
while in Japan, learn how different the Nikkei have become compared to the Japanese. Also, Japanese visitors to Brazil and global media have influenced both the way that Nikkei see Japan and Brazil. Some individuals have a nostalgic view of Japan and/or emphasize that they are Japanese while others have actively sought to fit into Brazilian society. Nikkei identity is neither Japanese nor Brazilian, some people retain varying amounts of both and moreover there are multiple variations of Nikkei identity that depend on generation and personal experiences with Japanese and Brazilian people and culture.

Suggestion for Future Research

There are a couple of interesting potential areas of future research. First, the continued study of the role of the kenjinkai and local Nikkei associations. I would suggest looking at how they are transforming over time, now that the older generations are slowly and at times begrudgingly yielding their leadership positions to the younger generations who do not adhere to the ideology of Nihonjinron as much as the older generations have. This shift of power has created both change and conflict in the kenjinkai. The meetings are now being conducted in either Portuguese or Japanese or at times both. However, for individuals who are not bilingual, this has made it difficult to understand the proceedings of the meetings. The changing structure of the kenjinkai has led to a loss of solidarity between members who either disagree or are faced with problems of miscommunication. In 2008, there will be a big festival celebrating the 100-year-anniversary of the immigration of the Nikkei. Starting with the 80-year-anniversary and 90-year-anniversary, they began to have nisei leaders as committee members, however these anniversaries where criticized by the issei who thought that the events did not contain as many conservative Japanese
elements as the *issei* had hoped. For the 100-year-anniversary, the *Nikkei* leaders are again trying to entrust *nisei* and younger generations to lead the festival. It will be intriguing to see how the festival will be conducted because this event will demonstrate the younger generations’ ability to lead the future *Nikkei* communities.

Another suggestion is the study of Okinawans in Brazil. Compared to people from the mainland of Japan and their descendents, the people from Okinawa and their descendents in Brazil have had a unique experience. Okinawans had been in a subordinate relationship to the people in mainland Japan for a long time before WWII. Even after 27 years of U.S. rule over Okinawa and its eventual return to Japan, the Okinawans are still subordinate to the mainland Japanese despite Japan’s peace constitution, created after the war that promises for equality of all people. There are a lot of differences between Okinawan immigrants and mainland Japanese immigrants, and many of the Okinawan immigrants have been sensitive about discrimination from the mainland Japanese immigrants. However, Okinawan immigrants still belong to *Nikkei* communities and participate in *Nikkei* associations. Moreover, non-*Nikkei* Brazilians recognize Okinawan as *Nikkei*. It would be interesting to study Okinawan from perspectives of self and social identities.

Another suggestion is the comparative study of *Nikkei* in Paraguay and Argentina. Japanese immigrants have gone to both countries, but how they have formed *Nikkei* communities and their maintenance of Japanese culture and identity are very different due to different, political policies, historical conditions in the countries, and cultural conditions. In Paraguay, the *Nikkei* isolated themselves from much of Paraguayan society and culture in order to retain their “superior” Japanese traditions and language. On the other hand, in Argentina, the *Nikkei* have been more willing to participate in Argentinean culture and moreover, intermarriage between *Nikkei* and
white people is relatively common. It would be interesting to explore the reasons for the differences between the ways in which the *Nikkei* have interacted with the peoples in their host countries.

The study of religion in *Nikkei* communities would also be an interesting topic of future research. It was obvious during my stay in Brazil that religion in the *Nikkei* communities is different from that in Japan. A study that compares and contrasts religion and religious change in Japan and in the *Nikkei* communities in Brazil would provide insight into how globalization has affected the way in which religion is practiced.

The last suggestion is the study *Nikkei* identity from the position of new ethnic identity. Lesser (1999) says that *Nikkei* identity is a hyphenated identity, as they are both Japanese and at the same time Brazilian. In other words, it can be also said that *Nikkei* identity is a localized version of Japanese identity in a Brazilian style. I agree with Lesser’s argument, however during my research it was brought to my attention that some *Nikkei* might not agree with his argument. A small number of *Nikkei* do not think that they are Japanese or Brazilian, or necessarily a mix of the two. They feel that they are a new and separate identity--they are “*Nikkei*” and do not want to be seen as a combination but rather an independent category. The reasons behind the desire to separate themselves from both Brazilian and Japanese identity would be an interesting topic of future research.

*Nikkei* identity is constantly changing depending on both internal and global influences. Although the *Nikkei* live in Brazilian society, it does not appear that they will become totally assimilated into Brazilian culture. Younger generations even though they may not actually live in Japan, they have contact with Japanese culture through global media. Furthermore, because of the current positive image of Japan in
Brazil, many *Nikkei* still emphasize (in varying degrees) their Japanese identity due to its social benefit.
Appendix A

Research on Daily Life
on Nikkei Society
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Research on Daily Life of Nikkei Society = Household =

| Research area          | Household # | Date  | Address                     | Phone | Researcher | Insu- | Pen- |
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<th>Type of housing</th>
<th>Condition of housing ownership</th>
<th># of household members who work</th>
<th># of the household members</th>
<th>Japan Media</th>
<th>Japanese Events and Customs</th>
<th>Events that family gets together</th>
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<th>Notes:</th>
<th>Participation of Nikkei groups</th>
<th>Subscriptions</th>
<th>1) Newspaper</th>
<th>2) Jpns</th>
<th>3) Port</th>
<th>4) Other</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Magazine</th>
<th>1) Jpns</th>
<th>2) Port</th>
<th>3) Other</th>
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<th>Subscriptions</th>
<th>1) Newspaper</th>
<th>2) Jpns</th>
<th>3) Port</th>
<th>4) Other</th>
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<th>Magazine</th>
<th>1) Jpns</th>
<th>2) Port</th>
<th>3) Other</th>
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<td>NHK: 1) watch</td>
<td>2) don’t watch</td>
<td>3) don’t possess</td>
<td>1) Yes</td>
<td>2) No</td>
<td>3) I don’t know</td>
<td>For those who answered 1) Yes, how do you contact them?</td>
<td>1) Visiting</td>
<td>2) Letters</td>
<td>3) Phone</td>
<td>4) Other</td>
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<td>Radio: 1) Always</td>
<td>2) often</td>
<td>3) sometimes</td>
<td>4) Never</td>
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<th>Materials at Home</th>
<th>Sports participation</th>
<th>Crime-Prevention (Suzano Area Only)</th>
<th>&lt;Type and area of Cultivation&gt;</th>
<th>&lt;Amount of Product&gt;</th>
<th>The biggest three agricultural/farm products</th>
<th>Farmers Only</th>
<th>Self-owned</th>
<th>Agricultural land</th>
<th>Are you a member of an agricultural/ Farmer cooperative?</th>
<th>1) Yes</th>
<th>2) No</th>
<th>How do you ship your products?</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Shinto alter</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>1. Security Fence Yes/ No</td>
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<td>2. Buddhist alter</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>2. Guard dog Yes/ No</td>
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<td>3. Chasm/Amulet</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>3. Anti-Crime Siren Yes/ No</td>
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<td>4. Emperor’s picture</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>4. Anti-Crime (street) lights Yes/ No</td>
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<td>5. Statue of Aparecita</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>5. Damage from robbery/burglary Yes/ No</td>
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<td>6. President’s picture</td>
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<td>6. How many times?</td>
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<td>10. VCR</td>
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<td>11. Kimono</td>
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<td>12. Bathub</td>
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<tr>
<th>Employment of laborers</th>
<th>Farmers Only</th>
<th>Self-employed</th>
<th>Agricultural land</th>
<th>Are you a member of an agricultural/ Farmer cooperative?</th>
<th>1) Yes</th>
<th>2) No</th>
<th>How do you ship your products?</th>
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<td>How many permanent employees</td>
<td>1. Yes</td>
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<td>How do you ship your products?</td>
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<td>Number of seasonal employees</td>
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<td>How do you ship your products?</td>
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<td>How do you ship your products?</td>
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(Source: Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002)
Appendix B

Questionnaire for Elderly Nikkei People
The questionnaire aims to disclose the living conditions and awareness of elderly Nikkei people in Brazil. Please provide your name for convenience in survey control, but ensure confidentiality during data compilation and analysis. For inquiries, contact São Paulo Arts and Science Research Center (381 São Joaquim St. 3rd floor/phone#: 011-3277-8616). We appreciate your assistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Research</th>
<th>Household No.</th>
<th>Name of Researchee</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
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</table>

1. Write down your name. Name__________________________

2. When were you born?___________(Day/Month/Year)

3. Is there any Nikkeijin in your neighborhood?
   1) Next door (In the same apartment complex).
   2) On the same street.
   3) No Nikkeijin in the neighborhood.
   4) I don’t know.

3-1. This is a question for those who answered 1) or 2) for the above question. Do you have any neighborly companionship with the Nikkeijin?
   1) Yes. 2) No.

4. Do you currently have your own private room (or a room for your spouse and you)?
   1) Yes. 2) No.
5. Do you currently live with a son(s) or daughter(s)?

   1) Yes.            2) No.

5-1. This is a question for those who answered 1) for question 5. Do you get along with your son(s) or daughter(s)?

   1) Very well.   2) So so well.   3) Not so well.   4) Not at all.
   5) I don't know.

5-2. This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 5. Among those sons or daughters who don't live with you, where is the one who lives geographically closest to you?

   1) On the same street.   2) In the same district.   3) In the same municipality
   4) In another municipality   5) In another state.   6) In another country.
   7) Other ____________________

5-3. This is a question for those who answered 2) for the question 5. How often do you see your son(s) or daughter(s) who doesn't live with you.

   1) Everyday.   2) On the weekend (about once a week).   3) About once a month.
   4) Several times a year.   5) Less than once a year  6) Never meet   7) Other ____________________

6. Have you visited Japan?  1) Yes.  2) No.

6-1. Would you like to visit Japan again or would you like to visit Japan at least once?

   1) I would not like to visit Japan any more.
   2) I would like to visit Japan if it's possible
   3) Definitely, I would like to visit Japan.
   4) I don't know.
7. Do you do the activities below by yourself or with somebody’s help?

1) Hairdressing  1. By yourself.  2. With help.
2) Having a meal  1. By yourself.  2. With help.
3) Putting on/ taking off clothing  1. By yourself.  2. With help.
4) Getting to bed/ getting up from bed  1. By yourself.  2. With help.
5) Taking a shower  1. By yourself.  2. With help.
7) Using a toilet  1. By yourself.  2. With help.
8) Going up and down stairs  1. By yourself.  2. With help.
9) Going out  1. By yourself.  2. With help.

8. Tell me about your health conditions. Which condition below would be closest to yours?

1) Very healthy  2) Reasonably healthy  3) Sickly condition
4) Being sick and under medical treatment  5) Being confined to bed
6) Other __________________

8-1. This is a question for those who answered 3), 4), or 5) for the question 8. What are you ill with?

1) Rheumatism  2) Asthma  3) Diabetes
4) Palsy, cerebral thrombosis, cerebral hemorrhage, etc.  5) Digestive trouble
6) Dementia / Alzheimer  7) Cardiac disease  8) Other

8-2. This is a question for those who answered 3), 4), or 5) for question 8. Does your illness require you to obtain somebody’s help?

1) Need help  2) Unnecessary, yet.
8-3. This is a question for those who answered 1) for the question above. (For those who need somebody's help) Do you actually have somebody who helps you?

1) Yes. 2) No.

9. Are you a member of any elderly club?

1) Yes. 2) No.

9-1. This is a question for those who answered 1) for question 9. Do you often attend activities of the elderly club?

1) Always 2) Almost 3) Sometimes 4) Rarely 5) Never

10. Do you practice the following activities?

1) Strolling in the morning 1) Yes. 2) No.
2) Radio exercise 1) Yes. 2) No.
3) Drinking healthy tea, etc. 1) Yes. 2) No.
4) Gate ball 1) Yes. 2) No.
5) Karaoke 1) Yes. 2) No.
6) Dance 1) Yes. 2) No.
7) Watching NHK program 1) Yes. 2) No.
8) Reading a Japanese newspaper(s) 1) Yes. 2) No.
9) Listening to a Japanese radio program(s) 1) Yes. 2) No.

11. At the present day, do you confront with any difficult problem(s)?

1) Health problems 2) Financial problems 3) Housing problems
4) Language problems 5) Family relationships 6) Lack of leisure time
7) Problems related to job 8) Difficulty in everyday life
9) Nothing 10) Other ____________________
12. Do you have any concern about your life in the future?

1) Health problems    2) Financial problems    3) Housing problems
4) Language problem   5) Family relationships   6) Lack of leisure time
7) Problems related to job  8) Difficulty in everyday life
9) Nothing              10) Other ______________

13. Would you like to enter a nursing home in the future?

1) I don’t want to enter one.
2) I would enter one if I become sick and need some care.
3) I would enter one if it’s a Nikkei nursing home.
4) I would like to enter one if it’s free.
5) I would like to enter one if it’s charged.
6) I don’t know.

14. Do you have a family doctor?

1) Yes.              3) No.

15. How do you spend your leisure time?

1) Watching TV, videos, listening to the radio, reading a newspaper(s), etc.
2) Enjoying a hobby(ies)
3) Spending time with family, taking care of grandchild, etc.
4) Spending time with friends and acquaintances, etc.
5) Broadening intellectual knowledge/acquiring cultural enrichment.
6) Exercising/ playing sports to maintain good health
7) Sitting idle
8) Attending religious activities/ strengthening faith
9) Doing volunteer work/ helping others
10) I don’t know.
11) Other__________
16. Are you satisfied with your current circumstances and life?

1) Satisfied very much 2) Sort of satisfied 3) Sort of unsatisfied

4) Totally unsatisfied 5) I don’t know

17. By looking back on your life, how do you evaluate it?

1) Fulfilled 2) Somewhat fulfilled 3) Neither fulfilled nor unfulfilled

4) Somewhat unfulfilled 5) Unfulfilled 6) I don’t know.

18. Do you receive any pension?

18-1. Pension from Brazil.

1) Yes. (RS$ per month) 2) No. 3) On the procedure

18-2. Pension from Japan.

1) Yes. (¥ per month/ Type: ) 2) No.

3) On the procedure.

19. Have you ever been to any social assistance organizations like Enkyo (relief agency) to take counsel?

1) Yes. 2) No.

19-1. This is a question for those who answered 1) for the above question. What kind of counsel?
20. Would you have any care person looks after you if your health condition becomes poor?

1) Yes. 2) No. 3) I don’t know.

20-1. This is a question for those who answered 1) for the above question. Who would take care of you? Write down your relationship with the person.

Who: _________________________________

21. This is a question for those who are issei. What do you think that the Japanese immigrants contributed to Brazil the most? Please write it down concretely.

____________________________________

________

____________________________________

________

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

(Source: Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2002)
Appendix C

Questionnaire for Research Re-adaptation of Dekasegi Returnees in Brazil
Questionnaire for Research on Re-adaptation of Dekasegi Returnees in Brazil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Research</th>
<th>Household No.</th>
<th>Name of Researchee</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
</tr>
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</table>

1. How many times have you been to Japan for work?

   1) Once.  2) Twice.  3) Three times  4) Four times

   1) The first time: From (Month/Year) To (Month/Year)
   2) The second time: From (Month/Year) To (Month/Year)
   3) The third time: From (Month/Year) To (Month/Year)
   4) The fourth time: From (Month/Year) To (Month/Year)

2. How long have you worked in Japan in total?

   (     ) year(s) and (     ) month(s)

3. Choose the three most important purpose(s) of your work.

   1) To repay debt  2) For living expense (remittance)
   3) To buy an apartment or a house  4) To buy a car
   5) To buy land  6) For savings
   7) Capital for new business  8) To know about Japan
   9) Tuition for school  10) Others

4. What are your accomplishments from dekasegi? Write down the three most important of them.

   1) 
   2) 
   3) 

114
5. How well do you think you accomplished your purposes?

1) Completely  2) Almost  3) Half  4) Not so well  5) Not at all
6) Other ________________

6. When you went for dekasegi for the first time, did you have a family or were you single?

1) had a family  2) Single  3) Other ________________

6-A. This is a question for those who had a family. For the first dekasegi, did you go by yourself or with your family?

1) by yourself  2) with family  3) other ________________

7. When you were going for dekasegi for the first time, did you work in Brazil?

1) I was a student and didn't work.
2) I was a student and also worked.
3) I had my own business. (Type of service ________________)
4) I was a homemaker and didn't work.
5) I served in a company.
6) I was a government employee.
7) Inoccupation/ unemployment.
8) Other ________________

7-A. This is a question for those who answered 2), 3), 5), or 6) for the question 7. How much did you earn a month? (approximately)

______________ times the minimum salary
7-B. This is a question for those who answered 1) or 2) for question 7. Did you graduate from school after you came back from dekasegi?

1) Graduated.
2) I went back to school after dekasegi, but I quit school before graduating.
3) I didn’t go back to school after dekasegi.
4) Other ________________

The situation after returning from dekasegi>
8. When did you return from your last dekasegi?

_________________ (month/year)

9. Do you currently work?

1) Yes 2) No

9-A. This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 9. What do you live on?

1) Allowance from parents 2) Spending money saved from dekasegi
3) Spouse’s income 4) Other ________________

9-B. This is a question for those who answered 1) for question 9. Why don’t you currently work?

1) Return to school 2) Although I look for a job, I cannot find a good job.
3) I worked, but quit. 4) Other ________________

10. This is a question for those who answered 1) for question 9. In other words, this is a question for those who currently work. When did you start working after returning from dekasegi?

1) Right away 2) One month later 3) Three months later 4) Half year later
5) More than one year later 6) Other ________________
10-A. (This is a question for those who currently work.) After you returned from dakasegi, how did you find your job?

1) Through an employment agency
2) Introduction of acquaintance / friend
3) Advertisement in a newspaper
4) Return to the same job as the one before dekasegi
5) Other _________________

10-B. (This is a question for those who currently work.) Is your job after returned from dekasegi the same type of job as the one you had before you went for dekasegi?

1) Same type of job 2) Different type of job 3) Other _________________

11. After you returned from dekasegi (currently), do you have your own business or do you work for a company?

1) Self-employed (type of service _________________)
2) Work for a company
3) Other _________________

<Case of those who are self-employed>

12. This is a question for those who answered 1) for question 11. Is your business the same as the one you used to carry on before you went for dekasegi, or did you open a new one?

1) Same business 2) New business

12-A. (This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 12.) Why did you start this new business (self-employed)?

__________________________________________

12-B. (This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 12.) When you opened a new business, did you ask for advice from anyone or any agency in advance?

1) Yes (to whom? _____________________). 2) No.
12-C. (This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 12.) How much did you invest to open your current business?

____________________ US$ (approximately)

12-D. (This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 12.) When did you start your current business?

From ________________ (month/year)

12-E. (This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 12.) How much profit do you make per month on average?

____________________ RS$ per month on the average

12-F. (This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 12.) Is your business in good circumstances?

1) Yes. 2) No. 3) Other ____________________

12-G. (This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 12.) After you opened a new business, what do you think is (are) the difficulty(ies) in running or starting a business?

_________________________________________________________________________

<Case of those who work for a company>

13. (This is a question for those who answered 2) for question 11.) Is the company you currently work for the same company as the one you used to work for before you went for dekasegi?

1) Yes. 2) No.

13-A. Does the company you currently work for provide the same type of service as the one you worked for before you went for dekasegi?

1) Yes. 2) No.
13-B. How did you enter the current company?

5) Through an employment agency
6) Introduction of acquaintance / friend
7) Advertisement in a newspaper
8) Return to the same job as the one before dekasegi
5) Other __________________

13-C. How much salary do you receive from this company? (approximately)

__________________________ RS$ per month.

13-D. Are you satisfied with working for the current company?

1) Satisfied a lot 2) Almost satisfied 3) Unsatisfied a little
4) Unsatisfied very much 5) Other __________________

13-D-(1) (This is a question for those who answered 3) or 4) for question 13-D. At what point aren’t you satisfied?

1) Salary 2) Human relationship 3) Nature of job
4) Distance from work to home 5) Other __________________

<Case of Unemployment>

14. (This is a question for those who answered 2) or 3) for question 9-B.) Why can’t you find a job or did you quit a job?

1) Salary 2) Human relationship 3) Nature of job
4) Distance from work to home 5) Other __________________
15. After you came back to Brazil, what was difficult to readjust? Give three concrete examples.

1) ____________________________ 
2) ____________________________ 
3) ____________________________ 

<Positive/Negative aspects of dekasegi>

It is considered that there are positive aspects and negative aspects in the matter of dekasegi. What do you think about positive and negative aspects of it? Give two concrete examples for each aspect.

1) Positive aspects of dekasegi: 1- 
2) Negative aspects of dekasegi: 1- 

16. Do you think about going for dekasegi in the future? Why?

1) I think about it and start preparing for it. (Reason: )
2) I think about it. (Reason: )
3) Undecided. (Reason: )
4) I don’t think about it. (Reason: )
5) Other. ( )

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

(Source: Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brasileiros 2000)
Appendix D

Approval Letter from the Human Subject
Institutional Review Board
Date: June 10, 2003

To: Laura Spielvogel, Principal Investigator
    Chihiro Nagasue, Student Investigator for thesis

From: Mary Lagerwey, Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 03-05-29

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled “Negotiation of Identity among Japanese Brazilians” has been approved under the exempt category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may only conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: June 10, 2004
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