(Re)locating Identities in the Ancestral Homeland:
The Complexities of Belonging among the Migrants from Peru in Okinawa

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<u>Declaration for PhD thesis</u>

I have read and understood regulation 17.9 of the Regulations for students of the School of Oriental and African Studies concerning plagiarism. I undertake that all the material presented for examination is my own work and has not been written for me, in whole or in part by any other person. I also undertake that any quotation or paraphrase from the published or unpublished work of another person has been duly acknowledged in the work which I present for examination.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the practices and discourses of migrants of Okinawan descent from Peru around one of the major turning points in their lives, the experience of (re)location to Okinawa, and explores their shifting sense of belonging through an ethnographic approach.

Since the late 1980s, *Nikkei-jin* - people of Japanese descent - have come from Peru to live and work in Japan as a result of an economic downturn and socio-political instabilities in Peru, and labour shortages in Japan. Often subsumed under this category of *Nikkei-jin* are people of Okinawan descent, who are the focus of this study. Primarily based on intensive fieldwork between 1996 and 1998 in Okinawa City, this research explores various sites in which migrants from Peru in Okinawa construct, reflect, negotiate and reconfigure their identities. It looks into migrants' economic activities, ritual participations, and social networks that affect their identity narratives and cultural negotiation processes. Through a historical analysis, it also examines how and why Okinawan-Peruvian migrants' subjectivity is transformed in different political and socio-economic settings.

The study finds that migrants' experience of relocation to their 'ancestral home' did not necessarily lead to instant integration and identification with their local 'co-ethnics', due to their status as newcomers, downward mobility to working class and an inability to maximise their cultural capital in the new setting. As a consequence, while they came to be incorporated into Okinawan *munchū* kinship, discovered Okinawan dimensions in what they had previously conceived unitarily as *Nikkei* and began to find 'home' in Okinawa, they also began engaging in a transnational way of belonging through forming social networks of their own, thus destabilising the unitary notion of 'Okinawanness'.

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Note on the Text

In rendering Japanese terms, I have followed the Hepburn style of Romanisation. Long vowels are indicated by a macron. However, macrons are omitted in the case of place and other common names, such as Ryukyu and Tokyo and for Japanese authors who published in English without macrons on their names.

For 'Peru', a macron is used in the context of Japanese/Okinawan (*Perū*) and an acute accent mark in Spanish (*Perú*).

Following Japanese convention, where Japanese names appear in the text, the family name precedes the given name, except for the authors of sources published in English whose names appear in the reverse order.

Unless interviewed in their official capacity, all the names of the informants have been changed, and I have used pseudonyms throughout the thesis. All the individuals mentioned in this thesis have given their consent to be quoted.

Glossary of Foreign Words

Includes words of Okinawan (O), Japanese (J) and Spanish (S) languages

Akisamiyō (O)	Okinawan exclamation
Awamori (O)	Okinawan liquor made from rice
Bankoku Shinryō (J)	Bridge to all nations
Buchidan (O), Butsudan (J)	Family altar
Cholo/a (S)	People of mixed Amerindian ancestry
Chōnan (J)	First son
Colectividad Nikkei (S)	Nikkei 'community'
Compromiso (S)	Commitment
Criollo (S)	Creole
Dekasegi (J), Dekasegui (S)	Temporary worker/to go to do temporary work
Dojin (J), Dojinā (O)	'Aboriginals'
Dōka (J)	Assimilation
Eisā (O)	Okinawan Bon dance
Fe (S)	Faith
Fi-nu-kan (O)	Hearth Deity
Gaijin (J)	Foreigner
Gyōji (J)	Events
Hacienda (S)	Plantation
Han (J)	Domain, Fiefdom
Hi-no-maru (J)	Japanese national flag
Hōgen (J)	Dialect
Hōgen bokumetsu undō (J)	Movement to eradicate dialect 'movement to reform lifestyle
Hōgen fuda (J)	Dialect placard
Hōjin (J)	Japanese nationals
Hondo (J)	Mainland
Ifē (O),Ihai (J)	Ancestor tablets
Issei (J)	First Generation
Japonés/a (S)	Japanese
Jiwari-sei (J)	Land allotment system
Kachi-gumi (J)	'Victory group' that believed in Japan's victory in WW2
Kaigai Uchinānchu Shitei (J)	Overseas children of Okinawans
Kaigai Yūhi (J)	lit. bravely launch abroad
Kankō (J)	Tourism
Ken-jin-kai (J)	Prefectural Association
Kichi (J)	Military bases
Kiken (J)	Dangerous
Kikoku Ken-kei-jin (J)	Returned descendants of the Prefecture
Kimi-ga-yo (J)	Japanese national anthem
Kirai-nisei (J)	Second generation returnees (to Peru) who as children were sent back to Japan before the war
Kitanai (J)	Dirty
Kitsui (J)	Difficult, Tough

Kōkoku Shinmin	Loyal subjects of the Imperial nation
Kokugo (J)	National Language
Kokusaika (J)	Internationalisation
Kōkyō-jigyō (J)	Public construction work
Kōminka (J)	Making of imperial subjects
Koseki (J)	Family register
Make-gumi (J)	'Defeat group' that admitted Japan's defeat in WW2
Mestiza/o (S)	Mixed Race
Moai (O)	Rotating Saving and Credit Association
Naichā、 Naichā-gwa (O)	People from mainland Japan
Naichi-jin　(J)	People from mainland Japan
Nichiryū dōso-ron (J)	Discourses on the common origins of Japanese and Okinawans
Nihon-jin　(J)	Japanese (people)
Nikkei (J, S), Nikkei-jin (J)	Descendants of Japanese
Nisei (J)	Second Generation
Obon (J)	Festival of the dead
Perū-gaeri (J)	Returnees from Peru
Rajio Taisō (J)	Radio callisthenics
Sappū (J)	The process of being approved and given the title of king of a nation by making a pledge of allegiance and sending tribute to the Chinese mperor
Sansei　(J)	Third Generation
Sanshin (O)	Okinawan three-stringed lute
Saqueo　(S)	Looting
Seikatsu kaizen undo (J)	Movement to reform lifestyles
Shi-chō-son (J)	City, Town and Village
Shi-chō-son-kai (J)	City-town-village associations
Shima (J)	Island, natal village
Shīmī (O)	
Shinseki (J)	Relatives
Somos Libres (S)	Peruvian national anthem
Son-jin-kai (J)	Village associations
Sotetsu (O)	Sago Palm
Tanomoshi, Tanomoshi-kō	Rotating Saving and Credit Association
Tenchōsetsu (J)	Japanese Emperor's birthday
Tennō (J)	Emperor
Tōtōmē (O)	Ancestral Tablet
Ubun (O)	See Obon
Uchinā (O)	Okinawa
Uchinā Yamatoguchi (O)	Mixture of Okinawan and Japanese language
Uchināguchi (O)	Okinawan langauge
Uchinānchu (O)	Okinawan people
Undōkai (J), Undokay (S)	Athletic Meet
Vivo/a(S)	shrewd and sly
Yamato-Damashī (J)	Yamato (Japanese) spirit
Yamatōnchu (O)	People from mainland Japan
Yobiyose (J)	Calling relatives and friends from the homeland

Yuimāru (J)	Mutual help
Yuta (O/J)	Okinawan spirit medium, shaman
Zairyū-min(J)	Foreign residents

Maps

Location of Okinawa

Map of Okinawa Mainland

U.S. Military Facilities in Okinawa

Ie Jima Auxiliary Airfield
Okuma Rest Center
Northern Training Area
Yaedake Communication Site
Camp Schwab
Gesaji Communication Site
Camp Hansen
Henoko Ordnance Ammunition Depot
Tengan Pier
Kadena Ammunition Storage Area
Gimbaru Training Area
Senaha Communication Site
Kin Blue Beach Training Area
Sobe Communication Site
Kin Red Beach Training Area
Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield
Camp Courtney
Torii Communication Station
Camp Mctureous
Army Oil Storage Facility
Camp Shields
Kadena Air Base
Ukibaru Jima Training Area
Camp Kuwae
White Beach Area
Camp Zukeran
Tsuken Jima Training Area
Makiminato Service Area
Awase Communication Station
Naha Port
Futenma Air Station
Deputy Division Engineer Office

Map of Peru

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/peru.html
[downloaded June 2010]

Introduction

On Chūō Park Avenue in Okinawa-city, there was a small club called *Pa'ti*, home of a popular Latino-Okinawan band called the *Diamantes*, formed in 1991.[1] Their style of music was a mixture of Latin rhythms and the Okinawan sound. Given that the leader of the group, Alberto Shiroma, was a third generation Peruvian of Okinawan descent who had come to Japan in 1986, the juxtaposition of Latin and Okinawan elements in his music may seem to be a natural product of his upbringing among Okinawan descendants in Peru. However, Alberto's musical orientation and aspirations in Peru were very different from the music he has become famous for today.

Alberto's singing career started in Peru when he was nineteen when he won one of the amateur song contests for South American *Nikkei* - Japanese descendants - in 1985. As a prize, he received a return-ticket to Japan. The following year, in 1986, he arrived in Tokyo, dreaming of becoming an *enka* singer. *Enka* is a type of music that dominated the Japanese popular music scene from the 1960s to 1980s, and is viewed often as representing the Japanese heart and soul (*nihon no kokoro*) with themes such as irrecoverable destiny, lost love and yearning for *furusato* (home).[2] Growing up in the 70s in Lima, when Latin music such as *salsa* was not as popular as in the 1990s among the youth, Alberto listened intently to American pop and country music, but it was *enka* that he became fascinated with at the age of fourteen. Alberto's mother's friend, a descendant from Kumamoto prefecture in Japan, used to lend him *enka* tapes, and its singing style incorporating *kobushi* (a swelling/delayed vibrato) he found 'totally cool.'

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[1] Prior to forming *Diamantes*, Alberto Shiroma, together with Tom Nakasone as a guitarist and Jorge Shiroma as a percussionist, formed an acoustic band called *Trio Diamantes* in 1989. This developed into *Diamantes* in 1991 with two new members, Bob Ishihara, a keyboardist and composer, and Tarbo, a former guitar player of the Okinawan hard rock band *Murasaki*. The members have changed several times since then. In 1998 when I was in Okinawa for my fieldwork, Kenji from Okinawa-city and Patty, Alberto's cousin were also members, and Chiaki, a female member trained in Okinawan folk music, was about to quit

[2] *Enka* blends Japanese style melodies in the pentatonic scale, with predominantly melancholic lyrics. It has long guaranteed a solid following, especially among middle-aged and older people in Japan. Although there has also been revived interest, few teenagers listen to *enka* pieces, and its record sales began declining in the 1990s.

Upon arriving in Tokyo, Alberto visited a Japanese *enka* composer in the hope of receiving singing lessons, but he was rejected, as the composer doubted that someone who did not fully understand the Japanese language could ever become a professional *enka* singer. When Alberto sang for the contest in Peru, he had almost no knowledge of Japanese and had no idea what he was singing about, but memorized the lyrics by writing down the sound phonetically using the Roman alphabet. His dream was shattered in this moment, only a month after he had arrived. Not knowing what to do next, he decided to visit Okinawa, from where his grandparents had emigrated to Peru. Alberto told me:

> Back then (when he was in Peru), I really did think my roots were in this kind of music (*enka*). We were Japanese children. Although I went to Spanish Catholic School in Lima where I was the only *Nikkei*, I always hung around with my cousins after school, and played in *Estadio La Unión* (the athletic playground for the *Nikkei* in Peru). My relatives would be there, and even if those that were there were not your true relatives, we called them *tío* (uncle) and *tía* (aunt), and they became like my relatives. I was always aware that Japanese blood runs through my body. I'm sure everyone else felt the same way. If they said it didn't, it would be a lie. In Peru, I yearned for Japan. The mysterious, yet brilliant high-tech image fascinated me, and it was the place that I would definitely visit one day. Of

> course, it was not until I came to Japan that I thought 'What is this? Was it all a lie?' `

> In our minds, Japan and Okinawa meant the same thing. I didn't even know the term *Uchinānchu* (Okinawan in the Okinawan language) until when I went to Brazil as a guest singer at one of the *Nikkei* song contests. Someone said to me then, 'You are a Shiroma (an Okinawan surname). You must be an *Uchinānchu*'. What on earth is '*Uchinānchu*,' I thought, and went home and asked my grandmother. The term *Okinawense* (Spanish for Okinawan) I had known, but '*Uchinānchu*' was totally new to me. When I arrived in Okinawa, I realised that *enka* just doesn't suit the atmosphere of the place. It was a shock. I felt that I knew nothing.

Alberto felt 'strangely nostalgic' when he first stepped on Okinawan land.[3] He was 'extraordinarily relieved' to find that the 'atmosphere was entirely different from Tokyo'.[4] He knew little about life in Okinawa then, only occasionally having heard about it from his elderly relatives in Peru, but remembered that as a child, he used to watch and listen to his grandmother and her friends play Okinawan *sanshin* (a three-stringed lute-like instrument) and dance during many of their gatherings that he was taken to. Back then, Okinawan *minyō* (folk music) was something that the grandmothers' generation did. Now in Okinawa, he started to learn traditional Ryukyu music and instrum

ents in earnest so as to have a deeper understanding of Okinawa. Soon after, he found an opportunity to play acoustic music at a hotel lounge and to join an amateur band whilst studying and working part-time.[5] Eventually, he formed the band *Diamantes* that performs music derived from elements from diverse sources, employing not only Latin and Okinawan musical styles, but also lyrics in Spanish, *Uchināguchi* (Okinawan language) and Japanese.

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Alberto's experience as a musician, whose music was shaped not only by his personal journey in various locations but also in relation to global and national market forces - which often frame the production of culture - is by no means typical for all Peruvian migrants of Okinawan descent. However, his experience of being a Japanese descendant in Peru, coming to Japan and encountering situations which led him to question what it means to be a Japanese, a Peruvian, a *Nikkei*, an *Uchinānchu*, is something that many migrants from Peru in Okinawa share. This thesis concerns their journey, the 'homecoming' of migrants of Okinawan descent from Peru to their 'ancestral' land, Okinawa – the group of

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[3] http://japanupdate.com/?id=2860, accessed June 2010. In addition to my own interview, I have also consulted with other sources and reviewed other interviews Alberto gave. For more detailed discussion and analysis of Alberto's music, see Hosokawa (2003), Olsen (2004) and Robertson (2010).
[4] http://japanupdate.com/?id=2860, accessed June 2010.
[5] Ibid.

islands located about 1,000 kilometres south of mainland Japan, once an independent Kingdom, and now a prefecture of Japan. Who are these people? What exactly has motivated them to come to live in Okinawa? Does their sense of belonging shift on coming to Okinawa? If so, what are the processes in which such shifts occur? What conditions such shifts? In other words, what are the local, national and global contexts that influence their sense of belonging? Are migrants continuously constructing and negotiating their identities within these constraints? What are the existing social and economic activities of the migrants and their social networks, and what influence do they have on their construction of identities? Do transnational practices exist in their case? How has Okinawa impacted them? This study, then, is an attempt to uncover the subject formation process of the migrants from Peru to Okinawa through an ethnographic account of their shifting life world.

1.1 Background to the Study (1): The 1990 Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act

A legal definition of *Nikkei* (in Spanish, Portuguese and English) or the original Japanese term *Nikkei-jin* does not exist (Ohno 2007: 243). However, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs defines *Nikkei-jin* as 'overseas Japanese permanent residents having Japanese nationality and people of Japanese descent having no Japanese nationality'.[6] According to the definition by *The International Nikkei Research Project*, *Nikkei* are '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. The concept includes the *dekasegi* [emigration to earn money], or persons who returned temporarily to live and work in Japan, where they often had a separate identity from that of the larger Japanese population' (Hirabayashi et al. 2002: 19).

The diasporic community of Japanese overseas and their 'homecoming' have been attracting much attention in academic circles, partly due to the transnational

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[6] Gaimushō Ryōji Ijū-bu Seisaku-ka (2002: 196), quoted and translated in Ohno (2007: 243).

migration sparked by the *dekasegi* boom to Japan beginning in the mid 1980s. Originally used to refer to the practice of temporary work involving a migration between the rural and urban regions in Japan, *dekasegi*, or *dekasegui* in Spanish and *dekassegui* in Portuguese, came to mean both temporary work in Japan and people who migrate to Japan to do such work. Many Japanese descendants – *Nikkei-jin* in Japanese or *Nikkei* in Spanish and Portuguese – were among those who migrated to Japan.

The 'reverse process' of the *dekasegi* migration of the Japanese descendants to Japan began during the period of the bubble economy, when the country was experiencing a great labour shortage. Until then, unlike the U.S., Germany and other European countries, Japan's rapid economic growth in the post-war period had not immediately required it to import migrant workers from outside its national territory (Goodman *el al* 2003a, Peach 2003). Labour had been supplied domestically through internal migration, and with women working part-time. This, along with the mechanisation and automation, and the revolutionising of manufacturing practice had made Japanese economic expansion possible without immigration. Thus, Japan's door had been closed to semi- non-skilled migrant workers (Sellek 1994). However, as the number of young people brought up in affluence with advanced education increased, the so-called three Ks industries (that is, the work is considered *kitsui*=demanding*, kitanai*=dirty*, kiken*=dangerous*)* in the small- and mid-sized manufacturing sector or construction had become unpopular workplaces. As a consequence, in these three Ks industries, the labour shortage became so acute that the domestic supply of labour proved insufficient to cover the jobs. Against this background, capitalising on the wage differences between their country and Japan, workers from Iran, the Philippines, China, Korea, and South American countries, started to migrate to Japan. Many stayed on without the documents necessary to prove their eligibility to work. The majority had entered Japan with a tourist visa, found work and continued their residency even after their initial tourist visa had expired. As a consequence, 'illegal foreign workers (*fuhō gaikokujin rōdōsha*)' had come to be perceived as a social problem.

In response to this situation, the Government of Japan introduced the revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1990, which would expel the undocumented workers, but at the same time would cater for the labour shortage. The law devised turned out to be a side door policy, which did not officially permit unskilled workers to enter the country, but allowed a certain kind of people (*Nikkei-jin*), or people working for a certain period of time (*Kenshūsei-seido*=job trainee system) to engage in such activities.[7] The new law permitted foreign nationals of Japanese descent (*Nikkei-jin*) up to the third generation, or their spouses, to reside in Japan without legal or employment restrictions.[8] Although automatic citizenship was not granted under the law, along with many other countries including Germany, Israel, Italy, Spain, Greece, Russia, Poland, Hungary and Korea, Japan adopted the law based on descent-based policy (Joppke 2005). Underlying such 'ethnic preference' policy was the essentialised assumption that because of the common descent, 'co-ethnics' would adapt better in the host country (Tsuda 2009: 27-28).

Nikkei-jin from South American countries had already started to arrive in Japan since the mid 1980s, mainly to escape from economic instability in their countries. In the case of Peru, a severe political and economic crisis in the 1980s, made evident with the rise of guerrilla warfare and insurgencies, hyper inflation and high unemployment, prompted the 'exodus' of Peruvians from all sectors of society not only to Japan, but also to the Unites States, Spain, Argentina, Italy, and other countries (Altamirano 1992, 1996). In this respect, emigration from Peru was not a phenomenon specific to the *Nikkei* population in the country. However, it was this particular Japanese state policy that privileged the diasporic descendants that accelerated a significant increase in the number of *Nikkei* migrants. Some Bolivian, Argentinean and Paraguayan *Nikkei* began arriving too, but by far the largest population came from Brazil, followed by Peru. The population of Brazilians in Japan jumped from 4,159 in 1988 to 233,254 in 1997,

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[7] See Komai (1995: 37-54) on unauthorised labour in the guise of trainee.
[8] Second generation Japanese descendants were entitled to a three-year-long renewable visa, while the third-generation denscendants were eligible for a one-year-long renewable visa. Fourth and later generation descendants did not qualify to enter Japan under this category.

and that of Peruvians from 864 to 40,394 in the same year (Homusho Nyukoku Kanrikyoku 1998). Included in the number of Peruvians were also those of Japanese descent who had bought *koseki* (Japanese family registration) and with forged documents, entered the country under the category of persons of Japanese descent. Despite economic stagnation already beginning in the 1990s, the number of *Nikkei-jin* continued to grow. There are those who returned to their native country, and those who migrated back and forth, but many who originally intended to work and live in Japan only temporarily began settling in on a long term basis, in many cases now with their own family. By 2007 over 316,000 Brazilians and 59,000 Peruvians were registered as foreigners living in Japan.

In spite of their Japanese descent, *Nikkei-jin* were often treated as foreigners in Japan. A piece of writing entitled 'Problems of Identity' on the website of a *Nikkei* association, *Asociación Peruano Japonesa* thus summarises the 20 years experience of *Nikkei* in Japan:

> The *Nikkei* in Peru, who thought they were Japanese and not Peruvian (or more Japanese than Peruvians) were shaken by the indifference – if not contempt – of the Japanese who were treating them not as their equals, but simply as foreigners. Having slanted eyes and Japanese surnames granted neither any privilege nor respectful attention. The alien registration card prevailed. In Japan a foreigner is a foreigner, regardless of the blood ties. These *Nikkei* discovered in the country of his ancestors that they were Peruvians. They were referring themselves as Latinos and they were feeling part of big Latin-American *patria* (homeland/fatherland), something that was unthinkable in Peru. However, there were some who did not look kindly upon the '*truchos* (illegals)', because they felt they had no right to be in Japan. Fortunately, today the vast majority understood that *Nikkei* or not, legal or illegal, we are all Peruvians. What does this mean? It means that we belong to the same *patria*.[9]

1.2 Background to the Study (2): The Studies on the *Nikkei* population in Japan

In Japanese society, *Nikkei-jin* came to be seen as a minority, joining the Korean, Chinese, Burakumin, Ainu, Okinawans and others that constitute multicultural

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9 http://www.apj.org.pe/dekasegi/parece-que-fue-ayer/problemas [Accessed 1 May 2010].

Japan (Goodman *el al* 2003, Stephen Murphy Shigematsu 2008, Weiner 1997). In response to this situation which *Nikkei-jin* were facing in Japan, there has been a burgeoning of academic research on the subject, most notably on the lives of *Nikkei* Brazilians in Japan (Carvalho 2002, 2003, Ishi 2008, Kawamura 2000, Kajita *el al* 2005, Lesser 2002, 2003, Linger 2001, Roth 2002, Tsuda, Watanabe 1995a, 1995b, Yamanaka 1996), but also on Argentines (Higa 2002), Bolivians (Suzuki 2003) and Peruvians (Del Castillo 1999, Kuniyoshi 2005, Takanaka 2000, 2003, 2004, 2009). Studies by Fujisaki (1991) and Sellek (1996, 1997) are not focused on *Nikkei* of a specific country of origin, but are overviews of South American *Nikkei* experience as a whole. Although these studies range from factual to ethnographic, many focus on government policy, typology of migration pattern, *Nikkei-jin*'s working conditions, and the transformation of their identity in the face of often narrow definitions of what constitutes Japanese – blood and culture - in the host society, and in reaction to their downward social mobility leading to a working class categorisation. Other recent studies on *Nikkei* and South Americans in Japan include that on emerging Latino transnational culture in the metropolitan area (Reyes-Ruiz 2010) and those with a focus on specific aspects of the lives of *Nikkei-jin*, such as on a Japanese Brazilian transnational business (Ishi, 2003), gender roles (Yamamoto 2010), and education (Sugino 2008).

In respect to Peruvians in Japan, Del Castillo (1999) writes a comprehensive study of Peruvian *dekasegi* experience in the 1990s. Takenaka's studies are also of particular value in that they elucidate the process by which the *Nikkei* boundary becomes strengthened in Japan in the migrants attempt to dissociate themselves with 'illegal' and other mixed race and non-*Nikkei* Peruvians whom they associate with lower class (2003) - contrary to what the above Asociación Peruano Japonesa website says – and they highlight the ethnic hierarchy among *Nikkei,* with Peruvians being perceived to be of lower status than that of Brazilians (2009). On the other hand, Roth's ethnographic studies (2002) among Brazilians in Japan points to the increasing salience of the oppositional identification between Japanese and Brazilian – in place of *Nikkei-jin* - despite the ongoing distinctions among Brazilians, and demonstrates that they strategically construct themselves in

what he calls 'oppositional flourescence' in order to seek their place in Japanese society. Lesser (2002) reveals that Brazilian Nikkei *mestizos* rejected their Japanese background in social situations but embraced it in the economic sphere. From his fieldwork among transnational Japanese-Brazilian migrants, Tsuda observes that transnational migration 'does not necessarily produce new forms of identification that transgress national boundaries' but on the contrary can 'consolidate and increase national loyalty among migrants toward their home country….thus contributing to the state's hegemonic objectives and nationalist agendas' (2003: 256).

Despite the rich contribution of these individual studies on the understanding of lives of South American *Nikkei-jin* in Japan, with very few exceptions, the dominant frame for studying *Nikkei-jin* has been what Noiriel (1991, cited in Fitzgerald 2006) drastically calls the 'tyranny of the national' and Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) call 'methodological nationalism'. Although generational, gender and class differences and the issue of 'mixed-race' are addressed, *Nikkei-jin* are often regarded unitarily in terms of their relation to the Japanese nation-state, and little attention has been paid to the *Nikkei-jin* of Okinawan descent. Exceptions are Suzuki's studies (2003, 2006) that focus specifically on the formation of Okinawan Bolivian identities in Colonia Okinawa in Bolivia and in Yokohama in Japan. Ueunten (2008) also explores the formation of Okinawan diasporic identities in an article that juxtaposes discourses of the regional Okinawan government and voices of South American Okinawan *Nikkei* working in mainland Japan. Higa (2002) in his study of *Nikkei* Argentines in Japan addresses how the conflicted historical relationship between Okinawa and the Japanese state renders the significance of 'Japaneseness' a delicate one for Okinawan descendants. On *Nikkei* living outside Japan, the Okinawan dimension had been highlighted in studies among *Nikkei* in Bolivia (Amemiya 1999b), Peru (Masukawa 2000, Yamawaki 1991) and Brazil (Amemiya 1999a, Mori 2000). Two volumes edited by Nakasone (1996, 2002) also specifically focus on the Okinawan immigration experience in various countries. Publications on the history of Okinawan emigration and Okinawan diasporas are numerous. These

studies are valuable contributions in that they shed light on the multiple backgrounds of the *Nikkei*. The 'return' migration of *Nikkei* of Okinawan descent, however, possibly due to its small number, has not received much attention in academic circles, bar a short article by Kuniyoshi (2005) that looks into cultural transformation of *Nikkei* Peruvians in Okinawa. My study aims to fill this void by addressing the significance of the historical formation of Okinawan identity in the regional, national and global context in understanding the experiences of migrants of Okinawan descent from Peru. By focusing on this Okinawan aspect, I recognise that there is a danger that I myself am engaging in the 'methodological nationalism' writ small – nationalism without a state. Furthermore, as we shall see in the chapters that follow, Okinawa is by no means a logical a priori category to which migrants of Okinawan descent naturally belong. Nevertheless, the Okinawan dimension needs to be looked at more closely, as it comprises a significant part in the construction of migrants' subjectivities, especially for those who relocated themselves to Okinawa. This of course does not mean that the role of nation-states in shaping and delimiting migrants' subjectivities can be neglected. Far from it, as exemplified by the case of Japanese immigration policy that we have seen above; the act of migration itself is channelled by the legal apparatuses of the nation-state and the national discourses that define its subjects. Regional, national, and global contexts intersect with the local in the experiences of migrants as individual agents, and it is precisely this process that I aim to explore in this thesis.

1.3 Anthropology and Migration: Transnationalsim, Diaspora, and Return Migration

Studies on migration have been 'both central and marginal to the development of social anthropology' (Eades 1987a:1). On the one hand, many earlier anthropologists tended to choose not to write about migration, 'even when it was happening right in front of them, because it did not fit the timeless and bounded idea of culture that framed their analysis' (Brettell 2003: ix). On the other hand, works on migration did exist from the early days of modern fieldwork; ethnographers belonging to the Chicago School sociology – particularly Thomas and Znaniecki (1996) who produced a classic work on the Polish peasant in

Europe and America, and Robert E. Park (1928) who coined the term 'Marginal Man' through his urban studies – found migration to be a major aspect of social reality. During the 1940s and 1950s, the Manchester School of British anthropologists, Max Gluckman (1961), J. Clyde Mitchell (1969) and others working in south central Africa witnessed rapid urbanisation and shifts from agricultural subsistence to waged, industrial labour in the area, and later developed approaches to case studies and concepts of social networks to understand the context of rural-urban migration.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the anthropology of migration was particularly influenced by Fredrik Barth's now dominant conceptualisation of ethnicity (1969). Parting with notions of culture as bounded entities, Barth, in his relational theory of ethnicity, put forward the idea that markers and boundaries of ethnic groups and identities are malleable and context-contingent. An ethnic group identity, in his formulation, is a product of particular interactional, historical, economical and political circumstances. As migration prompts change in these circumstances, ethnic identity and its maintenance, construction or reproduction among migrants came to be one of the central topics in anthropological studies of migration (Vertovec 2010a).

With the growth of interest in 'transnationalism' across disciplines, the focus of anthropology of migration since the early 1990s also has turned to the 'sustained cross-border relationships, patterns of exchange, affiliations and social formations spanning the nation-states' (Vertovec 2009: 3). The outcome of transnationalism, it is often argued, is the development of 'new identities among migrants, who are anchored (socially, culturally and physically) neither in their place of origin nor in their place of destination' (Al-Ali and Koser 2002:4). These ideas resonate with another concept 'diaspora' which came to be 'in vogue' at around the same time.

Originally referring only to Jewish people physically dispersed from their homeland in Judea, the term diaspora has been associated with historical and sociological features such as displacement, alienation, trauma of exile and the

desire to return (Cohen 1997, Safran 1991, Tölölyan 1996). In more recent usage, its meaning has been extended to include numerous migrant groups, who may or may not have a desire to return, or who have experienced trauma. The term is often used in a working sense to describe 'the situation of a people living outside of their traditional homeland' (Mitchell 1997: 534) or 'communities that define themselves by reference to a distant homeland from which they once originated' (Barber 2001: 178).

'Return migration', once noted by Russell King as the 'great unwritten chapter in the history of migration' (2000:7), is also now gaining increasing attention by anthropologists, sociologists, and geologists (Capo Zmegac 2007, Christou 2006, Louie 2004, Stefansson 2004, Conway and Potter 2009, Tsuda 2009). Referred to variously as 'diasporic homecoming' (Tsuda 2009), 'ethnic return' (ibid.), or 'ancestral return' (King 1986), many of the ethnographic accounts of the experience of war-refugees, political exiles, and others points to the 'unsettling paths' (Stefansson 2004) that they go through on their return. Markowitz addresses the role of the nation-state in paving such 'unsettling paths', stating that: 'due to the very practice of nation-state that lead their diasporas to imagine and act on the conflation of their sovereign territory with the mythico-historic homeland, the imagined home and reality of life in the state-qua-homeland often clash'(2004: 23). Tsuda (2009) contends that the cultural marginalisation and social exclusion that return migrants experience often shatter the favourable romantic images of their homeland previously held by the returnees. On the other hand, using Norbert Elias's and John Stotson's formulation of the 'established' and the 'outsiders'(1965), Capo Zmegac argues that conflict between two parties – those who returned and those who stayed - does not build upon 'irreducible cultural differences', but rather is inherently social in nature, 'the consequence of the social configuration that exposed the locals to meeting with the new comers' (2007: 181).

For my studies on migrants from Peru to Okinawa, transnationalism, diaspora, and return migration are all useful concepts with which to reflect on their experience,

although they are each not without problems. According to Glick-Schiller *el al* (1992), transnational migrants live in 'de-territorialised social spaces' that emerge above and beyond individual concrete territorial spaces.

> We define "transnationalism" as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders (Basch *et al* 1994: 7).

Theories of transnational migration were initially formulated in reference to circulatory migration process in the U.S., the Caribbean, and Latin America (Glick Schiller *el al* 1992, Levitt 2001, Smith and Guarnizo 1998, Rouse 1992). Unlike the examples examined in these earlier conceptions, however, migrants from Peru to Okinawa did not necessarily physically move back and forth between Okinawa and Peru with the same frequency. Although 'return' trips to Peru in various forms did occur, there were many who had not been back to Peru for a long period of time, and the everyday lives of most migrants were often firmly established in Okinawa. Social relations with the people back in Peru, most notably with their kin, were sustained in many cases, but their degree and intensity also depended from person to person, and remittance of money by migrants to kin back to Peru could not be characterised as migrants' common practice in the case of those in Okinawa. Could the social networks that migrants from Peru form in Okinawa be understood as a transnational social space? Here, Levitt and Glick Schiller's perspective (2004) that there is a difference between ways of being in transnational social fields as opposed to ways of belonging to them, may be useful. According to the authors, ways of being refers to 'the actual social practices that individuals engage in rather than to the identities associated with their actions'; on the other hand, ways of belonging refers to 'practices that signal or enact an identity which demonstrate a conscious connection to a particular group' (2004: 1009). Individuals within transnational social fields combine ways of being and ways of belonging differently in specific contexts, and it cannot be assumed that those with stronger social ties will be more transnationally active than those with weaker connections nor that the actions and

identities of those with more indirect ties are less influenced by the dynamics within the field than those with direct transnational ties (ibid.: 1010). Conceptualised as such, the social networks that migrants form in Okinawa could be understood in terms of transnational social fields, although the extent to which these networks are based on transnational cultural imagery should be critically examined and their formation must be explored in relation to migratory experience in Okinawa, the locale in which such networks are embedded.

Diaspora, the concept that underwent 'an amazing inflation' (Dufoix 2003:1), is another word that cannot be used without critical reflection in my study on migrants from Peru in Okinawa. Even if I take into account the broader definition of diaspora put forward by Cohen (1997), which encompasses a wide spectrum of victim (Jews, Africans, Armenians, and Palestinians), labour (Indians), trade (Chinese), cultural (the Caribbean), and imperial (British, French, Spanish and Portuguese), the question of the 'origin', the very referent point which a group of people purport to share, remains ambiguous in the case of migrants from Peru in Okinawa. Should their referent point be Peru, Japan or Okinawa? Are migrants from Peru diaspora or diaspora of diaspora living in the original referent point of return? Similarly, 'return' in the term 'return migration' is problematic in that migrants' own understanding of their move to Okinawa often oscillates between 'going to Okinawa' and 'going back to Okinawa'. For many migrants, Okinawa was the land they had never been to, and even for those who were born in Okinawa, in the course of protracted absence, 'home' had gone through its own transformation, making it at times unrecognisable for them.   In this scenario, where are the points to which they 'return'? To imagine 'return' is to imagine the beginning. As Glissant (1989: 16) observes, *retour* is the obsession with a single origin. For migrants from Peru, the origin was neither clear-cut, fixed, nor singular. Yet, it should also not be overlooked that their migration was perceived by at least some migrants and those around them as an act of 'return'.   In the present study, I have minimised the usage of the terms 'diaspora' and 'return', although I have not avoided them completely.   While the above question of 'origin' is unresolved, I use at places the term diaspora to refer to people of

Okinawan descent living outside Okinawa. Instead of 'returnees', I have chosen to refer to the people that I studied in most part as 'migrants from Peru to Okinawa', although this again, prompts a question: 'When do people stop being a migrant?' Nevertheless, that these people physically made a move from Peru to come to Okinawa is one common ground which they shared, and the term 'migrants' best illustrates this point.

Classification and categorisation are a conundrum that resurfaces in the act of writing, 'as any act of naming always participates in the act of fixing that object in time and space' (Clarke 2004). However, the purpose of my study on migrants from Peru to Okinawa is not to slot migrants into a particular category such as '*Nikkei*' 'Peruvian' 'Okinawan' or 'Japanese', nor to list the 'cultural traits' that demarcate one from another. To be sure, we cannot ignore commonsense social categories that tend to be essentialising and naturalising (Brubaker 2004: 9), and the fact that migrants and others use these categories to define themselves and the others. However, as Brubaker states, that does not mean that we should simply replicate 'participants' primordialism' in our scholarly analysis. He cautions that the 'tendency to partition the social world into putatively deeply constituted, quasi-national intrinsic kind' (Hirschfeld 1996) is a 'key part of what we want to explain, not what we want to explain *with*; it belongs to our empirical data, not to our analytical toolkit' (Brubaker 2004: 9). In other words, the job of the analysts is to try and account for the ways in which – and conditions under which – the group feeling comes to the fore, and not to reinforce the reification of ethnic groups (ibid. 10).

The aim of my study, then, is to examine these conditions, and explore how and why people use these categories under various circumstances. Regional, national and global political, economic and cultural forces and official discourse on citizenship, nation and race are some of the key factors that shape migrants' subjectivities. In this sense, migrants are not 'subjects who are freefloating nomads, despite what is sometimes implied by those eager to celebrate the freedom and playfulness of the post-modern condition' (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:

50), but are rather simultaneously situated historical subjects and active actors. As summarised by Caroline Brettel:

> An anthropological approach to migration should emphasize both structure and agency; it looks at macro-social contextual issues, micro-level strategies and decision-making, and the meso-level relational structure within which individuals operate. It needs to articulate both people and process (2003: 7).

While being subjected to the constraints imposed and statuses conferred on them, migrants navigate, make meaningful plans, decisions, and attempt to reconfigure their sense of being, and endeavour to enlarge their social space within which they can operate. It is this ongoing formative process of being made and making themselves that I aim to focus on in this study.

Finally, migrants' identities are not solely constituted through abstract and intellectual self-definition and self-categorisation. Rather, migrants' identities are lived in, negotiated, challenged and expressed through social activities and are conceptualised as they develop in social practice (Christou 2006: 216). Thus, their social practices must be analysed along with their narratives, not because a certain set of social practices is an essential marker of a certain group, but because migrants' identities are embodied through these practices.

1.4 On Positionality and Research Methodology

I was introduced to the field site, Okinawa-City by a fellow Japanese language teacher from Okinawa in Tokyo. When I met her, I was about to commence my fieldwork. Before beginning, as I was a teacher of Japanese as a second language myself, I had planned to conduct research on the ideologies and political factors that influence language teaching policies and on how these policies are reflected and negotiated in actual learning settings among *Nikkei* population in Japan. My initial plan was to go to an industrial city in Japan where there was a high *Nikkei* population. However, my plan changed when she invited me to come and stay with her family in Okinawa. During my stay, I came to learn that in fact although much smaller in terms of number compared to industrial cities where I originally

planned to do my fieldwork, some *Nikkei,* mainly from Peru, had also migrated to Okinawa. Having learnt that in fact over half of *Nikkei* in Peru were of Okinawan origin, I came to question the unitary ways in which *Nikkei* was usually understood, and began considering Okinawa as a potential field site to explore such questions.

My fieldwork in Okinawa began in October 1996 and continued until September 1998. My entry into the field was facilitated by the aforementioned Japanese language teacher, who had taught Japanese to migrants' children. While this made my initial contact with migrant children and their parents relatively easy, and although I never took up a role of teacher during my fieldwork, the fact that I was seen as a teacher's friend, and someone who was also a teacher, initially put me into a particular kind of social position, in grids of power relations which could influence methods, interpretations and knowledge production (Sultana 2007: 376). In the field, I was positioned variously as a teacher, a student from London, a single woman in her 30s, but more importantly, as a *Naichā* ('the Japanese from the mainland' with a mocking/derogatory tone) from Tokyo, *Hondo no kata* (a person from the mainland, with a polite/distanced nuance), *Yamatōnchu* (Yamato people=mainlanders), and *Nihon-jin* (the Japanese). The perceived slight difference in my phenotype and the standardised Japanese in which I spoke often made people put me in certain categories, 'other' me, and negotiate our relationship, sometimes exerting authority, sometimes being subservient. This positioning of me in itself came to be one of the junctures in the contiguous processes in which people articulate their identity, but it also meant that I had to always take into account the possible bias inherent in the data I was collecting due to my particular positioning. I was acutely aware of the history of the *Yamatōnchu - Uchinānchu* relationship being that of the coloniser and the colonised, and of the power position that I was placed in as a researcher with ties to an educational institution in the West. This meant that research ethics came to be of concern in practice on a continual basis. I made clear to most people I came to interact with my status as a graduate student in a University in the U.K.. I also sought to gain informed consent from them about using the information given

through explaining my intention to write a thesis on the subject of the Peruvian migratory experience in Okinawa. However, I was not always able to put my points across, especially to those who found it difficult to conceive of anthropology as a discipline, and took my research to be about writing a popular history - of suffering and overcoming – of Peruvian Okinawan migrants.

For the migrants, I occupied an ambiguous position within the insider-outsider spectrum. Where migrants themselves felt outsider in Japan, I was seen as its 'insider'. On the other hand, I was an outsider to the Okinawan society, while migrants were often positioned as insiders of the society through their ancestral ties. Although my outsider status, coupled with my experience of having grown up in countries outside Japan, came to be seen as a commonality by many migrants who themselves felt marginalised in Okinawan society and jokingly called me a *Nikkei* from *Igirisu* (U.K.), it would be naïve of me to assume that I ever became an 'insider' to them. Over time, my presence came to be naturalised, despite the initial curiosity of why I was there, and I was positioned as an acceptable outsider by many.   There were, however, people who kept polite distance from an outside researcher, and even with the people I came to be close to, as with any research, I was only able to partially access their lives, and herein lies the limitation of this research.

A long-period of qualitative ethnographic study was a particularly useful methodology for the purpose of my research, as it was often only after many months of participant observation had substantially reduced the initial formality and suspicion, that I was able to gain insights beyond the often fixed ways in which migrants tended to present themselves in the first encounter.   This particular methodology was also necessary for unveiling the meanings and processes encoded in the act of 'return' migration, not only through individual insights, expressed in migrants' words, but also through the activities and social practices that they engage in.

For the first six months, I lived with an Okinawan family in Ginowan city, an area in the central region of Okinawa mainland. The experience was of immense value, as I was able to learn and observe at first hand the daily lives and rituals of the family. The downside of living in this particular part of Ginowan city, however, was that as hardly any migrants from Peru lived in the neighbourhood, I had to commute on the infrequently-run public bus for about three quarters of an hour to get to Okinawa city where the majority of migrants lived, and had to rely on someone to drive me back home, after the last bus had gone (which was very early in the evening). Thus, after six months, I moved out and rented an apartment in Okinawa city (I will be describing this field site in detail in Chapter 5). It must be noted, however, that as my study generally centred around a small number of migrants' families and their assorted friendships or other networks scattered all over Okinawa city and beyond, a strict single neighbourhood focus was not suitable for my project. Instead, initially by bus, and later by way of driving, I spent a great deal of time travelling to various locations not only throughout the city, but - since migrants' activities were not restricted within the confine of the city – also outside of the city. As such, my research was carried out in an 'extended field site' (Olwig 2003).

For the first couple of months, my participant observation took place in a weekly Japanese language class for children with Japanese as a second language, church, Peruvian restaurants, local neighbourhood events, and family events including weddings, family rituals, beach parties, or just occasional sporadic gatherings at someone's home or outdoors. Also, early on in the fieldwork, I had learned that various *moai* (Okinawan term for rotating saving and credit associations) groups were being formed by migrants, and so participating in their meetings became part of my monthly routine. In August 1997, through an introduction by a migrant woman, I found a part-time job alongside migrants from Peru as a cleaner in a resort hotel, and continued working there until August 1998. I had explained my status and motives to the supervisors who were in charge of employing the cleaners, and to my co-workers with whom I had more than casual interaction. However, for many workers - whose consultation was not sought in granting me

the work in the first place - my position as a researcher was unclear, which posed ethical dilemmas.

The main part of my research methodology consisted of a combination of unstructured and semi-structured interviews, and informal conversations and observations recorded in my field notes. I carried out over 40 interviews using a tape recorder when there was consent and I found it appropriate. Other times (which was the majority of times), conversations took place without tape-recording and I had to rely on on-the-spot note-taking, or just my memory. The quotations that I present in the dissertation are derived from both formal interviews and informal conversations. They were originally stated in Japanese, *Uchinā-Yamatoguchi* (mixture of Okinawan and Japanese), Spanish, or in a mixture of Japanese and Spanish. All translations of the quotations are by the author. In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, names used in the texts are pseudonyms, except in the case of public figures or citations from published texts.

For secondary sources, I collected official documents, media accounts, publications by Okinawa prefecture and local municipalities, community publications, and surveys and research findings by visiting libraries, public offices, and community associations. Archives in the University of Ryukyus in Okinawa, and the National Diet Library and the Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo were particularly useful for collecting historical data. I also visited the Overseas Japanese Association in Tokyo, the Japanese Overseas Migration Museum in Yokohama, and the Center for Migration Studies at the University of Ryukyus. For the media accounts, I followed Okinawan local newspapers (Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo), Japanese national newspapers, and the Spanish newspaper circulating in Japan (International Press).

Apart from my main fieldwork from 1996 to 1998, I also conducted short term fieldwork in Peru from December 1996 to January 1997, from May to June 1999, and in February 2006. I had already begun my fieldwork in Okinawa when I had

the first opportunity to go to Peru. Before going to Okinawa, I had already made contact in Yokohama with a group of people belonging to various immigrants' rights nongovernmental organizations. They were about to conduct interview research among the Peruvians who had been detained by the Immigration bureau of Japan, and who had been later deported back to Peru. I was invited to join their three-week research project which was to take place in Peru.[10] The second occasion coincided with the centennial celebration of Japanese migration to Peru, and the third occasion with the centennial celebration of Okinawan migration to Peru.

Due to the short duration of each stay, I was unable to conduct extensive and multi-dimensional field research in Peru, unlike my fieldwork in Okinawa. Thus, although the people and contexts that I was studying - the creation of multiple variables that straddle across space - required me to take up the 'multi-sited' (Marcus 1995) approach, my researches in the two places were not of equal quality. During my first visit, I was a part of a research group that had particular research questions for mostly non-*Nikkei* Peruvians who had little to do with Okinawa. While this had given me a significant insight into the Peruvian migration phenomena to Japan in general, in practical terms, it meant that I was unable to dedicate the whole time of the stay exploring my individual research topic on Okinawan-*Nikkei*. This first visit (in fact the day of my arrival) also coincided with the terrorist siege of the Japanese ambassador's residence by the *Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement* (MRTA). As many *Nikkei* were among the captives and it was a sensitive time for the *Nikkei* community, for the first couple of days, I refrained from getting in touch with them and setting up interviews in general. However, as one of the members of the research group was an Okinawan-*Nikkei* migrant herself, I was able to interview her family and friends during this time, and with her guidance, to visit *Nikkei* institutions at appropriate moments. The network that I had already created in Okinawa had also helped me enormously in getting in contact with Okinawan *Nikkei* in Lima in a short period of time, once the initial shock had subsided.

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[10] See Nyūkan Mondai Chōsa-kai (1997) for the outcome of the research.

During my three visits to Peru, apart from participating in the research and the events, I frequented the *Centro Cultural Peruano Japonés* (Peruvian-Japanese Cultural Centre), the *Nikkei* athletic stadium *La Unión,* and the Okinawa Prefectural Association of Peru, where I conducted unstructured and semi-structured interviews, both with and without recording. I was also allowed access to three *Nikkei* schools; *José Gálvez, Hideyo Noguchi,* and *Colegio La Unión.* I also had opportunities to visit and interview families and relatives of migrants in Okinawa. In order to collect secondary documents, I visited Museo Conmemorativo de la Inmigración Japonesa (Commemorative Museum of Japanese Imigation) and Japanese-Peruvian community newspapers – *Peru Shimpo* and *Prensa Nikkei.*

After I finished my main fieldwork, I also went back to Okinawa for three further brief periods, from August to September 1999, from October to November in 2001, and in September 2007. However, although my later visits and communications with migrants continued to inform and frame the thesis, the data presented is primarily based on my fieldwork in Okinawa from 1996 to 1998, unless otherwise stated (Chapter 4 and Chapter 8) and thus must be read as ethnography specific to this period. I have chosen to present the ethnography in the past tense.

1.5 Organisation of the Chapters
The chapters that follow are divided into historical analysis (Chapters 2 and 3) and ethnographic examinations (Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, and partly 8). Chapter 2 introduces readers to the question of Okinawan identity by examining the processes in which Okinawa has been positioned ambiguously through the history of Japanese domination, the war, U.S. rule and the reincorporation into Japanese nation-state post-reversion. It situates Okinawan migration within the process of Okinawan modernity, and also discusses intellectual discourses that have produced a certain kind of knowledge about Okinawa at each stage of Okinawa's encounter with the outside world.

Chapter 3 turns to outlining the Okinawan/Japanese presence in Peru. It pays particular attention to the ways in which migrants from Okinawa, despite discrimination by and antagonism vis-à-vis the 'Japanese mainlanders', come to position and be positioned first as 'Japanese', and later as *Nikkei* in the context of long distant Japanese nationalism and Peruvian socio-political conditions.

Chapter 4 is an ethnographic examination of one specific event – the centennial celebration of Japanese immigration to Peru, which took place in Lima in 1999. It critically analyses the symbolism and discourses used during the central event of the celebration, and explores how and why a particular kind of Japanese-Peruvian identity was being promoted and enacted.

I shift my focus from Peru to Okinawa in Chapter 5, 6 and 7. These chapters provide primary empirical data based on long-term intensive fieldwork in Okinawa City and look at different sites in which migrants from Peru in Okinawa form, reflect, negotiate and reconfigure their identities. Chapter 5 first introduces readers to the locality and idiosyncratic history of Okinawa City, namely, the city's relation to the U.S. military bases, and its transformation into a 'multi-ethnic' locale. It then illustrates the arrival and settlement processes of migrants from Peru to Okinawa, and examines how the shift in their socio-economic status affected the ways in which migrants define themselves.

The focus of Chapter 6 is on migrants' relationship with their kin in Okinawa. The chapter looks specifically into their participation in rituals and incorporation into Okinawan *munchū* kinship. It critically examines the *munchū* ideology and migrants' experience of and reflection on ritual participations and questions whether positioning of migrants within Okinawan kinship necessarily results in migrants' strengthening of Okinawan identity.

Chapter 7 turns to the analysis of social networks that migrants from Peru have formed among themselves. It examines three different kinds of social space: *moai*

(Okinawan version of rotating credit and saving associations) gatherings, the annual procession of *Señor de los Milagros* and young migrants' outings.

The final chapter deals with the Okinawan local government's endeavour to form a transnational network with Okinawan diaspora, and discusses its impact on migrants from Peru in Okinawa. I will then conclude with a brief discussion on the implications of this study and pointers to additional areas for further research.

Chapter 2 The Formation of Okinawan Subjectivity

'Where are you from,' she asked.
I thought about where I was from and lit a cigarette.
That place colored by associations with tattoos, the *jabisen,*[11] and ways as strange as ornamental designs.
'Very far away' I answered.
'In what direction,' she asked.
That place of gloomy customs near the southern tip of the Japanese archipelago where women carry piglets on their heads and people walk barefoot.
Was this where I was from?
'South,' I answered.
'Where in the south,' she asked.
In the south, that zone of indigo seas where it's always summer and dragon orchids, sultan umbrellas, octopus pines, and papayas all nestle together under the bright sunlight.
That place shrouded in misconceptions where, it is said, the people aren't Japanese and can't understand the Japanese language.
'The subtropics,' I answered.
'Oh, the subtropics!' she said.
Yes, my dear, can't you see 'the subtropics' right here before your eyes?
Like me, the people there are Japanese, speak Japanese, and were born in the subtropics.
But, viewed through popular stereotypes, that place I am from has become a synonym for chieftains, natives, karate, and *awamori.*[12]
'Somewhere near the equator,' I said.
Yamanokuchi Baku[13]

Yamanokuchi Baku (1903-1963) published this poem in 1938, sixteen years after he had left his native Okinawa for Tokyo. The decade from the early 1920s through to the early 1930s is known as the period of '*sotetsu* palm hell' in Okinawa, as a sharp drop in sugar prices hit the Okinawan economy so severely that the Okinawans were reduced to eating the unpalatable and potentially poisonous fruits of the *sotetsu* palm. It was also during this period that internal migration intensified in Japan and the country was experiencing transformation in the process of capitalist modernisation, characterised by the move to heavy and capital industry. Yamanokuchi was one of many Okinawans who moved during this period. Living from a series of menial jobs and pursuing a 'lumpen' lifestyle in the city,[14] he continued to produce poems and novels addressing displacement

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[11] *Jabisen* literally means snake-skin strings. It is an Okinawan lute-like musical instrument. Today in Okinawa, the word *sanshin* is used more often to refer to the instrument.
[12] *Awamori* is a type of alcoholic drink made from rice.
[13] Translated in Molasky and Rabson (2000: 47).
[14] In explaining the background of the poem, Yamanokuchi writes: 'I had been planning for some time to graduate from my lumpen life-style…'(Yamanokuchi in Molasky and Rabson 2000: 46)

and marginalisation, pressure of assimilation, and at times, attraction to the modern, urban life with pathos and humour. The above poem, which expresses his reluctance to utter 'Okinawa', was written on an occasion when he was in a bar with his girlfriend, who was listening 'wide-eyed' to a bartender's account of his trip to Okinawa. Unknown to both the girlfriend and the bartender was that Okinawa was indeed in fact where Yamanokuchi had come from.

Okinawa has long existed at the margins of national, regional, and global history. Throughout its history, Okinawans have often had to incorporate projects developed by outside powers. The situation referred to today by Okinawans as 'the first dual subordination to the outside forces' begun when the tributary relationship between Ming China, which acknowledged Chinese supremacy over Ryukyu, was established in 1372 and Satsuma, the southern most fiefdom (*han*) of Japan, invaded Ryukyu Kingdom in 1609. In more recent history, Okinawa has been under 'the second dual subordination', that to Japan and the United States. 'Caught between the force of assimilation and dissimilation (Oshiro 1972)', Okinawan identities have been shaped by the processes of modernity, colonization, nationalism, and globalization, rather than having existed in a fixed state prefiguring these processes. The aim of this chapter is to explore this historical and ideological process, in order to highlight the conditions of the people whom I will be discussing in the chapters to follow.

2.1 From Prehistory to the 'Great Era of Trade'

Many dates and facts surrounding the inhabitants and the migration in and out of the Ryukyu archipelago in prehistory are still being debated among archaeologists and historians today. The ceramics found in the Sakishima Islands (Miyako, Ishigaki, Iriomote and surrounding satellite islands) of the southern end of the Ryukyus point to their connection with the Austronesian culture, while the influence from Kyushu in Japan is suggested by certain Neolithic cultural artifacts excavated in central and southern Ryukyus (Asato and Doi 1999, Hudson 2006). From the seventh century onwards, Okinawa began to be mentioned in the historical records of China and Japan (Kerr 1958).

The formal relationship with China began at the end of the fourteenth century, when in 1372, King Satto of the Chūzan (Central Kingdom) received *sappū* recognition from Ming China (1368-1644) (Kerr 1958). *Sappū* refers to the process of being approved and given the title of king of a nation by making a pledge of allegiance and sending tribute to the Chinese emperor. After Hung Wu Ti declared himself the Emperor of Ming China in 1368, all bordered 'barbarian states' - as called by China – such as Korea, Burma, Java and Annam, were called upon to acknowledge Chinese supremacy, and Chūzan of the Ryukyu island was among these states. At this time, the main island of Ryukyu was divided into three kingdoms: Chūzan (central kingdom), Nanzan (southern kingdom) and Hokuzan (northern kingdom).[15] Quickly following Chūzan's establishment of the *sappū*, Nanzan and Hokuzan also sent envoys to China in 1380 and 1383 respectively. The relationship with China was further strengthened when Shō Hashi of Chūzan unified the three kingdoms into one centralized Ryukyu Kingdom and founded the first Shō Dynasty in 1429. Thus Ryukyu - the name originating from the Chinese calling them Liu Chi'u - came to be incorporated into the East Asian international order with China at its centre.

The tributary relationship with China, which was to last for the next 500 years, bore tremendous influence on the cultural, political and economic development of Ryukyu. The relationship not only secured diplomatic recognition from China but also provided opportunities for Ryukyuans to learn from Chinese civilization through *sappū-shi*, the investiture missions sent from China, and through their missions sent to China.[16] The tributary system also enabled Ryukyu to profit from

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[15] The term *zan* refers to kingdom or principality. Each of the three kingdoms was a federation composed of local chieftains called *aji* or *anji* (Kerr 1958)

[16] In total, 22 *sappū-shi* were sent from China to Ryukyu between fourteenth and nineteenth century to conduct funerals and coronation ceremonies for the king of Ryukyu. An envoy mission carrying a letter of allegiance and tribute was sent once every two years from Ryukyu to China to receive a letter of response from the emperor, along with various goods and articles to take home. Ryukyu sent 171 missions to Ming China in total, making it the most frequent visitor to China among tributary states, with Annam in the second place with 89 and Tibet in the third with 78. Each mission consisted approximately of 300 people, the majority of whom settled in the diplomatic quater called Ryukyu-kan in Fuzou in Fukien province. A limited number of people was allowed to visit the court in Peking to see the emperor.

lucrative maritime trade with Japan, Korea and Southeast Asia. Under the system, tributary states were obliged to present their products to the emperor, but because Ryukyu had no important products of its own, it was allowed to present rare goods from other lands.[17] Ryukyuan missions shipped Japanese swords, lacquer ware, fans, folding screens and textiles to China and sent Chinese glazed ceramics, brocades, medicinal herbs and minted coins to Japan. Spices, suppan wood, incense, rhinoceros horn, iron, tin, ivory, sugar and artifacts from Southeast Asia were also carried by the Ryukyuan ships to Japan, China and Korea.[18] The trading years, which lasted for about 150 years from the end of the fourteenth century to the sixteenth century, are referred to today in Okinawa as 'The Era of Great Trade (*dai-kōeki-jidai*) of the Ryukyu' as the time when Okinawans not only prospered as an independent kingdom but established themselves as being good communicators with the outside world. A bronze bell first hung at Shuri Castle in 1458 called *Bankoku shinryō no kane* (the bell that anchors the myriad lands) had an inscription - a copy of which hangs in the office of the governor of Okinawa Prefecture today - that read:

> Ryukyu is located in a superb position in the southern ocean. It gathers to itself the excellence from the three kingdoms of Korea, serves as a balancing wheel to the Great Ming and with Japan it is as close as lips and teeth. It is the Island of Eternal Youth that arises from the two nations (China and Japan). With its vessels, it acts as a bridge between the myriad lands. Thus is the entire country filled with foreign goods and treasures.[19]

Exchange between Ryukyu and China was not only limited to that of goods but also extended to that of people; Ryukyuan students receiving 'national scholarship' were sent regularly to Peking while Chinese immigrants began settling in Kume Village, an offshore trading port of Naha, as early as in 1393 at

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[17] Trade with China at this time was allowed only through a tributary relationship. However, the Ryukyuan members of the mission which had remained in Fuzou were allowed to engage in trade with Chinese merchants.

[18] *Manamban* was the name Ryukyuans gave to Southeast Asian countries including Luzon, Annam, Siam, Java, Sunda, Palembang, Sumatra and Malacca.

[19] The replica of the bell is displayed in the reconstructed Shuri Castle (in 1994), and a copy of the above inscription hangs in the office of the governor of Okinawa Prefecture.

the direction of Ming government.[20] Chinese learning, custom and practices were introduced and fostered by Kume immigrants and students who had returned from their study in China.[21] Traces of Chinese influence can be observed today in Okinawan culture such as in diet, architecture and rituals: s*ampin-cha* or jasmine tea is drunk much more commonly than in other parts of Japan. Pork became part of the Okinawan diet much earlier than in mainland Japan, where eating meat from 'four-legged' animals was considered a taboo until the nineteenth century. The *kamekō-baka* (turtle-back-shaped tomb), which cannot be found in other parts of Japan but can be seen everywhere in mainland Okinawa, has its origin in the Fukien province of China. The ancestor worship ritual called *shīmī* also originates in China and is not practised in Japan other than in Okinawa. While many aspects of Japanese culture also are influenced by China, Okinawa's direct historical relationship with China made Chinese influence on Okinawa somewhat different from that on Japan.

2.2 The Satsuma Invasion

While China exercised political power over Ryukyu in many ways, it did not interfere in Ryukyu's internal politics and trade. The situation was different with Japan. In 1609, the Kingdom was invaded by Satsuma, the southernmost *han* (domain) of Tokugawa Japan (1600-1868), which began imposing harsh restrictions and heavy taxes on Ryukyu (Dana 1998) thereafter.[22] However, while the Amami island groups in the north of the Ryukyu archipelago came under the direct rule of Satsuma, the kingdom itself was not abolished at the time, and, when in 1633 the Tokugawa government began introducing its seclusionist policy which restricted Satsuma's own direct contact with outside Japan, Ryukyu

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[20] China claimed that the founding of its immigrant settlement was 'a gesture of benevolent interest in the welfare of the Okianwans'. However, China's interest in Okinawa's excellent geographical position as a centre for maritime trade seemed more than anything else to have prompted the Chinese to found their community in the area (Kerr 1958: 75-78).

[21] The Chinese clerks and craftsmen enjoyed social prestige at the Shuri court of the Ryukyu kingdom and also great privileges such as tax-free land and a rice stipend. Members of the so-called 'Thirty-six Families' of Kume Village stayed on in Okinawa for generations, and even today, although indistinguishable from other Okinawans, Kume descendents are seen as having a high social status and distinction.

[22] The tax imposed by Satsuma made Ryukyuan King's office in turn restructure and reinforce the poll tax imposed on all islanders in Sakishima, including Miyako and Yaeyama (Arasaki 2000).

became the proxy through which Satsuma could trade first with the Ming and later with the Qing dynasty (1616-1912).

Under the Satsuma occupation, the Kingdom of Ryukyu was treated as an *ikoku* (foreign nation) controlled by Edo via Satsuma (Arasaki 2000). The mission called *Edo-nobori* (a procession to Edo) was requested after each accession of a new king of Ryukyu and a new shōgun in Edo.[23] These missions were to demonstrate the subjugation of Ryukyu to the Edo Shogunate. In order to make it clear that Ryukyu was indeed an *ikoku*, Ryukyuans were made to wear Chinese clothes and be accompanied by Shimazu officials from Satsuma during the procession, thus demonstrating visually that Ryukyu was a foreign land under the control of the Shogunate. It was also through the interview with these ambassadors from Ryukyu that in 1719 Arai Hakuseki, a Japanese Confucian scholar and politician produced a book called *Nantō-shi* (History of the Southern Islands) in which the word 'Okinawa' in the Chinese characters in present form appears for the first time.

In the period following the invasion, the first discourses on the common origins of Japanese and Okinawans (*nichiryū dōso ron*) appeared. In 1650, Haneji Chōshū (1617-1675), the Chief Minister of the Ryukyu Kingdom, wrote in the Ryukyu Kingdom's first authorized historical chronicle, *Chūzan Seikan* (Mirror of Chūzan) about the myth which suggested the blood tie between the legendary founder of the Ryukyu Kingdom, Shunten'ō and Minamoto no Tametomo, a military leader of Japan in the Heian period (1139-1170). Based on the idea of the same ancestry, through a series of directives, Haneji made several attempts to modify Ryukyuan administrative, religious and social practices towards the Japanese way. While the legend would have been used as a strategic political tool for Haneji in the

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[23] Between 1634 and 1850, *Edo-nobori* was performed 18 times, and a mission was sent to Kyoto once in 1634. *Edo-nobori* consisted of about 100 members, including the prince, vice chief of the mission, government officials, guards, musicians and dancers. It took about 300 days for them to complete the journey and they stayed in Edo for about a month to conduct a formal ceremony and present performing arts. The contact with Japanese culture during this procession significantly affected Ryukyuan court culture. The *kumi-odori* theatre in Okinawa, for example, has incorporated aspects of *nō* and *kabuki* theatre from Japan.

Ryukyuan court, the idea of a common ancestry of Ryukyu and mainland Japan was again repeated by the Ryukyuan official Giwan Chōhō (1823-1876) in the 1870s, and was to influence academic discourses surrounding the sameness/difference between Okinawans and Japanese for many years even until the present time.

2.3 Meiji Government and the Making of Okinawa Prefecture

The independence of the Ryukyu Kingdom came to an end when the newly established Meiji government of Japan (1868-1912) annexed the kingdom, designated Ryukyu as a *han* domain in 1872 (other *han* had already been abolished by then) and executed *Ryukyu Shobun* (Ryukyu Disposition) by establishing it as the forty-seventh prefecture of Japan in 1879. Instead of 'Ryukyu', the name which evoked its past independence and connection with China, the newly founded prefecture was to be called 'Okinawa'.

The Ryukyu Disposition was enforced in the period when Japan was beginning to mark its national territory and emerge as a modern nation-state on the global stage, and was on the verge of its overseas imperial expansion. It followed the forced incorporation of Hokkaido (1869) and preceded the further expansion of the Japanese empire to Taiwan in 1895, southern Sakhalin in 1905, Korea in 1910 and Manchuria in 1932. The unilateral decision on the part of the Meiji government to 'dispose Ryukyu' did not go without resistance. Among the Ryukyuan officials, there were those who petitioned to retain its relationship with China, and sent messengers to the Chinese government to seek for intervention (Siddle 1998).[24] Nevertheless, with the negotiation stagnating, in the end, the Disposition was completed by the Meiji government with the threat of force (ibid.).

The Meiji government's policy in Okinawa Prefecture in its early years was full of contradictions. On the one hand, the prefectural government, headed by

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[24] The Qing government of China protested and suggested that the Sakishima Island groups be placed under their control. The dispute was officially settled when the territory was recognised by the Chinese government as Japanese after the Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895) (Kerr 1958)

Nabeshima Naoyoshi (1844-1915), an official from Kagoshima (formerly Satsuma), implemented a policy of preserving the old customs (*kyukan onzon seisaku*) and left systems such as land allocation, taxation, and the administration unchanged in order to pacify the elite in the former kingdom. As a result, modernisation in Okinawa lagged behind in certain aspects; the development of private enterprise beneficial to the individual Okinawan was not advanced, tax reform was delayed until 1903 (for the rest of Japan in 1873), and the first limited suffrage was only achieved in 1912 (for the rest of Japan, in 1889 with restrictions) (Kerr 1958, Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education 2000).[25] On the other hand, policies to Japanise the Okinawans in terms of culture, language and life-style were implemented much earlier. As early as in 1880, the first teacher training school, the 'Conversation Training Quarter' was opened, the *Okinawan-Japanese Conversation Book* was published to develop the use of 'standard Japanese' among the educators and clerks in the local administrations, and a compulsory education system which emphasised the speaking of 'standard Japanese' and the becoming of loyal subjects of the emperor was soon introduced (Kerr 1958: 413). In 1899, a decree was issued to prohibit *hajichi*, a tattoo on the back of women's hands, which was believed to ward off bad spirits and to symbolise their chastity (Arasaki 2000). As a result of the *dōka seisaku* (assimilation policy), the 'movement to reform lifestyle (*seikatsu kaizen undō*)' emerged in the early twentieth century. The movement involved changing Okinawan customs and lifestyles - their clothes, belief in *yuta* (spiritual medians), their names, pig-sty toilets and the habit of walking barefoot, among other things - into something more 'modern'. Concurrently, the 'movement to eradicate dialect (*hōgen bokumetsu undō*)' also began to take root. Under the psychological pressure emanating from the central government, these movements often came to be led and campaigned for by the elite strata of the Okinawans, which included local government officials, journalists and school teachers.

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[25] In the Sakishima Island groups, suffrage was introduced later in 1919. As with the rest of Japan, women were not allowed to vote at this time.

2.4 The 'Emigration Prefecture' Okinawa and the Life Style Reform Movement

The pressure to 'reform' the Okinawans was nowhere more strongly applied than on the emigrants who were about to leave Okinawa for a new future. Prior to the Second World War, along with Hiroshima, Kumamoto, Wakayama and Fukuoka, Okinawa had become one of the major prefectures from where people emigrated (Ishikawa 1997). Starting from the first contract migration to Hawaii in 1899, the destination of Okinawan migrants extended to different areas of the world, including North and South America, South East Asia, Micronesia, and Manchuria (see figure 2.1). Many Okinawans also migrated domestically to metropolitan cities, mainly in the Hanshin industrial belt, to work in the silk mills and spinning industry (Tomiyama 1990).[26]

In the early days, it was through officially sponsored emigration programmes that migrants from Okinawa travelled overseas. The Meiji government that had initially been reluctant to send its nationals abroad and that had placed more emphasis on internal migration to fulfil the policy of *fukoku kyōhei* (enrich the country and strengthen the army), strengthened the overseas emigration programmes in 1885 in order to alleviate overpopulation in rural areas hit by the deflation caused by 'a series of draconian economic reforms' taken by the then government finance minister, Matsukata Masayoshi (Stanlaw 2006).[27] By the mid-1890s, the government, while continuing to be its 'main architect and ultimate authority' (Endoh 2009: 6), no longer directly sponsored emigration and had left it to the emigration companies to advertise and recruit and train emigrants (ibid. 2009). Migration from Okinawa was initiated through the efforts of Tōyama Kyūzō (1868-1910), a member of the People's Rights Movement, who had fought to have Okinawans included among the emigrants.[28] He negotiated

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[26] In the 1930s, over 50,000 Okinawans were said to have lived in the Hanshin industrial area (Kondō 2006)

[27] Endoh (2009) points out that the socio-political climate of the southwest regions of Japan ridden with unrest urged the government to remove the economically and politically unwanted population to overseas

[28] The Okinawa Freedom and People's Rights movement (jiyū minken undō) led by Jahana Noboru (1865-1908), which called for social and political rights for Okinawans including suffrage, was met with much resistance by Narahara Shigeru (a.k.a. Narahara Kogorō) (1834-1918) - the Governor of Okinawa from Kagoshima prefecture who was appointed by the central government -

with the local government, invited emigration companies based on the mainland to recruit migrants in Okinawa and advocated emigration under the slogan '*iza yukan, warera ga ie wa godaishū* (Let us go out, our home is five continents)'. In Okinawa, as were in many other parts of Japan, young people were encouraged to undertake *kaigai yūhi* (lit. bravely launch abroad).

Figure 1 Pre-War Overseas Migration from Okinawa (1868-1940)

Latin America:	
Brazil	15,714
Peru	11,461
Argentina	3,154
Mexico	764
Cuba	113
Bolivia	37
Chile	1
Hawaii	20,518
U.S.	863
Canada	403
Philippines	17,026
Singapore	2,801
Celebes	364
Sumatra	81
Borneo	505
Ocean Island	322
Java	270
New Caledonia	921
Others	105
Total	75,423

Source: Kokusai Kyoryoku Jigyodan Okinawa Kokusai Senta (1994: 27)

The mass emigration phenomenon of the Okinawans in the early twentieth century was closely intertwined with the post annexation 'modernising project' in Okinawa. Firstly, the land tax reform completed in 1903 had created a severe economic condition that would propel farmers to find fortunes elsewhere, while at the same time transforming the ways in which individuals could plan their future.

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and prefectural government officials. On the issue of emigration too, Narahara is said to have opposed Tōyama's idea on the ground that Okinawans 'cannot speak Japanese' (Kaneshiro 1959a:5).

The 'reform' in Okinawa had meant the abolishment of *jiwari-sei* (land allotment system), and the conversion of communal land — nearly seventy-six percent of the total area of Okinawa — into private ownership, which resulted in a 'profound disorganization of traditional community life' (Kerr 1958: 424). As a result of arable land being divided into pieces and registered in the name of the head of the household, the productivity per farm declined, and the tax now imposed on each household had become a burden for many farmers. The shift, however, also meant that the people were no longer chained to the land, and that they were allowed to own, mortgage or sell the land.[29] For the prospective emigrants, this newly acquired ownership opened up an opportunity to obtain capital for the passage abroad (Ishikawa 1997: 351-352, 429-464).

Another significant impact of Japan's modernisation policy in Okinawa on its migration came with the introduction of conscription in 1889.[30] While welcomed and eagerly promoted by the political elite, journalists and educators of the time, as the move towards the acknowledgement of the Okinawans as 'Japanese nationals=*kōkoku shinmin* (loyal subjects of the Imperial nation)', conscription remained extremely unpopular among the general public of Okinawa.[31] One of the ways in which Okinawan youth could avoid the conscription was to emigrate abroad.[32]

For the majority of Okinawan migrants both abroad and domestically, migration meant that they came into contact with the world outside the confine of their village for the first time. Their encounter with the 'other' was often a negative one,

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[29] In the majority of cases, emigrants mortgaged the land, but did not sell it off. The land was looked after by either the migrant's relatives or by the emigration agents. This would suggest that migrants envisioned their stay abroad as temporary rather than permanent (Aniya 2001 :86).

[30] Six weeks' military service duty for primary school teachers in Okinawa was introduced in 1896, two years before the general conscription in 1898 (Shinjo 1994: 200).

[31] Between 1898 and 1915, 774 people in the prefecture were caught and punished for dodging the draft, and the cases of eligible men deliberately harming their body or pretending to be disabled persisted (Shinjo 1994: 201).

[32] It has been suggested that the conscription may be the one of the reasons why many more first sons emigrated from Okinawa compared to other prefectures (Ueno el al 1984: 23-26), where primogeniture, in which the first son of a family would exclusively inherit the entire family estate under the old Japanese *ie* (household) system, contributed to 'pushing' the other members of the family, the second, the third or fourth sons, to seek their fortune abroad (Maeyama 1979: 591, Tsuda 2003: 55-56, Endoh 2009: 65)

wherein they experienced discrimination and prejudice by *Naichi-jin* (people from mainland Japan) both domestically and overseas. In cities in the Kansai area such as Osaka and Kobe, for example, real estate agencies put up a sign that said 'No Koreans, Chinese or Ryukyuans' (Tomiyama 1990, Oguma 1998). Even outside Japan, the Okinawans were constantly under the Japanese colonial gaze (Ethnic Studies Oral History Project 1981, Kaneshiro 2002, Suzuki 2006, Tomiyama 2002).

In 1912, five years after the first migrants arrived in Brazil, the foreign ministry of Japan banned Okinawans from going to Brazil, as the quality of Okinawan migrants was deemed 'poor' (Kondō 2006). The ban was prompted by the complaints made by the owners of the plantations in Brazil that 1) there are too many false families among the Japanese immigrants 2) they eat bad food and live in filthy conditions and 3) they expose their naked body. The consulate in Sao Paolo further reported to the Foreign ministry of Japan that Japanese immigrants are not well thought of as they 1) move from one place to another too often, 2) get into fights, 3) strike and 4) escape. Although the owners' complaints were directed towards the Japanese in general, the Japanese consulate in Sao Paolo attributed all the negative traits to the Okinawans, who they saw as being 'selfish and only trying to remit money to their home and hurrying to be successful'. The ban was lifted in 1917, when the number of emigrants from other prefectures decreased due to the start of World War 1, and because of the lobbying effort of the Okinawa prefecture associations in Santos and Campo Grande (Tamashiro 1966). However, the ban was reimposed in 1919, until it was lifted in 1926 with conditions which included the ability to speak standardised Japanese, to have finished compulsory education, and to not have tattoos (Kondō 2006: 196).

The news of the ban had repercussions in Okinawa, where the Okinawan elite began to campaign for the 'reform' in earnest. For example, the local newspaper, Ryukyu Shimpo emphasised the 'Importance of the Emigrants' Education' in its 10th February 1917 edition as follows:

…Emigrants' education is not only important for the promotion of emigration but is indispensable in order to mould the migrants' character. Especially, as our prefecture differs considerably from the other prefectures in terms of customs, habits and language, emigrants should not take this for granted. If they ignore this, Okinawans will not be able to keep up with the people from the other prefectures. Not only will they bring shame to the prefecture but would also undermine our dignity as *Nihon Teikoku Shinmin* (loyal subjects of Japanese Empire) (cited in Ishikawa 1977: 14).

The need to 'educate' Okinawan migrants came to be perceived as an urgent task in the 1920s, when the rate of outbound migration of Okinawans increased sharply. The 1920s are known as the decade of *sotetsu jigoku* (sago palm hell) for Okinawans. After the Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895), the production of sugar, which had been Okinawa's main industry, was gradually moved to newly acquired Taiwan. Furthermore, as the result of the world sugar price collapse in 1921, many families were reduced to eating *sotetsu*, which unless cooked carefully, was poisonous. As the Tokyo government did not provide Okinawa with any concrete policy to alleviate this situation, Okinawans poured out of the prefecture as cheap labourers (Amemiya 1999a).

Against this background, in 1924, the Okinawa Prefecture founded *Okinawa-ken Kaigai Kyōkai* (Okinawa Prefecture Overseas Associations) which not only liaised with the overseas Okinawan Association, but sought to 'educate' prospective emigrants by establishing *Kaiyō Kaikan* - a centre where the emigrants were trained prior to their departure - in 1934 (Ishikawa 1977). In 1926, an Okinawan politician, Arakaki Kanazō (1895-1956) edited a book entitled '*Imin no Tomo* (Friends of Emigrants)' in which he asserted:

To rescue Okinawa, where it suffers from *sotetsu* hell, *kaigai yūhi* (brave launch abroad) is the only option…..At the moment, our prefecture is giving some instruction to those who travel abroad, but this does not sufficiently achieve the educational goal. This is only superficial. We need to build the basis for our future development abroad by starting emigrants' education from primary school (Arakaki 1926: 64).

Thus, the concern for emigrants' education had become a concern for primary education in Okinawa in general, and consequently, a workshop was organised in March 1927 at the Prefectural Women's Teachers' school to discuss the compilation of a manual for primary school education in the prefecture (Kondō 2006: 200-201). The result was the publication of '*Shima no Kyōiku* (Education of the Island)' in 1928, a detailed manual for school teachers. In its introduction, it states:

> We should not just be concerned with making money like the wandering Jews, clinging to this prefecture's unique customs and language without any will to improve our life, be content with a low level life and be seen as barbarians, or be seen as wandering Ryukyuans like Gypsies loitering with nothing in our hands (Okinawa-ken Shotō Kyōiku Kenkyū-kai 1928: not paged, second page of the Introduction). Clinging to an Okinawan way outside would (result in) 1) making oneself suffer materially and physically; 2) damaging the reputation of the successful Okinawan predecessors outside the prefecture and abroad.; 3) causing our Prefecture to be seen in a special way; 4) causing anti-Japanese sentiment abroad, thus harming the Imperial emigration policy; 5) having less opportunity to receive a special favour regarding emigration incentive money, and would be disadvantageous for our prefecture's emigration policy (ibid.: unpaged -3).

The manual, which covers vast areas of education, from morals, manners, speech, national history, geography, arts, sports, housemaking, and other courses, even comments on how to 'improve' one's hobbies: '…it is not only recently that the limitation and vulgarity of our prefectural people has come to our attention….If the Okinawan *shamisen* (three stringed lute) and plaintive Ryukyuan music and folk songs which no foreigners or people from other prefectures would understand are our only hobby, our prefectural people's development is doomed'(ibid. :施 29). The manual then goes on to suggest that schools encourage pupils to listen to Western orchestral music and Japanese *naniwa-bushi*.

The impact that such a policy actually had on an individual migrants would have varied from person to person, but we can get a glimpse of the pressure imposed on Okinawan migrants to become a 'civilised loyal subjects' in the travel writing

written by Richard Goldschmidt, a German biologist, who travelled to Okinawa in the 1920s:

> On my outward journey dozens of these modest, small and plain girls came aboard at Kobe to return home after their contracts had expired. I was told that their not so insignificant savings had regularly been sent ahead home by them. The most adventurous of the young men however emigrate to Brazil and the Hawaii Islands in large numbers, where they work mainly on the sugar cane plantations and can save a lot due to their modest needs…they send 1 ½ million Yen of savings back home each year. The emigrants do however return regularly to their old home country at least for a visit, and so our ship carried a sizeable number of returnees from Brazil and Hawaii, who during the passage strolled around deck half-naked, but just before arrival on the islands emerged from the depths of the ship wearing precious European clothes in South-American colour combinations. Some of them carried – according to them – lots of money and wanted to return for good. Others – and those were the more likeable ones – had not yet been able to accumulate savings and intended to go out again….Particularly concerned with entertaining me (all the while spitting enormously) were a couple of young men from Brazil. Our conversation – a mixture of port-Portuguese and Japanese on their part and of Spanish, Latin and Japanese on mine – must have sounded hilarious, but was quite successful. When one of them heard that I was German he asked: 'Do you know that Germany has been at war?' (It was March 1926), and expecting for my acknowledgement, continued: 'And do you also know that it was a war between Germany and Japan and that Japan has won?' This was my first encounter with the Japanese patriotism of the Ryukyans, which is quite remarkable considering their history. I later experienced it repeatedly – for example when I was asked not to speak of Ryukyu, but of the Administrative District of Okinawa, and not of Ryukyuans, but simply of Japanese. The reason for this is of course that being Japanese for them means being on a higher rung of culture (civilisation), to which they want to belong as equals (Goldschmidt 1927: 115-116).

2.5 The Okinawan Studies

Okinawa's status within the Japanese Empire remained ambiguous during its expansion in the first half of the twentieth century. As the historian Oguma (1995, 1998) has analysed, the pre-war discourses of Japanese nationhood envisaged the 'multiethnic empire' of Japan as a 'family state (*kazoku kokka*)', within which diverse ethnic groups were hierarchically united with the emperor at their head. Within this ideology, Okinawans were often categorised in the lower rank along

with Taiwanese and Koreans, and were characterised as being backward, as though they were 'children' that needed to be cultivated into becoming 'Japanese'.[33] As Christy (1997) has pointed out, political and economic problems in Okinawa, the cause of which can be explained in 'objective' factors – the sugar-centred economy and late participation in politics – were attributed to a 'subjective' cause, the 'defective Okinawan character', that hindered its 'progress'. This, in turn, as we have seen in the previous section, psychologically forced Okinawans themselves to mimic (Bhaba 1994) the Japanese colonisers and transform their way of being in order to climb the hierarchical ladder.

On the other hand, in the academic discourses of ethnologists and philologists, Okinawan culture was seen as an archetype of the long-lost culture of Japan (Christie 1997, Inoue 2007, Murai 1992, Oguma 1998, Siddle 1998, Yonetani 2000).[34] As was the case with anthropology in the 'West', anthropological studies in Japan were also closely intertwined with the political process of imperial expansion. In other words, the modern will to new types of knowledge incited new forms of classification and racialisation useful for the national project (Foucault 1970). From the late nineteenth century, scholars such as Tashiro Antei and Torii Ryūzō made expeditions to Okinawa, funded by the Meiji government in the case of the former, in order to examine a broad field which included language, religion, race and folk customs (Oguma 1998). Their findings - ancient Japanese words and place names in modern Okinawan speech, local religious practices, Okinawan pottery - were articulated in terms of the archaic identity between Okinawa and Japan; they also equated present Okinawa with a Japan of

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[33] In 1903, an Okinawan man and a woman were literally 'displayed' along with indigenous Ainu in the north and Taiwanese in the 'Jinruikan (pavilion of Homo Sapiens)' at the industrial exhibition in Osaka. This event was severely criticised by Ota Chofu, an Okinawan who urged other Okinawans to assimilate and 'even sneeze like Japanese', as an act of discrimination for positioning 'our prefectural people at the same level as Taiwanese and Ainu'. (Tomiyama 1990, Christy 1997).

[34] Murai (1992) sees an example of the Japanese version of 'Orientalism' in what he calls '*Nantō* (Southern Island) Ideology'. In his view, the scheme 'pre-modern= *Nantō*' was used as a means to postulate 'modern=Japan' and it was this kind of scheme that justified the Japanese colonisation of 'others'. This view in turn is criticised by Oguma (1998: 8-9) as being simplistic and insufficient for failing to explain the Japanese assimilation policy based on '*Ajia-shugi* (Asianism)', which stresses the similarity and 'same-rootedness' among people (as Said's idea of Orientalism is based on the irreconcilable dichotomy between 'west' and 'east', 'male' and 'female').

the past, thus simultaneously positioning Okinawa as always already being (ancient) Japan, yet in need of becoming (present) Japan (Yonetani 2000).

In search of an Okinawan identity divorced from the old regime, local intellectuals, most notably the 'father of Okinawan Studies', Iha Fuyū, also resurrected the *nichi-ryū dōso ron* (idea that the Japanese and Okinawan share common ancestry) formulated by Haneji Chōshū three hundred years earlier. Influenced by Torii and the British linguist and Tokyo Imperial University professor, Basil Hall Chamberlain, who argued for the joint roots of the Japanese and Okinawan languages, Iha also came to assert that Ryukyuans were a branch line of Yamato people (Iha 1922[1911]), although closer reading of his writing would suggest that he was not simply conforming and urging Okinawans to transform 'back' into Japanese. Acutely aware of the predicament of the Okinawans, he also endeavoured to invert the articulation of Okinawans through fixing his sights on 'Ryukyuan' signs in 'the Japanese' as opposed to discovering 'Japanese' signs within Okinawa (Tomiyama 1998: 170).

The tendency to search in Okinawa for the ancient Japanese culture 'regrettably lost' in the process of modernisation continued with the work of ethnologists such as Yanagita Kunio and Orikuchi Shinobu who saw Okinawa as a 'freeze-dried reminder of what Japanese life supposedly looked like in archaic times. . . a vast, living replica or even laboratory of seventh-century Japan in the present' (Harootunian, 2000: 324).

While academics 'deplored' the loss of the 'archaic', its 'preservation' in practice was often countered by the locals, as can be seen in the controversies over Okinawan language that followed Yanagi Soetsu (Yanagi Muneyoshi)'s visit to Okinawa in 1940 (Higa et al 1963, Okinawa-ken kyōiku Iinkai 1977). Yanagi, an activist of the Folk Craft Movement (*mingei undō*) asserted that 'Okinawan *hōgen* (the dialect)' and standard Japanese are both part of *kokugo*, the national language, and argued for the retention of the Okinawan language.

When a unitary national language *kokugo* was created through legitimising the style of speech used by the educated middle-class people in the political and economic centre of Tokyo, under the slogan of 'one language, one nation, one people' in the early Meiji period, its dissemination and the destruction of heteroglossia within the Japanese territory ensued. In the case of Okinawa, *Uchināguchi* (Okinawan language) came to be regarded as a 'dialect (*hōgen*)' of the Japanese language that needed to be 'eradicated (*bokumetsu*)'. Under the 'movement to encourage the use of standardised language (*hyōjungo shōrei undō*)', schools adopted the punishment of hanging a 'dialect placard (*hōgen fuda*)' around the neck of pupils caught speaking Okinawan language, a case which reminds us of Bourdieu's argument (1991) that the reproduction of symbolic domination presupposes the collaboration of speakers dispossessed of the dominant language through acceptance that the dominant language is the 'legitimate' one. In such a climate, Yanagi's recommendation for the preservation of heteroglossia and stance against the local government's hasty policy of standardisation were met by the local government's counterargument that unless they 'change to the standard Japanese, there will be no future development in the prefecture' (Higa et al 1963: 29). The controversy turned into a dispute (*hōgen ronsō*) which lasted for over a year, involving educationalists, linguists and the media, not only at the local level but also in Tokyo. The majority of the Okinawan elite opposed Yanagi's view, in the belief that the standardisation of language was indispensable for the modernisation of the area (Okinawa-ken kyōiku Iinkai 1977: 142). The people of Okinawa might have seen an opportunity for equality in the learning of the standardised language. However, that such equality was imaginary would become evident through the experiences of the people in Okinawa particularly during the Second World War and beyond.

2.6 The Second World War and the U.S. Occupation

The Second World War turned Okinawa into the bloodiest of battlegrounds, where one third of its population (approximately 150,000) was killed (Ota 2000). The memory of war still persists in the mind of many Okinawans who see the war as the manifestation on the part of the Japanese government of the willingness to

sacrifice Okinawa for its own survival. The Battle of Okinawa was fought when Japan's defeat was already obvious in the eyes of the Imperial Headquarters, but was nevertheless pursued as a sacrificial and delaying tactic for saving the mainland (Arasaki 2001, Ota 2000). During the battle, unlike the rest of Japan, Okinawa became the site of ground warfare wherein ordinary citizens experienced how the military behaved towards them (ibid.). The massacre of the civilians was carried out not only by U.S. troops, but also by the Japanese soldiers who robbed them of food, and drove them out of the shelters. They wrongfully suspected and executed civilians - as well as their fellow Okinawan soldiers who fought as 'loyal subjects of the emperor' - speaking in Okinawan language, of being spies of the enemies (Ota 2000). The collective suicide (*shūdan jiketsu*) among the citizens on Kerama, Zamami and Tokashiki islands was coerced and induced by the Japanese military during the battle. The controversy over this tragic historical memory triggered a demonstration in 2007 of 110,000 residents in Okinawa, when the Ministry of Education sought to screen and eliminate the reference to these incidents in the school text book.

Following the unconditional surrender of Japan, due to the island's 'strategic location', all islands of the Ryukyu archipelago came under U.S. military control. Initially there was an unsettled period, with the U.S. command changing frequently, and civilians being relocated into camps and given rationed food without currency. However, with the San Francisco Treaty in 1951, territories south of 29 degrees latitude were legally put under U.S. administration (the Amami Oshima group was reverted to Japan). The day that the Treaty was signed is known in Okinawa as 'the Day of Shame'; not only did the Japanese government agree to cede Okinawa to the U.S., but also according to the de-classified 1947 memorandum by General MacArthur's political advisor William Sebald, the Showa Emperor himself gave an 'emperor's message' in private in which he expressed his hope that 'the U.S. will continue the military occupation of Okinawa and other islands of Ryukyus' under the long term lease (Ota 2000: 84-85). After decades of having been subjected to struggle to be 'Japanese' and having lost their families in the war in the name of the emperor, the ceding of

Okinawa was (and is still) seen as a betrayal on the part of a Japanese government that saw Okinawa as a 'tail of the lizard' (expendable) (ibid.: 122).

The policy of the U.S. occupying force towards the Okinawans was largely shaped by the reports that had already been prepared through careful information gathering in the area during the war. These reports, 'Civil Affairs Handbook: Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands' and 'The Loo Choo Islands: A Japanese Minority Group', are classic examples of anthropology's collaboration with the government intelligence and the 'war effort': The former was based on research led by a group of Yale anthropologists, Geroge P. Murdock, Clellan S. Ford and J.M. Whiting while the latter is attributed to the Harvard Mayan specialist Alfred Tozzer (Sakihara 1989:112). 'The Loo Choo Island' report, partly based on research among Okinawan migrants in Hawaii, was prepared in June 1944 by the Research and Analysis Branch of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to serve as basic materials for the 'psychological warfare' that the U.S. government was about to launch (Miyagi 1996: 3). The report emphasises cleavages between Okinawans and '*Naichi-jin*' (mainlanders), stating that: 'in the minds of many Naichijin as well as members of other nationalities the Okinawas (sic.) and the Etas (sic. Burakumin, descendants of the outcast community) are classed together' (OSS 1944: 105) and that; 'propaganda directed toward increasing the idea of their having been down-trodden, and playing on the theme of the identity of their group in contrast to the Japanese as a whole, might well bear fruit '(ibid.: 122) in the 'present conflict'. The 'Civil Affairs Handbook: Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands', finished five months later in November 1944 for the Navy Department, was part of the series of handbooks that covered the then Japan mandated Micronesia from Bikini to Yap, Taiwan and Okinawa. Having already set up the 'Cross-Cultural Survey' to assemble and classify 'the basic information on a sample of the people of the earth', Murdock sought to apply the system to the war effort, and together with Ford and Whiting, enlisted in the navy and went on producing the handbook in the hope that it would be useful for military government upon its occupation of

these islands (Whiting 1986: 684).[35] The result was a 334 page handbook for the 'Ryukyu Islands' which offered detailed accounts of Okinawan society, based mainly on extensive research into publications in the Japanese language from 1934 to 1940 (U.S. Navy Department 1944: IV). The topics that it covered extended from basic information on geography, resources, history, people, customs and organised groups, administration and public facilities, law and justice, public safety, public welfare, health and sanitation, education, communications, public utilities and transportation, to economics. It also included 22 maps and 52 photographs, mostly taken during the 1930s. While the report, at first glance, seems to portray an objective account of the people and society, it also subtly makes suggestions as to which course the military occupation should take, by highlighting the 'potential seeds of dissention out of which political capital might be made' (ibid.: 62) It describes Ryukyu islanders as 'closely resembling the Japanese in physique', but to be 'somewhat shorter, stockier, and darker and to be characterized by more prominent noses, higher foreheads, and less noticeable cheekbones' and hair 'more often wavy' compared to the Japanese (ibid.:61). It also states that despite their 'close ethnic relationships', Okinawans 'are not regarded by the Japanese as their racial equals', and are looked upon as 'poor cousins from the country, with peculiar rustic ways of their own'(ibid.:61-62).

In a drastic contrast to the pre-war policy of the Japanese government, the U.S. military government, informed by these reports, and also out of fear that a movement for reversion to Japan would otherwise arise, stressed the difference of Okinawan people and cultures from the rest of Japan. In order to sever the tie it had with Japan and to evoke its past independent history, the name 'Ryukyu' was readopted in place of 'Okinawa', for the name of the government - United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) – as well as for many other institutions found during the occupation, such as University of Ryukyus, Ryukyu National Museum, Bank of the Ryukyus, and Ryukyu radio stations. The U.S. also encouraged the revival of Ryukyuan music, dance, drama, and language,

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[35] After completing the handbook, Murdock, Ford and Whiting were all sent to the Pacific as military government officers and were on active duty in Okinawa from its invasion until the end of the war. Murdock attained the rank of commander. (Whiting 1986: 684)

which had been suppressed under the pre-war Japanese regime (Rabson 1999: 145). However, the US administration was not interested in giving Okinawans the same rights as American citizens. The occupation introduced U.S. dollars as the currency and right-hand traffic (as opposed to left-hand in the rest of Japan),[36] but the education system, while the pre-war overtone of emperor worship was carefully removed, remained Japanese, and there was no movement to make English the official language (Oguma 1998: 472-473).

The 'Ryukyuization campaign' launched by the military government (Rabson 1999), however, did not have the intended effect, as from a very early stage, local resistance against the occupation emerged. Soon after the U.S. forces landed in Okinawa in 1945, areas were closed off with chain-linked fences to build military bases. As the Cold War heated up, the U.S. government began to see Okinawa as the 'Keystone of the Pacific', and its military bases were reinforced and extended for use in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. In the process, farmland was seized to construct the bases, and the houses of those who opposed the appropriation were often forcefully removed by bulldozers. Some families whose land was confiscated had to relocate themselves to Brazil and Bolivia (Amemiya 1999a, 1999b, Selleck 2003, Suzuki 2003). Military crimes and accidents happened frequently, but under American rule, the victims were excluded from the opportunity for legal justice. Against this background, in alliance with the displaced farmers, an 'island-wide struggle (*shimagurumi tōsō*)', a mass protest against the occupation, took place in 1956. In the 1960s, 'the movement to revert to the fatherland (*sokoku fukki undō*)' that called to 'Return Okinawa! (*Okinawa o kaese!*)' gained momentum with the *hi-no-maru* (Japanese) flag - banned from display by the military government except on certain holidays – as its symbol of resistance (Rabson 1999: 146, Arasaki 2001: 104).

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[36] The currency was changed to dollars in 1958 from the occupation currency called B-yen.

2.7 After the Reversion

After Okinawa was returned to Japan on 15th May 1972 as the result of the long struggle, the currency was changed from dollar to yen once again and the driving reverted to the left, but the U.S. military bases remained fixed (Arasaki 2000).[37] Still today, over 75% of U.S. military bases in Japan are located in Okinawa, a prefecture whose area amounts to less than 1% of the country's land as a whole. The struggle to gain a status equal to that of the other prefectures under the Japanese Peace constitution was further betrayed, as upon being reincorporated into Japan, the Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) also came to be deployed and stationed in Okinawa (Arasaki 2001). As such, the Reversion of Okinawa was 'nothing but a step to reinforce the Japan – US military alliance' (ibid.: 104). Noise, pollution, crimes and accidents associated with the presence of the U.S. military bases triggered numerous protests from the local residents. I arrived in Okinawa in October 1996, a month after a prefectural referendum that showed that most Okinawans wanted to reduce or eliminate the base presence. The referendum was prompted by an incident in September 1995, the rape of a twelve-year-old Okinawans school-girl by three US marines. Local protest was directed not only against the U.S, but also and even more strongly against the lack of action taken by the Japanese government, and the indifference on the part of the mainland public. More recently in April 2010, the then Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio reneged on his promise to relocate one of the bases off Okinawa.[38]

After the reversion, the Japanese government's influence over Okinawa no longer lay in the overt assimilation policy of the pre-war period, but rather in a more subtle exercise of power through money (Hook and Siddle 2003, Inoue 2007). In 1972, a series of three ten-year Okinawa Promotion and Development Plans were drawn up. As of 1999, a public fund, totalling almost 6 trillion yen, had been transferred from central government to Okinawa primarily for projects that were to 'eliminate the disparity (*kakusa zesei*)' between the mainland and Okinawa

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[37] The road switch-back took place in 1978.
[38] As of August 2010. The rally in April 2010 attracted nearly 100,000 people. There have also been smaller demonstrations since.

(Arasaki 2000). Under the banner of '*Hondo-nami* (parity with the mainland), the infrastructure such as roads, airports, ports, water, sewage works and other facilities, was vastly improved, transforming the townscape of Okinawa. The consequence of the Promotion and Development Plan, however, was that Okinawa's economic structure was disproportionately skewed towards and dependent on what are commonly referred to as the three Ks: revenues from *kichi* (military bases), *kankō* (tourism) and *kōkyōjigyō* (public construction work). This hindered the economic development of Okinawa in other sectors such as manufacturing (Hook and Siddle 2003, McCormack 1999: 265). As a result, to this day, [39] while Okinawa's per capita income exceeds even many in the developed world, it remains the lowest among the prefectures in Japan - 70 percent of the national average in 1998 (Hook and Siddle 2003: 8).

Major projects, such as the Special National Athletic Meet (*Wakanatsu Kokutai*) in 1973 and the Okinawa International Ocean Exposition (*Kaiyōhaku*) from 1975 to 1976, were two of the early attempts to boost tourism in the prefecture. The tourism industry in Okinawa, however, had often been driven by mainland interests and capital that was used to buy up ocean-front properties for constructing resorts, where Okinawans were hired as service workers for the mainland managers and customers (Rabson 1999, Hook and Siddle 2003). In the process of Okinawa's development as a 'tourism prefecture', a heavy burden was placed on the environment through the destruction of local coral reefs. An 'exotic' image, 'deracinated from the complex reality of Okinawan life' (Hook and Siddle 2003: 6), of a 'tropical island with blue sky and blue sea' was generated (Tada 2004).[40] The commodification of the 'exotic' and the unitary image of the Okinawans as non-threatening, laid-back islanders 'ever ready to burst into song and dance' (Hook and Siddle 2003: 6) not only boosted tourism in Okinawa, but in part induced an 'Okinawa boom', a vigorous consumption of Okinawan culture and artefacts, especially since the early 1990s. The morning drama series *Churasan* (Beautiful) broadcast in the year 2001 by the NHK

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[39] As of 2010.

[40] Tada (2004) analyses the meticulous planning of the image making during *Kaihōkokutai* (the 42nd National Athletic Meet) in 1947 and thereafter.

national television and a popular film such as *Nabī no Koi* (*Nabī*'s Love), contributed to the '"cosmetic operation" of Japan's multiculturalism by providing a utopian vision of Okinawanness' (Ko 2006), while obscuring its complexities. Influenced by the growing interest in 'world music' globally, Okinawan folk music (*minyō*) as well as Okinawan pop (*Uchinā poppu*), a combination of Okinawan and Western musical elements, became popular to varying degrees in mainland Japan and abroad, through artists' collaborations. In addition, elements of Okinawan music had come to be incorporated into the music outside Okinawa (Gillan 2009, Roberson 2003, Tokita and Hughes 2007).

While the structural constraints of Okinawan's position within the Japanese nation-states and U.S.-Japan relationships must not be overlooked, it must also be stressed that Okinawans are not simply being 'produced' and 'portrayed', but that they themselves negotiate (and have negotiated) their subjectivities within such constraints, at times by rejecting assumptions about Okinawa made by the Japanese and the Americans. While expressing and fighting for their own position in the terrain of politics, in the realm of cultural productions too, they do not simply reproduce the commodified and essentialised image of the 'exotic', but engage in exploring complex forms of historical memory within and against the contemporary power, as can be seen in the works of the writer Medoruma Shun (2001), the filmmaker Takamine Go (Ko 2006), and comedians such as Fujiki Hayato (Nelson 2008).

2.8 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I have outlined the profoundly ambiguous and complex process in which Okinawan subjectivities had been formed. In so doing, I have sought to highlight not only the role of national, regional, and global history but also the intellectual discourses which have shaped the Okinawa subjectivities.

In the field of the 'Okinawan Studies', the tendency to see Okinawa as a 'repository of the archaic' and as the 'exotic within the nation' continued post war, well into the 1980s. During this period, the quest for an essential and isolated

Okinawan culture devoid of history and politics characterised much of the work by Okinawan, Japanese and American scholars alike, despite differences in the political reasons behind articulating the knowledge in such terms (Inoue 2007). Discovering the authentic Okinawa became a popular theme for undergraduate students of anthropology in Japanese universities for whom Okinawa had become one of the favourite fieldwork destinations. However, from the late 1980s, but especially from the 1990s, a wave of new scholarship both within and outside Okinawa across the academic disciplines began reconfiguring Okinawa beyond an ahistorical self-contained entity, by situating Okinawa within history and global politics (Arasaki *el al* 2006, Christy 1993, Hiyane 1996, Hein and Selden eds 2003, Hook and Siddle eds 2003, Hudson 2006, Johnson ed. 1999, Oguma 1995, 1998, Morris-Suzuki 1998, Tada 2004, Tomiyama 1990, 1997), as well as highlighting Okinawan subjectivities and internal differences within such historical and contemporary global power relations (Allen 2002, Hook and Siddle 2003, Inoue 2007, Nakasone ed. 2002, Nelson 2008, Molasky 1999). In these studies, rather than simply seeing people in Okinawa as being passively positioned by the global, regional and national orders, researchers have sought to highlight diverging ways in which Okinawans themselves articulate their positions at different moments in time, without losing sight of the constraints that external orders pose on them. It is within this emerging trend in Okinawan studies that I also aim to situate my study on the migrants from Peru in Okinawa. With this in mind, after focusing on the historical processes in which migrants from Okinawa to Peru came to be positioned as 'Japanese' and subsequently as '*Nikkei*' in the next chapter, from chapter 4 to chapter 7, I will ethnographically examine the multifaceted ways in which migrants understand their experience and articulate their sense of belonging in specific places and moments.

Chapter 3   Becoming 'Japanese' and '*Nikkei*' in Peru

The history of Japanese immigration to Peru, or rather, a version of it, circulates repetitiously in forms of storytelling and publications, and contributes to the formation of the collective memory/identity of the *Nikkei* Peruvians, to which descendants from Okinawa also subscribe. The simplest version goes like this: the first Japanese immigrants arrived in 1899 as contract workers in the sugar plantations, with the dream of earning enough money and 'going home in glory' (*kokyō ni nishiki o kazaru*), but many died or fled due to the severe working conditions; Those who managed to escape to the city (mainly Lima) helped each other and started their own small businesses; soon after, they called their families from back home. Then 'free' migrants begun to arrive, and through hard work, the businesses run by the Japanese started to take off; Japanese communities were established, but at same time, anti-Japanese campaigns were launched, and the Japanese suffered from various discrimination, which culminated in the looting (*saqueo*) of the Japanese-owned shops in Lima in 1940; During the war, the leaders of the Japanese community were arrested and taken to the concentration camps in the United States, Japanese organisations, such as schools and newspaper companies were closed down, and the community was devastated. After the war, realising that there was no point in going back to war-torn Japan, the immigrants decided to make Peru their permanent home, reconstructed their lives and their organisations. They have now succeeded in establishing themselves firmly in Peruvian society with university graduates and professionals among them, earning the reputation of being trustworthy and hardworking citizens of Peru, without losing their identity as Japanese descendants.

This version of the history of the 'suffering and success' of Japanese immigrants in Peru, thus simplified, is at once significant and problematic.[41] Significant, because such a discourse impacts on the way many Japanese Peruvians construct

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[41] I owe this formulation to Sakiyama (2003).

their collective memory and identity. On the other hand, it is problematic, in that it reduces the history of migrants' experiences into a series of interactions between the already unified Japanese collective transplanted from Japan vis-à-vis the equally monolithically posited Peruvian other. In reality, the migrants from Japan, while they did all enter Peru under the same category of 'Japanese nationals' with a Japanese passport, differed internally in terms of regional background, class, and gender as well as in the timing of their arrivals and the regions where they settled in Peru. This would mean that their experiences cannot all be subsumed under the version of an official recounting of the history, often written from the point of view of those in relative power. As for the 'Peruvians', they too consist of arrays of ethnic, class and gender diversities, and each interactive encounter with the migrants, when looked into closely, would betray the totalising picture of, say, 'the Peruvians discriminating against the Japanese'.[42]

The task of writing history is inevitably done from a particular perspective and never escapes the omission of event. In the process, it produces a particular type of knowledge and discourse on the subject, at times totalising the multifaceted experiences of a group of people it aims to portray. At the risk of falling into a similar totalising trap myself, in this chapter, I attempt to recount the history of migrants from Okinawa in Peru, not because I want to write a definitive history accounting every detail of the Japanese/Okinawan migration to Peru, but with the purpose of shedding light on how migrants from Okinawa in Peru came to consider themselves predominantly as *Nikkei*, Japanese in Peru, in the latter half of the twentieth century.

The time when the first migrants from Okinawa arrived in Peru coincides with the time when, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the nationalising project imposed by the Japanese government was ongoing in Okinawa. The project, which was never completed, had put Okinawans into an ambiguous position of being almost Japanese 'but not quite' (Bhaba 1994), and this situation continued

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[42] See Rocca Torres (1997) for example for the different treatments by the Peruvian locals of the Japanese during the time of *saqueo* in Lambayake, a region outside of Lima.

on in Peru, as was the case in their many other migratory destinations (Amemiya 1999a, Kaneshiro 2002, Suzuki 2003, Tomiyama 1990, 2002, Ueunten 2002). As we will see, in the case of Peru, a long distance nationalism was nurtured in its own way in the Japanese community in the Peruvian political and social context, and this had a profound effect on migrants from Okinawa, who themselves were made up of diverse individuals whose identities based on their hamlet of origin would have been stronger than that of being an Okinawan, let alone a Japanese.

3.1 The Beginning

The out-migration of Japanese nationals, including Okinawans, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century came about as a result of active promotion by the Japanese government, as I have briefly mentioned in the previous chapter. The end of feudalism and the transition to a modern economy resulting in widespread unemployment contributed to the policy of the government that perceived 'population increase' to be a national problem. As a result, the practice emerged of the exporting of Japanese nationals to Hawaii, countries in North and South America and Asia.

Peru was one of the early destinations for the emigrants from Japan.[43] The diplomatic relationship established in 1873 prompted the Japanese and the Peruvian government to discuss the possibility of sending Japanese labourers to Peru. At the time, revived by foreign capital, Peru was experiencing high demand for a work force in coastal sugar cane and cotton *haciendas* (plantations) owned by Europeans or their descendants (Laurent-Herrera 1991).

The first group of contract migrants, recruited by the Morioka Imin Kaisha (Morioka Immigration Company) arrived in Lima's Callao port on 3rd April 1899 (Irie 1938). On board the first ship Sakura-maru were 790 male farmers between

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[43] *Gannen mono*, or the first Japanese emigrants after the Meiji Restoration went to Hawaii in 1868. A short period of government contracted migration (*kan'yaku imin*) to Hawaii began in 1885 until the Japanese government left their leadership to the *imin-gaisha* (emigrant companies) in 1894.

20-45 years of age (ibid.).[44] From 1899 until 1923 when the contract migration was terminated, 81 trips were made, and from the third shipment in 1906 onwards, migrants from Okinawan prefecture also embarked on the journey (Tigner 1978).[45] Thereafter, the number of migrants from Okinawa rose to nearly 10,000 so that they made up one third of the total of 29,000 for the Japanese by 1941 (ibid.). [46]

The conditions for the early migrants in *haciendas* were so severe that one of their families back in Japan, who received news from their family member in the Casa Blanca *hacienda*, was compelled to write a pleading letter to their local Nigata government as follows:

> (According to the family member of those who had migrated to Peru), upon landing in Peru, many fall ill, because of not being able to get used to the climate. Eight or nine out of ten people cannot carry out the work. Those in a serious condition have died and those with a slight ailment, even if they recover from it, soon catch another disease…….There are also those discharged from the Company. They are turned adrift. Even if they find ways of earning, the wage cannot pay even half of the price of their food. Even if they wanted to go home, there is no way to do so. They have no money for the postal fee even if they wanted to communicate. With a sick body, leaning on a stick, they wander about the town, but their words cannot be understood. The number of those who beg for food by pointing their fingers to their mouths and stroking their bellies increase day by day. Now they can do nothing but wait for their death. We (the family) are grieved profoundly (hearing this), but since we are families of those who went on to do *dekasegi* because of poverty, we do not have power to rescue them…please let them return to our empire' (quoted in Ito1984: 108-109).

In the *haciendas*, initial contracts were often violated, and the owners treated the migrants in the same harsh colonial-style with which they treated the black slaves, the Chinese indentured labourers, and the indigenous Peruvian workers from the

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[44] The ship Sakura Maru was operated by Nippon Yusen Kaisha. The first group of emigrants were from the following prefectures: 372 (373) from Niigata; 187(186) from Yamaguchi; 176 from Hiroshima; 50 from Okayama; 4 from Tokyo; and 1 from Ibaragi.

[45] The first Okinawan migrants aboard *Itsukushima-maru* were sent to *haciendas* in San Nicolas, Paramonga, Canete and Huachipa (Tigner 1978).

[46] By 1923 when the contract immigration terminated, approximately 3,772 migrants from Okinawa had entered Peru, and between 1924-1941, 6,622 more arrived (Tigner 1978).

highland before them (Hu-DeHart 1992).[47] In other words, when the Japanese nationals, including Okinawans, arrived in Peru, they entered into the already multiracial hierarchical society that was dominated by people of European ethnicities and a white power structure. In this context, not only did all migrants from Japan, most of whom would not have had contact before with people outside their own villages in Japan (Nakamoto 1994: 47), come to be seen as a unified block, the 'Japanese', but were often lumped together into the category of '*chinos*', the Chinese, or *asiáticos*, Asians (ibid.: 6). According to Gerbi, the racial relations among the labourers were not amicable, and the 'poor natives' who saw the Japanese as cheap and dangerous competitors regarded them as an 'inferior race' (1943: 61).

Under the harsh condition of the *haciendas*, many fled to Lima-Callao area and other coastal cities, before fulfilling their contracts. Among them were many Okinawans. According to a memoir written by Yagi Sentei (1963), in 1908 on the day of *Tenchōsetsu* (Japanese emperor's birthday), 60 immigrants from Okinawa prefecture in the *hacienda* in Chancay and Esquival, some forty kilometres north of Lima, fled in a group on foot towards Lima, crossing the desert and Ancón mountain, holding *hi-no-maru* (the Japanese national flag). They were later saved by Yagi, also an Okinawan who had arrived on the fourth ship and who was already establishing himself as a grocery owner in Lurin near Lima. There were many others who died during similar flights, or who managed to arrive in Lima, but suffering from malaria, not knowing about the existence of charity hospitals, or not being able to speak standardised Japanese or Spanish to ask for shelter, subsequently lost their lives (Peru Shimpo 1975: 47). It was against this background that Yagi, who had privately been providing asylum for the Okinawan migrants escaping from *haciendas*, together with about thirty other men, formed the *Okinawa Seinen Dōshikai* (Okinawan Young Men of the Same Ideal) in 1909.[48] This was one of the first associations established among the migrants

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[47] Slavery in Peru was abolished in 1854 (Hu DeHart 1989).
[48]. The actual date was 30 July, two days after Peru's Independence Day (Yagi 1963).   Some sources say the *Okinawa Seinen Dōshikai* was established in 1910 (see for example Titiev 1951,

from Japan in Peru.[49] The group was also the first to organise *tanomoshi-kō*, a form of rotating savings and credit system, which then spread gradually to other Japanese in Peru, and contributed to migrants establishing their own small businesses (Yagi 1963, Peru Shimpo 1975). According to James Tigner who interviewed Yagi in 1952, while the main purpose in founding the association was to assist Okinawan migrants in need, another consideration for him was that the personal appearance of the migrants in 'rags', which Yagi described 'shameful' would damage their reputation, unless their condition was improved' (Tigner 1978: 37). The fear, and the anticipation of discrimination expressed here by Yagi points to the pressure of the 'colonizing gaze (Chow 1993) of the 'modern others' that would label Okinawans as a whole as 'savages' that needed to be 'civilised'.

Okinawa Seinen Dōshikai was later renamed *Okinawa Kaigai Kyōkai* (Okinawa Overseas Association) when Kanna Kenwa, an Okinawan retired admiral visited Peru in 1928, and suggested that the organisation join the Okinawa Overseas Association in Okinawa (Tigner 1978: 37). The connection with the homeland thus created helped to persuade more to join, and by 1941, it had acquired approximately 1,700 members (ibid.). An acquisition of a building in 1936 provided the members with a physical space in which they could meet and socialise regularly. Social activities such as weddings, funerals, and celebrations of other events begun to be centred around the association, and sports and dance clubs for extracurricular activities for their children were formed (Nakamoto 1994: 109). The association, which later became *Okinawa Ken-jin-kai* (Okinawa Prefectural Association) also functioned as an intermediary between its members and the Peruvian government when acquiring business permits and licences, and as a guarantor for the application of *yobiyose* (calling over relatives), until it was closed down in 1942 during the Second World War (Tigner 1978.: 38).

Tigner 1978). Here I refer to the year cited in the memoir by Yagi Sentei (1963) and (Moromisato Misato and Shimabukuro Inami 2006: 63).
[49] The Lima barbers association established in 1907 was the first Japanese organisation in Peru (Morimoto 1997: 51). Subsequently, the Japanese Trade Association of Peru was formed in 1915 and the Callao Central Japanese Trade Association in 1918 (Titiev 1951: 229).

Migrants from other prefectures soon followed suit, and also established their own prefectural associations, but what was particular about the migrants from Okinawa was that besides the umbrella organisation of *Okinawa Seinen Dōshikai*, they also organised themselves around their closer kin and friends in the villages and formed *son-jin-kai* (village associations) (Moromisato Misato and Inami 2006). These became the foundation for the numerous *shi-chō-son-kai* (city-town-village associations) which still function today. In later years, the meaning of *son-jin-kai* changed to being a club based on the village of origin in which many have not set foot. However, at that time when migrants first arrived, *son-jin-kai* was a space in which to socialise with and provide help to people who they knew from back home, and their early establishment seems to suggest that their attachment to their village was perhaps stronger than their identification with the totality of Okinawa.

These associations, formed in most part spontaneously among the migrants, were soon to be welded into the hierarchy of the Japanese society in Peru with *Perū Chūō Nihon-jin-kai* (the Central Japanese Association of Peru) at its head. When the Japanese consul first opened in Lima in 1909, officials of the Foreign Service and a handful of Japanese leaders, such as the representatives of the commercial firms, got together, recognising the need to establish an over-arching organisation that would control the rapidly growing Japanese population in Peru. Beginning with the publication of the promotional magazine *Jiritsu* (Self-support), the group soon established the *Nippon-jin Kyōkai* (Japanese Society) in 1912, followed by the publication of a Japanese language newspaper called *Andes Jihō* in 1913. It did not take off smoothly in the beginning, because this group of the elite, who often held themselves aloof from the rest of the immigrants, were not well thought of by the immigrants, who had already formed their own group called *Nihon-jin Dōshikai* in 1910, which was later renamed *Perū Nippon-jin-kai* (Peru Japanese Association) in 1914. The division was soon dissolved in 1917 by the merging of the two groups and the founding of the *Perū Chūō Nihon-jin-kai,* but the social barriers between the two groups - the elite and the immigrants – were never completely dissolved until World War II, when the majority of the elite were deported from the country. Nevertheless, in the pre-war period, the elite, the

officials of the consul in particular, exercised immense power over the immigrants and *Perū Chūō Nihon-jin-kai*, along with the Japanese elementary schools financed by it, was to become at the heart of what would come to be considered the tight-knit community, the *colonia Japonés* (lit. the Japanese Colony)[50] in Peru.

3.2 Discrimination against the migrants from Okinawa

The end of contract migration in 1923 did not stop the flow of migration of Japanese nationals. On the contrary, the Exclusion Act of 1924 that excluded Asian immigrants from entering the United States accelerated the flow of Japanese to South American countries. The so called '*jiyū-imin*' (free migrants) - 'picture brides' among them - who were already arriving even before the termination of contract migration, continued to make their journey to Peru. Many of them were being 'called' by their relatives who had travelled to Peru before them.

One way in which the Japanese consul and *Perū Chūō Nihon-jin-kai* exercised their power over migrants was through controlling immigration, by having the power to approve such 'calls'. For approval, *Perū Chūō Nihon-jin-kai* required that the migrants had to be a member of the association in 'good standing' for at least two years, and after 1924 when immigration had become more restricted, it made the condition that the 'calling' migrants must have at least 8,000 soles in cash, or property assets (Masterson and Funada-Classen 2004: 67).

Furthermore, at times, the Japanese consul and *Perū Chūō Nihon-jin-kai* were also instrumental in deporting - extralegally to the Peruvian law - immigrants whom they considered 'unwanted' back to Japan. One such example can be found in an anecdote in the commemorative book published by Peru Shimpo on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Japanese migration to Peru:

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[50] 'Community' would be closer to the meaning of '*colonia*' in this context, as the Japanese settled in dispersed areas.

Around 1938, an upset woman from Okinawa was appealing for something at the entrance of the Consulate, but people there could not understand her, as she was speaking in Okinawan. It turned out that she was a wife of one of the four people who were deported from the *hacienda* in Bocanegra during the time of Consular Fujimura. At that time, there were three Japanese schools in the vicinity, in Bocanegra, Taboada, and Okendo. When the Consulate decided to merge the three schools into one in Taobada….two other groups opposed this vehemently. When Hayasaka (from the Consulate) hinted at deportation, they became even more obstinate, and had even tried to prevent the removal of equipment from their old schools. This prompted people from the Consulate to employ strong-arm tactics; one day, they went to the *hacienda* to capture the 'ringleaders' who were in the middle of working, abducted them still in the clothes they were wearing that day, and deported them. The family left behind were turned adrift, and it was one of them with a baby, who went crazy and went to the Consulate (Peru Shimpo 1975: 131).

In addition to the illegal exercising of the power to deport, they also kept an eye on people coming in to Peru. Migration from Okinawa Prefecture to Peru was never officially banned by the Japanese government as was the case in Brazil, mentioned in the previous chapter. However, the documents sent by the member of the consul in Peru to the Foreign Ministry in Japan attests that there was a similar kind of discriminatory feeling. In the report sent by Yodogawa Masaki, a consulate representative, to Shidehara Kijūro, the foreign minister of Japan, entitled 'The present condition of the Japanese in Peru seen from statistics' on 30 September 1930, migrants from Okinawa prefecture are singled out for criticism for concentrating themselves in the city area, and for monopolizing small businesses such as coffee shops, thus inviting anti-Japanese feelings among Peruvians.[51] The report goes on to comment on their traits of being 'uneducated', of having different customs and habits from the mainlanders and of not being interested in mixing with others. In a separate report sent on 26 June 1930 entitled 'On academic achievement test of the new comers', Yodogawa presents the result of research conducted by the members of the consulate.[52] At the port of

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[51] No.106 'Tōkei yori Mitaru Zaihi Hōjin Genjō' from the Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives (Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan Shozō) Honpō Imin Kankei Zakken Peru-koku no Bu vol 1 (J.1.20. J2-4)

[52] No. 83 'Shin Tokōsha no Gakuryoku Shiken ni kanshi Hōkoku no Ken' from the Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives (Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan Shozō) Honpō Imin Kankei Zakken Peru-

Callao, they waited for the new migrants to disembark and as soon as they landed, made them read passages from the text book used in Japanese elementary school. They prepared different texts for males and females and results were presented in separate columns for people from Okinawa prefecture and those from other prefectures. [53] Yodogawa remarked on the result as follows:

> As the tests were easy, I was expecting that all of those who finished compulsory education would pass. However…only 31 out of a total of 91 (*sic.*) candidates, that is to say, just over 30 percent passed. While the pass rate of people from other prefectures was 76 percent, that of people from Okinawa prefecture amounted to a mere 21 percent…As I got to know the academic aptitude of people from Okinawa prefecture, I felt disheartened. As a whole, academic aptitude of Okinawans who had finished higher primary school (*kōtō shōgakkō*) was equal to that of people from other prefectures who had finished ordinary primary school (*jinjō shōgakkō*).   Among Okinawans who only finished ordinary primary school, it was rare to find those with academic aptitude that can say they finished compulsory education. ….the above phenomenon is not limited to new comers… I feel strongly that there is a pressing need to improve qualification/aptitude of Japanese residents of this country. [54]

This 'test', while being presented as an objective survey, was not only subjective in terms of grading, but also had the thinly veiled intention of labelling migrants from Okinawa as being 'illiterate' and 'uneducated', as is apparent in its categorisation and comparison of 'Okinawans' and 'People from other Prefectures' in the first place.

In another instance, according to a journalist Ito Kazuo (1984), in 1934, Kasuga, the General Consul of Japan in Peru, attempted to restrict the 'calling' of families from Okinawa for a year, because 'Okinawans differ (from the mainlanders) in terms of culture, language and customs, and are like the *Indios* in Peru'. This idea that 'Okinawans are *Indios'* was supported and voiced by many Japanese primary

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koku no Bu vol 1 (J.1.20. J2-4)

[53]   The result was for Okinawans: *kō* (excellent) 15 people, *otsu* (good) 25, *hei* (average) 20, illiterate or near illiterate 10, can read Western alphabet 4. For people from other prefectures: *kō* (excellent) 16 *otsu* (good) 4 *hei* (average) 1, illiterate or near illiterate 0, can read Western alphabet 6.

[54] Ibid.

school teachers in Peru, which had made pupils from Okinawa prefecture so embarrassed that they could not even go to school (ibid.). Reacting to this situation, eighteen Okinawans formed a group named *Shōwa Shinsengumi Tekken-tai* and daily visited the Consul Kasuga and teachers who supported this idea, and one by one, asked them to take back their remark, but the issue was not resolved, as Kasuga and three teachers did not comply.

This incident points to various aspects of ethnic consciousness in the Japanese community at the time. First, that the Japanese in Peru were fully aware of the racial hierarchy in Peru, which had 'white' in power at the top, and *'Indios'* and 'blacks' at the bottom, and had themselves internalised and used these categories accordingly in discriminatory discourses. The *'Indios'* were (and still are) frequently referred to by the Japanese migrants as *'dojin'*, a term in Japanese, which refers to the 'natives', with the connotation of them being primitive, barbarian, and innately inferior,[55] and the logic apparent in the incident was that if Okinawans, the 'Indios' among them, continued to be part of the Japanese community in Peru, then their position as a whole in the racial hierarchy would be compromised, as the distinction between Okinawans and the 'mainlanders' was not made by other Peruvians. Exposed to such pressure to become 'Japanese', migrants from Okinawa were pressured to make an effort to rid themselves of their cultures and language, to 'mimic' (Bhaba 1994) the other Japanese, and to become more 'civilised' and 'educated', so as not to be identified as *'Indios'* of Japan.

3.3 Nurturing the *Yamato-Damashī* in Peru

The pressure of Japanisation for the Okinawans did not end when they left Japan for Peru, and the attempt of *dōka* (assimilation) and *kōminka* to create loyal subjects of Japan continued most notably in the area of education. As a historian Toake Endoh maintains, in the pre-war period, the Japanese state aspired to build

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[55] The Japanese newspapers circulating at the time abound in examples of readers' letters that caution other immigrants to behave 'properly' so as not be seen as similar to 'Indios' by other Peruvians. See for example, Andes Jihō 1916.7.28. p6, 1916.10.2. p.5, 1916.12.1. p.7, and 1916.12.20. p.7.

a 'cross-border society relationship' with the Japanese in South America, and through Japanese in their respective countries, emphasised education in 'Japanese orthodoxy to arouse collective consciousness as the nation's people' (2009: 180).

Starting with a private school run by a Buddhist priest Ueno Kōan in 1908 in the *hacienda* in Canete (Peru Shimpo 1975), the number of Japanese educational institutions in Peru steadily increased until a total of 32 had been reached in 1935 (Titiev 1951). These schools, some of which initially sprung up as spontaneous activities by small group of people in various *haciendas*, soon came to be subsumed under the power structure with *Lima Nihon-jin Gakkō* (The School for the Japanese in Lima) at its centre. *Lima Nihon-jin Gakkō*, better known as *Lima-Nikkō*, was not only the largest, but also the principal institution, being affiliated with the Central Association, *Perū Chūō Nihon-jin-kai*, recognised by the Ministry of Education in Japan and having teachers sent from Japan specifically for the purpose (Fukumoto 1997: 211). While the standard Peruvian curriculum in Spanish was also taught there, a program in Japanese, which was modelled on the schools in Japan, was considered crucial. Thus, on its inauguration on 18th November 1920, underneath the national flags of Peru and Japan, *Kimi-ga-yo*, the Japanese national anthem was sung, and *kyōiku-chokugo* (the Imperial Rescript on Education), which was promulgated by the Meiji Emperor in 1890 as epitomising Japanese moral essence, was read out by the principle (Peru Shimpo 1975: 85). Apart from reading and writing in *kokugo* (the national language) the subjects included mathematics, the history and geography of Japan, and morals based on *shūshin*, a book of ethics distributed by the Japanese Ministry of Education. Respect for the emperor was inculcated throughout (Titiev 1951: 233-234).

According to Furusawa Higoo, the principal of *Lima Nikkō*, the basic principle of the education for the *nisei* (second generation), as supported by both the Foreign Ministry of Japan and the 'Japanese Society' in Peru was to 'foster good and promising Peruvian citizens with *Yamato-Damashī* (the Japanese spirit)'(1937: 1). To be sure, parents of the *nisei* were not unanimously in agreement with the principle, as Furusawa himself concedes; there were those who only wanted

Japanese-style education, as their children would eventually be going back to Japan; there were others who believed that good Peruvian citizens should have a Peruvian spirit and rid themselves of attachment to and yearning for Japan; others, while sympathetic to the principle, felt it a wasted effort to foster *Yamato-Damashī* in an environment where Peruvianisation was unavoidable (ibid.: 2). However, he counters all these views stating that as the *kokutai* (the national polity) of Japan and Peru are different, maintaining that *Yamato-Damashī* in Peru is not only possible but necessary. In his view, Japan is a nation state (*minzoku kokka*), which 'had maintained pure bloodline and spirit for thousands of years'(ibid.: 4). On the other hand, Peru is a legal state composed of different races each maintaining their own spirits and pursuing individual interests, controlled by the political and legal system; there is no single language that they can call the expression of *minzoku seishin* (national spirit) of Peru, as although everyone speaks Spanish on the streets, at home they speak in different tongues. Thus, in his argument, a requirement to be a good Peruvian citizen does not lie in ridding oneself of *Yamato-Damashī* and acquiring an 'unidentifiable object called Peruvian spirit' (ibid.: 5).

The Japanese schools, *Lima Nikkō* in particular, did not only function as institutions to inculcate *nisei* with *Yamato-Damashī* and make them fit into the cultural pattern of the Japanese in Peru, but they were also meeting points for the families, who would get together on occasions such as *undōkai* (athletic competitions) held annually during the celebrations of *Tenchōsetsu*, the emperor's birthday (Peru Shimpo 1975). On 10th November 1940, for the celebration of the 2,600th year of the Imperial Era (*Kigen 2600-nen Hōshukuten*) held on 10th November 1940, the same day as all over Japan, the ground of *Lima Nikkō* was reported to have been packed (Peru Shimpo 1975: 140). Providing a 'home away from home', the Japanese schools, along with the associations, kept, to a certain extent, the Japanese migrants from being assimilated into Peruvian society, which resulted in arousing suspicion among some Peruvians (Fukumoto 1997: 212). As for the migrants from Okinawa, becoming 'Japanese' with *Yamato-Damashī*

meant that they would also become the target of the anti-Japanese sentiment that was building up at that time.

3.4 Manifestations of Anti-Japanese Sentiments

The looting of Japanese businesses and residences, known as *saqueo*, that occurred in Lima on 13 May 1940 was the critical incident in the history of the Peruvian *Nikkei* community which is still today referred to as a traumatic experience (Fukumoto 1997: 521) that affected their psyche in such a way as to lead them to make an unconscious effort not to stand out as a group for a long time (Takenaka 2004: 94).[56] On this day, a student protest turned into a mob riot that was joined by the general public that targeted the Japanese specifically. The police stood by watching, while the looters drove their lorries back and forth to force open the closed Japanese shops; Chinese shop owners, who along with the Japanese merchants were referred to by the locals as '*chinos de la esquina*' (Chinese of the corner [shop]), hung the 'blue sky with a white sun' - the flag of nationalist China - above their shops, lest they be mistaken (Peru Shimpo 1975: 138). Many families fled to *Lima Nikkō*, the school, for shelter, but in the end, the properties of 620 families – of which 500 were Okinawan - were damaged, dozens were injured, one life was lost, and 54 families (316 people) whose properties were damaged and hope for recovery was deemed slim were sent back to Japan (ibid.: 137).[57] A few days later, on 24 May, an earthquake struck Lima, and among the *Nikkei*, the story still circulates around like a myth that looters saw it as the wrath of God and said that 'Irohito (Hirohito, the Japanese emperor) has sent the *kamikaze* (divine wind) to Lima'.[58]

This incident, which might seem to be a sporadic racial event due to tension among the masses, was, as is the case with all such incidents, deeply rooted in the

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[56] The early candidacy of Fujimori was not supported by the community that feared the community as a whole would be punished again, should he win and do damage to the country (Takenaka 2004: 94)

[57] The damage caused by the event came to 1.6 million dollars in total (Peru Shimpo 1975).

[58] An Okinawan Peruvian writer has told me this is more like a myth, and that the majority of Peruvians would not have known who Hirohito was. The account of a woman praying to God on the street after the earthquake kneeling and screaming, 'I did nothing wrong to the Japanese' is reported in Peru Shimpo (1975: 138).

political and social climate of the time. The anti-Japanese sentiment existed from the early period of immigration for a number of reasons. First, the concentration of the immigrants in the Lima and Callao area and their success in small scale businesses, some of which they were seen to be monopolising in, caused public opinion to turn against them (Gerbi 1943),[59] even though their tendency to become merchants in the city rather than farmers was partly because they had only limited opportunities as contract workers, and also because they were institutionally unable to acquire new arable lands, which were already owned by colonists (Takenaka 2004: 84). Anti-Japanese propaganda emanating from the United States that warned against Japan's penetration in Latin America also had a significant influence.[60] As early as in 1912, Francisco García Calderón, the prominent Peruvian writer wrote: 'This current of emigration is neither chaotic nor fruitless. Even more than the German, the Japanese is an emissary of imperialistic design. He does not become absorbed into the nation in which he lives; he does not become naturalized under the protection of its hospitable laws; he preserves his worship of the Mikado, his national traditions, and his noble devotion to the dead' (1913: 324). Furthermore, the growing trade imbalance between Peru and Japan in the 1930s due to the expansion of the cotton trade also contributed to fostering resentment against the Japanese (Takenaka 2004: 91). Against this background, in 1922, an Anti-Asiatic Patriotic League was formed, and attacks on Japanese in the local newspapers such as *El Tiempo* and *La Prensa* had become 'almost a daily occurrence', condemning them for being 'unassimilable' and 'monopolistic' and urging their readers to join the 'anti-yellow campaign' (Nakamoto 1994: 78, 83).

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[59] The main occupations of the Japanese in the urban area were barbers, small traders, grocers, carpenters, restaurant owners and waiters, domestic servants, gardeners and laundrymen (Tigner 1978: 26)

[60] In 1910, an anonymous U.S. writer wrote in American Review of Reviews that 'In this vast colonization field of Latin America, the Japanese can themselves take part in the cultivation of waste lands, enlarging the circle of their activity, and promoting their interest and their influence, for the greater glory of the Land of the Rising Sun' (quoted in Nakamoto 1994: 75).

The anti-Japanese disposition was not just a sentiment, but had a direct consequence for the Japanese in Peru in the form of law. Starting with the abolition of contract migration in 1923, in 1936 a Supreme Decree was issued restricting the number of immigrants to 16,000 per nation. As the Japanese population already exceeded 20,385 in 1930, this made it difficult for new migrants from Japan to arrive. Another restrictive clause in 1937 prohibited the registration of any alien offspring born in Peru prior to 1936, which blocked their path to acquiring Peruvian citizenship. In 1940, an act stipulated that second generation immigrants who left Peru for their homeland – many migrants from Japan sent their children back to Japan for education - would automatically lose their citizenship. Family businesses were also affected with the law of 1932 which required at least 80% of employees to be Peruvian citizens. Although the nationality was never specified in these acts, the Japanese were the implicit target of them (Takenaka 2004: 65).

Leading up to the Second World War, the prospect of the Japanese militaristic expansion to South America and immigrants serving as the fifth-columnist was propagated further. After the Japanese attack on the Pearl Harbor on 7th December 1941, the Peruvian government froze all the assets of Japanese, and closed down Japanese-owned schools, organisations, newspapers and the legation. Gatherings of more than three people from the Axis were banned, and so the Japanese associations, clubs and *tanomoshi* disappeared (Peru Shimpo 1975: 146). Then, following the breaking of relations with the Axis on 24 January 1942, with the co-operation of FBI officers from the United States, the Peruvian police began rounding up all the leading figures in the organizations for deportation starting in September 1941 (Peru Shimpo 1975).[61] These deportees were moved to the internment camps in the United States for the duration of the war (Hirabayashi and Kikumura-Yano 2007). Of the nearly 1800 people deported, an estimated half were Okinawans (Ueunten 2002: 92).

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[61] Prior to this, volunteers were solicited among single men who wanted to go back to Japan in exchange for war hostages. 141 people applied and left on 4 April 1942 (Peru Shimpo 1975: 145).

Despite the treatment of the Japanese by the Peruvian government, attacks in the media, and riots, it must be noted however that relationships between the Japanese and the rest were not necessarily always hostile. As reflected in the Peru Shimpo's publication, during the war, the general public's sentiments towards the Japanese were not hostile, and neither were their children greatly affected at local school. Even after Peru declared war against Japan on 12th February 1945, the general public did not react much (Peru Shimpo 1975: 154). On a personal level, there were stories of neighbours helping and hiding the Japanese in times of *saqueo* and deportation. [62] That they were discriminated based on 'race' politically and institutionally, however, would affect the ways in which they would later form their collective memory.

3.5 *Kachi-gumi*

After the war, as was the case in Brazil, the Japanese community in Peru was split between *kachi-gumi* (victory group), those who refused to believe Japan's defeat in the war, and *make-gumi* (defeat group)*,* those who accepted it (the latter was not an organised group). Unlike in Brazil, however, where *kachi-gumi* was formed as an underground organisation headed by the overall system of *Shindō Renmei* (The Federation of the way of the Subjects) during the war, in Peru, various groups - *Aikoku Dōshikai* (Patriotic Association of People with the Same Ideals)*, Kyōdō Renmei* (Mutual Federation)*, Kōdō Renmei* (Federation of Imperial Way)*, Yamato Minzoku Renmei* (Federation of Yamato Race) – emerged one after another after the war ended (Tigner 1978, Peru Shimpo 1975). With the closure of the Japanese newspapers, there were those who were isolated from the information sources, but those who had access to the radio also refused to believe the defeat even after listening to the *gyokuon-hōsō*, the Imperial broadcast announcement by the Emperor Hirohito concerning the unconditional surrender, and decided that the broadcast was the enemy's counter campaign (Peru Shimpo 1975: 159). The leaders of the organisation led the members to believe that the emperor would soon send a warship to take them back home, and that they would each receive 80,000 soles (U.S.$3,200) upon arriving in Japan (Tigner 1978: 40).

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[62] According to the author's interview with Igei Ginyu in May1999.

Although the exact figure of the total number of *kachi-gumi* is indiscernible,[63] as shown in Figure 2, the overwhelming majority of the members of one such group, *Kyōdō-Renmei* were migrants from Okinawa.

Figure 2 The number of members belonging to *Kyōdō-Renmei* in 1952[64]

Prefecture of origin	Total Members	Number of household	Male	Female
Okinawa	621	120	313	308
Fukushima	28	7	18	10
Kumamoto	23	7	15	8
Fukuoka	14	3	10	4
Shizuoka	9	1	7	2
Yamaguchi	9	3	4	5
Wakayama	5	1	3	2
Mie	1	1	1	0
Total	710	143	371	339

While there were no violent cases of killing as was in Brazil (Maeyama 1979), social and business relations between *kachi-gumi* and *make-gumi* were severed, and at times, death threat notes were sent to those who voiced opinions against *kachi-gumi* (Peru Shimpo 1975). According to a woman I interviewed in Okinawa, who grew up in a *kachi-gumi* family in Peru, division among relatives was not uncommon, and marriages between the groups were opposed by families on both sides. Children of *kachi-gumi* often were not sent to local schools but were educated in private Japanese classes run by their leaders, which continued with the tradition of reading the pre-war Japanese text books, and reciting the *kyōiku chokugo*, the pre-war Imperial Rescript on Education (which the aforementioned informant could still recite by heart).[65] While many of these

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[63] Tigner (1978: 40) states nearly 500 people were *kachi-gumi*, while Peru Shimpo (1975) says there were about 1,000 members.

[64] The table was drawn from data based on *Kyōdō Renmei Kaiin Kazoku Shirabe (Kachi-gumi)* archived under 'immigration (3) D2-5' in the National Diet Library, Tokyo Japan.

[65] The most successful and the longest running Japanese private school managed by the *kachi-gumi* was the school affiliated to *Kyōdō-Renmei*. When it first opened, there were only four pupils, but soon the student numbers increased to over 160. Its teaching method had a strong militaristic flavour and the teaching principle was *chūkun aikoku* (loyalty to the emperor and love for the

children later found work in Japanese companies in Peru using their Japanese language abilities, growing up in the environment was difficult, as the informant told me:

> When I opened my eyes, I was already among the *kachi-gumi*, before I could even walk and talk, I was already surrounded by the cheer of *banzai* to the emperor. In every house (of the members of *kachi-gumi*), there was a photo of the emperor and the empress, and we had to do *sai-keirei* (bowing in highest respect) before meals. I would be slapped on my head if I didn't….Of course, I questioned all this. We are living in Peru, speaking the Peruvian language and eating Peruvian food here, why do we have to bow to the emperor?

The Kachi-gumi in Peru lasted much longer than in Brazil, and was still active throughout the 1950s, and the school affiliated to *Kyōdō-Renmei* survived until 1965 (Peru Shimpo 1975: 163). The formation and persistence of *kachi-gumi*, to an extent, can be understood as the product of their search to redefine themselves in the idioms that they were familiar with, in the face of the sudden loss of their social and symbolic structures brought about by the war. While those who joined the group were a minority, that the Okinawans were also among the members points to the fact that the Japanisation project of the pre-war period that had interpellated Okinawans into becoming imperial subjects had had immense influence on shaping the lives of some migrants from Okinawa and their descendants.

3.6 The New Beginning
The first half of the history of migration of immigrants from Okinawa includes the processes of becoming nationalised as Japanese in Peru through pressure to

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country). They held up photos of the Emperor Hirohito, Tōjō Hideki (general of the Imperial Army and the Prime Minister during the Second World War) and Nogi (a war hero in a Russo-Japanese war) and every time the pupils went in and out of the classroom, they were made to do the *sai-keirei* (the most respectable bow). The subjects were taught only in Japanese. The school's teaching was strict, and pupils were physically disciplined with a stick. Those above the third grade were tested on their writing of *kyōiku-chokugo*, for which more than half of the pupils achieved 100%. The school was never authorised. The two hundred or so graduates were very good at Japanese, and were capable of giving commanding speeches at weddings in Japanese (Peru Shimpo 1975: 163).

assimilate within the Japanese community on the one hand, and through being ascribed as the 'Japanese' by the Peruvian society at large, and becoming the target of various anti-Japanese attacks on the other. However, this is not to say that by the Second World War, the process of becoming Japanese had been completed for the migrants from Okinawa, nor that friction between Okinawans and the mainlanders had disappeared. In March 1943, the Research and Analysis Branch of the Office of Strategic Services compiled a report entitled 'Field Notes on The Japanese in Latin America'. The report, albeit written with a specific purpose on their part as a contribution to the war effort, in assessing the 'weakness' of the 'Japanese colony' in Peru, picks up on the division between Okinawans that made up sixty percent and the others from the mainland as follows:

> Although they (Okinawans) have Japanese citizenship and the Loo Choo islands now have full prefectural status, they are not accepted by the Japanese as equals. They are accused of being dirty and unmannered and are social outcasts. No Japanese will marry an Okinawan and when Okinawans and Japanese find employment on the same hacienda, in Peru, the latter demand separate quarters. Psychologically, the Okinawans are confused. To be Japanese has been, in their experience, a great advantage, and if they explain that they are Loo Chooans, nobody cares. So they loudly acclaim their Japanese citizenship. A great deal could be done with them to break up the Japanese colony in Peru. (Research and Anaysis Branch OSS 1943: 37)

The post-war period, nevertheless, saw these internal differences diminish to a great extent, if not disappear. According to Nakamoto (1994), by the late 1980s, when the 'reverse migration' to Japan began, intermarriage between Okinawan and 'mainlander' sections of the community had become more common, and *sansei* (the third generations) and the later generations often did not know the names of the prefectures of origin unless they needed to find out in order to obtain their *koseki* (family register) to work in Japan. Many *nisei* (the second generation), also felt that such distinctions were no longer relevant, even though they were more aware of past discrimination and divisions (ibid.: 151).

For the majority of the migrants from Japan in Peru, the Second World War represented the turning point. This was when they came to realise that returning to a war-devastated Japan was no longer practical, and had come to think of their settlement in Peru, typically with a family by this time, in more permanent terms, rather than the prolonged '*dekasegi*', the temporary sojourn (ibid.:132, Peru Shimpo: 1975: 159). Flows of new migrants from Japan had more or less ceased too, except for some cases of return of the *kirai-nisei*, children who were sent back to Japan before the war for their education, and of a few 'calling' of relatives, once Peru lifted the ban on Japanese entering the country in 1957 (Yanagida 1999). The word *Nikkei-jin* (people of Japanese origin), or simply *Nikkei*, began gradually to replace the words which had been used to identify them in the pre-war period, such as *zairyū-min* (foreign residents), *hōjin* (Japanese nationals) or, when in writing, often *zai-hi-dōhō* (compatriot residents in Peru).

Those who had lived in urban areas had already begun acquiring the Spanish language before the war, as their contact with the locals in their shops and their employees necessitated it (Nakamoto 1994: 111-112). After the war, however, with more *nisei* and the later generation attending the local schools, the shift towards Spanish was further accelerated to the extent that except for *issei* (the first generation), *kirai-nisei*, the newly arrived migrants, and some of those who retained Japanese/Okinawan modes of communication in agricultural settings outside the cities, neither the Japanese nor Okinawan language were any longer the principle medium of communication. Some words, such as terms relating to family relationships, daily life, and Japanese/Okinawan customs, were retained and used in conversation with family and *Nikkei* friends. However, the shift towards Spanish in general had meant more interaction with and access to Peruvian society at large, which in turn led not only to their upward social mobility into the middle class for many, but also to the diversification of the *Nikkei*, in many cases, out of their tight-knit 'community'.

Although the general pre-war image of the Japanese in Peru had been that, unlike the Chinese men who had arrived in Peru single and mixed 'freely with the

natives', they were 'overwhelmingly endogamous' (Gerbi 1943), many who were unable to marry through the 'picture-bride' system or to find *nisei* spouses, (or indeed who were in love), did in fact find partners outside of the Japanese community (Nakamoto 1994: 125). Nevertheless, exogamy had often been avoided, firstly because the earlier migrants envisaged that they would return to Japan one day, and secondly because, as they were fully aware of the racial hierarchy in Peru, 'marrying down' to '*Indios'* or lower class '*mestizos* (people of mixed European and Amerindian ancestry)' was not only seen to be harmful to their social advancement (ibid.: 124), but might lead to being ostracised from the community. On the other hand 'marrying up' to 'white' upper class was not an option for most, as the upper class had their own attitudes of exclusion (ibid.). In the post-war period, within the *Nikkei* enclave, the prejudice against those who marry outside persisted even in the late 1990s, as I have heard on number of occasions comments such as 'if the mother is *Perū-jin* ("a Peruvian" in Japanese which include or exclude *Nikkei* depending on the context – here the latter is the case), the Japanese tradition can no longer be transmitted', or '*Perū-jin* only marry *Nikkei* woman because they are after *okane* (money)'. Nevertheless, in reality, not only marriage between the Okinawans and the 'mainlanders', but also marriage outside of the *Nikkei* enclave increased after the war (Nakamoto 1994, Takenaka 2000).

The diversification of the descendants of the migrants from Japan had created among them classes of people who no longer actively participated in the '*Nikkei* community': those who belonged to the upper class, intellectuals and artists, who viewed the 'community' as insular and its activities restricted; and the lower class Japanese-Peruvians who could not afford to belong and felt excluded (Takenaka 2000: 88-89). The '*Nikkei* community', often referred to locally as '*la collecvitidad Nikkei',* in this context, was the perceived community that revolved around associations and schools 'reborn' after the war.

3.7 The 'Nikkei Community' and its Institutions

Among the *Nikkei* associations, the first to reopen after the war was that of Okinawans, under the name of the Okinawa Relief Association of Peru (*Perū Okinawa Kyūen Renmei-kai/Sociedad Socorro Okinawa del Perú*). It was founded in 1947 in response to the appeal from the already established *Okinawa Kyūen-kai* in North America and *Okinawa Kyūen Renmei* Headquaters in Tokyo, both of which were formed for the purpose of raising funds for relief in war-devastated Okinawa (Peru Shimpo 1975: 168).[66] Three years later in 1950, the association was renamed United Association of Okinawans (*Okinawa-jin Renmei-kai*), and its name changed again to Okinawan Association of Peru (*Perū Okinawa-jin-kai*) in 1952, by which time it had nearly 1,000 active members (Goya 1987: 94, Tigner 1978: 39).[67] In March 1960, a physical site was bought to accommodate the association, and this became a space where weddings, anniversaries, and receptions for guests from Okinawa were held, and Peruvian festivities - carnival, mother's day, father's day and Christmas – as well as Japanese/Okinawan – *minyō-kai* (Okinawan folk music festival), *bōnen-kai* (end of the year party), *keirō-kai* (Seniors' Appreciation Day) - were celebrated (Moromisato Misato and Shimabukuro Inami 2006: 64).[68] After Okinawa was returned to Japan in 1972, the name of the association also changed to Okinawa Prefectural Association of Peru (*Perū Okinawa Ken-jin-kai /Asociación Okinawense del Perú*), which became a highly structured organisation with approximately forty affiliated associations including *shi-chō-son-kai*, or clubs based on members' municipal origin in Okinawa. In 1979, the first stone was laid for the new site for the association in the disctrict of Ate in Lima in the presence of Nishime Junji, the then Prefectural Governor of Okinawa (Tokumura 1987: 32, 35). Completed by *Fujita-gumi*, the Japanese construction company in 1981, the cost for the land of 60 thousand square metres, the building, and the athletic ground with a swimming

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[66] Their initial plan to raise funds through putting on *engei-kai*, performances from Okinawa,earlier in 1946 was halted by the *kachi-gumi*, who saw it as admittance of the defeat, and called the organisers, one of whom was a member of *kachi-gumi*, 'traitors to the nation'. However, in June 1947 in Jardin Peru, a meet without *engeikai* was organised to raise money, and the association was established (Peru Shimpo 1975).

[67] Women were excluded from membership at the time (Tigner 1978: 39).

[68] The land was bought in Antonio Miro Quesada Street in Barrios Altos (Moromisato Misato and Shimabukuro Inami 2006: 63)

pool and courts for ball games totalled over 400 million soles for which Okinawa Prefecture and municipalities in Okinawa contributed approximately 150 million yen (Tokumura 1987: 32, 35). This new site was to become a space where *ijūsai* (migrants' festival) commemorating the 75th (1981), 90th (1996), and 100th (2006) anniversaries of the arrival of the first Okinawans in Peru were celebrated in grand scale.

As was the case before the war, the Okinawa Prefecture Association soon came to be hierarchically positioned under the umbrella organisation of the *Nikkei* community, Japanese-Peruvian Association (*Asociación Peruano Japonesa,* APJ hereafter), a reincarnation of the pre-war *Perū Chūō Nihon-jin-kai*.[69] APJ is the organisation that liaises between Japan and Peru, between *Nikkei* and the larger society and 'monopolises activities, resources and definitions' (Ropp 2006). During my brief fieldwork in Peru in 1996, 1999 and 2006, I learned that the *Centro Cultural Peruano Japonés* (Peruvian-Japanese Cultural Centre) that houses APJ, and the athletic stadium *La Unión* were two central institutions around which much of the *Nikkei* activities both official and private took place. In other words, these two institutions, both located in a middle-class neighbourhood in Lima - the *Centro Cultural* in the district of Jesus Maria and *La Unión* in Pueblo Libre - operated as what C.W. Mills calls 'cultural apparatus' inside which, standing between individuals and events, 'the images, meanings and slogans that define the worlds in which (we) live are organized and compared, maintained and revised, lost and cherished, hidden, debunked, celebrated' (1963: 406).

The Cultural Centre was built in 1967 on a field of 10 thousand square metres received from the Peruvian government two years before in compensation for the expropriation of Japanese schools during the Second World War. Apart from APJ, the 10-storey building housed Japanese restaurants, a karaoke bar, a beauty salon, banks, and a museum dedicated to the history of Japanese migration to Peru.

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[69] The central organisation for *Nikkei* restarted its activities in 1955 as the Japanese Central Association. It was renamed the Japanese-Peruvian Association of Peru in May 1984, which was again amended in 1998 to its current name: Asociación Peruano Japonesa. Affiliated to APJ are prefectural associations, associations based on regions in Peru, *Nikkei* schools, cultural institutions, a library, a museum, a women's association, youth associations, financial organisations, and others.

Courses on Japanese language and culture, exhibitions, and film screenings also took place here. In the vicinity were an affiliated hospital and a theatre.

The stadium *La Unión*, on the other hand, was not only a sports stadium where large events were held, but was also where parents dropped off their children to play with their friends at the weekends, the elderly met every morning for *rajio taisō* (callisthenics by radio) and *gateball* (croquet-like sports), and family and friends got together in general. Within the complex were not only various sports facilities but were restaurants, shops, banks, and *Colegio La Unión*, a private *Nikkei* primary and secondary school, which mainly followed the Peruvian curriculum but also provided some Japanese language and culture classes. The lives of its students, I was told, revolved around *La Unión* during their private leisure time. As a result, they tended to come in contact with the world outside the *Nikkei* enclave only after they had graduated from school and entered universities or found work. Only a fraction of *Nikkei* children went to *Colegio La Unión*, because as a private school, its fees were not inexpensive. Others went to less expensive *Nikkei* schools such as la Victora, Hideyo Noguchi, and José Gálvez, and many others simply went to local national schools. Some parents who had money also put their children into non-*Nikkei* private schools. In the *Nikkei* community, there was a general perception that a social hierarchy existed among them according to which schools they attended, with those who went to *Colegio La Unión* at the top, followed by the other *Nikkei* schools, and local national schools at the bottom. Many of those who went to local schools also went to *La Unión* stadium for leisure and other activities, but some of them thought that *La Unión* students and graduates were 'stuck up' and felt excluded from their group. Those who went to other private schools were somewhat outside this hierarchy, often saw such hierarchy to be irrelevant to them, and often found those who went to *Nikkei* schools to be cliquey and closed-minded.

The 'tradition' of *undōkai* (*undokay*), the athletic meet, from the pre-war period continued to be celebrated on Emperor Hirohito's birthday (29th April) in *La*

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Unión until his death in 1989.[70] Besides putting on a Pan American Song Contest and Sports Contests, and annual dance parties during Carnival, Spring Festival and on New Years' Eve, the stadium *La Unión* was a stage for large scale communal events such as the commemoration of the 75th, 90th and 100th anniversaries of Japanese migrations to Peru and for receptions for guests from Japan, such as Prince Mikasa in 1958 and then Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko in 1967 (Sakata de Chang 1995).   These large scale events, one of which I will look into more in detail in the chapter that follows, functioned to institutionally cultivate and produce a particular kind of *Nikkei* identity and to draw a communal boundary.

The 'endurance' and constant revitalisation of the *Nikkei* institutions in Peru, despite the considerably few post-war migratory in-flows from Japan and the increasing cultural assimilation, can be attributed to various factors. The rise of Japan as an economic power in the post-war period not only meant that Japan had become a positive country to be affiliated to for many; the status of Japan in the world economy also elevated the status of *Nikkei* within Peruvian society which came to see them as 'trustworthy, disciplined, hardworking and technologically advanced people'. This discourse on '*Nikkei* values' (Ropp 2003) in opposition to the '*criollo* characteristics' associated with people of Lima as 'shrewd and deceitful', came not only to be crucial for the self-identification of the *Nikkei*, the majority of whom no longer maintained much of Japanese linguistic and cultural practices (Morimoto 1999); it also became a valuable resource to gain economic and political power in Peruvian society. When the former Peruvian president, Alberto Fujimori, the son of Japanese immigrants from Kumamoto Prefecture to Peru, first stood for election in 1990, it was the discourse of these '*Nikkei* values', along with the image of him as an ethnic and racial other – he distributed a photo of himself dressed as a samurai with a sword in his hand - that he utilised to mobilise the indigenous majority who were economically, socially and politically marginalised in Peruvian society (Lee 2010, Ropp 2003). While the *Nikkei*

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[70] *Undōkai* is now (as of 2010) celebrated on the last Sunday of April or first Sunday of May to celebrate Japan-Peru Friendship Day.

community as an institution distanced itself from the campaign at the time,[71] fearing that if Fujimori failed to deliver, the anti-Japanese sentiment of the pre-war period might resurge, that Fujimori eventually won the election made the *Nikkei* in Peru realise the extent of the currency *Nikkei* values had in Peruvian society. This, in turn, motivated *Nikkei* leaders (referred to as *los dirigentes*), who would gain social status as prominent figures in the 'respected' community, to maintain and continuously revitalise *Nikkei* institutions. Japanese governments, both central and local, also contributed to the survival of the institutions. Financial support for the construction of *Nikkei* institutions' infrastructures, and scholarship awards for young community members with opportunities to study and train in Japan were some of the examples in which governments in Japan continue to be involved in the *Nikkei* community in Peru (Takenaka 2000).

The *Nikkei* institutions which had come to earn a place of a degree of prominence in Peruvian society, however, were simultaneously facing a challenge in the 1990s, as they had experienced a significant drop in membership, due to the exodus of many young *Nikkei* to Japan (Masterson 2006, Ropp 2003). This new turn of events in the history of Japanese migration to Peru was to impact the community in such a way as to make its members question the boundary and meaning of what it is to be a *Nikkei*. With their membership dwindling, some *Nikkei* institutions began opening up their educational and recreational activities to a broader audience beyond the ethnic community (Ropp 2003). Although the costs for these activities restrict the entry of those from low socio-economic groups, and the important positions in the formal organisations continue to be held by and large

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[71]In the April 12 1990 edition of the Peruvian national paper, El Comercio, APJ released the following statement: '91 years since the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants in Peru, four generations of Peruvians - their descendants - take part actively in all aspects of the national life, reaffirming permanently and with pride our Peruvian nationality. It came to be of public knowledge that in the last days some acts and disagreeable reactions have taken place against members of our community and persons of Asian origin in general. This causes to us worry deeply. We understand that these acts are products of the heat of the electoral contest, but that by no means justifies (these actions) in a democratic system. In response to assumptions that the *Nikkei* community as such, supports or doesn't support one presidential candidate or other, we must repeat that our institutions neither develop nor promote political activity. Also, as Peruvian citizens, our members are free to exercise fully their individual rights to choose and to endorse their own political options. Therefore, and since it is obvious, the above mentioned assumptions lack foundation'.

by the 'ethnically' Japanese members, often from prominent immigrant family lines, on some level, the membership to the *Nikkei* community is becoming relatively more flexible compared to the past (Ropp 2002). With the news of *Nikkei*'s experience in Japan – often that of alienation - reaching back to Peru, members of the *Nikkei* are beginning to articulate their '*Nikkeiness*' less in connection to the Japanese in Japan, but further in terms of the '*Nikkei* values' that came to distinguish them in Peruvian society.

3.8 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I have outlined the history of Japanese migration to Peru, highlighting the social process in which migrants from Okinawa 'became' Japanese national subjects under the ongoing pressure of assimilation carried to Peru from Japan in the pre-war period. I have also looked at how they later came to identify themselves by and large as *Nikkei* in the latter part of the twentieth century. Such positioning of descendants from Okinawa as '*Nikkei*', however, is neither fixed nor unitary. For one, as I will be exploring in later chapters, migratory experience to Okinawa and other parts of Japan as well as the Okinawan prefectural government's initiative to build Okinawan networks across the world from the late 1980s had been destabilising the notion of '*Nikkei*' as a unified identificatory category.

In the *Nikkei* community in the 1990s, discrimination against Okinawans was officially relegated to the past, although in practice, the division never disappeared completely (Ropp 2002). During my fieldwork in Peru, the majority of people I spoke to referred to the division as a 'thing of the past', although some stereotypes seemed to have persisted. A second generation Okinawan-*Nikkei* told me that *Uchinānchu* sometimes perceived *Naichā* (the mainlander) as 'worse' than other *Perū-jin* (Peruvians): '*Uchinānchu* think that *Perū-jin* may be *vivo* (sly and shrewd), but *Naichā* are *abusivos* (abusive). There is this perception that *Uchinānchu* are warmer people compared to *Naichā*'. The younger generation, on the other hand, knew less about the difference between Okinawa and the mainland except for the fact that there were divisions among the immigrants in the earlier generations: they often took elements of Okinawan culture that they were

familiar with, such as food and words, as Japanese culture. How would their affinity towards Okinawa change when they relocated themselves to Okinawa? Would their *Nikkei* subjectivity be transformed by the migratory experience? If so, under what circumstances? Before answering these questions, in the next chapter, I want to further examine an aspect of the *Nikkei* identity construction process in Peru through an analysis of the 'defining moment in *Nikkei* Peruvian history', the centenary celebration of Japanese migration to Peru.

Chapter 4   The Spectacle of the Centennial Celebration of Japanese Immigration to Peru: The Symbolic Construction of *Nikkei* Identity

> The spectacle presents itself simultaneously as all of society, as part of society, and as instrument of unification. As a part of society it is specifically the sector which concentrates all gazing and all consciousness. Due to the very fact that this sector is separate**,** it is the common ground of the deceived gaze and of false consciousness, and the unification it achieves is nothing but an official language of generalized separation.
>
> (Debord 1994: 12)

Every now and again, there are cultural events, which momentarily punctuate the transformed and transformative nature of an imagined community. Such events induce the members of a community to understand and reconfigure their shared experience in a certain way. The *ijū kinen-sai*, the migrants' festival, which abounds in themes that stress the solidarity and communality of the community and the boundary between insiders and outsiders, is one such case.

In May 1999, I was visiting Peru for the second time to participate in the celebrations marking the centennial of Japanese immigration to Peru. Exactly 100 years after the first contract migrants reached the shore of Callao in 1899, the Japanese community in Peru organised a number of events throughout the year to commemorate the occasion. Some official events began on 3 April, the exact date of the first migrants' arrival, which was designated '*Día de la amistad Peruano-Japonesa* (The Day of Peruvian-Japanese friendship)',[72] but a series of central and official celebrations was scheduled for slightly later dates for a week between 24 May and 1 June, and it was during this time that I revisited Peru. This chapter examines this commemorative occasion, focusing in particular on the aspect of symbolism utilised by the event organisers to (re)produce a certain kind of 'collective' *Nikkei* identity.

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[72] The day was established in 1989 during the 90th anniversary of Japanese immigration to Peru, initiated by the then Minister of Labour, Orestes Rodríguez.

4.1 The Event: The Princess, The *Nikkei* President and the Pioneers

The week of celebration in Lima to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the start of Japanese immigration to Peru was composed of a melange of events; a Peruvian-Japanese Cultural exchange festival organised by MOA in the National Museum[73]; a Catholic mass of thanksgiving at Lima Cathedral[74]; visits of Japanese delegates to the Presidential Palace; a Buddhist ceremony in homage of the pioneers[75]; ceremony awards to all the surviving *issei* (first generation); a commemorative plantation of pine trees in the Peruvian Japanese Cultural Centre; a meeting of *issei* with the princess of Japan; the inauguration of the commemorative monument, bridge-shaped with the inscription of names of the first immigrants, in Campo de Marte in the Lima district of Jesus María; the laying of the cornerstone of the Peruvian-Japanese Hospital in the district of Pueblo Libre; the Central celebration in the athletic Stadium, La Uníon; and business meetings of Japanese and Peruvian companies. In and around the central celebration week, concerts and performances were held in various locations, prefectural associations threw their own parties, and a Pan American Japanese speech contest invited *Nikkei* from other Latin American regions.

The celebration, partly due to the fact, no doubt, that Alberto Fujimori, the country's president at the time, was a son of Japanese immigrants, received extensive coverage in the local media: The official banquet at the Presidential Palace was broadcast live on TV; snippets of the mass in Lima Cathedral were shown on the news; and photos of the Japanese princess with the Peruvian President made the front pages of the newspapers, both broadsheet and tabloid. One of the local newspapers, *El Sol*, even published a special 80-page booklet entitled '*Desde el Sol Naciente: El encuentro de dos culturas* (From the Rising Sun: The Encounter of two cultures),' dedicated entirely to the history of Japanese

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[73] MOA (Mokichi Okada Association) is an organisation which was established in 1980 to promote the work of Okada Mokichi who founded a Shinto-based new religion in 1935 (*Dai-Nihon Kannon-kai*, later renamed it *Sekai Kyūsei-kyō* in 1950).

[74] A message from the Pope John Paul II was read during the occasion.

[75] Toyohara Taisei, a priest of Jōdo Shinshū Honganji division, lead the ceremony in the Okinawa-Peruvian Association (AOP). The ceremony was, however, not restricted to Okinawan-Peruvians, but was for all *Nikkei*. AOP was chosen as a venue for practical reasons, as it could accommodate the huge crowd.

immigration to Peru. The Okinawan papers covered the event on their front pages and ran a series focussing on Okinawan migrants in Peru. On the other hand, the coverage in the national newspapers in Japan in general was a moderate one that most likely went unnoticed by the public. The celebration of a particular ethnic community may not have been such an important piece of news for the majority of Peruvian citizens either. However, the event did get noticed and certainly in Lima, on a number of occasions, at newspaper kiosks and in stores, locals would throw comments at me, such as 'Your princess is here, isn't she?'

The display of pomp and ceremony through the media must have worked as an effective diversion for Fujimori, as around this time, he was increasingly being criticised domestically for corruption and despotism, as well as for his intention to change the constitution in order for him to run for the presidency for a third consecutive term.[76] The occasion provided the president with a chance to present his position in the world to the Peruvian public in a seemingly non-political situation; the photo-shot of him together with the princess reminded the public of his strong connection to the economically advanced nation on the other side of the earth.[77]   In this sense, the spectacle was a 'total manipulation of meaning-making processes through theatrical events to serve the production of power and managerial needs to control and spin a good story in the face of bad news' (Boje 2001: 437). The presence of the Nikkei president, on the other hand, for many of the other 'protagonists' of the event, the Japanese immigrants and their descendants, epitomised their achievement in a once foreign land. The celebration was, after all, not only a moment to reflect their past, reaffirm their position in this land, and redefine the relationships with their 'homeland' for themselves, but also an opportunity to assert to the outside world through the media coverage the position, the values, and the role of *Nikkei* in Peruvian society.

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[76] Some astute media coverage was not distracted by the occasion. The cover of the magazine *Carretas* for the week of the celebration had a photo of Fujimori and the princess, but the leading article was entitled, *'Cómo se dice "Otra vez" en Japonés? Saisaisén, Señor Presidente* (How do you say 'One more time' in Japanese? *Saisaisen* [re-reelection], Mr. President' *Carretas* 27 May, 1999, no 1569, pp10-12
[77] Fujimori also made a state visit to Japan a few days before the celebration. On 20 May 1999, he met the Emperor Akihito and the then prime minister of Japan, Obuchi Keizô and this event was also covered in the local press.

The symbol of the past for the *Nikkei* community was the group of the few remaining *issei* (first generation). Throughout the celebration, the emphasis was placed on the *kōreisha* (elderly above 75 years of age), the majority of whom were in fact *issei*. These elderly people present at the ceremonies embodied the now long since deceased pioneers who had crossed the border and endured substantial hardship after first arriving one hundred years ago to become their ancestors, and to whom the Catholic mass was dedicated and the Buddhist offerings were made. In a sense, it was as though through these ceremonies, the pioneers, who were always associated with pain, suffering and bravery, were elevated to the status of ancestral origin for the *Nikkei* Peruvians. Thus we were constantly reminded of the presence of the pioneers through the special treatment of the remaining *issei* during the celebration: they were all awarded with a special certificate of commendation; they were invited to an exclusive audience with the Japanese princess; and during the central event in la Unión stadium, they were collectively given seats at a designated central corner of the auditorium, where they also became the recipients of the gaze of the other spectators.

Of all the different events that took place during this time, the central celebration at La Unión stadium on 30th May was the one people looked forward to most, and for the occasion, more than 15,000 people gathered from different parts of the country.[78] While the central event was not strictly closed to the public, it was a ticketed event. In theory, anybody who paid 10 dollars for a ticket in advance could attend, but the number of tickets was limited, and they were not sold in public ticket shops; instead, they were bought in Japanese institutions, such as the Peruvian-Japanese Cultural Centre or through friends. As a result, locals without connections to the community were scarce among the audience. At the walled venue of La Unión, even when these events were not taking place, the security was strict; if you were a stranger with a face that did not look Japanese, you would be stopped and searched at the entrance. On the other hand, as I looked

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[78] Although the number was small, there were also a couple of *Nikkei* from Okinawa and other parts of Japan who visited Peru for the occasion.

Japanese, despite the fact that I was a short stay visitor and was not a familiar face for the guards, I could get in almost freely without having to show any I.D. After the siege of the Peruvian Japanese embassy in 1996,[79] the security was especially tight for this occasion, as VIPs including the Peruvian president and the Japanese princess were among the attendees; on the rooftops of the surrounding building of la Unión, army officers with machine guns and police dogs were positioned, ready for any possible attack. Such high security prevented any passer-by from coming in, and so the celebration, in practice, was an exclusive event mostly for the *Nikkei.*

The all-day event in la Unión consisted of various performances and ceremonies. It started off with *rajio taisō* (radio callisthenics) by the elderly in the morning, followed by Peruvian folkloric dances by the students from *Nikkei* schools and others.[80] 800 *Peruvian Sōka Gakkai* members,[81] the majority of whom were not *Nikkei*, performed their original massed callisthenics-like dances including the one that featured an Okinawan tune and theme of sugarcane cutting, which was one of the first immigrants' occupations. Shortly after midday, groups representing *Nikkei* organisations in various regions in Peru, prefecture associations, and first to sixth generations paraded around the stadium.[82] Special guests including

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[79] On 17 December 1996, fourteen members of the *Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement* (MRTA) seized the Japanese ambassador's residence, where at the time, a reception was being held in celebration of Emperor Akihito's birthday. The hostages of over 600 guests included high level government and military officials, diplomats, business leaders and some prominent members of the Japanese-Peruvian community. President Alberto Fujimori did not attend the reception, but his mother was also among the female and elderly captives that were soon released. After nearly four months, the seige ended in 22 April 1997 with a raid by the Peruvian Armed Forces commandos, killing all members of MRTA. Although Fujimori initially received much credit for his uncompromising stance against the 'terrorists', it later emerged that execution of the MRTA members had been carried out despite them surrendering, and he came to be criticised for crimes against humanity.

[80] The *Nikkei* schools that participated in the parade were: La Victoria, Hideyo Noguchi, José Gálvez, Academia de Cultura Japonesa, Inka Gakuen in Huaral, San Antonio de Padua, Abraham Lincoln, and Colegio la Unión.

[81] *Sōka Gakkai* is a Nichiren Buddhist organisation based in Japan, which was founded in 1930.

[82] The order was as follows: Peruvian-Japanese Assiciation (APJ), Peruvian-Japanese Women's Association, Association of the stadium la Unión (AELU), Aelucoop, Miyagi-ken, Fukushima-ken, Tochigi-ken, Tokyo-to, Yamanashi-shinbokukai, Shizuoka-ken, Gifu-ken, Shiga-ken, Wakayama-ken, Okayama-ken, Hiroshima-ken, Yamaguchi-ken, Kagawa-ken, Ehime-ken, Oita-ken, Club Fukuoka, Saga-ken, Kumamoto-ken Miyazaki-ken, Kagoshima-ken and Okinawa-ken. Then, followed la Cámara de Comercio e Industria Peruano Japonesa, Sansuikai, Peruvian-Japanese Associations of Callao, Trujillo, Snata, Huacho, Huaral, Cañete and Barranca. Lima Nikko,

President Fujimori, Princess Sayako of Japan and Japanese ex-Prime Minister, Kaifu Toshiki then made an appearance, and their presence was marked by the hoisting of national flags and national anthems of Peru and Japan. Speeches by the organisers and guests followed, but it was only when the princess 'broke the protocol' and together with the president, climbed down from the royal box and walked around the stadium that the audience broke into rapture. The audience gave shouts of joy, the cheer of '*banzai*' was occasionally heard, and many were furiously waving the small flags in their hands, both Peruvian and Japanese, while the couple walked around slowly, waving back to the audience for about half an hour.

The possibilities of this event were manifold, as it was also an occasion that sought to express the heterogeneity within the *Nikkei* community. By staging ebullient shows and pageants that encompassed different backgrounds and generations, the events sought to convey a sense of celebration of 'diversity'. Nevertheless, the focal point of the celebration seemed to converge on the 'visitation' of the Japanese princess. The enthusiasm with which the audience received the royal guest was striking. The only daughter of the Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, Princess Sayako was not a minor figure in the Imperial family. However, her public appeal in Japan was minimal compared to the Crown Prince Naruhito and his wife Masako, their child Aiko, or Prince Akishino and his wife Kiko, who collectively have become one of the most popular subjects in the Japanese tabloid media. Peruvian-*Nikkei*, especially the young people, did not know much about the princess prior to the event either; many who I spoke to mistakenly believed 'that famous one who got married to the crown prince' was coming. Yet, as the representative of the Japanese Imperial family, the princess seemed to constitute one of the most important ingredients of the events, along with, if not more than, the *Nikkei* president and the *issei*. In the following days, I

Comité San Francisco, Centro Nikkei de Estudios Superioes, Pacific Club, Urasenke Association of Peru, Pacific Cooperation, Abaco Cooperation, Kyodai Convenio and Cooperation, Emmanuel Association, Kenryukai, APEBEJA, APEBEMO, AOTS and Peru Gateball Association. Ceine Santa Beatriz school, Antonio Cavoli, José Gálvez, Inka Gakuen, La Victoria, Hideyo Noguchi, la Unión, Academia de Cultura Japonesa, San Antonio de Padua and Abraham Lincoln.

was to find out more about the significance of the 'imperial presence' for the *Nikkei* in Peru.

4.2 The Aftermath

For the next few days, the two local *Nikkei* newspapers devoted a lot of space to images and news of the princess. One of these papers, *Peru Shimpo,* described the exclusive meeting of *issei/kōreisha* (elderly) with the princess in its Japanese edition as follows:

> (the princess) shook hands with 600 people that filled the theatre…..Among the *kōreisha*, there were those in tears, not being able to speak, (except for the word) '*mottainai* (lit. waste; not worthy)' Nori no Miya (Sayako) stroked the back of a *kōreisha* with a heart of deep compassion……(Peru Shimpo 31/5/1999, p.1)

The same paper in its Spanish edition reported the same event with the following episode:

> ….Tetsuaki Tokuyama, a native of Hiroshima and 66 years in Peru, did not want to stop expressing to the daughter of the Japanese emperor great joy…'I wanted to shout *banzai*', said the *issei*, who doesn't look 85 years old…Princess Sayako listened with delicate imperial attention to every one of the words expressed by these Japanese citizen (sic.) with a tender glance. (Peru Shimpo 30/5/1999, p.3)

On summing up the celebration, another Nikkei paper, Prensa Nikkei reported:

> …(The princess underscored) the great sacrifice of the migrants, who had arrived in adverse circumstances and context, but had managed to overcome these and today continue with the same determination with which they had begun. It was for this reason that the illustrious visitor (the princess) at every moment showed her recognition for *issei*, who were the founders of the progressive Peruvian *Nikkei* community that still maintains its ongoing respect towards the traditional forms of Japan, the respect towards the elderly and especially, the consideration towards the Imperial Family, who still maintain a symbolic meaning for the *Nikkei* community…The president of the Centennial Commission also.....expressed gratitude towards the pioneers of immigration who had force and certainty at the time to overcome the adverse conditions, such as religion, language, the customs and the

culture....and (was thankful) to the following generations of *Nikkei* who have also maintained bonds of cooperativism and union…He also thanked the princess for her presence in this celebration, a fact that will be remembered by the following generations of *Nikkei*, because until today, they recognize and respect the Imperial Family with the same force. (Prensa Nikkei 7/6/1999, p.7)

A few days after the celebration, I was invited by the editor of one of the Spanish language *Nikkei* newspapers in Peru to submit an article about the occasion. If I wrote in Japanese, he explained, he could easily get it translated. I wrote a short article about the *Ryukyukoku Matsuridaiko*, the drum performance organised by the Okinawan-Peruvian youth; the performance attracted 400 participants including not only Okinawan-Peruvians, but also *Nikkei* from other prefectures and 'non-*Nikkei*' Peruvians. It was on this diversifying aspect of the *Nikkei* event that I focused as the main theme of the article. The day before I was due to leave Peru, the article was published. I was then shocked to find out that the translation differed considerably in many aspects from my original. It even included a passage that was not in my original version: 'the presence of the Princess Sayako from Japan and the President of the Republic, Alberto Fujimori in La Unión Stadium, added grace to the celebration (*le dieron realce a la celebracion*)'. I complained to the editor and asked for an explanation. My complaint met with a forceful and aggressive rejection, and I was asked to leave his office.

During my last evening in Peru I consulted a *Nikkei* writer friend, who was sympathetic to what had happened to me, and two others who were half-puzzled and half-amused by the turn of events. Working together, led by the writer, we produced an exact translation, as well as a letter of protest. The following day, before leaving for the airport, I sent both these items to the newspaper. To their credit, the newspaper did print both the new version and the letter in a future edition, and also arranged for a copy to be sent to me in London. Two years later, I met the editor in Okinawa at the *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival.* He offered his hand without hesitation, although he had no wish to discuss the matter any further.

I did not get to meet the translator, and I still do not know how such a nonsensical translation came about. Most likely, this was done not out of malice but from incompetence and negligence. Even my name was spelt wrongly, and there were an unacceptable number of mistakes and inventions in the translation. The insertion of the praising of Princess Sayako and Fujimori, however, was something that intrigued me the most. When I recounted the event to an Okinawan-Peruvian friend in Japan, she said, half-jokingly, 'Actually, whoever the translator was, s/he may have thought s/he was doing you a favour by adding the courteous acknowledgement. S/he probably thought, oh, this girl has left out something important that surely ought to be there. Let me add that bit for her'.

Whether intentionally, unconsciously, or out of habit, that the translator felt the need to add on the tribute to the princess and the president points to a far greater question than mere lack of professionalism of an individual. What compelled the translator to take such action? What does the princess, a delegate and embodiment of the imperial family, mean to the *Nikkei* Peruvians? Does, as the president of the Centennial Commission and the writer of the *Prensa Nikkei* claim, the imperial family maintain a symbolic meaning for the *Nikkei* collectivity with the 'same force' as ever? Is this a mere continuation and manifestation of Japanese nationalism, only spatially removed? Does the princess fill the missing link between those pioneers cum ancestors and that imagined 'homeland'? Why, among the 'guests' from Japan, was it the princess, who attracted almost all the attention? (Kaifu Toshiki, the ex-Prime Minister also participated, but his name hardly got mentioned).

4.3 The Emperor System and Japan

As academics have argued intensively, the modern cult of the emperor as the 'timeless, archaic' symbol of the Japanese nation is a fairly recent creation (Fujitani 1996, Gluck 1985, Harootunian 2001). When the Tokugawa shogunate was ousted in 1868, the first operation that the Meiji government undertook was to restore and institutionalise the emperor as the state figurehead, and Shinto as the state religion of modern Japan. From then on, various projects began to combine elements from the resource of the past and transform an emperor,

hitherto confined to the aristocratic circle in Kyoto and unknown to the diverse mass, into a visible unifying national symbol for the Japanese public. As Fujitani (1996) demonstrates, from the end of nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, Japanese elites, while referring to Western historical events and trends, sought to mobilise society to accept an emperor as the legitimate figurehead and a manifest deity, through use of pageantry, creation of the imperial cities, monuments, shrines, commemorative buildings and so on. Imperial Japan was to be spiritually sustained by an emperor-centred ideology. An essential part of this ideology was the concept of *kokutai* (national polity), in which Japan was described as a 'family-state,' the emperor as parent and sovereign of the people – who 'reigns from an unbroken line,' and the Japanese people (*Yamato minzoku*), as heirs to this unique concept of *kokutai*, were considered to be superior to other peoples of the world. Such ideology coexisted with a diversity of ideological formulations up until the 1910s, but in subsequent decades, the discrepancy became more apparent between the dominant ideology and people's experience (Gluck 1985: 281-282). As the imperial ideology began to lose its 'apparent invisibility,' the more intense the state control and more rigidified 'the ideological orthodoxy' became (Gluck 1985: 281). The word *tennō-sei* (emperor system/ideology) was coined and the concept of *kokutai*, which was originally ambiguous, came to be defined in *Kokutai no hongi* into a legal term in the 1930s (Gluck 1985: 281-283).

After the defeat of Japan in the Second World War, despite his role as Commander-in-Chief of the imperial forces, Emperor Hirohito was never brought to trial. The emperor was stripped of all political power and demoted from the status of *kami* (deity), but his pre-war role was depicted as that of a 'helpless puppet' of the militants, and the emperor system was made to survive in the 1947 'peace constitution'.[83] The background to this was, during the U.S. occupation, the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in the Pacific, General Douglas MacArthur found the emperor convenient as a unifying force within a new

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[83] For a discussion of the wartime emperor as playing a very active role in the decision making process, see Bix 2000 and Dower 1999.

democratic nation, which would be docile to the U.S. and become a strong bulwark against the 'growing menace' of communism.

Depoliticisation of the emperor, however, had an unexpected turn, as 'the postwar reconfiguration and transposition of the emperor into a symbol made possible the production of an imaginary community that no longer needed to derive its identity from the state but only from the Japanese collectivity' (Harootunian 2001: 628). In other words, in the post-war discourse of the emperor, the pre-war emperor as the head of the state and military leader was now seen as a diversion, and the end of the war merely restored him as a timeless symbol of the *kyōdōtai* (communal body), defying history and unconstrained by politics, which is constrained by articular time and space. By moving the emperor from the political into the cultural domain, the emperor was now more powerfully reconfigured as a symbol of a unifying cultural body -- which has always represented the 'will of the people' since time immemorial. For example, Watsuji Tetsuro, a philosophical anthropologist and one of the authors of *Kokutai no hongi*, maintained after the war thus:

> (the emperor) originated in primitive religious practices and this means that the people of the archaic community were already conscious of the fact that a wholeness existing within the group was also in the emperor. It is not…possible to say if archaic man considered or even recognized the whole intention of the group. But this intention reflecting *zentaisei* (wholeness) led to ceremony and ritual that eventually were formalized. The will of the group moved according to religious ceremony and the one who stood in a position to recall this intention (in performance) was the *tennō* (emperor). We are thus able to say that the *tennō* was the symbol of group unity from the beginning (Watsuji 1964 363-64).[84]

Despite the extralegal and suprahistorical nature of the emperor that such theorists advocate, or rather, precisely because such putative wholeness disregards the contradictory and diverse nature of society, the emperor system in Japan has been a morally and politically charged issue. While commodification and misrecognition of the emperor system permeates contemporary Japanese society,

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[84] The translation is by Harootunian (2001: 63).

fissures and contradictions within the system are never completely disguised. Even after the death of Hirohito, the question of war accountability of the emperor continues to haunt the conservatives who aspire to restore a 'true Japaneseness' to the centre of state and society. Dissenting views are voiced, especially by progressives, feminists, academics and the minorities. This is particularly the case in Okinawa.

4.4 Okinawan Perspectives on the Emperor System

To many in post-war Okinawa, the image of the emperor embodies wartime imperialism, the military's atrocities, and Okinawa's sacrifice to it. As I have mentioned in chapter 1, Okinawan people were incensed when, in 1979, they learned that in 'the emperor's message' in 1947, it was the emperor himself that endorsed and even encouraged the U.S. occupation of Okinawa. In 1987, to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary since Okinawa's Reversion to Japan, the national athletic meet, *Kaihō Kokutai*, was held in Okinawa. Originally, Hirohito himself was scheduled to attend with the hope of 'rewarding the Okinawans for their services (*rō o negirau*)' and 'encouraging (*hagemasu*)' them (This was to be the first visit of an emperor to Okinawa). This provoked anger and much discussion and dissent among academics, journalists and others. An Okinawan historian, Arasaki Moriteru remarked, 'How can the emperor, who is personally responsible for the battle of Okinawa and its (subsequent) foreign domination (*iminzoku shihai*), come to Okinawa, not to "apologise" but to "thank (Okinawans) for their services" and "encourage (them)"?... Does this mean that the emperor, instead of being a human being who must abide by "human moral standards" reverted to being a pre-war *arahitogami* (manifest deity)?' (Arasaki 1989 [originally 1987]:186). In the end, Hirohito cancelled the visit, but when the crown prince attended the Meet in place of his grandfather, Chibana Shōchi, a grocery shop owner from *Yomitan* village, burnt the *hi-no-maru* (the Japanese national flag) in protest.[85] Since then, imperial visits to Okinawa have not been events that would not spark controversy, let alone be appreciated wholeheartedly.

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[85] See Chibana (1988) and Field (1991).

As recently as 2001, when it became known that Prince Akishino was to give an opening lecture for the fourth International Okinawa Studies Conference held in Okinawa, critical articles by different authors ran for three days in the local newspaper *Ryukyu Shimpo*. Okinawa Bunka mailing lists (email circulation among people interested in Okinawa) were also filled with discussions and questions on the theme of 'royalty in Okinawa'.

To be sure, the true picture of Okinawa is a far more complex one than such incidents and a tendency to see the whole of Okinawa as the site of resistance might suggest. The misrecognition also occurs in Okinawan society, where many would claim that '*Okinawa wa tennō wa kankeinai* (Okinawa has nothing to do with the emperor)'. For example, I remember feeling stunned when, during the national election campaign when Prime Minister Hashimoto appeared on the street of Goya in Okinawa-City to support the campaign of an LDP candidate, many onlookers almost unconsciously took the *hi-no-maru* (Japanese flag) handed out by the campaigners and began waving; The 'mnemonic sites (Fujitani 1996: 9),' the material sign on the physical landscape, also remain unmoved in the form of *Naminoue Tenmangū* (*Naminoue* Shrine) in Naha, where a statue of the Meiji Emperor still stands. Yet, visits of the imperial family and *hi-no-maru* (the flag) and *Kimi-ga-yo* (the anthem) at official events have been controversial enough to continue making many Okinawans feel uneasy. It was in contrast to this situation in Okinawa that the rapturous acceptance of the princess by *Nikkei,* including descendants of Okinawa, struck me as almost extraordinary.

4.5 The Multiple Meaning of the Celebration for the *Nikkei*

During my stay in Lima, I had not come across a single criticism or even a doubting murmur over the princess' visit or the emperor system of Japan in general. As I have outlined in the previous chapter, *Nikkei* Peruvians also suffered hugely during the war through the experience of deportation and confiscation of their properties. Migrants from Okinawa also had lost their relatives during the fierce battle that raged in their homeland. After the war, the division between *kachi-gumi* and *make-gumi* caused enormous friction amongst families and

friends. Despite this history, none of these memories were connected with the emperor system, and the continuity of the *Nikkei* with the imperial family as the symbol of Japan was taken as natural.

This naturalised sense of belonging in terms of 'homeland' Japan as a country where the emperor symbolises its unity, was complimented and reinforced with the help of other devices, such as *Kimi-ga-yo* and *hi-no-maru*: the crossed flags of Japanese *hi-no-maru* and Peruvian *pabellón nacional* featured everywhere; Almost every programme in which I participated, from the grand mass at the Lima cathedral to a small fringe celebration at one of the *Nikkei* schools, started off with the national anthems of Japan, *Kimi-ga-yo* (Reign of the emperor) and of Peru, *Somos libres* (We are free). This was only a few months before the bill concerning the legalisation of the national flag and national anthem was almost certain to be passed in Japan.[86] Oblivious to the controversy this bill was causing in their homeland, these national symbols were utilised to the full during the celebration.

To be sure, such nationalistic overtones in the festival may not be attributed only to the national sentiment felt by the *Nikkei*, but is also partly due to the way the official festivities are carried out in Peru in general. In Peruvian schools, for instance, the anthem *Somos libres* is sung constantly, and children are often made to perform military-style marches in uniform. Disciplinary techniques to both instil and reinforce the values of compliance with authority and punctuality are prominent features of Peruvian schooling. In fact, in Okinawa, young returnees who had gone through such an education system told me that they missed such occasions, and asked me why the Japanese do not focus more attention on 'flags and other national symbols.'

These celebrations are also transnationally informed by the former *ijū kinen-sai* (immigrants' celebrations) outside Peru: Almost all the *ijū kinen-sai* begin with

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[86] According to the logic of the government, the Japanese had already approved the two signs as the national symbols of integration and harmony among Japanese.

the national anthems of Japan and the country they migrated to. The Catholic mass and the Buddhist offering have also been incorporated in most of the *ijū kinen-sai*; and above all else, the imperial family has been the principal feature of many *ijū kinen-sai* held by the Nikkei in other regions, such as Brazil, Hawaii and others. As early as in 1958, Prince Mikasa participated in the fiftieth anniversary of the Japanese immigration to Brazil, the first major *ijū kinen-sai* to be celebrated by the *Nikkei*. Since then, it has become almost an established custom for the 'royals' to appear at these occasions (Maeyama 1996: 487).[87]

Moreover, it was not only the Peruvian nationalistic practices and transnational *Nikkei* practices that provided the conditions for the nationalistic language in which the Peruvian centenary celebration was presented. Each of the nationalistic elements in the celebration: the imperial family, national flags, and anthems, had been making their presence felt throughout the history of *Nikkei* in Peru, albeit with different weight and significance at each particular moment. As we have seen in the previous chapter, pre-war migrants, who had travelled to Peru when *kōminka* (making of imperial subjects) accompanied with modernisation, was at its height in Japan, brought with them such elements, but more importantly were also concerned with establishing themselves as Japanese national subjects in Peru. The emperor's image, *goshin'ei*, was revered, and a huge amount of donations were offered on the occasion of the Taisho Emperor's coronation. National holidays, such as *tenchōsetsu,* were also celebrated among these migrants. When in 1947, with the 'courageous determination' of the head teacher, the *hi-no-maru* was hoisted for the first time after the war in a Japanese school, migrants were reported to have been in tears (Peru Shimpo 1975). As such, the princess, *hi-no-maru* and *Kimi-ga-yo* could easily slip into people's consciousness as recognisable iconic images, as if they had always been a central part of the

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[87] There followed Crown Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko in 1978 (seventieth), Crown Prince Akishino in 1988 (eightieth) in Brazil respectably, Prince Hitachi in Hawaii in 1986 (hundredth) and Prince Akishino and Princess Kiko in Mexico in 1997 (hundredth). Princess Sayoko also moved on to Bolivia after Peru to participate in their hundredth anniversary. The *Kaigai Nikkei-jin Taikai* (Convention of Nikkei & Japanese Abroad), which has been held almost yearly since 1957 in Tokyo, has also been under 'imperial presence' since its sixth meet in 1965 (Kaigai Nikkei-jin 1999 (5): 17).

tradition within the community. This is not to say, however, that this celebration had been a manifestation or repetition of a continued 'tradition.' Far from it, as much as pre-war migrants were transformed into becoming Japanese in Peru in various moments of history, this celebration itself was both a product and producer of a situation that the *Nikkei* community found itself in.

Amidst the cry of unity and continuity, the Peruvian *Nikkei* community was undergoing a sense of transformation. During this short visit to Peru, in private conversations, I often heard from the leaders of the *Nikkei* organisation, who overlapped with the organiser of the celebration, about the double 'problems' that the 'community' was facing. One of the 'problems' was that so many young '*dekasegui*' to Japan were causing a hollowing-out of that particular generation in the community. The other 'problem' was the apparent diversification of the *Nikkei*. With the growing cases of exogamy, and numbers of Japanese descendants who do not participate in the *Nikkei* circle or events such as this *ijū kinensai* increasing, leaders of the *Nikkei* organisation are facing difficulties in defining what constitutes the category *Nikkei*. There were comments like 'Perhaps we should think like this: if one of the grandparents are of Japanese origin, we should call this person a *Nikkei'*, 'If one *feels* and describes oneself as *Nikkei,* then this person is a *Nikkei*,' or 'If they maintain and uphold the value of *Nikkei*, honesty, sincerity, and respect to the elderly, then s/he could be called a *Nikkei*, regardless of the blood'. Just how such values would be measured remained unclear for many of the leaders who were commenting. How unified and pure they were in the past, is also open to question. As I have outlined in the previous chapter, economic differentiation, regional backgrounds, gender difference, spatial distribution, different degree of racial backgrounds, and generational gaps have always loosely made up the category of diasporic *Nikkei* (Araki 2002, Moromisato 2002). Thus, a unified *Nikkei* identity was always more of a rhetorical device and imaginary construct than some tangible reality. What is important, however, is that these leaders, whose prestige is derived from the existence of such a community, were viewing the transformation as a crisis, and it is against this apparent sense of 'crisis' that the reaffirmation of *Nikkei* unity in

the name of things Japanese, imperial family and *Nikkei* value must be understood.[88]

However imaginary and contested the notion of the '*Nikkei* community' may be, rhetorical devices to shape such construct do exist, and they have an effect on those who consider themselves *Nikkei*, or in the case of this celebration, on those who participated in it. The images of the princess, the *Nikkei* president whose parents are first generation Japanese Peruvian, and the *issei* pioneers, who appeared predominantly, if not every one 'racially pure Japanese,' held at the centre of the celebration, urged the people to understand the '*Nikkei* community' in terms of commonality and continuity. While in the context of Peruvian society this manifestation may be seen as an expression of diversity and an assertion of an ethnicity that has hitherto been sidelined, nationalising discourses of the 'homeland' and '*Nikkei* community' inlaid in the celebration compartmentalised *Nikkei* in an enclave of certain shared symbols and sentiments. In other words, the process of celebration itself served to nationalise the experiences of *Nikkei* diaspora. To be sure, the diversity among the audience and performers almost instantly betrayed what those discourses and imagery tried to communicate. However, even the diverse performances were undertaken under the benign gazes of the central 'guests', and in the end, looked as though they were something to be sanctioned by these authorities. As such, rather than destabilising the notion of *Nikkei* based on an essentialised idea of Japaneseness and creating a third space, the celebration of ethnicity had the effect of complementing a sense of unified entity, the putative 'Japaneseness' of the *Nikkei*. The power of such ritualized celebration 'lies in its ability to quickly and efficiently condense complexity, finesse contradiction, and evoke intuitive comprehension' (Neils Conzen 1989: 46).

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[88] A similar sense of 'crisis' is also expressed by a Brazilian Nikkei in Sao Paolo. The ninetieth *ijū kinen-sai* attracted only 3,000 people. There is exogamy of 42% among the third generation and 62% among the fourth generation. 'We cannot avoid an identity crisis as a result of exogamy' (Nakasone 1998: 63). The identity crisis is of the putative '*Nikkei* community' rather than of the individual.

It should not be assumed, on the other hand, that such impositions had the unifying effect and meant the same things to everyone who was present. Take, for example, individuals' response to the princess: An *obā* ('grandma') living next door to where I was home-staying, did come back slightly exhilarated after the meeting of the princess with the *issei* and recounted the event to me: 'She looked really kind and beautiful. One of us even asked, "When are you getting married?" Hahahaha'. This story that someone boldly asked this question to the princess, who had just turned 30 then, and who would in the past have been regarded as slightly old to be not yet married, circulated among some of the *Nikkei*. On hearing the news, some responded laughingly, 'you just don't ask things like that to a member of the imperial family. She must have been surprised by such a candid question'. Others took this event more positively, saying that 'this shows how close the *issei* felt towards this princess and that for the *issei*, she was almost like a grandchild'. Such an attitude towards a member of the imperial family was quite different from a revered sense that many Japanese would have had before the war, when a word like '*fukeizai* (lese-majesty)' would have been immediately attached to such demeanour. In another instance, a *Nikkei* feminist intellectual told me how she was impressed by the princess' fragile and faint voice in which she addressed the public, remarkably different from the more authoritative style of speech by the Peruvian female politicians that she was used to hearing. To other younger generation *Nikkei*, the princess was at best a celebrity-like character belonging to a 'king and queen' story of a far-away country that they know little about, and not necessarily a source of pride, nor an object of respect. Thus, such events are not simply one-way propaganda, aimed at effective communication of a certain message to passive spectators observing the performance.

What should not be forgotten, however, is the fact that however different the imaginings of people might have been from the official intentions, the rhetorical devices and imagery in the ceremonies still do have an impact on the real lives of the people   By this, I am not assuming that rituals and ceremonies merely reflect and reproduce a sense of unity unproblematically. Nevertheless, we must not underestimate the emotional hold that the displays of symbols and the processes

of ceremonies can have over people participating in an event. A festive occasion entails 'celebrative affirmation', 'saying yes to life' and 'joy in the deepest sense' (Cox 1969: 23).

According to Victor Turner, a ritual process separates the participants from normality with its roles and statuses, and immerses them in a "betwixt and between" threshold state of liminality, which produces what Turner posits as 'communitas' (Turner 1969: 42-43, 93-97). 'In celebration . . . much of what has been bound by social structure is liberated, notably the sense of comradeship and communion, in brief, of communitas: on the other hand, much of what has been dispersed over many domains of culture and social structure is now bound or gathered in the complex semantic systems of pivotal, multivocal symbols and myths which achieve great conjunctiveness' (Turner 1982a: 29). Thus, in communitas, the participants are left to be receptive to the symbolic meanings embedded in the particular ritual. Dialectic between communitas (anti-structure) and structure (social order) is 'indispensable for human social continuity,' and if structure is 'maximised to full rigidity' without communitas, 'it invites the nemesis of either violent revolution or uncreative apathy' (Turner 1974: 268).

In this sense, *ijū kinen-sai* which have celebrated the first migrants' coming to Peru on a fairly regular basis since the seventy-fifth anniversary in 1974 – then eightieth in 1979, ninetieth in 1989 and centenary in 1999 – create communitas which initiates newcomers as well as instilling in members a sense of belonging to a unified community, made believable through the juxtaposition and reiteration of the key images and symbols. While the spectacle shapes the imagined community, the process of imagination recreates it.

4.6 The Wrap Party at the Okinawa-Peru Association

So far, I have focused on the unifying aspects of *ijū kinen-sai*. The repetition and regularity of these celebrations, however, does not automatically reproduce an unchanging structure, the same sets of mental dispositions, or *habitus*, as Bourdieu would have it, as the celebration is itself part of the social field with

constraints and possibilities in which individual actors operate. Even during an official event such as this centenary celebration, carnivalesque moments did occur. According to Bakhtin, carnival is 'not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates because its very idea embraces all the people. While carnival lasts, there is no other life outside it. During carnival time life is subject only to its laws, that is, the laws of its own freedom'(Bakhtin 1981: 7).

A small event at the fringe of the celebration in Okinawa *Ken-jin-kai-kan* / Okinawa- Peru Association (AOP), although it may not have reached the point of Bakhtin's Medieval Carnival, resulted in some spontaneous and carnivalesque moments. In the Okinawa *Ken-jin-kai*, they were having a wrap party for the *Ryukyukoku Matsuridaiko* participants.

Ryukyukoku Matsuridaiko (Ryukyu Nation Festival Drums, *Matsuridaiko* hereafter) was founded in 1982 by former members of an Okinawa-city youth group. The music of *Matsuridaiko* is drawn from many sources: Okinawan folk songs, pop and rap as well as some Japanese songs and 'Thriller' by Michael Jackson. The dance incorporates Okinawan karate movements and *eisā*, a dance form popular in and around Okinawa-city, traditionally performed annually during the *obon* (Festival of the dead, also *ubun*) season (eighth month of the lunar calendar) for the ancestral spirits that visit their home during this time. The large barrel drums and hand-held *pāranku* drums, as well as synchronic group coordination of *eisā* feature in the dance *Matsuridaiko*. *Matsuridaiko*, therefore, is sometimes referred to simply as *eisā*. Unlike the more 'traditional' *eisā*, which is accompanied by the live performance of *sanshin* (Okinawan three string lute) and *jiuta* (singing), however, recorded music is used for *Matsuridaiko*. Also, *Matsuridaiko* is less rooted in a specific area in Okinawa, while *eisā* groups in and around Okinawa-shi are organised under the youth association of each *aza* (village), and therefore are more 'embedded' in its locality, and the connection with *obon* is stronger (during the season, each group performs *michijunē*, a procession around its village). For these reasons, *Matsuridaiko* is often seen as 'less authentic', and if one calls *Matsuridaiko* an *eisā*, people with a more

essentialist view on *eisā* would frown upon such a comment saying: 'That is not an *eisā*. That is a *nisemono eisā* (fake *eisā*)'. However, perhaps precisely because of this 'unrootedness' and relative ease due to the use of recorded material, dynamic *Matsuridaiko* dances have appealed to many both inside and outside Okinawa: they now have branches inside the U.S. military bases in Okinawa; groups are formed in other prefectures in Japan; and a growing number of diasporic Okinawan communities (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Hawaii, Mexico, Peru and the United States) now have chapters.

When I first visited Peru in 1996, neither *Matsuridaiko* nor any other form of *eisā* group was in existence. *Matsuridaiko* in Peru was a new phenomenon, formed partly for the centenary. It was introduced by a *kenpi ryūgakusei* (prefectural scholarship student), who returned to Peru in 1997 after a year's stay in Okinawa. Okinawa Prefecture invites descendants of Okinawa from different regions, such as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru and the Philippines for a limited period (often one year) to study in Universities in Okinawa. This provides a chance for the descendants to learn about their 'home' country as well as meeting Okinawan descendants from other countries. While I was in Okinawa during my fieldwork (1996-1998), I visited several times the *kenpi ryūgakusei*'s practice sessions of *Matsuridaiko*, which were providing them with amusement as well as sense of learning about Okinawan culture. Upon bringing back their newly found learning to Peru, they set about starting up the group, originally incorporating around only forty members in December 1998. It soon grew into a huge congregation consisting of nearly 400 participants by the centenary in May 1999. The participants for the centenary came from different backgrounds: taking part were not only *Nikkei* from other prefectures but also members of *Matsuridaiko* from other countries, such as Argentina, and nearly one third of the group was made up of local Peruvians who had had little to do with the *Nikkei* community until then. Thus, *Matsuridaiko* provided a space to 'move beyond barriers of nationality or ethnicity' (Shiroma 2002:121).

The group performed for the memorial service for the deceased souls of the pioneers in Cañete (April 1999), and at the central celebration in *la Unión*. The carnivalesque moment, however, happened during the wrap party. After many thank-you speeches, the congregation broke out into a disco party. Among the Ricky Martin and other popular Latin pop and salsa music, they sporadically played various *Matsuridaiko* theme tunes. When the *Matsuridaiko* theme tune was played, everyone, including those who had not participated in the practice and the performance at *La Unión* joined in and started to copy the movements. Such a spontaneous act, accompanied by screaming and laughter, was very different from the officially sanctioned performance they gave at *La Unión*.

Of course, there is a danger of reading too much optimism into the diverse nature of the group. A mere presence of people from different backgrounds does not automatically promise the breaking of boundaries. Even among this heterogeneous group, there can be an insider and outsider break and closure. I was reminded of this when I talked to two of the 'non-Nikkei' participants, who were also there for the party. My talk with them began with a happy tone in the beginning. A journalism student explained to me how he got involved in this group. One day, as he was taking a Japanese language lesson in *Centro Cultural Peruano Japonés* (Peruvian Japanese Cultural Centre), he heard the sound of drums. It was the sound made by the *Matsuridaiko* group, who happened to be practicing there. The deep tremulous sound of the drums and the dynamic karate-like movements captivated him instantly. He joined the group immediately and subsequently asked a few of his friends also to participate. When I asked his girlfriend how she found the group, she quipped; 'this group is notorious. They are very closed (*cerrado*). These *Nikkei* all keep to themselves'. The aspiring journalist continued: 'Maybe after the attack at the embassy (of Japan by the 'terrorists' in 1996), they were naturally alarmed by outsiders, or perhaps that is their way. I don't know. But I really enjoy the *Matsuridaiko*. I heard that the founder of *Matsuridaiko* thought about forming such a group, because he saw young people on the street, not having things to do. To keep them from becoming delinquents, he thought of creating this group, and I thought, hey, that is

wonderful.' The girlfriend was still not too impressed by the group: 'I like dancing in general, so I did this. But these people (pointing to groups of *Nikkei*), they are nothing to me'. As soon as the sound of *Matsuridaiko* tune filled the room again, however, they also disappeared into the crowd of dancers.

4.7 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I have sought to examine how the *Nikkei* collective memory and identity in Peru were nurtured through commemorative events and activities. I have focused in particular on the symbolic devices of the commemoration utilised by the event organisers: the Imperial family of Japan, the *Nikkei* President, and the pioneers. These symbols were useful devices for those leaders of the community who shared a common interest in the continuity of existing institutions, unity among the *Nikkei*, and loyalty to the status quo. Yet, this centennial celebration was not just about the parochial expression and reconsolidation of the long-distant nationalism orchestrated by the interested party. The celebration was also a platform in which the official and the vernacular intersected. More than any other previous *ijū kinen-sai*, the centennial celebration, which coincided with Fujimori's tenure as President, was also a stage on which *Nikkei* could negotiate and assert their position in the wider Peruvian society. To be sure, one must always caution against overestimating the resonance and importance of such commemorative events to ordinary people who were not active participants in the production and reproduction of *Nikkei* identity. It could be said, however, that as a monumental event, the centennial anniversary certainly was one of the various forces that shaped *Nikkei* subjectivities in Peru.

Chapter 5   The Relocation of Migrants from Peru to Okinawa-City: The Arrival and the Settlement

This chapter turns from charting the history of Japanese/Okinawan migration to Peru and looking into one specific aspect of the Peruvian *Nikkei* community – namely the reconfiguration and consolidation of the community identity through a commemorative festival - to the task of trying to understand the experiences of the 'reverse migration' from Peru to Okinawa.   Although this migratory movement is often referred to as 'reverse', the majority of migrants had not set foot in Okinawa prior to their relocation, and even for those who were born in Okinawa, the Okinawa they had returned to was not the same Okinawa they had left behind. How does their sense of belonging change when they arrive in Okinawa? What conditions such a shift?

In order to contextualise their experiences in Okinawa, the chapter begins with an introduction to Okinawa City, a place where some migrants from Peru had relocated themselves.   After looking into the city's development as the U.S. military 'base town', its economic structure resulting from that development, and its stance towards the diversifying population, I aim to explore crucial issues facing migrants as they sought to create their new home in Okinawa, and how the conditions they found themselves in shaped the migrants' sense of belonging.

5.1 Field Site: The 'Base Town' Okinawa City
Apart for some U.S. military personnel arriving directly at their airbase, the most likely arrival point in Okinawa Mainland for other travellers is Naha airport, located in the south east of Naha, the capital city of the prefecture.   When I returned to Okinawa in 1999, the small but charming airport terminal that had greeted me during my previous visits was no longer in use. As the old terminal had become increasingly incapable of managing floods of tourists into the island efficiently, a new terminal replaced it in May 1999, just in time for the G8 summit that was to take place in Okinawa the following year. The spacious, functional new airport looked like any other major airport in Japan, whereas the older one

had a character of its own. An Okinawan friend living in Tokyo told me that the new terminal no longer made her feel as if she was back home in Okinawa. While some nostalgically reminisce about the experience of arriving at the crowded, old terminal, others attach little emotion to the change: 'An airport is an airport, as long as it functions well, it doesn't matter what it looks like'. When returnees began arriving in Okinawa, it was still the old terminal that greeted them. For some returnees, the experience left them with the impression that they had arrived in some kind of rural place, further removed from the advanced technological Japan that they had imagined back home.

From the airport, four bus companies, the only public transportation system available on the island, operated throughout the island.[89] These buses were usually empty, being only occasionally filled with tourists, high school students and the elderly. Dubbed *kuruma shakai* (car society), the most popular mode of transportation in Okinawa was 'my car', with members of a family often owning a car each. There are several routes from the airport to Okinawa City, but the most popular route was via the often heavily congested national Route 58, which ran from south to north on the western side of the mainland. Except for the U.S. Port Facility lying right next to the airport, the southern part of Okinawa, which includes the capital city of Naha, was practically devoid of major military installations. Thus, Naha citizens often said that living in the southern part of the Okinawa, they did not notice the presence of the U.S. bases as much as those who live closer to them. It is only when one left Naha city and headed north towards *Chūbu*, the central part of the mainland Okinawa, that the blocks of areas surrounded by barbed wire became more noticeable.

Between Naha and Okinawa city sprawled Urasoe city, Ginowan city, Chatan town and Kitanakagusuku village, almost seamlessly merging into one another without any visible boundaries. Upon entering Urasoe city from Naha, a green stretch immediately would come into sight to the west; this was Camp Kinser

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[89] In 2003, *Yui Rail*, a monorail line that stretches from Naha airport to the west of Shuri castle, opened in Naha.

which lay between Route 58 and the sea. North of Urasoe City was the densely populated Ginowan City, where the Futenma Air Base sat right at its heart. This air base was located in such a way that the city earned its nickname 'doughnut', as local residents of Ginowan-city were forced to settle around the base. As a consequence, the residents had to endure not only the intense aircraft noise but also the inconvenience of having to take a circuitous route around the airfield to go from one side of the city to another. The roads from Naha-city to Okinawa City are often congested, as the military bases limit the number of roads that cut across from the west to the east. In order to reach Route 330 in the east that leads to Okinawa City from route 58 in the west, I often turned right at the Isa intersection in Ginowan City and took the upslope road, from where I could catch a glimpse of intense blue sea to the left beyond the military base, Camp Foster, which sprawled across portions of Ginowan City, Chatan Town, and Kitanakagusuku-village. Turning left at the Futenma Intersection onto Route 330 and continuing my way up north, the Stars and Stripes and the *hi-no-maru* (the Japanese national flag) would soon come into sight to the right, part of Camp Foster, where the U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters was located. Driving on the stretch of road flanked by the barbed wire fences both to my right and left, I would soon reach the southern tip of Okinawa City bordering on Kitanakagusuku Village. [90]

The majority of migrants from Peru would have taken this same route on their way from the airport to Okinawa City when they first arrived. If they had not known much about the existence of the U.S. military bases in Okinawa back in Peru, which often seemed to have been the case, its presence would have inevitably been felt once they set foot in Okinawa. Even when they had some knowledge about the bases, seeing them first hand would have given them, as it did me, a picture of Okinawa beyond that of a tropical paradise. One man in his

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[90] This area is still referred to locally as 'Raikamu,' an abbreviation for the Ryukyu Command (Rycom), which ruled Okinawa between 1947 and 1955, as the headquarters was located in this area.

sixties, who had accompanied his parents returning from Peru and had arrived in Okinawa for the first time in 1970 told me about his first impression:

> It was a massive shock for me to come to Okinawa under the American occupation. Of course in Peru, we used to get newspapers from Japan, even though they were a few months late/old. We knew about the occupation and that Okinawa was about to revert to Japan. Seeing the bases for real for the first time, though, I felt totally sad inside. I remember on my way from the airport, going from Makiminato to Futenma, passing by the barbed wire fences. To your left was the base and you can see beyond the fences was this vast stretch of green land. Our side of the barbed wire was gravelly (*ishi goron gorō*). I knew in my mind that the real Okinawa was not going to be exactly the same as how my great aunt had described it to me, but somewhere deep inside, I could not forgive this. The Okinawa my great aunt had told me about was a place where you could sleep safely under the mosquito net with windows wide opened. She used to say how safe and peaceful Okinawa was compared to Peru. To come to Okinawa and find these iron grilles (barbed wires) instead! Of course, I had known about them all in my mind, that there were barbed wires also in the Philippines and in Mexico, and that Okinawa was just one of those places, but somehow I did not want to admit that this was the reality of Okinawa.

When the emigrants left for Peru before the war, Okinawa City was still two separate agricultural villages. It was after the Second World War that the area underwent such a radical transformation to become the second largest city in the prefecture and be dubbed as the prototypical 'base town.'

Okinawa City officially came into being in 1974, two years after the prefecture's reversion to Japan, with the merger of Koza City and Misato Village (excluding the area which is now a part of Uruma City), the number of residents having grown to nearly 100,000 by this time. The area is still often referred to as Koza today, as compared to somewhat sanitised and innocuous 'Okinawa City,' the name Koza, which evokes images of the area of having been the major base town, seemed to sit better, especially for the generation of people who lived through the American occupation period (1945-1972). The name Koza itself was a relatively new one, given by the Americans after they landed during the Second World War campaign in 1945 and designated the district, then called Goeku Village, as their

base camp.[91] In other words, the new name Koza was imposed on the area as if to 'sever the area from its ties to the history of Goeku,' but with time, the name also soon came to be used commonly as though 'plants without roots begin to grow on soil' (Tsuya 2000: 29).

Before the war, Goeku Village was primarily an agrarian community with wild peaches and oranges as its major products, and neighbouring Misato prospered as a fishing village with some small-scale sugar factories. Before the unification of the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1429, the area was part of Chūzan, one of the three competing kingdoms.[92] Misato was then an integral part of Goeku, and it was not until 1666 that Misato branched off from Goeku to form a separate *magiri* (district). Because of these historical ties, when they merged in order to form Okinawa City in 1974, some saw it merely as reverting back to its 'natural state.'

While the U.S. forces referred to the area as 'Camp Koza' from the beginning of its occupation, Koza City was not officially established until 1956. After a brief period between 1945-46, when the official name was Koza Village, written in Chinese characters (胡差村), the official name reverted back to being Goeku Village of the Koza District for ten years (1946-1956). During this period, the 'New Goeku Village' experienced population growth and urbanisation at tremendous speed, initially as the result of the village accommodating refugees from all over Okinawa, and later owing to the base constructions which attracted workforces not only from other villages in Okinawa, but also from mainland Japan. What used to be a small sized village with a population of around 8,000 people before the war grew into a bustling town with over 35,000 people by 1955 (Onga 1998: 27). As a result, the following year in 1956, Goeku Village was

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[91] There are two theories as to how the name originated. The first one is that the Americans misread Goya, a name of a district in Goeku Village, as Koza. The alternative theory is that they misheard Koja, the name of a district where one of the civilian refugee camps was set up in neighbouring Misato Village, and simply extended the usage to refer to Goeku area as well (Tsuya 2000: 28-29).

[92] The Goeku Castle, the ruins of which still remain, is thought to have been built during this time to fend against the Hokuzan kingdom in the north.   In the fifteenth century, a community grew around Goeku Castle, where King Shō Taikyū (1415-1461) and King Shō Sen'I (1430-1477) lived when they were princes.

upgraded to city status. This time, the inhabitants themselves appropriated the name given by the Americans, and Koza City was born. Koza City (コザ市) was the first ever official place name both in Okinawa and Japan to be written in *katakana*, one of three Japanese writing systems which is used primarily to denote foreign imports. Despite having being part of the Ryukyu Kingdom, unlike Naha City which has the ancient capital Shuri in its district, Okinawa City is associated less with 'the glorious past of the Ryukyu Kingdom'. The popular imagination of Okinawa City, rather, is linked to its recent history as Koza in *katakana*, the hybrid town filled with the spirit of post-war Okinawa, distinct from Naha, the seat of the Ryukyu Kingdom and the present day political and economic centre, which people in Koza would often remark is quickly becoming like a 'smaller version of Tokyo'.

The post-war arrived in Okinawa City much earlier than in many other parts of Okinawa.[93] On 1 April 1945, the American troops landed virtually unopposed by the Japanese on the west coast of central Okinawa, advanced and captured the airfield in Kadena abandoned by the Japanese forces, and within a day, arrived in present-day Okinawa City. Inhabitants that survived the war quickly had to readjust themselves to the reality of the occupation and witness the growth of the bases. Lands were expropriated and many locals were initially forbidden to return to their land to continue with producing their own food. Thus, it became necessary for those working for the occupied forces to smuggle out food and medical supplies from their depots and barter them outside the base.[94]   Survivors soon

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[93] Organised resistance against the U.S. in Okinawa continued until 23 June when Japanese Commander Ushijima killed himself in a cave at Cape Mabuni. Japan officially surrendered on 15 August 1945. Athough the post war arrived earlier for some, civilian casualties in Okinawa City were by no means low. It is estimated that 30% of the population perished, and among them were 33 people in Misato Village who committed suicide between 2 April and 5 April 1945 (Onga 1998b: 12-13). Cornered by the horrors of the news that the Americans had already arrived in neighbouring Goeku, these despairing group of people decided to end their own lives before being captured. Some died alone, but others committed mass suicide either by setting fire to blankets and clothes or by killing members of their own families first before stabbing themselves. Testimonies of the survivors of these tragic events reveal that there had been an order from the Japanese army to 'finish off their family' before having to experience the disgrace and shame of being captured by the Americans.
[94] Stolen goods were referred to as '*senka* (booty, lit. fruits of war),' and *senka agyā*, or those who 'won booty', were not only objects of envy, but in some cases looked up to as brave persons doing damage to the occupying forces (Ishihara Zemināru 1994: 57-62).[94]   In some way, thus began the

started appropriating the debris left over from the war to make everyday objects. Duralumin which was found in aviation wreckage was melted and transformed into pots, kettles and pans; children's clothes were tailored out of used uniforms; and artillery shells were utilised to make ashtrays, lamps and vases (Okinawa Shiyakusho 2007: 9).[95]

In later years, Koza came to thrive as the 'base town' particularly during the height of the Vietnam War. During this time, the Koza's 'A-sign', or 'approved', bars, restaurants, night clubs and brothels were packed with soldiers with their pockets filled with dollars, either about to take off from adjacent Kadena Air Base to Vietnam, or having just returned from the battlefield. 'American popular culture', such as Rock'n' Roll, entered Koza through this experience (Molasky 1999, Roberson 2001). American racism and segregation were also reproduced in the town, with white soldiers gathering mainly in the entertainment district around BC Street, and the black soldiers in Teruya district. According to an anecdote I have heard on several occasions, when in the early hours of 20 December 1970, triggered by a court-martial acquittal of a U.S. serviceman who had killed an elderly woman in a traffic accident, a spontaneous riot broke out involving more than two thousands locals on the streets of Koza, overturning and setting fire to cars owned by American servicemen, marked with yellow plates with an initial 'Y', locals tried not to target black soldiers' cars, as the story that they also were being discriminated against like the Okinawans circulated.[96]

After the Vietnam War, the city's prosperity as 'the base town' diminished considerably. A reduction in the number of troops, as well as the rise in the value

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locals' resistance against the overwhelming power of the occupier, after their arms were laid down (Ishihara Zemināru 1994: 60).

[95] As traditional materials to make *sanshin* (a lute-like musical instrument) were unavailable, empty tin cans and strings from parachutes were assembled into *kankara* (tin-can) *sanshin* (Okinawa City Hall 2007: 9).

[96] About 30 Afro-American soldiers stationed at the Kadena Air Force Base issued an 'Appeal from the Afro-Americans at the base to Okianwan people,' expressing support for the Koza people's anti-U.S. struggle. The appeal stressed: 'nothing but such an action can defeat the oppression by power.' It declared that the Afro-American soldiers would further strengthen their support to the struggle of the Okianwan people and fight shoulder to shoulder with them. (256-258)

of the yen had inflicted a serious blow to the economy of the entertainment sector. Prefecture-wide, military related income, which includes a rent for military-held land, salaries for workers on the bases, base-related grants and expenditure by U.S. military personnel and their families decreased from 15% of the gross prefecture income in 1972 to 6% in 1998,[97] and Okinawa City was one of the areas severely affected by the change. Successful development in the 1990s of the shopping and resort complex 'American Village' on the returned land of the U.S. base in the neighbouring Chatan-Town had also hurt traffic to Okinawa City. The Plaza House, an old shopping centre in the south end of the Okinawa City, once a symbol of American affluence, attracted much fewer people, despite its revamp in 1997.[98]

In 1996, the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO), established by the Japanese and U.S. governments, reached an agreement on the phased reduction and closure of U.S. military bases. However, the strategic importance of the bases in Okinawa City, the Kadena Air Base which is the largest U.S. Air Force Base in the Far East in particular, was reconfirmed by the committee. As a consequence, the returned land in Okinawa City remained very limited, and 35.9% of the land in the city continued to be occupied by the bases (Okinawa-ken 2004: 13). The structural constraints thus created had hindered Okinawa City from implementing effective urban planning and development projects (Yamazaki 2008). The economic structure dependent on the bases also hindered development in the manufacturing industry, and chronic stagnation and slow economic growth within the prefecture was also reflected in Okinawa City. According to the National Census carried out in 1995, of the 46,593 people employed in Okinawa City, 2% were engaged in primary industries, 20.3% in secondary industries and 77.5% in

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[97] In 2007, it decreased further to 5%.

[98] Plaza House opened on American Independence Day, 4th July, in 1954 with a special licence granted by the then Ryukyu Government. It was originally established to cater for the American personnel and their family, but when it had become possible for everyone to shop, locals and tourists from Mainland Japan started to visit the place to buy rare foreign goods. After the Reversion, with the official approval of Tourist Tax Rebate System, it became a place sells souvenirs as well as duty free goods such as perfume, whisky and cigarettes for tourists, now mainly from Taiwan.

tertiary industries, while the unemployment rate was 8.5%, higher than the prefecture average of 6.2% and more than twice as high as Japan's national average of 3.2% (Okinawa Shiyakusho 2000: 22-23).[99] Furthermore, youth unemployment in Okinawa was considerably higher than the national average, with unemployment among the 15-24 year-old group being about 40% compared to 26-27% nationally (James and Tamomori 2000:23). Under this condition, although the military-related income had decreased and accidents, incidents and noises caused by the bases continued to pose severe problems for the residents, the number of people who felt that the military bases were indispensable for the economy of the area was not small. Not only was opinion divided between people who had economic means without the help of the bases and those whose livelihood depended on them, 'a sense of place', or the personal and emotional attachment people have to a place (Agnew 1996), created through the experience of living in proximity to the bases and growing up seeing Americans on their streets had left many locals feeling ambivalent towards the bases and often made it difficult for them to claim to be outright pro or anti-bases (Yamazaki 2008).

5.2 The Discourses of 'International' and *Champurū* Culture

Despite the serious economic decline of Okinawa City as outlined above, many gift shops, live houses, bars and clothing stores near Kadena Air Base were still opened for business for Americans, particularly along the *Kūkō Dōri* (Airport Street), creating a particular 'mutli-national' atmosphere in the area. The *Kūkō Dōri*, which stretches from the Goya Intersection directly to the second Gate of Kadena Air Base, was more commonly referred to as the *Gēto Dōri* (Gate Street) by the locals, or Gate Two Street by American military personnel. The area was considered to be the landmark of Okinawa City; the shop signs in English and American military personnel strolling out through Gate Two from the base on their payday all contributed to the idea of Okinawa City as being 'international'.

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[99] In 2009, the unemployment rate of Okinawa prefecture was 7.5%, while the national average climbed to 5.1%. Sources: http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/toukeika/lfs/lfs.pdf and http://www.stat.go.jp/data/roudou/longtime/zuhyou/lt01-13.xls [both downloaded June 2010].

Since its declaration of being the 'City of International Culture and Tourism' in 1974, Okinawa City has attempted to capitalise on its image and experience of coexisting with the 'Other' culture. The 'Other', in the case of Okinawa City, often equalled America. However, precisely because Okinawa City has been the '*kichi no machi* (base town)', it has also attracted migrants from various other countries as well as from other prefectures in Japan and various parts of Okinawa. The tailor shops lining Gate Street, for example, were owned mostly by migrants from India who arrived during the 1960s and 70s. Among the workers in the sexual and other entertainment sector in the area were those from the Philippines, often marginalised in the Okinawan community and left invisible in a celebratory discourse of 'internationalisation'. 'Amerasian' children, born to an Okinawan mother and U.S. military father too had long been marginalized and discriminated against. Also relatively invisible had been the existence of the Okinawans and their families that had immigrated to various parts of the world, including Peru, and had later returned.

Circulatory migration had not attracted much attention in Okinawan society, because such movement had tended to be sporadic and in small numbers, except immediately after the Second World War when Okinawans were repatriated in mass from the formerly Japanese occupied territories. Besides this postwar repatriation, however, a small amount of return migration always existed since the early days of mass emigration in the early twentieth century. Although the official number of returned Okinawans in the early period of emigration does not exist, during my fieldwork, it was not rare to meet persons over fifty years of age, who were born overseas and had come to Okinawa during their childhood. Since the *dekasegi* boom from the mid 1980s, *Nikkei-jin* of Okinawan descent and their families, mainly from Peru, had also begun relocating themselves in Okinawa City.

In terms of the number and the percentage of those officially registered as 'aliens', neither Okinawa City nor Okinawa prefecture as a whole necessarily rank high nationally. In 1996, Okinawa prefecture had a population of 1,281,205 people,

7,246 of which were registered foreign residents (less than 0.6% of the total population), while for Okinawa City, out of the total population of 117,493, those who were registered foreign residents were 971 people (0.8%) (see Figure 3 for the breakdown).[100]

Figure 3 Registered Foreign Residents in Okinawa City and Okinawa Prefecture (1996)[101]

	Okinawa City	Okinawa Prefecture
U.S.	310	1896
Phillipines	184	1289
Peru	163	572
China	128	1964
India	67	162
North and South Korea	36	335
U.K.	27	110
Brazil	15	154
Others	41	764
Total number of Foreign Residents	971	7246
Total Population	117,493	1,281,205

However, it must be noted that to think of the city's migratory experience in terms of such categorisation and quantification is problematic, not only because it reinforces the idea that 'the nation-state' posited as a countable entity is the primary conceptual 'other' against which 'us' can be defined, but also because the number of cases of migration are omitted from such figures: *issei* (the first generation) returnees, who never gave up their Japanese citizenship, and registered their offspring in the Japanese consulate abroad, are not included; there were also those who had acquired Japanese citizenship since arriving in Okinawa; and the figure also excludes nearly 50,000 people covered by the Status of Forces Agreement (SAFO), namely the U.S. military personnel and civilian employees and their family members, who are exempt from the alien registration requirement.[102]

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[100] Source: Okinawa-Shi (2000) and Okinwa-Ken Chiji Kōshitsu Kokusai Kōryūka (1997).

[101] Source: Okinawa-Shi (2000) and Okinwa-Ken Chiji Kōshitsu Kokusai Kōryūka (1997).

[102] According to Motonaga, the total number of military personnel, civilian employees of the military and their family members in Okinawa in 2001 were 49,279 (2003: 25). The breakdown was, Marines: 15,317, Air Force: 6,755, Navy: 1,569, Army: 946, Civilian employees: 1,355, Family members 23,337.

In Okinawa, to describe its 'multicultural' state of being and the general attitudes of Okinawans towards 'things foreign', *champurū,* a word derived from the Malay-Indonesian word *champur* which means 'to mix', was often used. *Champurū* is an everyday type of dish both cooked at home and served at many local restaurants throughout Okinawa. A stir-fry mixture of various ingredients, the style is thought to be the product of influences from Chinese cuisine and Southeast Asian cuisine from the time when the Ryukyu Kingdom was trading with these regions. Among the most typical of the styles are *gōya* (bitter melon) *champurū,* tofu *champurū*, and *fū* (wheat gluten bread) *champurū*, in which the primary ingredients, *gōya,* tofu or *fū*, are fried together with some vegetables, eggs and pork meat. Usage of a canned processed meat (such as Danish Tulip or Spam), locally referred to simply as *pōku*, instead of real pork, had also come to be widespread after being introduced by the Americans during the occupation. *Champurū* is said to be a type of dish where every ingredient stands out without ever losing its identity, but it is through the mixing that the primary ingredients, *goya, tofu, and fu*, which can be tasteless on their own, can come to life. This, according to many Okinawans, was the essence of *champurū bunka*, or *champurū* culture.[103] In everyday conversations, the term *champurū bunka* was used to represent Okinawan culture in general, which has a history of interaction with the outside world, but the area associated with this cultural state of 'mixture' more often than anywhere else was the Central region of the Okinawa mainland, which was marked by the highest concentration of U.S. military facilities. At the centre of the 'mixing', according to many, was Okinawa City.

The official discourse of *champurū* in Okinawa City often oscillated between referring to the mixture of things American and Okinawan, and being about having foreign nationals from over forty countries registered as 'aliens' in the city. The idea of *kokusaika* (internationalisation) promoted by the central government in Tokyo had also played a part in the city's reconfiguration of its image as 'an international city'. In 1986, the central government implemented a policy to

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[103] For the origin of the usage of 'champuru' in context of culture, see Ota (1997). Terurin (Nelson 2008).

allocate grants to local government for international exchange programs, and *Guidelines for Promoting Local Level International Exchange* published by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1989 promoted local international affair divisions (O'Toole 2001). As a result, from 1989, Okinawa City created a section within its Citizen Exchange Division and appointed officers to look after the affair. Accordingly, several projects were run under the *kokusai kōryū* (international exchange) banner. Many of the earlier projects centred around on the 'inspection tour' to establish sister city agreements within the United States.[104] A joint exhibition of paintings by school children in Okinawa City and in American School inside the base, annual international festivals themed along the national cultures, language classes (initially English only but later extended to Japanese and Spanish) and *kokusai kōryū saron* (international exchange salon) were other examples of the activities supported by the Council. For the migrants from Peru, an annual party/sports festival to 'encourage returnee children' was held. In this context, rather than being categorised in terms of nationality, the word '*Kaigai Uchinānchu Shitei* (Overseas children of Okinawans)' was used by the Council. In fact, in the majority of official discourse, migrants were not categorised as 'foreigners' or 'Peruvian' and the term '*Nikkei-jin*' was not often used either. From 1991, the city had also been sponsoring a scholarship programme for descendants from Okinawa abroad.

Despite the effort on the part of the municipality to promote *kokusai kōryū*, in my observation and according to the opinion of many, these projects and events tended to either attract only a limited number of participants, or be ephemeral one-off 'fireworks' that did not lead to continuous exchange among the residents. Yet, that these official projects and events appropriated the concept *champurū* to generally mean the celebration of nationally compartmentalised cultures does not necessarily limit the possibility of interactions based on the idea of *champurū*. Indeed, just as the term '*kokusaika* (internationalisation)' had been a 'multivocal concept used to describe very different processes' (Goodman 2007), so did *champurū bunka* meant different things to different people. When the word was

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[104] Agreement was reached between Okinawa-City and Lakewood to establish Sister Cities in 2002.

appropriated in the early 1980s by performers in Koza, while their concern remained in the framework of the nativist critique of modernity, it was in the context of discerning the transformative potential of Okinawan culture in the face of the Japanese project of modernisation and the American occupation that the word was deployed (Nelson 2008). It may be that in this dynamism and the fact that the idea of *champurū* emerged out of the lived experience of the people of Okinawa City and of Okinawa lay the strength of the concept.

5.3 The Arrival and Settlement of the Migrants from Peru in Okinawa City

Unlike in the other industrial cities in Japan with a relatively high concentration of *Nikkei-jin*, where their population sprang from almost zero to thousands with the *dekasegi* boom in the 1980s, in the case of Okinawa, return migration had been taking place before the boom, albeit small in scale, as mentioned earlier. Before the Second World War, some migrants in Peru sent their children back to their family in Okinawa for the purpose of education. A return visit home was also not uncommon among migrants who were looking for a bride to take back to Peru. Some families also packed up for good and returned to their respective home villages in various parts of Okinawa, including the present day Okinawa City.[105] One woman in her seventies born in Peru told me that in 1940 her parents decided to return to their native village Kamara (in Okinawa City), as did many of their relatives before them, after having saved enough money, and reminisced that it took time then to adapt to life in Okinawa, where she was the only pupil in school wearing shoes and had to eat sweet potatoes every day instead of meat, rice and noodles as she used to in Peru. Some families taken to the concentration camp in Crystal City in Texas during the war, if they did not have Peruvian citizenship, also had to return to Okinawa after the war, as was the case of one man in his sixties I met, whose father was a school teacher in Peru. Sporadic return migration continued throughout thereafter for various reasons: some *issei* (first generation) wanted to reunite with their family back home and spend their later

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[105] In 1935, 45% of the Okinawans in Peru were from the Central Part of Okinawa Mainland (Nakagami-gun), 28% from the North (Kunigami), and 26.5% were from the South (Shimajiri). There were no migrants from the Sakishima Islands (Miyako and Yaeyama) (Okinawa-ken 1974: 72).

life in their native land, and their children born in Peru followed to look after them; others had to come to Okinawa to take up the obligation of looking after their ancestors and to inherit properties. Thus, as early as in 1961, *Koza Perū-kai* (Koza Peru Association) was founded by returnees for the purpose of welcoming visitors and newly returned migrants and their families from Peru.

From the mid 1980s, as shown in Figure 4, the number of Peruvian nationals newly registering in Okinawa City rose, particularly around the 1990 change in the immigration law, increasing from 20 people in 1982 to 125 people in 1989 and peaked in 1993 at 232 people, decreasing steadily thereafter. In 1996 when I begun my fieldwork, out of 572 Peruvians in the prefecture, 163 people were registered in Okinawa City, making them the fourth largest group in the city.[106] Although negligible in terms of scale in the context of 37,099 Peruvians that were registered nationally in the same year,[107] the trend since the early eighties points to the influence of the *dekasegi* boom of Peruvians to Japan also being evident in Okinawa City. As I mentioned earlier, the number excludes those who have Japanese citizenship, but from personal data and informal records that I gathered, one can infer that nearly 400 people in Okinawa City had lived in Peru at some point in their lives. Although Peruvians lived in various parts of the prefecture, the majority resided in and around Okinawa City, the central part of Okinawa mainland. Familial tie was one of the major reasons why they settled in Okinawa City, but those whose relatives lived in other parts of the prefecture also lived in the city because of the network they had with migrants already living in the area, and because the convenience of its location.

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[106] The numbers are calculated from the monthly *Giakoku-jin Tōroku Kokuseki-betsu Jin'in Chōsa-hyō* kept by Okinawa–city (unpublished).
[107] The number of Peruvians registered in Japan in 1996 is from http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/press_020611-1_020611-1.html (accessed June 2010)

Figure 4 Registered Peruvian Nationals in Okinawa City 1984-2008
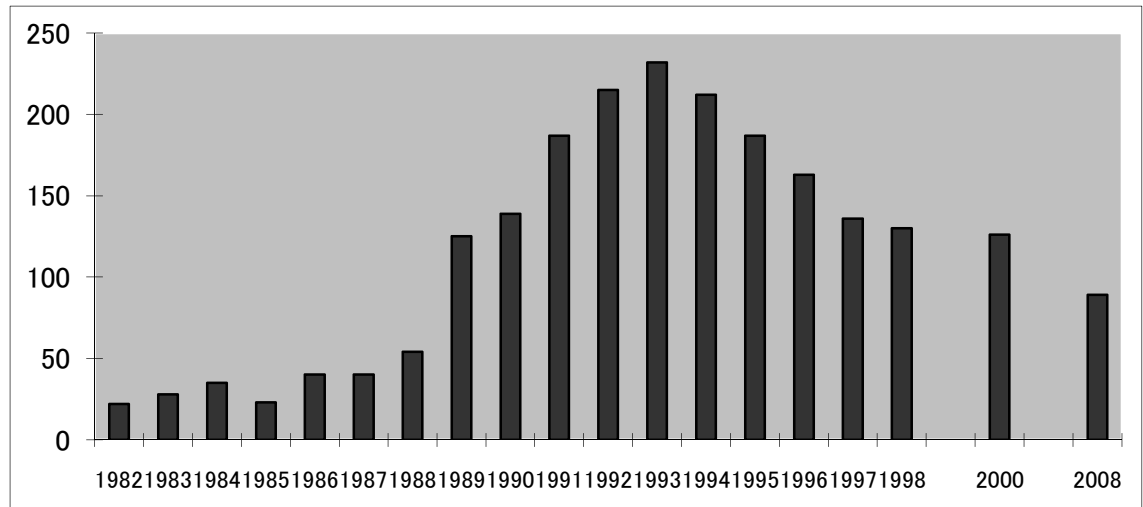
Even during the *dekasegi* boom years, the number of Peruvian *Nikkei* coming to Okinawa was small, and was even smaller for the Brazilian *Nikkei* (See Figure 3), despite the number of *Nikkei* of Okinawan descent in the respective countries – approximately 39,000 (65%) out of total population of 60,090 *Nikkei* in Peru, and 1,170,00 (10%) out of 1,168,000 total for Brazil (Burajiru Okinawa Ken-jin-kai 2000: 328). This was largely due to the economic structure in Okinawa that I outlined earlier, which had no significant manufacturing industry and had a high unemployment rate. In the early years of *dekasegi* boom, the majority of *Nikkei* went straight from their countries to industrial cities in Japan after finding work in factories through labour brokers (see for example, Del Castillo 1999, Roth 2002, Tsuda 2003), and a number of those who had initially come to Okinawa because of familial ties in the late 1980s and early 1990s also left for these cities once they found work there. Finding a job that paid 300,000 yen a month, which was the approximate pay for factory work on the mainland in the mid 1990s (Tsuda 2003), was not easy in Okinawa. When I asked *Nikkei* of Okinawan descent on the mainland if they would consider living in Okinawa, the majority answered that they would like to, but there was no work in Okinawa. Thus, when I arrived in Okinawa City in 1996 after the initial wave of migration in and out of Okinawa had more or less subsided, the proportion of Peruvian *Nikkei* between the 20-40

age group was considerably lower than that of industrial cities. The number of Peruvians who were not of Okinawan descent was also extremely low, being limited to a handful of those who were married to Okinawan Peruvians. During my fieldwork, although the migration flow had slowed down, there were still some people leaving Okinawa after finding work on the mainland. Some had decided to move to Okinawa, after having worked in other industrial cities on the mainland. There were also those who initially started out in other industrial cities, but later decided to register as residents in Okinawa, and found temporary work on the mainland from Okinawa through a public employment security office, thus migrating circularly, as did many other young people in Okinawa who could not find stable work in the home prefecture.[108] Those who moved their base to Okinawa from the mainland frequently cited the more relaxed way of living as their main reason for their relocation. The factory work life on the mainland for the *Nikkei* often consisted of shuttling back and forth from the long-hour repetitious work to sleeping in the minimal accommodation provided by the subcontractors, leaving them little time of their own. Thus, for some, if they could find work in Okinawa, giving up the better paid work in the factory made more sense, even if it meant less income.

The demographic characteristic of the migrants from Peru in Okinawa from the mid 1980s to 1990s can partially be explained by the macro-level of analysis of transnational migrations based on Wallerstein's world system theory (1974), that attributes the unequal global division of labour between different regions to the phenomenon of international migration (Massey et al. 1993, Portes and Walton 1981, for example). Economic and social problems in Peru and high demand for manual labourer in Japan in the 1980s certainly produced economically motivated migration, which explains the low concentration of migrants from Peru (and other South American countries) in Okinawa as opposed to the high concentration in the industrial cities in Japan. However, macro-theory alone cannot adequately

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[108] Brokers on the mainland are privately run businesses, and rarely cooperate with the public employment security offices, except in the case of Okinawa prefecture. Because of its high unemployment rate, Okinawa prefecture allows brokers to advertise in the public employment security office and supports those who seek jobs outside the prefecture in various ways (Tanno 1999: 138).

explain why among these migrants, however small in number in comparison, there were those who relocated themselves to Okinawa. To be sure, for migrants in Okinawa also, economic reasons, social situation in Peru, and the Japanese state's policy to implement the new immigration law had played an important role in their decision to move out from Peru in the first place. However, a closer look at the micro-level of motivation of individuals and families (or lack of it, in the cases of many children) to move to Okinawa would reveal that within these political and economic structures, they make choices taking several factors into account. As I will explore more in detail in the next chapter, among those who came straight to Okinawa, fulfilment of family obligation was one of these factors. In addition, possibility of education, network with the family and friends who had migrated before them, and the prospect of a better quality of life (liveability) were also factored into the calculation when they decided to settle in Okinawa.

5.4 Economic Lives of the Migrants from Peru

In the initial stage of *dekasegi*, migrants from South American countries in Japan mostly obtained work as unskilled labourers in small and medium-size firms in the manufacturing and construction sectors through labour brokers (Del Castillo 1999, Roth 2002, Tsuda 2003, Takenaka). In contrast, in Okinawa it was difficult to speak of a typical occupation of the migrants from Peru, because its economic structure was heavily service-based, and there were few factories and companies comparable to those that absorbed the *Nikkei* labour force on the mainland. Consequently, they went into work of diverse kind. Nevertheless, the language barrier often prevented the more recent migrants from finding white collar work, as was the case for the *Nikkei* in the mainland. For those who had worked in an office or had run their own shops in Peru, becoming an unskilled labourer meant loss of their urban middle class status.

The economic and social status of migrants who established themselves before the *dekasegi* boom varied across classes, and their occupations included politicians, small-sized company directors, company employees, carpenters, electricians, shop owners, farmers and others. The more recent migrants who came to Okinawa

from the 1980s onwards, however, tended to work in an hourly or daily paid job without bonus, paid holidays or social insurance. These included work in construction, electronic installation, farming, restaurant, supermarket, ten-pin bowling centre, gift shops near the base, bakery factory, in hotels as cleaners and others. Among the more recent migrants, there were also a handful of those who had found work inside the U.S. military base. Some succeeded in opening their own restaurants, a boxed lunch shop, and small family-run bakery shops or in becoming Spanish language teachers or working as musicians in Okinawa.

In general, migrants from Peru in Okinawa found work individually through friends and relatives, and tended to work less in clusters. This often necessitated migrants to have more direct interaction with the local workers, and as a result, came to learn to speak the local language faster compared to the *Nikkei* workers on the mainland.[109] There were two workplaces, however, that hired some numbers of migrants from Peru. One of them was a resort hotel in On'na village where I also started working from the summer of 1997 as a room cleaner during my fieldwork, after being introduced to it by one of the migrants from Peru. What follows is the description of this workplace:

The resort hotel was located near the beach on the west coast of Okinawa mainland, about a one hour drive north from Okinawa City. Like many other similar types of hotels in the area, its main customers were tourists coming from the mainland. As the east coast of central Okinawa, which included Okinawa City, was hardly developed as a resort area, and a similar kind of work was difficult to find, cleaners, including migrants from Peru in Okinawa City, travelled outside of the city to the other side of the coast. The contracted agency that supplied cleaners to the hotel (our direct employer) provided the company bus that went around Okinawa City and other towns nearby to pick up cleaners in the morning from around 7:30 to arrive at the hotel by 9:30. In a prefecture where the public transportation system was not well developed, the company bus made it easy for migrants from Peru without a driving license to get work, even if it meant having to spend over an hour and a half on the bus one way.

At the time when I started working, there were only five women from Peru in Okinawa City who worked at the hotel regularly. According to these women and as I could discern from a photo that I was shown from that period, in the early

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[109] An bilingual activist friend who had worked extensively with migrant workers on the mainland told me she was surprised to find that migrants in Okinawa spoke much better Japanese than their counterparts on the mainland, when she visited me in Okinawa.

1990s, half of the bus from Okinawa City was filled with nearly 25 migrants from Peru. Many had since left, after having found work closer to where they lived. Women from Peru that I worked with had children whose age ranged from 15-20 and were in education, except for one woman whose children had already graduated from high school and were working.

The cleaners at the hotel were predominantly women over 40 years old, with some younger single mothers and others who had an insufficient educational background to find work elsewhere. All the cleaners were hourly paid part time workers. Only three administrative staff members (cleaners' supervisors), two of whom were male, were permanent salaried employees hired by the contracted agency for this hotel. Among the cleaners, there were those who were hired more or less regularly – five women from Peru belonged to this group – and they were provided with the pale pink uniforms with white aprons. The more experienced among them would become *chīfu* (chief, the leader) whose work consisted of looking after all the cleaners working on each allocated floor, as well as cleaning. As the hotels were divided into two buildings, one of seven storeys and one of five storeys, there were about five to ten *chīfu* each day, depending on how full the hotel was. Apart from the regulars, there were others, like myself, who came only 3-4 days a week. 'Irregulars' could register to work with short notice, and were not provided with uniforms. There were also those who only came to work occasionally. Some returnees' children, mostly girls in high school, who would come during one weekend to earn some pocket money, were among that group.

As a novice, my hourly pay was 530 yen. The more experienced 'regular' workers, which included the migrants, were paid 580 yen, and *chīfu*, 630 yen. The total number of cleaners varied from day to day, and so did the working hours. When there were more of us, and the rooms to be cleaned were fewer, we were let off as early as two o'clock. Thus, my daily pay ranged between 2,650 yen to 4,250 yen. The 'regular' cleaners' income was higher than mine, but would not have exceeded 100,000 yen a month by too much.[110]

The work started with a short *chōrei*, a morning meeting, where it would be announced who would be paired off with whom for that day (we worked in pairs) and who would work on which floor. After some preparation, the work itself started at around ten o'clock in the morning. The thirty-minute lunch break, which we took in turns, was not included in the pay. The finishing time was normally around four to six o'clock, but sometimes around two or three o'clock when the hotel was vacant, and around seven o'clock, when busy. In the morning, the *chīfu* of each floor were given the lists of rooms that needed cleaning. The pairs working under each *chīfu* would then be given a rough allocation of the rooms, which in the end was relatively flexible depending on the speed at which

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[110] Some people were careful to keep their income low, as anyone whose income exceeded one million yen annually was required to pay income tax, and his/her partner would lose entitlement to a dependent tax deduction. Unless one is earning considerably more than 1 million yen a year, the disadvantages of earning over 1 million yen are too great, and part-time workers tend to keep their income below this threshold (77.1% of female part-timers in Japan belong to the category of those earning less than one million yen annually (Nakamatsu 1994: 92)

the pair worked. One person took care of the bathroom, and the other vacuumed and cleaned the main room. Some pairs alternated the task, while the others fixed their roles. The first thing we did when we went into a room was to open the window, and turn off the air conditioner. This was especially tough during the summer when the temperature outside was over 30 degrees. As we were under constant pressure to finish the room efficiently, and as the pair were cleaning separate parts of the room, there was hardly any time to chat leisurely with one another during the work, except towards the end of cleaning each room, when the one in charge of the bathroom would come into the main room and together with the other changed the bed sheets. This was also done very quickly, so we could never go into any deep conversation. Most of the time, the conversation consisted of remarking how dreadful the state of the room was, or how our back ached, but this was also when I came to know about fragments of the life of my cleaning partner for that day. When I was paired off with one of the migrants from Peru, this was the time when they would often laugh and exclaim: 'Who would have thought we would be cleaning somebody else's toilet! We used to have our own maid back in Peru!' or criticise fellow workers for not being efficient or thorough enough in their work.

During the short thirty minute lunch break, we would sit amongst the carts full of towels and amenities, and eat our lunch that we had each brought from our home, often in silence from exhaustion, rather than jovially chatting. Thirty minutes break would pass quickly and we would go back to the routine again. At the end of each day, we would fill out the time card, and head for the company buses that would take us back home. On the bus, most of us would be dozing off after the hard work, but on some occasions, I would be chatting to the migrants. Many of our conversations were dominated by the topic of the work of that day: that there were so many rooms, that we were rushed, that the customers did not leave till late and messed up the cleaning schedule, that the rooms were turned upside down by students from the mainland on school trips, and so forth. The conversation (in Spanish) would also often turn into criticising other workers for being slack and sloppy in their work. This was when they felt that the image of Japanese being 'hardworking, disciplined and thorough' was betrayed. They would tell me: 'We Peruvians are much more hardworking and know how to clean the place better than the Japanese'. When criticising, migrants referred to the others as *Nihon-jin* or *los Japoneses* (the Japanese) rather than *Uchinānchu* or *los Okinawenses* (Okinawans). Then the conversation would then turn into how very tidy Peruvians are compared to Japanese. The 'Peruvian' in this context, was the *Nikkei* Peruvian, whose traits in their eyes of being the '*trabajadores* (hardworking) and *disciplinados* (disciplined)' distinguished themselves from the rest of Peruvian people. Of course, the degree of tidiness/cleanliness of the migrants, as well as other cleaners, varied from person to person in reality, but during such conversations, these traits became a marker to distinguish 'us Peruvians (*Nikkei*)' from 'the Japanese'. The most critical among the migrants was Maria, a second generation *Nikkei*, a former office worker in a Nikkei company in Peru, and now a meticulous and efficient cleaner (as well as my strict but patient instructor at work). There was one person, however, that she looked up to among her co-workers. One of the *chīfu*, Higa-san, already in her sixties, was

feared by the other cleaning members for her stern, headmistress-like behaviour. She was constantly scolding the other members for leaving the carts in the wrong place, forgetting to fill up the shampoo bottles, and leaving spots on the bathroom mirror. However, for Maria, Higa-san personified the hardworking value that her parents in Peru told her was a trait of the Japanese transmitted from their ancestors.

During the time I worked in the hotel, I never came across the other workers calling the migrants '*gaijin* (foreigners)', '*Nikkei-jin*' or '*Perū-jin* (Peruvians)'. Instead, they were referred to as '*Perū-gaeri* (returnees from Peru)'. Overtly discriminatory behaviour was not observable either. Although during free time, such as lunch time, the migrants tended to be together, they occasionally mixed with the others too, especially with those who they got to know better through working in pairs. However, after I left my fieldwork, Maria quit the job after working at the hotel for 13 years, because of a discriminatory remark made by one of the supervisors. When I went back to Okinawa in 2006, Maria told me of the event. When she asked her supervisor, who was from Hokkaido, of the possibility of taking up the role as *chīfu*, his reply was: 'you should be happy that you even have work here, if you were in *naichi* (mainland), *gaijin* wouldn't be able to find work so easily'.

The description of the workplace above is not meant to be taken as a representative experience for all migrants from Peru in Okinawa; the various occupations that they held meant that the working conditions and their relationship with co-workers and supervisors would have also differed significantly; migrant men's experience is excluded from the description too; there were not many cases of overtly calling migrants *gaijin* in Okinawa. Yet, some of the themes in the above description - low pay, unstable status, the feeling of being treated differently, the feeling of having climbed down the social ladder, disappointment in finding out that the 'Japanese' are not so disciplined and hardworking as they expected - were recurrent in the stories of many other migrants I came to know during my fieldwork.

5.5 Language and Education

For many adult migrants who had come to Okinawa, language had been the major barrier that hindered them from advancing in Okinawan society, although their linguistic abilities prior to coming to Okinawa also varied from person to person. The *issei* (first generation) returnees in general had little difficulty with communication. For the majority of *nisei* (second generation), on the other hand,

Spanish was their primary means of communication. Their command of Japanese or *Uchināguchi* (vernacular Okinawan languages) tended to be very limited, although they had some knowledge of basic terms relating to family relations and everyday life, and were familiar with some expressions in *Uchināguchi* learnt by listening to the conversations between their parents and relatives. The exception to this was children of *kachi-gumi*,[111] who were educated in the pre-war style private Japanese school after the war. Already in their late 40s and 50s, they not only spoke fluent Japanese, but they also had advanced reading and writing skills. For the *sansei* (third generation) and later generations, both Japanese and *Uchināguchi* were 'foreign languages', although those who had lived with their grandparents remembered expressions in *Uchināguchi*, such as *akisamiyō-nā* (oh my goodness!), *ūmakū* (scamp), *warabātā* (children), *achikōkō* (hot for food), *ūtōtō* (words of prayer) and so forth. As the third and later generation of the migrants in general had little prior knowledge about the difference between Japanese and *Uchināguchi* in Peru, many believed that these expressions in *Uchināguchi* were Japanese. For those who had worked in the mainland, it was only when these words were not understood by the other Japanese people that they come to realise what they thought were Japanese were in fact *Uchināguchi*.

The linguistic landscape of present day Okinawa is a complex one. *Uchināguchi* is often referred to as a 'dialect of Japanese', but they are in fact mutually unintelligible. *Uchināguchi* itself is a conglomeration of different vernaculars that are again, often mutually unintelligible if the speakers come from different regions in Okinawa (Osumi 2001). The assimilation policy of the Meiji government and the increased need for a lingua franca within Okinawa resulted in a shift away from *Uchināguchi* towards standard Japanese during the last century. While *Uchināguchi* is still actively spoken in some areas, among those over the age of 50, and in some situations, the predominant mode of communication in Okinawa today is Japanese, especially in the formal situations. Office work, for example, requires reading and writing skills of standard Japanese. Younger people under the age of 50 understand and speak Japanese better than

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[111] See chapter 3 for the background of *kachi-gumi*.

Uchināguchi, although in everyday communication, *Uchināguchi* is alive in the form of *Uchinā-Yamatoguchi*, a creative use of Japanese with a mixture of *Uchināguchi*. *Uchināguchi*, *Uchinā-Yamatoguchi*, and Japanese were being used interchangeably, depending on the situation. Not only do different workplaces require different modes of communication, but even within a workplace, language shifted according to the circumstances. Thus, in the resort hotel among cleaners, for example, older women from the same regions spoke in *Uchināguchi* among themselves, the morning meeting was carried out by the supervisor in standard Japanese, but *Uchinā-Yamatoguchi* prevailed in most of the communication during the work.

The decade of the 1990s saw 'an unusually active moment for the re-construction of Okinawan identity' (Hein 2001:32), and in this process, and also in response to the recognition of the value of 'endangered languages' worldwide, the movement to reappraise and revitalise *Uchināguchi* took place in Okinawa. Despite this, political and economic conditions still privileged the use of Japanese as official language in Okinawa. This meant that for the migrants from Peru, while discovering the expressions they had thought to be Japanese was in fact *Uchināguchi* filled them with a renewed sense of closeness to Okinawa, the Japanese language remained as the 'obstacle' they needed to overcome in order to have access to better work in Okinawa.

Against this background, in the early 1990s, one of the *nisei* who had migrated to Okinawa in 1970 organised a Japanese language class for newly arriving adult migrants. The class, which provided an introductory survival Japanese course, had already stopped running when I arrived in the field site, but when it operated, it not only attracted migrants who had settled in Okinawa, but also those who circularly migrated between Okinawa and the mainland. The same *nisei* also negotiated through another Peru-born member of the municipal assembly to address the problem migrants' children were facing in the local schools. As a result, in 1991, Okinawa City Board of Education started running a *Nihongo Kyōshitsu* (Japanese class) for children for whom Japanese was their second

language.[112] These children attending different primary schools and junior high schools in the city were 'pulled out' and driven to the community centre twice every week after school to attend the class. While the programme itself was not designed to go beyond seeing 'language as problem' and to support children's mother tongue, the by product was that the class became a place where migrant children who were dispersed in different schools could meet up regularly, and with their peers brush up their Spanish, the skill of which was beginning to be outstripped by that of Japanese.

The majority of migrant children that I came to know in Okinawa proceeded to studying in high school after finishing compulsory education.[113] Cases of those entering university were also not rare. Those who did not go on to studying in university tended to find work on the mainland. Among those who quit factory work on the mainland and moved to Okinawa, there were a couple of those who said that their decision to move was prompted by their desire to study. These were migrants who moved to Japan after finishing high school or university in Peru, who were looking for opportunities to study in Japan. They attended part-time high school in the evening. Among the migrants, there was a general perception that Okinawa provided a better environment for studying. In Okinawa, they were no longer in the long-hour work in the factory that prevented them from having their own time. It was also easier to obtain information about opportunities through the network of migrants, which included those who had come to Okinawa prior to the *dekasegi* boom.

Migrants from Peru placed importance on the Japanese language and education as they saw them to be conducive to accumulating the cultural capital that would convert into economic capital (Bourdieu 1977). Despite Okinawa City celebrating *champurū* culture in a generalised term, the social field, or market, within which migrants struggled to change the distribution of the capital, imposed

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[112] In 1995, 19 out of 44 primary and junior high school children with nationalities other than Japanese went to Nihongo Kyoshitsu (Okinawa-shi Kyōiku Iinkai 1996: 32)

[113] This is in stark contrast to the high non-attendance ratio among the *Nikkei* children in primary education reported in other parts of Japan (Onuki 2007).

a linguistic norm that placed little importance on the linguistic capital that migrants had accumulated in Peru. Bilingual education was not developed within the educational policy, and migrants themselves were aware that in the social field they lived, there were a limited number of positions where Spanish knowledge and skills could become an instrument to advancing economically. Nor did they recognise that acquiring *Uchināguchi* would transform their social status in society. Instead, besides Japanese, which they felt they were already disadvantaged in, English learning became something that they aspired to. In fact, when I asked high school migrant students what they wanted to study at university, the overwhelming majority would tell me English or computer science. Many expressed the wish that they could study in the American university inside the U.S. military bases. English was the subject they found themselves to be better at in school, and was seen as the key to open the opportunity to work 'internationally' and connect to the world outside. More immediately, for migrants from Peru, proficiency in English was the asset they thought may lead to accessing work on the military bases.

5.6 The Lure of the U.S. Military Bases?

Migrants from Peru who had landed work on the U.S. military bases were often considered 'fortunate' by the others: although a small number, some migrants worked as IT technicians or in the service sector, such as in the restaurant and hotel inside the bases. When I returned to Okinawa in 2007, a daughter of a woman I worked with as a cleaner in the hotel had finished her English degree in a local university and found work as a hotel manager inside the bases. The mother told me that her daughter had been submitting job applications for many years, even from the time when she was still at university, and that she was very happy now that her daughter had a stable income with petrol and housing allowances. When I visited the family of another woman I worked with, I found out that they were waiting for the application to obtain Japanese citizenship to come through. They told me that one the reasons for their decision was because they thought Japanese citizenship would enhance the chance of their daughter to obtain a job on the bases. The regulation of U.S. base employment states that the

positions are open to all Japanese permanent residents, [114] and therefore, theoretically, being a Peruvian should not prevent their daughter from applying for the work. However, they told me, that in practice, they avoided hiring Peruvians, so becoming a Japanese citizen would give her a better chance, and that the change would only be on paper, their feeling of being Peruvian would not change.

There were various reasons as to why the work in the U.S. military bases continued to attract some locals and migrants alike, but the stable and relatively high salary and the working condition were the major factors. The total base employment in Okinawa declined considerably from more than 40,000 people at its peak during the occupation to 8,349 in 1997, but it is still the second largest employer after the Prefectural Government.[115] Initially, all employees were hired directly by the United States Forces Japan (USFJ), but after the Reversion in 1972, an indirect hiring system was introduced. Now the legal employer of all the local employees on the bases is the Government of Japan, as represented by the Defence Facilities Administration Agency, while the USFJ continues to be in charge of determining what type of jobs are required, employing and classifying local workers accordingly, and supervising and managing the workforce day-to-day. The majority of workers in Okinawa were hired under bilateral labour contracts, the Master Labor Contract (MLC) and the Indirect Hire Agreement (IHA). [116] The MLC concerned accountants, engineers, technicians, security guards, heavy vehicle drivers, fire fighters and others who worked at the headquarters or units of the services, while employees under IHA worked in the base facilities which generated profits, namely supermarkets, clubs, restaurants, hotels, golf courses and other recreational centres.

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[114] Except for U.S. citizens in the case of IHA positions, and for U.S. civilian employees for the military, service members or their family members for the MLC positions.

[115] Okinawa Taimusu, 2 July 2006. During the occupation period (1945-1972), the U.S. military base was the largest employer of the prefecture. The Okinawa prefectural government had approximately 23,000 employees in 2006

[116] In 1997, out of 8349 employees, 5739 were hired under the MLC/MC contracts and 2610 under the IHA.
(http://www.rimpeace.or.jp/jrp/jugyoin/okolett/juugyouin005.HTML [accessed 3 Jun 2008])

The salary of the employees are paid from the Japanese Governments' so-called '*omoiyari yosan* (sympathy budget),' which also pays for the lease of the land utilized for the base installations, for the facilities built on the installations, and also for the electricity used for the operation of the bases. The basic salaries for the base employees varies according to their ranks, but average annual salaries for MLC employees were $50,380 and $35,324 for IHA employees, which were considerably higher than Okinawa prefecture's per capita income of 2,169,000 yen ($19,899). In Okinawa, this level of wages was limited to public services and some private companies, positions for which were scarce. The wages were set at a level similar to the Japanese National Public Service through compensation which included language allowances, paid-for English tuition, family allowance, commutation allowance, housing allowance, overtime pay, and USFJ Differential (a monthly bonus of 10% of an employee's base pay),[117] retirement allowance and twice a year bonuses (Dokuritsu Gyōsei Hōjin Chūryūgun-tō Rōdōsha Rōmu Kanri Kikō 2006). Working hours were normally between 0830 hours and 1630 hours, and those who have to work during 2200 hours to 0500 hours, such as night guards and fire-fighters, receive the night differential rate (ibid.). While overtime work tended to be the norm in private sectors, working hours on the bases were, on the whole, observed more accurately according to their contract, and in some cases, people could take advantage of the so-called '59 minutes rule,' and go home 59 minutes earlier.[118] Furthermore, employment was relatively stable, as although the reduction of the bases on Okinawa could potentially be a source of concern for employees, compared to work in private sectors, they did not need to worry about becoming redundant due to bankruptcy. The opportunity to use and improve English was attractive for many younger generations, while equal opportunity for both genders appealed to many women. For all these reasons above, the competition for the jobs at bases was fierce. In May, when the regular

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[117] The USFJ Differential was introduced to compensate the gap between the base employees' basic pay and public servants' and private sector employees' pay in Japan, but the Japanese government has proposed abolishing the USFJ Differential and language allowances in 2008.

[118] In accordance with the regulation which stipulates supervisors may excuse 'brief periods of absence of less than one hour,' employees may be granted up to 59 minutes approved absence without having their pay reduced at the discretion of management. How often this '59 minutes rule' actually was applied in practice was not clear, but it was one of the well known aspects of base employment about which those on the outside talk with a tinge of envy.

annual recruitment took place, locals poured in and filled up the parking lots of the Labor Management Organization for USFJ Employees in Okinawa-City and in Urasoe City to submit their applications. In 2001, 21,854 people applied for about 700 positions advertised.[119]

In his ethnographic study of base-related activism in the 1990s in Henoko, the contested site for a new U.S. military facility in Northern Okinawa, the anthropologist Masamichi Inoue (2007) explains how the class divisions brought about by the uneven economic development in Okinawa created a divided Okinawan identity - a working-class pro-base identity of difference under the rubric 'We are Okinawans of a different kind', and an anti-base totality of middle-class 'citizens' of diverse backgrounds awakened to globally disseminated ideas about human rights, peace, ecology, and gender, 'We are Okinawans'-, and how the working-class pro-base desire 'for development, happiness, and a better life' (ibid.: 155) ultimately disrupted the possibility of a united front against the U.S.-Japan alliance. In this respect, the migrants' desire to work on the bases (and their disinterest in general about the anti-base activities in Okinawa) can be interpreted as a reflection of their being incorporated into the working-class sector in Okinawan society.

To be sure, it was not the economic benefit alone that the migrants expected from work inside the bases. As one migrant in his 20s explained to me:

> One of the reasons why the *Nikkeis* want to work in the bases is because they are not confident in Japanese. Their level of Japanese is not the same as other Japanese. If they get a job in the bases, then they can learn English quickly because many words are similar to Spanish and you need less effort than learning Japanese. Your English may not be perfect, but it doesn't matter, because that is a problem the other Japanese working there also have.

Another migrant, a *nisei* who migrated to Okinawa in 1970, told me he himself did not consider work in the base as an option at the time when the island was on the verge of Reversion, and the anti-base sentiment among Okinawans was high.

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[119] Ryukyu Shimpo, 1 November 2001.

He nevertheless said that he understood the psychology of the migrants wanting to work there and said:

> It is easier for them (migrants) to speak in English and the salary is stable. But perhaps more than that, it's because they feel that (among Americans) they don't have to be over-attentive (*ki o tsukau*) to what others may think. In the early nineties, there were kids coming back to Okinawa mentally fatigued after working on the mainland. Some of them developed a bald patch from stress. For them, America is more familiar (than Japan). They feel they can open up to the Americans. They think that the Americans won't be picky when you make a mistake and even if they did, it wouldn't matter, because you can talk back. We are both *gaikoku-jin* (foreigners) in Japan. Subconsciously, Peruvians think that the Japanese are hardworking, honest and mannerly. That is why when they socialise with the Japanese, they get nervous.

In the eyes of many migrants, the bases were the work place where the power relation between 'the Japanese' and the *Nikkei* could be relativised, even if it meant that they entered into new power relations with the Americans as their superior. In addition, the bases were seen to be the place where the pressure to assimilate and conform to the image of hardworking and disciplined 'Japanese' could be eased. Similar sentiment was expressed by another migrant:

> Many *Nikkeis* want to get a job on the bases, because that could be the faster way of becoming a 'normal' part of this society. Sure, the good stable salary is an attraction, but more importantly, on the bases, they can behave the way the *Nikkeis* are. In Japanese society, many *Nikkeis* are wearing masks. They are only acting like Japanese, when in fact, they are not. In the bases, they feel they can fulfil their roles in this society without having to compromise and be somebody else.

Many migrants felt that they were being marginalised and were being excluded from the 'normal' part of the society when they became incorporated into the working-class on arriving in Okinawa. This propelled them to seek a working environment where the cultural capital (language skills, the way of behaving) that they had accumulated in Peru could be converted into economic capital. The U.S. military bases were seen to provide this opportunity, and thus the majority of the migrants from Peru in Okinawa come to subscribe less to the 'We are Okinawans' identity that Inoue (2007) outlined.

5.7 Shifting Sense of Belonging

Migrants from Peru who had lived and worked both on the mainland and in Okinawa would invariably comment on how better life was in Okinawa, not only because they were no longer working like a machine for long hours in the factories, but also because they felt 'a little bit more at home'. As one migrant put it: '*Nikkei* working on the mainland feel almost relieved (*hotto suru*) when they come to Okinawa. For them, Okinawa is like an extension of Peru, a transit point between Peru and the mainland. Peru is too far away, so they come to Okinawa and relax. They recuperate after being here for about a week'.

Many migrants of Okinawan descent, especially the third and later generation who arrived during the *dekasegi* boom, came to Japan without much prior knowledge of Okinawa. In Peru, they considered themselves as *Nikkei* which often was synonymous to being *los Japoneses* (the Japanese). Very few knew about the past animosity between Okinawans and '*Naichā* (those from the other prefectures)' in the Peruvian *Nikkei* community, and Okinawa was just one of the regions in Japan. For them, Okinawan food that their grandmothers had made for them on special occasions was Japanese food, and words in *Uchināguchi* they learnt by ear were Japanese words. Thus, when they arrived on the mainland and were met with food 'too sweet' and the look of incomprehension on the face of the Japanese when they tried to communicate in *Uchināguchi*, and were treated as a *gaijin* (foreigner) by those who they had thought to a degree were their fellow 'Japanese', they were made to redefine what it meant to be a *Nikkei*. In contrast, in Okinawa, not only was the food more familiar and words were understood, so they felt slightly less '*gaijin*'. Fernando, whose father is non-*Nikkei* Peruvian and mother is of Okinawan descent, told me how he felt when he relocated himself to Okinawa after having worked in several cities in the mainland:

> In general, *sansei* in Peru didn't have strong feeling as *Uchinānchu*. I wasn't involved much in *Nikkei* activities in Peru either. I went to the sports ground La Union to play football, but that was about it. In the *Nikkei* colonia in Peru, if you didn't have money, you were looked

down upon, and people were in little cliques according to which school they went to. It was when I went to work on the mainland and then came to Okinawa that I noticed that it's actually wonderful here in Okinawa. People are cold on the mainland. When I came to Okinawa, I felt here that I am related by blood (*chi ga tsunagatteiru*). Okinawa has more relationship with South America, many people here have relatives living there, so people are kinder (*yasashī*). I don't mean kind in a sense of *shinsetsu* (helpful). There were people who were *shinsetsu* in the mainland too, but they completely see us as *gaijin* (foreigner), whereas here in Okinawa, they accept us, something like, half like them, or may be even totally as one of them. When you go to the mainland and then come back to Okinawa and see your relatives, you feel as though you are back in Peru. The faces we see here are the faces of *Nikkei* in Peru.

In discussing the *Nikkei* Brazilian's minority status in Japan, Tsuda (2003) mentions that the overall negative Japanese perception of the legacy of migration associated with economic hardship and the subsequent 'abandonment' of the homeland contributes to the negative image of *Nikkei* Brazilians in Japan. In contrast, because of its history of a high proportion of emigration, the image of the *imin* (emigrants/immigrants) in Okinawa, where it calls itself an *imin-ken* (immigration prefecture) was in general less negative. In fact, it was quite often the case that local Okinawans had someone among their relatives who had emigrated and migration was seen not as a special but as a familiar phenomenon, even if each individual's degree of interest in migration varied. Furthermore, the local newspapers Ryukyu Shimpo and Okinawa Times reported about *Uchinānchu* diaspora regularly and many municipalities had published the oral histories of *imin* from their districts. As I will be discussing more in detail in chapter 8, the prefecture had been celebrating the *Uchinānchu* network across the world since 1990. In addition, while on the mainland, migrants from Peru were viewed collectively as *dekasegi Nikkei-jin* (temporary migrants of Japanese descent), in Okinawa, those of Okinawan descent were often seen as '*Perū-gaeri* (returnees from Peru)', the one originally from a certain locatable village 'who had come back'.

Yet, despite attitudes of relative acceptance among the locals and in spite of the 'blood-tie' and elements of cultural connection that the migrants themselves felt,

these factors did not automatically make migrants' sense of belonging shift to Okinawa. If any, migrants' sense of being a Peruvian or being a *Nikkei* often intensified, not so much because of the overt labelling by the others as *gaijin*, but because of the socio-economically mariginalised position they found themselves in.   In this process, the cultural difference – the language, behaviour, way of thinking – and their shared history of migration came to be highlighted, and the meaning of what it is to be a Peruvian or a *Nikkei* came to be reconfigured.   In Peru, many migrants - to various degrees, depending on the family situation and affinity to the 'Japanese community'- identified themselves as being *Nikkei*, which did not contradict their being *los Japoneses* (the Japanese).   They were called '*los Japoneses*' by others, and the image of being 'trustworthy and disciplined' and belonging to the social network of the *Nikkei* were the cultural and social capital that worked advantageously for many.   In contrast, a fissure began to emerge between the meaning of being the 'Japanese' and of being '*Nikkei*', when migrants were being incorporated into a power relation with other 'authentic' Japanese on the mainland in particular,[120] but also in Okinawa. Within this power relation, migrants from Peru positioned themselves as 'Peruvians' vis-à-vis the 'Japanese' other.   When they referred to the 'other', including local Okinawans, the term   'Japanese' was used as a generic term rather than *Uchinānchu* （Okinawans）.   The affinity they felt with Okinawa made their position as *Uchinānchu* an ambivalent one.   The feeling of displacement and economic hardship prevented them from identifying themselves fully as *Uchinānchu*.   In the process, they came to define themselves against the 'Japanese' other, especially when they were being critical of them.

While less marked than on the mainland, internal 'othering' also occurred among Peruvians in Okinawa. The sociologist Takenaka (2003), in her study of Peruvian migrants on the mainland, elucidates how 'ethnic' divisions among Peruvians became exacerbated after arriving in Japan.   When Japan introduced the immigration law that privileged Japanese 'blood', Peruvians who were not of

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[120] Lesser 2003, Linger 2001, Roth 2002, Takenaka 2003 Tsuda 2003 discuss this process in their study of *Nikkei* in the mainland.

Japanese descent also entered Japan to work, some of them with forged documents (they were often labelled as *Nikkei bambas* –'false' *Nikkei*). Associating the non-*Nikkei* and mixed raced Peruvians with this legal status and lower socio-economic status in Peru, those who consider themselves an 'authentic' *Nikkei* defined a stricter group membership in Japan in order to dissociate themselves. As Okinawa provided little work for migrants, a very small number of non-*Nikkei* that came to Okinawa were almost all related to *Nikkei*, and there was practically no one who stayed on with forged documents. Thus, the dissociation from '*puro* (pure)' Peruvians was not of immediate concern for the majority of *Nikkei* in Okinawan society. They all knew about the Peruvians working on the mainland with forged documents, but rather than being critical, many were sympathetic to them, some even criticising the Japanese government for creating the law that excluded them, when in fact it was the government that was in need of labour. That is not to say that migrants in Okinawa did not differentiate their groups along ethnic lines: a non-*Nikkei* woman often told me that the *Nikkei* were so narrow-minded and closed in general, and that she only socialised with a few of them; *Nikkei* often remarked that '*verdadero* (true)' Peruvians were *vivos* (take advantage) and not to be trusted. Even the word *dojin* or *dojinā* (barbarian in old Japanese) was used by the older *Nikkei* in the process of 'othering'. However, such division along the ethnic line was relatively less marked, and while the reconfigured *Nikkei* identity - in terms not of 'the shared culture and ancestry with the Japanese in Japan' but rather of 'the shared migration history, the shared experience in the *Nikkei* community in Peru, and the values of hardworkingness and trustworthiness' - was strengthened in Okinawa, they also positioned themselves as Peruvians that were more 'occidental and expressive', and who 'treated men and women more equally'.

Despite a shared language and in some cases, national origin, migrants from Peru tended to draw a group boundary between them and Latinos working in the military bases. There were some interpersonal exchanges between migrants and the Latinos on the bases. Some young migrants played soccer with the base team occasionally; there were a few cases where a Latino man and a migrant woman

became a couple. However, the majority of migrants saw Latinos on the bases as poorly educated and of low socio-economic status, and therefore tended to distance themselves from them. As a consequence, in the context of Latino-migrant relations, rather than forging a pan-Latino identity with them, the perceived difference contributed to and strengthened the migrants' *Nikkei* identity.

5.8 Concluding Remark

Previously in Chapter 2, I outlined the process in which Okinawan migrants in Peru came to be positioned and to position themselves as 'the Japanese' as a result of ongoing assimilation pressure and of being discriminated and labelled collectively as 'the Japanese' by the Peruvian other. While the division among the Okinawans and the mainlanders nevertheless persisted to a degree, in subsequent generations, the feeling of difference came to be blurred and Okinawan culture and customs passed on by the older generations came to be understood as Japanese.

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that while the 'return' migratory experience of the Okinawan descendants from Peru prompted them to 'discover' the difference and reconnect to Okinawa, their socio-economic situation and sense of 'not quite being the normal part of society' resulted in strengthening of their subjectivity as *Nikkei*-Peruvian, rather than in automatic shift to becoming 'Okinawans'. Neither did they identify themselves with the 'We are Okinawan' totality of anti-base citizens, as they saw work on the bases as an opportunity to be a 'normal part of Okinawan society' without having too much to change their way of being.

Their reconstructed sense of belonging, however, is not fixed once they are in Okinawa either, as they continually reposition themselves in relation to different points of reference, and the different situations that they encounter. In the next chapter, I will describe how in Okinawa, an 'ancestral tie' did not remain just a necessary proof to obtain a visa nor an abstract idea, but through practice of ritual participation, came to influence migrants' positionality in Okinawan society.

Chapter 6   Migrants among the Kin: *Munchū* and *Shinseki*

'*Zen'in shukkin* (everyone has to be at work) tomorrow', announced Yamauchi-san, the head of the cleaning staff at the resort hotel during the morning meeting. Normally, cleaners took their days off in turn, and '*Zen'in shukkin*' was applied only when the hotel was fully booked and had to operate in full capacity. There were a couple of days during the year, however, when this rule did not apply. On the days when the important annual rites for the Okinawan ancestors took place, we were all urged to come to work, even when the hotel was less busy. That following day was one such day. 'Tomorrow *obon* (festival for the dead) starts and I know many of you will be busy cooking and preparing at home, but please don't be selfish and take the day off', pleaded Yamauchi-san, 'If we all show up, we can finish around midday, and then all of us can go home early'.

After the meeting, Victoria from Peru said in Spanish, rolling her eyes: 'Why are there so many *compromisos* (lit: commitments) here in Okinawa? Once or twice a year is enough, isn't it? Do they (Okinawans) seriously think that the ancestors can recognise whether you (the living descendants) are wearing short sleeves (summer clothes) or long sleeves (winter clothes)'? All those from Peru chuckled hearing this. Victoria continued: 'We did *obon* (festival for the dead) in Peru too but that was it. Here, there's one thing after another, *compromisos* almost every month all year around!   There's hardly any holiday for us'.

To have a '*compromiso*' in Spanish means to have a commitment, obligation, or sometimes just an appointment with someone. Used by Victoria in the context above, it refers to what the local Okinawans would simply call '*gyōji* (events)' in Japanese, or less often in Okinawan, *ugwan-gutu* (lit: things related to praying), which often includes the occasions where the families and relatives gather to perform the rites in honour of their ancestors. For the majority of migrants from Peru, living in Okinawa had brought about the obligation to participate, or in some cases, lead the series of ritualised events. These events had become the site

where the migrants came into contact with their kin in Okinawa, and where they came to be positioned as '*Perū-gaeri* (returnees from Peru)', 'insiders' of society, rather than *gaijin* (foreigners) in their homeland.

The ritualised events related to ancestor worship into which the migrants had become incorporated into were often seen to be part of the quintessential Okinawan tradition from the past. As is the case with many other 'traditions' of the world, aspects of rituals in Okinawa as well as the ideology behind such practices are not the product of a stable 'persistent cultural system' (cf. Spicer 1971), but rather are an ongoing creation of the past through selective appropriating, remembering, forgetting and inventing. As such, what the migrants from Peru encountered upon arriving in Okinawa may be what Appadurai calls the configuration of 'fundamentally fractal' cultural forms (1996: 46). This, however, does not mean that when the migrants from Peru had relocated themselves to Okinawa, they were thrust into a social and cultural vacuum where 'anything is possible'. Cultural forms and ideologies in a particular place at a given moment in time, no matter how 'fundamentally fractal' they may be, do have the power to shape, discipline and regulate migrants' subjectivities revolving around class, gender and ethnicity. At the same time, as subjective agents, migrants are not simply being formed and acted on by the circumstances they find themselves in (Bourdieu 2000, Giddens 1979, Ortner 2006, Sahlins 1981). When they become incorporated into the social and cultural network in Okinawa through committing themselves to obligations, migrants do not simply comply with the demands of various social settings, but they also actively engage in their own processes of reconfiguring the past and the present. It is these processes of incorporation and reconfiguration that I aim to highlight in this chapter.

6.1 'We are not *Dekaseguis*': Coming 'Home' to Look After *Tōtōmē*
As I have explained in previous chapters, the 'return' migration of the *Nikkei-jin* from South America to Japan from the 1980s has been generally referred to as *dekasegi* (Sp.: *dekasegui*), the temporary acts of individuals with the goal of 'making money and returning' to their respective native countries. Among the

migrants in Okinawa who had began to envision their life there as 'settlement', there were also those who would say that their initial intention at least was to do exactly that, to do *dekasegi*, to escape from the socio-political situation and the economic state of Peru only temporarily. There were many others, however, who would say quietly, but with a hint of pride: 'Actually, unlike others, we did not come here because we were hard up in Peru. We came back, because we had to look after *tōtōmē* (a cabinet that enshrines *ifē*, the ancestor tablets)'. Time and time again, I was told that migrants in Okinawa were different from *dekasegi* in other prefectures, as many of those who came to Okinawa left Peru with the intention to settle down, not to earn quick money and return. In their view, they 'had to come' to Okinawa, because they were 'called home' by their relatives to take up their responsibilities as the *chōnan* (first son); They simply followed the 'custom of Okinawa (*Okinawa no shūkan*)' to fulfil their filial obligations, which included looking after the *tōtōmē* and performing the series of ritualised events and observances in honour of their ancestors.

According to such a view of 'Okinawan custom', the household once established is perpetual, maintained continuously through an unbroken succession by the eldest son (or his substitute) of the preceding head. In Okinawa, a group of households recognising a common ancestor through the male line is referred to as *munchū*. Ancestor worship, the *munchū* system and rituals related to the system have received considerable attention from scholars including social anthropologists and ethnologists (Adachi 2001, Alam 1995, Lebra 1966, Maretzki and Maretzki 1966, Sared 1999, Tanaka 1977). As I will be discussing in more detail in the next section, many of the recent studies on Okinawan kinship have moved towards rejecting the treatment of such a system as a static field of analysis. Differences in terms of regions, families and individuals, as well as its fluid nature, render easy identification of the *munchū* kinship system with 'Okinawanness' problematic. Nevertheless, *munchū* ideology and the 'rules and regulations' that are attached to it continue to play an important role in shaping aspects of everyday life in Okinawa, including that of migrants, most notably in the practices of rituals and events.

During my fieldwork, through living with an Okinawan family for the first six months, and also being invited to different festivals and family events thereafter, I learned that the rituals which took place both at communal level and personal level at home, punctuated the daily routines of many Okinawans. The daily ritual of *uchatō-mintō*, offering of tea (*uchatō*) to the *gwansu* (ancestors) in a household where there was a *butsudan* (Ok.: *buchidan*) - the altar that houses the *tōtōmē* -, and water (*mintō*) to the *fi-nu-kan* (fire deity) that reside in the kitchen, once in the morning and once in the evening, was mostly taken care of by the women in the family. On the first and fifteenth day of the each lunar calendar (*chiitachi-jūgonichi*), the *butusdan* and the area where the *fi-nu-kan* was located were cleaned, offerings of *ubuku* (white rice), *saki* (rice wine), salt, water, and cuttings from a green plant in a vase were renewed, *hira-ukū* (flat incense) was burned, and prayers were said, again mostly by women. In many households, women consulted a free calendar from a local newspaper that displayed the lunar dates side by side with the solar dates, so as not to forget the *chiitachi-jūgonichi*. The three major annual events, which involved extended family, were *sōgwachi* (Jp. *shōgatsu*, the NewYear), *shīmī* (Jp. *seimei*) and ubun (Jp. *obon*). Unlike many other Okinawan events which were based on the lunar calendar, the majority of households now celebrated the New Year on the first of January of the solar calendar. The head of the household and sometimes other members of the family visited relatives' houses during this time. *Shīmī*, which I will be describing in more detail later in this chapter, took place on a day of each family's choosing, normally on a Sunday, during the third month of the lunar calendar. Described often as a 'family picnic with the ancestors at the family tomb', in Japan, the Taoist influenced *shīmī* is observed only in Okinawa.[121] The festival for the dead, *ubun*, or now more commonly referred to in Japanese as *obon*, was observed from the thirteenth day (*unkē*, welcoming of the dead) to the fifteenth day (*ūkui*, sending off the dead) of the seventh month of the lunar calendar.[122] Before *obon*

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[121] *Shīmī* is not practiced throughout Okinawa either. In Miyako and Yaeyama islands family feasts at the tomb take place on *jūrukunichi* (sixteenth day of the first month of the lunar calendar) instead of during the *shīmī* period.

[122] In some areas in Okinawa, *ubun* ends on the sixteenth day of the lunar calendar.

on the day of *tanabata*, the seventh day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar, family tombs were cleaned, mostly by men and children, to welcome the dead. Unlike in other parts of Japan, during *obon*, families did not visit the tomb in Okinawa, and although *obon* itself is the result of the influence of Buddhism, Buddhist priests did not come to people's home to give prayers either. During the three days, the family with the *tōtōmē* received their relatives, and women in the household prepared a feast from early in the morning for these relatives, family and the ancestors. Apart from these events, biannual *higan,* the Buddhist-influenced celebration of ancestors around the spring and autumn equinoxes and *yashichi-nu-ugwan* (praying for house property) in the second, eighth and twelfth month of the lunar calendar took place among some families. Less practiced was *umachī*, rituals of new harvest, in the second, fifth and sixth months of the lunar calendar. Besides these cyclical ancestor worship rituals, other events among the kin often taxed migrants from Peru both in terms of time and money. These events included the celebration of the birth of a child, the first birthday of a child, marriage*, tushibī* -birthdays on the year of your Chinese zodiac year, especially important among them being the 13th, 61st (*kanreki*), 73rd, 85th (*tōkachi),* 97th (*kajimayā*) year -[123] and funerals.

The degree of participation among the migrants in these rituals and events varied, depending on their situations. The families of the first sons with *tōtōmē* in the household generally were more involved in practicing rituals and receiving guests, while the families of younger sons without *tōtōmē*, divorced women and women who were married to a non-Okinawan Peruvian often played the part of helping with the preparations of big events, or simply paid visits to the relatives that carried the *tōtōmē*. Children were often present during the major events, but teenagers tended to find a way to escape from these gatherings. With a very few exceptions however, the majority of migrants from Peru in Okinawa, although in varying degrees, had ongoing contact with their relatives in Okinawa. As such,

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[123] These are counted in the traditional way of expressing the age of a person in Okinawa and other east Asian countries, *kazoe doshi* (year count). In *kazoe doshi*, a person is in his/her first year of life when s/he is born, and thereafter, one year is added to his/her age at the beginning of each new year. Thus, one turns 13 in *kazoe doshi*, when in fact s/he is still 12 years old according to the western way of expressing the age.

their experience with the relatives was different from that of the majority of *Nikkei* migrants living in other prefectures, who normally did not live close to their relatives in Japan, and whose contact with them often only amounted to greetings on their arrival, if there were any.

For the majority of migrants to Okinawa, key elements of ancestor worship such as *tōtōmē* and the *butsudan* as well as some practices revolving around them were not completely novel. Aspects of ritual practices from 'back home' can be observed among many *Nikkei* in Peru, including Okinawan descendants, despite the majority of them having converted to Catholicism (Fukumoto 1997: 483, Morimoto 1991: 164-165).[124] When I visited the households of the Okinawan diaspora in Peru, it was not unusual to find in their living room a *butsudan* sent over from Okinawa, which often contained not only *tōtōmē* but also the image of Christ and sometimes even a little figure of Buddha. Those who had lived with the first generation *obā* (grandmother) in Peru would recollect that when they were children, they were told by her to say '*ūtōtō* (words to begin prayer)'[125] in front of the *butsudan*. The word '*obon* (festival for the dead)' was also not unfamiliar to the ears of the migrants who used the word to describe their practice of going to the family grave, even if some went on 'the Peruvian *obon* in November', instead of in the seventh month of the lunar calendar as in Okinawa.[126] They consulted *yuta*, an Okinawan spiritual mediator among the migrants, when they needed guidance and advice when faced with a problem. These practices, often seen as the continuation of the tradition from back home, to be sure, should not be interpreted as the mere transportation of the objective cultural forms from Okinawa to Peru, but rather, as a creation in its own right in

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[124] According to a census carried out by Amelia Morimoto in 1989, 92.41% of descendants from Japan including Okinawa were Catholic (1991: 164). 32.45% of households had *kamidana*, *butsudan* and/or *ihai*. (ibid.: 165).

[125] The closest literal translation of the Okinawan prayer '*ūtōtō*' would be 'ah, thou reverend' (Yoku Wakaru Ugwan Hando Bukku 2006: 27)

[126] In Peru, an increasing number of *Nikkei* go to graves on All Souls' Day on 1st November following the Peruvian custom, rather than in the eighth month of the lunar calendar or on 15th August. There has been, however, an 'institutional revitalisation of bon celebration in August', and the Japanese Association of Peru has been organising pilgrimages to the cemetery in Cañete and visits to the Buddhist temple Jionji in honour of the deceased pioneer migrants. (Fukumoto 1997: 483).

response to the local environment they found themselves in. However, what is important here is that these ritual practices were seen and lived by the migrants as continuous traditions which were handed down by their predecessors, the pioneer migrants, transformed and simplified as they might be. After all, it was this sense of 'continuation' that at least in part made it possible for the migrants to decide to leave Peru for Okinawa.

6.2 Kinship in Okinawa: Studies on *Munchū* ideology

Studies on Okinawan kinship flourished under the powerful influence of the structural functional paradigm in post-war British anthropology, especially in the 1960s and 1970s (Alam 1995: 83). In these studies, basic elements of kinship such as descent rules, terminology systems and so forth came to be seen as essential components which constitute social structure. [127] An American anthropologist William Lebra, for example, saw Okinawan society as being 'segmented into extended families organized on a patrilineal principle for worship of common ancestors' and stated that *munchū*, the largest aggregate of such households, 'has successfully preserved its ritual integrity', despite 'extensive social changes which have transpired since the Japanese annexation' (1966: 153). Earlier studies like Lebra's were concerned with the main function of *munchū* as a kin group performing ancestor worship, making pilgrimage to sacred sites and sharing a tomb, and as a system under which patrimonial properties, material as well as spiritual, were inherited through the eldest son (*chōnan*). Properties to be inherited, such as the house and household compound, the land, household name (*yān'na*), and *tōtōmē* (the cabinet containing ancestor tablets) and tomb(s) were described in detail.

The static picture of Okinawan society functioning under *munchū* principle soon came to be questioned from two different fields; namely history and anthropology (Alam 1995). Studies of historical materials have shown that, contrary to the popular belief that the *munchū* system has persisted throughout Okinawan history,

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[127] Studies by Higa (1982, 1983), Lebra (1966), Maretzki and Maretzki (1966) and Tanaka (1974, 1977), for example.

its formation did not occur in many parts of Okinawan society until fairly recently. According to these findings, *munchū* was originally developed somewhat 'artificially' by the ruling class of the Ryukyu Kingdom to distinguish itself from the commoner class and came to be solidified through the establishment of the Bureau of Genealogies (*Keizu-za)* by the Ryukyu government in 1689. Under the influence of a Chinese model, the upper classes of Ryukyu had already been ordered into a hereditary social system by then. However, the imposition by the Satsuma fiefdom, which invaded Okinawa in 1609, of strict feudal social stratification played a further role in the formation of *munchū*, which was a status system rather than a kinship group organisation at the time (Ogawa 1971). The registration of respectable names at the Bureau of Genealogies clarified the division between classes *samurē* (warrior class) = *kēmuchī* (those who have genealogies) and *hakushō* (commoners) = *mukē* (those without genealogies) (Takara 1996: 78-79). The upper classes also began around this time to construct a common tomb for each lineage and to enshrine *tōtōmē* at the stem family, in order to demonstrate their membership in the privileged position. For the 'commoners', the possession of genealogies as well as the practices of certain ancestor worship rites such as *shīmī,* were something that came into their world much later. In the eighteenth century, in order to solve the problem of unemployment for the rapidly increasing population of the upper-class, the government of Ryukyu amended the law which had hitherto prohibited the upper classes from living outside the capital Shuri and taking up jobs other than that of civil servants. With the amendment of the law, the superfluous upper classes were now encouraged to take up farming elsewhere, whilst being allowed to retain the original class status and privileges. As a result, patches of small hamlets called *yādui* (lit. 'temporary lodging'), consisting of the upper class migrants from Shuri, begun to be formed all over Okinawa. The organised patrilineage system and *munchū* rituals performed by those upper classes living in *yādui* came to be gradually emulated by the commoners who lived around the area (Ogawa 1971: 11). The idea and practice reached the northern part of Okinawa mainland only

after the nineteenth century and islands outside mainland Okinawa in the beginning of twentieth century.[128]

In the field of anthropology, ethnographic data which did not comply with an ideal *munchū* model led many researchers to question the applicability of such a model to their findings. Mabuchi (1976), for example, from his studies in the outer islets of Okinawa (Yaeyama island and Miyako island), concluded that the framework of patrilineal affiliation 'fluctuates' in various ways, because in these areas, children are sometimes affiliated bilaterally, both to their father's line and mother's line. Furthermore, Oda (1987) found out through observing the *munchū* tombs in the northern part of Okinawa that, contrary to the common definition that *munchū* is a group of people who claim to share a common ancestor and a tomb, a tomb was not exclusively for a certain kingroup, but was shared by different families.

The most important development in the kinship studies of Okinawa, however, can be found in the studies of *munchū*-making, studies in which researchers such as Adachi (2001), Kasahara (1977), Lee (1995) and Oda (1996) looked into the ongoing process of *munchū* formation – a contemporary practice of creating an idealised *munchū*. This contemporary move is precisely the context in which the migrants' decision to come to Okinawa and their relatives' acceptance of them - or in some cases, urge to call them back - should be understood.

In an idealised *munchū* system, there are strict regulations as to how to perpetuate it. The eldest son is the ideal heir, but in the case where the eldest son is absent, there are strict rules and taboos regarding who can and cannot be the substitute to the heir. Four main taboos concerning the succession of the *tōtōmē* are referred to as *chatchi-ushikumi* (lit. putting aside the legitimate son, prohibition of exclusion

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[128] Documents sent by the central government of Okinawa to a village in the beginning of the nineteenth century suggest that the practice of worshipping the ancestral shrine at home was not widely known at the time. According to the document, 'There are some households (in the village) that do not enshrine ancestral tablets'. The document instructs: 'those who do not have the tablets should prepare them and worship courteously by offering incense sticks as soon as possible' (cited in Dana 1998: 79).

of the first son from inheritance), *chōdē-kasabai* (lit. overlapping of brothers, prohibition of putting brothers' tablets together), *inagu-gwansu* (lit. woman as a founder, prohibition of inheritance by female) and *tachī-majikui* (lit. mixing of other lineages, prohibition of inheritance outside patrimony). In other words, if there is a *chōnan* (eldest son), wherever he may be, he should never be excluded from the inheritance, because he is the *chatchi*, the legitimate heir, of the lineage. Even when the eldest son is dead, younger sons are not allowed to inherit the *tōtōmē*, because brothers are not supposed to be enshrined on the same altar nor entombed in the same tomb.[129] Instead, male relatives of the same patrilinial line should take the position.[130] Injunction against *inagu-gwuansu* (woman as a founder) forbids women to succeed the father's position and become the head of the household. Women are supposed to marry out of her natal *munchū* and enter their husbands' *munchū* and tomb upon their marriage. Adoption of the daughter's husband, which is practiced often in other parts of Japan, should not occur, because it infringes on another taboo, *tachī-majikui*, mixing of other lineages in the process of succession.[131]

If the rules of the *munchū* system were followed strictly and the above taboos were avoided, ideally, only the *tōtōmē* of the successions of first sons and their wives would be enshrined in the *butsudan* of a household. Such an ideal, of course, rarely reflects the actual practices, because in reality, many families find some kind of 'deviation from the ideal' in their family tree, be it in their generation or generations before them. What is interesting in the studies of *munchū*-making is their focus on the contemporary processes of rectifying the

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[129] Younger sons are expected to establish their own households upon their marriage and prepare their own tombs, thus starting their own branch descent line.

[130] The *tōtōmē* of the father (A1) and his deceased first son (B1) can be taken care of by the younger son (B2)'s second or third sons (C2, C3…), but not the younger son himself (B1) or his first son (C1). Since the eldest son (C1) of the younger son (B2) has to succeed his father's line, the younger sons (C2, C3…) should inherit the line of his uncle (B1) and grandfather (A1). If the younger son (B2) did not have a son or had only one son, *tōtōmē* of (A1) and (B1) will be taken care of temporarily by the younger son until there comes a right person to succeed them (normally, father (A1)'s father's other grand son or great-grandson who is not the eldest son).

[131] The taboo has its roots in the Chinese belief that the ancestral spirit will not accept the rituals performed by an adopted son who is not blood-related. The adopted son, therefore, must come from the same *munchū* in principle.

'wrong succession' and the role of *yuta* (Okinawan spiritual mediators) in them (cf. Adachi, 2001Kasahara 1977, Lee 1995, 2003 and Oda 1996).

The act of rectifying, referred to in Okinawan as *shijitadashi* (rightening of family lines), may involve rearranging ancestral tablets in the correct place, relocating the burial place of the ancestors' bones, praying and apologising to the 'right' ancestors, or finding the 'right' heir to take care of the *tōtōmē* which is presently in 'wrong' hands. Some families may begin compiling the 'correct' genealogy, or start undertaking – or change the route of - pilgrimage to the sacred place associated with their ancestors, with the help of a *yuta*, the spiritual mediator, and/or of specialists known as *shimuchi* (lit. book people) or *sanjinsō* (lit. three phases of life)*,* who are thought to possess historical and religious knowledge (Lee 1995, 2003). *Shijitadashi* is often prompted by the advice of a *yuta* who often attributes the misfortune in a family to the infringements of taboos regarding succession. *Yuta*, a role predominantly assumed by women, is believed to be able to intermediate between the worlds of the spirits and the living. Those who believe in the ability of *yuta* to discern the causes of misfortunes and to advise on proper actions, call upon her/him when tragedies strike or when ominous events occur. A misfortune, if it was a minor one, would generally be put down to *ugwan-busuku* (lack of prayer), but in more serious cases, it often would be interpreted as a hint sent by the family's ancestors, who are troubled by the descendants' treatment of them, such as negligence of ancestral rituals and infringement of taboos. The infringement may be one that the sufferer's close kin is currently committing, but it can also be one committed generations ago by one of their ancestors.

The main contribution of studies of *munchū*-making to Okinawan kinship is that instead of portraying *munchū* as a static system under which society operates organically, they have shed light on the ongoing process of its making and remaking in present day Okinawa. That there are movements towards the stabilisation and consolidation of *munchū* does not mean, however, that the Okinawans are unanimous about preserving/creating a social system according to

munchū ideology. On the contrary, *munchū* ideology, while being revitalised on the one hand, is at the same time being challenged from all angles. To begin with, the exclusion of women from properties and land inheritance, which often goes hand in hand with the inheritance of *tōtōmē*, has become a major area of contention. Sparked initially by a series of articles on the issue in the local newspaper, Ryukyu Shimpo, in the 1980s, '*tōtōmē mondai* (issues)' this continues to divide opinions of the Okinawans (Shinzato 2009: 123). The new Civil Code of Japan, which replaced the old Meiji Civil Code in 1948, abolished the primogeniture inheritance, and instead equalised, at least in principle, inheritance of all properties among siblings, regardless of one's sex or birth order (Shinjō 2009: 71-72). Not only are the practices of preserving *munchū* in direct conflict with the new Civil Code in terms of inheritance, but also the idea that their ancestors would punish their descendants for not following the system came to be looked upon with scepticism by many people in Okinawa, who are increasingly identifying the ancestors with their deceased parents and close relatives, rather than patrilineal ancestors in the past (Shinzato 2009). During my fieldwork, I also came across people who were in a quandary over, or sometimes even were flatly against, the idea of *tōtōmē* inheritance according to *munchū* ideology. A woman who was married to a first son and had two daughters – but no son –, used to tell me that the ancestors would be wishing their descendants nothing but happiness, and it would be foolish to think misfortune will strike, if they let their daughters inherit *tōtōmē* and the properties instead of a distant male relative. Although in her case, she was still torn between her thoughts and what is expected of her, there were others, who told me that because *tōtōmē* only creates problems, or because there was no son in the family, they went through the 'correct' procedure to end the *tōtōmē* in their generation.[132] Members of some new religions, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, also did not practice ancestor worship.[133]

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[132] *Tōtōmē* without inheritors, I was told, is called *hijuru* (cold) *tōtōmē*.

[133] One of the relatives of the migrants I came to know was a member of Jehovah's Witnesses. She lived on her own and had a *butsudan* with *tōtōmē* in her house for her relatives to come and pray, but when it was not 'in use' it was covered with cloths.

Such a phenomenon is often viewed as a conflict between 'tradition' and the 'modern way of life' brought about through the process of 'Japanisation'. The situation, however, seems to be a more complex one. The 'modern way of life' often goes hand in hand with 'preservation' and consolidation of the 'tradition' exemplified in the process of '*munchū*-making', which is itself in a way, a modern phenomenon. In 2006, a handbook entitled '*Yokuwakaru Ugwan Hando Bukku* (Easy to understand Prayer handbook)', explaining the procedure of the rituals, had become a bestseller in Okinawa.[134] That many people felt the need to consult the handbook could be interpreted as a sign that such knowledge is beginning to be 'lost' among them, but at the same time, it shows their willingness to 'continue with the tradition' in the modern world.

Adachi (2001), a scholar of religious studies who has worked extensively on Okinawan ancestor worship, sees the activities of '*munchū*-making' and the revitalisation of ancestor worship among Okinawans as a nativistic movement in search for narratives that refute *nichiryū dōsoron* – the theory of the Japanese and the Okinawans having the same roots – and a manifestation of the Okinawan counter identity against the assimilating pressure from Japan. He also maintains that the search for self-narrative based on ancestor worship can also be interpreted as part of human behaviour that endeavours to project their future (entwerfen, in the Heideggerian sense) in the world they are thrust into (Geworfenheit). To determine what exactly is at the heart of this revitalisation is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Suffice it to say here that, as I will be exploring in the ethnography in the following sections, this process of *munchū*-making also influences the way migrants from Peru become incorporated as a member of Okinawan society.

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[134] The booklet explains with illustrations such things as the way to enshrine *hinukan/fi-nu-kan* (hearth kami) and *tōtōmē*, the things to prepare for the offering (*usagimun*), and the order in which the practice of offering should take place during important events, such as New Year, *shīmī*, and *obon* (lunar-calendar bon festival). On top of that, in a form of quiz, it shows the way to say the prayer, explains the set number of incense sticks (*hiraukō*) and the meaning and practical ways to split the incense, and offers the way to apologise to the ancestors when one has forgotten to do the *ugwan* (prayer) on a certain day. Recognising that the way to do things varies from family to family, region to region, the editors included blank memos in some pages, so that each reader can fill in their own family's way of practicing the rituals.

6.3 The Meeting Before the *Shīmī*

The genealogy (*kēzu*) and a copy of a booklet entitled '*Sosen-Yurai-ki* (history and origin of ancestors)' were presented to me during the preparation meeting for the *shīmī* at Chōshū-san's house in Kamara hamlet in Okinawa-city on 27th March 1997. Eleven senior men from Tsukayama family in Kamara were already sitting around the table. Except for the most senior member of the group, Chōki-*ojisan* (uncle Chōki), they were all born in Peru, but had migrated to Okinawa at various time, some before the war, some in the 1970s, and others during the more recent *dekasegi* years in the early 1990s. The owner of the house, Chōshū-san was born in Peru in 1933 but had returned to Okinawa with his family before the war, and has been a city council member of Okinawa-city since 1994. Chōshū-san's wife, who had earlier laid the table with glasses for beer and *awamori* (spirit made of rice) and plates for light snacks, was not sitting at the meeting. When I was taking a look at the genealogy and the booklet, Chōki-*ojisan*, the eldest, suddenly announced rather formally that he would now begin the meeting for the Tsukayama *munchū* in Kamara. Chōki-san then succinctly outlined the schedule of the *shīmī*: the first day would be the coming Sunday, starting with prayers at the tomb of King Shō Sen´i, followed by a visit on the second Sunday to a tomb of the *ufu-mūtūya* (chief house of origin) in Naha (prefectural capital); The banquet at the tomb of one's closest kin would be on the third Sunday, and lastly, on the fourth Sunday there would be a visit to *naka-mūtūya* (mid-origin house) followed by a gathering at Hong-Kong Hanten, a Chinese restaurant run by his daughter. The offerings (*usagimun*) for the first Sunday were to be prepared this year not by them but by Tsukayama families from another hamlet, Goeku, but those from Kamara would have to pay the 300 yen *usakatī* (ritual tax) per head. After deciding on what time to meet on the first day, the formal atmosphere quickly dissolved, and those who gathered started to drink and chat to each other. Chōji-san, who sat next to me, noticing my taking interest in genealogy and the booklet, told me that they had compiled them in 1986 and had made 200 copies, some of which he had sent to his relatives in Peru.

The rather crisp looking genealogy and booklet explained how the Tsukayama-family originated from the abdicated King of Ryukyu Kingdom, Shō Sen´i, whose tomb they were to visit on the first day of the *shīmī*. The genealogy, however, did not begin with Shō Sen'i. As was the case with all Okinawan genealogies, the king was then traced back to the mythological first king of Ryukyu, *Tensonshi*, who was again traced back to the mythological founding brother and sister of Ryukyu. They told me that compiling them was a serious task, because they had to commission a *shimuchī* - a specialist dealing with history - to write the booklet explaining the history of the family. The most difficult part, however, was in reconstructing the genealogy. According to Chōjirō-san, it was reconstructed through the hard work of opening the tombs and reading the inscription on the funerary urns, because *koseki* (family registration) prior to the war had been burnt and lost during the Second World War. He strongly opposed, however, having their genealogy lumped together with many 'faked ones' made after the confusion of the war. According to him, some part of their genealogy was saved by a family who emigrated to mainland Japan before the war, and escaped the fire of the battleground in Okinawa. They come from the *samurē* (warrior) class, and that is why all their names start with the Chinese character 朝. All male members of an upper-class *munchū* share the *nanui-gashira* (initial character name) in their personal name. In the case of the Tsukayama family, the character 朝 (read either *chō*、*tomo* or *asa*) is used for the names of male members. 'Apart from Tsukayama, we also have a Chinese surname *Shō* (向). All the men who belong to *Shō Uji* (clan) have the same character 朝, regardless of their Okinawan surnames' explained Chōjirō-san with pride, pointing his finger to the character *Shō* (向) printed on the booklet for me. 'So where is Lucho in this family tree?' I asked, remembering that one of the teenagers from Peru I knew also belonged to the Tsukayamas. The genealogy only gave Okinawan names, and to mentally substitute their names with the ones more familiar to me -- Andres, Marco, Luis, Patti –was a difficult task. 'Don't ask me too many difficult questions, ask great

uncle Chōjirō. He knows everything', said Chōei, the youngest of the group, but was the head of this particular *mūtūya* (origin house). 'Did you also have a Peruvian name?' I asked Chōei. 'Oh, I was Alberto in Peru. I had to think about that one, because no one calls me Alberto any longer', laughed Chōei.

Chōei came from Peru when he was 23 in 1972, a couple of months after Okinawa's reversion to Japan. Chōei's grandfather, Chōkō went to Peru in 1929 at the age of 16, following his two uncles who had left Okinawa a few years earlier as contract immigrants. Despite being the eldest son, Chōkō decided to emigrate, leaving his father, also an eldest son who had to look after his parents. Chōkō called a picture bride from his native village, and they had 9 children, 5 boys and 4 girls. In the meantime, Chōkō's father in Okinawa passed away, leaving a substantial amount of wealth. This was temporarily looked after by Chōkō's younger brother, Chōjirō (uncle Chōjirō), who stayed in Okinawa with his father, and by Chōkō's uncle (Chōshū's father) who had returned from Peru before the War. At some stage, however, those in Okinawa, especially Chōjirō, 'felt it not right to leave it as it was'. After all, Chōjirō was a younger son, and it was his elder brother Chōkō who had the right and obligation to look after the *tōtōmē* and the properties. The family called Chōkō back from Peru to sort out the problem. Chōkō, with his wife, youngest son and youngest daughter, decided to return home some 40 years after his departure. Chōkō divided approximately 30% of the land and other wealth amongst his brothers in Japan as well as his children both in Peru and in Okinawa for them to inherit upon his death, but 70% of the properties, including the main house and *tōtōmē* (ancestral tablets) were to go to his eldest son, Chōichi. Chōichi also joined his father in Okinawa some years later, but he did not get accustomed to the life in Okinawa and eventually went back to Peru. This was when Chōichi's eldest son (Chōkō's grandson), Chōei, a third generation Okinawan-Peruvian, came to be chosen to take on a mission to inherit and look after the ancestors in place of his father. Chōei, who was merely 23 at the time, without much knowledge of Okinawan customs, had thought that relatives were sending him to Okinawa, because *furyō musuko* (delinquent sons) in Peru were often sent back to Japan to rehabilitate, and he

thought that his family thought he was one of them. Chōei was only happy to come to Okinawa, because he could reunite with his girlfriend (now his wife), who had previously gone back to Okinawa with her sick father. Now that his grandfather was dead, Chōei was in charge of all the ancestral rites as a head of one of a big branch of the *munchū*. 'I only do what uncle Chōjirō tells me to do' said Chōei. In the past 25 years, little by little, most of Chōkō's children had relocated themselves to Okinawa with their families, except for Chōichi, Chōei's father. That Chōichi was still in Peru was a source of concern for some, like one of Chōei's aunts-in-law. Once, she had told me that in fact, responsibility of the head of the household should not jump from an eldest son to a grandson, and Chōichi, as an eldest son, has to return to Okinawa one day, 'even if he becomes mere bones (*hone ni natte mo*)', because bones and *tōtōmē* should never be kept apart.

The evening ended with discussions on the politics of Okinawa-City and on Chōshū-san's chance of being re-elected as a member of the City Council in the coming election. That the meeting did not take place at Chōei's house, but instead at Chōshū's seemed to be because this was not only the occasion to discuss the upcoming *shīmī*, but also for Chōshū-san to gain reassurance of family support for the upcoming next election. Throughout this meeting, none of the female members were present, nor were some of Chōei's uncles, who had returned to Okinawa more recently. It was not until three weeks later during the family *shīmī* at Chōei's family tomb that I would see all of them gathered together.

Chōei's family tomb, only a few minutes' walk away from his house, was, like many other tombs in Okinawa, a large house-size omega-shaped tomb with a spacious patio (*mā*) at the front, modelled on the tombs in Fukien Province in China. The writing on the tomb said that it was built in 1935. Chōei's great-great-great grandfather, who was a second son, branched off and started the line of this family. When I arrived at the site on the day of family *shīmī* with Yumiko, Chōei's wife, in the early afternoon, approximately twenty five people were already there, sitting on the 'blue sheet' that men of the family had already spread

over the patio in the morning. They had also built a large tent above like many other families do to keep out the sun. Chōjirō-*ojisan*, the great uncle and Chōshū-san, the member of the city council were not yet there, because they were at their own family tombs which Chōjirō-*ojisan* and Chōshū-san's father had built separately (being the younger sons, they had to branch off from Chōei's line). They would join later, however, as their more senior ancestors were buried in this tomb.

The ceremony ended quickly. As is the custom, the eldest woman present, Chōei's decreased grandfather's wife, *obā* (grandma) walked towards the front of the tomb, where a *binshi* (a wooden box containing rice, salt and *awamori* - the Okinawan liquor made from rice), and *jūbako* (the lacquered box containing food) were laid towards the right side facing the tomb. With help from Chōei, *obā* lit *hira-ukō* (black incense, symbolising the earthly desires of humans), and began saying prayers in *Uchināguchi* (Okinawan), the set phrase that opened with '*sari ātōtō ūtōtō*' and continued on introducing herself to the ancestors, thanking them and asking for their favours. *Obā* then burnt *uchikabi/nchabī* (paper money for ancestors to use in their world), and after another *ūtōtō* (prayer), placed them in a basin and distinguished fire with tea and *saki* (sake). Chōei, the head, prayed next followed by his first son and then the members of the family present. The order of praying, apart from the first three, *obā* first, Chōei the first son next, and then his first son, seemed not relevant. The ceremonial part only took a few minutes.

Soon, everyone began *usandē*, eating food and drink first offered to the ancestors. The offerings that Yumiko had prepared consisted more of the 'traditional' sorts, such as *mūchī* (rice cake), *sanmainiku* (pork), fish tempura and red fish cake (*kamaboko*), but wives of uncles who had come from Peru more recently had brought in their Peruvian specialities such as *papa a la Huancaina* and *papa rellena*. Family members arrived and departed throughout the afternoon, and children started climbing and playing around the tomb. Soon, uncle Chōjirō and Chōshū-san, who had finished visiting their family tomb, joined. Rather than talking and remembering ancestors, they seemed to be enjoying themselves,

drinking, eating and gossiping. It was strange, however, to see how they were gathered together; women sat on the right hand side of the patio facing the tomb, and men on the left, with more or less senior members nearer the tomb door and others in the back. 'Why are you men and women sitting apart?' I asked one of the one of the more recent migrant women among them jokingly, 'I don't know why. This is an Okinawan custom' she laughed. I have seen Okinawan men and women sitting together mixed in other *shīmī*, but this *shīmī* seemed more divided along the gender line.

'Did you go to the *kami-ushīmī* at the *ufumūtūya* (origin house) last week?' I asked Yumiko. Her answer was: 'No, it takes at least an hour to get there. Only *otōsan* (lit. father, but in this case her husband) and Tomohiko (her eldest son) went'. Yumiko looked exhausted from preparing offerings and food from early in the morning. I have helped to prepare these offerings on other occasions, and knew that neither *obā* nor her husband Chōei would have been there to give her a hand. *Obā*'s role in the event now, was to give the prayer, the role which Yumiko would be taking up in the future. She told me she hadn't learnt these words in *Uchināguchi* yet, and would have to learn from her soon.

As with so many aspects of rituals and events in Okinawa, activities surrounding *shīmī* were often gendered. Men decided on the procedure in the meeting, visited the distant stem family, and set the site for the picnic; women were in charge of cooking and preparing food at home, and the eldest among them gave the prayer. As such, while women's status in religious rituals is generally considered superior than that of men in Okinawa (hence *obā* gave the important prayer at the beginning),[135] the practical division of labour between genders (and seniority) during the *shīmī* resembled the pattern described in ethnographies on ancestor worship in other parts of Japan (see for example, Lebra 1984, Martinez 2004). Middle-aged men had the public role of representing the household, while women

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[135] In Okinawa, women, not men, are believed to possess the spiritual power to access the ancestors, and are often the official leader of the religious rites. This is said to be based on 'Onarigami' belief, in which it is considered that *onari* (sisters) possess the ability to provide spiritual protection over *ekeri* (brothers), who deal with the earthly matters. See Sered (1999) and Yoshida (1990) on Priestesses of Okinawa.

prepared in the background. As I will return to later in this chapter, such division of labour was one aspect of life in Okinawa which the migrants from Peru found difficult to get used to.

6.4 Becoming Connected to Royalty

The same year in April 1997 on another Sunday, I was invited to come to *shīmī* of the family of Alicia, my co-worker at the resort hotel. Alicia came to Okinawa with her husband, Carlos, and their two children in 1991. Carlos's father, who was the first son of the Nakasone family, had migrated to Peru before the war and had passed away there, and so now the responsibility fell on his first son, Carlos, to continue with their *munchū*. As was often the case with the migrants coming 'home' to take up such responsibility, they moved into the house that belonged to Carlos's father. The house, not much changed from the time it was built, and still having a toilet outside the main house,[136] came with the *tōtōmē* and *butsudan*, which according to Alicia, had given her a burdensome task. She used to joke that she was the *chōnan* (first son), not her husband, as she was the one who had to do the *uchatō-mintō* (offering of tea and water) every day, receive the husband's uncle when he visited early in the morning on *chītachi-jūgunichi* (fist and fifteenth day of the lunar calendar), and do all the cooking and offering when it came to rituals.

Before Carlos and Alicia started living in the house, Carlos's younger brother, who came to Okinawa earlier in the eighties, was using it as a home for his family. Their relatives in Okinawa, however, felt it was not right that the younger son was taking the position of the eldest son. Various small misfortunes were beginning to happen around them, and they began to wonder if this was because they were infringing the taboo of *chatchi-ushikumi* (neglecting the legitimate son). When Carlos had made a short visit to Okinawa, they therefore took the opportunity to urge him to leave Peru with his family to take up his responsibilities. Alicia once

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[136] Before flushing toilets were introduced, the toilet was always built outside the main building, often in the pigsty, in an Okinawan house. *Fūru-nu-kami* (god of the toilet), ranked one of the highest among the gods in the household property, is thought to reside in the toilet area.

told me that making the decision to leave Peru was not easy, as she did not want to loose her position as a secretary in the office of a Japanese company in Peru. At the same time, because she did not get along with her mother-in-law in Peru, escaping to Okinawa was not an unattractive idea either, so she thought about giving it a try. Of course, she told me, back then, she had no idea that going to Okinawa would mean she was going to have to look after so many rituals.

The tomb of the Nakasone family was not in Okinawa city where they lived, but in Naha, the capital city. On the day of the *shīmī*, I was told by their uncle, whom I met for the first time, that before going to the tomb of their close ancestors in *Shikina-Reien*, a municipal cemetery run by Naha city, they had to visit another tomb to pay respect to their more distant ancestors first. The tomb turned out to be *Tamaudun*, the Royal Mausoleum, some two hundred meters down towards the west from the Shurei-mon (Gate of Courtesy) of the reconstructed Shuri Castle, one of the busiest tourist sites in Naha.[137] Built in 1501 by King Shō Shin (1465-1526) to re-entomb the remains of his father, King Shō En (1470–1476), *Tamaudun* entombs the successive generation of the Shō En dynasty. Seeing the surprise on my face on finding out where we were, the uncle explained: 'When we investigated our family history, it came to our knowledge that we were connected to the Royal family'. The ample space in front of the tombs of *Tamaudun*, consisting of three crypts, was busy with several other families visiting to perform their offering that Sunday. The uncle told me that the central crypt was for preserving remains before *senkotsu* (bone washing), the one on the left was for the bones of kings and queens after being washed, and the one on the right was where the bones of the rest of the royal family were kept. When one family finished the prayer, Nakasone family quickly moved in front of the crypt on the left, placed their offerings, burnt *hira-ukō* and *uchikabi*, murmured the prayer, but they did not stay on to have a feast there. Instead, they quickly left the place to give space for the next family who were waiting behind, ready to make their offerings.

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[137] *Tamaudun*, as a part of the sitegroup Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu, was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2000.

The family feast of *shīmī* took place later, when we moved to *Shikina-Reien*, in the open space in front of the more modest and newly made family tomb in1988, where Nakasone's closer relatives were buried. After going through the usual procedure of placing the offerings and praying, we opened the *jūbako*, the lacquered box containing food prepared by Alicia, and began eating, drinking and chatting. I asked Alicia which *munchū* they belong to, and what kind of Royal connection they had, but she did not understand the word *munchū*, nor did she know in detail what kind of Royal connection they had. 'You have to ask uncle', she said, and the uncle explained that the family can be traced back to prince Misato, the fourth son of Shō Teiō (1645-1709). 'I didn't know that', Alicia told me in Spanish, 'we are supposed to be from this very important family, but still, I work as a cleaner in a hotel, and Carlos works in construction, daily paid too!' she laughed.

6.5 The One Who Would Not /Cannot Participate

A few days before the *shīmī*, at Maria's house, I was watching the television with her and her children in a very small sitting room about four and a half *tatami* mats (9 ft x 9 ft) in size. The big television and the *butsudan* containing the *tōtōmē* always overwhelmed me in that small room. 'Aren't you supposed to be busy preparing for the *shīmī*?' I asked Maria, mockingly. 'Oh no, I never participate in those things', was her reply. I was surprised to hear this, because Maria had always told me her and her husband Lucho had come to Okinawa because of the *tōtōmē*'.

The decision to leave Peru for Okinawa was down to Maria, rather than Lucho. In 1988, Lucho made a short trip to Okinawa, his father's homeland, for the first time in his life. The first person for him to visit was Lucho's uncle, who had left Peru for his native land in Okinawa in the 1960s. Lucho's uncle was a *chōnan* and the head of the household, but he had no child. Lucho was a second son of the uncle's younger brother, and therefore was in a 'perfect' position for succession. Lucho learned that his uncle wanted to adopt him, because he was getting old, living on his own, and needed someone to take care of him, his

properties and the sugar cane field. Lucho went back to Peru and discussed the situation with his wife. It caused a dilemma for the couple, because Lucho had a very good job in Lima as a manager in one of the international hotels. Maria also successfully ran a small restaurant near the centre of Lima.   On the other hand, the economic and social situation in Peru was not looking good.   Insurgent activities by groups such as Sendero Luminoso were becoming more and aggressive, with four members of JICA were killed, and the Bank of Tokyo was bombed. Even the hotel that Lucho worked for was bombed. Maria had always wanted to live abroad. Her first choice was to go to Canada, where Lucho's sister lived, but since Lucho's uncle was asking him to come to Okinawa, she thought about taking advantage of that opportunity. She also wanted to see Japan, where her grandfather had come from. Thus, despite Lucho's apprehension, the couple moved with their two daughters to Okinawa two years later in 1990. Now they find their life in Okinawa extremely difficult and completely different from the 'middle-class' life they had enjoyed in Peru.   They had never dreamed of becoming manual workers themselves. The small pottery factory where Lucho found work at now had suspended his payment, because business was slow, and so Maria had to work as a cleaner at the supermarket in the morning and cut and pack meat in the afternoon. She wished she could find work in the base, 'even it were as a dish washing woman' in the restaurant. Lucho too wanted to work there, but he was nearing fifty and feared he would be too old to be accepted. The sugar cane field that the uncle owned needed too much work and generated too little income.   Although Lucho would eventually inherit the properties, he wasn't allowed to sell the land nor use his money while the uncle was alive. They did not have to pay the rent because they lived with the uncle, but that was about the only benefit of living in Okinawa. Everything else, they had to manage on their own.

Maria told me that the uncle never let her touch the *tōtōmē*. Perhaps, she said, it was because she was a *gaijin* (foreigner); one of Maria's grandfathers was an immigrant from Kumamoto prefecture in Japan, but her other grandparents had no connection with Japan at all, and her connection to Okinawa was through her husband Lucho. The *tōtōmē* was there for the uncle, who lived in a detached

room outside the main house, and came time to time to 'do things' for it, and Maria was excluded from it. The *butsudan* was very dusty but she said she didn't care; she was not supposed to touch it anyway, so why should she bother?

Lucho was becoming increasingly depressed with his life in Okinawa. He hardly mixed with the other migrants from Peru, and when I visited their home, there was often tension between Lucho and Maria. When I went back to Okinawa in 2001, Maria and the children were living separately in a rented apartment. When I went back again in 2006, the family was gone. I was told that the uncle had passed away, Lucho sold all the properties and land he inherited, and they all left for Peru.

6.6 Ancestors, Who are they?

After the *shīmī*, during the break at work in the resort hotel, I asked the migrant women how their *shīmī* went. Knowing that Victoria was the eldest woman in the family, I asked her if she learned to pray to the ancestors in *Uchināguchi* (Okinawan). 'Of course not', she told me, 'I cannot speak *Uchināguchi* or Japanese, I did it in Spanish. I'm sure it doesn't matter. It is the thought that counts, isn't it? My ancestors would understand my Spanish'. For the migrants I spoke to, their image of the ancestors was less of the distant patrilineal spirits that would wreak havoc if not cared for correctly, but instead, was more of the recently deceased that would be looking upon their descendents benevolently.

The conversation then moved on to the relationship between the ancestors and Christian God. All of them were Catholic, and they told me that the ancestors and Christian God are not the same, but that there was no contradiction in believing in both. One woman said: 'I heard that the Vatican said it is okay for Catholics to do ancestor worship. In Peru, they also feast at the graveyard, you know, but that was what "*cholos* (terms applied to people of mixed Andean ancestry, often used with derogatory connotation)" used to do, we just went to the grave and put flowers. Feasting in the graveyard is a rural custom in Peru. Okinawa is so *inaka*'. The elaborate procedure of ancestor worship rituals was, then, for them,

just an Okinawan custom, a 'rural' tradition, which did not necessarily challenge their identity as a Catholic.

One migrant from Peru, a devout Catholic, once told me that for him placing the incense and praying in front of the *tōtōmē* was like saying 'hello' to your ancestors. According to him, they were still part of the family and when he prayed to them, it was to ask them to talk to God, now that they are closer to Him. At the same time, he would pray to God to ask Him to receive his ancestors' souls and would also ask his ancestors to pray to God for the wellbeing of the living family.

By practicing the 'custom' and 'performing kinship' (Van Vleet 2008), the migrants from Peru gained their membership among their Okinawan kin, but this did not necessarily mean that they were following the prescribed rules blindly. As Howe (2000) argues, participants in the rituals 'always bring their own competencies, reputations and interests to a ceremony, so that the ritual becomes a specific performance rather than an exercise in repetition'. Through praying in Spanish, or praying simultaneously to the ancestors and Christian God, the migrants strategically incorporated their competencies and interests while simultaneously asserting their position among the kin through performative ritual acts.

6.7 Longing for Life back in Peru

Although the migrant women at the hotel all knew the importance of *tōtōmē* and of the first son in Okinawan society, for them, the word *munchū* meant little. When I asked them which *munchū* they belonged to, they would normally ask me back what the word meant. When I explained to them, they would reply: 'Ah, you mean *shinseki* (relatives). Those who come to *obon* and *shīmī*'. To be honest with you, *shinseki* here are very cold. Totally different from *shinseki* in Peru. You see them when there are *gyōji* (events), but that's about it'.

The 'coldness' of the *shinseki* in Okinawa was what migrants from Peru often referred to. According to them, in Peru, the relationship with their *shinseki* was more intense; they met every weekend, went to La Union (the *Nikkei* sports ground in Lima) together, visited each other's houses frequently, male and female relatives mixed together more, and whether the relatives were from father's side or mother's side did not matter; *shinseki* was the extended family, that often offered emotional support.

The less intense nature of the migrants' relations with their *shinseki* in Okinawa was also reflected in my experience with them. Apart from some exceptional cases, the only time I saw them was when I was invited to one of the family events. I rarely came across Okinawan *shinseki* at migrants' home and they did not come to any gathering organised by the migrants either. On the occasion I saw them at the Okinawan family events, such as *shīmī* and obon, they were generally pleasant, explaining to the outsider (myself) the meaning of the event, how the *munchū* system operates, and so forth. Conflicts between the migrants and their relatives, if there were any, did not surface in such settings. Outside of the confine of these settings, however, many migrants would confide in me that their relationship with *shinseki* was something that disappointed them when they came from Peru. Some would even tell me that when they first arrived, relatives seemed to have been suspicious that they might have come back to claim the family land and properties.[138] Even when such suspicion was cleared, and the relationship improved, the relatives were busy with their own life, and so they ended up seeing each other only during family events.

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[138] Such suspicion was not ungrounded, as selling of the land and property in Okinawa by the Okinawan diaspora was not uncommon. Several bilingual migrants have told me that they have been called to court to translate to resolve the property disputes of many kinds between those from Peru and their relatives. While I was in Okinawa, a *sansei* from Peru visited in order to sell the land that belonged to his father, who was a *chōnan*, but was living in Peru. The estate and land were being looked after by the sansei's grandfather's younger sons who did not migrate. The broker got involved in the selling of the land, and the Peruvian family felt that they did not receive the correct amount of money due. As he spoke neither Japanese nor *Uchināguchi*, he was not entirely convinced with the explanation of the situation that the local lawyer gave. A bilingual Peruvian restaurant owner in Okinawa had been called to the task of translation, but the problem was never resolved. Although this case was not strictly a conflict between the migrants and their relatives, I was told that there were also cases of disputes between them.

These events in Okinawa were often perceived by migrants to be formal and rigid, completely different from the joyful conviviality with their *shinseki* that they had known in Peru. 'Christmas is the saddest day for us here in Okinawa' many would tell me. 'We buy *pollo* (chicken) instead of *pavo* (turkey) here, but it's not just that. Christmas was when all the *shinseki* got together. Our reunion back then was more intimate. Here, Christmas is not even a holiday'. In their view, *shīmī*, which was enjoyed by many locals as a time for convivial family reunion, did not quite match the Christmas they had enjoyed in Peru. What is important here is, of course, not whether or not *shīmī* is intrinsically less convivial than Christmas, but that it was conceived to be the case by the migrants. One aspect of family events in Okinawa which seemed to have contributed to migrants having such sentiment was the division of the gathering along the gender line – which in itself mirrored the division of labour ascribed to each gender. On these occasions, women were often relegated to the realm of kitchen, while men entertained their guests in the living room in front of the *butsudan*. Such a situation lead many migrants to complain: 'There was *machismo* also in Peru, but at least we were a bit more equal, and we did things together. Here in Okinawa, men go one way and women go the other way, children do things on their own, and the family becomes separated'.

6.8 Concluding Remarks

'*Anta doko no shima ne* (which *shima* are you from)?' is the question one frequently gets asked when meeting someone for the first time in Okinawa. *Shima*, which is usually translated into English as 'island', in this context refers to a much smaller communal space, a hamlet, a place of one's origin through a patrilinial line, a cultural landscape where rituals, performance and other practices take place. For someone like myself, who could not claim a *shima* of my own, and was not married to an Okinawan man, no matter how much tanned and better versed in *Uchinā Yamatoguchi* (mixture of Okinawan and Japanese) I would become, not being able to answer this question was when I would be instantly put into the category of 'not *Uchinānchu* (Okinawan)'. In contrast, while in my observation, more recent migrants from Peru often did not fully participate in

larger *shima* activities that often took place in *kōminkan* (community centre) nor belong to its associations such as *seinen-kai* (youth association) and *jichi-kai* (community association), the majority of them came to be placed firmly in one *shima* or another through belonging to a *munchū*, through looking after the *tōtōmē*, or through performing the ancestral rites. In this context, they also came to be referred to as '*Perū-gaeri* (returnees from Peru)' rather than *Nikkei-jin* or *gaijin* (foreigners).

As I have outlined in this chapter, rituals were an important site where migrants both reformed and negotiated their identities. They not only symbolically reintegrated some migrants into the *munchū* system – a narrative of being an Okinawan – while excluded others (as in the case of Maria), the 'stylized repetition of acts' (Butler 1990:140) inherent in rituals had given migrants an embodied sense of being an Okinawan. The genealogy, which collapsed the past into the present, gave substance to the ethnicised sense of continuity for migrants. In some cases, membership in a certain *munchū* also prompted them to reconsider their working-class status in Okinawa with their newly found connection to the upper-class past. The division of labour that accompanied the ritual practices pressed migrants to assume the gender roles that they often felt at odds with.

This is not to say, however, that migrants themselves did not actively assert their membership themselves. They not only recreated and performed the rites accordingly, but also inscribed their differences through praying in Spanish, through incorporating the Christian God in the prayer, or through adding Peruvian food in the offerings. As such, rituals could also be understood as the 'fertile and creative terrain' (Salih 2002: 223) in which migrants could assert their difference and to which they can add new meanings.

In practical terms, belonging through *munchū* opened up opportunities for the migrants to get acquainted with the world outside the migrants' circle by interacting with their relatives who had 'stayed put'. This, however, also prompted migrants to yearn for a different kind of relationship which they had

with relatives in Peru. This loss of emotional and deep felt relationships, while not the same or as intense as the relation that they had with the *shinseki* in Peru, would be partially substituted through the development of a different kind of network that the migrants form among themselves, as I will be exploring in the next chapter.

Chapter 7   Forming the Migrant Network

In the last chapter, we have seen the process in which migrants from Peru to Okinawa come to be 'reinstated' and positioned as *Uchinānchu* who are *Perū-gaeri* (returnees from Peru) through ritual participations.   The process, which involved being in contact with their kin in Okinawa, did not necessarily provide a substitute for the familiar bonds they had known in Peru, or mitigate their sense of loss. This chapter explo

res the various ways in which migrants from Peru sought to deal with such a sense of loss by forming social networks among themselves and by developing interpersonal relationships and a sense of 'community' that they could feel they belonged to.   As my fieldwork progressed, I learned that outside of work, schools and family commitment, migrants continue to strengthen ties with fellow migrants from Peru mostly in informal ways.   Semi-formal institutions for the migrants from Peru did exist in Okinawa.   *Perū Nikkei-jin Kyōkai* (Peru Nikkei-jin Association) in Naha, *Koza Perū-kai* in Okinawa-City, and Hispanic Cultural Centre in Kadena-Town were some of the main institutions which migrants from Peru could be affiliated to.   However, in my observations, involvement of the migrants in these organisations tended to be limited, and the majority of activities for the reinforcement of migrants' interpersonal relationships took a different form than belonging to a formal institution.

This chapter is organised around three episodes drawn from the daily life of migrants that exemplify their informal social networking process: the *moai* gatherings, the annual procession of *Señor de los Milagros*, and a sketch of a young migrants' outing.   These episodes are disparate in character. They are respectively, a rotating savings and credit association meeting, a religious procession, and a youth recreational activity.   Thus, they are to be read as a collage rather than an organised sequence, which nevertheless captures a number of layers embedded within the process of migrants' identity formation.

7.1 First Episode: the *Moai* Gatherings

Moai, or *muē*, [139] is the Okinawan version of a rotating credit and savings associations (ROSCAs), the form of mutual financial support system which is widespread in many parts of the world.   In contrast to the drastic decline in the number of rotating credit associations in other parts of Japan (variously referred to as *tanomoshi- ō*, *tanomoshi*, *mujin-kō, mujin,* or simply *kō*), *moai* gatherings continue to play a significant social and economic role in Okinawa. In the 1960s, the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz regarded ROSCAs as 'middle rung' institutions that appear at an intermediate stage of development and predicted that they would gradually disappear as more developed financial institutions replaced them (1962: 260). This view was shared by another anthropologist, Ottenberg (1968), who in researching *esusu* practice among the Ibos in Nigeria, also observed that such credit associations are transferral institutions that arose in the process of shifting from a non-monetary agrarian economy to a more modern monetary economy. This seems to have been the case if we take a look at other parts of Japan. When the American anthropologist John Embree (1939) conducted fieldwork in a Japanese village in the 1930s, he found *kō* to be an important component of village co-operative organisation, but by the time Robert Smith (1978) studied another agricultural community in Japan in the 1950s, already then it was something only 'a few older people could remember'. [140] ROSCAs in the form of *moai*, however, were far from disappearing in Okinawa, despite the existence of various alternative 'modern' means to secure loans: there were three local banks, two of which were listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange; credit cards

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[139] The term *moai* derives from the word *moyai*, which describes the work of tying ships together. Before the Second World War, a credit association in Okinawa was also referred to as *yurē* (*yoriai*). In some cases, the suffix *gwa*, which means 'small', is added to these terms; *muēgwa*, *yurēgwa*.

[140] Associations for mutual assistance had already existed in Japan in the Kamakura period (1185-1333), and by the Muromachi period (1392-1573), they fulfilled a popular financial function (Satomura 1981: 20). In the case of Okinawa, the word *moai* was first mentioned in the historical chronicle *Kyūyō*. According to the chronicle, the official of the Ryukyu Kingdom, Sai On (1682-1761) issued in 1733 a law concerning *moai*, which stated that the members of the gentry in financial difficulty should learn from the way commoners saved and utilized their fortunes. This indicates that by this time, the practice of *moai* already existed among commoners in Okinawa. This kind of credit association system continued to be widely practiced both in Okinawa and in other parts of Japan throughout the Meiji era.   In 1915, a law called *mujingyō-hō* was promulgated to regulate the activity. This suggests that the practice was so popular at the time that it needed to be regulated by the state. Tamura Hiroshi (1927) mentions that in Okinawa in 1923, *moai* of various types, tofu *moai*, sugar *moai*, rice *moai*, goat *moai,* or thatch *moai* flourished among different groups of people, such as members of a clan, women, and young people.

were readily available to most people; and *sara-kin* (shark moneylender) companies proliferated in both the main streets and back streets of Okinawa City. According to research conducted in 1979 by the Okinawa Kaiho Bank, an estimated 118.5 billion yen was circulated in *moai* in Okinawa (Okinawa Sogō Ginko 1979).[141] This sum represented approximately 11% of the total of the money deposited in all financial institutions in Okinawa. In the 1980s, 60% or two thirds of the adults in the prefecture were said to be participating in one form of *moai* or another (Suzuki 1986:28). During my fieldwork in the 1990s, I also came to know that *moai* gathering was one of the most popular modes of socialising among many locals. 'I cannot make that day because my *moai* gathering is also on that day' was one of the typical excuses heard for not being able to participate in a particular meeting or declining an invitation. No one could raise an eyebrow for going out for *moai*, and so for men, *moai* was a good excuse to come home drunk, and for women, a good excuse to hang out in the evening. *Moai* certainly was an integral part of everyday social life for many Okinawans I met.

Moai gatherings usually took place once or twice a month and consisted of drinking and eating either at a restaurant or at a member's home, and of contributing a certain amount of money for a fund which was allotted to each participant in turn. A prototypical *moai* works as follows: Let us say there are 10 members in a *moai* group. They each bring 10,000 yen every month for 10 months. Every month, 100,000 yen will be collected from the members and one person will take the whole sum. By the end of one cycle (10th month), everyone has had a chance to receive the 100,000 yen they have contributed. The simplest version of *moai* operates thus, but the real *moai* tended to be more complicated, as there was an element of advantage and disadvantage regarding the time that the money was received. The person who received the 100,000 yen at the very end of the *moai* cycle would be disadvantaged, because he/she bore not only the cost of

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[141] At the time the research was conducted, Okinawa Kaiho Bank was called Okinawa Cooperative Bank. Okinawa Cooperative Bank was formed by the merger of two banks, Okinawa Sōgo Ginko and Daiichi Sogo Ginko, which had formerly been two *mujin* companies, Okinawa Mujin and Naha Mujin respectively.

lending his/her money to the others for 10 months, but also the risk of default. Thus, there were several variations as to how to decide the order of recipients. Generally, the organiser of the *moai* took the first sum, but from the second month on, the order could be decided through (1) Informal discussion (who really needs the money urgently, etc.), (2) Drawing lots, or (3) Bidding interest. In the third case, those who needed money urgently bid the interest that they were prepared to pay in the earlier stage of the *moai* cycle. The person who bid the highest interest won the money for that month, but also incurred an obligation to pay the interest proposed on top of the regular monthly contribution from the following month. This way, people who waited for their turn until the end of *moai* cycle gained financially by receiving the interest that the other members had paid. As a whole, all members were conceived as being both benefactors and beneficiaries of *moai* in one way or another.

Thus, the spirit of *moai* was often explained in terms of mutual help. I heard time and time again during my fieldwork that at the base of *moai* was a spirit of *yuimāru*, a local practice of mutual labour help that emerged in farming communities. Some even drew on the anthropologist Nakane Chie's *Nihon-jin-ron* (theories about the Japanese) that characterised the Japanese society as vertical,[142] and remarked that *moai* survives in Okinawa because they value egalitarian horizontal relationships as opposed to the *Yamatōnchu* (mainlanders) who live in a 'vertically structured society'. Aniya Masaaki (1981), an Okinawan sociologist, speaks about *moai* as a practice based on a 'wet relationship', which stems from a communal relationship, as opposed to a 'dry relationship' formed through the modern rationalism that presupposes a contract. Many believed that *moai* was quintessentially and uniquely Okinawan, and were surprised when I told

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[142] Nakane Chie's work '*Tate-shakai no Ningen Kankei* (Human relations in a vertical society)' which came out in 1967, influenced popular and academic discourses about Japan in the 1970s. Her version of *Nihonjinron*, along with that of other authors such as Doi Takeo, which posited Japanese society as homogeneous and hierarchical group-based, came to be criticised for claims about the 'unique essence' of modern Japanese society, which lead to the rise of cultural nationalism in Japan (see Sugimoto and Mouer 1982, Mouer and Sugimoto 1986, and Yoshino 1992 for the critique of *Nihonjinron*).

them that a similar practice existed across the world.[143] In the popular discourse of the locals, *moai* and the spirit of *yuimāru* were often highlighted in what could be interpreted as their version of '*Uchinānchu-ron* (theories about the Okinawans)' that demarcated the boundary between *Uchinānchu* and the Other, which in many cases meant the *Yamatōnchu* (mainlanders).

Types of *moai* ranged from a highly speculative one with a large sum of contributions among the merchants, to one more social in nature, with a smaller amount of contributions. The membership of *moai* could be organized on the basis of kin (*shinseki-moai*), ex-classmates (*dokyūsei moai*), neighbours (*kinjo moai*), and same village of origin (*dōkyō moai*). People with the same hobbies, parents whose children went to the same school, and supporters of a particular politician also got together to form a *moai* group. *Moai* organised by migrants from Peru were one type of these many kinds of *moai* that were practiced widely in Okinawan society.

The concept of *moai* itself was not new for the migrants from Peru in Okinawa, as it was not only an important part of immigrants' history, but also part of their everyday life in Peru. As was the case of Japanese/Okinawan migrants to other parts of the world (see, for example, Embree 1941 for Hawaii and Light 1972 for California), when Okinawans and other migrants from Japan arrived in Peru, they organized what they then collectively referred to as *tanomoshi* as a means to help fellow immigrants in financial difficulties or to assist those who wanted to set up their own businesses, build houses, and so forth.[144] In the initial stage of

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[143] Financial systems operating under the principle of ROSCAs can be found worldwide under different names; *hui* in China, *esusu* in Ghana, *chits* in India, *juntas* in Peru. They also exist among office workers in cities of Bolivia (Adams and Canavesi de Sahonero 1989), amongst Korean immigrants in LA (Light and Zhong 1995) as well as South Asians in Oxford (Srinivasan 1995) and the list goes on.

[144] The earliest *tanomoshi* in Peru was initiated shortly after the first immigration of Okinawans to Peru. Yagi Sentei, a prominent figure among the Okinawan immigrants, established *Okinawa Seinen Kai*, former *Okinawa Kenjin Kai* (Okinawan Prefectural Association) as early as 1910, only 4 years after the first Okinawan immigration to Peru, and advocated the necessity to start *tanomoshi* (Yagi 1963: 10). In his memoirs, Yagi reminisces that the very first *tanomoshi* in Peru began with 1 *kabu* (position) for 30 soles, once every month. At the time, earnings for work on a sugar or cotton plantation were 1.20 soles a day, and for work in a rubber plantation, 2.50 soles a day (Yagi 1963: 5). Dishwashers earned 12 soles a month and apprentice barbers (for a husband

immigration to Peru, most immigrants in Peru did not utilise banks, not knowing the procedures (Tanaka 1969: 202).[145] Neither did banks make an effort to look into the possibility of Japanese immigrants as their clients as their creditworthiness was unknown. Consequently, Japanese immigrants in general remained excluded from the banking system in Peru and *tanomoshi* flourished among them, contributing to the burgeoning of shop openings by Japanese/Okinawan migrants in Lima around 1920-1935. The success of these migrants, however, led to anti-Japanese sentiment, as I have outlined in Chapter 3, and the seemingly clandestine practice of *tanomoshi* at times fuelled suspicion that these immigrants might indeed be hatching some sort of a conspiracy.[146] Despite some uneasiness voiced against the practice, *tanomoshi* was never regulated by the Peruvian government, and it continued to be prevalent among the Japanese/Okinawan immigrants until the time when hyperinflation in the 1980s and early 1990s caused the decline in the number of people participating in *tanomoshi*.[147]

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and a wife) earned 120 to 150 soles a year (Yagi 1963: 7) The first *tanomoshi* attracted 28 *kabu* (those who could not pay the whole 30 soles shared the position with the other members), and helped migrants to open their own coffee shops, barber shops, or become water vendors, etc.. Among the members were house boys, dishwashers and apprentice barbers, who were all aspiring to start their own businesses.

[145] In 1941, the Banco Industrial of Peru had 62 foreign customers with 16 different nationalities, as against 172 Peruvians. Among the foreign nationals, however, not a single Japanese person was listed among the bank's borrowers (Gerbi 1978).

[146] In 1943, Manuel Seone, a member of the Aprista Party of Peru, remembered that in the 1920s, when he was a boy, his Japanese house servant had opened a barber shop through a 'strange procedure' (1943: 675). This Japanese, 'had got together ten Japanese with a capital of a thousand *soles* each and they all agreed to draw lots to see who would benefit by the total capital….(Seone's former servant)..won. …this lottery method was used by the Japanese in all branches of small business: laundries, bakeries, tire repair shops, and the like' (Seone 1943: 675). Seone also mentions that rumours circulated in Peru that 'the Japanese Consulate was the secret Bank of the Colony' (1943: 676). Research conducted by the US government during the Second World War also reveals that one of the most common complaints against Japanese businessmen by Peruvians was that 'they command credit facilities which give them an unfair advantage over competing Peruvians' (1943: 32).

[147] The inflation rate exploded in Peru, especially at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (1,722% in 1988, 2,775% in 1989 and 7,650% in 1990). One migrant from Peru commented that during this most intense period of inflation, 'those receiving the sum of money in the beginning of a cycle of *tanomoshi* could buy a car, while members whose turn came towards the end could not even afford to buy a tyre with the winnings'. Some people kept the *tanomoshi* going in US dollars instead, because the value did not fluctuate as much as Peruvian soles did. For others, however, it had become increasingly difficult to keep up with *tanomoshi*, as they had to spend more soles each time to exchange into dollars, and less and less people participated in *tanomoshi*.

Thus, for the many migrants from Peru, *moai* was not a novel experience in Okinawa, but was a practice that they were familiar with in Peru. When they started organizing *moai* groups amongst themselves in Okinawa, however, this time it was not so much for setting up new businesses and building houses that they formed the group. Maintaining psychological ties with Peru, speaking in Spanish, eating Peruvian food and listening to their kind of music were equally, if not more, important reasons.

In Okinawa City, there were at least five *moai* organised by the migrants from Peru. Two were men's *moai*, two were organised by women and one was a *moai* among relatives (*shinseki moai*). Although there were different leaders for each of the men's two *moai* and the members contributing to each fund were slightly different, both *moai* took place in the same place with sometimes membership overlapping. What follows is an account of activities surrounding these men's *moai* gatherings.

Every first and second Sunday of the month at around 6 o'clock in the evening, a group of men from Peru gathered to meet for *moai* at Kōzō-san's spacious roofed garden, constructed especially for the occasion. Kōzō-san, a *sanshin* (Okinawan lute)-teacher and an ex-golf player, had never been to Peru himself, but his cousin, Juan, was a returnee who had come to Okinawa in the 60s, when Okinawa was still under American occupation. Juan was one of the founding members of the present *moai*, which had begun as early as in 1961. The *moai* was organised at that time, because there were few places at the time where *nisei* (second generations) could gather together and enjoy themselves. This same group of people also formed the *Koza Perū-kai* (Koza Peru Association) then, which continued to celebrate Peru's Independence Day on 28 July annually, and put on a reception party when groups from the diasporas from Peru visited Okinawa on an occasion such as the *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival*. Although *moai* itself was not a part of *Koza Perū-kai* activities, core members of the association were also the members of the *moai*.

Kōzō-san's house was in an area called Ageda, a district in Okinawa-City east of Route 330 that runs through two major cross roads, the Goya Cross Road and the Koza Cross Road. Ageda is a hilly area, and Kōzō-san's garden had two storeys. The meeting place for what they had called Ageda-*moai* was hidden behind and beneath the main garden, and standing at the main gate, one could not see what was going on behind that main garden. It was usually not until I had come near

the stairs behind the main garden that lead to the *moai* meeting place that I could hear the cheerful swearing and laughing sound of the people who had already gathered. '*Mierda* (shit)' and '*carajo* (stupid)' were usually the first words I would hear coming from downstairs in the garden from the mouths of the men normally so engrossed in the betting game of *sapo*.

The first Sunday *moai* lasted for 27 months and the second Sunday *moai* for 24 months. The basic contribution a member had to make each month was 30,000 yen a month. Some of those who were unable to afford 30,000 yen, but wanted to contribute, shared a slot with somebody else. In the first month of *moai*, the organiser (*zamoto* or *oya*) took the sum of contributions made. Thus, in the case of the second Sunday *moai* for example, the organiser received the total of 30,000 yen x 24 = 720,000 yen.[148] From the second month, members again contributed 30,000 yen each, but this time they also had to bid on a slip of paper the figure of interest they were prepared to pay. 5,000 yen was the upper limit of interest, and the lower limit was 1,000 yen. 720,000 yen plus interest, while not a small amount of money, was not enough for anyone to start a business or build a house in Okinawa. Thus, the usage of the winnings varied from member to member. Those in trade used the money to buy stocks; those in charge of a big family (the first son in particular) needed money to cover the cost of ceremonies and rituals in Okinawa; one member said he kept the winnings as *hesokuri*, (money hidden away from their wives so as to be able to spend it freely), and others were more interested in receiving the winnings with high interest added at the end, as interest paid by the bank was less than 1% in Japan at the time.

Although there was always the risk that someone taking the sum earlier on would later disappear without paying the due, during the 35 years of Ageda *moai*, this had only happened once.[149] Generally, to become a contributing member of the *moai*, one had to have two guarantors who were already members themselves, so default happened very rarely. The organisers kept a *moai-chō*, or *moai* book, which could be bought in any stationary shop in Okinawa. In the *moai-chō*, there were pages where the two guarantors signed and sealed on their signatures under each participant's name. For members who knew each other in Peru and for those whose relatives were already members, seeking two guarantors was not difficult, but those who had little connection with the *Nikkei* community in Peru and did not have participating relatives and friends among the members had to wait and become acquainted with the existing members before they could contribute to the fund. The members consisted mainly of men in their 40s to 60s. The majority were the second generation (*nisei*) born in Peru. Their timing of arrival to Okinawa ranged from pre Second World War to more recently during the *dekasegi* boom since the mid 1980s. Some of them barely remembered their lives in Peru, as they came to Okinawa when they were children, while the more recent migrants had spent the majority of their adult lives in Peru. Apart from the *nisei* migrants, there were also three non-returnees among them: one was the

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[148] This amounts to $5,760 when $1 = 125 yen.

[149] On this occasion, members had to use the money pooled from the extra 1,000 yen contribution they had paid every month apart from the regular 30,000 yen contribution.

owner of the garden, one was married to a *nisei* woman, and the other was the owner of a carpentry business that hired some *nisei*. The participants held various occupations including that of company employees, carpenters, builders, a restaurant owner, a gardener, an electrician, a member of the municipal assembly, an owner of a *bentō-ya* (packed lunch seller), and a supermarket employee. Although members were mainly Okinawa City residents, some travelled for over an hour all the way from Naha City in the south and from On'na Village in the north to socialise with their fellow migrants.

Usually, the exchange of money and bidding took only a few minutes and members moved on to the eating and drinking session straightaway. Strictly speaking, the participants of the *moai* should either be there by 6 o'clock promptly, or leave the money with someone else or telephone if arriving late.[150] Failing to do so regularly would be seen as a sign of a member being 'unreliable'. Not all *moai* participants came along to the actual gathering. There was one participant who had gone *dekasegi* (temporary work) to the mainland and sent money by registered mail each month. Some members were not happy about this arrangement, because sometimes the mail arrived late. There was also one female participant who never attended, but her participation was accepted because her relative brought the money to the gathering without fail. Several others, including myself, who did not contribute to the *moai* fund but only came to socialise, could arrive at any time.

The financial transactions were invariably followed by a game of *sapo* (the frog game) which went on for far longer than the actual bidding. *Sapo* is a very popular game in South America and especially in Lima, Peru. The game involved simply throwing golden coins at holes in a wooden box. The objective of the game was to get as many coins as possible in the holes with different point values. If a coin was thrown inside the open mouth of a golden frog which sits on the box, the highest points could be earned. Men gathered for *moai* were divided into two groups. Each person threw ten coins in turn. Points were added after the end of each round, and those who were in the group of losers had to contribute 300 yen each, the sum of which paid for the cost of whisky, beer and food for the day. Those who were not the contributing members of *moai* also participated in the game. The 30,000 yen monthly contribution for the *moai* was unaffordable for some migrants, but paying simply for a lost game of *sapo* was not too costly for anyone. *Moai* gathering would normally continue until the end of the third round of *sapo*, three hours or so after the bidding.

The game of *sapo*, along with alcohol and Peruvian food such as *ceviche* (marinated raw sea food) and *agualito* (rice porridge), prepared by the organiser's wife, seemed to be the major attraction of the *moai*. The *moai* also provided an occasion where the migrants could feel at home in the language they spoke. 'From Monday to Saturday, I speak Japanese', a member once told me, 'but on Sundays, I come here to speak in *Castillano* (Spanish). Here, we can speak

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[150] Such punctuality is not necessarily required in all *moai* in Okinawa. In many cases, people say that it does not matter if people arrive late, as members are friends they trust.

mancha hīchā (mixed). We speak *Uchināguchi*, we speak *Castillano,* and even *Yamatoguchi* (Japanese). Tomorrow, I go back to speaking in Japanese until the next *moai* meeting'. Not everyone spoke and understood all three languages as members included non-migrants. Members who barely remembered Peru also did not understand much Spanish. The degree of the command of languages differed according to each member's background, but it did not seem to matter. They were drunk most of the time, and were happy shouting in whatever language(s) that came out from their mouths.

Background music was played on a tape recorder continuously while the *sapo* game went on. The audio tapes consisted of a mixture of songs familiar to the migrants. They included nostalgic songs from Peru, *musica criolla* (creole music from the Peruvian coast) including *valses* (waltzes) and *tonderos*, Okinawan polular *min'yō* (folk music) such as *Asadoya Yunta* and *Bashōfu*, and old Japanese popular music. Japanese *natsumero* (nostalgic melodies) from the sixties, such as '*Kimi to Itsu made mo*' by Kayama Yūzō and '*Hoshikage no Warutsu*' by Sen Masao reminded migrants of the times in Peru when *Nikkei-jin* used to gather together once a year to listen on the radio or to watch a video recording of *Kōhaku Utagassen*, a popular end of the year TV music programme broadcast in Japan.

The space and atmosphere that returnees created for these *moai* gatherings were a product of reimagination of 'their social lives back in Peru'. It was, of course, certainly not the life of Peru remembered by every migrant. Thus, the younger generation of migrants, who would have been put off by the choice of music in *moai* alone, generally refused to come near the gathering. Wives also hardly ever dropped by and formed a separate *moai*. Even men who actually participated in *moai* would in some instance admit that things were different back in Peru, and lament that since arriving in Okinawa, men, women and children began going their separate ways.

For some migrants from Peru, who often felt at a loss on coming to Okinawa, not knowing the language and not being accustomed to the way of life, the *moai* gathering provided a space where they could momentarily escape from this immediate 'outside world' that did not speak their language. Among the fellow migrants, they felt less as strangers in a strange homeland. Their experience of *moai*, however, could never be an exact copy of their life back in Peru.   During the *moai*, they would not only be recreating and reminiscing about their past, but would also be talking about their day-to-day experience in Okinawa, and about their future.   With some non-migrants and 'old migrants' among its members, *moai* also had become an opportunity for 'new migrants' to learn about the ways of life in Okinawa, such as how to conduct certain rituals and how to join the National Pension Scheme, for example. It was also an occasion where members

who had never been to Peru could encounter and learn about the aspects of Peruvian culture in Okinawa through playing the *sapo* game, eating Peruvian food and listening to Spanish they hardly understood. Thus, the *moai* contributed to the formation of a network among migrants and the others, and as a result came to simultaneously be a place to escape from and also be in contact with the immediate 'outside world'.

At times political activities also formed a part of these *moai* meetings. Among the participants of *moai* was a member of the Okinawa City Municipal Assembly, who was born in Peru, but had returned to Okinawa as a child with his family before the Second World War. Although he no longer understood Spanish and his memory of Peru was fading, he continued participating in the *moai* regularly and maintained ties with fellow migrants. Before he stood for his second term in council, the organiser of the *moai* gave a short speech in his support during the *moai* meeting. For him, *moai* was one of many places where he could campaign. While such conspicuous political activity took place only very occasionally during the *moai*, for the other members, the presence of the member of the assembly provided an opportunity to have their voices heard and connect themselves with the 'outside world'. Social capital gained through this practice could in the long run be to the migrants' advantage.

Thus, in this returnees' *moai*, social, political and economic benefits were inseparably linked together. Of course, all these political and social activities could well have been carried out outside the context of *moai*. It was, however, the cyclic nature of the *moai* that created and kept up a kind of 'moral community' in which such activities could take place. To be sure, money was the attraction of *moai*, whether a member were after making a successful bid early on in the *moai* cycle or taking the sum in the end with high interest. However, hardly anyone came to *moai* only to do the bidding. Most of the time, everyone stayed on to play *sapo*, have a drink, and chat with the other members. Thus, *moai* gatherings not only bound the group of people by a sense of obligation to repay and trust for

the others to repay, but consolidated social relations through various activities that accompanied the monetary exchange.

While these gatherings heavily involved elements of their life back in Peru, *moai* itself was viewed by the participants as a quintessentially Okinawan practice based on the spirit of *yuimāru*, mutual help. Some members thought that in fact it was Okinawan immigrants who taught immigrants from other prefectures about *tanomoshi* in Peru. Of course, this was not the case, since *tanomoshi* was widely practiced in other parts of Japan at the beginning of twentieth century, as discussed earlier. Many returnees, however, believed that *moai* was peculiar to Okinawan society, and by so believing, they drew boundaries between 'us Okinawans' as opposed to the 'more self-interested *Naichā* (mainlanders)' and 'other Peruvians' who cannot be trusted with money. These migrants, mostly *nisei*, belonged to the generation of people who still remembered the time when there had been strong antagonistic feelings between *Uchinānchu* and *Naichā* in Peru. They also viewed Okinawan society as a more egalitarian one based on horizontal relationships (*yoko no kankei*), and to them, the *moai* epitomised such relationships. In reality, of course, even in *moai*, hierarchy was not totally absent; members who established themselves successfully economically and socially were respected and held senior positions in the aforementioned *Koza Perū-kai*. To an extent, exclusion also was an aspect of this *moai* gathering: those who could not find the guarantors and so were rendered financially unreliable were not welcomed (thus excluding new migrants who did not have connections); the presence of wives was generally avoided, and no female contributor ever turned up in the meetings during the two years of my fieldwork.[151] Nevertheless, for those already in the group, *moai* was seen as an expression of their egalitarianism, and became one of the tools to draw boundaries between them and *Naichā* and other Peruvians (There were two members who were of mixed race, but both migrated to Okinawa before the 1970s, and were seen by the members as 'one of them').

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[151] My presence as a female was tolerated partly because they viewed me as an outside researcher who was trying to learn about Okinawan culture and because they got accustomed to having me around in due course.

Women's *moai* was slightly different from men's *moai* in that it was not particularly connected to the formal *Koza Perū-kai*, but it also was an occasion where migrants from Peru could get together and socialise with each other. Below is the description of one the women's *moai*, of which I also became a contributing member:

Women's moai took place on every third Saturday of the month. Except for myself, the eleven members consisted solely of recent migrants from Peru that came to Okinawa after late 1980s, which included all the women that I worked with in the resort hotel. Although this was mainly a women's *moai*, one young male migrant also contributed, but he usually only dropped by to hand in the money and quickly disappeared without staying on for the gathering for long. As the monthly contribution was 10,000 yen (one third of men's *moai*), the hurdle to join was lower compared to that of men's in terms of cost. However, as with the case with most *moai*, it was not an open membership for anyone who could afford it, and one had to come to be trusted by the other members or the *zamoto* (leader) before being able to join.   Although the contribution was smaller compared to that of the men's *moai*, the money side of it was also important, as many women were mothers of teenagers, who were in high school or about to start University, and often needed a large sum of money especially at the start of the school term. Rather than bidding, one of the children brought by the women drew a straw with the names of those who wanted the money that month.

This women's *moai* took place in a Peruvian restaurant called 'Santa Cruz' on the top of Chūō Park Avenue, a commercial road of Okinawa-City. The restaurant, opened in 1991, was managed by a *nisei* who migrated from Peru in 1985, and had bought the restaurant from a Bolivian (hence the name 'Santa Cruz'). Unlike the men's *moai*, women brought along their younger children too, and sometimes husbands, who as drivers, brought their wives to the *moai.* They also stayed on for a chat with the restaurant owner or with women of the group. The meeting resembled any other gathering of a group of friends in a restaurant. As the restaurant was a public space, very often, those who did not participate in the *moai* also came and stayed for a chat. In the summer of 1998, 'Santa Cruz' closed down, but the women's *moai* continued to meet in McDonalds. When I went back to Okinawa in 2007, the *moai* was still ongoing, now at another Peruvian restaurant Kokorolatino in neighbouring Uruma City, which opened after I left my fieldwork. However the day I revisited the women's *moai* in 2007 was the last *moai* Kokorolatino, as it was also due to close. Their next meeting was going to be in a restaurant in a shopping mall.

Unlike the men's *moai,* the women's *moai* became mobile, without a fixed place. They had not found a locality where they could base their activities. Nevertheless,

the meetings continued, not only because of the economic benefit that *moai* generated, but also because this was a moment where they could gather and feel at home, socialise, chat in Spanish, and be connected to people who had gone through the same migratory experience.

7.2 Second Episode: the Annual Procession of *Señor de los Milagros*

The great majority of migrants from Peru said they were Catholics and told me that in Peru, they used to go to church more often. Expressions of their faith in Okinawa varied from person to person. Some had the image of the Virgin or Jesus Christ placed on the wall of their living rooms or their bedrooms; there were also those who had placed the image of Christ along *tōtōmē* inside the *butsudan,* although this practice seemed less frequent than at Okinawan-*Nikkei* homes in Peru. A family member in charge of many 'important' *tōtōmē* once told me she could not put the image of Christ in the *butsudan* in Okinawa as they did in Lima, because the 'relatives here' would not understand; instead, she carried the image of the Virgin as a talisman inside her purse.

As for the Catholic mass, only a fraction of people went regularly. Some went only on special occasions, such as on mother's day, Easter Day or on Christmas Day. There were also those who had not been to church in a long time, because according to them, 'religion is about what is inside you, not about going to church'. I was told that more people went to church before I started my fieldwork in 1996, as a Mexican priest who was stationed in the church inside the U.S. military base used to give a mass in Spanish in a Catholic Church in Goya (outside the base) in Okinawa-City from time to time. Once he had left to take up another position outside Okinawa, the number of people going to the church dwindled. The church activities among the Peruvians around that time were also more active because of a Spanish-speaking Japanese nun in Yonabaru in the south east of Okinawa mainland. She was originally from outside Okinawa, but had grown up in Bolivia, and had worked extensively with migrants, helping out with their day to day problems and offering Japanese language classes. When I arrived in my field, however, she was also no longer there. Many migrants who had

attended the mass during that time had also left Okinawa, as they found better paid work in other prefectures.

During my field work between 1996 and 1998, the mass in Spanish took place in turn every Sunday in four different churches; in Yonabaru-City, in Oroku in Naha-City in the south, in Nago-City in the north, and in Ginowan-City in the central region of Okinawa mainland. The mass at that time was sometimes conducted by an Italian priest from the base or by a Japanese speaking priest with some readings being carried out by the volunteers among the migrants. Travelling to four different places, which were scattered all over the mainland of Okinawa, was not easy for those who lived in Okinawa-City, especially if they did not drive. Consequently, the majority of migrants I came to know in Okinawa-City hardly ever attended the mass. Contrary to my initial expectation that the Catholic Church would be the place where the majority of migrants from Peru would congregate, only a small number of devotees went on a regular basis. There was one day in a year, however, that the church attracted more participants than usual; that was the day of the annual procession in honour of *Señor de los Milagros* (the Lord of the Miracles).

Every year on 18th and 28th October, people in Lima celebrate its patron saint, *Señor de los Milagros* with massive street processions worshipping his image in the hope that the Lord will protect them against the dangers of earthquakes, and provide them with strength in everyday life. The whole month is known as the purple month (*mes morado*) after the colour of the habits the devotees wear to show their penitence. The origins of *Señor de los Milagros* are said to date back to the mid 17th century during the Spanish Viceroyalty, when the image of a dark-skinned Christ was painted on the wall in Pachacamilla plantation near Lima by a slave from Africa (Rostworowski 1998). The veneration of the Afro-Peruvian image, which came to be known as the Cristo Moreno (Coloured Christ) or Cristo Pachacamilla (Christ of Pachacamilla), began when, according to the legend, a massive earthquake demolished every building in the area except for the painted wall (Rostworowski 1998: 351). The wall survived not only the subsequent

earthquakes that hit Lima but also several attempts by the ecclesiastic authorities to demolish it. Eventually the worshipping of the image spread among the *mestizos* (Latin Americans of mixed race) and Spaniards, and the annual procession in its honour was initiated by a religious brotherhood consisting of Afro-Peruvians in the 18th century (Paerregaard 2008: 151). Borne out of the syncretism of the belief systems of the African diaspora, Catholicism and possibly an Andean belief in the gods' power to control natural forces,[152] the image of the dark-skinned Christ and the procession are seen today as 'a critical symbol of Peru's long history of cultural hybridity' that reflects the collective consciousness of the process of *mestizaje* (ethnic mixture) that has shaped the country's history and society' (ibid.: 147).[153]

In 1917, José Carlos Mariátegui**,** a Peruvian journalist and Marxist philosopher, thus expressed his admiration for the robustness of the procession in his early writing:

> The spring time in Lima - the dull, misty, gray, indefinite and coward spring - has two days that suddenly resuscitate the tradition and faith in the city. On these days, the procession of *Señor de los Milagros* utters the renewal and flourishing of metropolitan religiosity and evokes on the hybrid streets – colonial and modern - a strong, melancholic and picturesque wave of emotion…. The declarations of faith of the multitude are imposing. They dominate, impress, seduce, oppress, win love, move. The contemplation of the crowd that invokes God always shakes with irresistible force and deep tenderness. The step of the procession of *Señor de los Milagros* along the streets of Lima produces a very deep emotion in the city that one finds surprisingly invaded by an ingenuous, sedative and religious feeling….The entourage of *Señor de los Milagros* is colorful, heterogeneous, immense, loving, devout and believing. It is aristocratic and villainous. It is the meeting of the model of elegance with the exemplar of butchery. Among the well-dressed ladies of noble birth are girls from the slums, those in the category of 'concubines', common prostitutes in circumstantial repentance, humble servants and kitchen maids. And there, on the other hand, clean gentlemen in good taste, workers badly dressed and badly groomed, whining beggars, gangsters in attrition, fervour vagabonds

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[152] Rostworowski (1998) alludes to the connection between the cult of the Lord of the Miracles and the Andean cult of the god Pachacamac, which was believed to create and control earth tremors, as expression of his anger.

[153] In May 2010, Alan Garcia, the president of Peru, named *Señor de los Milagros* (the Lord of the Miracles) the Patron Saint of Peru.

and uncouth and rustic peasants all rub shoulders with no trouble, tears or discomfort. (Mariátegui 1994: 2336-2339).[154]

Today, *Señor de los Milagros* is not only still thriving as the main Catholic festivity that gathers the largest crowd on the streets of Lima, but is also celebrated by Peruvians across the world, in the United States, Canada, Argentina, Spain, Italy, Chile, Columbia, Venezuela, and in Japan (Baia 2001, Paerregaard 2008, Reyes-ruiz 2005). In Japan in 2009, the celebration took place in various areas to which Peruvians had migrated, such as in Kakegawa-City and Hamamatsu-City in Shizuoka-prefecture, Isesaki-City in Gunma-prefecture, Oyama in Tochigi prefecture, Yamato in Kanagawa prefecture, Nagoya-City, Kobe-City and cities in Osaka, Shiga, Mie and in Okinawa.[155] As such, the celebration could be seen as the product of transnational ties among the Peruvians in Peru and in diasporas. However, as Paerregaard (2008) has observed, the formation of the processions in different parts of the world occurred in most part independently of each other.

The first procession in Okinawa took place in 1995. According to one of the organisers of the event, the idea came from within, rather than as the result of communications with Peruvians outside Okinawa:

> We started this because many people who came from Peru have been talking about this event. We were always saying, 'now that we are not going back to Peru, why don't we celebrate it here'. Back then, many of us were suffering, because we couldn't find a job, and when we did find one, it was hard and very severe. And so we were saying, if we do the procession and ask for the help of God, things could become better. Let's do it, we always used to say, but the years went by, because it seemed impossible to put it into practice. After three years of dithering, two years ago, we suddenly said to ourselves, ok, we might not be able to do this perfectly, but of course we can do it. We discussed among ourselves how to do this, what would be the bad way, and tried to work out what was best for us. Whose idea was it? It was a group decision. Three, four people getting together and working it out.

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[154] The article 'La Procesion Tradicional' originally appeared simultaneously in *La Prensa*, Lima (10th April 1917), *Cronica*, Lima (10th April 1917) and *El Tiempo*, Lima (12th April 1917). It was reprinted in Mariátegui (1994: 2336-2339).

[155] http://www.srdelosmilagrosjp.jicas.net/main.html [Accessed on 1 June 2010]

For the first two years, Catholic Maehara Church in Ginowan-City was the centre for the celebration of *Señor de los Milagros*. The first time I went to the procession in 1996, the group carried their icon on the ground of the adjacent school managed by the church and on the pavement around the church, tucked away from the main road. Although it 'took to the street', unlike the processions in Lima which block several main downtown streets, the procession in Okinawa did not leave the vicinity of the church, and therefore did not attract many local spectators. As such, it was more of a closed private affair among the concerned parties, rather than an event where strangers rubbed shoulders as is the case in Lima. Nor was it an ostensive expression of their faith and cultural identity vis-à-vis the locals. The following year, because they 'did not want to disturb the neighbourhood and wanted to avoid hassles with the police and the local authority', they decided to move the event to St. Paul's Catholic Church in Futenma, also in Ginowan-City. Located uphill and surrounded by a thick green grove, the church was even further tucked away from the busy streets than the Catholic Maehara Church. The procession at the Futenma Church I saw in 1997 did not take to the street at all, but was carried out on the ground and the parking area of the Church, completely away from the public gaze.

The same as the previous year in Maehara Church, the procession in Futenma Church also began with a mass inside the church. Following the mass and a brief explanation of the origin of *Señor de los Milagros*, the procession began as night fell. The image of the Lord, framed by a flowered arch on a litter (*la anda*) was carried out of the church by two male porters (*cargadores*) dressed in robes, which were hand-sewn from a purple cloth by women who were active in the organisation of the event. The image, which was the reproduction of the original icon kept in the monastery adjoining the Nazarenas Church in Lima, had been ordered from Peru. The procession was lead by a *captace* (a male leader) with a bell, and was followed by four women in white robes, who were acting as the *sahumadoras* (women carrying the thurible) and *cantadoras* (women intoning the hymn). The smell of the incense coming out of the thurible filled the area, and the

rest of the participants, about sixty people in total, sang along plaintively and solemnly to the hymn coming out of the portable tape recorder:

Señor de los Milagros,	Lord of the Miracles,
a Tí venimos en procesión	we come to You in procession.
tus fieles devotos,	Your devout faithful,
a implorar tu bendición.	to beg for your blessing.
Faro que guía, da a nuestras almas	Light that guides, give to our souls
la fe, esperanza, la caridad,	faith, hope, charity,
tu amor divino nos ilumine,	Your divine love illuminates us,
nos haga dignos de tu bondad.	make us worthy of your kindness.
Con paso firme de buen cristiano	With a firm step of a good Christian
hagamos grande nuestro Perú,	let's make our Peru great,
y unidos todos como una fuerza	and join all together as one force
te suplicamos nos des tu luz.	We beg you give us your light.
Señor de los Milagros,	Lord of the Miracles,
a Tí venimos en procesión	we come to You in procession.
tus fieles devotos,	your devout faithful,
a implorar tu bendición.	to beg for your blessing.

Each time a cycle of the above hymn ended, the procession stopped, and the devotees prayed quietly. After a few minutes, the music would start again, and the walk resumed too. This lasted for nearly an hour, and then a small feast followed in the meeting room adjoining the church.

As the words in the hymn indicate, for many participants I spoke to, the procession was about being united as Peruvians, but more importantly, also about the expression of their *fe* (faith). *Fe*, many would tell me, is personal, and means different things to different people. One theme that came out time and time again through our discussion of *fe*, however, was its relation to the suffering, struggle, and hope of the poor, the interpretation of which has a deep root in Catholicism in Latin America.[156] In explaining the meaning of the procession for the participants, one of the organisers of the procession said:

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[156] Liberation Theology, which interprets Christian faith out of the suffering, struggle and hope of the poor, began taking roots as a movement in Peru and in other Latin American countries in the 1950-60s.

What does this all mean to us? We have this thing called the 'tradition of *fe* (faith)'. We all have some kind of problems here in Okinawa. We don't understand the language. In Peru too, there are poor people, and when they have problems, they look to God. For the Peruvian in Okinawa, the procession signifies '*esperanza* (hope)', a wish that things will change one day. We pray through this procession.

Although the celebration of *Señor de los Milagros* might look like a cultural practice that migrants transplanted directly from Peru to Okinawa, their *fe* was not always expressed through the participation in this procession. In fact, the majority of migrants told me that they had not taken part when they were in Peru. As the organiser told me:

The procession, compared to Christmas, is more active, there's more participation involved. Carrying the icon is supposed to be hard work. The one we are using is not that heavy, but it should be heavier. In Peru, people don't just walk around carrying it; sometimes they crawl on their knees and bleed. The procession in Peru is much more volatile and dangerous. That's why many of us actually have never been to the procession in Peru. We only saw it on TV or from the window on the bus. So for us, working out how to do it was not easy. There was one *ojīchan* (grandpa) who knew about this, so we consulted him a lot on how to put this on.

Thus, although the procession in migration was lived as continuous tradition brought from back home, in reality, it was their migratory experience in Okinawa itself – the socio-economic insecurity, environmental change, and cultural alienation – that prompted them to express their *fe* through this means, and to momentarily psychologically connect with the poor in Peru.

In the process of appropriating and restaging the religious practice, organisers aimed to carefully 'reproduce' the procession in Peru, by preparing the icon and using the purple robe and the hymn which are all essential elements in the feast. However, lying behind the 'assumed continuity of revitalised tradition' (Valentin 2009: 37), were the many processes of alteration and invention. As I pointed out earlier, the procession was brought from the public space of the streets in Peru to a more enclosed private realm in Okinawa. Participants were no longer made up of 'strangers' but consisted of acquaintances. A small post-festival feast that followed the procession in Okinawa is not specifically a feature of *Señor de los*

Milagros in Peru. In the feast, the single food item associated with the celebration in Peru, the *turron de Doña Pepa* (a sticky fruitcake-like sweet) was absent, but instead, various homemade Peruvian foods were brought in by the members. This feast, during which migrants could chat and catch up with each other, was a significant component of *Señor de los Milagros* in Okinawa. Thus, for the migrants from Peru, the celebration of *Señor de los Milagros* was not simply a reproduction of Peruvian 'tradition', but was an opportunity to create and secure familiar spaces for them within the new environment.

7.3 Third Episode: Going for a Drive

For the younger generation of migrants in Okinawa City, neither going to *moai* nor attending the church was a way of keeping in touch with fellow migrants. Although the number of migrants in the 20-40 age group was small, there were some young people, mainly teenagers still in education, who came to Okinawa as children during the *dekasegi* boom period. These teenagers rarely participated in formal events, such as the Peruvian Independence Day, organised by the *Koza Perū-kai*, saying that they 'they were uninteresting and for uncles and aunties'. Instead they socialised amongst themselves in a more informal way. Getting together in a local karaoke bar was one way of socialising. They also went to dance parties occasionally put on by Peruvian migrants in a hired space in Ginowan-City. Quite often at the weekend, they would also go out in a group for a drive in the middle of the night.

The majority of those who were in high school had worked part-time in *izakaya* (pubs), petrol stations, or in other service industries after school. As their finishing time at work varied, and they went to different schools, it was more convenient for them to get together late in the evening.. At that time, there were only a few older ones who had a driver's licence, but as soon as they reached the age of eighteen, they would try and get the licence.[157] A couple of times, I was summoned to be one of the drivers. Most of the time, it was boys who went out in

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[157] Some entered at a grade lower than their age when they came to Okinawa and were still in high school at 18.

the evening, but sometimes their sisters joined as well. The drive was usually in small groups, three cars at most, sometimes two, sometimes just one. Rather aimlessly, we would decide where to go. We would buy cans of drink from the vending machine, buy snacks at a *konbini* (twenty-four-hour convenience store), and just go to the beaches in Hamahiga island in the north-east coast or in Chatan on the west coast, and so forth. Blaring out from the car audio system would be the latest Latin rock or *salsa-merengue*, Latin and Afro-Caribbean dance music, and at times hip-hop and rap in the U.S. hit charts and Japanese pop. When we got to the beach, we would open the drinks and snacks, and chat and joke around for a couple of hours in mixture of Spanish and *Uchinā-Yamatoguchi*, and then head home. It was often during these meetings that these youths would tell me about the difference they feel towards the other *Nihon-jin* (the Japanese): that *Nihon-jin* in high school are immature compared to Peruvians; that *Nihon-jin* don't say what they really think; that they have a different sense of humour; and that the ways boys and girls socialise is different. This kind of gathering also provided an opportunity for the youth who had come to Okinawa as children to learn from their peers who migrated later the steps of *salsa* dance, which was becoming increasingly popular among them.

Many of these teenagers shared the experience of going to *Nihongo Kyōshitsu*, the Japanese language class organised by the Okinawa City Board of Education which I have mentioned briefly in Chapter 5, when they were in primary school or junior high school. During my fieldwork (1996-1998), the number of children attending *Nihongo Kyōshitsu* had already dwindled to less than five pupils from China, the Philippines, India and the United States, and Peruvian children were no longer among the attendees. However, at the peak period in the early 1990s, when these teenagers from Peru were in primary and junior high schools, over 30 pupils from Peru were taken out from their schools every week to study Japanese in the community centre for a few hours. The teenagers remembered their time there fondly, and often told me that not being able to speak or understand Japanese at school initially, they looked forward to the *Nihongo Kyōshitsu* to meet children who were going through the same experience of moving to Okinawa. In

their respective schools, they were surrounded by a foreign environment, and often felt they had to efface themselves and act like the others, but in *Nihongo Kyōshitsu*, they could be themselves. As they became better in Japanese, it also turned into a place where they could brush up their Spanish among peers, which they felt they were beginning to forget.

After they graduated from junior high school, they continued maintaining the bonds they had made. Against the uniforming processes of adaptation, these youth sought to anchor their sense of belonging around the relationships formed through a shared experience of migration, and by so doing, (re)acquired skills such as Spanish language and *salsa* dancing, which for them, partly symbolised their group identity.

The 'going out for a drive in the late evening' was an ephemeral phase. As they got older, other forms of socialising, - meeting in karaoke bars, restaurants, *salsa* bars and so forth – began to take over, and they also began socialising more with people outside their group. However, although there was not a defining locale or institution that bound these youth together, and the ways of socialising changed over time, the network they had formed in the early years continued to be a source of identification for many migrant youths.

7.4 Concluding Remarks

As the majority of migrants from Peru go to different work places and different schools, they have little face-to-face contact with each other on daily basis in Okinawa. Nonetheless, they continue to foster and maintain their social ties in their new-found surroundings in various forms.

We have seen in this chapter, first, that the thriving of *moai* in Okinawa in general prepared a framework within which the migrants could easily identify and engage with forming their network. The migrants' *moai*, however, was not an unchanging practice that was exported to Peru by their forefathers and brought back home intact by the migrants. Even though it may be perceived and

experienced as part of their enduring tradition, the migrants re-enacted and reprocessed *moai* not for the sake of its preservation, but rather to re-establish new roots on the new ground. For the migrants, the significance of *moai* went far beyond mere economic speculation and reciprocity. The returnees were not only tied by the mutual obligation to pay and repay, but were welded together, through partial re-enactment of their life in Peru, in a sense of a shared past. The cyclic reunions of *moai*, dominated by the Peruvian game and food, provided the migrants with a secure space where they could feel at home in an otherwise non-Peruvian environment. The *moai* gatherings, however, were not simply occasions for indulging in nostalgic recollections. They also produced a new basis for belonging, where the borders of Okinawan and Peruvian cultures blur. The practice was also bound up with their ideas about progress and development in the present and future, about accumulating social capital, knowledge of how to develop and maintain contacts in the new surroundings.

Although completely different in terms of form and its meaning, the annual procession of *Señor de los Milagros* also provided migrants not only with the moment of worship and religious devotion, but also with the opportunity for the migrants to get together, and briefly immerse themselves in 'Peruvian culture'. The procession, however, although lived by the migrants as a simple translocation of 'authentic Peruvian tradition' to Okinawa, was also a product of recreation in reaction to migrants' local life-world.

Migrant youths, on the other hand, formed their bond not in a particular locale nor with regularity, but through private and casual meetings with no specific purposes except to socialise and talk. Their informal gatherings not only reaffirmed their ties with their native Peru, but also came to be an arena in which these youths, who had felt that they were being increasingly culturally assimilated in the host society, became 'Peruvian' through (re)learning of Spanish and salsa dancing.

Although the *moai* gatherings, the annual procession of *Señor de los Milagros* and the young migrants' outings did not specifically involve 'concrete' intimate ties

with specific sets of kin and acquaintance in Peru, their social network could be interpreted as transnational social space, in that it involved 'diffused, imagined ties and identification' (Jurgens 2001) with the localities or the social relationship they had in Peru. In this sense, they were engaging in a 'transnational way of belonging', rather than a 'transnational way of being' (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004) through memory, nostalgia and imagination.

What these three episodes also point to is the fact that rather than being a simple continuation and reproduction of their lives back in Peru, the social networks among the migrants in Okinawa were formed in response to the new environment in which the majority of them felt to be marginalised at least in their initial stage of migration to their 'homeland'. The connection with the fellow migrants provided them with a secure enclave in which they felt they could belong in the otherwise alien outside world. This does not mean, however, that once formed, their sense of belonging becomes fixed within this enclave. Nor does it mean that migrants stay within the enclave and shut themselves out from the outside world. As they come to be incorporated into Okinawan society through the workplace, participation in rituals and other social interactions, and begin to find a home in their 'homeland', their sense of belonging shifts once again. Whether such a shift would mean the migrants becoming 'Okinawans' or forming completely different kinds of subjectivities, would depend how the emerging official discourses on Okinawan identity – situated within the national and global context – intersects with how migrants themselves act within it, and this is the topic I would like to turn to in the concluding chapter.

Conclusion: Towards Transnational Belonging in a Multicultural Okinawan Society?

In this thesis, I have explored the complex and contested process in which migrants from Peru came to reflect, negotiate and reconfigure their sense of belonging in their experience of 'return' to their 'ancestral homeland'. Through a historical analysis of changing categorisation of Okinawan-Peruvian migrants in different political and socioeconomic settings, and by ethnographically examining the social processes of identification in context, I have attempted to shed light on the multiple ways in which migrants both narrate and embody their identities in particular moments and locales.

In this final chapter, I will first briefly introduce the discourse of Okinawan identity surrounding the emerging transnational Okinawan diaspora network that is consciously promoted by the Okinawan local government, thereby situating migrants' subjectivities in the context of official discourse in the regional, national and global cross section. I will then discuss the implication of my study in the context of diversifying Okinawan society, and end by suggesting ideas and directions for further research in this area.

8.1 Constructing the Transnational Network*: the Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival*

'*Matchōtandō* (we were waiting for you)', '*Okaeri* (welcome home)' greeted onlookers on *Kokusai-dōri*, the main street of Naha City, the capital of Okinawan prefecture, as *Uchinānchu* from 28 different countries paraded behind their colourful flags and banners on the eve of the *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* 2001. *Uchinānchu* from various parts of the globe to which they had scattered were 'called back' to their '*furusato* (home)' Okinawa to celebrate this special event that was to take place for the next four days. Among the 4,325 *Uchinānchu* were over 381 participants that had come all the way from Peru.[158] Led by

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[158] The number according to: Dai-Sankai Sekai no *Uchinānchu* Taikai Jikko Iinkai Jimukyoku (2002: 288).

musicians and dancers dancing to the Andean folkloric music of *huayno*, the Peruvian participants, all dressed in red jackets tailored especially for the occasion, cheered '*eso, eso, eso, eso* (as they do in football matches)' and shouted '*viva el Perú*' as they marched down the one-mile stretch of *Kokusai-dōri*. Three years after I finished my fieldwork, I was back in Okinawa watching the parade with the migrant women that I had previously worked with, standing on a side street of *Kokusai-dōri* among tourists and others who had come down from different parts of Okinawa to see their relatives from abroad marching in the parade.

Before the event, there had been serious worries amongst the organisers that a significant number of overseas participants would cancel, because of the September 11th attack that had taken place less than two months prior to the festival. Immediately after the attack, the security status on the US bases in Okinawa was upgraded to the highest precaution level of 'Condition Delta', which prompted a large number of cancellations of high school trips and group tours (Tanaka 2003: 419). The prefectural government at that time was struggling to counter the 'tension-filled' image of Okinawa by replacing it with that of the 'island peaceful as usual' with 'the blue sky and the blue sea' (ibid.), and by publicising the slogan '*Daijobusā, Okinawa* (Okinawa's alright)' even on the body of commercial aircraft (Ryukyu Shimpo 2001). Despite such circumstances, while there were some cancellations, over 4,000 *Uchinānchu* from across the world and from other prefectures of Japan crossed the sea to take part in the 'homecoming' event that is held only once every five years.[159] This was seen by many involved as a sign that the regard for their old country was strong enough to overcome the difficulties.

Participating in the later fourth *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* in 2006, Ricardo Ganaha Kamisato, a *sansei* writer from Peru, reflected in his memoirs on the feeling when he saw the faces of these Okinawan people in *Kokusai-dōri*, noticing how similar their skin tone was to his, and how they greeted using '*okaerinasai*

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[159] Nealy 300,000 *Uchinānchu*, approximately one fourth of the prefectural population of 1,200,000, are reported to be living outside Japan (Yamashiro 1990: 281).

(welcome home)', rather than '*irasshaimase* (welcome)', (Ganaha Kamisato 2008: 11-12). He writes that he then suddenly understood why in his previous trip to Tokyo, he could not identify with any *Naichā* (the mainlanders) (ibid.):

> …the face of my *obā* (grandma) reflected in the (faces of) thousands of *obāchan* (grandmothers). With their faces and wrinkled hands they applauded us with a lot of love and enthusiasm, and bombarded us with flashes of their cameras.   This is when the sentiment and the hereditary blood of our ancestors began to heat up, and manifested itself in an internal rebellion, as if my genes had activated anew. Suddenly, my identity became less diffused, less confused: I began to feel that I am a *Nikkei* Japanese, but above all, a *Nikkei* Okinawan, an *Uchinānchu* indeed'. (Ganaha Kamisato 2008: 12)

The first *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* took place in 1990 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Okinawa's reversion to Japan. *The Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* in Okinawa 2001 was the third of its kind. The idea of the *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* arose out of a two-year series of articles carried in the local newspaper, *Ryukyu Shimpo*, from January 1984 to December 1985. The series '*Sekai no Uchinānchu* (*Uchinānchu* in the wider world)' featured the lives and life histories of Okinawan descendants 'from the Swedish town of Thebe in the north, to the Argentinean Islands of Tierra de Fuego in the south' (Yamashiro 1990: 280), and reported on the respective countries and regions that they lived in. The series met with an enthusiastic public response, and subsequently Okinawa Television and Radio Okinawa also made a series under the name *Sekai no Uchinānchu Kikō*.[160] In 1987, the prefectural government invited prominent *Uchinānchu* from abroad to the 42nd National Athletic Meet that took place in Okinawa, and organized a festival for these guests alongside the sports event. This particular National Athletic Meet, better known as *Kaihō Kokutai*, not only saw the inception of the idea of *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival*; it was during this event that an Okinawan local grocery store owner, Chibana Shoichi, protested

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[160] The TV version consisted of reports carried out by Maehara Shinichi of the Okinawa Television visiting *Uchinānchu* in different countries and interviews with their relatives living in Okinawa. In the radio broadcast, the Ryukyu Shimpo journalists who had carried out the research for the *Sekai no Uchinānchu* articles talked to the *Uchinānchu* abroad via international phone calls and asked how they had been getting along since.

against Japan's militarist past and the presence of the crown prince at the Meet, by burning the Japanese national flag (as briefly mentioned in Chapter 4).

In retrospect, the *Ryukyu Shimpo* views this period as the time when *Uchinānchu* were beginning to suffer from the post-Reversion disillusionment:

> A decade had already passed since the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan and the population had begun to lose confidence, because they suffered from a sense of inferiority when interacting more with mainland Japan.

In an attempt to counter this 'sense of inferiority' and informed by the success of the festival during *Kaihō Kokutai*, the prefectural government set about planning the *Sekai no Uchinānchu Taikai* (*Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival*)' as a means to boost the confidence of *Uchinānchu* at home and to build the *Uchinānchu* network worldwide.

The effort by the Okinawan government to reach out to its diasporic community goes far beyond putting on the *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival.* It has implemented the *Kenpi Ryūgaku* (prefecture sponsored study) system for emigrant descendants, appointed people in various countries as *Uchinā* Goodwill Ambassadors to act as 'keystones' of the *Uchinānchu* network, helped founding World *Uchinānchu* Business Network (WUB), sponsored *Ken-jin-kai* (prefecture associations) activities around the world, and organised annual one-week junior study tours in Okinawa for the children of Okinawan descendants. Through these activities, the Okinawan local government has been trying to build its own transnational network based on a distinct kind of Okinawan identity, and this has been leading to revitalisation of Okinawan identity among the Okinawan diaspora. Symbols used in the *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* were the *Bankoku Shinryō no kane* (the bell that anchors the myriad lands) – the epitome of the 'glorious trade period' of the Ryukyu Kingdom, spirit of *ichariba chōdē* ('once sat together, we are brothers and sisters') and Okinawan *chimugukuru* (heart). The then governor of Okinawa, Keiichi Inamine stated in his inaugural speech:

In September last year, I was privileged to attend the hundredth anniversary celebration of the first emigration of Okinawans to Canada. And this past August, I attended the 50th anniversary celebration of the founding of the *Centro Okinawense en la Argentina*. I was also fortunate to be able to visit the *Okinawa Ken-jin-kai* (prefectural associations) in four neighbouring countries…I had the pleasure of seeing firsthand how active they (people of Okinawan descent) are in politics, economic life, culture and, indeed, in every area of life. As brothers and sisters of the same blood (*dōhō*), this was truly praiseworthy and filled me with pride. As you know, our ancestors have been seafarers since the ancient time of the Ryukyu Kingdom. In the course of their far-flung trading activities, they developed flourishing relations with China and the various countries of Southeast Asia and they drew on the influences thus acquired to create a uniquely Okinawan culture. With boat and oar they built bridges among nations. They were people of indomitable spirit and enterprising nature. With the blood of their ancestors coursing through their veins, our forebears set out for distant lands to realise their hopes and dreams. When I think of how those pioneers of emigration, carrying on the spirit of our ancestors, put down roots in their new homelands and by working hard without rest, overcame the often severe environment of faraway countries to build the communities and attain the prosperity that we see today, I can only bow my head in honour with respect. ….*Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* is a gathering that will inspire the activities of people of Okinawan descent in various parts of the world, promote the further development of human networks, foster exchange in every field and thus contribute to international society. I hope that this festival prompts an opportunity to expand the *Uchinānchu* networks throughout the world, and that the Okinawan spirit of empathy and compassion manifest in the *chimugukuru* of Okinawa will diffuse in the world and make a significant contribution to world peace.

These images are far removed from the symbols used in the centennial celebration of the Japanese immigration to Peru - the Imperial family or the Japanese flag *hi-no-maru*, about which I have discussed in Chapter 4. They are also drastically different from the pre-war image imposed on Okinawan migrants – that of possessing 'backward' cultures that needed to be 'reformed' (Chapter 2 and 3). Yet, as Ueunten (2008) has observed, *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* is a 'top-down' approach to creating an Okinawan diasporic identity, with its main sponsor and organiser being the prefectural government (it has spent 40 million yen for the third festival), which is subordinate to the central government of Japan that sees Okinawa as a 'southern international base of exchange'. It is located within the

'internationalisation project' advocated by the Japanese government, which now endorses and helps to promote 'the least threatening aspects' (Hook and Siddle 2003: 14) of Okinawan culture that provides an 'exotic' vacation destination, colourful music and dance, and an alternative way of life, while continuing to let the U.S. use Okinawa as a major military outpost. Thus, while Okinawa was presented as an 'island of peace', and the suffering of the Okinawan people during the war was mentioned, the contemporary base issue was practically absent from the festival.

The *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* romanticised the Ryukyuan past and mythologised the outbound journey as an archetype of the Okinawan people, and produced and constructed a specific kind of Okinawan identity defined through blood ties encoded in the notion of 'Okinawan descent'(as exemplified in the term *dōhō* used by the Governor). *Uchinānchu,* defined as such, instantly excluded many immigrants living in Okinawa who had become culturally and or linguistically Okinawan, whereas migrants from Peru (and from other countries) of Okinawan descent came to be positioned as 'one of us'. In practice, however, the focus of the *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival* was on the 'suffering and triumph' of the *Uchinānchu* descendants outside Japan, and not on the migrants who came to live in their 'homeland'. All overseas participants were invited to attend the main ceremonies and events, and were provided with a special badge that became a free bus pass, while others, including the majority of migrants from Peru in Okinawa, were not given these privileges. While the success of the pioneer emigrants was being hailed repeatedly, hardly any mention was made about the *Nikkei* Okinawan migrants presently working in Okinawa or other parts of Japan (they were not specifically invited to the event either, even though in many cases they had financed the travel cost of their parents and grandparents back home to come to the festival).

To be sure, this does not mean that the festival had no effect on migrants from Peru in Okinawa: outside the events, they were able not just to engage in a transnational way of belonging but also of being (Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2004)

by meeting their visiting relatives. For some bilingual migrants from Peru in Okinawa, the festival provided an opportunity to utilise their cultural capital through becoming volunteer interpreters and collaborating with the *Nikkei* from areas other than Peru. Nor was the definition of Okinawan identity uncontested: after receiving some criticism on the narrow definition of *Uchinānchu* network based on blood in the earlier events, the organisers of the second festival renamed it to *Uchinā* (Okinawa) network in order to encompass a broader spectrum of people that included people related to *Uchinānchu* and those who were simply interested in Okinawa. Yet, the definition of *Uchinānchu* itself remained unquestioned, and discourses of 'internationalisation' centred around the '*Uchinānchu* from overseas'- often represented by their national flags -, and not on the diversified populations on home soil, which included migrants from Peru.

8.2 Migrant Belonging in Okinawa

Throughout this thesis, I have emphasised that subject constructions of ethnicity, identity, culture and belonging are contingent on the global, regional and national history and politico-economic structure, and that they are not about natural manifestations of fixed criteria such as common ancestry, biological characteristics and culture. Okinawan subjectivities, for instance, were produced within powerful discursive and ideological formations of modernity and building of the Japanese nation, as well as by the policy of the U.S. administrations, as I have outlined in Chapter 2. Yet, despite the constraints imposed upon them, the fact that Okinawans continue to develop a multitude of vibrant cultural practices, and to carve out the meaning of what it is to be Okinawan and so destabilise the discourse of Japanese homogeneity, points to their capacity to exert their agency and develop alternative sites of identification. In the process of constructing Okinawan identities, however, there is also a danger of falling into the trap of representing 'Okinawanness' in monolithically and timelessly fixed terms of blood, race and culture, as we have seen in the discourse surrounding the *Worldwide Uchinānchu Festival*. My study has been a modest attempt to highlight the fact that underneath the bridging discourse of 'Okinawanness', there

are a multitude of voices emerging that challenge the unitary conception of 'Okinawanness' within Okinawan society.

Migrants from Peru came to live in Okinawa for various reasons - uneven development in the world economy, social and political instability in Peru, existing networks with kin and acquaintances in Okinawa, personal aspirations and interests to live in a foreign environment/ancestral homeland, and for many, the a specific immigration policy of the Japanese government that privileged those with 'special ethnic ties' to come and engage in any type of work without restrictions, including unskilled labour. Such supposed 'ethnic ties', however, did not result in the migrants' instant identification with their 'co-ethnics' – Japanese or Okinawan - nor necessarily facilitate their integration into the host society, as was the case for other *Nikkei* migrants who moved to various industrial areas in Japan (Linger 2001, Roth 2002, Tsuda 2003, 2009 Takenaka 2000, 2003, 2009), or indeed for many other 'ethnic return migrants' across the world (Capo Zmegnac 2007, Christou 2006, Cook-Martin and Viladrich 2009, Fox 2009, Klekowski von Koppenfels 2009, Song 2009, Stefansson 2004).

However, being *Nikkei* in Okinawa also involved a different trajectory from being *Nikkei* in other parts of Japan. For many migrants, living in Okinawa meant that their 'ancestral tie' came to have more than an abstract importance, as they became incorporated into *munchū* kinship through participation in rituals (Chapter 6). Migrants were not only discursively positioned as part of the kin and ultimately as *Uchinānchu* under the *munchū* ideology, but also their identity was also inscribed and embodied through cyclical ritual practice and experience. As such, migrants were being integrated into the process of becoming *Uchinānchu*.

Yet, although they were helped by their kin in Okinawa to find work and housing, in the majority of cases, they were unable to utilise their cultural capital to enter into high status occupations.[161] As von Koppenfels observes, ethnic belonging

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[161] This is in direct contrast to another type of 'returnees' in Japan, *kikokushijo*, or schoolchildren of expatriate parents, whose middle-class status enabled them to mobilise their economic and political power to move their children from marginal to elite status (Goodman 1990),

does not automatically translate into successful cultural or socioeconomic integration, while the obverse is often true: 'successful socioeconomic integration plays a more significant role in belonging and membership in a society regardless of ethnic origin' (2009: 126). Thus, the experience of downward mobility from middle-class status in Peru to working-class status in Okinawa had led many migants to reconsider their position in the 'ancestral homeland' and what it means to be *Nikkei*, as was discussed in Chapter 5. The meaning of *Nikkei*, which in Peru was linked more strongly to an amorphously imagined homeland - the Japanese nation-state -, transformed as they came to directly experience Japan (*Nihon*) and the Japanese (*Nihon-jin*) – the terms migrants often also applied to Okinawa and Okinawans. Now *Nikkei*-ness was increasingly being associated with their migratory experience in Peru and Japan, and was understood in terms of the values that they believed *Nikkei* shared; 'trustworthiness, discipline, honesty', which in their eyes were lacking in present day Japanese society, and different modes of socialising, that involved a more intense interaction with friends and relatives of both genders.

The sense of being socio-economically alienated and marginalised in the new environment left migrants feeling that they were seen and treated as '*gaijin*' (foreigners) by the members of the host society, although in my findings, cases of overt labelling of migrants as '*gaijin*' were rare in Okinawa, where migrants were often referred to as '*Perū-gaeri*' (returnees from Peru). That despite the generally accepting attitudes by the locals, migrants continued to feel '*gaijin*', points to their sense of alienation and loss, although at the same time, many were beginning to find a 'home' in Okinawa, where they felt they could enjoy a better quality of life, compared to the factory-workers' life on the mainland. Migrants began forming their own social networks in various forms (Chapter 7), where they could engage in a transnational way of belonging through symbolic connection to Peru. In this transnational imagining, the migrants' centre had shifted from Japan to Peru, thus the centre finding itself 'wherever the migrant is not' (Baldassar 2001: 337). Such social networks came to be sites in which the migrants express and embody their identity as Peruvians, or as *Nikkei* from Peru.

The migrants from Peru go through a process of reconstructing and negotiating their identities through their experience as immigrants in Okinawa. As Christou (2006) has observed in her study of second-generation Greek-Americans in Greece, emergent 'diasporic discourses' intensify when the imagined 'homeland' becomes a home site of everyday life. This applies to the case of migrants from Peru in Okinawa as well. If asked who they are, many migrants would simply answer they are *Nikkei* Peruvian. Yet, being a *Nikkei* in Okinawa is not a simple continuation of being a *Nikkei* in Peru. As Stuart Hall has argued, identity is a '"production" which is never complete, always in process' rather than an 'already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent' (1993: 392). While the defining term may be a homogeneous label '*Nikkei*', its meaning is subject to constant negotiation and reconfiguration. *Nikkei* identities in Okinawa were less fashioned within their 'country of origin' - the Japanese nation-state - , but rather were articulated in terms of differences that marked them off from the rest of 'the Japanese' and 'the Okinawan'. In this sense, migrants from Peru were becoming *Nikkei* in Okinawa, rather than being *Nikkei* in Okinawa.

At the same time, migrants from Peru were not exclusively and uniformly *Nikkei* either. Depending on the situation and context, different modes of identity - of being *Uchinānchu*, Peruvian, and/or Japanese or of belonging to a certain gender, religion and/or class - took precedence. Furthermore, among the *Nikkei*, diverse voices were found: some migrants positioned themselves more as Peruvian than *Nikkei* on finding it difficult to reconcile being of Japanese descent and belonging to Japan; others simultaneously became *Nikkei* and *Uchinānchu* in Okinawa, as they came to 'discover' Okinawanness within their *Nikkei* self, and as they came to feel integrated as the members of Okinawan society. There is a multiplicity of *Nikkei* identities, and it is ultimately impossible to talk about the 'migrant from Peru in Okinawa' as a homogeneous ideal type.

On relocating themselves to Okinawa, migrants from Peru come to be subjected to the national discourses and ideologies of what constitute Japaneseness and

Okinawanness that often simultaneously include (common ancestry) and exclude (different culture) them. Yet, while these ideologies influence the way they position themselves, they are not passive receptors of such ideologies either. Through maintaining the difference, they are also trying to enlarge their social space and carve out their own way to belong in their new locale. In so doing, migrants, along with other minorities, generate a need to redefine dominant national identity – Japaneseness and Okinawanness. This is not to say, however, that I negate the value of the political Okinawan identity asserted in terms of unity. As Inoue has warned, there is a danger in the hasty attempt to pluralise Okinawa in that 'it may lead us to disregard the problematics of Okinawan modernity in the context of globalization, that is "old" but enduring Okinawan sentiment that is being expressed in opposition to Japan and the United States under new historical circumstances of the post-cold war era' (2007: 96). Pluralism can manifest itself in various ways, as I have mentioned in Chapter 5 on migrants' desire to be comfortable in their difference through working in the U.S. military bases. Yet, as Inoue himself has pointed out, it is not diversification and fragmentation of the category of 'Okinawa' in itself, but the refusal to see this reality that makes it difficult to imagine the inclusive public sphere in which diverse voices could be heard and expressed in order to form political unity (2007: 211). Recognition of the diverse voices could be the first step towards migrants from Peru entering into the public sphere in which they can imagine the possibilities of other ways of belonging to Okinawa without losing their difference.

8.3 Considerations for Further Research

Nearly 15 years have passed since I first embarked on the research on migrants from Peru to Okinawa. Since then, continual economic, political and social changes have taken place which would mean that the situation surrounding migrants today is not the same as when they began to arrive in the late 1980s. To begin with, the decline in population due to the falling birth rate and the prospect of future labour shortage in Japan has sparked renewed debates on the implications of immigration. Some politicians and media continue to construct negative images of foreigners and stir up public anxiety over the social costs of immigration. On the other hand, 'multiculturalism' (*tabunka-shugi*) and

'multicultural co-existence' (*tabunka-kyōsei*) have also become an important part of the official and media discourse. Grass-roots activism by some Japanese citizens to fight for the rights of foreigners has been influencing the way that the local government and the state deal and think about the 'foreign' population (Shipper 2008). Yet, as Japan faced the worst economic downturn in 2008, *Nikkei* workers, the majority of whom were contract labourers, came to be among the first to be laid off. In 2009, the government introduced a program to pay 300 thousand yen to each jobless *Nikkei* wishing to return to their country of origin with a condition that they do not return under the *Nikkei* category in the near future. While such a policy would not have directly influenced migrants from Peru in Okinawa, the message such a policy conveys - '*Nikkei* are only needed as labour force' - would have affected the way that migrants feel about their position in Japanese society.

Since the time when I first started fieldwork, the world has also undergone a technological revolution in the area of communication. There have been very many advances in the internet since its inception in the early nineties, and the telecommunication system has developed in such a way as to transform the way we live, learn and connect to the world. Research into the impact of such transformation could reveal new and different ways in which individuals 'bring the wealth of their cultural heritage to new locations', and contribute to 'multicultural enrichment, freedom, mobility, communication, and creative hybridity' (Tsing 2001: 462). During the late nineties when I lived in Okinawa, the number of people accessing the internet and using emails was still relatively small. As for the migrants from Peru, only a handful made use of the technology on daily basis. Making an international call to Peru, even when the cost was falling compared with earlier days, was still considered a luxury. Nowadays women that I worked with in the resort hotel own their own mobile phone and send me the odd text now and again. No doubt their opportunity to connect to their families in Peru would have also increased. Yet, physical proximity still counts for something. After the initial excitement of gaining access to such technology, depending on the degree of intimacy with the people that they

communicate with and the frequency with which each person utilises the technology, contacts could become few and far between. It is still face-to-face communication that counts in many ways, and investigation in the area of these enhanced channels of communication and exchange needs to be made in the context of the physical life-world that people live in.

Another aspect which would be interesting to look into further is class diversification among the migrants. When I briefly revisited Okinawa in 2007, I found that those who were still teenagers back when I did my initial fieldwork had already finished their studies and were now working. A few of those who went on to study at universities had found jobs like many other local graduates in more competitive positions in private companies. One was an employee in a local bank, another a computer engineer, another a researcher, and another a manager - not a cleaner - in a resort hotel.   Many of those who did not go to university found work outside Okinawa, again, as do many other young locals, often as semi- or unskilled workers, and now occasionally return back to Okinawa to see their families. Exploring how the class diversification among migrants from Peru affects the ways in which they articulate their sense of belonging could further lead to uncovering dynamism, complexity and internal differentiation in migrants' subject formation process.   My hypothesis is that migrants' successful internalisation of 'Okinawan/Japanese' habitus and upward mobility in the society would not necessarily result in their abandonment of ties and affiliation with Peru. During my revisit in 2007, I had a chance to speak with a second generation *Nikkei* who came to Okinawa in 1970, became a naturalised Japanese citizen, and won a seat in the Okinawa City Assembly. [162] He then told me about his experience of visiting the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents, Japan's first foreign resident advisory council set up by the local government in 1994, and about his intention to raise the question in the Okinawa City Assembly of the meaning of *champurū* culture analysed from its basic principles. Many others have told me that they feel less need to behave like the

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[162] Between 2006 and 2010, two out of thirty seats in the Okinawa City Assembly were filled by members born in Peru.

'Japanese', now that they have found a 'home' in Okinawa without losing the sense of who they are and forgetting where they come from. It appeared that migrants were beginning to find the possibility of belonging to Okinawa with difference.

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