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New Lives in the Ancestral Homeland:

Return migration from South America

to mainland Japan and Okinawa

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Thesis Abstract

This work presents a study of identity formation in migrants of Japanese and Okinawan descent who relocate from countries of South America to mainland Japan and to the island prefecture of Okinawa, initially to seek economic advantage. The migrants, called Nikkeijin, are predominantly progeny of earlier migrants from Japan to South America. In a cross-generational sense, they are return migrants.

The ethnographic study, based on field research conducted in two sites on the mainland and in Okinawa, compares Nikkeijin experience and attitudes as they interact with native Japanese. Because of their Japanese background, Nikkeijin benefit from privileged visa status; nonetheless, in Japan they are treated as foreigners, and their identity diversifies. Nikkeijin are found to construct simultaneous social fields in both the country of departure and the new environment. This situation may be recognized through the concept of transnationalism.

I argue that Nikkeijin self-identity can be multiple and flexible, and does not necessarily coincide with social identity. An increasing and officially promoted diasporic consciousness among migrants of Okinawan descent would seem to produce a different ethnic response to any on the mainland and a greater potential for integration. My thesis should contribute to the understanding of identity in Nikkeijin return migration.

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

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Introduction

At a coffee bar run by Japanese Brazilians, bordering the Brazilian Plaza in Oizumi town in Gunma Prefecture, central Japan, I said a farewell to Kachiya the owner, and to regular customers Pedro, Alfredo, and Mayumi. "See you next year," I told them. It was the summer of 2002 and I was conducting field research. Pedro replied, "I will be in Brazil next summer." He was cheerful at the thought. "Perhaps I cannot see you again unless you go there." Mayumi said she would be staying in Japan for a couple of years more, while Kachiya was looking to expand her business by opening another coffee bar if the present one went well.

In August of the following year, 2003, I went again to Oizumi and visited the same coffee bar. Kachiya was still there, as was Pedro and Alfredio. The establishment had grown a little in capacity, and the menu offered more variety. It was busy. Pedro, recalling the last time we spoke, told me, "I meant to go back to Brazil this summer but I could not." He did not give a reason, and I did not ask one. Instead, he informed me he was hoping to work for S company from the beginning of the next month. Alfredo said he was fine. He was working night shift and his grandson was attending a Brazilian school in Oizumi. Mayumi had returned to Brazil – according to her niece, for good. A year later and a further visit to the town, I learned from Kachiya that Alfredo and his family had left for Brazil, and Pedro had moved to an adjacent prefecture. On Christmas Day 2005, I made a fourth visit to the coffee bar in the Brazilian Plaza in Oizumi. Kachiya told me Pedro kept in touch. Some of the faces gathered in the café looked familiar. A three-hour train journey delivered me back to

central Tokyo, where I was currently staying: I could not help but notice how bright was the illumination compared to Oizumi.

I met Lucy, from Peru, while attending a traditional folk music class during my field research in Naha, the capital city of Okinawa, in May 2002. She was hoping to be a teacher and hold classes of her own. I was given recorded tapes of her singing and playing the sanshin, a three-string stringed instrument; on listening to them I came to appreciate how her soprano voice was able to convey sorrowful emotion. We saw each other again, when I made another visit to Okinawa in September 2003. Lucy had obtained an award in a competition for Okinawan classical music and was teaching as planned.

Subject matter

This thesis is about people who live in Japan but were born in South America, like the individuals introduced above. They are mainly the second or third generation descendants of migrants who originally left Japan for a new life and opportunities in Brazil, Argentina, Peru and elsewhere in the subcontinent. In a reversal of their parents' or grandparents' earlier movement, they arrived in Japan in order to take up employment. They are *Nikkeijin*. The term, sometimes written *Nikkei*, is used in referring to Japanese emigrants. It is also generally applied to returnees to Japan, even when a generation might separate outward and back migration, from anywhere in the world. Throughout the following text, the Nikkeijin described have entirely the South American connection.

Migration to Japan is not new. During phases of Japanese imperialism, Taiwanese, Chinese and Koreans were brought, willingly or unwillingly, as labour for an expanding economy. Nowadays, over a million of their descendants live in Japan. They are known as 'oldcomers'. The economic boom which started in the 1970s attracted a second influx of foreign workers entering the Japanese labour market, mostly from Southeast Asia (not always legally) and – the focus here – South America. These are 'newcomers'. The migrants are predominantly unskilled or semi-skilled, filling the demand for '3K' labour: *kitanai*, dirty; *kitsui*, difficult; *kiken*, dangerous. Japan prides itself on a high level of education amongst its citizens, and few Japanese entertain a desire for low grade 3K work. Labour therefore has had to be imported, with preference given to people of Japanese ancestry.

In contrast to Japan's economic success, many South American countries became, during the 1980s, beset by inflation and job or business insecurity. Occasionally, there was also political instability. To some descendants of Japanese migrants, the firm prospect of work in Japan seemed a better alternative to the uncertainty of their South American situation. Not all were labourers or operatives. Numbers of white collar workers, out of a job because of contracting economies, and business people who had been forced to stop trading, decided that if a transfer to the blue collar sector had to be made, then it was more advantageous to take up such employment in Japan, where wages are higher, than to do so in the home country. Spouses and family members sometimes followed later. *Dekasegi*, which means temporarily working elsewhere for financial advantage, has the potential to become a matter of migratory settlement. The return migration of Nikkeijin from South America, a significant

group born abroad who might have never seen their ancestral homeland, is somewhat remarkable. Nowhere else in East or Southeast Asia has such a large ethnic return been able to take place (Tsuda, 1999:715). Thousands of foreign workers in South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines have been expelled whenever there was a drop in the demand for labour. The Nikkeijin worker, favoured by legislation, has – until recently – been able to withstand economic downturns.

When people relocate abroad as migrants, they are often exposed to a completely new society, and their individual and ethnic identities undergo reconstitution. This experience can occur regardless of their category in the home country or relationship to the host country. Japan, where a sense of ethnic homogeneity is well developed (Oguma, 1995), provides no exception. Although the group's members are primarily migrants – people arriving from another country – they share a generally assumed racial background with the Japanese which assists their position, while cultural differences set them apart from mainstream Japanese society.

In the case of Nikkeijin from South America, identity may be a product not only of a 'Latinized' culture being brought to modern Japan but also of an earlier Japanese culture underlying the Latin. For the Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent there are the added layers of cultural traditions retained by the previous generation, and of being associated with an island that receives only limited respect from the mainland. Migration can engender a variety of phenomena, often designed to offset exclusion and discrimination. These include multiple identities, renegotiated kinship ties, exaggerated national loyalties, transnationalism, ethnic resistance, artificial cultural

devices – the list goes on. Although Okinawan descendants born in South America now living on the island of Okinawa share with non-Okinawan descendants residing in mainland Japan the category of Nikkeijin, there are distinct features in the manner they form communities.

An extensive bibliography is available regarding Nikkeijin in Japan, especially those from Brazil (Linger, 2001; Tsuda, 2003; Roth, 2002; Yamanaka, 2000; Carvalho, 2003; Lesser [ed.], 2003) and from both Americas (Hirabayashi *et al.* [eds.], 2002), including work only available in Japanese (Maeyama, 1996; Ishikawa, 1997). However, only a few studies have looked at the particular experience of return migration of people of Okinawan decent (Nakasone [ed.], 2002; Sellek, 2003) and these provide little insight into similarities and differences between their theme and migration from and to mainland Japan.

The chapters that follow explore Nikkeijin strategies for coping with a new environment; the changes that can take place, consciously or unconsciously, to Nikkeijin as individuals and in communities; and Japanese society's attitude towards Nikkeijin. Specific attention is applied to the situation of descendants of migrants who left the island of Okinawa to settle in South America, these descendants now residing in Japan, either on the mainland or on the island of Okinawa. A comparison between Nikkeijin having Okinawan forebears and Nikkeijin from mainland (i.e. non-Okinawan) families offers a new perspective for considering identity formation within the Nikkeijin migration process.

Research questions and methodology

The argument of the thesis is that, within the category of Nikkeijin, individuals express various forms of self-identity which can be elastic or fragmented. There may be a single identity or multiple identities. A self-identity built around a hyphenated national identity, e.g. Japanese-Brazilian, in the country of departure is not necessary continued in Japan. Nor does an ascribed social identity as Nikkeijin necessarily coincide with self-identity. A comparison between Nikkeijin in Okinawa and Nikkeijin on the Japanese mainland also shows that self-identity is not the same within both groups. In particular, an increasing diasporic consciousness among migrants of Okinawan descent produces a more complex identity and significantly impacts on the experience of return migration.

My research was organized around two sets of interrelated questions. The first set concerned Nikkeijin self-identity: what kinds of identity do Nikkeijin articulate?; how are these identities shaped in the process of migration?; what differences, if any, are there between generations, and between migrants having ancestral connections to Okinawa and those with links to the mainland? I also investigate for marginalization of Nikkeijin as a minority having a different cultural background. What, for example, are the perceptions of local Japanese residents towards Nikkeijin? As informant narratives disclose, the Nikkeijin situation often results in a complex identity formation. A second set was directed at the issue of transnational migration. Most Nikkeijin in Japan retain some links with 'home'. But what is the meaning of home to them? How effective is the desire to return to South America? Nikkeijin in Okinawa and on the mainland show dissimilar attitudes in their attachments to home.

To pursue the above research questions in the manner of a comparative analysis of two groups of Nikkeijin having different ancestral backgrounds, I conducted field research both on the island of Okinawa and on Honshu, the main island of Japan (the'mainland'). On the mainland, I chose the industrial town of Oizumi in Gunma Prefecture as a suitable site for researching the lives of Nikkeijin since it has the reported highest proportion of Nikkeijin in Japan. In order to research an Okinawan community on the Japanese mainland I selected Tsurumi ward in Yokohama city. In my preliminary research I considered other mainland Okinawan communities – for example, Taisho ward in Osaka. I visited the ward over two days, looking around the streets and speaking to Okinawan residents, but it seemed difficult to find Brazilian restaurants and similar appropriate venues for interviews. The duration of my principal fieldwork in Japan extended from October 2001 to October 2002 as follows: in Naha, the capital of Okinawa, from October 2001 to May 2002; Tsurumi ward in Yokohama, and Kawasaki in neighbouring Fujisawa (both cities in Kanagawa Prefecture), from June 2002 to July 2002; in August I moved to Oizumi where I stayed until October. My time in Okinawa was longer than at the other sites because I wanted to learn, through participant observation, as much about Okinawa possible – about the climate, landscape, cultures and demeanour of Okinawan people, Okinawa folk music, and so on. The three research sites provided me with suitable comparative ethnographic materials.

Marcus suggests:

> Migration studies are perhaps the most common contemporary research genre of the basic mode of multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995:106).

Multi-sited fieldwork carried out in both the country of departure and the receiving country might be considered the best means of understanding how travellers, ideally from the same group, form their social field in the process of migration. In the study of Nevisian culture, Olwig (1997) researched four different countries: Nevis and three different migration destinations (New Haven in Connecticut, Leeds in the United Kingdom, and the US Virgin Islands) in order to discuss a global network of social relations and associated cultural values. I was not able to visit in person the departure countries such as Argentina and Brazil, though descriptions obtained first-hand from informants and from relevant literature (see Carvalho, 2003; Lesser [ed.], 2003; Hirabayashi *et.al.* [eds.], 2002; Maeyama, 1996) are trusted to provide some understanding, at least sufficient for the task, of the lives of Japanese migrants in South America[1]. My goal in this work has been to explore how Nikkeijin as a social category were talked about and experienced by two different groups: Okinawans and mainlanders. In that sense I use multi-sited ethnography to indicate the comparative study of different but similarly identified groups of people in different locales in order to understand both the commonalities and particularities of people's experiences in shaping and responding to the situations they encountered.

Fieldwork in detail

I began on the island prefecture of Okinawa and continued to completion in mainland Japan. A successful application for voluntary work as an interpreter at the Third Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival provided a start. For the role, I took accommodation in Naha, the capital city of Okinawa. It was my first visit to the island and a chance to meet Okinawans in their own prefecture. I stayed at a *minshuku*, equivalent to a

bed-and-breakfast establishment, for part of the time. Most evenings while there, I talked to guests from the Japanese mainland. Conversations with the proprietors of the *minshuku* were in some respects informal interviews from which I was able to gather information about Okinawa and migration. During my period of residence in Naha, I observed several events and festivals. Okinawa made a strong impression on me as a culture that was quite unlike the one with which I was familiar on the mainland.

After completing fieldwork in Okinawa I moved to Tokyo. Ethnographic research on Nikkeijin and Okinawan internal migrants living in Kanagawa Prefecture, specifically in the Tsurumi ward of the city of Yokohama and in the neighbouring city of Fujisawa, was carried out over some two months by 'commuting' once or sometimes twice a week from the home of a sister in central Tokyo. That is to say, I did not reside in the research site. The names of two local interviewees had been obtained during my time in Okinawa, though I began by seeking other potential informants and observing the landscape. Initial navigation was from information gained over the Internet.

My next relocation was to Oizumi town in Gunma Prefecture. On arrival in the town which, as stated earlier, is an industrial area reported to have one of the largest concentrations of Nikkeijin in Japan, I rented an apartment owned by a Nikkeijin and usually made available for fellow Nikkeijin. For a period of two months I conducted formal recorded interviews as well as informal ones. In addition, I engaged in casual conversation whenever the opportunity arose, hoping to tease out subtleties and

anecdotes, and made observations. Preparatory background material was gathered by consulting local archives and other sources as well as familiarizing myself with the research literature.

According to Okely:

> The most rewarding fieldwork is when the anthropologist is open to what comes and what the people often consider significant. Thus the anthropologist may find herself changing emphasis and topic. This openness and *disponibility* means that research practice is not a formulaic recording of answers to predetermined questions and what might risk becoming a mechanical collection of unproblematic data (Okely, 2008:55).

Perhaps to visit the field site with the purpose of conducting interviews but not to reside within the community and thus be no part of it might lose the openness in research practice to which Okely refers. Later, when I came to write up the ethnographic narratives, I felt that reminiscences of Tsurumi have less of a quality when compared to those forged in Okinawa and Oizumi, even though the interview procedure was the same. In this sense, 'the experience of fieldwork has became memory before it becomes text' (Hastrup, 1992:125). Although fieldwork began in Okinawa, the relevant chapter appears in this thesis after the chapters on Oizumi and Tsurumi. The order of presentation reflects the comparative nature of the Okinawa study.

Ethnography

I chose the ethnographic approach as being, in my judgement and guided by the example of others, an appropriate research methodology for gathering information from which to complete my thesis. A characteristic of ethnography is the involvement of the researcher present

> ... in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:1).

My introduction to ethnographic writing was through a degree course at University of Hull in England. By subsequently completing a Masters degree I was able to develop the interest. In Japan, I regarded myself as an ethnographer: after all, here was a woman born and brought up on the mainland, someone who had pursued a working career in the nation's capital for some years before going abroad to study. The personal background served me in my fieldwork. Informants may have regarded me as a kind of migrant or occasionally a local resident. Indeed, in Oizumi some Nikkeijin informants related to me as they might another Nikkeijin. Participants were possibly more willing to be frank with someone they saw more in the light of a colleague rather than as an outsider, or as an 'expert' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). In the manner proposed by Roseneil, I am persuaded that

> ... the researcher is more able to discount misinformation, whether deliberate or not, and can evaluate respondents' accounts in relation to her own experience (Roseneil, 1993: 189).

The writing style as presented within this thesis is, then, intended to be ethnographic. Although the methodology centres on the individual, I believe that narratives delivered through everyday practice are able to articulate an analytical ethnography which draws on structure, agency, and the personal as appropriate (Tsuda, 2003). Through my experience and knowledge I interpret the sentiments my informants shared with me. Therefore my writing is subjective. However, as Scheper-Hughes picks out, the ethnographer-anthropologist is

> ... a keeper of the records, a minor historian of ordinary lives of people
>
> often presumed to have no history (Wolf, 1982; cited in Scheper-Hughes,
>
> 1992:29).

This statement, I feel, adequately describes my intent.

Interviews

Qualitative researchers rely on four methods for gathering information: participatory observation; direct observation; in-depth interviewing; and analysing documents and material culture (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). Effective ways for assembling data are in-depth interviews and group discussion (Lewis, 2003). Fielding (1993) emphasises that two principles guide the research interview: the questioning should be open-ended; and, in order to gain spontaneous information about respondents' attitudes and actions, the questioning technique should encourage interviewees to talk about their underlying attitudes, beliefs and values. According to Fielding, the manner of the interviewer is crucial: a relaxed and unselfconscious interviewer puts respondents at ease. I found these two principles applied in my interviews. For the

first couple of interviews, with migrants from Bolivia living in Okinawa, I felt uncomfortable even though I already had experience of interviewing from preliminary practice. Perhaps my knowledge of Okinawan migratory history was not enough at the time, and in one instance I failed to overcome the shyness of the interviewee. Overall, interview management in Okinawa was not so easy. However, as the interviews progressed, the difficulties receded.

With the aim of understanding the formation of identity in the subjective experiences of Nikkeijin living in Japan, and as a key part of my ethnographically informed methodology, I conducted face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with migrants, and engaged in formal and informal conversation with local people in order to collect material. During the interviews, questions I asked migrants were as follows:

Where do you come from, and when?

By which organizational process did you arrive in Japan?

What is your impression of your ancestors' homeland (Okinawa or Japan)?

Where is your homeland?

How do you identity yourself as a matter of nationality?

How do you interact with local people?

Have you any experience of being bullied or discriminated against?

Venues for interviewing varied according to informants' time and circumstances: at my accommodation; the informants' home; the work place, which may be office or ethnic restaurant or bar; during a meal; or while sitting on a bench at the park.

The sessions were planned to last sixty minutes although some were longer. All were recorded and transcribed. Permission to record the interviews and occasionally to take photographs was sought in advance. In addition to the questions designed to obtain the information I required, time was made for respondents to tell their stories, enabling a comparability of response (Holloway and Jefferson, 2000). I transcribed into Japanese first – the language of the interviews – and translated them into English later. To render the explanations and expressions of feelings given by respondents into a language of different nuances and verb tenses, a language not my first, proved to be a challenging process. I also allowed for shortcomings that respondents may have had conversing in a language that was not their own first. In fact, my interviewees ranged from adequate to fluent in spoken Japanese, and in only one instance did I conduct the interview with the help of an interpreter.

In total, I conducted formal interviews with forty-four informants: Nikkeijin but also local people, and local government officers. To include informal interviews would take the number over seventy. A list of all my informants as formal interviewees broken down according to each field site and basic biographical details is provided as an appendix at the end of the thesis. Their first names are all pseudonyms.

Accessing interviewees

The means of introduction to interviewees took three main routes. The first was via religious institutions. When I carried out some preliminary research in the summer of 1999, I found I could reach Okinawan Nikkeijin informants on the mainland through churches both Catholic and Protestant. Two years later, with the help of an Okinawan

Argentinian church administrator on the mainland, I was able to access the informants in Okinawa. They were Okinawan Peruvian, and by means of their recommendation, I met other Nikkeijin at a church in Okinawa city. A second route was from participant observations. During the Third Uchinanchu Worldwide Festival I contacted several organizations of Okinawan Nikkeijin. Once I had attracted an informant, I would often be introduced to their Nikkeijin friends through what some social researchers refer to as the 'snowball' effect. On another occasion, I contacted a presenter on Okinawa Television associated with a documentary programme about Okinawan migrants in South America. I interviewed the presenter and he gave me the names of two female Nikkeijin Argentinians on the mainland and in Okinawa. The snowballing technique is a useful way of gathering informants within the membership of an ethnic minority. Indeed, 'an advantage of snowballing sampling is that it reveals a network of contacts which can itself be studied' (Arber, 1993:74). A third route to finding interviewees was to seek them at ethnic restaurants and bars. This means proved effective at Tsurumi and Oizumi where Nikkeijin communities would already be established, but the method might hold an element of awkwardness and even risk for a researcher.

My requests for interviews were successful apart from two refusals. In Okinawa, I tried to contact a male, second generation of Nikkei Peruvian. An earlier informant had given me his name and a contact number. I spoke to him on the telephone but he declined an interview. Nonetheless, I learnt he was a physiotherapist in Okinawa but in Peru had been a medical doctor. He did not have a licence to practice as a doctor in Japan. I was interested in how the difference in occupational status affected his

identity. Perhaps he might think that his life in Okinawa was a failure. The other instance was in Oizumi, where I sought an interview with an employment agency handling Nikkeijin labour. When I told his secretary my status and intention for interview, she replied that he was too busy. The respond confirmed that it might be difficult to obtain an interview with a professional or senior person without a certain level of authoritative introduction. In Tsurumi ward, a director (Nikkei Brazilian) of a language school accepted my interview only hesitantly because I did not have the Japanese professor's introduction.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, I revisited Okinawa once and Oizumi town twice after my principal fieldwork, during the process of writing up. Although my main time in Oizumi was only two and half months in duration, there remained for me a sense of 'intimacy' (Bruyn, 1966, quoted in Fielding, 1993:167). I could not help but make a fourth visit to the town on a later return to Japan, to discover any changes. I continued to maintain a long-term relationship with some informants, contacting them by means of email. It may be possible to conduct a follow-up interview online with an informant with whom I previously held a face-to-face interview.

Positionality

While I was conducting fieldwork in Okinawa, a female Nikkei Brazilian participating in the Uchinanchu Festival asked me if I would write something on behalf of Nikkeijin. For formal interviews I would present my name card and mention my having worked in Japan. In everyday interaction at the Brazilian Plaza in

Oizumi town, some Nikkeijin thought I was a journalist, writing a book on Nikkeijin. Indeed, when I requested an interview with a male Nikkei Brazilian without introducing myself as a researcher, he began to relate his story, albeit with a little initial hesitancy. I had a similar experience in preliminary research in Kanagawa Prefecture. Perhaps being a journalist allows easier access than does being a researcher.

I would introduce myself as a Japanese single woman living in England as an overseas student. As such, I was not categorized as Nikkeijin, yet my empathy for Nikkeijin derived partly from my situation in England, where of course I was a foreigner. Life in a different culture is difficult at first, especially as regards language, the essential means of communication with people in the host society. In England, my hitherto status in Japan as a career woman was changed to a student with insufficient English. From this experience I can to a degree empathize with some informants when they undergo a move from being a white collar worker in Brazil to a blue collar worker in Japan. I recognize the feeling of isolation that results from lack of language, and instances of discrimination. A distinction between Nikkeijin in Japan and myself in England is appearance. I look Japanese (although sometimes I am considered Chinese) while Nikkeijin share their visible features with local Japanese. My perspective on Nikkeijin is based on such positionality. When I wrote up my thesis, I recalled the advice C. Wright Mills offers in his book *The Sociological Imagination*:

> Do not be merely a journalist, however precise a one. Know that journalism can be a great intellectual endeavor, but know also that yours is

greater! So do not merely report minute researches into static knife-edge moments, or very short-term runs of time. Take as your time-span the course of human history, and locate within in the weeks, years, epochs you examine (Wright Mills, 1959; 2000 [reprint]: 224-225).

My intention is that by adopting an ethnographic approach I can present the hopes and ambitions, concerns and feelings of Nikkeijin from South America living in Japan situated and understood within the wider histories of migration and return migration that have taken place over the past century.

Structure

The body of the thesis consists of seven chapters, set out as follows.

Chapter One discusses theoretical aspects of migration and anthropological perspective of transnationalism, including a review of pertinent literature on Nikkeijin. From a relative wealth of research on Nikkeijin return migratory movement, which tends to focus on Japanese Brazilians, I select works by Linger (2001), Tsuda (2003), and Carvalho (2003), each a distinctive treatment. Additional literature on Okinawan migrants in South America describes cultural differences within the Japanese migrants population.

Chapter Two traces a history of migration from Japan and from Okinawa to South America with specific attention given to Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Peru as destinations and places of settlement. I look at changes of attitude and identity which

take place in subsequent generations. An awareness of earlier migration provides a basis, within a transnational perspective, for comparing return migration.

The third chapter provides an account of Nikkeijin discourse regarding reasons for relocation to Japan, community formation, and perceived status in Japan. I pay attention to official policy towards Nikkeijin at national and local authority levels. The chapter provides a background for the ethnographic content of the following three chapters in which I present my case studies conducted in the research sites as introduced above.

Chapter Four describes Nikkeijin in Oizumi. Almost all whom I met were Japanese Brazilian. I look at how Nikkeijin form a transnational community in the town and at the operation of supporting facilities such as ethnic restaurants, supermarkets, a sports centre, and schools. My enquiry includes the perceptions of local authorities and residents towards Nikkeijin. Finally, I present Nikkeijin views on self-identity.

In Chapter Five I focus on Okinawan Nikkeijin in Tsurumi ward, Yokohama city, in which also a significant number of Okinawans reside as a result of internal migration. I examine Okinawan assimilation into Japanese society and the perceptions of established residents towards Okinawan Nikkeijin. The role of Okinawan associations is relevant. I report on experiences of discrimination and exclusion. Relations with Okinawa are considered as is the concept of home, and how these might impact on the formation of Okinawan Nikkeijin identity.

Chapter Six looks at the lives of Okinawan Nikkeijin residing on the island of Okinawa. My informants were from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Peru. I enquire the reasons for the ancestral location as destination rather than the mainland, and about self-identity in the countries of departure. In documentation, the Okinawan authorities imply support for a return by Okinawan Nikkeijin to Okinawa. My interest is in an Okinawan ethnic awareness and the affect on self-identity.

In the final chapter I analyse the similarities and differences between the two groups (Nikkeijin having Okinawan or mainland connections), the manner of forming transnational community, and the formation of the self-identity. I discuss how Nikkeijin might be placed within a theoretical scheme of 'Japaneseness' and how the concept of transnationalism is relevant in earlier migration and recent return migration. I also consider the relevance of a diasporic approach with regard to the differences between the two groups, and situate the emergence of an Okinawan diasporic consciousness within both historical and contemporary processes.

Translation

In general, Japanese words and phrases are presented in *italics* to mark them out as such. A glossary is included at the end of the thesis. Proper or place names are not italicised, nor – as already will be apparent – is the often appearing term Nikkeijin. As far as possible, the English spelling reflects the sound in Japanese. To denote the Japanese long vowel, the letter is doubled except for the long 'o' where a 'u' is added to avoid the potentially misleading 'oo' (recognisable spellings such as Tokyo, where both vowels are long, are left as they are).

Introduction – Note

1. I had an intention to conduct research in South America. Indeed, during the writing up period, I studied Spanish for one year in England in preparation for going to Argentina or Bolivia in order to carry out voluntary work within the Nikkeijin community organized by JICA (Japan International Co-operated Agency). Unfortunately the opportunity did not materialize.

Map 1: Research sites in Japan. (Tokyo is shown for reference.)
Source of outline: Graphic Maps.

Chapter One

Theoretical considerations

Introduction

The study of migrants from South America to Japan, migrants whose parents or grandparents – or indeed great-grandparents – were themselves migrants either from the Japanese mainland or the island of Okinawa, offers a useful insight not only into the international migrant movement generally but also into the issues of ethnic minority and the formation of identity within migration. The phenomenon may be termed return migration, understood here to apply to first, second and possibly third generation descendants of original emigrants to South America.

This chapter introduces theoretical frameworks related to the subject of my research. The first part provides an overview of migration theory in general; the second discusses the anthropological perspectives of transnationalism and transmigration; while a third part reviews some of the literature and ethnographies on the Nikkeijin and, separately, on Okinawan migrants.

1.1 Migration

Why people move, who moves, and what happens after they move, in the context of internal and international migration, continues to be the focus of increased attention by social scientists from an ever broadening range of disciplinary fields. Internal

migration is defined as people's movement by virtue of inter-urban or, typically in developing regions, rural to urban residential mobility within the same country. International migration takes place across national borders, and the migrant travellers may be termed immigrants (arrivees) or emigrants (leavers) according to the standpoint. Alongside economic migrants seeking work, there are permanent settlers, expatriates of any class, overseas students, and leisure migrants, young and old, men and women – in fact, at once a whole range of types that may be found in contemporary society (Boyle *et al,* 1998).

International migrations and the consequent impact of migratory movement on any society remain major subjects of debate and study in both the political and public areas. It can be said that, within the modern meaning of migration, a much more complex and varied set of movements is taking place, involving more countries, more social groups, more causal factors, and indeed more people. Castles and Miller identify five general tendencies of international migration as flows have developed in response to economic change, political struggles, and conflicts (Castles and Miller, 2003:7-9). The tendencies are as follows.

    1. The globalization of migration: more countries are involved.

    2. The acceleration of migration: the numbers of migrants are increasing
    in volume.

    3. The differentiation of migration: types, or classes, of migrants are
    several; and migratory chains that start with one type of movement often
    continue with other forms, despite efforts by some governments to stop
    or control the movement.

4. The feminization of migration: gender variables (it is suggested) have always been important not only in global migration history but also in contemporary migration. In the past, labour migrations were male dominated and females were dealt with in terms of family reunion, yet today there is evidence of single female migration, for example from the Philippines and Thailand to Japan.

5. The growing politicization of migration: domestic politics, regional relationships and national security policies are increasingly affected by international migration.

Various considerations need to be present when analysing the migratory process, the structure of migration, and settlement. These include the conditions favouring migration, the length of distance of movement, any patterns in frequency and demography, and characteristics such as return migration. In the examination of migration a useful distinction may be made between three main approaches: economic theory; the historical-structural approach; and migration systems theory (Hugo, 1993:7-12; cited in Castles and Miller, 2003:22). These are here looked at in turn.

Economic theory

Perhaps the most recognized popular theory is the neo-classical economic equilibrium perspective, or the 'push-pull' model. This proposes that the individual makes a decision about migration based on costs and benefits in terms of labour (or career) opportunities and material well-being. The theory postulates that people

move from densely to lesser populated areas, or from low to high income areas, in accordance with fluctuations of the business cycle (Castles and Miller, 2003:22). In general, migration occurs when there are push factor stresses in the home region and pull factor attractions in the destination region, and when transportation costs between the two countries are acceptable (Anthony, 1990).

Yet this approach cannot explain the reasons for a certain group of migrants moving to one particular country; for instance, why most Algerians have migrated to France and not Germany. Furthermore, it does not refer to the role of the state although states are often active in initiating and controlling migratory movement. Thus, the purely economic approach has difficulty with its simplistic treatment and obscures the inherent complexity of population movement (Castles and Miller, 2003:24).

The historical-structural approach

A more comprehensive explanation of migration is provided by the historical-structural approach. Since the 1970s, the Marxist school has stressed the unequal distribution of economic and political power in the world. The perspective draws significantly on the work of dependency theorists such as Frank (1967) and world systems theorists like Wallerstein (1974). Accordingly, migration is framed in the context of a global economy characterized by core-periphery relations. International labour migration occurs as part of the intrinsic dynamics of a world system which is stamped with the capitalists' drive to maximize profits. The contention is that the world system preserves uneven development and exploits the resources of poor countries in order to make the rich countries ever richer. International labour

migration is seen as a way of mobilizing cheap labour to supply industrial and commercial demands. For world systems theorists, labour migration is one of the main ways in which links of domination are forged between the core economies of capitalism and an underdeveloped periphery (Brettell, 2000:103). However, the approach fails to address questions of why and how migrants themselves choose migration among alternative options. It sees the interests of capital as all-determining and does not pay adequate attention to the motivation and actions of individuals (Castles and Miller, 2003:26).

Migration systems theory

Migration systems theory considers how international relations, political economy, collective action and institutional forces are linked intricately to individual migrants. This approach, which examines both ends of the flow between the two countries over time, studies the various linkages that might exist between the places concerned, and allows the relationships between states, mass culture, family and social networks to be examined. The theory suggests that migratory movements generally derive from the existence of prior links between sending and receiving countries based on colonization, political influence, trade, investment or cultural ties. It can be argued, for example, that Korean and Vietnamese migrations to America were a long-term consequence of US military involvement in the countries concerned (Sassen, 1988:6-9.) and the migrations from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh to Britain are linked to the one-time British colonial presence on the Indian subcontinent. Similarly, Caribbean migrants have tended to move to their respective former colonial powers, from Jamaica to Britain, Martinique to France, and Surinam to the

Netherlands. Algerian migration to France (and not Germany) is explained by the French colonial presence in Algeria, while the Turkish presence in Germany is the result of direct labour recruitment by the host country (Castles and Miller, 2003). The premise of the migration systems approach is that any migratory movement can be understand as the result of interacting macrostructures and microstructures, these linked by 'mesostructures', as described below.

Macro-, micro- , and mesostructures

Macrostructures include the political economy of the world market, interstate relationships, and the laws, structures and practices established within the states of original departure and the receiving, or host, countries in order to control migration settlement.

Microstructures refer to the informal social networks developed by the migrants themselves. These networks include personal relationships, family and household patterns, friendship and community ties, together with mutual help in economic and social matters. The family and community are important components of migration networks which provide the basis for processes of settlement and community formation in the immigration area. Migrants develop their own social and economic infrastructure: places of worship, associations, shops, cafés, professional services such as those of lawyers and doctors, and other services.

Mesostructures focus on individuals, groups, or bodies which may take on the role of mediation between migrant and political or economic institutions. Recruitment

agents fall within this category, but so may exploiters of illegal movement, such as people traffickers (Castles and Miller, 2003:26-29).

With respect to the various structural levels, Lamphere *et al* (1992) examined the situation of migration to the United States and discovered that established residents and newcomers live in divided social worlds characterized by physical separation and social distance. The various contributors to the book argue that this detachment and division is a consequence not only of choice, language barriers, racial or cultural differences, but also of patterns supported and even created by the structure of institutions in which newcomers interact with established residents. These institutions include corporations, school systems, city governments, and housing organizations. Lamphere's contributors stress the importance of combining micro-level qualitative observation and quantitative macro-level data if we are to comprehend the complexities of immigration and the variety of relationships that are consequently forged. It is important to understand a local political economy, and examine the ways it has been shaped, because immigrants themselves may have been pulled into, pushed out of, or encouraged to stay in very different economic settings throughout the process. By examining mediating institutions within changing local economies, and by combining macro-level data with ethnographic insight, the contributors are able to trace the power configurations that inform the strategies and choices of migrants living in a new land. They also draw attention to the significance of the role of gender: men and women are often differently located in social situations.

From their perusal of power relations, the writers point out the importance of distinguishing between tactical and organizational power on the one hand, and structural power on the other. Tactical power is deployed through organizations, constituting the many and varied ways in which individuals and structural units circumscribe, limit, and define the actions of others. Structural power has to do with how the political economy is designed and deployed to allocate social labour. It shapes the possible field of action to make some kinds of behaviour likely, with others less so (see also Wolf, 1990:586-587). The authors found that structural power is most visible in macro-level economic and political forces, where industries, corporations, and various levels of government react to and try to arrange movements of capital and labour. Case studies presented in the work examine tactical and organizational power as it is deployed at the micro-level (for which perhaps in some instances may also be read meso-level) in particular sites within a mediating institution. Lamphere suggests that it is useful to focus on the policies of managers, owners, school principals, and local government officials as they exercise power and attempt to influence the lives of new immigrants (Lamphere, 1992:21-22).

However, the realities of migration may be more complex and far from being as clearly demarcated as the structural approach would propose. The difficulties of the idea lie in the demand for an application of data and in the way it draws boundaries around constituent systems. The theory is not particularly empathetic of the human angle and tends to neglect the more social elements of migration. Arguably, it relies too heavily on mechanistic metaphor, on modelling flows, and on interactions between components of the various systems (Boyle *et al*, 1998:78).

To sum up, in the above three theories (economic, historical-structural, structural interaction), the migrants themselves are placed as passive actors and are without voice. These theories tend to ignore individual agency and therefore cannot properly describe the complexity of migration nor fully account for the contemporary migrant situation. They ignore contingency in the process of migration. Arguably, a more useful approach is called for, one which focuses on migrants as agents and considers their ideologies and decisions. Such a framework exists. It is to be found within the correlated concepts of transnationalism and transmigration.

1.2 Transnationalism and transmigration

Schiller, Basch and Blanc, in 1992, suggested that traditional conceptions of migration were no longer adequate since the word 'immigrant' evokes images of 'permanent rupture of the uprooted'. In order to provide a new analytical framework for the study of migration, they developed the concept of transnationalism, first proposed by Bourne (1916), which the writers defined as:

> ... the processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement. Immigrants who build such social fields are designated 'transmigrants'. Transmigrants develop and maintain multiple relations – familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political – that span borders (Schiller, Basch and Blanc, 1992:1).

From their examination of case studies of migrants living in New York having moved there from Haiti, the eastern Caribbean, and from the Philippines, the writers

proposed that the concept of transnationalism could be expressed in three different formulations. The first is transnational cultural studies, which bring attention to 'the growth of global communications, media, consumerism, and public cultures that transcend borders to create a global ecumene' (Schiller, 1997:155). To apply a clear meaning to ecumene as applied in this context it is as well to look to Hannerz who suggests the term may be used 'to allude to the interconnectedness of the world, by way of interactions exchanges and related developments, affecting not least the organization of culture' (Hannerz, 1996:7).

A second aspect is given as global studies, which relate to 'the recent configurations of space and polity and the growth of global cities'. Finally, there is transnational migration studies wherein 'scholars are concerned with the actual social interactions that migrants maintain and construct across borders' (Schiller, 1997:155). It is this third approach that Schiller, Basch and Blanc adopted for their joint studies.

Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, feel concerns, and develop identities within social networks in such a way as to connect them to two or more societies simultaneously. An essential element of transnationalism is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both home and host societies. Thus, the significantly different point of the approach taken by Schiller and colleagues compared with migration systems theory is that the subject of the study of migration is the migrants themselves. It is about the ideology of migrants and what change these migrants bring to localized communities, not only through economic remittances but also social remittances in both countries.

Schiller's own case study is drawn from a Haitian woman who was living in New York, who still paid for the weddings and funerals of her nieces and nephews in Haiti (Brettell, 2003:49). Margolis, in a separate study of Brazilian migrants also living in New York, likewise states that transnationalism emerged from the realization that immigrants abroad maintain their ties to their countries of origin, making 'home and host society a single arena of social action' (Margolis, 1995:29). A number of other examples further illustrate the mechanism of the transnational process in the sphere of household and family economies in both sending and receiving societies.

Migrants and communities, migrant identity, and migrants and home are considered central issues in the above studies, and together with the cultural studies approach to transnationalism have led to the emergence of transnational anthropology. For instance, Rapport and Dawson (1998:5) explore 'space-time co-ordinates' and argue that the traditional conception of individuals as members of 'fixed and separate societies and cultures' is not adequate for the modern world. The claim is that traditional social anthropology neglects the concept of 'home' and thus loses an analytically constructive tool. What is required is an exploration of physical and cognitive movement between homes. The two writers suggest that the idea of home is subjected to dramatic change, from being commonly 'the stable physical centre of one's universe' to the more recent notion of becoming, in conceptual terms, 'far more mobile' (Rapport and Dawson, 1998:7).

Olwig (1993) offers an account of the social and cultural life of the St. Kitts-Nevis islands in the Caribbean within the global and transnational context of migration. Her

approach is not towards the sites of the political economy of migration, but rather the culture and values which are rooted in migration. By researching the relationships between departure and destination of immigrants in a historical vein, she observes cultural identification is represented in the carnivals of diaspora life. She considers the family home on Nevis to be a focal point in a global family network, this focus representing a process of global cultural homogenization. In later work, Olwig emphasized that:

> ... important frameworks of life and sources of identification should rather be sought in the cultural sites which have emerged in the interstices between local and global conditions of life. These sites encompass and embody the multiple and contradictory spheres of life in which people are involved today (Olwig, 1997:35).

Transnationalism, then, can be regarded as 'part of the effort to reconfigure anthropological thinking so that it will reflect current transformations in the way in which time and space are experienced and represented' (Schiller *et al*, 1995:49).

Circumspection

There are some cautioning perspectives on transnationalism. Foner examined the concept by comparing immigrants of the past and the present, her study – like the Schiller research – located in New York. The writer wanted to know whether transnationalism is a first generation phenomenon or whether it is the property of a following generation.

Foner observes that there is a similarity to be found in the patterns of past immigrant behaviour. For instance, Russian Jews and Italians established and sustained familial, economic, political, and cultural links to their home societies at the same time as they developed ties and connections in their new land (Foner, 1997:357). From 1870 to 1910, nearly eighty per cent of Italian immigrants were men who left behind wives, children, and parents. They were pioneers who sent money for the passage fares of other family members. Commonly, immigrants also saved with the intention of buying land or a house in the country of origin, one day to return. To an extent, the same was apparently true among Jewish immigrants. The author goes on to propose that rates of return migration in the past were, if anything, higher than the present. It seems, therefore, the phenomenon of transnationalism may have been 'alive and well' ten decades ago, and preceded the articulated concept. Foner does not refer to any difference in nature between past and present transnationalism – in her text only the time period varies. Today's migrant, of course, has the advantages of technology to make contact much easier with the home society. She concludes, perhaps a little untidily, that we do not know precisely how pervasive and extensive various transnational ties actually are for different groups.

According to Mintz (1998), the view of transnationalism as a qualitatively different phenomenon is exaggerated. From an examination of migration in the nineteenth century, the author finds that the Caribbean region emerges as representative of an earlier transnational (or international) era. He believes there is some risk in becoming too enthusiastic about the concepts of transnationalism and about its new lexicon, and the words now being invented or borrowed to describe 'a new sort of world

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[which] may turn out all too soon to be less useful or less applicable, than they seem at this moment'(1998:130).

Mintz proceeds by saying:

> The massive movement of people globally is centuries old. The identification of persons with more than one community is similarly ancient. The processes of culture change now being called 'creolization' are not really that but something else (Creolization itself is very old, if one has in mind what the word originally described). The new theories of transnationalism and globalization are not respectful enough of history, especially of the history of exploration, conquest and the global division of labour (Mintz, 1998:131).

It is worth adding that Foner (1997) also acknowledges ancient displacements or dispersals, often by force, when she makes reference to diaspora.

Similarly cautionary, Castles and Miller suggest the overuse of the term 'transmigrants' should be avoided as the majority of migrants still do not fit within it. For example, temporary labour migrants who sojourn abroad for maybe a year or two, send back remittances, communicate with their family at home and visit occasionally – these are not transmigrants. Nor are permanent migrants who leave forever, and simply retain loose contact with their homeland (Castles and Miller, 2003:30).

Commonly to be found in the literature of transnationalism, according to Guarnizo and Smith (1998), are interpretations which see:

> ... transnationalism as something to celebrate, as an expression of a subversive popular resistance 'from below'. Cultural hybridity, multi-positional identities, border crossing by marginal 'others', and transnational business practices by migrant entrepreneurs are depicted as conscious and successful efforts by ordinary people to escape control and domination 'from above' by capital and the state (Guarnizo and Smith, 1998:5).

Against this interpretation, the co-writers argue that the emancipatory character of transnationalism is questionable, and state that 'while transnational practices and hybrid identities are indeed potentially counter-hegemonic, they are by no means always resistant' (Guarnizo and Smith, 1998:5).

A personal view

Despite the above reservations, I argue that the transnational perspective is still the most useful for my research on South-American-born Nikkeijin in Japan. The word 'transmigrant' translates into Japanese as *etsukyosha* which expresses the notion, in a positive sense, of a person crossing over the boundary of countries. I believe this concept appropriately applies to the Nikkeijin of my study. The perspective may be understand as being neither 'top-down' nor 'bottom up'; instead, it has the potential to get right inside the process of migration by its focus on migrants' ideas and behaviour in both the receiving country and the departed country. I learned about the

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process of migration from stories told by the migrants themselves: the motivations and reasons for moving from South America to Japan; their experiences in Japan; the complex identity formation faced by migrants.

I believe the migration process of the Nikkeijin is not as simple as that undertaken by their parents or grandparents. In order to understand the contemporary experiences of these migrants it is important to consider the historical antecedents of the present day situation. That is to say, while the transnational perspective encourages us to think about the various sets of affiliations and identities established by people as they move within and between different geographical locales, a historical approach forces us to consider whether or not and how these affiliations and identities have changed over time. Additionally, as others have argued (see discussion of Carvalho below), and as I demonstrate in this thesis, a generational approach is required in order to give an account of the broader structures and processes at work within Nikkeijin transmigration. For example, the historical context can tells us about the influence of states and governments both on individual decision-making with respect to migration and on the reception of migrants as ethnic minorities in the host countries.

In sum, while the approach I adopt is broadly that of transnational anthropology in so far as it is primarily concerned with the experiences of people who are themselves directly involved in complex forms of social interaction and identity formation, my analysis of their experiences draws from and is informed by a historical understanding of the changes and continuities in the Nikkeijin narrative.

For the following section, I provide an overview of recent studies on Japanese Brazilian migrants in Japan which have attended to the themes of Nikkeijin identity and the issue of ethnicity. Each accords to a transnational and transmigrant perspective; nonetheless, there are significant differences in methodological and analytical approach that lead not only to different ways of construing the current situation but also to different predictions for the future of the Nikkeijin in Japan.

1.3 Literature on Nikkeijin

Overall, a generous number of studies have been conducted on the lives of Nikkeijin in Japan. At a localized level, civic authorities in Japan, especially those of municipalities where populations of Nikkeijin are concentrated (such as Hamamatsu and Toyota, and the town of Oizumi), produced many reports during the 1990s, with others since. There are journalistic accounts written in Japanese, notably by Fujisaki (1991), Honma (1998), and Watkins (1994). In the academic field, much research has been attracted to general aspects of lives of Japanese Brazilians in Japan, the group which represents the greatest proportion of Nikkeijin, based on surveys and interviews (Watanabe, 1995). Less attention is paid to the study of Nikkeijin from Argentina, Peru and Bolivia, although *New Worlds, New Lives* (Hirabayashi and Yano, 2002), a book contributed to by several authors, contains comprehensive reference.

With regard to Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent, a number of researchers point out differences, when in the host countries of South America, between these and Nikkeijin having forebears who came from other prefectures of Japan. Some relevant

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literature on this matter will be looked at later in the section. Additional material, specific to discussion, is inserted wherever appropriate.

Three studies are chosen for the present purpose, these by Linger (2001), Tsuda (2003), and Carvalho (2003). All researched Japanese Brazilians living in Japan and Brazil. Each takes a different approach: 'person-centred' ethnography; analytical ethnography; socio-economic historical. The subject group is referred to using slightly different terminology. Linger describes 'Brazilians in Japan' or 'Nikkeis in Brazil'; Tsuda prefers 'Japanese Brazilians in Japan'; while in Carvalho's book, the phase 'Nikkeijin in Japan' often appears.

1. Person-centred ethnography

Daniel Touro Linger (2001), in his book *No One Home*, examines identity-making by nine Brazilians living in Japan, and addresses 'microcosmic' aspects of transnationalism. The writer considers the 'intrapersonal' side of transnationalism in conducting a person-centred ethnographic approach. He is of the opinion that the existing literature tends to be 'extrapersonal' in direction, dealing with the global political economy and the formation of migrant networks. As a result, subjectivities are likely to be treated as 'subject positions' (Gupta, 1992:73; cited in Linger, 2001:13) to be found in spaces produced 'by competing and intersecting discourse rather than as the personal appropriations, negotiations or transformations of those discourses'; therefore, extrapersonal commentaries are incomplete and likely to mislead (Linger, 2001:13).

Linger firmly believes that intrapersonal aspects of migration would be able to engender migrants' ideas and feelings about human relations, nationality and identity, although he points out that intrapersonal aspects and extrapersonal commentaries are not exclusive domains to one another. He advises that the person-centred ethnographic approach is only partially valid, and it is wrong to make the assumption that 'practitioners of this approach think of themselves as uncovering personal world of meaning' (Strauss and Quinn, 1997; cited in Linger, 2001:14).

The research site is in and around Toyota, a suburb of the city of Nagoya and home of the Toyota motor plant. Linger spent his time during 1996 and 1997 in the Homi Danchi public housing development in Nagoya, once almost entirely populated by Japanese but, because of affordable rents, where many Nikkeijin – especially from Brazil – have come to reside. Linger conducted in-depth interviews with nine Brazilian Nikkeijin in what he calls 'transnational premises'. His interviewees were three factory workers, three high school students and three intermediaries which included a bilingual teacher and an interpreter. Applying the person-centred technique, Linger has reproduced portions of field conversations, rather than paraphrasing interviewees' comments or sewing them up in monologue. He tries to translate 'sociocultural abstractions into languages of experience' (Linger, 2001:47). In particular, his concern is a reflective consciousness, 'diverse senses of self' and accounts of people's lives – their feeling of displacement, and their interaction in 'transnational scenes' such as on the shop floor, in the class rooms, and among compatriots in leisure settings.

Transnational scenes

Linger considers that transnational scenes refer to a manifestation of transnational flows. He explains the word *scene* 'to convey a sense of setting, a place where, loosely speaking, people play out the dramas of daily life' (Linger, 2001:49). Transnational scenes are therefore the focal point of a significant perspective in interactional correlations which occur across or within ethnic groups, of a specific global migration. Some transnational scenes bring Brazilians and Japanese together in structured interactions. A good public example is in school itself, whereas other places, such as Brazilian restaurants, are the nearly exclusive preserve of Brazilians. As he states, transnational scenes can stimulate critical reflections on self and identity; for instance, Brazilian restaurants in Japan are key sites of identity-making for Nikkeijin, since Nikkeijin visit a Brazilian restaurant not just to eat, as they might do in Brazil, but 'to eat Brazil' (Linger, 2001:75), and to engage in the self-conscious reaffirmation and reformulation of their identities as displaced Brazilians. He emphasizes that a complex, explicit dislocated Brazilian identity is thrown into relief and it becomes more noticeable. That is, transnational social relations bring their 'Brazilianness' to the surface.

In such a transnational scene, Linger repeatedly hears the message from Brazilians that 'Brazilians are warm, Japanese are cold'. He interprets the phrase as converting 'a sense of strangeness' in their mind into a cultural account, and examines it in terms of a different interaction style used in the two countries. According to Linger, the interaction style is analogous with 'subtle, nonverbal, semantic, often unconscious aspects of human behaviour' (Linger, 2001:292).

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National character and human warmth

Linger acknowledges that national character theories invented by American anthropologists are currently branded psychological and stereotypical, yet he believes that the works of Benedict on Japan and Freyre on Brazil can offer an insight into 'quotidian nationality' (Linger, 2001:290). Attention is drawn by Linger to two classical books by these authors, Freyre's *The Masters and the Slaves* (1986 [1933]) and Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1947), in order to understand the repeated message of the Nikkeijin.

Benedict's contribution is seen as important for the theory of human behaviour. Her intuition is still generally considered relevant, and contemporary ethnographers of Japanese society have continued to refine her observations. Within her text, Benedict stresses that Japanese nationalistic rhetoric encompasses virtue, indebtedness, honour, respect through ties of blood and family as well as emphasizing hierarchical relations, at the apex of which is the emperor. Linger thinks that a nationalistic hierarchical attitude still exists in Japanese society. He states that:

> Japanese politics and policies are multifarious; the quotidian nationality
>
> that lends them credibility, Japan's deep structure, quietly reproduces
>
> itself in the intimacy of the home' (Linger, 2001:292).

(It has to be said that, despite subsequent refinement, Benedict's definition of Japanese characteristics could be seen as outdated, that after the Second World War Japanese society underwent massive changes both economically and socio-culturally, and that the result was a multidimensional character. Also, it was Japanese wartime

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propaganda and support for a military regime which promoted ties of blood or the sharing of a unique 'spirit').

In Linger's lexicon, Brazilian 'human warmth' means 'personalist interaction'. This is embodied in touching and kissing, the tangible characteristic of Brazilian greetings, and is so remarkably absent among Japanese, even among those who may know each other well. To a Brazilian, the Japanese social atmosphere is one of 'respect', by which is signified 'formality, distance, correctness, dutiful treatment, careful calculation, expectations fulfilled' (Linger, 2001:301). Human warmth and respect, in this context, are opposites. In short, Nikkeijin Brazilians in Japan elaborate their national character analysis within a bipolar domain. Ironically, some Nikkeijin, when in Brazil, had regarded themselves as 'square', somewhat aloof, and not spontaneous though solidly responsible – impressions they perceived from family and community settings as a celebrated mark of Japaneseness. Once in Japan, however, even square Nikkeijin found the ground reversed (Linger, 2001:302).

'The identity path'

Linger's person-centred ethnographic approach can tell us how one of his informants, a second generation male, has identified himself since arriving in Japan. It is useful to consider identity formation in terms of 'the identity path', which Linger describes eloquently as the diversification of self-identification through four 'moments'.

The first moment is, who he had been (before the move); the second is, who he was (immediately after the move); the third is, who he currently is; and the fourth is, who

he might become. When applied to the informant, these moments are framed as follows. Before 1990 – a Japanese migrant descendant living in Brazil; 1991 – a *gaijin* (foreigner) in Japan, not able to read nor speak Japanese; later in 1991 – a Japanese in Japan feeling no longer quite the stranger, and having the same appearance; 1992 onwards – a Brazilian in Japan, his identity shaped to an extent by local Japanese. On a return trip to Brazil in 1992, he felt Brazilianized Japanese. The moment of the future will be a Brazilian in Brazil, for one day he is going home (Linger, 2001:104-114).

Transnationalism from the person-centred approach

It is clear from what has gone before that the person-centred ethnographic approach studies the subject in close-up. From this point of view, Linger claims that transnationalism is a term that social scientists have invented to refer to human flows and exchanges across national boundaries. Its compass is global, but 'transnationalism is inadequate to the task of describing what it is like to be a Brazilian migrant in Japan'. An attempt is made to avoid the connotation that 'transnationalism viewed up close is homologous with transnationalism seen from afar'. He suggests that imaginative projection has a precondition, and it is 'the translation of sociological abstractions into some semblance of the terms in which the world is encountered by those we wish to understand'. This idea is based on his belief that human experience has an irreducibly first person quality: individual human lives and human subjectivities cannot be inferred directly from sociological abstraction (Linger, 2001:48-49).

A personal view

I believe the person-centred approach tells us that each individual has different attitudes and expectations; therefore the selection of interviewees is a significant function of research. Although he chose transnational scenes, Linger depended on a rather limited source of informant narratives. Schoolchildren and intermediaries may not experience the concept of transnationalism according to the definition proposed by Schiller and others (see above). Even Linger's informants among the factory workers were not so well versed in this concept; as he states, migrants do not encounter transnationalism in their everyday life nor is transnationalism an element of their experience.

On the other hand, I suggest that some of my own informants, in Oizumi town, do in fact experience the concept of transnationalism when, for instance, they construct simultaneous social fields in both the sending and receiving countries. These are Japanese Brazilians dispatching remittances to sustain their families in Brazil while maintaining multiple relations between Japan and Brazil. Were this phenomenon to be thought of as a normal process of settlement of migrants, then the term 'transnationalism' is somehow inadequate, as Linger argues. However, if the same phenomenon is defined as *dekasegi* (temporarily working abroad for financial advantage), then transnationalism would be a suitable label.

To be accurate, Linger does not claim his to be specifically a study of Brazilian Japanese culture. It is (he says) about men and women, girls and boys, who engage with the categories to which they are assigned and the circumstances that surround

them. Their lives are not cultural artefacts, reducible to a set of social coordinates. Additionally:

> National narratives do not determine any particular person's identity. People personalize, rather than absorb, such narratives, transforming them into dense, changing, distinctive components of selves. A responsible account of subjectivity therefore demands attention to the complex interplay of biography consciousness, and public representation (Linger, 2001:18).

Above all, Linger wishes to probe the 'consciousness-making' that he sees present in the experiences of Nikkeijin. He is interested in the dynamic process by which nationality becomes something personalized and by which individuals consciously or unconsciously craft the concept of nation as an aspect of their self-identity. His attempts may be seen as echoing Cohen's suggestion that 'looking at boundaries of selfhood *must* sensitize us to qualities of bounded collectivities which we otherwise miss' (Cohen, 1994:66).

Linger concludes *No One Home* rather in the manner of throwing the issue to the audience when he says:

> I do not think the Brazilians, most of them, will turn Japanese – but they might. I do not think Japan will embrace multi-ethnicity – but it might… Stranger things happened, and will: lives and history do not move in either circles or straight lines (Linger, 2001:313).

A Linger postscript

In a subsequent article on Japanese Brazilians, Linger comments that 'the more closely one examines the category 'Nikkei', the more slippery it gets' (Linger, 2003:211). He realizes the epithet does not have the same meaning for them who place themselves within it. Perhaps such categories should not be supposed as such important self-designations, and should certainly not be assumed as common content for everyone who uses them. Linger clearly has doubts about characterizing people as being bounded within one category. Since in choosing to focus on presumed groups such as 'Japanese Brazilians', attention is drawn to, and tends to reify, a theoretical abstraction (Linger, 2003:212).

2. Analytical ethnography

Under the book title *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland*, Takeyuki Tsuda (2003) handles his data in a manner which he describes as 'analytical ethnography', organized according to a certain line of argument, in contrast to a 'narrative ethnography' (Tsuda, 2003:49). His topics are the issue of migration and minority, ethnic identity, and adaptation by the Japanese Brazilians within the contexts of migrant nationalism, transnational communities, and globalization. Along with these topics, he attempts to integrate the presentation of individual diversity within a generalized ethnographic description. In places, the writing lacks editorial attention, and generally the text is heavy with informants' quotes. Field research for the book was conducted in three regions: Kanagawa, Gunma, and Toyama in Japan, in 1992 and in 1998.

Types of Nikkeijin

The proposition is that migrants are physically displaced through transmigration and tend to reconfigure and reconceptualize their ethnic status and identity. Tsuda investigates the concept of transnational and global processes and their impact at the local level. Particular attention is paid to the implications with regard to minority status. Japanese Brazilians are a socially prominent and culturally respected positive 'Japanese minority' in Brazil; however, when they arrive in Japan their status becomes an ethnically disparaged and marginalized negative 'Brazilian' minority of low social class status (Tsuda, 2003:46). Many researchers in this field, including Linger and Carvalho would agree with this point.

In his consideration, Tsuda defines two types of Nikkeijin. One is the Nikkeijin who maintained a stronger Japanese identity in Brazil, and they reacted much more strongly to their negative ethnic experiences in Japan than might be expected. He reasons that they have a reasonable pride and investment in their 'Japaneseness', and their prior ethnic experiences in Brazil is reinforced by the socio-cultural pressures they confront in Japan. The other is Nikkeijin who had stronger Brazilian identities in Brazil. Members of this type are not as personally affected by their negative ethnic experiences in Japan, therefore do not discern much of a change in their ethnic identities, although these Brazilianized Nikkeijin are exposed to a similar negative ethnic environment in Japan. Tsuda suggests that they felt less affinity with the Japanese before migration and are not as sensitive to ethnic exclusion and discrimination when they move. Rather, their prominent cultural differences with the Japanese are a confirmation of their Brazilianness (Tsuda, 2003:212-214).

Transnational communities

In contrast to Linger and his rather limited acceptance of transnationalism, Tsuda examines the concept in terms of communities, economic and political aspects, and identities. Transnational communities are defined as not geographically restricted and confined to a single unified, contiguous space, but consist of individuals and institutions in non-contiguous space. In turn, contiguous space is described as the place where actual face-to-face contact occurs, while non-contiguous space is interaction without physical proximity, such as any communication through electronic means and the various media (Tsuda, 2003:222). Migrant networks are more dependent on non-contiguous space than are more territorially localized communities. Furthermore, transnational communities are 'deterritorialized' in two aspects. Firstly, they transgress the borders of nation states; that is, they consist of social networks of individuals residing in more than one country. Secondly, they are mainly constituted in non-contiguous space, thus superseding the territorial constraints of contiguous.

However, transnational migrant communities are not based on deterritorialized, non-contiguous space alone. Individuals residing in separate nation states also maintain connections over large geographical distances through the circulation of commodities and links with others over contiguous space – a deterritorialized exchange of property and people across national borders. The constant transnational flow of information, imagination, goods, and people enables Japanese Brazilians to remain simultaneously engaged in both nations (Tsuda, 2003:226).

In Tsuda's view, the economic ties established by Japanese Brazilians represent the most important components of their transnational community. Most notable are the remittances Nikkeijin in Japan send home to their families. Not only is international flow of money to Brazil handled by Japanese banks, Brazilian banks have also opened branches in Japan. Through such economic transactions, made possible as a result of computerized banking networks operating in transnational non-contiguous space, Japanese Brazilian migrants in Japan are able to support their families and communities in Brazil (Tsuda, 2003:226).

It is not only the pure economic importance of monetary flows that maintain 'transnational families' together but also their cultural meaning. According to Tsuda, remittances are not merely economic transactions; they are a form of 'symbolic capital' through which migrants abroad express feelings of familial responsibility and authority while maintaining close social and emotional ties with those back home. Significantly, the emergence of business entrepreneurship by Japanese Brazilians themselves is becoming increasingly prevalent as an important component of transnational economic communities.

Tsuda points out that, despite their highly developed economic transnationalism, Japanese Brazilian migrants have not been very transnationally engaged on the political front. Increased migration and the emergence of more cohesive transnational communities that extend beyond the confines of the nation state are not making the nation obsolete as a source of identity and belonging. Studies are finally appearing that consider how national communities and loyalties continue to remain relevant in

constituting transnational processes and how transmigrants do not always escape the disciplining power of the nation-state.

On the question of why national influences on self-consciousness remain more powerful than transnational influences, Tsuda thinks that transnational communities are unable to challenge the hegemony of nation-state. He found that, in political terms, almost none of his informants expressed any strong consciousness of being part of a deterritorialized transnational community, and very few spoke of an emerging transnational identity that simultaneously incorporates aspects of both Brazil and Japan (Tsuda, 2003:259).

Issues of identity and ethnicity

Ethnic identities of migrants are related to experiences. Tsuda argues that 'dormant nationalist sentiments are revived in a deterritorialized context abroad as an ethnic minority counter-identity that is asserted in opposition to a negatively perceived Japanese society'. He echoes the claim by Castells (1997) that migration makes a special contribution to the development of a new form of identity. It is a part of the migrant condition to adopt multiple identities, which are linked to the cultures both of the homeland and of the country of origin. Such identities possess complex new transcultural elements (Tsuda, 2003:273-274). Tsuda proposes that those migrants who have lived in Japan for an extended period move beyond a Brazilian nationalist identity and develop a synthesized Nikkeijin consciousness that attempts to combine the better aspects of both Japan and Brazil.

At work also are complex Japanese ethnic prejudices that are rarely revealed in discriminatory behaviour. To Tsuda, the poor regard towards the Nikkeijin, a product of *honne* (private inner feelings), is carefully regulated by *tatemae* (socially approved and acceptable attitudes). The extent to which the social facade masks the private thought is greater among the Japanese than in most other societies. Tsuda found that Japanese people expect Japanese Brazilians to act fully Japanese because they look Japanese. When this does not happen, any movement towards mutual understanding gives way to an intensification of cultural distinction. In his view:

> Nikkeijin return migration has therefore caused a transformation in the ethnic identity of both the Japanese Brazilians and the Japanese as a previously shared transnational ethnic consciousness based on presumed cultural commonalities has been divided into separate ethnic identities based on national cultural differences (Tsuda, 2003:359).

Notwithstanding the above analysis, Tsuda predicts that the Nikkeijin can be 'purified' in Japan through cultural assimilation and subsequent social mobility to middle-class status. His belief is that, rather than Japanese Brazilians being seen as a racially different minority group, they will be absorbed into the majority populace and will effectively disappear.

3. The socio-economic historical approach

While Linger and Tsuda examine the lives of Nikkeijin in a manner of ethnographic research, Daniela de Carvalho (2003) uses historical empirical methodology. In her book *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil*, for which material in both

Portuguese and Japanese is examined, she analyses the construction of Nikkeijin identity. She tells the historical trajectory of Japanese in Brazil, and how migrants made their lives there. Emigration to Brazil took place at periods between 1890 to the 1970s (reverse migration to Japan began in the 1980s). The writer describes how the Japanese in Brazil were on the whole successful and gained status in the host country and examines the way in which the migrants saw themselves, and how they were categorized in the receiving country together with the effect this had on their self-perception.

Carvalho's study is based on three phases of the field research: the first was in 1992 and 1995 in Okayama prefecture in Japan, consisting of fifty interviews and social surveys involving many responses; the second consisted of two months spent in Saõ Paulo in Brazil; the third occupied six months in 1998 and two months in 1999 once more in Japan, in the prefectures of Aichi, Okayama, Shizuoka, Kanagawa, and in Tokyo. In order to address her subject she organizes around the following five points.

1. Nikkeijin identities are adaptive to variables of time and space.

2. The behavioural significance of such identities cannot be fully understood apart from a comprehension of the broader system.

3. Nikkeijin identities are the negotiated result of several encounters with the host society.

4. An emphasis on ethnic allegiances as the most meaningful bases of identity depends both on the situation and self-interest at stake.

5. There are important individual differences which in the fuller picture cannot be ignored.

Dekasegi **Nikkeijin**

Carvalho does not discuss the concept of transnationalism directly but examines the Nikkeijin in terms of what *dekasegi* means. There is a historical overview, and a profile of the situation in Japan as regards recruitment, employment condition, wages, working hours, welfare, housing, and so on. She suggests that migration cannot be reduced to a simple cost-benefit analysis, and does not always involve a conscious decision. Instead, it needs to be analysed as a social process with its own dynamics, involving the migrant as well as the sending and receiving societies. Attention is drawn to the possibility that settlement may depend more on the policy of the Japanese government and the attitude of Japanese society than on migrants' individual wishes.

Emphasis is attached to the importance of the labour market, because migrants everywhere are unwelcome when social and economic conditions are difficult. Yet, although the recession in Japan continues, and the unemployment rate has increased, the position of *dekasegi* workers has not been particularly threatened. This is attested by the number of job offers available to Nikkeijin, which in turn may be attributed to their willingness to perform jobs that nationals do not want. Also, Japan's economically active population is expected to decline over the next decades. The social benefits resulting from the presence of *dekasegi* personnel are significant. It is argued that in addition to their importance as labourers, they (or most of them) make a contribution to the Japanese economy by paying taxes to central, prefectural, and local government. They contribute more to social services, taking out less than the national average because of their relatively young age, and are valued as consumers.

All the same, despite their economic contribution to Japanese society and common ancestry, a favourable attitude towards the Nikkeijin by native Japanese should not be taken for granted.

Nikkeijin ethnicity

The Nikkeijin living in Japan are mainly of the second and the third generation. Carvalho stresses that, when we analyse how ethnic identities have been formed in Japan, we need to take 'the ethnic past' into consideration. She states that literature on Nikkeijin often relies on their ethnic allegiances being a cultural response. To accommodate such an analysis, ethnicity is viewed as a primordial 'given' assigned by birth and ancestry, and in so doing fails to account for the dynamic nature of identity in migration as a creative process. Nikkeijin ethnicity did not cross the sea intact, but rather developed in Japan. That is, the identities of the migrants were shaped by new circumstances.

In Carvalho's perspective, ethnic identity is not based on common descent and cultural tradition, but is instead an aspect of social relations among and between social actors who are regarded by others as being culturally distinct from the host society with whom they interact within a specific historical, political, social and economic setting. It provides a sense of belonging in relation to others. It may be exploited according to instrumental motives, but it may also be imposed by the dominant order. Thus, ethnic identity is both socially constructed and situationally contingent, and 'Nikkeijin identity is a process of self-definition, mediated within the interplay of that definition with external definitions' (Carvalho, 2003:xxi).

The researcher develops the idea, proposed by Barth (1969) and Jenkins (1997), that ethnicity should perhaps be viewed in terms of a relational difference which arises in the boundary between 'us' and 'them', that it is flexible and contingent, growing from internal and external pressures. Ethnicity, Carvalho argues, is not solely an individual matter, but also it is embedded in larger social forces and process. She emphasizes that Nikkeijin identity has developed in a complex interaction of similarity and difference in relation to Japanese and Brazilian alternatives, therefore we need to situate Nikkeijin identity in specific historical situations and within a discourse of 'Japaneseness'.

In the historical context, there was a period when Japanese migrants defined themselves as *coloniajin* (*colono* translates from Portuguese as colonist or settler; the Japanese *jin* suffix means person or people). Japanese immigrants to Brazil were seen to 'de-Japanize' in accordance with their gradual movement towards integration into larger Brazilian society, particularly so after the Second World War. This contrasts with the pre-war decades, when Japan provided the dominant frame of identity among migrants. Carvalho notes that, even as *coloniajin*, the Nikkeijin were not completely separated from their Japanese roots. She points out too that the Nikkeijin in Brazil 'do not constitute a homogenous group, there are intra-group differences' (Carvalho, 2003:74). Such differences are to be found in the context of generations as well as between pre- and post-war arrivals. Also, there is separation between migrants having family backgrounds on the Japanese mainland and those from Okinawa.

'Japaneseness'

According to Carvalho, the criteria for Japaneseness, or the measure of being Japanese, are (to no priority, but closely linked): birth in Japan, citizenship, national character, blood relations, full command of the Japanese language, physical appearance. Of the elements, she believes the most important are bloodline (descent) and national character, although she does not particularly explore what national character might consist of. With regard to possession of the Japanese language as an essence of Japaneseness, she points out by way of example that the first language of second and third generation Korean residents in Japan may be Japanese, but they are not regarded as *nihonjin* (a Japanese person, or people) by Japanese society. At the same time, Nikkeijin are often called *henna nihonjin* (strange Japanese), because of their adopted and presumably imperfect language (Carvalho, 2003: 118-123).

The underlying proposition is that the presence of the Nikkeijin in Japan has deconstructed traditionally defined Japaneseness and may contribute to reshaping a new Japanese ethnic identity, while the migrants reconstruct their own. Carvalho goes so far as to suggest that the Nikkeijin could become a new minority. She is of the opinion that any analysis of the Nikkeijin can be complete only in relation to the reconstruction of Japanese identity.

4. The literature summarized

The three books described above have each a character of their own in the analysis of ethnicity and identity of the Nikkeijin. Linger does not produce any general conclusion of Nikkeijin identity from his person-centred ethnography, yet his micro-

structural transnational treatment is able to tell us what individuals experience in new circumstances – in Japan – and how they define themselves. He notes that the arrivals from South America have differing perspectives and feelings toward Japanese society. In another paper (Linger, 2003), the writer questions whether there exists a Japanese Brazilian ethnicity in Japan. Linger sees Japaneseness in terms of the experience of Nikkeijin, as when the phrase is used 'Brazilian is warm and Japanese is cold', and attempts to analyse the experience by considering differences in national character.

Carvalho's approach depends mainly on material from governmental policy announcements, media coverage, researchers and commentators, and on official documents to assess how the Nikkeijin are perceived in Japanese society. Unlike Linger, she does not pursue migrants' individual experiences and ideas. Although she conducted extensive research to formulate her version of Japaneseness, she did not rely on interviews with the Nikkeijin. It is to her credit, however, that she conducted empirical research both in the Portuguese language and in Japanese (Linger only interviewed in Portuguese). Her message is that any social anthropological placing of the Nikkeijin is bound in the 'larger redefinition of Japan's national identity' (Carvalho, 2003:153).

Tsuda predicts the future disappearance of Nikkeijin in Japan as a result of complete assimilation because, he believes, there is no racial difference between indigenous Japanese and generational returnees from Brazil, although he cautiously concludes that it is too early to answer the question of when complete assimilation into

Japanese society is likely to take place. His prediction would seem a rather deterministic and ethnocentric idea.

Linger finds it more appropriate to consider individual consciousness and ethnic self-definition rather than any collective identity of ethnicity. Carvalho follows the Barthian approach of social boundary. Tsuda, who at one point criticizes Barth, believes that ethnic identity tends to be consumed over time in a process of ethnic stabilization. It is he who suggests that migrants to an ethnically related host society generally experience a greater impact on their self-consciousness that those who migrate to an ethnically alien society (Tsuda, 2003:367).

5. Literature on Okinawan migrants

Contributors to the book *New Worlds, New Lives* (Hirabayashi and Yano [eds.], 2002) draw attention to Okinawan migration since Latin America is the site of significant populations from Okinawa (Lesser, Amemiya, Miasato, Higa and Arakaki). Each researcher agrees that Okinawans show an interesting variation of Japanese identity because of their island's being essentially a semi-colonial region of Japan. The diaspora phase of the Okinawan migrational experience, their subcultural affinity, their ties with each other globally and with the home prefecture – these factors tell something important about the formation of identity within Okinawan return migrants. Research on the Okinawan diaspora and the boundary of 'Nikkei' by Arakaki is concerned with the way in which the position of the Uchinanchu, a term used by Okinawans to distinguish themselves from mainland Japanese, intersects with that of the Nikkeijin. He says that the worldwide Uchinanchu network endorses

the possibility of forming a trans-state diasporic body. However, he does not explain how this and similar influences (for example, the five-yearly World Uchinanchu Festival) will affect the formation and maintenance of an Okinawan diasporic identity.

A paper written by Mori (2003) appearing in the book *Searching for Home Abroad* suggests that Brazilians of Okinawan descent have constructed an identity in Brazil that is different from those originating out of the Japanese mainland. There is no single contemporary Okinawan-Brazilian identity, he asserts; instead Uchinanchu identity 'in certain moments appears almost hyper-Japanized, while at others it is defined in contrast to Japaneseness' (Mori, 2003:47). Mori states it is critical to remember that Okinawan descendants in Brazil had by no means a single Uchinanchu identity in the historical context: they may self-ascribe as *kenjin* (prefectural people), *coloniajin* (settlers), *nihonjin* (Japanese), *burajirujin* (Brazilian) (Mori, 2003:49). He maintains that in the early twentieth century, Uchinanchu leaders called themselves *kenjin* to avoid being identified as Okinawans. This was because, in the eyes of Japanese officials, Okinawan people were 'different from and inferior to themselves', second-class Japanese, not true Japanese. The formation of otherness represented an official attempt to classify Okinawans on a level with Chinese, Koreans, or descendants of exiles. Migrant self-ascription in the pre-war period went on to favour Brazilian above Japanese, with some suppression of language and newspapers, although there were Japanese who retained a sense of continuity through education and even emperor worship.

Since the 1970s, Brazilian Uchinanchu has emerged as a term of self-ascription. Two reasons can be attributed, according to Mori. One is the changing policy towards migrants within Brazilian ideology which has moved from an assimilationist principle to one that is based on cultural relativism. The other is a change in residential patterns in the city of Saõ Paulo after the war. Japanese descendants began to move from rural areas to the central parts of Saõ Paulo. Of these, the Okinawans became highly concentrated in – as a rather typical example – the area of wholesale fruit and vegetable vending, while those from mainland ancestry were found in laundry services (Mori, 2003:59, 61).

Mori goes on to say that economic stability and success led Okinawan-Brazilians to assert that their (presumed) solidarity, openness and co-operativeness exceeded the levels of Nikkeijin of mainland descent. He tells that the Uchinanchu ethnic identity in Brazil emerged in the post-war period as a response to discrimination by migrant settlers from the Japanese mainland (called *yamatonchu* by Okinawans, itself reactionary). Ironically, the Brazilian government was during this same time promoting an ideology of racial democracy uniquely free of discrimination.

In summary, while the Okinawan community had, during the interwar period, readily accepted Brazilianized Japanese identity, in the post-war period a Brazilian Uchinanchu culture emerged and began to flourish as an embracing of language, rituals, arts, or seasonal events endorsing the Okinawan identity and which is echoed by Okinawans in Japan.

Chapter Two

Japanese migration to South America

Introduction

This chapter presents an outline history of Japanese migration to South America with particular reference to the migration of Okinawans. An overview of migratory process and settlement patterns in the host countries is helpful to the understanding of identity formation among return migrants living in Japan. In order to place migration to South America in context, some comment is included on Japanese migration in general. The story of Japanese migration to North America is relatively well documented and there is especially much literature on migrants in Hawaii and the United States, the earliest destinations. In contrast, research concerned with Japanese migrants to South America is limited and mostly published in Japanese, although connections with Brazil have received increased attention because of the growing number of return migrants from that country.

Six distinct types of participant in the Japanese dispersal within the modern period have been classified by Befu (2002). They are:

　　1. economic emigrants to Asia, South and North America before and after

　　the Second World War;

　　2. war brides;

　　3. those involved in international marriages;

4. multinational business expatriates and their families;

5. those who provide a service infrastructure for the business expatriates community;

6. those who have more or less abandoned Japan out of discontent with their situations there.

Here I will be concerned essentially with economic migrants, who are called *imin* in Japanese.

2.1 *Imin*

The term literally means nomadic or shifting people when represented in Japanese characters, which may be rendered in English as meaning both 'emigrant' (its generally accepted Japanese meaning) and 'immigrant'. Historically, Japan's *Imin Hogo Hou* (Protection of Emigrants Act, 1896) defined *imin* as an individual who went abroad in order to work, where 'abroad' did not include Korea or China. Certain categories were excepted: diplomat, student or trainee, researcher, banker, journalist, company employee, and traveller. After the Second World War, the Japanese Constitution declared that 'Freedom of all persons to move to a foreign country and to divest themselves of their nationality shall be inviolate,' (Constitution of Japan, Chapter 3, Article 22; cited in Ishikawa, 2004). In 1955, the Japanese Foreign Ministry removed the term *imin* from official application and started to use *ijuu* or *kaigai ijuu* (Ishikawa, 2004). *Ijuu* means migration or immigration and *kaigai ijuu* means to migrate abroad. Both terms are used as nouns describing actual activity rather than for referring to people or an individual. Such transition from *imin* to *ijuu*

in official papers would be assumed to reduce the negative or pejorative image towards migration. For example, in literature the phrase '*imin wa kimin*' might suggest that emigrants are abandoned people, or – more strongly – discarded people. This phrase permeated Japanese society when migrants would be thought of as coming from a poor family background, such as might be found in the rural agricultural sector. In addition, it could be taken as indicating governmental policy in an attempt to reduce population.

The image of the migrant is somewhat different in Okinawa, where migration is a more common topic. Among the islanders, the term *imin* does not carry the same pejorative meaning as on the mainland, while the idea of '*kokyo ni nishiki o kazaru*' (return home loaded with honours) finds a resonance, particularly so in post-war years, as it suggests Okinawans can aspire to seek a new world.

2.2 *Issei, nisei, sansei, yonsei, gosei…*

Japanese migrants commonly refer to themselves in terms of generation. The *issei* are the original settlers who constructed the institutional foundations for a new, essentially ethnic, community. Among the *issei*, there are two subdivisions, *kyu issei* and *shin issei* – 'old' and 'new' first generation – which distinguish those who were present before the Second World War from those who arrived after that war. The *nisei* (second generation) are the children of *issei*. Many *nisei* were born in the host country, though when specific individuals are described as *jun nisei*, represented as 'semi' *nisei* in Japanese characters, they were brought to the host country by their *issei* parents as children. The *sansei* (third generation) are the children of *nisei* or *jun*

nisei, the *yonsei* (fourth generation) those of *sansei*, and *gosei* (fifth generation) those of *yonsei*[1]. Complexity of identity is seen to increase by generation and as a result of the host country's political and socio-cultural circumstances.

Populations

The number of Japanese of all migrational generations who are settled abroad is recorded as being in the order of 2,700,000. Over half of these live in South America. Approximate dispersal on the continent is given in the table.

Country	Numbers	% of total
Brazil	1,300,000	90.9
Peru	80,000	5.6
Argentina	32,000	2.2
Paraguay	7,700	0.5
Bolivia	6,700)	
Chile	1,600)	
Colombia	900)	
Venezuela	800)	0.3
Uruguay	500)	
Ecuador	300)	
	1,430,500	100

Table 1: Nikkeijin living in South America 1997 (estimated).
Source of data: *Kaigai Nikkeijin Kyokai Jigyo Gaiyou* (Overseas Nikkeijin Association Prospectus). Cited in Honma, 1998.

Another, more recent estimate applies as follows: Brazil 1,500,000 (90% of South American Japanese migrants); Peru 90,000 (5%); Argentina 50,000 (3%); Bolivia 15,000 (1%); and Paraguay 10,000 (less than 1%) (Ishikawa, 2004). It needs to be

stressed that significant variation can be found among sources of population estimates of Nikkeijin. The difficulties include not knowing for sure if a figure includes all individuals or only adults, who arguably are easier to count; sometimes doubt exists about exact dating in what is essentially a dynamic entity; and methodology is not often explained. For the purposes and aims of this thesis, statistical precision is considered not to be crucial. Rather, a broad idea of scale is deemed to suffice.

2.3 Japanese migration in the modern period

After a period of more than two centuries of self-imposed isolation, Japan experienced the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry's naval squadron from America in 1853 and, with some reluctance, responded to the call to open up. The establishment in 1868 of a government as part of the Meiji Restoration marked the start of Japanese migration in the modern period. Movement may be split into three identifiable phases: indentured labour (1885-1898); free and indentured labour (1899-1945); and free emigration (1946-1972) (Ishikawa, 1997:14).

The departures actually began in 1868 when some indentured labourers emigrated to Hawaii to work on sugar plantations. This event was followed by other isolated examples, but collective migration may be considered not to have been under way until 1885. The Meiji administration, in its efforts to steer Japan towards a level of parity with the west, introduced a series of far-reaching reforms which included emigration policy. These were finalized by 1890. Early destinations included several Pacific islands such as Guam (42 individuals, in 1868), Fiji (305, as indentured sugar

plantation labourers, in 1894), Guadeloupe in the Caribbean (499, to sugar plantations, in 1894), and South American countries such as Guatemala (132 in 1893) and Peru (790 in 1899). After Hawaii was integrated into the United States of America in 1898, some Japanese migrants moved from the island to the mainland seeking higher wages (Wakatsuki and Suzuki, 1975:53-60).

Japan was initially considered a country for supplying labour and little else. Official and private invitations were made by various Western governments and their agents to recruit Japanese as indentured workers. In the case of Hawaii, the first group of migrants would most likely experience almost slave-like treatment (Wakatsuki and Suzuki, 1975:57). Japanese migration to Australia started in 1883 with migrants arriving to work as cockle pickers on Thursday Island and later as indentured labourers on sugar plantations in Queensland. Under the country's white Australia policy introduced in 1901, non-white migration was restricted. A gentleman's agreement in 1905 between Japan and Australia allowed for a one year's stay. Canada tightened immigration controls from as early as 1895 and the number of Japanese migrants decreased, the route to Canada being closed completely by 1908. In North America, fears of a 'yellow peril' following Japan's victory in its war against Russia (1904-1905) accelerated the process of exclusion and limitation of Japanese migration. A restriction in 1908 by the United States on the level of arrivals to Hawaii and the mainland resulted in alternative channels of emigration being sought: to Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil (eventually to become the main destination), and later to Paraguay and other South American countries. The Immigration Quota Act of 1924 significantly reduced movements to the United States and Hawaii. After

the Second World War, the Japanese government negotiated a new treaty with Brazil, and arranged to establish settlements in Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, Argentina and in Bolivia (Wakatsuki and Suzuki, 1975:62-66).

The main goal of the early phase migrants was to earn money overseas and return to Japan with some wealth, a strategy based on the huge economic differences between Japan and the West at that time. A majority of Japanese immigrants were employed as low-wage agricultural labourers or subsidiary farmers for the plantations, which exported agricultural products to the internationally integrated markets governed by Western colonial powers (Castles and Miller, 1998:54).

There was also a stream of emigration to Japan's colonies such as Korea, Manchuria and Formosa in East Asia, as well as to Southeast Asia and Micronesia (the South Sea Islands) until Japan lost the imperial power in 1945. A large number of migrants to the colonies, who were called *kaitaku imin* (represented as 'pioneer' migrants in Japanese characters), worked not only on plantations but also in factories, mining and the commercial sector. Some played a leading role in restructuring these acquired areas, occasionally working under severe conditions. This was certainly the case in Manchuria (Wakatsuki and Suzuki, 1975:67-70).

Regional characteristics of migrants

Japanese migration was predominantly drawn from the regions of the south-west, especially from Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Kumamoto, Fukuoka, and from the island of Okinawa. According to statistics published in 1940, the ratio of the number of

emigrants against the total population by each prefecture showed Okinawa as having the highest rate at 9.97%, followed by Kumamoto 4.78%, Hiroshima 3.38%, and Yamaguchi 3.23% (Ishikawa, 2001:70). Financial contributions from overseas to a home town or village were the norm. Migrants sent regular remittances while away, and would bring money on their return. Some of the income was used to support schools, temples, and other public buildings.

2.4 Migration from Okinawa before the Second World War

As Japan rapidly achieved modernization, Okinawa was left behind in every aspect of reforms. Significant migration from Okinawa did not commence until fourteen years after that of the mainland. Except where signified, the following material in this section is based on *Okinawa Kenshi: Imin* (The History of Okinawa Prefecture: Migration) (OKKI, 1974).

In 1899, a group of twenty-seven Okinawan migrants left for Hawaii as indentured labour. The late start (within the phases of Japanese migration history) was mainly caused by the slow modernization programme set for Okinawa by the Japanese government. For example, land reforms undertaken on the mainland in 1871 did not translate through to Okinawa until 1899. Private ownership of land was established in 1903, which made it possible for peasants to mortgage their land titles in order to raise funds to go overseas. Meagre natural resources, overpopulation, and repeated severe weather in the form of typhoons meant that internal and overseas migration became an attractive alternative to the problems of Okinawa (Ishikawa, 1987).

Migration from Okinawa to South America started in 1906. On the 16th October of that year, thirty-six indentured labourers departed through the port of Yokohama to arrive at Callao in Peru on the 21st November, then to leave Lima for Santa Cruz in Bolivia where they were engaged in the cultivation of cotton. Movements from Okinawa to Brazil began in 1908.

The Pacific island of Saipan became a Japanese colony in 1921 and, in particular, migrants from Okinawa were encouraged because of the new possession's similarity to their home island. As already mentioned, the United States was completely closed to migrants from Japan by 1924, while movement to the Philippines, Brazil and Peru increased. The flow of migration was fuelled by the offer of free passage by the government to people displaced by the massively destructive Kanto earthquake of 1923. There was also migration to Argentina, and – on a lesser scale – to Penang in Malay, to Singapore, Java, and Sumatra in Indonesia. Japan annexed a large part of north-east China in 1931 and migration to Manchukuo, as the territory was renamed, was encouraged by the Japanese government. The economic depression of the period led the authorities in Okinawa to establish the Okinawa Overseas Association. A function of the new organization was to develop communications with other countries with a view to opening up possibilities for and facilitating migration.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Okinawa's economy, which was largely dependent on export-oriented sugar and other crops, collapsed due to a sudden world market drop in the price of sugar. As a result, a large number of islanders migrated to the urban and industrial areas of mainland Japan, principally to Osaka, Hyogo, Kanagawa and

Tokyo. Some 10,000 individuals are said to have departed Okinawa for overseas destinations. Almost half of these went to Hawaii. Others travelled to the Philippines to work on a road-making project; to New Caledonia; to the (still quota restricted) United States into agriculture; to Canada for the mining industry; and to Mexico and Peru.

During the 1930s, migration to the Philippines increased. Argentina also became a destination. Brazil and Peru, however, began to apply restrictions. A general limit of 3,000 migrants per year was imposed by the Brazilian government in 1939. Single males were required to fall within the age range of 18 to 50; couples, also within the same age constraints, had to be childless; and all newcomers were expected to work for four years in agriculture.

By 1939, Okinawa Prefecture had changed its migration policy from *dekasegi* (working away from home) to one that favoured a permanent settlement migration. At about the same time, the Japanese government introduced schemes which subsidized removal expenses in addition to paying fares (OKKI, 1974:57).

2.5 Migration from Okinawa after the Second World War

Immediately following the Second World War, almost all migrants originally from Japan, with the exception of those living in the Americas, were required to repatriate. Okinawa received back some 50,000 people from the Philippines and the South Pacific Islands, and possibly a number in excess of 100,000 altogether.

The US Civil Administration of the Ryukyus (USCAR) was set up in 1950 to implement American policies and programmes. Two years later, the San Francisco Peace Treaty officially separated Okinawa from Japan and changed its name to the Ryukyu Islands. By Article 3 of the treaty, the US was granted the right to exercise all powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the islands. The Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) was created the same year, but it had limited authority. Ryukyuans were defined as those who were entered in the family register (*koseki*) of the Ryukyus and who currently resided on the islands. Non-residents were required to carry Japanese passports or identification documents issued by the Japanese government on entry (Sellek, 2003:81). By this time, however, emigration to South America destinations had resumed. The government encouraged emigration both from the mainland and from Okinawa by lending funds to those intending to go overseas. Okinawan movement tended to be to Argentina and Peru. Emigrants networks were established both in Okinawa and in the host countries through kinship, neighbourhood, friendship and other types of affinity.

At first, many Okinawans were free or sponsored migrants. Between 1954 and 1964, a (quoted) total of 3,238 moved to Bolivia within a process of planned migration supervised by the Ryukyu government in agreement with the occupying US authorities. The arrangement lasted until 1985 when, to all intents and purposes, migration to South American destinations came to an end (Nakayama *et al*, 1986).

Table 2 provides an approximation of recent dispersal and usefully indicates Okinawan migrant populations as a percentage of total Japanese. Although the source

is a respected institution, some caution regarding the estimates is nonetheless advised. No date is specified but the information almost certainly applies to the late 1990s.

Host area	Migrants from Okinawa	of Japanese
Brazil	116,800	10%
USA	70,300	8%
(Hawaii)	(45,000)	(22%)
Peru	37,900	65%
Argentina	30,600	70%
Bolivia	8,700	60%
World	270,000	12%

Table 2: Migrants from Okinawa living abroad (estimated).
Source: Bank of the Ryukyus (no date). The figure for USA includes Hawaii. Japanese refers to all migrants from Japan (mainland and Okinawa) living in the area stated.

Reasons for emigration

The reasons for pre-war migration from Okinawa were economic and the result of social factors such as the introduction of new land reforms that allowed family lands to be divided up and established the right to own property, which made the availability of money for migration easier. Poor levels of education on the island meant that opportunities outside of farming were few. Subsequently, there was encouragement from a political activist[2], migration brokers and agents, in addition to a desire to evade conscription.

Migrant families after the Second World War usually consisted of five or six members. As before the war, they were motivated to migrate by a number of reasons.

Unemployment and poverty were, as ever, powerful determinants. There were few industries on Okinawa. A strong sense of kinship among Okinawans sometimes produced the offer of sponsorship from a sibling, other relatives, or friends already living abroad. Okinawan migrants could normally rely on support from their respective *monchu* (a group based on close common ancestry[3]). For instance, when proposing to start up a business, someone could borrow money through mutually financing loan systems, or credit unions, operated by the community.

Although physical distance between Okinawa and the South American host country is obviously much greater than the distance to the Japanese mainland, Okinawan migrants feel closer spiritual ties towards the host country. The 'sense of closeness' comes from kinship ties as well as association with a common prefecture. That is, for migrants spiritual closeness can overcome physical distance (Ishikawa, 2001).

Another reason for migration was a desire for a more worldly, or at least continental, experience. A further and sometimes strong reason for wishing to leave Okinawa after the Second World War was the uncertainty regarding a future on an island of limited size used extensively as a base by the US military (Nakayama *et al*, 1986).

2.6 South America as destination

In the host countries of South America, Japanese migrants have formed communities according to their history and subsequent development. Such a community is based on social networks, including kinship ties, and on economic, educational and socio-political factors.

With regards to comers from Okinawa, the first generation have demonstrated a strong sense of nostalgia through a high degree of representation of Okinawan culture in the performance of island folk song and dance, in playing the sanshin (stringed instrument), and in demonstrating Okinawan sumo wrestling. For their everyday spoken language, Uchinaguchi (the Okinawan dialect[4]) is used. They live close to each other and hold several regular festive occasions within the kin network. Further social ties are made through the operation of *moai* and *tanomoshi*, forms of credit unions which provide loans and other services among the community. The *kenjinkai* (prefecture associations) organize cultural and social events. Migrants create conditions similar to those found when living in Okinawa and hold on to a clear Okinawan identity.

Almost all Okinawan migrants were engaged in agriculture as indentured labourers at first, though some later became tenant farmers or even farm owners. Many Okinawans would, after completing their contract, move into the city and find positions in the commercial and service sectors. As a consequence, their social standing in the host country could become relatively high. Particularly in Peru, Okinawa migrants have achieved significant levels of success in the service and retail sectors.

1. Argentina

The first recorded migrant from Japan to Argentina arrived in 1886 at Buenos Aires before moving to Cordoba, where he lived for thirty years. An example of collective migration took place in 1908 when a group, mostly people from Okinawa, travelled

to Brazil and from there moved on to Argentina. In 1914, about a half of the occupation structure of Okinawan migrants was made up of factory workers employed in sugar refining, meat freezing factories and by companies processing wool. Family businesses accounted for around a quarter of the total. By 1936, laundry services dominated the occupation profile, with some sixty per cent of the Okinawan migrant workforce engaged, while market gardening attracted about twenty-five per cent. Little change is recorded for the post-war period: for example, a survey of occupations between 1955 and 1965 among migrants coming from Motobu village in Okinawa found that around ninety per cent were involved in laundry services and the cultivation of flowers and vegetables (Ishikawa, 2004).

Total numbers of migrants from Japan to Argentina have always been relatively small. A figure of 4,882 has been given for the period between 1913 and 1983, with more than half of these (2,754) coming from Okinawa. Many were free migrants, invited by their relatives and friends. A small degree of secondary migration also took place, whereby Okinawans who had earlier arrived in Bolivia or Peru moved to Argentina to re-establish kinship ties. Between 1948 and 1986 the flow of migrants from Okinawa to Argentina is put as totalling 3,889. Of this number, approximately eighty per cent were invited to migrate by friends, a situation which differs from those of Brazil and Peru where such invitations were significantly less in proportion. In the main, the later migrants were relatively well educated single males, some of them graduates from the agricultural college in Okinawa, often of lower middle class background and able to meet the costs of travel and relocation (Onaha, 1998). A motivation for migration within this group was social aspiration (Ishikawa, 1987).

Okinawans and their descendants are estimated to account for about seventy per cent of Argentina's Nikkeijin population (see Table 1).

Among the Okinawans in Argentina, it was a common practice to send the young for short periods to Japan for secondary education. These children were called *kia nisei*[5]. Some Okinawan *nisei* graduated from university in Argentina and formed an association for the exchange of information. *Nisei* are to be found in the professions such as law, medicine and academia (Ishikawa, 2004).

Argentina was essentially a country of immigrants in the first decades of the twentieth century and had a certain reputation for being a melting pot of races similar to the United States. According to Higa (2003), the first generation of Japanese migrants defined themselves as Japanese, and quite a few called themselves Nikkeijin until the mid-1980s, whereas almost all members of the later generations represent themselves as Argentinian. The term 'descended from Japanese' would occasionally be added for clarification, though the descriptive expression 'Japanese-Argentinian' would not be much used among the migrant community. Higa emphasizes that the immigrants and their descendants were expected to fit in to the established demands of Argentina's national identity. Nevertheless, certain practices such as attitude toward elders, kinship and family relationship, preparation of food, and so on, were interpreted as the Japanese way of doing. The *nisei* in Argentina, therefore, were faced with a dilemma of identity as they found themselves living in two worlds – Argentina and Japan.

With regards to language, an opportunity to reproduce Uchinaguchi was provided by the agricultural environment of Argentina in which the generations worked together. The *nisei*, however, tended to suppress the use of Uchinaguchi in public for fear of being labelled non-Japanese by other Japanese migrants. Instead, they preferred Spanish (Onaha, 1998).

2. Bolivia

Although the early Japanese migrants to South America worked on sugar plantations as indentured labour, conditions were such that the workers looked elsewhere. For Bolivia, the first arrivals, in 1899, were recorded as ninety-one in number. They came from Peru, having crossed Lake Titicaca, seeking work on rubber plantations. By the same route, Okinawan migrants entered Bolivia in 1909. Following the collapse of the rubber boom in 1915, these workers moved into the cities, principally Santa Cruz, La Paz, Oruro, Cochabamba, and Potosi where, in time, they were able to join the small Bolivian middle class engaged in commerce. Migrants continued to enter Bolivia, often from Peru, most to take up work in agriculture (Ishikawa, 1987). According to the Okinawan prefecture *Imin* statistics, the number of migrants travelling directly to Bolivia between 1919 and 1938 was a mere thirty-seven individuals.

After the Second World War, a number of families left for Bolivia from the Okinawa villages of Yomitan, Nago and Nakagusuku. Their land had been requisitioned by the US army (Nakayama *et al*, 1986:78). Planned migration to Bolivia was undertaken by the Ryukyu government, at that time under US control, during the period 1954 to

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1964. New arrivals from Okinawa, assisted by the existing migrant community, constructed 'Colonia Okinawa' comprising three settlements (Colonia Okinawa 1, 2, 3) in an area of land lying a hundred kilometres to the north-east of Santa Cruz, in order to engage in tropical agriculture. Between 1951 and 1989, a total of 3,893 individuals were recorded as having emigrated (Ishikawa, 2004).

Japanese migrants to Bolivia are to be found in three regions: the northern Amazon basin; old highland cities; and the department of Santa Cruz. In the northern Amazon, mainly in Riberalta and its surroundings, early Okinawan migrants and (sometimes mixed Okinawan-Bolivian) descendants chose to live apart from the rest of the Bolivian Nikkei community, paying little attention to a Japanese relatedness. In the late 1980s, however, this group became aware that their Japanese surnames could be of advantage in searching for job opportunities in Japan.

Another example of separate settlement is where post-war (mid-1950s through the 1960s) migrants in Santa Cruz formed two communities: one was at Colonia Okinawa (see above); the other was at San Juan de Yapacani, north-west of Santa Cruz, this made up of migrants having come from all over Japan. Subsequently, the group at San Juan de Yapacani has grown and its members are making an acknowledged contribution to greater Bolivian society.

Amemiya (2002) observes that there is a clear distinction between the *issei* (who emigrated to Bolivia as adults) and the *nisei* (born in Bolivia as a second generation) together with the *jun nisei* (who accompanied their parents or other relatives when

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young) as regards their lifestyle and thinking of Japan. For instance, the *issei* feel loyalty and deference toward the royal family of Japan. When, for the centennial ceremony held in Santa Cruz, a princess of the Japanese royal family visited Bolivia, members of the *issei* regarded her in a manner similar to how she might be in her own country, whereas the *nisei* took a more detached stance towards the occasion. To the *nisei,* the president of Bolivia is more important. It is a matter of simple fact for them and it is neither political nor ideological. Their self-identification is Bolivian, and they do not expect to be treated as foreigners. The *issei* were brought up to respect traditional Japanese old-fashioned ethics that valued hard work with low risk and no debts, and they toiled hard alongside their Bolivian workers. They eat mostly Japanese food and watch Japanese programmes on television. They set themselves apart from other Bolivians and identity as Japanese. The second generation speak much better Spanish than their parents, although they are sometimes conscious of themselves as Japanese, particularly when they are with Bolivian friends (Amemiya, 2002:101).

As regards the Okinawan first generation, Amemiya informs that its members hold on to a historically shaped and politically oriented identity and are eager to maintain a close connection with Okinawa prefecture. Even so, they may insist their Okinawan identity is but a cultural one, and 'Okinawa is synonymous with Japanese', a reflection of Japanese sovereignty transplanted in a host country. Among the *nisei* and *sansei* generations, however, Okinawan identity shows some diversification. Theirs is a social milieu wherein *andagi* (Okinawan doughnuts), *champuru* (a type of stir-fry), *eisa* (a style of dancing) meet with Latin American

cooking and music. Altogether, a strong sense of attachment towards the ancestral village or area prevails among the community. It is important for members to know from whereabouts in Okinawa their families originate.

3. Brazil

Japanese emigration to Brazil began in 1908 and the first group consisted of 158 households (781 individuals) organized by the *Koukoku Shyokumin Kaisha* (Imperial Migration Agency). The travellers departed on the 28th April from Kobe, sailing on the *Kasato Maru* to disembark at the port of Santos in Brazil on 18th June before continuing on to Saõ Paulo the following day. In 1910, a second group arrived in Saõ Paulo. Migrants as workers were welcomed in Brazil as a result of the abolition of slavery of 1888 and a decrease in migration from Europe. Similar movements went on until 1941. The total number of migrants has been put (with commendable official accuracy) at 186,272. A flow peak of about 23,000 occurred in 1932. In 1934, the Brazilian government began to impose restrictions (OKKI, 1974).

Between 1953 and 1962, a second phase of encouraged migration took place when, in all, about 50,000 Japanese arrived in Brazil. Subsidies were provided by *kenjinkai* (prefectural associations) and a federation of overseas associations was set up with the aid of the Japanese government in order to deal with recruitment and the process of migration. The *Kaigai Shinko Kabushiki Kaisha* (Overseas Emigration Development Agency) bought land in Brazil. At first, the majority of migrants were single young men, but family reunions followed.

Further migration continued to 1973, when a last group of 285 made the journey. A three-year survey, published in 1990 in Brazil, found that the total number of Japanese migrants and their descendants living in the country for more than three months was 1,228,000 – equivalent to almost one per cent of the national population. This number was made up of (in rounded values): 13% *issei*, 31% *nisei*, 42% *sansei*, 13% *yonsei* and 1% *gosei*. (Centro de Estudos Nipo-Brazileiros, 1990:20-21; cited in Carvalho, 2003:27).

Almost the entire Japanese migrant population is concentrated in the south-western and southern regions of Brazil. The state of Saõ Paulo has by far the highest number of Nikkeijin with a population of 887,000 (the city of Saõ Paulo itself has 326,000). The second largest group is in the state of Parana, which has 138,000 Nikkeijin, most of whom live in the cities of Curitiba and Londrina. The states of Rio de Janeiro, Espirito Santo, and Minas Gerais have a combined total of 87,000 Japanese (Tsuda, 2003:57).

Brazil as host country represents by far the most common destination in South America for migrants from Japan. These travellers had, in part, their Japanese identity forced upon them when they became subjected to a different culture. As newcomers to a multi-racial society, making a living and raising families, they chose to live together as Japanese in a foreign land and began to see themselves as long-term Japanese residents in Brazil where they formed ethnic groups. As a result, the relationships between them became strong. At their own various paces, migrants organized their lives and constructed their ethnic identities (Maeyama, 1996).

Among *issei* Japanese migrants in Brazil, there is a clear distinction between *kyu imin* ('old' migrants) and *shin imin* ('new' migrants having arrived after the Second World War). There are few *issei* left among the *kyu imin* today but a number of *issei* migrants among the *shin imin* remain alive. Differences between the two categories of *issei* impact on the second generation. The physical appearance of 'old' families have became more Brazilianized in that their skin is darkened, whereas 'new' families are marked by a lighter skin (Carvalho, 2003:62).

Issei families use the Japanese language within the home for conversation. Even though their language in the public place is Portuguese, it is common for the *nisei* to go to a Japanese school (in Brazil) at least some of the time. In general, *nisei* have seen themselves as engaged in a process of transition, whereas the *issei* were Japanese who became foreigners in Brazil. *Nisei* assimilate to Brazilian society for everyday purposes while retaining Japanese identity. The reason extends beyond the physical characteristics of looking Japanese. A positive image of Japaneseness is shaped by the Japanese migrants themselves as a whole, one that emphasizes the Japanese reputation for being hard working, caring for others, and for showing respect to a senior person. Carvalho comments that Nikkeijin in North America have a slightly different attitude towards promoting Japaneseness. Some individuals of the *nisei* retain quite a firm Japanese ambience to their lifestyle, while others prefer to consider themselves Brazilian.

Japan's reputation for advanced technology is beneficial to Nikkeijin in South America. Additionally, Japan's economic success has lent importance to the position

of the Nikkeijin in that they can legally take up work in Japan, all the more an advantage while Brazil's economy was making uncertain progress.

Okinawan migrants to Brazil

The history of Okinawan migration to Brazil follows a similar pattern to that of general Japanese migration to the country. Aboard the *Kasato Maru* in 1908 were 47 families (355 individuals) from Okinawa (OKKI, 1974). A second group followed in 1912. From 1913 to 1916, and again between 1919 and 1926, the Japanese government prohibited Okinawan emigration to Brazil. The reasons given were: the rate of settlement as indentured migrants was relatively low and there were many 'escapees'; the difficulty of reconciliation with other Japanese migrants outside Okinawa; the retention of Okinawan customs and culture; criticism by migrants from the mainland that Okinawan migrants were disgraceful. Ishikawa suggests that these preconceptions were formed by the Japanese government. As a consequence of controls on departure, migration to Brazil stagnated during the second and third decades of the century. After the Second World War, from 1949 to 1986, about 9,500 Okinawans migrated (Ishikawa, 1987). Almost all who arrived in Brazil were free migrants or were sponsored by relatives or employers. It is estimated that the number of Okinawan migrants moving to Brazil accounted for ten per cent of the total number of Japanese migrants (see Table 2). The majority of Okinawans settled in Saõ Paulo and the neighbouring state of Paraná.

According to a survey conducted in 1984 by *Zaihaku Okinawa Kenjinkai* (Association of Migrants from Okinawan Prefecture), *issei* Okinawan migrants in

Brazil tended to engage in retailing businesses such as clothing, restaurants, and grocery provisions. Within the Okinawan community, the *nisei* established a *seisounen kai* (youth association). Its members are mainly engaged in the professions, and individuals may be a lawyer, doctor, dentist, pharmacology, architect, professor, or a politician. It would seem that Okinawans are likely to achieve professional status by dint of hard work, and that human resources among the migrants community are relatively rich (Ishikawa, 2004).

Okinawans in Brazil call themselves *kenjin* (migrants coming from own prefecture) whereas they refer to other Japanese migrants by the term *kengaijin* (coming from a different prefecture). The distinction would occasionally be suppressed, however, when Okinawan *issei* saw an advantage in adopting a Japanese identity, and the associated reputation for being hard working and efficient, to improve their prospects (Tomohara, 1994). Similarly, Japanese migrants having a mainland background tend to view migrants coming from Okinawa as a separate group.

The common perspective, therefore, is that there is clear distinction between Okinawans and Japanese among the Nikkeijin community in Brazil, although the division may be imperceptible to the rest of Brazilians, and indeed Okinawans sometimes play down the separation. Lesser mentions the case of two politicians, children of Okinawan migrants, being asked during research in 1996 about their perceived identities. Despite the ideological differences of the two, both took advantage of the image of being essentially Japanese. When the question was whether they felt Okinawan-Brazilian or Japanese-Brazilian, each then asserted a

strong sense of difference from Japanese mainland migrants. Both considered themselves unequivocally Okinawan-Brazilian (Lesser, 2002:52).

Intermarriage in Brazil

Intermarriage between migrants or subsequent generations and the host population is widely considered a barometer of assimilation and integration. One of my informants said that it was her impression gained from stories that, in the early years of migration to Brazil, marriage occurred only within the Nikkeijin community. An explanation for this could be that the *issei* would not speak the local language and made contact only with other Japanese. In contrast, the *nisei* would attend local schools and mix with pupils and students of different racial backgrounds. When a *nisei* wished to wed a Brazilian, the couple might elope if their families were against the marriage. My informant, who was a *sansei* female, mentioned the case of an aunt who was accepted by her grandfather only after a son was born. Lesser informs that a census conducted in the late 1950s showed that exogamy was rare: the rate between 1908 and 1942 was less than two per cent among immigrants from all countries, and less than six per cent among Nikkei (Lesser, 2002:40). Carvalho suggests that, in the 1950s and early 1960s, there was a slight increased in the rate of intermarriage as a result of a general move to the cities, though the process tended to follow the Japanese tradition of *omiai* (arranged marriages). A few *nisei* and *sansei* consider intermarriage as no great issue since they have never dated a Japanese or Japanese descendant. However, other *nisei* of different ages admitted to feeling more comfortable with someone from the same background as their own in a relationship. The rate of intermarriage in 1979 was approximately twenty-five per cent of all

marriages while a survey in 1988 put marriage with a non-Nikkeijin at a little under a half. (Carvalho, 2003:43).

4. Peru

Japanese migrants first arrived in Peru in the April of 1899 when 790 single male labourers, indentured to sugar plantations, embarked at the port of Callao. A second group followed in 1903; again the migrants were indentured labourers but this time their number, 983, including married men. Three years later, a third group arrived. By 1923, when indentured migration was abolished, seventy-nine ships had delivered approximately 18,000 migrants.

On arriving at the plantations, the early migrants found a basic working environment. They soon began to search for higher paying jobs and exchanged information about better workplace conditions. Many moved to urban areas and became, for example, street vendors or barbers – by 1907, there were twenty-five barber shops run by Japanese migrants in Lima, and an association was formed (Araki, 2002:78).

The number of Japanese migrants having arrived in Peru by 1941 is put at about 32,000. With the outbreak of the Second World War, the concentrations of Japanese migrant settlers were perceived as a threat to Peru and demonstrations were held in 1940 to expel them. Some had their property confiscated while others were exiled to North America. After the war, the occupational structure of migrants expanded away from the commercial sector into the agricultural, the industrial, and – for the *nisei* and *sansei* living around Lima – the professional sectors (OKKI, 1974).

Okinawan migrants to Peru

Okinawans did not begin to arrive until 1906, when thirty-six travelled into the Lima hinterland as contracted labourers to work in cotton fields. For a while, numbers increased every year, mostly to supply sugar plantations. On completing their contractual obligations, Okinawans moved into urban suburbs. The *fazenda* (large scale farm) system meant that they were unlikely to becomes farmers or growers themselves.

A piece of research conducted during 1960 in Peru to ascertain the employment structure of migrants from Nishimura village in Okinawa Prefecture found that almost all the survey population worked in the commercial and service sectors, involved in enterprises which might include a restaurant, grocery shop, coffee shop, bakery, fruit shop, a barber's, or poultry or pig farming – some twenty-two kinds of occupation in all. Similarly, during a 1979 study, Okinawan *issei* migrants were found to be engaged in the service industry such as retail or the wholesale trade, although also in small family businesses.

According to Okinawa prefecture statistics, from 1906 to 1938 the number of Okinawan migrants travelling to Peru was recorded as 11,588. Between 1948 and 1970 the number was a mere 733 individuals. Among the *nisei*, there were the *kirai nisei*, equivalent to the *kia nisei* in Argentina. They were born in Peru but were sent to be educated in Okinawa. The *kirai nisei* tended to follow the occupation of their parents, whereas Peruvian educated *nisei* might be engaged in professions (Ishikawa, 1997). Many *kirai nisei* are said to have experienced difficulties in adapting to the

customs and culture of Peru on their return. Nonetheless, some of them played a significant bridging role between Peru and Japan by having first-hand knowledge of two cultures (Horie and Yanagida, 1997).

An official census conducted in 1989, which categorized the majority of households of the Nikkei community domicile in Peru as middle class, provided a breakdown of the population in terms of generations. The proportions were: first generation, 5%; second, 35%; third, 47%; fourth, 13%; fifth, insignificant. (Miasato, 2002:190).

Identity within the generations

From the first years of the Republic (independence from Spain was proclaimed in 1821) until the 1930s, attempts to attract migrants into the country was an objective of every Peruvian government. English, French, German, Italian, Chinese, Japanese and Arab migrants joined the Spanish and African populations of colonial rule, these previously having added to the indigenous Amerindian stock. Araki describes Peru as a complex country in terms of society, culture, race and class, and sees that its multicultural contradictions offer very different possibilities for access to power, wealth, and status (Araki, 2002).

The *nisei* generation of Japanese migrants became involved in academic and cultural issues, developing a desire for greater participation in national life and, above all, in the political arena. Particularly after the Second World War, the later generations have established careers in a variety of fields such as the political, economic, professional, academic, social, cultural, and in sports activities. Horie and Yanagida

note that the post-war generations began to form their own associations and take over important roles, at the same time maintaining themselves as persons of Japanese origin. The resulting balance between the two identities enriched them collectively, producing a number of professionals and politicians, one of whom became the president of Peru – Albert Fujimori, incumbent 1990-2000. His election symbolized a recognition of the increasing importance and value of the Nikkei population. Significantly, Fujimori's rise was accomplished outside the nucleus of community. For a campaign theme, he used 'Technology, honesty and work'. Part of the electorate saw in this Nikkei such commonalities as coming from humble origins, being the child of immigrants, and having a strong work ethic. Others associated him with a highly technical Asian country having made great economic achievements.

Peruvian or not?

A survey conducted in 1989 by Morimoto shows that the self-image of the Nikkei in Peru has, on the whole, a positive complexion embracing such qualities as being studious, hard-working, disciplined, respectable, serious, and of setting a good example. To these may also be added the following perceived attributes: dynamic, optimistic, self-sacrificing, altruistic, generous, kind, sincere, and honest. Other possible elements are the ability to overcome obstacles and achieve goals (Morimoto, 2002:145). It was noted that the Nikkei recognize their unity, homogeneity, solidarity and integration into the host country together with their preservation of ancestral values, traditions and culture, although the more open and liberal *nisei* and *sansei* have an enthusiastic and progressive approach as regards the future of Peru, which has shifted the balance.

Another study, by Ropp, suggests that Peruvian social identity consists of fluid forms of affiliation and identification. Therefore, a Nikkei identity in Peru is pragmatic in appealing to a social network in order to gain opportunities in obtaining work, accessing school, and in finding general security.

Ropp regards the Nikkeijin community in Peru as a pyramid structure based on vertical and hierarchical relationships. One third of the Nikkeijin population is affiliated with organizations such as the *kenjinkai* (prefectural associations). It is relatively easy to participate in and become an active member of the Nikkeijin community, and a wide range of people are involved. As Ropp notes, a definition of 'who is Peruvian' becomes extremely difficult. Ropp agrees that a distinction is made between Okinawans (*kenjin*) and non-Okinawans (*kengaijin*) and confirms that the term Uchinanchu is employed for self-reference by migrants and descendants from the prefecture of Okinawa while *naicha* is used for speaking of those from mainland Japan (Ropp, 2002).

In the same manner, Higa remarks that, within immigrant communities, there has always been a clear distinction, both institutional and individual, between Okinawans and non-Okinawans, which although attenuated, lasts through generations in the different countries where they have settled (Higa, 2002:273). It would not be so strange, then, were the dichotomous relationship between Uchinanchu and *naicha* to be seen to be reproduced in Japan via the South American return migration experience.

Intermarriage in Peru

Within the Peruvian Nikkei community, younger generations show a trend towards intermarriage. The official census of 1989 reported that one-third of all marriages involved a spouse of part-Nikkei ancestry or a non-Nikkei person.

Miasato studied intermarriage through the lens of gender. She says that many *nisei* women thought about intermarriage but they ended up marrying a Nikkei since they were not used to associating with other groups. *Sansei* women preferred marriage to Nikkei men but they felt physically more attracted to non-Nikkei men because these were considered to be more joyful and dynamic. Also, Nikkei men could be very conscious of rejection. The author concluded that *sansei* women were not afraid of establishing a family with other races; it was not a subject of shame, and they thought non-Nikkei men would understand women's personal aspirations better than Nikkei men, whom they considered male chauvinists (Miasato, 2002:193-196).

Concluding remarks

Early migrants travelled from Japan to South America for *dekasegi*, to find work and fulfil the dream of returning with wealth. However, the reality was harsh working conditions and difficulty in obtaining their own land for cultivation. In consequence, the majority of them moved to the commercial and service sectors. Despite the many initial hardships, most Japanese migrants to South America settled down and were able to establish themselves within the middle-class social strata of their host societies.

Migrant social identity differs according to time and place. For example, there are some differences between *kyu issei* and *shin issei* ('old' and 'new', as determined by the watershed of the Second World War). A generational approach shows distinction between the *issei* and *nisei*. The *issei* migrants felt a strong sentiment toward Japan, and assumed a minority ethnicity status, whereas the *nisei* show complex identities in a process of transition. For the *nisei*, within the home and community they use the Japanese language and attach Japanese culture, while in their outside life the degree of assimilation is directly related to the level of contact with the culture of the host society. In Brazil, the positive image of being Japanese, established by migrants themselves and fostered by Japan's economic success, has played an important part in identity formation among the *nisei*. In Peru, Japanese migrant identity is more pragmatically shaped by the hierarchical structure of migrant networks. Yet in both Argentina and Bolivia, further distinctions of attitude can be observed, with the *nisei* presenting a national identity rather than a Japanese one.

Among the Japanese migrants, Okinawans have formed several organizations for mutual aid and for preserving Okinawan culture in the process of their settlement. In the case of planned migration to Bolivia encouraged by the US and Ryukyu governments from 1954, the role of associations such as *Uruma Ijuu Kumiai* (Uruma [Bolivia] Immigration Union) made an important contribution in the reception of migrants from Okinawa. Likewise, *Okinawa Sangyo Kaihatsu Seinentai* (Development of Okinawan Youth Association) in Brazil, which was organized by members of *Zaihaku Okinawa Kyokai* (Okinawa Brazilian Association), played a mediating role. Okinawan migrants used loans arranged through credit unions to start

up businesses. These businesses constituted a chain within the community from producing to distributing and selling – for example: food processing, poultry and dairy farming, wholesale, and running retailing outlets such as grocery shops, restaurants, and supermarkets (Ishikawa, 2001:73-75).

For Okinawan migrants and their families in South America, identity has always been multi-dimensional. The *issei* retain an Okinawan distinctiveness among themselves, a form which is diversified among the younger generation as they absorb elements of the host culture. At the same time, a Japanese identity is assumed as the occasion demands. The *nisei* and subsequent generations engage with the local *amigo* culture. Although surrounded by Okinawan dialect and ways, their language is Spanish or Portuguese, and their education prepares them for the systems of the host country. In Argentina, the Okinawan *nisei* prefer to speak Spanish rather than speaking Uchinaguchi in order to avoid being grouped non-Japanese by other Japanese migrants. This suggests that the *nisei* identity presents a complexity beyond the Uchinanchu identity of the *issei.*

While intermarriage between subsequent generations of Nikkeijin and non-Nikkejin in Brazil and Peru would seem to be increasing, a similar tendency could not be found among Okinawan migrants. The study of Okinawan diaspora in Bolivia by Suzuki (2010) proposes that the vast majority of second generation Okinawan Nikkeijin had married other Okinawan second generation, a choice strongly preferred by their parents, whose views on intermarriage presents their 'wishes and desires about the developing form and character of ethnic identity in their lives' (Kibria,

2002:159; quoted in Suzuki, 2010:158). In the case of Colonial Okinawa in Bolivia, Okinawan ethnicity is firmly confirmed by the rejection of intermarriage.

Moreover, Okinawans may identify themselves as a distinct subculture by which language, art and culture can reinforce new linkages to the home prefecture, as well as the re-identification with Okinawa. Mutual aid and solidarity among Okinawans is also presented in the close links between Okinawa prefecture and the host countries maintained through the activities of *Okinawa Kenjinkai Kyoukai* (Okinawa Prefecture Association). On Okinawa itself, articles concerning the lives of emigrants from the island have appeared in the newspaper *Ryukyu Shinpo* regularly since the 1980s. In each village and town, the local history books take up the stories of migrants. From the 1990s, events such as the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, and business networks have served to activate the link between host countries and Okinawa prefecture. These phenomena affect the identity formation of Okinawan migrants and their descendants.

Chapter Two – Notes

1. In the case of Okinawan migrants there is a family which has 131 members ranging from *issei* to *gosei* – five generations. Mr Kinjo emigrated to Brazil in 1908 and there married an Okinawan woman (Okinawa Times:July 31, 2004).

2. Kyuzo Toyama, sometimes called the 'father' of Okinawan emigration. Born in 1868 in the town of Kin, he became a teacher at an elementary school. Toyama believed that a way to alleviate poverty on the island was to approve emigration. His suggestion was at first dismissed on the grounds that Okinawans might bring shame on the Japanese nation if relocated overseas. Subsequently, he was allowed to organize the first departure, on 5th December 1899, from Naha bound for Hawaii (Kin town information, 2002).

3. *Monchu*: paternal lineage group associated with the family grave. There is a *mon* (gate) in front of the grave and members of the family gather to hold a service for ancestors on the occasion of the spring festival (Okinawa Bunka Jiten, 2004).

4. The Okinawan dialect Uchinaguchi (sometimes referred to as the Ryukyu language) gradually split from Japanese about fifteen hundred years ago. One major phonetic difference between the two is that Uchinaguchi has only three vowels (a, i, u) whereas Japanese has five (a, i, u, e, o). Uchinaguchi retains elements of an earlier Japanese, an example being the p and f sounds which today are h in Japanese: *hana* (flower) is pronounced *pana* or *fana* in Uchinaguchi. In practice, Uchinaguchi and Japanese are mutually incomprehensible (Nakasone, 2002, ix).

5. *Kia* is an abbreviation based on Japanese characters representing a return from Argentina.

Chapter Three

Nikkeijin in Japan

Introduction

Japan did not accept unskilled labourers from abroad after the Second World War until the boom economy of the 1980s created a demand. Since the mid-1980s, it has been a familiar scene to see people from various other countries in Japan. At the time, I lived in Tokyo and noticed there were many foreigners wandering about in the Shinjuku station. My work was in publishing: on one occasion I talked to the director of a bookbindery and was to learn that his company employed illegal foreign workers from Iran. At another binding company, the situation was similar; here, workers from Pakistan were used. In the late 1980s, books on economic immigration began to be published and the media had taken up the issue surrounding foreign workers from Asia, and economic migrants from South America who themselves were descended from Japanese migrants.

The return movement of Japanese descendants from South America to Japan became apparent from the mid-1980s. Economic crises hitting Brazil in the 1970s and 1980s caused serious financial difficulties there. Hyperinflation and unemployment primarily threatened the urban employed class. By the mid-1980s, many Brazilians had come to view emigration as a route to economic survival (Mori, 2002). Japanese descendants travelled to Japan in the search for a better life. At first, mainly *issei*

(first generation) males made the journey, with the intention of working for a limited period before returning to their home country. This strategy became known as *dekasegi*, and it soon spread to other South American countries. In the case of Peru, the 1990s saw acts of terrorism and numerous cases of government corruption added to economic uncertainty. Those years marked the beginning for Peruvians of migration to other countries, including that of the Nikkeijin to Japan (Araki, 2002). The most recent estimate, at the time of field research, of Nikkeijin from South America living in Japan numbered them at approximately 350,000. They were from Brazil (270,000), Peru (51,000), Bolivia (4,500), Argentina (3,300), and from Colombia and Paraguay (Ministry of Justice, 2003).

This chapter consists of three broad sections and acts as an introductory description for the following three chapters which refer to how Nikkeijin make their lives in different regions in Japan. I begin by presenting the discourse of Nikkeijin in an historical context. To consider how migrants were regarded by government in the past is useful in contextualizing the status of Nikkeijin at the present day. Secondly, several phases of return movement to Japan by Nikkeijin will be traced from the 1980s to recent years. The progression from the *dekasegi* phenomenon to a more permanent settlement in a geographical perspective allows a differentiation between Nikkeijin and other foreign workers in Japan. Referring to Japanese governmental policy, I will consider the activity and attitude towards Nikkeijin at the local level. In the final section I describe the situation of Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent living in Japan.

3.1 The discourse of Nikkeijin

The term Nikkeijin has connotations shaped by cultural, historical and political constructions, which in turn are influenced by a range of micro and macro conditions both in the host countries and in Japan. The term became current in Japan when travellers from South America began to arrive in Japan as economic migrants in the 1980s, and in particular, the phase *nanbei* Nikkeijin (Nikkeijin from South America) is familiar among Japanese society. This section relates how the social meaning of Nikkeijin has been constructed in the historical transition of Japanese migration. In this text, Brazil and Argentina will assume representation of the host countries because, among South American countries, Brazil has the greatest number of Japanese migrants and Argentina has the largest proportion of Okinawan descendants.

Defining Nikkeijin

A general translation of Nikkeijin into English is 'person or people of Japanese lineage' (distinction between singular and plural in Japanese nouns is contextual). In its most widely accepted usage, the term refers to someone of Japanese origin, parentage, or descent who lives in another country as a migrant, or as a member of a subsequent generation of a migrant family (Maeyama, 1996:27).

In its Japanese etymology, *ni* comes from *Nippon* (Japan) and *kei* from *keitou* (meaning from the same lineage). *Jin* is derived from *hito* (human being or people). Nowadays, the word's usage applies to any Japanese living abroad, not only migrants but also businessmen and women, and Japanese people who reside overseas on

behalf of their employers. Further identification is obtained by reference to the host country: for instance, there are Nikkei *Amerikajin* (Japanese American), Nikkei *Burajirujin* (Japanese Brazilian), Nikkei *Argentinjin* (Japanese Argentinian), Nikkei *Boliviajin* (Japanese Bolivian), and Nikkei *Perujin* (Japanese Peruvian). Enterprises abroad that have Japanese owners are called Nikkei *kigyo* (Japanese enterprise or company).

Self-definition of Japanese migrants in host countries

Early Japanese migrants to Brazil variously called themselves *zairyumin* (residents), *hojin* (Japanese who live abroad), or *zaihaku hojin* (Japanese migrants living in Brazil – *haku* represents Brazil in Japanese). They thought of themselves as sojourners and carried the dream of becoming wealthy before eventually returning to Japan. Some formed the *Zaihaku Hojin Shakai* (the compatriot Japanese residents' community in Brazil). In time, *issei* (first generation) Japanese migrants undertaking *dekasegi* (temporary work) identified themselves as *hojin*. (LAK, 1967:14-17; cited in OKKI, 1974:4). A Japanese dictionary gives two meanings to the term *hojin*: one is a person who belongs to his or her own country, the other (as mentioned above) is a Japanese who is travelling abroad or who resides abroad.

In the 1930s many Japanese associations in Brazil were formed by migrants themselves such as *kenjinkai* (prefectural associations), *dougyo kumiai* (professional co-operative), *seinendan* (youth associations for males) and *shojokai* (youth associations for females). Okinawan migrants formed their own distinctive *Brazil Okinawa Kyokai* (Brazil Okinawan Association).

On the whole, the Japanese community appeared to be peaceful although there was some bitter rivalry between two groups surrounding the outcome of the Second World War[1]. By the 1950s, Japanese migrants identified themselves as *zaihaku doho* (fellow citizen residents of Brazil) or *zaihaku hojin*. The committee for the celebration of the 400th anniversary in 1954 of the foundation of the city of São Paulo city became perhaps the first organization to manifest this idea. In the following year, the *Nihon Bunka Kyokai* (Japanese Cultural Association) was established for the purpose of intensifying ties between Japanese and Brazilian culture. In the same year, an official survey on Japanese migrants was conducted in Brazil (Carvalho, 2003:29). Through each *kenjinkai* (prefectural association), the settlers could retain links with prefectures in Japan.

For the celebrations in 1958 to mark the 50th anniversary of the beginning of Japanese migration to Brazil, events were organized across the country and new associations were established. The *Burajuru Todofukenjinkai* (Brazilian Federation of Prefecture Associations) was formed in 1966. Post-war development saw the somewhat temporary *Zaihaku Hojin Shakai* (Brazilian Society of Japanese Nationals) become the more settled *Burajiru Nikkei Colonia* (Brazilian Nikkei Communities), its members defining themselves as Nikkei C*olono*. In Japan, a conference in 1957 under the name *Kaigai Nikkeijin Shinboku Taikai* (Mutual Co-operation between Japanese Migrants Abroad and Japan) was a first step towards the formation of the quasi-governmental *Kaigai Nikkeijin Kyokai* (Association of Overseas Nikkeijin), an organization established in order to enhance mutual relations between Nikkeijin in the host countries and Japan.

During the 1970s, the Prince and Princess of Japan (the present Emperor and Empress) visited Brazil and the event brought significant meaning to *issei* migrants. The decade also saw Japanese migrants become the subject of media interest during the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the beginning of their migration (Carvalho, 2003:29). By the late 1980s, economic difficulties in Brazil and the shortage of labour in Japan were the start of return migration to Japan.

From Nikkei *colono* to Nikkeijin

Not only in Brazil but also in Argentina, the defeat of Japan at the end of the Second World War triggered a sense of abandonment. Japanese migrants believed there was no way back to Japan. Onaha (1998), of Okinawan descent, suggests that when Japanese migrants decided to reside permanently in Argentina, they became Nikkeijin. They may call themselves Nikkeis (the term 'Nikkei' in this usage potentially encompasses the notion of part-Japanese descent) but there is no real difference between the two terms.

It has been widely agreed that the immigration policy of the Japanese government added further support to the definition of Nikkeijin within Japanese society. In some South American cases, the Nikkei category was intensified by the legislation of the 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act in Japan as it embraced other categories, such as the spouse of someone Japanese. This is because the family names of Nikkeijin and familial links with Japan are important factors in the determination of who has the opportunity to work legally in Japan (Higa, 2002:264).

Maeyama (1996) observes that in the case of Brazil, the term Nikkeijin is used for *nisei* (second generation, born in Brazil) and for subsequent generations but the first generation (*issei*) do not necessarily use it to refer to themselves. However, the broader meaning of Nikkeijin is accepted as including the first generation, both in host countries and in Japan. The *Kaigai Nikkeijin Kyokai* (Association of Overseas Nikkeijin) defines Nikkejin as *issei* migrants and subsequent generations which may be the result of intermarriages. Thus, the term Nikkeijin emphasizes the Japanese lineage of those Japanese living abroad and of their descendants.

3.2 Nikkeijin in Japan from the 1980s

The discourse of *dekasegi*

The initial stage of the Japanese return migratory movement from South America is called *dekasegi* Nikkeijin in Japanese. The original meaning of *dekasegi* in Japanese is movement for economic purposes made within a country. For instance, agricultural workers from northern regions of Japan or people from the islands of Okinawa and Hokkaido may temporarily transfer to the mainland of Japan during the agricultural off-season to work in the manufacturing sector or in the food processing industry. These are *dekasegi* people moving within Japan. The meaning has been extended to apply to Nikkeijin from Brazil or other South American countries travelling to Japan in the hope of accumulating some wealth. They cross national borders and oceans.

The 'extended' *dekasegi* movement was started in the early 1980s mainly by *shin issei* post-war 'newcomer' males from Brazil, who retained their Japanese nationality. For them *dekasegi* meant a temporary life in Japan and at the time this

did not appear as a social phenomenon, it being essentially an 'invisible movement' because the travellers, as Japanese citizens, did not show up in official statistics. One reason for the travellers' predisposition to 'invisibility', or at least conducting little self advertisement, was that *dekasegi* carried a sort of pejorative meaning in Japanese society, and could suggested a failure to make a life in the host country. The notion was so powerful that returnees sometimes did not want to appear in public or even to see their relatives in Japan. Within the community of Nikkeijin in Brazil, *dekasegi* travellers were said to belong to the lower strata (Kajita, 1999:2-3).

In the process of passing from *issei* (the first generation) to *nisei* (the second generation) became more visible as individuals came and went between Brazil and Japan. At first, almost all *issei* returned to Brazil with money which allowed them to start a business or buy a house, or to invest in other assets. They were fluent in the Japanese language and presented a Japanese culture when in Brazil. Playing a certain role at the beginning of the *dekasegi* movement, they acted as mediators, involved with recruitment agencies and brokers in Japan and Brazil. Their experience of *dekasegi* in Japan encouraged the younger generation to see the ancestral land.

During the 1990s, *dekasegi* Nikkeijin consisted mainly of *nisei* (second generation). The change in pattern from *issei* to *nisei* was characterized by a shift from single male to male and his family, and to *sansei* (third generation) married couples with their children, the couples sometimes being of mixed racial background. The age range widened, too.

By about 1995, two groups of migrants could be identified among Brazilian *dekasegi* migrants. One repeated the journeys between Japan and Brazil; the other chose to stay longer in Japan. The reason for the latter lay in the economic situation: money earned in Japan was economically devalued in Brazil, and wages in Japan were decreasing. In addition, the first generation was growing too old for *dekasegi*, and business start-ups were not so successful in Brazil. There was also a rise in the number of third generation singles seeking experience of working in Japan (Kajita, 1999:6).

A characteristic of the Nikkeijin, especially *nisei,* in their attitude toward jobs was to move from company to company in the quest for higher wages. This attitude is not common within the Japanese working system, but companies had to accept it. *Sansei* and *yonsei* (third and fourth generation) are usually in their late teens or early twenties and, as Mori remarks, pursue a consumer lifestyle in that they spend their earnings on socializing and buying consumer goods rather than saving and sending remittances. They are called 'people who enjoy *dekasegi'* (Mori, 2002:242).

Although the Nikkeijin are assured a long-term residency under the 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act, the pattern of settlement shows a different and perhaps less stable style, depending on the situation of the individual. Over twenty years the generational profile of *dekasegi* Nikkeijin has changed from *issei* to *sansei*.

Mori, investigating *dekasegi* movements from Brazil, suggests three phases. The first phase took place between 1985 and 1989 and was typified by single men of the older

first generation or younger second generation men who had relatives. Most of these were engaged in the construction and manufacturing industries. The second phase was from 1990 to 1995, when migrants were often single males and females in the age range eighteen to sixty years old, with fixed periods of stay of one or two years. They were engaged in the service sectors in hotels, health care, and such jobs as the commercial preparation of lunch boxes and caddying on golf courses. This period represents the boom of the *dekasegi* period. The third phase was from 1996 onwards. Migrants were more as couples aged from eighteen to forty, typically a family unit with children of school age, with both parents working. Some of the spouses were not of Japanese ancestry. During this phase, almost all manufacturing companies reduced overtime and wages. Some families decided to return to Brazil and then travel again to Japan for their children's education (Mori, 2002:242).

With regards to the socio-cultural background of *dekasegi* Nikkeijin in Japan, about forty per cent had graduated from universities, and most held white-collar jobs in Brazil (Japan International Co-operation Agency, 1992; cited in Ishii, 2003). Coming from a host country where they occupy predominantly an urban middle class status, some Nikkeijin would need to adjust to the different social environment of Japan, especially in the light of their engagement in unskilled employment.

3.3 Nikkeijin and foreign workers in Japan

The number of alien registrations in Japan shows a continual year-on-year increase since 1980. Aliens account for about one-and-a-half per cent of the total population of Japan in recent years. The majority of migrants originate from Asia, while a

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sizeable minority are from South America (see Table 3 below). In terms of prefectural concentration, the prime destination is Tokyo (accommodating about one fifth) while Osaka, Aichi, Kanagawa and Hyogo prefectures follow.

Many Japanese researchers conventionally apply the term 'oldcomers' to Koreans and Chinese introduced as forced labour during the period of Japanese imperialism, and refer to foreign workers who entered during the 1980s onward, whether illegally or legally, as 'newcomers'.

Country of Origin	1991	1994	1997	2000	2006
Korea	693,050	676,793	645,373	635,269	598,219
%	56.9	50.0	43.5	37.7	28.7
China	171,071	218,585	252,164	335,575	560,741
%	14.0	16.1	17.0	19.9	26.9
Brazil	119,333	159,619	233,254	254,394	312,979
%	9.8	11.8	15.7	15.1	15.0
Philippines	61,837	85,968	93,265	144,871	193,488
%	5.1	6.4	6.3	8.6	9.3
Peru	26,281	35,382	40,394	46,171	58,721
%	2.1	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.8
USA	42,498	43,320	43,690	44,856	51,321
%	3.5	3.2	3.0	2.6	2.5
Other	104,821	134,344	174,567	225,308	309,450
%	8.6	9.9	11.8	13.4	14.8
Total	**1,218,891**	**1,354,011**	**1,482,707**	**1,686,444**	**2,084,919**

Table 3: Foreigners registered in Japan by nationality.
Source: Ministry of Justice, 2007.

'Oldcomers'

Following Japan's annexation of the Korean peninsula in 1910, a number of forced labourers from the new territory were transferred to the Japanese mainland's heavy industrial sectors, such as mining and steel production. In 1920, some 3,000 Koreans entered Japan by this means, and the flow increased substantially to reach a total number of around 30,000 by 1930. By the outbreak of the Second World War, transfers had increased a further tenfold, to number in total 300,000 by 1940. Many of the workers were peasants from the agriculture sector. Most were eventually to be incorporated into the bottom-most strata of Japanese society as *zainichi* Koreans. The majority lived in Kita-Kyushu and Fukuoka (in the South of Japan) where they worked in the mining industry, and some in Osaka, Tokyo and Yokohama. Subsequent to the Kantou earthquake of 1923, the *zainichi* Koreans were moved into the west of Japan where, for the most part, they were engaged as manual and cheap labour, working in construction, manufacturing, metal-working, and the chemical industries in small enterprises, these often sub-contracted companies. Thus, before the Second World War, Koreans were used as manual labourers in Japan in response to the increasing needs of the Japanese pre-war economy (Nakao, 1997:9-12).

After the Second World War, the Japanese government reversed its attitude to foreign workers filling the demands for manual labour. This is in contrast to the European and North America position where large numbers of foreign workers were encouraged in order to fulfil the demands for manual labour within rapidly growing economies. In the late 1960s, the government started reviewing the subject of foreign workers. The move was precipitated by the flow of trainees into Japan during the late

1960s and the early 1970s. Because of a labour shortage during the Okinawa Marine Exhibition of 1976, a small number of manual workers from Taiwan were introduced on short-term contracts (Kajita, 1996:15).

'Newcomers'

Japan's post-war immigration flow may itself be divided into three phases. The first phase runs from the end of 1970s into the earlier half of the 1980s; the second traces a period from the latter half of the 1980s to the beginning of 1990s; the third phase reflects the stagnation which followed the collapse of the bubble economy in 1995 (Kajita, 1996:26). In the early 1980s, a large-scale influx of women from Southeast Asia into the sex and entertainment industries took place. The late 1980s saw men, also from South-east Asia, begin to appear, arriving to work as manual labourers mainly in the manufacturing and construction industries (Komai, 1995:2). Students at Japanese language schools also joined the ranks of foreign workers by engaging in the service industries such as restaurants and fast food industries. The phenomenon was accelerated by the introduction of the trainee system. At about the same time, Nikkeijin from South America, mainly from Brazil and Peru, began to enter Japan.

Categories of foreign workers

Excepting for professionals, foreign workers in Japan can be categorized as follows.

    1. people who enter the country illegally or with false passports;

    2. people who are pre-college students;

    3. people who come into the country with short-term visas and then stay

    on beyond the expiration dates;

4. people who are engaged in unauthorized labour as 'trainees' employed in activities which fall outside the activities for which they were granted their visa;

5. people who are under the work training programme scheme inaugurated in April 1993;

6. people of Japanese descent from South America and their spouses, who have been given the legal right to work – that is, Nikkeijin.

The framework of the trainee system and *shugakusei*

In order to find a resolution of Japan's labour shortage of the 1980s, the 'trainee system' represented a break in the traditional barriers. The use of 'trainee' assumes workers who are not unskilled, but there were nonetheless many situations where the category of trainee was applied unlawfully to guarantee a supply of cheap labour. There have been some cases where companies never carried out the academic courses or lectures they promised Immigration Bureau officials they would provide. In other cases trainees were sent directly on to assembly lines, without any comprehensive instruction (Komai, 1995: 38).

The classification of *shugakusei*, students of language and technical schools, has provided a convenient vehicle for the introduction of foreign workers. Before the 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act, there were no clear rules governing this category. *Shugakusei* status is given to people who come to study in a variety of schools other than the institutions of higher education specified in the school education legislation, or in vocational and other special schools.

Most foreign workers engage in the construction industry, the service and the manufacturing sectors. Another characteristic of the manufacturing sector is its hierarchical nature of contractors and various ranks of subcontractors. Many sub-contractors are small and medium-sized firms, in which the working conditions are poor and can lead to a higher rate of accidents. The demands for workers in these types of businesses, for which the labour shortage of the 1980s was particularly acute, have been filled by Nikkeijin from South America.

According to a report on foreign workers employment in 2000, the occupations of Nikkeijin are almost wholly in manufacturing (78.4%), the service sector (13.2%), and the retail sector (7.3%) (Enari, 2002). Workers are usually employed indirectly through agencies. Their contracts are relatively short, for three months. This period represents a limit beyond which insurance contributions must apply.

Perhaps the most important element for labour importation is the policy, under the 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act, of admitting workers according to a principle based essentially on bloodline.

3.4 Changing the status by law

The impact of the 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act

The 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act introduced a new category of *teijusha*, or long-term resident, one who could obtain an indefinitely renewable three-year visa as a *nisei* (second generation) Nikkeijin. A similar status also applied to spouses of *nisei,* and to *sansei* and their spouses.

Additionally, by the legislation:

> If a relative within the sixth degree of consanguinity in Japan, such as a
> grandnephew or a grandniece of the applicant's grandparents obtained a
> certificate of eligibility from the local immigration office in advance, the
> issuance of a visa was effectively guaranteed (Sellek, 1997:189).

Since this act was introduced, the number of Nikkeijin from South America has
increased dramatically (see Table 3). Data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
suggests there were 148,700 Nikkeijin working in Japan in June 1991, their
nationalities being Brazilian, Peruvian, Argentinian, Bolivian, and Paraguayan. The
figure had been 76,150 in 1990; that is to say their numbers roughly doubled in the
space of just one year (JICA, 1992:69; cited in Komai, 1995:4). Of the people from
Brazil, 79% were citizens of that country, 12% were Japanese citizens, and 9% held
dual citizenship. As regards the people having full Japanese parentage, 6.7% were
first generation who had migrated from Japan themselves, and 62.1% were second
generation, frequently the progeny of mixed marriages (JICA, 1992:72; cited in
Komai, 1995:80).

Initially, Nikkeijin represented the most popular category of foreign workers chosen
by employers to fulfill 3K jobs. That is, Nikkeijin were seen simply as one category
of foreign worker. In the 1990s many subcontracted companies invited foreign
workers, and especially from the Brazil Nikkeijin community. In the case of Oizumi
town, the association of local enterprise recruited Nikkei Brazilian directly (see
Chapter Four) as many employers preferred to hire people of Japanese ancestry.

To consider the reasons behind the government's Revision of the Immigration Control Act, Kajita proposes that two issues are to be understood: one is the matter of *zainichi* Koreans (third generation Koreans in Japan); and the other is the repatriation of the *chugoku zanryu koji to fujin* (Japanese children abandoned in Manchuria at the end of the Second World War – the phrase is abbreviated below to *zanryu koji*)[2]. At the end of the 1980s, the Japanese government was required to discuss with the South Korean government the matter of *zainichi* Korean *sansei* (third generation) who were born and grew up in Japan. The negotiations resulted in the abolishment of fingerprinting of *sansei* and the clarification of the criteria for permanent residence. The issue of *zanryu koji* was not addressed until 1972 when Japanese and Chinese diplomatic relations were normalized. Although there is no correlation between the issue of *zainichi* Koreans, the repatriation of *zanryu koji* and the issue of Nikkeijin, the idea of the policy-makers was that a special permanent visa status to *zainichi* Korean and the status of Nikkeijin should be treated equally. In short, the policy-makers relied on the idea of 'law of blood'. In March 1989, the Revision of Immigration Control Act (1981) was discussed in Cabinet and passed in the National Diet the following December (Kajita, 1999).

As indicated, the Revision provided for two types of visa to be issued, one for the spouse or child of a Japanese national or of a second generation Nikkeijin, the other for a third generation Nikkeijin. Usually the second and third generation would have no Japanese nationality, though they can stay in Japan for an initial period of between six months to three years, with even the possibility of permanent residence. The Japanese government regard these Nikkeijin as descendants wishing to visit their

ancestral homeland and to gain cultural experience. In order to help them, they are allowed to work during their stay in Japan. Above all, it can be said that the 1990 revised immigration controls were to favour Nikkeijin from South America in fulfilling a shortage of labour.

3.5 Settlement patterns of Nikkeijin

Sojourner to settler?

Kajita notes in his group research conducted in 1996 that the movement of Nikkeijin is typified as 'repeating between Japan and Brazil'. He also uses the term 'repeater' for Nikkeijin. The expression is applied during the early stage of return migration, perhaps until the decision is made to settle. Even then, some 'repeater' movement between Japan and the host country continues in the practice of *satogaeri* (visiting relatives on an annual basis) (Kajita, 1999). Therefore, it becomes difficult to define what denotes settlement. From my interviews of Nikkeijin during field research, I saw that there is a tendency for a family to settle in Japan if their family business is doing well. Nikkeijin working in the manufacturing sector as unskilled or semi-skilled workers will also tend to settle in Japan because of their children's education. Other factors are stability in terms of finance, and the perceived remoteness of economic and political stability in the host country.

The argument on what constitutes settlement remains difficult. Kajita draws attention to the repatriation of *zanryu koji*. It can be said that this group settled well in Japan although there have been some problems in the assimilation process. The intention of the policy-makers was for settlement of Nikkeijin to follow the pattern of that of the

zanryu koji. Yet there is a difference between the two: the transnational movement of the Nikkeijin is not the same as repatriation: this and return movement for economic advantage stand fundamentally apart. The degree of settlement by Nikkeijin is blurred. A pertinent question might be, how much of the movement can be said to be 'repeater'? Within a family, one member can return to the host country while one newly arrives in Japan. Also, Nikkeijin tend to move internally according to the demands of the labour market. It may be suggested that Nikkeijin settlement depends on the degree of financial and social stability in their life.

Forming a Nikkeijin community in Japan

The Nikkeijin tend to live in certain locations in which manufacturing companies and their subcontracted companies are situated in Japan. In the example of the town of Oizumi in Gunma prefecture, described in detail in Chapter Four, Nikkeijin form a place which assumes an ethnic quality. Brazilian schools for their children, supermarkets for Brazilian food, Brazilian restaurants, karaoke bars for Brazilians, clubs for dancing, shops selling shoes imported from Brazil, religious associations, second-hand shops – these are all run by Nikkeijin. The landscape of Oizumi has changed since the mid-1980s, with the main street becoming a scene of vivid colours and commercial signs written in Roman characters rather than in Japanese script.

3.6 Perception of Nikkeijin by Japanese society

National policy

The presence of Nikkeijin in Japan provides an additional socio-economic, cultural and ideological aspect to Japan. For foreigners, such as the *zainichi* Koreans and

Chinese, the Japanese government and policy-makers have produced clear social boundaries for a long time. Unless the applicants apply for naturalization, they cannot obtain citizenship. Japanese governmental policy on citizenship is based on 'the law of blood' or parental nationality. This concept is in contrast with 'the law of soil', which embodies the concept of nationhood (Sellek, 1997:202). If Japan had adopted the principle of the law of soil, then the majority of *zainichi* Koreans would have obtained Japanese citizenship. The Nikkeijin population, as descendants of Japanese migrants, have Japanese blood and biological lineage; therefore, the Japanese government secured their status, at least as unskilled labourers. The government welcomes the Nikkeijin in fulfilment of the labour shortage in the areas where younger people tend to avoid 3K jobs. For employers the flexible labour afforded by Nikkeijin is attractive, because employers regard them as Japanese descendants.

Local government level

Local authorities have tried out various kinds of activities for the Nikkeijin, and many meetings and conferences were held in areas having a relatively large Nikkeijin population to debate the various issues. Within the local governmental level there is much quantitative research conducted about the lives of the Nikkeijin, especially with respect to Nikkei Brazilians in such cities as Toyohashi, Yokohama and Hamamatsu. The mayors from thirteen localities[3] populated by Nikkeijin, met in Hamamatsu city in Shizuoka prefecture where they formulated the Hamamatsu Sengen (Hamamatsu Declaration) in October 2001 and sent a delegation to the Japanese government. They discussed four topics: c*hiiki kyosei* (mutual co-operation

between local people and foreigners); education; social security; and alien registration. I summarize the text of the declaration as follows (own translation).

Chiiki kyosei

The initiative is concerned with increasing cultural exchanges among all residents, and with providing security. It promotes a community in which everyone can participate in mutual respect and understanding of different value systems and cultures, where rights of both are respected and responsibilities are carried out.

Education

To help children of foreigners to learn the Japanese language, we need to find places for them in state primary and secondary schools. The problem of truancy becomes a serious issue in a regional society. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a support system for disaffected children. Special provision is required for teaching them Japanese. For this, financial support and legitimization of Japanese education has to be found.

Social security

With increasing numbers of foreigners who do not join national insurance schemes and cannot pay medical expenses, the aim is to facilitate a system of contributions from both employers and employees. The national health insurance, which is reserved only for Japanese nationals under some prefectural rules, and the national medical insurance scheme should be unified, or a special health plan for non-Japanese should be

established. The employers should cover insurance costs for their workers, and registration be made a condition for contract employment. In co-operation with various medical organizations, NPOs, NGOs, and other volunteer groups, a system should be considered by which non-Japanese residents can avail themselves of multilingual medical care and information with peace of mind. This applies to all levels: national, prefectural, and among related organizations.

Alien registration

In order to reduce the administrative gap between Japanese and non-Japanese, many documentation should be available in several languages. The regional authorities follow the recent IT movement and make online registration, proxy registration and immigration procedures possible. The non-Japanese should be allowed more flexible options, such as on-the-spot submissions at departure, and that immigration speed up its departure processing and notification procedures. With regard to their human rights, the information on welfare, education, and the procedure of taxation should be made more available. Further appropriate measures should be taken on laws concerning non-Japanese, with a view to making it easier for them to stay longer in Japan.

The term c*hiiki kyosei* contains a requirement for communication between Japanese and foreigners, and more specifically local people and Nikkeijin within a locality. An ideal situation might be a community in which everyone can participate in mutual

respect and understanding of different value systems and cultures; however, in practice the Nikkeijin cannot help feel a sense of exclusion by local people.

Education, especially in relation to children of Nikkeijin who possibly moved country while at school age or were born in Japan, becomes a significant issue in terms of how to adapt to Japanese society. As the declaration addresses, special provision is required for teaching them Japanese in state schools. Experience has found that truancy tends to be a serious problem among immigrant communities. With increasing numbers of foreigners who do not join national insurance schemes and cannot pay medical expenses, local government aims to facilitate a system of contributions from both employers and employees, although the intention is far from being realized.

Local residents level

Nikkeijin living in Japan do not differ in physical appearance from native Japanese, and they share a common lineage. Yet their cultural background is different and their social behaviour often distinguishes them from Japanese. Local residents encounter Nikkeijin in everyday life within the community, or as colleagues in the workplace. The characteristic of group-oriented activity in Japanese society manifests itself in neighbourhood practices, such as the way refuse collection is organized. In Japan, the local authority may require that domestic refuse be divided according to type. If Nikkeijin disregard the regulations, a dispute with local residents may result. I often heard mention of the matter in Oizumi.

3.7 Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent

As regard Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent, I observed some are living on the mainland of Japan running businesses such as convenience stores, coffee shops, or retail outlets in Oizumi town. Others are engaged in manufacturing industries. In the case of Tsurumi ward in Yokohama city, where an Okinawan community has formed, some Nikkeijin are engaging in manual work while a few run Brazilian restaurants or mixed menu establishments with fellow Okinawans. The organizational activities of *Tsurumi Okinawa Kenjinkai* (Tsurumi Okinawan Association) facilitate Okinawan cultural presentations such as holding a competition of Okinawan folk song. The reasons for settling in this region are not only the demand of labour market but also the factor of kinship ties with other Okinawan descendants.

Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent who returned to or have chosen to live in Okinawa tend to engage in the service or professional sectors rather than in unskilled labour. They do not form groups in the same way as Nikkeijin living on the mainland of Japan. Rather, they promote contact and ties between host country and the island. As members of the Uchinanchu diaspora, a conscious ethnicity strongly influences their everyday life. As far as I observed, there is a less distinctive social boundary between Okinawan people and Nikkeijin, who are categorized by the Okinawa authorities as *kikoku kenkeijin*. In Japanese, the character read as *kikoku* means 'return to one's country', *ken* represents prefecture, and *kei* means lineage as in the etymology of Nikkeijin. The abbreviated term *kenjin* is often used by Okinawan migrants and appears on their documentation in the host countries. If Okinawan migrants define themselves or make distinction against other Japanese migrants in Brazil, then they

use the term *kenjin* for Okinawan migrants and *kengaijin* for non-Okinawan migrants, the *gaijin* element meaning in the sense of people who are not from Okinawa prefecture. This distinction is sometimes heard in Japan.

Associations formed by Okinawan migrants who had experience of migration as *issei* or their subsequent generations have their own activities for promoting solidarity among the Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent and for maintaining relations with Okinawan migrants in the host countries. In particular, Okinawa's prefectural government and local authorities activate several events, notably the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival held usually every five years for Okinawan migrants. On this occasion, the Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent play a significant role as mediators between Okinawa island and the host countries.

Concluding remarks

The push and pull factor as described in the classical theory of migration applies to the transnational movement of Nikkeijin from South America. Japan's burgeoning economy of the 1980s 'pulled' foreign workers from Southeast Asia and South America. At the same time, high inflation, economic stagnation and political uncertainty in South American countries acted as a 'push' factor to descendants of Japanese migrants living there, who are the Nikkeijin. Demand for labour in the 3K sectors in Japan engendered this movement and the 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act endorsed it. The Japanese government encouraged Nikkeijin to come, see their relatives, and have the experience of Japanese culture. During their stay in Japan, they are allowed to work. Nikkeijin, categorized as

teijusha (long-term residents), are granted visa status for up to an initial three years without the demonstration of any skills for working. This legislation accelerated the flow of Nikkeijin from South America.

At the beginning of the transnational movement almost all Nikkeijin from South America to Japan expected to return to the host country within a relatively short time. Yet some of them stay longer or decide to settle down in Japan while others repeat the journey between Japan and their original country. A number of local authorities have collectively attempted to tackle several issues arising between Nikkeijin and local people and to formulate an assimilation policy at local level under the slogan *chiiki kyosei* (mutual co-operation between local people and foreigners).

Nikkeijin of Okinawan extraction who choose to live in Okinawa seem to settle down there as Uchinanchu (Okinawan people). It might be said that a social boundary between the Nikkeijin and indigenous Okinawans is not apparent although the Nikkeijin individual may have complex feelings regarding identity. Even the term Nikkeijin seems not to have currency in Okinawa, the phrase *kikoku kenkeijin* (returnee prefecture people) being used in official documentation. Nikkeijin in Okinawa use their cultural background from the host countries as an advantage in order to access work, which is often of a professional kind. On the whole, they are content. Perhaps they feel they have returned to their home country: Okinawa.

Chapter Three – Notes

1. The Second World War created an enclave of Japanese migrants. Among them were formed two groups: the *kachigumi* (victory faction) believed firmly that Japan would win the war; the *makegumi* (defeat faction) took the opposite view. So intense was the difference in feelings that some leaders of the *makegumi* were killed by radical members of the *kachigumi* (Amemiya, 1998; also Carvalho, 2003:21; Wakatsuki and Suzuki, 1975:94,).

2. It is believed that after the war about 10,000 Japanese children were abandoned in the north-east of China and Chinese foster parents adopted almost all. In the 1980s, the Japanese government decided on their repatriation and started to look for relatives to confirm their status (Kodansha Encyclopaedia of Japan, 2003).

3. These were Hamamatsu and Iwata in Shizuoka Prefecture; Ougaki, Kaji and Kosai in Gifu Prefecture; Toyohashi and Toyota in Aichi Prefecture; Yokkaichi, Suzuoka and Minogamo in Mie Prefecture; Ota and Oizumi in Gunma Prefecture; Iida in Nagano Prefecture (Hamamatsu Sengen, 2001).

Chapter Four

Nikkeijin in Oizumi

Introduction

In this chapter I explore the formation of migrant identity among Nikkeijin living in Oizumi town focusing on the way that return migration impacts on awareness of ethnic identity (Epstein, 1978:100; Maeyama, 1996). Such formation lies in the self-identity of individuals and the effect externally imposed by the dominant society (Comaroff, 1987:309; cited in Tsuda, 2003:157). Internal definition and external definition are mutually interdependent, though theoretically distinct social processes are at work (Jenkins, 1996:20). Within the chapter, I consider the following factors: local government discourse and policies toward return migrants; the construction of migrant identities by local Japanese people and their attitudes towards migrants; and the migrants' own ways of talking about and approaching the question of identity. Other researchers and some of my informants point out that Japanese migrants in South America were called 'japonesa'. It was an ethnic categorization by a dominant society. When a later generation of those migrants arrive in the ancestral homeland of Japan, their awareness of ethnic identity undergoes change. Their physical appearance is Japanese; nonetheless, their cultural background is not that of the dominant society, and the difference marginalizes them in Japan.

I begin the chapter by considering how the image of Nikkeijin is constructed and perceived by different social agents in the host society. This follows the manner in

which Tsuda and Carvalho observed migrant identity to be part of an ongoing social and historical process of self and other ascription (Chapter One). When Japanese migrants relocated into a new society in South America their Japanese ethnicity was initially reinforced and subsequently shaped by the receptions they received in the host countries. More specifically, newly arrived Japanese in South America had relatively low social status in the various countries they migrated to. Decades later, many descendants of the original immigrants had reached middle-class status and Japanese ancestry was viewed as a positive feature of their hyphenated identities as national citizens of the adopted countries. Thereafter, when the second and subsequent generations relocated to Japan, the ancestral homeland of their parents and grandparent, they too have had their ethnicity shaped and reinforced by the reception in the host society, as Nikkeijin – foreign born individuals of Japanese ancestry. However, despite identification as people having Japanese ancestry, it has not been their Japanese ethnicity that has been highlighted and reinforced by the host society but the particular ethnic and national affiliations with their countries of birth. Tsuda states that in the case of Japanese Brazilian return migration, the change from a 'Japanese' to a 'Brazilian' ethnic minority status in Japan is also accompanied by a dramatic shift from a 'positive' to a 'negative' minority status (Tsuda, 2003:104). This is to say that while Japanese Brazilians are a socially successful middle-class minority in Brazil which has culturally held on to its Japanese qualities, those same people have become low status factory workers in Japan who are discriminated against for their perceived Brazilian behaviour and identifications. Against that backdrop of discrimination, most researchers seem to agree that the majority of Nikkeijin further embrace and seek to distinguish themselves from their host society

on the basis of national identification, creating more ethnic distinctions between themselves and the Japanese.

A personal view is that these claims may be oversimplified. My research in Oizumi town shows more complexity in Nikkeijin awareness of and cultural practices in relation to ethnic identity. As I demonstrate, some people are merely sojourners economically and have unskilled jobs, while others may occupy a professional position such as teacher, or become entrepreneurial. Depending on the individual circumstance, the presentation of self-identity shows different phases. It is important to understand how Nikkeijin see themselves as being treated by indigenous Japanese since 'one's identity is ultimately a feat of reflective consciousness' (Linger, 2001:309) and to reflect how identity may be 'the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography' (Giddens, 1991:53). Return migration by subsequent generations of Okinawan migrants potentially presents a further layer of ethnicity which would extend beyond the dichotomy of Japanese and Brazilian.

Firstly, I consider the factors accounting for Oizumi's relatively high proportion of Nikkeijin population, and how this is attributable both to changes in national legislation as well as to policies implemented by the local council, and by employers who sought to encourage people of Japanese ancestry to fill the labour shortage they were experiencing. Council officials routinely present themselves as being favourably inclined towards and concerned about the welfare of return migrants. These official discourses were constructed by the idea that municipal officers and commercial employers originally regarded return migrants as Japanese. Employers

preferred Japanese Brazilians to workers from Southeast Asia or the Middle East. As migrant numbers increased, and perceptions changed, several schemes were introduced by Oizumi Council in order to maintain harmony with Nikkeijin. I then present how local Japanese people talk about and interact with Nikkeijin. The way that local inhabitants construct the image of Nikkeijin in their everyday experiences is through difference: Nikkeijin behaviour and attitudes are not the same as those of an established resident. I consider how these societal images and pressures affect the defining of self-identity among return migrants.

4.1 Oizumi town

Location and population

Oizumi is situated in Gunma Prefecture close to the border with Saitama Prefecture, about fifty miles north-north-west of central Tokyo (see Map 1). The journey by train from my accommodation in Tokyo, as undertaken during the research period in summer 2002, took about three hours, requiring a change at Tatebayashi before reaching the modest Nishikoizumi station which serves Oizumi.

In 1957 Oizumi became a town in its own right when the smaller town of Koizumi was merged with the village of Okawa. Three years later Oizumi was designated a 'capital region urban development district'. Subsequently, the town improved its infrastructure, rapidly attracting many factories and becoming an important industrial town serving Gunma and Saitama Prefectures. Oizumi's population stood, in 1980, at 31,282; by 1990 the number had risen to 39,232, a twenty-five per cent increase within a decade. During the 1990s the rate of growth slowed, eventually to level off

between 1998 and 2001[1]. Despite a slowdown in the economy, the number of registered aliens increased from approximately 800 in 1990 to 5,700 in 2000. The number reached 6,307 in December 2001 (Oizumi Council, 2002). Between 1990 and 2001, therefore, the registered aliens population grew eightfold.

The changing industrial structure of Oizumi

Oizumi is characterized by its closely packed production industries. Before the Second World War this area produced military ware, mainly fighter planes from the Nakajima aircraft factory. After the war, the US military occupied the facilities, which were returned to the town in 1959. Fuji heavy industries subsequently took over the site to make cars. After being designated a development district, Oizumi attracted large manufacturing companies such as Sanyo for electrical goods production, and created an industrial park for the plants and factories of Yukijirushi, Ajinomoto and Hanamaruki (food producers), and the Toppan printing company.

According to the Report on the Fourth Oizumi Town Planning (Oizumi Council, 2002), the workforce engaged in producing electrical goods (12,506 personnel), transport equipment (2,021), and food and groceries (1,070) accounted for over eighty per cent of the total workforce, these three categories representing about four-fifths of total production in the town. Plastics, printing and other production were also significant for employment. High technology manufacturing industries have made a great contribution to job creation in and around Oizumi, and in turn to the regional economy.

The pattern of the Oizumi workplace changed dramatically between 1985 and 2000. Manufacturing between 1985 and 1990 represented two-thirds of total industry. On the arrival of economic slowdown, the number of companies began to fall. There was a reduction of secondary industries as a proportion of total industries. In other words, manufacturing industries were the more affected by economic downturn. One reason for this was that part of the production line of Sanyo, a major employer, was moved to China, and the transfer had knock-on affects in the sub-contracted industries.

Foreign workers in Oizumi

In a locality such as Oizumi town it was not exceptional within the Japanese context that the number of foreign workers increased dramatically during the 1990s, a particularly active phase being 1994 to 1995. Two factors may be proposed to explain this: one is Japanese governmental policy; and the other is derived from action at the local level. As outlined in Chapter Three, the 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act accelerated the influx of labour from South American countries. Under the amended legislation, Nikkeijin and their spouses together with any children were granted an automatic visa. Second generation Nikkeijin were entitled to a three-year visa with one year for third generation. All visas were renewable.

A second factor is the decision made by employers in Oizumi town. During the 1980s, industry experienced shortages of labour. In the domestic situation of Japan, many among the younger generation tended to avoid the manufacturing sector and its '3K' jobs. On the other hand, foreign workers were looking to obtain the relatively

high wages and security offered by the Japanese labour market in contrast to those of their countries of origin.

Increasing the Nikkeijin population

Many employers recognized the growing shortage of labour in the 1980s. In 1989, the mayor of Oizumi suggested that a way to solve the problem was to recruit from Nikkeijin living in South America. Local employers, concerned about the common reliance at the time on illegal foreign workers from Southeast Asia and the Middle East, discussed the issue. In December 1990, the *Tomo Chiku Koyo Antei Sokushin Kyogikai* (Tomo Ward Stability and Employment Facilitating Association) was established by employers and acted as an employment agency by applying to Japanese Brazilians directly. Members of the association made the journey to Brazil and recruited 687 Nikkeijin between 1991 and 1992 (Jomo Shinbunsha, 1997:43). The association arranged decent welfare conditions for arriving Nikkeijin workers. For instance, its regulations stipulated a refrigerator and air conditioner for two persons per flat to be provided by employers. Thus, it can be said that an increase in the Nikkeijin population in Oizumi was triggered by policy-making of local entrepreneurs and business leaders. One organizer reported a total recruitment of 1,082 Nikkeijin from Brazil. Although this number is not great, it had a significant influence in energizing other employment agencies. By pursuing an ideal model of employment conditions, the council and the association were together able to demonstrate a comprehensive policy towards education and health care for Oizumi town. It was shown that the standard of Nikkeijin life could be sustained at an acceptable level. The association was disbanded in 1999. A statement declared that

the system had made a great contribution to recruiting Nikkeijin but that the role of the organization had come to an end (Jomo Shinbunsha, 1997:45).

As an example of the level of provision, my accommodation during field research in Oizumi was a one-roomed flat for Nikkeijin, with bathroom, kitchenette and a small veranda. A refrigerator, a washing machine, air conditioning, and TV were installed. The landlord was a successful Nikkeijin businessman, first generation from Brazil. He also ran an employment agency for Nikkeijin. I asked through his secretary for a personal interview but was refused. My flat was on the second floor in a two-storeyed block containing fourteen flats, some empty. The basement had space for cars and bicycles; at the time, usually only two cars were parked. I had been introduced to the flat by Sumiko, a retired local resident in another apartment owned by the same businessman.

Local government policy

As numbers of South American Nikkeijin increased, the local council and prefectural government introduced several schemes for their welfare and their children's education. The *Oizumi Kokusai Koryu Kyokai*[2] (Oizumi International Communications and Exchange Association) was established in 1995 by Oizmumi Council, organized with the co-operation of many local business enterprises, and employed staff who were able to speak Portuguese. Its main object was the explanation and maintenance of regulations and social matters of daily life in Oizumi, such as the separation of household refuse into different categories for recycling together with collection routines, the regulation of transport, maternity

benefit, and voluntary work which included translations into Portuguese. For this purpose, discussions were held with the participation of all parties: representatives of established residents, foreign workers, employers and council staff. The council also took other measures to address the emerging situation of an increase in the numbers of Nikkeijin. Local secondary and high schools in Oizumi prepared to teach extra Japanese classes for children of South American Nikkeijin families.

I spoke to Hiroshi, a manager in the international policy-making department of the council, who had the following to say.

> We hope that the Nikkeijin can live in this town safely and peacefully. The measures rely on us understanding one another. We do not mean to burden their lives with Japanese regulations. For instance, we letter public signs not only in Japanese but also in English and Portuguese. The representatives of the groups have met to discuss several issues since 1998. We facilitate participation in town events and organize refuse collections. As regards acceptance of these people, we are used to meeting foreigners in general as an aspect of our history of the town. In the past, we even accepted illegal workers until the emigration act was revised. I think that there is a good atmosphere for Nikkeijin here. There is a space for them in which they do not need to speak Japanese. But it would be better for the whole community if they learnt Japanese.

A former manager in the same council department, Ichiro, told me of one observation from his five years of experience.

The problem of truancy among school children is a serious matter, both for the Nikkeijin and for the administration. The administrative side did provide a budget to a school for Nikkeijin children in the early stages of increased arrivals. In particular, the number of assistant teachers was increased. Some schools have a special class for teaching Japanese.

However, he claimed that the Japanese government took no initiative and had no proper policy for these issues, preferring to pass responsibility on to the local council. Like Hiroshi, Ichiro believed the town offered an environment in which Nikkeijin could live and settle down. He explained to me how before the Second World War the population was relatively low; but during the war newcomers arrived to work in the munitions factories; and at the end of the war, when the Americans took over the facilities, there was a hospital for the US army. After the Americans left there were many unoccupied houses and flats for rent, therefore it was easy for Nikkeijin to find accommodation. Ichiro concluded by saying:

Nikkeijin differ from both Japanese and Brazilians. I conceive Nikkeijin as an ethnic group.

A left turn from the railway station will find the Chiiki Anzen Center (Regional Safety Centre). It is similar to a police station. The centre provides a type of community policing based on patrols of the town. Any antisocial or suspicious activity is reported to the official police. A large proportion of reported incidents are said to relate to Nikkeijin or foreign workers. An officer of the service told me:

Under-age drinking and smoking is a problem among young Nikkeijin. When we find them smoking in the park, they often lie about their age.

He pointed out other frequent infringements by Nikkeijin: not wearing a seat belt whilst driving, riding a bicycle at night without lights, and neglecting to indicate right turns in traffic. There was also a tendency to make noise in public places.

> For instance, they have held a barbecue party in the park on several occasions. We patrol six hours per day in Nikkeijin areas. By this action the crime rate has decreased although there are some areas in which it is said by established residents to be unsafe.

From the above it would appear that, in the discourse of local government and civic institutions, Nikkeijin are regarded essentially as foreigners. Yet the initial attraction for employers in recruiting Japanese Brazilians was a perceived similarity to native Japanese, or at least a closer association in ethnic and cultural terms than other groups. Nikkeijin, though, represent subsequent generations of migrant families who have become more Brazilianized in their social behaviour and have different outlooks as regards work. The differences make the Nikkeijin into foreigners.

Official strategy has been to maintain harmony within the Nikkeijin community and between the community and local residents. To this end, several measures were taken, such as use of the Portuguese language, Japanese language teachers for children of Japanese Brazilians, and the establishment of the Chiiki Anzen Center. Community policing, with teams patrolling Nikkeijin residential areas, may bring a degree of reassurance to the greater community but also has the potential for producing differentiation and discrimination.

4.2 Local perceptions of Nikkeijin

Although it is not new for residents of Oizumi to experience arrivals of new groups of people – mainly foreigners – to their town, the coming of the Nikkeijin and their subsequent settlement gave rise to a particular consciousness. Shigeru, who had lived in Oizumi since before the Second World War, and who ran a camera shop, told me about his image of Nikkeijin.

> I became aware that there were many foreign workers in Oizumi about fifteen or sixteen years ago [around 1986 or 1987] and I began to hear the term 'Nikkeijin.' I often saw Nikkeijin dressed in work clothes riding bicycles, and the image of Nikkeijin and bicycles became established in my mind. However, this image has changed gradually. I think now that recently many Nikkeijin have their own cars. Many Nikkei Brazilians have come into my shop to have photographs taken. The Nikkeijin have similar faces to Japanese; their physical build is no different from ours. But I can recognize them by their demeanour. For instance they are very emotional in their behaviour.

Through interaction with a Nikkeijin customer, Shigeru recognized that Nikkeijin were different from Japanese in their behaviour. The customer called him by his familar name. This form of address took him a little by surprise him because Japanese people do not use a familiar name in the relationship between a customer and a shop owner. It is customary to use *sumimasen* (excuse me) unless the relation is that of a neighbour or friend. Shigeru thought that Nikkeijin were very friendly though their way of greeting each other could be excessive, such as hugging and

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perhaps kissing when they meet in public, compared with the Japanese way of greeting by bowing.

The cultural differences of Nikkeijin were seen as both negative and positive to local people. Shigeru had an experience of being warned by a Nikkeijin customer about other Nikkeijin.

> One Nikkei-san told me that among the Nikkeijin there may be the occasional rumour that this or that person is in debt, so he should not be associated with us.

I often heard Shigeru use the expression 'Nikkei-san' instead of Nikkeijin. It has a connotation of distance, a politeness but with a suggestion of alienation. Even so, he told me that he offered photographs free of charge for taking back to Brazil and he wished to be kind to the Nikkeijin.

Shigeru suggested that the stage when Nikkeijin tend to want to return to Brazil was as they get older, as in the case of one customer who was sixty-eight years old, and another who was seventy-two. While I was conversing with Shigeru, a Nikkeijin and his son-in-law entered the shop and asked for a passport-sized photograph to be taken. This customer, who volunteered his age as sixty-two, was going back to Brazil because his employer had closed a production line and he could not find another job. The son-in-law, in his mid-twenties, said that it was more economical to return his father to South America than to take care of him in Japan. This was because, if he were to send a remittance of the same amount as he was currently giving his father, it would be the equivalent in Brazil to an entire household's maintenance.

Afterwards, Shigeru talked about the samba parade.

> I went to see the samba team in the summer festival every year, and it is
> very sad that the participation came to an end in 2000. I cannot of course
> go to Brazil to see the samba team. I am a professional cameraman and
> other colleagues were expecting me to take pictures, but we cannot do so
> any more. When the festival was first put on many years ago the turn-out
> by the samba team was small but every year it grew. The team gathered
> members not only from Oizumi but also from other regions. The
> costumes were glamorous and looked so expensive. See, in contrast, the
> Japanese festival costume is the same over many years. Our Japanese
> festival maintains everything as at the beginning. Therefore the costumes
> are not so costly and a portable shrine will last a long time. I personally
> think that we should support the participation of the samba team because
> the image of the samba in Oizumi contributed much to the town.

Shigeru's positive perception of Nikkeijin is not shared by all. Yoshiyuki, fifty-two years old, replied to my questions on what he thought of Nikkeijin by using terms of group reference in a divisive manner.

> They live in their own world and in their particular area. It's not the same
> as ours.

The sentiment was shared by other informants. For example, Sumiko, a pensioner who had been living in Oizumi for more than for forty years (and who helped me when I was looking for accommodation), told me that the first time she noticed there were so many Nikkeijin and foreign workers in the town was by a rise in the

incidence of bicycle and motor-cycles thefts, and reported joy ridings. There was also vandalism such as public telephone boxes being damaged.

> We did not have such incidents in this town before. I am sometimes uncomfortable when I see three or four Nikkeijin walking together in the evening or loitering in front of the station.

Sumiko did not sound as if she welcomed the existence of Nikkeijin in the community. I noticed her replies tended to contain many negative words such as 'uncomfortable', 'crime', 'truancy', 'delinquency' and 'vandalism'.

> Since the Nikkei Brazilians have lived here the landscape of this town has changed. The buildings are colourful, but I have heard that the number of delinquent teenagers is on the increase and the truancy rate among Nikkeijin is high. A district which the Nikkeijin inhabit is noted for trouble. At first I did not understand the reason for this town accepting the Nikkeijin, but now I recognize that international elements and labour markets are factors. Personally, I do not want the number of Nikkeijin to increase because they influence our lives, regardless of whether it is for good or bad. One of my friends has a shop for cosmetics in this town, and half of the customers are Nikkeijin. According to my friend, the Nikkeijin are all right for business, and her daughter waits on them. I think that Oizumi offers agreeable circumstances to Nikkeijin. But I do not dare go to the Brazilian restaurant by myself although I used to go with my colleagues when I was working.

A part of the building where Sumiko lived was occupied by a Nikkeijin family. As their neighbour, Sumiko felt she was able to give an opinion on whether or not Nikkeijin observed social regulations.

> I think that Nikkeijin are very considerate; as far as my neighbours are concerned they keep a low key. For instance, when their children made a noise they asked whether it annoyed me or not. As a matter of refuse collection arrangements they asked me what to do. When the samba parades were held, the Nikkeijin family practised dancing and drumming, with a boisterous merrymaking every Sunday. It was a little noisy for me at the time but they seemed to be enjoying it. It was so sad for me not to hear this sound when the parade was stopped.

Having made the above comments, which seemed to express a range of opinion concerning Nikkeijin which were perhaps influenced by the relative closeness of individuals, Sumiko finished by saying:

> I don't discriminate against Nikkeijin at all because I am accustomed to seeing foreigners.

Another perception of Nikkeijin came from Takashi, who gave his age as forty-three.

> The Nikkeijin take jobs which Japanese do not want to do, but I do not think that the Nikkeijin are increasing the unemployment rate in Japan. I am not interested in the Nikkeijin, I have never been to a Nikkeijin restaurant and I do not intend to do so in the near future. Nikkeijin restaurants are not to my taste. I do not have any Nikkeijin for

neighbours. I think recent Nikkeijin are second and third generation, and almost all are racially mixed. They hardly speak any Japanese, not like older Nikkeijin, who are able to speak Japanese fairly well.

Although he had no specific contact with Nikkeijin, Takashi said that if he had children, he would no doubt meet Nikkeijin during school activities. As a retail businessman he intended to treat any customers equally, regardless of whether his customers were Japanese or Nikkeijin.

Nikkeijin have a similar appearance to Japanese, but I recognized them because they speak with a strong accent in Japanese. I have never been to a samba festival.

He had noticed some changes in a local supermarket.

Some years ago there was a booth for selling Brazilian food and Brazilian alcohol there, but now the booth has closed because another supermarket, owned by Nikkeijin, sells various kinds of Brazilian alcohols and food.

Walking in the park, I asked workmen who were cutting grass whether they were aware of Nikkeijin living locally.

Yes, we know that Nikkeijin live in this area, but nothing more than that, as we don't see them in the area where we live.

As Ichiro's remark (above) suggested, it seems that there is a discrete boundary between local residents and Nikkeijin in Oizumi town: both groups are in a state of

sumiwake (living separately). The situation has the resonance of the social boundary approach and I am reminded of the submission made by Wallman that 'a social boundary is symbolic even when marked by real things'. Also, it is situational, responding to changes within the relationship between the internal and external systems (Wallman, 1978: 205-206).

On the future

My respondents were asked what they thought might be the future course of Nikkeijin as regards population levels and settlement in Oizumi. Takashi again:

> I don't believe that the number of Nikkeijin will increase because, in the recession, the Nikkeijin cannot save as much money as they used to do. It seems to me the number of young female Nikkeijin is rapidly declining. I don't know why that should happen.

Shigeru and Sumiko also believed there would be no increase. Additional thoughts on the matter were offered by Shigeru.

> We would be better to keep the Nikkeijin for the sake of the town. I think that we depend largely on Nikkeijin labour power. Our town developed due to their existence. But under the recession I think many employers tend to take Japanese people rather than Nikkeijin, therefore the numbers of Nikkeijin will be decreasing. In the near future many Nikkeijin will go back to their home country. I think that the third generation find it difficult to adapt to the local culture.

Despite having some personal reservations about their presence, residents on the whole agreed that Nikkeijin contributed to the local and national economies and therefore it might be better if they were to stay. These seemingly contradictory attitudes can be understood in terms of the significant Japanese dichotomy of *honne* and *tatemae*. The first relates to personal feeling; the second to behaviour and opinions expressed in the open, and to what is expected by society. Regardless of whatever concern they may have, local residents try not to display discriminately behaviour. Rather, they either present a sympathetic front and seek social harmony with Nikkeijin, or are simply 'used to seeing foreigners'.

4.3 Self-identity

What has been presented above would act to support the argument forwarded by both Tsuda and Carvalho that Nikkeijin are treated as foreigners in Japan. As a response to the social environment which Nikkeijin encounter in Japan, their ethnic attachment to, and identification with, countries of origin in South America are strengthen, especially so in the case of Japanese Brazilians. As I will describe below, there is clear evidence of ethnic and national affiliations with Brazil that are part of everyday cultural practices in the landscape of Oizumi town. However, the way that Nikkeijin talk about themselves and their self-identification reflects a much broader and more complex pattern of identity than might be suggested by casual observation.

In this section I discuss how various factors have affected Nikkeijin in the formation of their identity – how they define themselves in Japan and in the locality of Oizumi. These factors might be age, generation, duration of living in Japan, occupation. The

respondents, all from Brazil, represent three groups: *dekasegi* migrants in unskilled labour; skilled workers and professionals, and entrepreneurs.

Lives of Nikkeijin in Oizumi

Near the Nishikoizumi station were houses and shops. To one side a Brazilian restaurant displayed a sign offering whole chicken and *churrasco* (Brazilian beef stakes); to the other, a small general store advertised Brazilian food. The store was owned and run by Takanori. He migrated from Okinawa to Brazil when he was in his twenties and lived there for another twenty years before returning to Japan, where he set up the business in 1999. His two sons stayed behind in Brazil. I guessed the Okinawan background from the name above the store. Takanori was willing to talk.

> I was interviewed several times by the TV and other media about the samba carnival and the World Cup. I am a first generation Nikkeijin. I can speak both languages and understand both sets of customs. It is an advantage to me. When Japanese people visit I can show them the way using a map of the town, pointing out Brazilian restaurants, and also I can tell fellow Nikkeijin about Oizumi by speaking in Brazilian [Portuguese].

During the interview, one Japanese couple asked Takanori about restaurants serving *feijoada* (a stew of beans with meat, a popular dish of Brazil). The couple had been in Brazil for six years on business and sometimes missed Brazilian food, which was their reason for visiting Oizumi from Tokyo.

By the side of Route 327, the main road from Oizumi to the south, stood a beauty salon and a clothes store. Opposite the store lay the Nippaku Center (Nikkei Brazil Centre) run by Shoko and her husband, both of whom were Nikkeijin from Brazil. She migrated to Brazil in 1958 at the age of 13 and returned to Japan in 1991. The centre had a job agency and processed documents such as applications for the extension of visas by Nikkei Brazilians. It also included a school for Nikkeijin children. Shoko had set up an education facilitation association as a non-profit organization. She emphasized the importance of language education.

> I am appreciated by my three daughters for teaching them Japanese in the house when we lived in Brazil. My daughters are bilingual. The advantage allows them to be able to get good jobs here.

Another road runs parallel to the main road, and here is the Brazilian Plaza, where many Nikkeijin gather for shopping, eating and drinking. I often went there from five o'clock in the evening to eight or nine o'clock expecting to encounter informants. They would arrive after work to drink a bottle of beer and enjoy a Brazilian snack, pasties and so on. They would know each other and exchange information about the economic situation in Japan and Brazil, and sometimes talk about their families. Most spoke to each other in the language of Portuguese, which they called Brazilian.

Forming Brazilian cultural space

The Plaza exudes Brazilian culture. There was music, food, clothes, shoes, a travel agency, an electrical shop, a tattoo parlour, a supermarket, two restaurants, a jewellery and clock shop, a beauty salon, and two coffee houses. In front of the Plaza

building was parking for about sixty vehicles; at weekends this area would be completley filled. It was at the weekend that a temporary reception desk was set up by the branch of a Brazilian bank near the entrance. One Sunday afternoon on the first floor I watched a band play samba music. A few people were dancing. After the performance, representatives of the Koyo Sokushin Kyokai (Employment Facilitating Association) conducted a survey with questionnaires concerning occupations of Nikkeijin. Mayumi, a second generation Nikkei Brazilian, and Mrs T visited each table in turn to explain the context.

Many of my informants said that during the World Cup football matches played in June 2002, the Plaza was full of Nikkeijin supporting Brazil. Especially for the final match the first floor was filled by Nikkeijin, possibly as many as a thousand, watching a big screen. One shop assistant, who was twenty-one years old and worked in the jewellery store situated within the building, told me:

> I am working in a factory during the weekdays in Tatebayashi [next to Oizumi town] though I work in this store every Sunday. I do not mind working every day. I live here with my younger sister and I have to pay house rent, gas and electricity charges, and so on. My mother is in Brazil. It is good for me to see many Nikkeijin here.

Kachiya, a forty-seven years old female Nikkei Brazilian second generation, opened a coffee shop in April 2002 on the ground floor of the Plaza.

> I came to Japan in 1990 and worked for a factory in Kanagawa Prefecture and then moved first into Tokyo, then Saitama Prefecture and finally

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Gunma Prefecture. During twelve years I changed my job more than seven times and finally I settled down in Oizumi town to start this business. I am getting married to a man who is Nikkei Brazilian, the same as me.

It was Kachiya's belief that her ability to speak good Japanese enabled her to set up the coffee house. Many Nikkeijin gathered there. It looked to be a hub of Nikkeijin social life, with Kachiya adopting the role of co-ordinator, translating from Portuguese to Japanese. She told me that when she started the business, the staff at Oizumi Council helped her in every way. The landlord, who was Japanese, had been happy to allow her to open the coffee house.

I met several Nikkeijin at Kachiya's establishment and chatted with them over the course of several evenings. Pedro, Nikkei Brazilian second generation and fifty-three years old, had come to Japan in 1993. His first work place was Chiba Prefecture, after which he changed jobs and places of residence some ten times before finally settling down in the town next to Oizumi. He called in at Oizumi almost every evening; the day before a night shift started, he stayed at the karaoke bar run by his younger brother.

When I first came to Japan through an agency I brought only fifty thousand yen with me, as a man at the agency told me that amount was enough. But I immediately realized it was a very small amount of money in Japan so I dashed to my brother's and borrowed some money, and managed to survive somehow.

He was sending remittances to his family in Brazil and maintained contact with his children by mobile phone. His daughter had sent a text message with a smiley face, which he showed me. Pedro spoke about his son's education and told me of his intention to arrange for his family to make a trip to Japan in time for a gathering of the greater family.

There looked to be hardly any Japanese in the Plaza building when I visited it, although the owner of the complex, who was also the proprietor of an electrical goods shop on the ground floor, was Japanese. I did meet an elderly Japanese couple who were enjoying a trip out from a nearby town. They told me that the World Cup had given them an interest in Brazil and after the event they sometimes came to have a Brazilian snack and beer. Before going to the Brazilian Plaza, I exercised my routine of visiting the Oizumi public library to research books and other documents. This I did during the day when I could take advantage of the air conditioning. The international corner at the library, supported by volunteers, was well-stocked with material in Portuguese, quite a few of the books being donated by Nikkei Brazilians. Here were newspapers in English and Portuguese besides Japanese newspapers. Several leaflets on events and resources were available in both Portuguese and Japanese.

A sports centre owned by Nikkeijin

The Oizumi Futsal Center[3] was co-owned by Miguel, thirty-seven years old second generation from an Okinawan mother and Brazilian father. He told me the reason, in 1998, for the gym being set up.

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My younger brother was eager to introduce futsal, which is popular in Brazil. He thought that through the sport especially we could be a good influence on Nikkeijin children. I agreed with him. I used to be a professional athlete playing futsal in Brazil. I can teach how to play it. We have our own futsal team here and we have won the futsal competition of Japan several times. Membership of this centre is not only children but also adults including Japanese.

One of the members, a Japanese university student, told me:

I live in Saitama Prefecture. I know the sport and this centre through a sports magazine and I am really interested in the game. Next year I hope to go to Brazil to play. I really enjoy it very much.

A karaoke bar owned by Nikkeijin

One weekday evening, I went to a karaoke bar with Mayumi (above). After having retired from a construction engineering company she came to Oizumi with her husband (a first generation) and son. The bar's owner was also a second generation Nikkei Brazilian and her husband Brazilian. We ate *churrasco* and enjoyed a spell at karaoke with another customer who used to live in Brazil as an agricultural engineer. Mayumi sang Japanese popular songs of the mid-1980s. She told me that when she was in Brazil she often went to a karaoke bar owned by Nikkeijin. I did not ask her the reasons for choosing these songs. My acquaintances persuaded me to sing English songs because I live in England. While we were there a small group with children and a baby arrived after nine o'clock, perhaps to celebrate a birthday. The

karaoke screen displayed the words of Japanese, Brazilian, and English songs in Roman script.

A karaoke competition was held one Saturday evening in the bar, lasting till midnight. When I arrived there earlier, around six o'clock, many cars lined the side of the road. A large number of Nikkeijin were already gathered in the smoked-filled venue. The garden side of the bar was full of people, mostly standing with perhaps a beer in one hand, a cigarette in the other. Sessions were held for children and for adults, with songs in Brazilian and English. The owner's son, who was twenty-three, conducted the karaoke competition. Pretty young women wearing identical red tee-shirts delivered drinks and food through the crowd.

In the bar, one Nikkei Brazilian who had been in Japan for eight years said that he sometimes came to Oizumi for shopping although he lived in Saitama Prefecture. An established resident told me that every time a business closed down, a Nikkei Brazilian owner would take over the business and decorate it in colours of the Brazilian national flag.

Two Brazilian schools

P Colegio was established in Ota city, which is near to Oizumi, in 1999. The school is a branch of one based in Brazil. Pupils, aged three to eighteen, learn basic subjects compatible with the school in Brazil. I visited the school at the finish of lunch, which was delivered by a Brazilian menu catering service. The influence of Brazil was strongly evident in the curriculum, in the choice of text books, music, and dance.

Japanese lessons were conducted three times a week. The administration staff were Nikkeijin but teachers were non-Japanese Brazilians (some are spouses of Nikkeijin), except for two Nikkeijin. School hours were seven o'clock in the morning to eight in the evening. A school bus picked up pupils before their parents went to work. Pupils numbered about a hundred and sixty, three-quarters of whom were mixed Nikkeijin and Brazilian. Some pupils were from Peru. I calculated fees to be equivalent in sterling to about £3,000 per year. The school building used to be a warehouse. When I looked in at the senior class, where fifteen pupils were engaged in study of the history of Brazil, a female pupil told me she would be going to a university in Brazil in the near future.

A co-ordinator in the school told me:

> One day, officers from the council staff came to inspect the school and to
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> hold discussions on the gym and library. The council offered us the use of
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> a sports facility in the park, and arranged for many Portuguese books to
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> be supplied to the library.

Another site I visited was the Nippaku school[4] in Oizumi, established in 2002 by Shoko (above) and her daughter. Pupils were aged three to seventeen. The school had an afternoon course for some children of Nikkeijin attending from other local schools. The teachers were non-Japanese Brazilians (again, perhaps some were spouses of Nikkeijin) except for one Nikkeijin. Almost all the pupils were mixed Nikkeijin and Brazilian. Mayumi (above) was deputy headmistress.

I observed a lower secondary class during a gymnastics session, conducted in *capoeira,* a form of Brazilian dance which originated in Africa, to a single-stringed musical instrument called a *berimbau*. The movements of the pupils were comparatively slow, legs up and down, and body turning. I had seen the same dance at the previous school performed under the same teacher's instruction. This teacher also ran his own dancing school in the area. During a conversation after the lesson I questioned some pupils on their food preferences: whether Japanese or Brazilian. Brazilian food accounted for about half of preference; Japanese for about a quarter, and a quarter had no preference.

At a religious service

When Nikkeijin are confronted with the stress of living in Japan, separated from friends and relatives (Carvalho, 2003), or when they wish to alleviate their feeling of loneliness, homesickness and social alienation, a kind of religious 'revival' occurs (Tsuda, 2003:301). Some attend Christian churches, which are mostly Catholic though a few are Protestant. These churches may offer a variety of social activities.

On another occasion, I joined the congregation of the Japanese religious organization Seicho-No-Ie[5], who met each Sunday morning in a room of a public building in Ota city. About sixty people were present, including Japanese. This denomination is one of a number of religious movements in Japan which have spread since the Second World War, with the majority of its followers in Japan and Brazil. Some of those at the service probably attended the church in Brazil. A male Japanese Brazilian member of the congregation told me that he had joined during a time of ill health in

Japan. A female Japanese Brazilian said she had arrived in Japan ten years earlier and worked very hard from morning to evening, and from the night to the following morning, for five years. In her work place, there was very little opportunity to learn Japanese and it was not necessary to speak the language. But now she felt a need for speaking Japanese because her children were going to school and she sometimes had to meet their friends' parents. During the congregation I listened to the sermon through a female Nikkeijin interpreter who spoke Japanese so quickly that I could not always follow. Another female Japanese Brazilian, visiting relatives in Japan, talked a little of her experience in Brazil. After the service, only Nikkeijin remained in the room, chatting, eating and taking photographs.

Looking over the landscape of Oizumi, and the 'Brazilianized' space owned by individual Nikkei Brazilians, I was reminded of what Ichiro (above) had said about there being social phases among Nikkei Brazilian.

Some Nikkei Brazilians who have been living in Japan for more than twelve years can say they have a successful life. They run their own businesses such as supermarkets, restaurants, employment agencies, and coffee shops. But other Nikkeijin who have been in Japan for five or six years, are faced with some difficulties. They are manual workers and their wages have declined as a result of the recession in the Japanese economy.

Opposite the station is the Sakata district where many apartments are occupied by Nikkeijin. As I strolled around I heard Nikkeijin, many wearing tee-shirts and shorts,

outside their homes chatting with neighbours in Portuguese. Others were walking or riding bicycles. One Sunday, on which I participated in a small summer festival organized by the district, I happened to see two Nikkeijin groups having barbecues in the Shironouchi Park.

When I came across a young man repairing a car in the parking area of the apartments where I was staying, I asked him whether he lived in the block and he replied that he was an occupant on the first floor. He was third generation from Brazil. His grandmother had recommended that he should come to Japan. Apparently, he rarely cooked in his flat as he had lunch at his workplace and could obtain a Brazilian takeaway for an evening meal which the job agency would deduct from his wage. The young man told me that he often went up to Tokyo for the weekend. He may have belonged to the type who 'enjoy *dekasegi*'. Third and fourth generation Nikkeijin are usually in their early twenties and tend to pursue a consumer lifestyle in that they spend their earnings on going out and buying consumer goods rather than saving and sending remittances.

Presentation of the samba parade

A most symbolic cultural representation of Nikkei Brazilian, and their common perception as such, was the samba parade. It may be considered a practice of Brazilian national identity. The samba team was composed of Nikkeijin who first joined the summer festival in 1991. At the time, Nikkeijin and employers' wives co-operated in making the clothes, everything hand-made (Jomo Shinbunsha, 1997). Gradually, the media began to take an interest in the parade, portraying the festival as

a characteristic of Oizumi, the place being 'the town of samba' and becoming familiar as such around the Kanto region. However, the samba parade's part in the summer festival was discontinued in 2000. Apparently as a result of the economic recession in Japan, many sponsors withdrew their contribution to the festival, even though visitor numbers were said to exceed 100,000 during the festival. Another official reason was the matter of security. In the opinion of one established resident, after a new mayor took power, the mood within the council and its policy towards Nikkeijin participation changed. According to Shoko, not only was the discontinuity a result of the council's withdrawal of safety and security cover but was also because the samba parade itself had become unstructured in terms of finance and performance. When I observed the summer festival in 2002, it was an ordinary local summer festival with samba replaced by a band performing Latin music on a stage.

During its time, Tsuda observed the samba parade and proposed that the performance enacted by Nikkeijin has its own cultural basis and logic which is appropriated and reinterpreted by them. The motivations for taking part 'range from alleviation for feeling of homesickness for Brazil to simple festive entertainment' (Tsuda, 2003:283). According to Tsuda, when national symbols from Brazil are appropriated for ethnically demonstrated purposes abroad, the emblematic use of Brazilian costume becomes decontextualized and distorted because Japanese Brazilians do not have sufficient cultural understanding and experience of this Brazilian national ritual. In his analysis, the occasion was a 'Nikkeijin samba' and not an authentic performance like the samba parade in Brazil. While I would agree it was a performative construction by Nikkeijin who did not necessarily participate fully – if

at all – in the parade in Brazil, I would nonetheless say that, within its own sense, Nikkeijin samba possibly constituted an authentic performance as Nikkei Samba.

In June 2002, following Brazil's victory in the World Cup, some Nikkeijin planned to hold a parade during the summer festival. This was suddenly cancelled because the council was not prepared to take responsibility regarding security. Shoko (above) told me about the situation.

> When the samba festival discontinued, nobody took the initiative to take up this issue among the Nikkeijin. If the council withdraws the moral and financial support, it is difficult for us to continue. Take the World Cup victory parade: the council asked us whether we could accept some of the responsibility as regards safety and security. We couldn't, so we had to give it up. I think that is the Japanese way of avoidance of accountability. Nobody wanted to take responsibility for it. This is a very Japanese manner in which they tend to be mean-minded in pursuing the issue of responsibility.

However, Hiroshi, a manager in the international policy-making department of the council (above), claimed:

> The samba carnival team participated in the festival for ten years before the samba event was discontinued in 2000. I think that they could celebrate independently. There was no intention to get rid of them by reducing their budget. We facilitated their participation in the baseball competition, the art exhibition, and other events. There are also awards

presented to people who have worked for more than ten years in small enterprises.

A difficulty in maintaining harmony among Nikkeijin may have affected the continuation of the samba event. Shoko remarked:

I think that our characteristic tendency lies in individualism. Ten people have ten different colours. Therefore, we cannot make harmony as a whole. We do not have any official organizational institution here. There is supposed to be an organization called Oizumi Brazil Anzen Kyokai [Oizumi Brazil Safety Association] formed by a chief constable at the Oizumi police station but, since he left, this group does not work at all.

From the above comment, there would seem to be revealed a lack of solidarity among the Nikkeijin as a community. The following narratives were taken from Nikkeijin informants. Their ages ranged from twenties to fifties; generations were from first to third.

How Nikkeijin talked about local residents

Shoko mentioned how Nikkeijin emphasized the importance of ambience, making reference to the atmosphere of the workplace.

Japanese supervisors are inclined to reprimand and humiliate Nikkeijin in front of everyone. Nikkeijin workers do not like this. Brazilians respect the individual. There is a difference in labour culture between Japan and Brazil.

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Indeed, Jamese, forty-seven years old second generation Nikkei Brazilian, related his experience of the workplace as follows:

My senior colleague [Japanese] told me off every day – do this, don't do that – and the work was so hard physically. So I quit the job and looked for another. My wages have declined in recent years and overtime is limited. My only pleasures are talking to Nikkeijin, and drinking, and sometimes watching television.

Tsuda's observation regarding social relations in a factory in Oizumi town shows there was little interaction between the Japanese 'proper' and the Japanese Brazilians. The two groups always remained apart during break and lunch hours, sitting in separate rooms or at different tables, and conversing only among themselves. Interaction across the divide was limited to brief smiles or greetings in the morning (Tsuda, 2003:161).

Shoko asked me about general perceptions.

I want to know how local people perceive us. I believe that they do not want us to live here.

Her nuanced use of 'us' and 'they' was a reversal of the way in which local people applied the terms. This indicates that the boundary between local people and Nikkeijin derives not only from the dominant society but also from within the minority group itself. Shoko gave her own idea of what local residents (they) thought of Nikkeijin (us) based on comments she had heard residents make.

I think if somebody creates a disturbance the established people are ready

to believe it is due to the Nikkei Brazilians, or if somebody does not

follow the regulations, that must be the Nikkei Brazilians. They attribute

all problems to us.

A sense of discrimination

One evening, when I was in a karaoke bar eating a Brazilian *obento* (takeaway), a

man sitting next to me wanted to talk. While buying some beer at a convenience

store, he had felt the attitude of the assistant had been one of doubt and suspicion.

This sensation of discrimination would seem to be common among Nikkeijin.

David, thirty-two years old second generation Nikkei Brazilian, was sure that

Nikkeijin were discriminated against by wider Japanese society. Apparently, he had

joined a retail association in Oizumi but believed that the organization was not fair to

him. When he had asked for a loan, he was refused. The reason, he said, lay in the

fact that he was a Nikkei Brazilian. There could of course have been another reason

for the refusal, such as his contribution to the association not being long enough to

qualify for financial help, though his interpretation did not allow for this.

The experience of another informant mainly concerned language. Luiza, a twenty-

three year old second generation, said she sensed a kind of isolation when she talked

to Japanese people.

I feel lonely in Japanese society. I do not know how to associate properly

with Japanese people. For example, when I speak with a senior person, I

feel I have to use a polite form and manner. It is awkward for me. A further instance is when I ask directions – nobody helps me in Tokyo. If I were a European or American, everybody would treat me kindly.

This comment relates to a characteristic of the Japanese language. Japanese people indicate respect to a senior person (age or authority) by the use of an intensive system of honorific expressions. An absence or misuse of an honorific element is overlooked when the omission is made by a foreigner. Luiza said she was faced with the unspoken criticism: if she was Japanese, why did she not speak Japanese properly? Although she believed her Japanese to be not good enough, when she talked to me it was excellent. Her feeling of isolation may have arisen more from a lack of self-confidence than from an inadequacy of language.

How Nikkeijin talked about themselves

Self-identity among my informants is presented in the following informal categories.

I think I am half-Japanese and half-Brazilian

Pedro (above) told me that the return movement phenomenon by Nikkeijin repeats what his parents and their parents did in the past when Japanese migrants travelled to Brazil seeking a new life and escaping from poverty in Japan. This informant, who regarded himself more as third generation (his parents were each seven or eight years old at migration), spoke Japanese quite well but said he could not read or write the script to the same level. When I asked him about his identity, he replied that he considered himself to be half-Brazilian and half-Japanese since he was of Japanese

blood. His life in Japan meant nothing more than a possibility for sending remittances to his family in Brazil. Yet, to have Japanese blood was still a significant factor in his self-identification.

Willis, thirty years old and second generation, left Brazil in 1992.

> My reason for arriving in Japan was this was my parents' country. I went to a national university in Shimane Prefecture, sponsored by the Rotary Club. I am working for a Brazilian bank in Tokyo now, and I know many Nikkei enterprises.

His spoken Japanese was good and he sometimes did voluntary work as a translator.

> I am very interested in the subject of identity. I define myself as half-Brazilian, half-Japanese. I do not want to associate with Nikkeijin because recent Nikkei Brazilians have come from the rural region of Saõ Paulo and they are not educated.

As he observed representatives from the Koyo Sokushin Kyokai (Employment Facilitating Association) carrying out a questionnaire survey on the lives and occupations of Nikkeijin, Willis told me:

> I don't think they can do anything for Nikkeijin by conducting such a survey.

I noticed his face harden as he spoke, as if he were implying criticism of the organization and of government policy. I did not press him on the matter. He may

have felt that Nikkeijin are treated as foreigners in Japan, isolated from the mainstream of Japanese labour market and employed only for unskilled job, while subject to discrimination from Japanese people. Perhaps he thought the official process did not try to understand the lives of Nikkeijin and could offer no suggestion for improving the situation. I was reminded of the opinion of Ichiro, the former manager of the international department at the Oizmumi Council, which was that the Japanese government took no initiative and had no proper policy regarding Nikkeijin.

I am Brazilian

Edmundo, fifty years old, had made the journey from Brazil to Japan three times since 1997. He defined himself as a Brazilian, but said that on the whole it did not seriously matter to him whether he was considered Brazilian or Japanese. For him, Japan was nothing other than somewhere he could get a job and earn money for his family.

There was, however, a second generation Nikkei Brazilian prepared firmly to identify himself as Brazilian. When I interviewed Filipe, thirty-seven years old, in his office at the college in Ota where he taught, he did not speak Japanese at all and his colleague interpreted for me. Filipe clearly thought himself to be nothing but a Brazilian.

> I feel as if I am commuting between Brazil and Japan. I have never
>
> suffered from the problem of identity. When I first came to Japan, I
>
> worked very hard for two years and saved my money. I still have my own

house in Brazil. I returned to Japan to work as a teacher at the P Colegio.
I am not going to live in Japan forever. It is easier for me to live in Brazil
rather than Japan, therefore I am prepared to go back to Brazil at any
time. My two daughters attend the Brazilian school here. In my class, if a
pupil feels unsure as to whether they are Brazilian or Japanese, I suggest
that they are Brazilian and should try to be Brazilian, and to understand
Brazilian culture and customs. When their parents suffer from identity
matters, it affects their children. The experience of being bullied in [any]
school can be directly attributed to this problem. I always advise pupils
to be Brazilian and encourage them to learn Portuguese and Brazilian
history.

His first experience as a manual worker may have formed his awareness of being a
Brazilian. It would seem that his later position, at the *colegio,* further shaped his
identity. I believe Filipe's comment regarding his having a feeling of commuting
from home in Brazil to his workplace in Japan to be characteristic of the
transnational personality.

Brazilian means Nikkeijin

James (above) said he was considered to be Japanese in Brazil but on arrival in Japan
he suddenly became Brazilian – which to him meant Nikkeijin. He told me he did not
have any Japanese friends but was not lonely (was he living with his younger
brother).

Nikkeijin is neither Brazilian nor Japanese

Rosa, twenty-nine years old and third generation, worked in a Brazilian school in Ota. She spoke Japanese well. Her role at the school was co-ordinator, secretary, sometimes interpreter. She was of the opinion that almost all Nikkei Brazilians in Japan consider their identity as being Brazilian.

> When I was in Brazil, many friends of mine were Nikkeijin, and we had a common identity. That was a Japanese identity. However, since I moved to Japan, I define myself as Nikkeijin, which is neither completely Japanese nor Brazilian. I cannot adapt fully to Japanese culture, nor to Brazilian culture. I live in a gap between the two.

It seemed to me that the issue of identity was quite important to Rosa, and a sensitive one. She had probably come to her conclusion about being Nikkeijin and so to 'live in a gap' after much thought.

I want to be Japanese

Sharing a house with Rosa (above) was Luiza, who was a teacher of English and Spanish also at the Brazilian school. Her father was first generation Nikkei Brazilian and her mother third generation.

> I think that I was brought up with Japanese ideas and customs, culture and food. In my home I was surrounded by all things Japanese, even as regards human relations. I would often go to the place where many Nikkeijin gather in Saõ Paulo. I cannot agree with the idea of being third and fourth generation Nikkei Brazilian here. I really want to be Japanese.

Her wanting to be Japanese started early.

> When I was in Brazil I thought I was Japanese and I adored Japan. Now I live in Japan, I am surrounded by Brazilians in my workplace. I do not think I could get a job like my present one elsewhere because the Japanese economy is undergoing long-term recession.

She said that she continued to learn more Japanese whenever there was the time.

> My first concern is still to teach Japanese to Brazilians. In fact, while I was in Brazil I taught Japanese. Nikkei Brazilians in this school do not want to learn Japanese and Japanese culture. It is very sad. I want to communicate with them more deeply. Our students are a mix of Nikkei Brazilian extraction and Brazilians of non-Japanese extraction. There are quite a few Nikkei Brazilian pupils – it was a surprise to me.

For Luiza, acquisition of the Japanese language was important; she studied Japanese at a university in Brazil. The conversation turned to the notion of home.

> To me, home is the place where I can see my family every day, therefore my home is Brazil. Brazil is home, not just a country to me. Home is a space where my family live. I think that, to a Nikkei Brazilian, home is Brazil and Japan is merely a country. The place in which they experience peace and happiness is Brazil and here is a pseudo or temporary residence. They think that Japan is only a place where they can get a job to earn money. On the whole, as a country Japan is not a home to them, even though it is the land of their descendants.

Interestingly, regarding nationality, Luiza wanted to keep a Brazilian one.

> My brother has dual nationality, but I could not get Japanese nationality.
> If I took Japanese nationality I would have to renounce Brazilian
> nationality, and I do not wish to do that. I would like to work for at least
> three years in Japan and want to get to know Japanese people and culture.
> I would like to live in Japan for as long as I can.

Within the above comments is an ambivalence. On the one hand, Luiza adores Japan
and has a strong desire to be Japanese; on the other, she wants to retain her Brazilian
nationality and recognizes that her home is Brazil.

Luiza possessed a comparative insight into the culture and values of both countries;
for example, she commented on differences in family life.

> It appears to me that one of the advantages of Brazilian life is that
> communication between parents and children is much better than in
> Japan. My parents know about my friends. In Japan few parents take an
> interest in their children's friendship relations. They are too busy to care
> about their children.

Summary

Responses from informants recorded in this section would suggest that the
construction of ethnic self-identity can be complex, fluid and a negotiable element in
the process of migration. The move from Brazil to Japan led, within this sample, to
ethnic awareness and often dramatic change. Based on informants' comments, I

make the assumption that Nikkeijin self-identification in Brazil must have been subject to broad variation within the ethnic minority category of Japanese-Brazilian, depending on individual circumstances such as generation, gender, occupation, education and affiliation to the Japanese community in Brazil. Variation reappears in Japan. Some migrants believe that the issue of identity is not appreciably significant, that it does not matter. Some are interested in their identity and are concerned about how they are perceived by local Japanese people and society. Some regard themselves simply as Brazilian and report that their identity as embraced in Brazil remains essentially intact.

There are those who feel that they have become Brazilian since living in Japan. And others who describe themselves as half-Japanese and half-Brazilian. Or neither fully Japanese nor Brazilian ('in a gap'). Perhaps, as in the case of Luiza, they may exhibit ambivalence, desiring to be Japanese whilst wanting to retain Brazilian nationality. Then there is the specific adoption of a Nikkeijin identity.

With little doubt, the pressure of the dominant society forces a review of self-identity. In a subliminal realm, almost all Japanese Brazilians identify themselves as Japanese, which is not so different from their position, as members of an ethnic minority, in Brazil. Yet the Japanese host population perceives the comers from Brazil as foreigners, as people who do not satisfy the criteria for Japaneseness. Mechanisms of exclusion are involved; social boundaries emerge; and a new ethnicity, which is at the same time an official category, is constructed.

Nikkeijin have demonstrated an ability to operate in the social fields of both host and departure countries. This capacity may be interpreted as being indicative of the transmigrant identity.

4.4 A reflection of Okinawan ethnic identity

In the final section of this chapter I consider Okinawan ethnic identity among Nikkeijin in Oizumi town. Japanese migrants to Brazil originated from all parts of Japan, ranging from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa in the south. Although they are ethnically identified as a Japanese minority and distinguishable from Brazilians, it is widely accepted that there existed a boundary between Okinawans and Japanese, especially before the Second World War. Hilda, third generation Japanese Brazilian told me:

> When I was a child I always heard that Okinawans were different from us. My parents would not refer to them as *nihonjin* [Japanese]. It seems that the two didn't mix much, at least not in Brazil. I met some Okinawan descendants here in Oizumi and we all get along pretty well. I guess we're all *gaikokujin* [foreigners] in this situation. My mom's parents were from Kochi. My dad's parents were from Tokyo or somewhere close by.

From the above comment, it might appear that origins through previous generations do not matter in Oizumi. I interviewed some Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent living in the town.

Brazilian first, Okinawan second, Japanese third

David (above) ordered his identities in the following way:

> When I was in Brazil, I was brought up as Japanese, but once living in
> Japan, I recognised I was a foreigner. That is, I am Brazilian. The
> surrounding culture in Brazil was not only Japanese but also Okinawan.
> Therefore, secondly I am Okinawan, and the last relationship is Japanese.

The reference to being Okinawan was made in a lowered tone, as if it were
something not to be advertised. When he started his retail business in Oizumi, other
Nikkei Brazilians of Okinawan descent helped him with finance (after he was
refused by a local retail association – see above). At the time of the interview, David
was a director of two companies employing eighteen people.

> It's my view that Okinawan society has *yuimaaru* [unity spirit]. We can
> help each other when someone has a problem, for instance with financial
> matters. Such co-operation still exists in Brazil's Okinawan community. I
> also joined the Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association[6].

Half-Brazilian, half-Japanese, not Okinawan

There are some Okinawan descendants from Brazil who have not such a strong
affiliation with Okinawan ethnicity. Miguel (above) told me that his identity was
half-Brazilian and half-Japanese. When he was in Brazil he perceived himself as
being about seventy per cent Brazilian and thirty per cent Japanese. In appearance, he
had features of both. Although his mother came from Okinawa, his own
identification with Okinawa was very slight.

I saw that Okinawan people were different from Japanese when I went to Okinawa to attend the Third Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival.

Brazilian

Alfredo, fifty-six years old, second generation, Nikkei Brazilian of Okinawan descent, lived with his wife and his daughter's family.

My parents migrated to Brazil from Okinawa. I am Brazilian, although I have Japanese nationality. I was born and brought up in Brazil. If I can stay for the time being I will work here. But I will go back to Brazil one day in the near future. For this, I send my grandson to a Brazilian school here rather than a local school.

He showed me an identity card which gave his birthplace as Okinawa, but said that he had not been to Okinawa during his present time in Japan.

Japanese

Kachiya (above) arrived in Japan in 1990.

I think of myself as being Japanese. I was born in Okinawa. My family migrated to Bolivia when I was five, and eight years later we moved to Brazil. There was some Okinawan culture. My grandmother played the sanshin, and we had a lot of recorded Okinawan folk music. In Brazil, I studied very hard at university and was proud of being Japanese.

It may have been coincidental that those whom I met in Oizumi of Okinawan descent were successful retailers such as David, Takanori and Kachiya. Before starting their businesses they all had done unskilled factory work. Okinawan mutual financial aid contributed enormously to David's business start-up. It would seem that this facility was maintained both in the Okinawan community in Brazil and in Japan. However, Nikkeijin of Okinawan background living on mainland Japan do not show a strong sense of belonging to Okinawa.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have considered the formation of migrant identity among Japanese Brazilians living in the town of Oizumi by examining aspects of ethnic awareness, perceptions of local residents, perceptions of the migrants themselves, and local government policy. By so doing I find that self-identity among Nikkeijin to be diverse and often complex. It is not present in single form within the individual but shows multiplicity. My conclusion is that Nikkeijin living in Japan are transmigrants. As conceptually described in Chapter One, transmigrants operate in the social fields of two (or more) countries. My case study within this chapter on Nikkeijin shows evidence of their making a social field in Brazil, the place of their birth and upbringing, and in Japan, the land of ancestral origin and current place of residence. They may see themselves as commuting between two countries, not only in terms of physical movement but also cultural movement. Some Nikkeijin help their families in Brazil by sending remittances and maintain contact through modern means. In body they are in Oizumi – a presence which might be intended as temporary or transitional, and be only for economic benefit – while their mind is in the homeland.

I found no clear boundary in Oizumi between Nikkeijin of mainland descent or those of Okinawan decent.

Postscript

I visited the Brazilian Plaza on three occasions after my initial field research (see Introduction) and found that the landscape of Oizumi had become a little more Brazilianized. A recycled goods shop had opened, and Kachiya's coffee shop was expanded. Mayumi returned to Brazil in 2003, against my expectation, and Alfredo and his family followed in 2004, as he told me he would. Pedro remained in Japan until 2005. James continued to work and said he envisaged no change in his future unless a disaster happened. New faces I talked to after 2002 were a female Nikkei journalist who was Nikkei Brazilian third generation, and a male second generation. I learned that a male Nikkei Brazilian of Okinawan descent was occupying my former accommodation. Although many local residents predicted a decrease in numbers of Nikkeijin, the official population figures published for 2007 show that the number of registered aliens had actually increased: this number would almost certainly contain Nikkeijin.

Finally, almost all the Nikkeijin whom I saw came from Brazil. There were a few Nikkei Bolivians; a young couple I met at the karaoke bar of Pedro's brother had left their five children and parents in Bolivia. The husband was of Okinawan descent but he had never been to Okinawa. I wanted to have an interview with them but I thought that their Japanese was not sufficient to communicate. I also saw a young man from Bolivia with a little daughter at the restaurant on the Brazilian Plaza's first floor. It

was quite difficult to find Nikkeijin who where not from Brazil; I am not sure how a Nikkei Bolivian would self-identify in the predominantly Brazilian culture of Oizumi.

Chapter Four - Notes

1. As at the 31st March 2002, the population of Oizumi stood at 42,511 (16,847 households). Of this number, 6,311 (3,156 households) were registered aliens (Fourth Oizumi Town Planning, 2002). The figure shows that, for registered aliens, the number of people per household is relatively lower than for the established population (2.00 against 2.64). The proportion of foreigners is nearly 15%. Recent statistics show that the number of registered aliens increased to 6,676 and the total population decreased to 42,165 as at the end of March 2007. Accordingly, the proportion of foreigners is close to 16%. This represents the highest recorded ratio of foreigners living in any town in Japan. Oizumi is one of fourteen cities and towns having a large population of Nikkeijin.

2. The *Oizumi Kokusai Koryu Kyokai* (Oizumi International Communciations and Exchange Association) was founded by Oizumi Council and thirty companies with the aim of establishing mutual communication between the local people and Nikkeijin. Its activities include Japanese language tuition for Nikkeijin and organizing special events in Oizumi town (www.oia-gunma.jp).

3. Futsal is a variant of football that is played on a smaller playing surface and mainly played indoors. Its name is derived from the Portuguese *futebol de salão* and the Spanish *fútbol de salón* (and colloquially *fútbol sala*), which can be translated as 'hall football'.

4. Later the Oizumi Nippaku Center.

5. Seicho-No-Ie was founded in 1930 by Masaharu Taniguchi, its basic characteristics inherited from Buddhism, Christianity and Shinto. Followers, mainly in Japan and Brazil, are estimated to number about 212,0000. Thirteen cities in Brazil have a holiday for Seicho-No-Ie.
http://www.seicho-no-ie.org/center/japan.html

6. The Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association (WUB), a non-profit organization, was established for strengthening partnership among Okinawan businesspeople throughout the world, creating an international business network and promoting members' business civilities (www.wub.gr.jp).

Chapter Five

Nikkeijin in Tsurumi ward, Yokohama

Introduction

For Okinawans the term migration embraces not only movement to destinations abroad but also relocation to mainland Japan. Internal migration to industrial areas on the mainland was undertaken before and after the Second World War, principally to the regions of Hanshin (Osaka and Kobe) and Keihin (Tokyo, Yokohama and Kawasaki) in order to satisfy Japanese labour requirements. Historically, these regions accepted an influx of domestic seasonal workers from the peripheral regions of Japan in addition to workers from Korea and China. Populations were consequently an expanding mix of nationalities. In recent times, return migration from South America has added to the composition.

In this the second case study of my thesis, I focus on the lives of Okinawan Nikkeijin in and around the Tsurumi ward of the port of Yokohama, Japan's second largest city and the capital of Kanagawa Prefecture. The prime reason for my choice is that the ward has a significant number of residents who are Okinawan by birth or by descent. It may be assumed that these arrived in the region through two main routes. Firstly, there are those who moved to Tsurumi as internal migrants directly from Okinawa or after having worked in other industrial areas of Japan; secondly, there are those who arrived from South America as 'return migrant' Nikkeijin.

I examine Nikkeijin perceptions of self-identity in their everyday lives. Attention is also given to the manner in which local residents, including established Okinawans, regard Nikkeijin in general and Nikkeijin of Okinawan background. To begin, I present a brief profile of Tsurumi ward and consider the historical context relating to internal migration, looking at Okinawan assimilation into Japanese society. The role of social organizational networks in earlier migration is significant: later, similar structures contributed to the recruitment of many migrants from South America.

5.1 Tsurumi ward

Location and population

In 2002, the population of Tsurumi ward, one of eighteen wards in the city of Yokohama (see Map 3), was recorded as 273,782. The number of registered foreigners was 6,788 (2.5 per cent), the majority of these being Korean and Chinese. Of Nikkeijin, the number from Brazil was put at 1,454, which represented about half the total number from South America.

Tsurumi's migrant population contains both long established residents and more recent arrivals. Firstly came Okinawans, Koreans and Chinese; during the 1980s workers began to arrive from Southeast Asia and South America. Although registered foreigners in the ward account for only a relatively small proportion of the total population compared to the figure for Oizumi, Tsurumi is characterized by having ethnic minorities living closely together.

Map 2: Kanagawa Prefecture Source: Wikipedia.org

Map 3: Yokohama by wards Source: City of Yokohama

Local government initiatives have recognised the situation. For example, in 1991 the Tsurumi Ward International Exchange Project Promotion Committee was introduced in order to cope with the growing numbers of Nikkeijin. Japanese language lessons were taught with the aid of voluntary workers. An annual festival has been held as an acknowledgement of Ryukyuan (Okinawan), Korean, Chinese, and Latin American ethnic cultures. Takezawa argues, in her case study of the Kobe area in the aftermath of the severe earthquake of 1992, that Nikkeijin have been the primary force in promoting the concept of *tabunka kyosei*, or multicultural coexistence (Takezawa, 2002:311).

Internal migration: Okinawa to mainland Japan

The momentum of internal movement from Okinawa to the mainland can be traced back to the early 1920s, and the causes possibly to the First World War. When European powers withdrew from the Asian region in order to concentrate on the war, Japan took over the vacated markets. Okinawa became an important producer of sugar. At the end of the war, the Europeans returned and the boom for Japan ended. A collapse in the price of sugar together with a colonialist attitude from the mainland and looming worldwide economic depression brought severe hardship to Okinawans. The period between 1923 and 1930 is referred to as *sotetsu jigoku* (cycad hell) since occupants of the island were reduced to eating the potentially poisonous 'famine food' palm-like cycad plant.

Islanders left for the mainland, the main destinations being Osaka, Hyogo, Kanagawa and Tokyo. Migrants found work as factory workers and labourers, sometimes in the

form of *dekasegi* (in the term's original sense of seasonal work). During the 1930s the Kawasaki Fuji spinning mill employed a large number of Okinawans in the Keihin industrial region at the north-western side of Tokyo Bay. Faced with discrimination before the Second World War and after, migrants settled in the Tsurumi ward, forming an Okinawan neighbourhood (Aniya, 1974:425-430).

Yasuhiko owns a family business and has been living in Tsurumi ward for more than fifty years. He is chairman of the local *Okinawa Kenjinkai* (Okinawan Prefectural Association) and *Seishonen Ikuseikai* (Youth Education Association).

> When I was a high school student in the late 1940s, the Ryukyu government encouraged emigration from Okinawa to South America. But I did not go since I thought Peru and Bolivia were more backward countries than post-war Japan. I went up to Tokyo to enter university. Afterwards, I came to Tsurumi and thought that the Okinawan people living here maintained an old style Okinawan manner. I told the representative of the Okinawan Association in Kanagawa at the time that we should assimilate better into Japanese society. After the Kanto earthquake [1923] and during the post-war years, Okinawans and Koreans were considered inferior by the established people. If some incidents occurred such as theft or burglary, it was often said that Okinawans or Koreans must have been involved. In my perception, discrimination against us diminished after 1965. We have more than thirty thousand Okinawans in this ward, enough for us to have an Okinawan councillor.

The above anecdotal reference would indicate that Okinawan assimilation into Japanese society as a process of internal migration is a means of acquiring protection from discrimination.

In his seminal work on Okinawans and modern Japanese society, Tomiyama suggests that social networks such as *Kansai Okinawa Kenjinkai* (Kansai Okinawan Prefectural Association) held a pivotal role in promoting assimilation of Okinawans into Japanese society during the 1920s and 1930s. According to Tomiyama, the organizations functioned to provide information regarding job vacancies and assured accommodation by way of common dormitories or home stay with relatives. They were run by members from the same town or village, and along kinship ties. It would seem that the shared origins enhanced their sense of being fellow Okinawans, of identifying as *dokyojin* (people from the same locality). Tomiyama claims that his use of the term *dokyosei* (sense of same locality) may be interpreted similarly to Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, by which customs and patterns of actions are practised without consciousness[1]. If *dokyojin* can be taken to represent Okinawans then *dokyosei* may stand for 'Okinawanness' (Tomiyama, 1990:140-150).

Kansai Okinawa Kenjinkai was set up in 1924 as a more systematic way of assisting the settlement of Okinawan migrants in the Osaka area. One function was to fight discrimination in the labour market and to push for better working conditions. Employment of Okinawans was restricted within some sectors and was mostly excluded from heavy industry during the 1920s. Okinawans, Koreans and *burakumin* (people at the bottom of the Japanese social hierarchy) were employed as cheap

labour, their wages being consistently lower than those for mainlanders (Tomiyama, 1990:158-169).

The association played a role in the S*eikatsu Kaizen Undo* (Lifestyle Reform Movement), a campaign sponsored during the pre-war period by the Japanese government and other groups concerned about the low quality of life among rural communities. In Okinawa Prefecture, the way for islanders – often regarded by mainlanders as primitive, unclean, disorderly and unconventional – to adapt to the perceived image of a modern Japanese citizen was seen to be through the suppression of Uchinaguchi (the Okinawan dialect) and by discouraging or prohibiting many Okinawan customs and aspects of culture such as Okinawan sumo wrestling, Okinawan play, *ryubu* (traditional Okinawan dance), the sanshin (three-stringed musical instrument), and the funeral ritual of bone-washing. The distinctive female dress form of *ryuso* was reformed and even renamed (Tomiyama, 1990; Horiba, 1990). Thus, assimilation into contemporary Japanese society could, in the eyes of the authorities, be achieved. It is perhaps an irony that an organization established to create solidarity among Okinawans in the region of Osaka also had a part in forcing Okinawan islanders to discard their culture and customs for the purpose of assimilation. Nonetheless, as a result of diligence and obedience in the workplace, Okinawan labourers in Osaka were to see an improvement in conditions and wages.

In the post-war era, social networks were again active as Nikkeijin from South America arrived, including those of Okinawan descent. In the next section I describe my observations of Tsurumi ward and the Okinawan community there.

5.2 Okinawan community and Latin American colour

On arrival in Tsurumi, I walked for thirty minutes from the railway station to Nakamachi Street in the Ushioda district, a neighbourhood decorated at the time in the national flags of participating countries for the World Cup. The Ushioda district is an area in which many Okinawans settled before and after the Second World War. As I went along the street I saw a sign advertising Okinawan noodles, and displays of *sata andagi* (a kind of doughnut) in a small entrance, which reminded me of a similar sight on the island of Okinawa. Further along the street I came to the *Okinawa Kenjin Kaikan* (Okinawan Prefectural Centre). On the ground floor of the building there were Okinawan restaurants and a products centre selling Okinawan food and souvenirs. The *Okitsuru Kaikan* (Okinawa Tsurumi Centre) was on the first floor. The centre, established by Okinawan return migrants from Hawaii and the South Sea Islands after the Second World War, symbolizes the role played by Okinawan social networks and mutual aid organizations in Tsurumi (Hirota, 1995). Lessons in *ryubu* and in playing the sanshin*,* and occasional events were held on the second floor. This is where Japanese lessons for Nikkeijin used to be held. A Brazilian restaurant, a Bolivian and a Peruvian one, and a travel agent displaying colourful boards in Roman script, plus a used goods shop run by Nikkeijin were amongst the many businesses to be found in Nakamachi Street.

Recruiting Okinawan Nikkeijin from Brazil

As mentioned above, one of the reasons behind the increasing number of Okinawan Nikkeijin in Tsurumi ward is the affiliation of Okinawans. In the 1980s, the Okinawa Prefectural Association conducted a recruitment drive aimed at Nikkeijin from

Brazil. Research by Hirota identified one route to Tsurumi via an electronics company based in the ward and owned by an Okinawan. The company opened an office in Brazil for recruiting Okinawan Nikkeijin and by 1992 was employing about six hundred Nikkeijin. After a spell working for the company some of the recruits left to set up their own businesses and themselves began recruiting people they knew from Brazil. Okinawan Nikkeijin were considered acceptable tenants as regards the provision of accommodation. An estate agency run by Okinawan residents made it a priority to help Okinawan Nikkeijin (Hirota, 1995:200). I would venture that various informal networks were based on the consciousness of *dokyo* (same place), this time applied to people having come from localities in Brazil.

5.3 Local perceptions of Nikkeijin

Later, I lost my way around the area and asked an elderly lady in the street if she could direct me to a neighbourhood where Nikkeijin might live. She replied, "You mean foreigners? I know one Okinawan returnee from Brazil who runs a second-hand shop along there". In the direction indicated, I found a name board in Roman characters and entered the shop. A woman, standing with arms folded, did not look my way. I asked her, "Excuse me, are you a Nikkeijin?" Her reply was abrupt. **"No, I am not."** I said that I had heard she came from Brazil. "No," she repeated. When I asked, "Are you from Okinawa?" she rather petulantly nodded and murmured this was so. I decided not to ask any further questions. On another occasion, I enquired of the owner of a stationary shop about Nikkeijin. His response was that he did not really mind them living in the area. It would seem that some local residents looked upon Nikkeijin as foreigners.

However, there were other local residents who were concerned about Nikkeijin and wanted to help them. For example, Yoko operated a Brazilian snack bar. She told me that she wanted to serve Nikkeijin with Brazilian food and drinks and provide them with a place to gather and chat. One of the reasons she gave was that she understood their situation and was able to share their feelings to some extent. Although she was not Okinawan, her husband came from the island and as a couple they had experienced discrimination. Her voluntary work with Nikkeijin ranged from personal matters to dealing with social welfare difficulties. Yoko was also a member of *Kanagawa-ken Kokusai Koryu Kyokai* (Kanagawa Prefecture International Exchange Association) which helps with the exchange of information among foreign nationals living in Japan.

Yoko's daughter, Naomi managed a Brazilian restaurant with a Nikkei Brazilian man (I was not sure of any personal relationship). When I visited the restaurant for a snack and coffee, the customers were all male and the atmosphere smoky. Two large screens displayed a Brazilian programme. In one corner four men were playing cards. Naomi said she had never been to Brazil but had picked up Portuguese by ear and had learned how to cook Brazilian snacks. The owner of the restaurant did not speak Japanese, so she had to use Portuguese. I tried to find interviewees. Naomi advised it might be difficult because of language, and customers probably would not wish to tell their stories to a stranger.

All the same, I attempted an informal interview with a customer sitting next to me. Speaking hesitantly but in good Japanese, he told me that he had been living in

Tsurumi for seven years and worked for an electronic components company; that he often came to the restaurant in the evening to have a meal and to chat with friends; and that he wanted to return to Brazil sometime in the future. I felt the restaurant was not an easy place for a single Japanese woman to be in. Naomi told me that almost all customers were male Nikkeijin but sometimes couples came in. It appeared to me there was really no room for anyone other than Nikkeijin.

Although Okinawan residents in Tsurumi ward have contributed to the arrival of Okinawan Nikkeijin, the process is not necessary without difficulties. Yasuhiko (above) made the following comment.

> In a recent case, I knew that some ten Nikkei Brazilians were living in a two-bedroomed flat. Some of them worked night shifts and some day shifts. They made noise into the night, dancing and playing sanshin. I gave several warnings as a representative of the association, but they took no notice. The problem lasted for more than six months. I think they have different values and attitudes, even though their backgrounds are Okinawan.

In summary, while Nikkeijin when they arrive in Tsurumi ward are offered some assistance from members of the established community, there is also the perception of Nikkeijin as foreigners. The situation may still apply when the residents are of Okinawan connections and the Nikkeijin have Okinawan descent. The sense of Nikkeijin as foreigners derives not only from daily interaction between Nikkeijin and Japanese, but is reinforced in the discourse of the media and by the very facilities

operating to assist Nikkeijin, for example the provision of Japanese language lessons, and information leaflets printed in Portuguese (Takezawa, 2002:317).

5.4 Self-identity

In this section, six of my informants in Tsurumi talk about their ethnic identity. One individual was first generation and five second generation. Two were from Argentina and four from Brazil. Five were of Okinawan descent. Occupations ranged from manual labourer to business owner, and one was a teacher having had experience of working as manual labourer for several years.

I am Okinawan in Argentina and in Japan

Munenori, sixty-five years old, emigrated from Okinawa to Argentina in 1969 at the age of thirty-two with his wife, by invitation of his uncle. As described in Chapter Two, it was a common practice whereby Okinawan migrations to Argentina were conducted through kinship ties, perhaps invited by relatives. He owned a small farm and raised a family. Munenori left Argentina for Kanagawa in 1992 because of economic doubt and social uncertainty in Argentina. In Japan, he secured through an Okinawan friend a position working for a subcontractor to Nissan. After some years he set up an electronic parts company in Tsurumi where he employed Nikkeijin. He also found a role in the social network of Okinawans within the area and was an acting representative of an association for people coming from Nago city in Okinawa. In addition, he carried out voluntary work preparing visa applications for Nikkeijin. His employees were single men, who usually returned to Argentina after one or two years. Munenori told me that there was an Okinawa Prefectural

association in Buenos Aires and he often used to go there to meet other Okinawans.

> I am not conscious of any problem of identity. I am Okinawan in Argentina and in Japan. Okinawan people are easier to get on with than the Japanese. In Argentina, I was called 'japonesa' by non-Japanese; they were very kind to me.

As a first generation Okinawan migrant to South America, Munenori claimed an Okinawan identity. For a second generation, self-identity can be different.

I am always Argentinian

Marta, fifty-five years old second generation, was born in Buenos Aires. She moved to Japan in 1973 with her father, a migrant to Argentina in the late 1920s, who wanted to take care of his own father living in Okinawa. Her brother took over the family's property on the eventual death of their father. She said that there was no suitable work for her in Okinawa but she found a job in Tokyo teaching Spanish. Subsequently she married a Japanese man and began to teach Spanish at a community college in Tsurumi. She lived in adjacent Kawasaki city (see Map 2).

> In Argentina I was told I was Argentinian though I was also called 'japonesa'. In my consciousness I was always an Argentinian – there and here. It was a little strange to me, the conflict in identity, but I do not have any inferiority complex about it. At the time, the 1970s, I think there was no such a word as Nikkeijin in Japan, and I was Argentinian in the eyes of Japanese people. Of course I think of myself as Argentinian. I cannot be Japanese, I am not Japanese. When you belonged to a

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particular culture into your teens, it stays with you as an adult. I prefer to be called by my first name, Marta. Mrs Sato is a rather common surname in Japan, isn't it? I think Marta can be attractive for Japanese people – it sounds rather exotic.

Marta's words demonstrate how a host nation identity can reflect upon the second and subsequent generations of Japanese migrants. Marta firmly believed that her self-identity was Argentinian. Whenever I telephoned her, she would answer with '*Holla!*' Perhaps it was habitual. She spoke about her work.

When I taught Spanish, some students dropped out of class because my features are Japanese – they saw me as odd. Perhaps they felt that Spanish can be taught only by someone who looks Spanish. It was a disappointment to me. It's like the way that being taught English by someone in an English speaking country is different from being taught it by a Japanese teacher. I think the reason I have held a professional teaching job for such a long time is that I speak Spanish as a first language.

It seems that Marta's social identity and self-identity coincided, and that this became a practical strategy. Marta was a mother of three children and participated in community activities relating to the children as far as she was able. Not understanding everything had not deterred her: she had always tried to have a positive outlook on being a foreigner.

Of the Nikkei Brazilians, all four informants were second generation, and three were of Okinawan descent.

I am Brazilian in Japan

In 1992, Silvia came to Japan from Brazil with her husband and two children. Her husband was also a second generation Nikkei Brazilian and both were of Okinawan descent. In Brazil, they had run a hardware store and employed a Brazilian maid. The reason for arriving in Tsurumi was her husband obtained a job through some Okinawan friends. She told me that for a long time she had wanted to visit Japan and when she saw some of her friends and neighbours leaving for that country, she thought it was a good time for her to make the journey too. In Tsurumi, she was running a restaurant which offered a mixed menu offering Brazilian and Okinawan food. When I interviewed her it was a weekend mid-afternoon, not a busy period. Customers that afternoon were a Nikkeijin and three Japanese connected with the property business.

> I wanted to have a restaurant for a long time. My parents originally came
>
> from Okinawa and my restaurant provides both Brazilian and Okinawan
>
> food. I employ two Nikkeijin including my cousin. Customers are
>
> Japanese and Nikkeijin. I try to cater for families.

During the interview, piped Okinawan folk music played in the background. Silvia told me about her ideas of self-identity.

> I was brought up as Japanese in Brazil, and I thought I was Japanese. But
>
> since I have lived in Japan, Japanese people do not treat me as Japanese,

and I have come to think of myself as a foreigner or Brazilian. I am proud of being Brazilian.

The above comment would seem typical among Nikkeijin whether of Okinawan or of non-Okinawan descent, there being no difference. Many Nikkeijin are subject to discrimination to some degree or other on arrival in Japan. Silvia told me of her encounter.

I went into a pharmacy where I found a 500 yen coin. I asked in Japanese, 'Has anyone dropped this?' A shop assistant replied, 'You are a foreigner, aren't you? We don't serve foreigners!' I was angry and left without buying anything. I can speak Japanese but I was treated as a foreigner. Why was that? I cannot forgive her. At first, it was hard to live in Japan because the customs and language are very different. When I lived in an apartment, the corridors echoed and I was told off because my children's walking made a noise.

Silvia knew the priority of learning Japanese, and made various efforts to acquire the language for business.

When we first arrived, we spoke Portuguese in the home, though now almost all conversations are in Japanese. My daughter understands Portuguese but my son cannot understand it at all. I have officially discarded my children's Brazilian names and I bring them up as Japanese. I attended a language cram school for a year where I learnt how to write and read Japanese. The school had lessons for both Japanese

and Portuguese people. While I was working for a fast food outlet, I had to know Japanese in order to communicate with other staff. I think that some Nikkeijin don't bother to learn much Japanese. They tend to live in their own world which I think is wasteful. I want to associate more with the Tsurumi community.

Ricardo, fifty year old second generation Nikkei Brazilian, was an instructor of karate in Brazil. His parents emigrated from Okinawa to Brazil around 1940. He arrived in the Tsurumi district in 1991 with his family by way of an Okinawan friend's introduction and obtained a job in an electrical equipment factory, a similar route to that taken by Munenori. Ricardo met his present wife, who is second generation Nikkei Brazilian, in Japan. They opened a Brazilian restaurant in 1998. According to Ricardo, their restaurant was authentically Brazilian since his wife's family ran a restaurant in Brazil and the same menu had been introduced. He believed his command of Japanese was not enough to express his character. Indeed, he was very talkative in Portuguese but somewhat reticent in Japanese. During the interview, his daughter sometimes corrected his grammar and supplied words. Ricardo talked as if he thought himself Brazilian.

I am Nikkeijin, neither Japanese nor Brazilian

Another informant, living in Fujisawa in which also many Nikkeijin reside, disclosed a more complex self-identity. Teresa, forty-three years old, came to Japan in 1988 with her husband and two sons. The main reason for the move was the economic and political uncertainty of Saõ Paulo. Her parents agreed it was for the best. She worked

for a components company for four years before changing jobs several times.

> I worked very hard each day from six o'clock in the morning to six o'clock in the evening. It was so difficult working while bringing up my children. My husband worked shifts. Also, I attended a class in a community centre to gain proficiency in Japanese writing and reading. Eventually I collapsed through overwork.

The family travelled back to Brazil once, in 1996, though they retained a bank account and the telephone number in Japan in the expectation of an early return. They were once more in Japan six months later. The decision was taken to settle down in Fujisawa.

> After we returned, we worked very hard in order to obtain our own house. I was granted a permanent visa in 2000 and we took out a mortgage in 2001. One day, my elder son said he would never go back to Brazil; I think that he has the confidence to live in Japan.

Teresa talked about self-identity as follows.

> I am Nikkeijin in Fujisawa. I see my identity as neither Japanese nor Brazilian. On the whole, it does not matter to me now.

However, when I asked about the experience of discrimination, her self-identity showed signs of previous adjustment.

> I know some Nikkeijin feel that we are discriminated against in Japanese society, but I do not believe the problem is serious. I used to think I was

Japanese in Brazil and this continued when I first came to Japan. Then I told myself that my nationality is Brazilian, therefore I am Brazilian. The idea came to suit me. I cannot pass through immigration control easily like a Japanese because I am Brazilian, like other nationalities of South America. On these occasions I wish I could have a Japanese passport.

When Teresa decided to settle down in Japan, it would seem her self-identity gradually shifted from being Brazilian to being Nikkeijin, which she defined as being neither Japanese nor Brazilian. The new position replaced an ambiguity in self-identity. She accepted that her nationality was Brazilian and sometimes identified with it. Nonetheless, she was making great efforts to assimilate into Japanese society in terms of language acquisition and the purchase of a family house. Significantly, Teresa did not say that her self-identity was part-Japanese and part-Brazilian, as other Nikkeijin have done. A practical strategy of accommodation does not necessary reflect personal sentiments in terms of identity: Teresa might at specific times have wished to be of Japanese nationality but this was not the same as equating with a Japanese identity.

I am Nikkei Braziljin

John, a forty-five years old second generation Nikkei Brazilian, was a manager of a language crammer in Tsurumi ward. The school was one of many branches not only in Japan but also abroad that taught maths and Japanese. John's parents were not from Okinawa. He moved to Japan in 1994, though he had taken a master's course at a Japanese university in the 1980s.

In Tsurumi ward there are many Nikkeijin households, not only families but single people, too. There is a Nikkeijin community. I decided to apply for a post in a school here. The students are mostly males in their twenties. I would like to do something for Nikkeijin children who were born in Japan. I can offer learning in Portuguese and Japanese.

John talked of growing identity consciousness while still at secondary school in Brazil.

When I was thirteen years old I was troubled by my identity. My question to myself was, 'Why do I study in Portuguese with a Japanese face?' I stopped speaking Japanese altogether and could not write the script. At fifteen or sixteen years, I was told by an older friend, 'You are Japanese, you have Japanese blood, and your parents' nationality is Japanese,' and then I really wanted to go to Japan to see my parents' country, to search for my roots, and to visit the grave of my ancestors. I read many Japanese history books in order to know myself and my ancestors' country. I think of myself as Nikkei *Braziljin*; that is, I am Japanese with Brazilian nationality.

He expanded on the theme.

As far as I'm concerned, identity is firstly a root. It is about where you come from, who your ancestors are, and who you are as an individual. Secondly, it is to do with cultural influences and customs. Language is an important factor in considering identity. By studying Japanese, I was able

to recognize who I am. I wanted to know my roots. It was a concept. In Brazil I was very proud of my Japanese ethnicity but after living in Japan the idea collapsed. I found differences between the representation of real Japanese life and the one which I imagined while in Brazil.

I insert at this point a quote from the literature, from Hall, to which John's comments would provide an alternative idea.

> ... actually identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves … not so-called return to roots but a coming-to-terms-with our 'routes' (Hall, 1996:4).

To John, the country of his birth and in which he was brought up was not the place of his roots: only in the ancestral homeland, Japan, would he find those. In Brazil, he consciously cultivated a Japanese identity and perhaps the more this was done the more the expectation he had of acceptance in Japan. However, the reality of Japan failed to correspond with his imagined 'homeland', or 'the image of their communion' Anderson (1983:6).

The indication from case studies is that migrants are concerned about the acquisition of language. John thought language an important factor in defining an identity and told of his time working in a factory.

I did not use my Brazilian name and my face is Japanese. My senior colleagues did not recognize me as Brazilian because I spoke Japanese. I experienced no discrimination there.

Yet, in the community, he desired to create a Brazilian atmosphere and generate the circumstances in which people were able to speak Portuguese. In particular, for a next generation born in Japan, he expected a more Brazilian outlook and wanted to encourage the learning of Portuguese.

I tell my students that to have a different culture in Japan is a good thing for you. Someday you will be able do something for your home country. Please think about what you can do for Brazil. You should be pleased to have a Brazilian identity and be blessed with a cheerful Brazilian nature. There is no discrimination in Brazil. It is a cosmopolitan country. Japanese society has discrimination against Koreans and *burakumin*. My friends back in Brazil are of various nationalities such as Italian, German, and so on.

Fujisawa city

Like Tsurumi ward, Fujisawa is another area of Kanagawa Prefecture where many Nikkeijin reside. Teresa was living in Fujisawa and her cousin Marta in Kawasaki, both cities having relatively large populations of foreign workers. One Sunday morning I visited a newly opened Brazilian food store and restaurant in Fujisawa with Teresa and Marta. The owner of the store had experienced living in Brazil for twenty years. According to Teresa, the young attractive waitresses in the restaurant

were Nikkei Peruvian and Brazilian. They communicated in Brazilian Portuguese. It appeared to me that customers were familiar to one another by the way they greeted, though this could have been a cultural style. During lunch, I asked my companions about relations with other Nikkeijin. Teresa said:

> Almost all my friends are Nikkeijin because it is easy to socialize with them. I have heard there is a Nikkeijin social club, but I am too busy to join it. My neighbours are not Nikkeijin but I get on with them.

And Marta told me:

> When I came to Japan in the 1970s, there were no Brazilian or Argentinian restaurants or food, so we had to integrate with Japanese society. Now there are many kinds of cuisine available, and a number of restaurants, and this is very convenient for the newcomer.

Relations with Okinawa

The impression emerges that, to the second generation of Okinawan Nikkeijin in mainland Japan, Okinawa is little more than their parents' home country. Silvia explained that her sister was married to her husband's brother and that they were all of Okinawan descent.

> I was brought up as Japanese but surrounded by old-style Okinawan culture. We often had Okinawan cooking. My parents would say that old Okinawa enjoyed good relationships in which people helped one another. They spoke Uchinaguchi but they asked us to speak Japanese. We children talked to each other in Brazilian when at home. Through

activities at the Okinawan club, my sister learned traditional Okinawan dancing and how to play sanshin. There were many recordings of Okinawan traditional songs at home.

Silvia had been to Okinawa once to visit her ancestors' graves which were located at different places on the island. Her uncle had a butcher's shop in Naha city, and she asked her aunt how to prepare Okinawan family cooking such as soups. She wanted to learn more authentic Okinawan cooking.

I asked Marta her thoughts on Okinawa.

> My brother lives in Okinawa, where he tends my father's grave. Unfortunately, there are no suitable jobs for me there even though Okinawan society welcomes Nikkeijin returnees as members of the Uchinanchu. Without doubt, it is a different attitude from mainland Japan. When I was in Argentina there was an Okinawan society and we often went to the social club. My father spoke Uchinaguchi. I have eaten goat meat [an Okinawan delicacy]. We retained many Okinawan values. I see some similarities between Okinawa and Argentina – for instance, a more casual attitude to the passage of time. People enjoy drinking into the night. I want to go to Okinawa when I am older. I think that Okinawan people take care of the elderly. My mother came to Japan in 1995 to attend an Uchinanchu festival. I am interested in the festival as it is part of Uchinanchu culture.

Ricardo was less enthusiastic.

> I went to Okinawa once for a karate contest but I don't think I will be going again. I learned sanshin from my father when I was seventeen years old but I stopped and turned to guitar instead. Because the sanshin has only three strings, I felt ashamed to play. It is a slightly primitive instrument. But I still have the one my father left me.

Yasuhiko (above), identified a specific difference between Okinawa and the mainland.

> The notion of *nankurunaisa* in Uchinaguchi, which means 'muddling through', is no longer current in mainland Japan. This concept of being 'easy going' is for Okinawan society. Okinawan people are different from those of mainland Japan in ethnicity. The idea of *yuimaaru* (unity spirit) still exists among the first generation in the mainland Japan. We worship the soul of our ancestors. I think that it derived from Confucianism, itself continued from the Ryukyu Kingdom. Our belief is different from Buddhism. There is no sect of Buddhism in Okinawa as on the mainland. Relatives gather each summer to visit their ancestors' graves and a senior or an elderly person talks to us about our ancestors. We are expected to respect a grave for ever.

So far, I have examined self-identity among first and second generation Nikkeijin. My informants' comments reveal a generational difference in the migration process. First generation returnees are aware of being Japanese; for an Okinawan, identity

awareness was one of being Okinawan, which was retained in Japan. Second generation show a more complex pattern: mainly, they feel Japanese in their host country, then host national (Brazilian, Argentinian) in Japan, although in one case the self-identity was neither but instead Nikkeijin.

The concept of 'home'

I asked my informants to talk about the concept of home and homeland. For Munenori, home was definitely Okinawa, where his relatives lived. He said that he intended to move there when he is old. He continued to have an affection for Argentina and was in regular contact with his brother, who informed him of what was going on in the country. Marta also maintained regular contact.

> My sister and mother still live in Argentina, and I phone them every week. They tell me the economic situation there is deteriorating and the place is becoming unsafe. When I was a child, Argentina was such a prosperous country, and safe to be in. Now it is like a war situation. My sister's salary goes down every year. I find it hard to believe that Argentina is in such decline.

To second and third generation Nikkeijin, home might be Argentina or Brazil. Ricardo regarded his stay in Japan as a temporary life stage.

> I want to go back to Brazil some day. My parents passed away but my brother and sister are there. Brazil is my country, where I was brought up. To be honest, I want to be able to talk with Japanese people since I am a talkative person. I cannot speak Japanese well – I can only do greetings

in Japanese. Japan is just a work place to me. I cannot find enough time

to teach karate, and my life is only work. My wife doesn't speak

Japanese. I am applying to get a permanent visa, but I do not intend to

pursue naturalization.

Although Silvia had resided for more than ten years in Japan, she was not completely

comfortable.

My home is Brazil. My daughter wants to live in Brazil. She was only six

when she arrived in Japan; even so, sometimes she thinks that it may be

easier to live in Brazil. The climate is warmer there, and society is

friendlier.

The concept of home was not a fixed thing for John. He believed it was adjustable

depending on circumstances and location.

When I was in Brazil, I thought that my homeland was Japan but, since I

have been living in Japan, home is Brazil. To me, each country has a role,

the same as children see their parents.

Teresa, whose course of settlement in Japan had gone as far as buying a house, said

that she could not think in terms of a homeland; it was neither Japan nor Brazil. This

is a similar statement to when she talked about her self-identity. She went on to say

the following, bringing in Okinawa.

In Brazil, I attended an Okinawan social club. You see, human beings are

very interesting. I enjoyed Okinawan cooking and music. Because I was

interested in what was happening in Japan, I tried to watch Japanese news. But since living in Japan, I really miss Brazilian music and food. I asked for a CD to be sent and I watch satellite TV to see what it is going on in Brazil. After work, we watch the news in Portuguese. It's strange, I am interested in anything about Brazil. I have been to Okinawa several times as my relatives are there.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have presented the responses of Nikkeijin of Okinawan connection living in Tsurumi ward, Yokohama city, and of two respondents from nearby Fujisawa and Kawasaki, as regards their self-identity and concept of home.

With reference to the historical context of internal migration from the island of Okinawa to mainland Japan, it was shown that Okinawan social networks contributed to the recruitment of the labour force and to assimilation into Japanese society of internal migrants from Okinawa. Assimilation in the imperial era also meant suppression of cultural distinctiveness as islanders tried and were encouraged, or often compelled, to achieve an ideal of Japanese citizenship. When Nikkeijin from South America started to arrive in Tsurumi, the role of the Okinawan Prefectural Association had a significant role in providing job opportunities for them. Both processes were possibly influenced by the notion of *dokyojin*, which means people originating from the same small locality, though perhaps more widely interpreted as being from the island of Okinawa. (On an even wider scale, the term Nikkeijin also alludes to people of common origin.) However, in everyday interaction, Okinawan

residents consider Nikkeijin to be different, to be foreigners or not fully Japanese, despite their Okinawan descent. The perception is comparable to that held by non-Okinawan local residents. This is not discrimination, rather it is differentiation. The Okinawans themselves maintain a cultural distinctiveness in Tsurumi though the authorities positively acknowledge the multi-cultural composition of the ward.

Regarding the presentation of self-identity, my findings from this chapter and the preceding one suggest that there is no discernible difference between non-Okinawan and Okinawan Nikkeijin. The patterns of perceived ethnic identity are: home country (Brazilian, Argentinian, or other); neither home country nor Japanese (instead, a self-identity of Nikkeijin); Japanese with home country nationality. There is no particular insistence on the Okinawan connection within Nikkeijin: that is, no discrete boundary of identity exists between Nikkeijin who, in terms of family background, categorize as Okinawan and non-Okinawan.

The concept of home to Nikkeijin tends to have a parallel formation to that of identity. It may be clear and emphatic, or not completely decided, or not a fixed idea at all. Home may be more an emotional and possibly sentimental element while self-identity is pragmatic and strategic.

Chapter Five – Notes

1. Bourdieu proposes the concept of habitus as follows:

> The habitus, the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus. ... The habitus is the universalizing mediation which causes an individual agent's practices, without either explicit reasons or signifying intent, to be none the less 'sensible' and 'reasonable' (1977:78-79).

Chapter Six

Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa

Introduction

It may be accepted that migration in terms of both internal movement and relocation abroad was a significant social phenomenon in Okinawan society during the twentieth century. The history of Okinawan emigration began in 1899 when a group of twenty-seven Okinawan males crossed the Pacific Ocean to Hawaii in order to work as indentured labourers for a sugar cane plantation, arriving in Honolulu on 8th January, 1900 (one was not able to disembark because of health reasons and was sent home). The event marked the start of sustained emigration to the United States, Canada, Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico, Cuba, Paraguay, New Caledonia, the Philippines and the many islands of Micronesia. Migrant families have entered their third, fourth and subsequent generations. Departure from Okinawa was part of a pattern of migration from Japan as a whole. However, growth of the Japanese economy, rebuilt after the Second World War, attracted return migration to Japan. At first, in the 1960s, returnees came from Southeast Asia. By the 1980s, return migration was also under way from South America. The numbers included people – Nikkeijin – with Okinawan connections, and indeed some of these returned directly to the island of Okinawa.

This chapter looks at Okinawan Nikkeijin on the island of Okinawa. I examine governmental policy there and expectations as regards return migration through the

event of the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival and other social institutions concerned with migrants. I also consider local perceptions of Nikkeijin. I explore the process of return migration from the perspective of migrants themselves and examine changes in self-identity that have resulted from relocation. There is a section on the meaning of 'homeland' to migrants. One purpose of this chapter is to consider the identities of Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa against those of Nikkeijin on mainland Japan.

The Nikkeijin in Okinawa Prefecture whom I encountered included first, second and third generation return migrants from Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru. As might be expected, first generation migrants saw themselves as returning to their home country. Perhaps the destination would be the town or village in which they had lived before moving to the host country. For the second and the third generation, 'return' was a new experience. While in South America, they were to varying degrees surrounded by Okinawan values and customs; even so, on arrival in Okinawa they found a rather different environment.

As demonstrated in the previous two chapters, dominant society impacts significantly on the formation of Nikkejin self-identity. In this sense, it is important to examine the extent to which official discourses and perceptions of native Okinawans affect returnee self-identity in Okinawa. The comers are categorized beyond the general term of Nikkeijin as *kikoku kenkeijin* (returned prefectural person or people), which may be viewed as a significant reference to Okinawan migratory discourse. It evokes, too, the notion of *dokyojin* (people from the same locality), mentioned in Chapter Five.

6.1 Okinawa

Location and population

Okinawa Prefecture consists of forty nine islands many of which are uninhabited. According to a report on the economic situation published in 2008 by the Okinawa Prefecture Planning Department, the total population in 2007 was put at 1,373,754. When this is considered against previous available figures – 1,106,559 in 1980; 1,222,398 in 1990; 1,318220 in 2000; 1,361,594 in 2005 – it can be seen that the trend is steadily upwards, against a national population trend for Japan which during the same period levelled then began to fall.
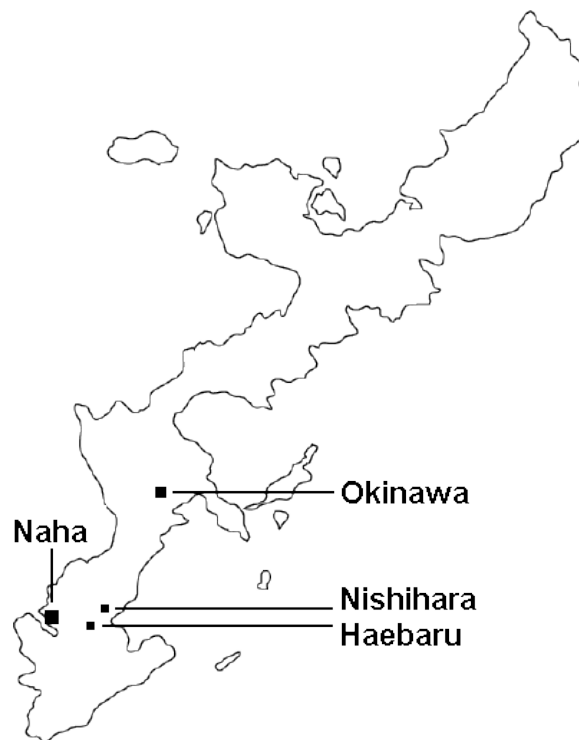
Map 4: Okinawa Island. Source of outline: Graphic Maps.

The number of legal registered foreigners in Okinawa for 2007 was recorded as 8,914, which accounted for less than one per cent of the total population. Countries

of departure are various and included the USA, China, Philippines, South Korea, North Korea, India, Brazil, Peru, Bolivia and Argentina. Many of the Chinese and of the Nikkeijin from South America reside in the capital, Naha, while Americans and Filipinos live in the urban centres of Okinawa city and Ginowan. Movement of Nikkeijin from South American countries increased after the 1990 Revision of the Immigration Control Act though began to fall back towards the end of the decade (see Table 4). It is supposed that the reasons for this were that Nikkeijin were successfully naturalized or went to mainland Japan seeking work (Suzuki, 2005).

	1987	1990	1993	1996	1999	2002
USA	1,498	1,665	1,923	1,808	1,849	1,917
China	972	1,311	1,794	1,943	1,833	1,845
Philippines	986	1,160	1,454	1,263	1,468	1,770
Brazil	137	148	151	151	158	173
Argentina) Peru) Bolivia)	269	762	911	683	564	523
Others	834	956	1,063	1,224	1,489	1,802
TOTAL	**4,696**	**6,002**	**7,296**	**7,072**	**7,361**	**8,030**

Table 4: Legally registered foreigners in Okinawa.
Source: Ministry of Justice Immigration Bureau.

Employment

The economic structure of Okinawa Prefecture is characterized by a high proportion of tertiary industries such as tourism, retail business and other service industries while secondary industries, typified by manufacturing and construction, are weak. In terms of production, the island ranks very low amongst prefectures. An attraction as regards work and business is the network of US military sites on the island. Research into occupational structure carried out by Ryukyu University suggests that Nikkeijin

tend to engage in lower status employment than do non-Nikkeijin foreigners. The same research found that only fifty per cent of Nikkeijin have been in higher education, as compared with over eighty per cent of non-Nikkeijin foreigners, and Nikkeijin are the lower income earners (Suzuki, 2005).

6.2 Okinawan government policy towards Nikkeijin

Okinawan migrants overseas have made an enormous contribution to the island's economy by sending remittances from host countries. It was recorded that in 1929, for example, approximately sixty-six per cent of the entire revenue of Okinawa Prefecture came from this source (OKKI, 1974:32). In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War when the land was devastated, migrants dispatched large quantities of food and goods. Transnational relations between Okinawan migrants abroad and Okinawan society have maintained an unbroken tie. In return, Okinawa Prefecture has provided help such as funding the construction of a hall for Okinawan migrants in Brazil. Okinawan *kenjinkai* associations in host countries became important centres for the preservation of Okinawan culture. Following the reversion in 1972 of Okinawa Prefecture to Japanese governance, the concept of a worldwide Okinawan community began to emerge, gathering pace in the 1980s (Arakaki, 2002b:297).

In order to promote the idea, the Okinawan government planned the first Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival in August 1990. A second festival was held in 1995 to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Battle of Okinawa in the Second World War; in tribute the festival performed a commemorative event for international

exchange and peace. In 2001 a third festival was held, and a fourth in 2006. The Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association (WUB) was founded in 1997 to provide Okinawan businessmen with links to global networks. Junior Study Tours for younger people started in 2001.

Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival 2001

I attended the third Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival which took place between the first and fourth of November 2001 (the originally planned date in 2000 was cancelled because of the twenty-sixth G8 Summit convened in Nago, Okinawa). The festival was jointly organized by the Okinawan Prefectural Government, the Okinawan Exchange and Human Resources Development Foundation, and the Okinawan Convention and Visitors Bureau. According to organizational sources, 4,325 participants arrived from twenty-eight countries across all continents. For the first time, there was representation from Cuba. The main objective of the festival was to continue and develop exchanges between Okinawa and host countries and regions, and to promote mutual progress and prosperity. There was particular emphasis on the exposure of younger generations to Okinawan history, culture, and art in order to promote an 'Uchinanchu identity'.

An estimated total of 266,000 people attended the festival (Okinawa Prefectural Report on Uchinanchu Festival, 2002). Various events were presented for business, economic, arts and culture; these included a World Business Fair, World Bazaar, traditional Okinawan performances, and an Uchinaguchi speech contest. An exhibition called 'Uchinanchu Across the World: Past, Present and Future' presented

the historical story of emigration from Okinawa. Sessions of an Uchinanchu Symposium were held at the Okinawa Convention Centre in Ginowan city and at other venues. Music Fest featured Okinawan artists living in Japan together with artists from overseas; an emphasis here was on music from South America, often played in a distinctive combination of Brazilian and Okinawan styles.

Official Expectations

The programme of the Uchinanchu Symposium included sessions for Chairpersons of Overseas and Domestic Okinawan Associations; *Uchina* (Okinawan) Goodwill Ambassadors; Global Okinawan Women's Forum; and *Kikoku Kenkeijin* (prefectural returnees). I attended the *Kikoku Kenkeijin* session. The essential theme was that the Okinawan government expects second and third generation Okinawan return migrants to act as a bridge between host countries and Okinawa Prefecture. Five panellists talked about their experiences in host countries and their reasons for moving to Okinawa. They were: Miss Kuniyoshi, a third generation Peruvian post-graduate student; Mr Ouwan, a second generation Argentinian general manager of a resort hotel; Mr Aniya a first generation Brazilian deputy representative of the Brazilian Friends Association; Mr Toumei, a first generation North American; and Mr Yagi, a second generation Okinawan Filipino.

Speaking on identity, Mr Ouwan said that he saw himself not as Japanese but as a foreigner, and his concept of home was the place of his birth and upbringing. He said that he lived with a sense of being a migrant in Okinawa (this impression is returned to below). The panellists supported the central theme of the session, believing that

while not being completely Japanese, they were able to contribute to Japanese society by maintaining relationships between Okinawa and other places as a result of having experience and knowledge of more than one country.

Involvement of the young

In the July prior to the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, the Okinawan government invited younger people of subsequent migrant generations to visit Okinawa in order to 'experience the real Okinawa'. Fifty pupils aged between twelve and sixteen years from twelve countries in North America, South America, Europe and Asia took part in the Junior Study Tours. The aim was for the young people to meet local pupils and to learn about Okinawan history, culture and customs. A similar initiative, part of the festival, was the Worldwide Young People's Forum in which students and trainees from overseas were invited to serve as a link between Okinawa and their countries. Forty-seven people studying or training in Okinawa and other prefectures participated in the forum. The topic under discussion was the identity of Uchinanchu and how students could be involved in the Uchina network. Participants and an audience of over a hundred watched a video entitled 'The Strategy of Transporting Pigs to Okinawa'. The documentary depicts the story of Okinawan Hawaiians sending five hundred and fifty pigs in order to aid the plight of the Okinawan people in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Welcoming parties as municipal events

The various municipalities involved in the festival organized many events to welcome Okinawan migrants. For example, in Haebaru town, where there is a

permanent exhibition of migrant history, participants sang Japanese children's songs as if recalling childhood days, and *rukyu buyo* (a traditional dance) was performed by a female Okinawan Brazilian exchange student. Names of past emigrants were written on a wall at the venue: some visitors rejoiced in finding those of ancestors.

As this section has described, the policy of the Okinawan Government regarding the Third World Uchinanchu Festival was to encourage and maintain solidarity among Uchinanchu abroad and to reaffirm Okinawan ethnic identity. The Okinawan government welcomes return migrants and their experiences in order to endorse a social network between Okinawa and the host countries. It is apparent that the authorities do not regard Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa merely as foreigners. A survey conducted for the fourth festival in 2006 showed that fifty-nine per cent of participants shared an Uchinanchu consciousness. The festivals played 'the role of incubator for assuming identity as being Uchinanchu', and the beneficial effect on the economy cannot be ignored (Kinjo, 2008:87). It may be assumed with some certainty that networks were enhanced through the festivals, along with an understanding of the Okinawan cultural climate.

In summary, the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival is an Okinawa government initiative for creating and developing systematic social networks with Okinawans abroad. This can be understood as the policy required for establishing a worldwide Uchinanchu community. It can be said that the festival is a means of enabling the sharing of Okinawan culture and traditions with and among Okinawan Nikkeijin. In this respect, the festival exemplifies the existence of a transnational cultural space.

6.3 Local perceptions of Nikkeijin

Each time I took a taxi during my stay in Naha city, I made a point of asking the driver whether he had relatives who had emigrated abroad. Almost every one answered in the affirmative. In a small guest house where I lodged for a time, the landlady told me that her two brothers both had families in Brazil and that she had once visited them.

The Okinawan media has drawn attention to Okinawan migrants since the 1980s. The newspaper *Ryukyu Shinpou* ran a series of articles headed '*Sekai no Uchinanchu*' (Okinawans in the World) to mark the tenth anniversary of the reunion with mainland Japan. A weekly column, '*Kaigai Uchina Jijo*' (Okinawan Migrant Affairs), was started in 1983 and continues to this day. The remit of the piece is to provide information about Okinawan migrants abroad. Between 1987 and 2001 a series called '*Sekai Uchinachu Kiko*' (Uchinanchu Travelogue – the title was changed slightly during the run) was broadcast over the local television network to feature the lives of Okinawan migrants in twenty-four different countries. During the series, the number of individuals appearing exceeded more than three hundred (Kinjo, 2008). The *Okinawa Times* provides weekly pages for reporting the events and lives of Okinawan migrants from correspondents abroad. Media coverage has popularized the term 'migration' among Okinawans and this has proved to be an effective means of endorsing the transnational Uchinanchu network amongst native Okinawans.

Nonetheless, prejudice towards return migrants exists: many of my informants had experiences of being discriminated against and not being welcomed in the school or

workplace. When I asked one local elderly lady about the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, she told me that she was aware of it but nothing more, although she felt some sympathy toward migrants. This would seem a typical attitude from a resident having no migrant relatives. It is perhaps indicative that the reported estimate of native Okinawans participating in the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival in 2002 was a mere five per cent, (Kinjo, 2008).

6.4 Nikkeijin and Okinawa

In the first part of this section I present the Okinawan Nikkeijin cultural dimension. As far as I observed during my stay on the island, it was difficult to determine a neighbourhood that could be said to represent a Nikkeijin community. The Nikkeijin seemed to be well dispersed. Perhaps a first generation returns to the original home location, while subsequent generations stay with relatives until moving elsewhere for work or business. In the second part, I examine reasons for their coming to Okinawa as reported by Nikkeijin. My informant base was somewhat limited in terms of generation and occupation: I was unable to find informants among manual workers. Finally, I consider the self-identity of Okinawan Nikkeijin since arrival in Okinawa. My informants were four from Argentina; five from Peru; three from Bolivia; and two from Brazil. They were from first to third generation and almost all arrived in Japan and Okinawa between the mid 1980s and early 1990s. Although these examples may not include every possibility of circumstance, I believe they provide an instructive insight into the characteristics of Okinawan return migration from South America.

1. Ethnic restaurants and bars in Okinawa

As noted above, there are no apparent enclaves of Nikkeijin in Okinawa as can be found in certain cities on the mainland. Rather, recognizably ethnic Nikkei establishments are interspersed within the general urban scene. I describe examples of restaurants and bars run by Nikkeijin, situated in Naha city, Okinawa city, and Nishihara town.

A Brazilian restaurant and Latin bars in Naha city

Naha city is the capital of Okinawan prefecture. In 2001, the total population stood at an estimated 361,000 of which the number of legal registered foreigners was approximately 1,600 (less than half of one per cent). International Avenue, the main thoroughfare, is lined with several traditional Okinawan music shops, Okinawan restaurants, a fish market, vegetable markets, a small Brazilian snack bar, and a Brazilian restaurant.

Cecilia, thirty-eight years old second generation Nikkei Brazilian, was part owner of the Brazilian restaurant. She arrived in Japan during 1986 to work in Gunma Prefecture. At first, she did not speak much Japanese but could cope with unskilled employment at factories in Ota, and was able to save money. When a job opportunity presented itself at a travel agency in Yokohama city, she made a concerted effort to improve her Japanese. Later, she moved to Okinawa with her husband, who was Nikkei Argentinian. With her mother, she opened a Brazilian restaurant in Naha city.

> Okinawa is my parent's home. Naha is an ideal place to have a business
>
> like ours as there is a variety of customers, such as tourists, Nikkeijin and

local people. If I had a similar restaurant on the mainland of Japan, like one in Oizumi town, almost all the customers would be Nikkeijin. My brother runs a grocery shop there and almost all his are Nikkeijin.

As Cecilia suggested, one of the characteristics of Naha city is its cosmopolitan nature. A large number of tourists visit not only from mainland Japan but also from abroad, such as Korea and Taiwan. During my period of stay in Naha city, the restaurant expanded.

One weekday, I went to a bar called Salsatina. The owner of the bar was a second generation Nikkei Peruvian. Lively Latin rhythm and salsa dance music resounded throughout the place. A group of five young women were celebrating a birthday in a corner near the bar. The women looked to be in their early twenties. A man wearing a *kariyushi* (similar to an Hawaiian shirt) entered the bar and started to dance salsa with a waitress. Two black men entered and acknowledged the group in the corner. The men danced with two of the young women. I discovered there was only one Nikkeijin there that day, a bartender who was Peruvian third generation. He told me that Nikkeijin and foreigners turned up at weekends. This contrasted with the situation of Oizumi town and Tsurumi ward in which customers at the bars I visited were mostly Nikkeijin on any day of the week.

A Latin American restaurant in Nishihara town

In the town of Nishihara, Saori's family ran the P Latin American restaurant. Saori, twenty-eight years old third generation Nikkei Peruvian, came to Okinawa when she

was a teenager. Her mother was second generation and her father had migrated to Peru by invitation of his uncle. Together, her father and uncle had run a bakery store. After his marrying, her father started a restaurant in Lima employing local people.

Saori told me her story.

> In 1989, I and my younger sister set off for Okinawa. We boarded the plane for Japan with my uncle. It was full of Nikkeijin and some of my friends were aboard: "Are you going to Okinawa, too?" We arrived in Tokyo after crossing the Atlantic. There were an automatic doors and automatic drinks machines. Wow! I thought how advanced Japan was. We took another flight to Okinawa by small plane. My aunt came to greet us at Naha airport and took me by car to Itoman where we were to stay. On the way she asked many questions about Peru. I wanted to know about Okinawa, though.

Saori did not recognize the real purpose of coming to Japan at first. Her idea was of briefly visiting Okinawa Island, the ancestral homeland, as a tourist. This was to change. Four months later her parents arrived in Japan. At Naha airport, she witnessed her parents embracing tightly her older sisters, who had arrived on Okinawa two years before her. Saori sensed her family were not going back to Peru. After the scene at the airport, her plans to return to Lima effectively evaporated. The reasons her family gave for wanting to settle down in Okinawa were political instability and uncertainty in Lima, a city dangerous to walk in, and a failing economy, although they had a new house there. Also, they wished to look after a

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grandmother who lived in Okinawa. Saori's parents subsequently opened the P restaurant, where the four daughters helped.

Brazilian bars in Okinawa city

Giovanni, twenty-five years old third generation Nikkei Peruvian, worked in a Brazilian pastel (pastry) shop in Okinawa city. Although only twelve years old at the time, he perceived the reasons for the move to Okinawa were that his father had passed away and the family were increasingly concerned about the situation in Peru.

> I arrived in Okinawa with my mother and my grandparents in 1991. We could not bear to live in Lima any longer, because of the poverty and political instability in Peru. There were many burglaries.

He had learned how to make Brazilian pastry from his stepfather. The shop was small; every weekend he and his parents served snacks at a counter facing a highway.

With regard to the ethnic restaurants described above, where South American Nikkeijin are able to enjoy home fare and atmosphere but may also meet fellow Nikkeijin for social exchange, I would refer to Linger. He identified a distinction between a 'restaurant in Brazil' and a 'Brazilian restaurant', and proposed different forms of Brazilian identity.

> ... restaurants are key sites of identity-making and identity confirmation ... the subdued diffusion of Brazilianness at Dona Lica's 'restaurant in Brazil' contrasts sharply with the conspicuous propagation of Brazilianness at Restaurante 51 [in Nagoya city], a 'Brazilian restaurant.' If Dona Lica's restaurant-in-place quietly reinforces a

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Brazilian identity-in-place, the displaced Restaurante 51 forthrightly cultivates a displaced Brazilian identity (Linger, 2001:76-77).

In my view, this might well be the case when the Nikkei Brazilian identity is single and relatively simple; however, comments made by my informants indicate that the issue of identity may not be so straightforward.

2. Reasons for return to Okinawa

Based on the experience of my informants, the reasons for arriving in Okinawa would fall into two broad categories: migrants whose arrival was the outcome of decisions made by their parents; and migrants whose arrival was the outcome of decisions made by themselves. Those who made their own choice were normally adults whereas children and adolescents make the move as a result of parental choice.

As a family decision

Kiyohide, thirty-four years old second generation Nikkei Brazilian, arrived on the island of Okinawa in 1980 at the age of twelve (like Giovanni). His father followed the idea shared by many first generation migrants about sending their children to Japan in order to receive an education.

> When I was in Brazil I was not interested in Okinawa. I had no desire to know what it could be like to grow up there. But my father wanted me and my sister and brother to have an education in Japan, so we came to Okinawa. On arrival it was hard for me to associate with the society in

Okinawa, and my sister had the same feeling as well, but my brother was too young to think about it.

He stayed at the home of his grandparents and went to high school. Later on, his family were reunited in Okinawa city. Kiyohide was a teacher in a secondary school at the time of my research.

From an experience in youth

The experience of subsequent generations who visited or stayed in Okinawa in their youth was felt strongly in later life, and it was a motive for return. On an individual level, there were a few return migrants who, like Kiyohide, had been educated as teenagers in Japan in accordance with parental policy on education. At local government level, some towns and cities have, since the 1970s, invited the descendants of migrants as cultural exchange students to learn the Japanese language and about Okinawan culture. Such opportunities opened the door to all descendants of Okinawa migrants. Indeed, the following three informants gave reasons for coming to Okinawa which followed on from the experience of having already been to the island as students in their youth.

Masaru, fifty-seven years old third generation Nikkei Argentinian, was acting representative for the Okinawan Argentinian Association. He was a language student at university when spending a year in Okinawa in the 1970s. During that time he met a girl and after working as an engineer for some years in Argentina he returned to Okinawa and married her. For him, marriage was a specific purpose of return.

Amelia, forty-three years old third generation also from Argentina, first came to Okinawa in 1986 to take a language course, and returned to Japan in 1988 where she worked as a manual labourer in factories in Gunma and Kanagawa, and in Tokyo as an interpreter. She subsequently decided to move to Okinawa and there worked for an interpreting agency before establishing one with some friends.

The above two informants had attended language courses. Yukari, thirty-three years old third generation Nikkei Bolivian, came to Okinawa first as a trainee student through JICA (Japan International Co-operation Agency) to study accounting and Japanese. She made a return to Okinawa two years later.

For keeping *Totome*

Totome is an Okinawan tradition, based on ancestral worship, whereby a deceased person's inheritance and their *ihai*, a mortuary tablet on which the names of past family members are inscribed, are passed to male offspring, generally the first-born. Some informants, the eldest sons of families, had journeyed to Okinawa for the maintenance of *totome*. (Two of the male panellists on the Uchinanchu Symposium gave this as the reason for their coming to the island). This was particularly so among first generation migrants. For example, Tetsu migrated to Bolivia in 1954 and returned to Okinawa in 1979. When I visited him at his home, which in many other respects was not a typical Japanese-style house, there was a *butsudan* (a family Buddhist altar) in one corner of the living room. The property was on the market to raise the money for a return to Bolivia, when Tetsu would pass on the *totome* to his brother.

I realized how much Bolivia suits me. It's a magnificent place to live

with friendly neighbours. I am going to run a stock farm again in Bolivia.

He was seventy-eight years old, but still active. Tetsu hoped that he could contribute to collaboration between Okinawa and Bolivia, so that many Okinawan Bolivians would be able to travel to Japan in order to study Japanese. He returned to Bolivia with his wife four months after I interviewed him. I don't know about the stock farm. Furio, forty-eight years old second generation, had been a high school art teacher in Argentina.

Okinawa is my ancestors' country. I came to Okinawa once before when

I was in my twenties and became interested in the culture. In Argentina, I

spoke a little Uchinaguchi at home. My relatives in Okinawa offered me

accommodation and so I came in 1985. I did some manual jobs for a few

years. I eventually married a local girl and became a freelance artist.

The belief in ancestral worship widely permeates Okinawan society. Furio's case was rather complicated in that he succeeded *totome* on his mother's side. When his uncle passed away, his mother consulted Furio about the maintenance. After discussion, a cousin living in Osaka finally decided to maintain the grave in Okinawa.

Music

Some informants were passionately involved with traditional Okinawa culture and especially music when they were in the host countries. Associations in the host countries have held several events promoting aspects of Okinawan culture including

folk song, playing the sanshin, wrestling, and the performance of classical dance. Through these events, migrants have had opportunity to learn.

Lucy, thirty-five years old third generation Nikkei Peruvian, has travelled between Peru and Okinawa several times. The first journey was at the age of seven with her grandmother. She stayed for two months and she remembered liking Okinawa very much. The second occasion, she was thirteen; it was a summer vacation and again she was accompanied by her grandmother. After graduation from high school, she was again in Okinawa, where she went to university for one year but had to return to Peru on the death of her mother. Two years later she returned to the island and worked at her cousin's bar. Meanwhile she learned Okinawan folk music in order to obtain a qualification for teaching. Back in Peru, she had picked up sanshin from demonstrations by her grandmother. It may be assumed that Lucy was brought up surrounded by the Okinawan culture. This could have become a strong influence on her being in Okinawa.

Reasons for being in Okinawa were therefore to maintain the traditional custom of *totome*, or a self-made decision based on a cultural attraction often connected with upbringing and previous stays during childhood for education. Some motivation could be attributed to organizations offering the opportunity to support Okinawan culture for subsequent generations. The policy of Okinawan local government is a significant element in that it facilitates mutual relations between host countries and Okinawa.

Only two of my informants had undertaken *dekasegi* on mainland Japan. They began in unskilled jobs to then go on, when their Japanese became proficient, one to a secretarial post at a travel agency and the other to become an interpreter. Eventually, both moved to Okinawa, supported by relatives in accommodation and work. In all, arrival on the island as a migratory movement involves more than the economic imperative which delivers migration to the industrial areas of mainland Japan. In the case of Okinawa, kinship ties and cultural preferences are also important.

6.5 Ethnic minority status and self-identity in the host country

As mentioned in Chapter Four, Japanese migrants in Brazil are socially identified as Japanese with ethnic minority status and are referred to as 'japonesa'. Japanese migrants and their subsequent generations are given a similar status in Argentina and Peru. Almost all of them accept the social identity as equivalent to self-identity. Yet some of my informants indicate that such minority status was not always coincidental with individual self-identity. I examine this point in the case of Argentina and Peru. In the same way that a boundary may be identified in Brazil between migrants from Okinawan and those coming from mainland Japan, it would seem the same situation occurred in Peru, Bolivia and Argentina.

Ethnic minority status in Argentina

Second and third generation Okinawan migrants Furio, Amelia and Masaru said they were called 'yapo' in Argentina. Furio accepted this descriptive term as an unavoidable fact since his parents migrated from Japan. He gave the following reasons to explain why the term was used.

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As you know, Buenos Aires is a cosmopolitan city, and there are people from many different countries. Italians are called 'tano', Spanish are referred to as 'galieco' because there are many people from the Galicia region in Spain, and Japanese are called 'yapo'. I don't believe there is implied discrimination in these terms. It is not a problem to me to be called 'yapo'. To me, there is nothing more to this than the fact that my parents have Japanese and Okinawan ways. But some of my friends felt discriminated against when they experienced bullying at school.

Similarly, Masaru said that he was looked upon as a foreigner or Japanese in Argentina, though his self-identification as Japanese was equivalent to being Okinawan.

When I was in Argentina, I thought that I was Japanese and at the same time Uchinanchu. To me, Okinawa means Japan – after all, Okinawa is a part of Japan.

In the literature, Higa states that the descriptive expression Japanese-Argentinian (Argentino-Japonés) was not as diffuse among the Japanese migrant community in Argentina as was Japanese-Brazilian in Brazil. This is because the immigrants and their descendants were expected to assimilate into the established demands of Argentina's national identity. For subsequent generations, when they asserted 'Soy argentino' (I am Argentinian) it was not only a claim to legal status but was also highly related to their inability to speak Japanese (Higa, 2003:76).

Amelia represents an example of someone with a migrant background who used her self-identity in a strategic way.

> When I was in Argentina I was called 'yapo' but it does not relate to the matter of my identity. I think that some people are likely to take it as a negative meaning. Nikkeijin is Nikkeijin, it is not a foreigner and not Japanese; it is a special existence. Since childhood I have used my multiple identities to advantage. I am sometimes Argentinian and sometimes Japanese depending on the situation. I think my childhood was surrounded by double cultures and customs: one is Argentinian, and the other a preserved old-fashioned Okinawan. All my relatives on my mother's side live in Argentina and all those on my father's side live in Okinawa. So I sometimes think of myself as Uchinanchu.

Amelia worked as a counsellor for a hospital in Buenos Aires before moving to Japan. When told she was not the same as the other Japanese in the work place, Amelia emphasized the effect that Argentinian, rather than Japanese, culture had on her personality. Her response was, "I am Argentinian although my outlook is Japanese." Amelia had operated her multiple identities depending on the situation and place in which she found herself.

> Before entering university I used to attend the Okinawan Nikkeijin Association and be part of the community. There, the terms *issei* [first generation] and *nisei* [second generation] were often used. I was a youth representative in the association. On becoming a student, I gradually began to break away from the Nikkeijin connection. But I realized that in

finding a job it was an advantage to appear Japanese because there was

an established belief that Japanese were hard workers and reliable.

Ethnic minority status in Peru

Saori told me that she was called a foreigner in Peru while she identified herself as being Japanese. To her, the meaning of foreigner equates with being Japanese and she suggested the following reason for this.

During school years I was made conscious that I am a foreigner. I myself

thought that I am Japanese. At first I thought the Japanese were my

fellows and I would have a certain security. This is because I lived in a

Nikkeijin community in Peru.

Lucy, also from Peru, reported similar feelings. Thus, a tentative impression is formed that Nikkei migrants are regarded as foreigners in the host countries though some of them self-identify as being Japanese. There are however, a few individuals who demonstrate, and perhaps use strategically, a complexity of features in terms of how they identify.

'Otro japonés' or the other Japanese

In Argentina, neither Amelia nor Masaru discerned any significant difference between Okinawa and Japan. Amelia said:

I did not distinguish between the mainland of Japan and Okinawa, but

since moving to Okinawa, I acknowledge that I was surrounded by

Okinawan culture and customs in Argentina, and not Japanese ones.

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The above sentiment was also heard from Masaru. Perhaps for subsequent generations there is no clear distinction between Okinawa and Japan, or at least they cannot see a difference from the particular viewpoint of Argentina. The first generation, on the other hand, were keen to preserve the Okinawan language and culture, culinary tastes and customs. I suppose one reason was that, in Argentina, there was not the pressure for Okinawans to assimilate as there was in Japan; another may be that Okinawan migrants in Argentina tended to outnumber those from the Japanese mainland. Also, there was a boundary element. According to Patty, second generation Argentinian:

> When I was in Argentina, we Okinawans were so close and kept a good relation with each other, but there were arguments with the mainlanders. Indeed, one of my friends was banned from associating with the mainlanders. The mainlanders were different from us. I think that the Okinawans had a consciousness of it.

In Brazil, Okinawan migrants call themselves *kenjin* (literally, prefecture people) whereas they refer to other Japanese migrants by the term *kengaijin* (people from another prefecture) (Maeyama, 1996). From the opposite point of view, migrants having mainlander backgrounds tend to view Okinawan migrants as a separate group. Indeed, the division between Okinawans and mainlanders in the host countries is encapsulated in the following phrase. The Okinawans were in the 1930s called 'otro japonés', which translates as 'the other Japanese', by Japanese mainlanders in Peru (Ueunten, 2002:102). This compares with other phrases used by mainlanders to refer to Okinawans in other settings: *Japan-pake* (Japan-Chinese) in Hawaii

(Arakaki, 2002a:132); *Japonese-kanaka* (becoming Japanese) in Micronesia (Tomiyama, 2002:63). In the Philippines, Okinawans were often regarded as 'the other Japanese' by both Filipinos and Japanese mainlanders (Hayase, 1984:216; cited in Kaneshiro, 2002:79).

Further support is found in my informants' narratives. The following came from Kouken, first generation Nikkei Bolivian.

> I lived in Colonia Okinawa [see Chapter Two], but almost of all the Japanese mainlanders live in Sanfan, and Okinawan migrants were called 'another Japanese' by mainlanders. I think the reason for it comes mainly from a language difference – Okinawans speak Uchinaguchi. But we have a reputation of being good workers and enthusiastic for education.

Yukari, (above) told me that she was called 'Okinawa japonés' when she attended a local school in Bolivia.

6.6 The diversified self-identity

This section examines Okinawan Nikkeijin and their perceptions of self-identity since living in Okinawa. As proposed in Chapters Four and Five, the attitude expressed by the dominant society towards Nikkeijin has an affect on the formation of self-identity amongst Nikkeijin. It could reasonably be assumed that return migrants would be more widely accepted in Okinawa than on the mainland of Japan, not least as a result of governmental policy. Yet, during their teenage years, many Nikkeijin shared a sense of being discriminated against by local pupils, and of being

isolated from dominant society or in their work place. The situation is not exceptional in Okinawa.

Experiences of Discrimination

As set out above, Okinawa offers an acceptable environment for return migrants. Patty believed that discrimination against Okinawan Nikkeijin is less than in mainland Japan as there is a more intimate atmosphere and easier association with existing residents. Customers of restaurants run by Nikkeijin are not only Nikkeijin but also local people. It was her view that the older generation of local people have a feeling of appreciation towards Nikkeijin for sending remittances after the Second World War.

However, discrimination against Okinawan Nikkeijin during school years is a common phenomenon. Some of my informants were to an extent faced with bullying by local pupils. For example, shortly after his arrival, Kiyohide was asked whether there were traffic signals in Brazil, and he knew that the images of Brazil formed by the young of Okinawa were of the Amazon, football, large families, and barefoot children. He told me:

> My experience of being bullied at primary school was not one of violence, more a sense of being excluded, of being unable to join my classmates. I hesitated to go along with Okinawan society. I thought I would not be able to marry. But now I am married, to an Uchinanchu, and have a baby. The reason I am a teacher is I want to tell the truth and reality about people who have a different culture.

Saori observed that secondary school in Okinawa was rather different from what she had expected. Pupils were very quiet in class. The boys were skinheads, and the girls looked naïve and self-conscious. She felt that life in Okinawa had to be accepted because it was her fate, but sometimes she resented it. At primary school, which she entered three grades lower than her real age because of her poor understanding of Japanese, she was subject to quarrels and fights. She told me that one day one a classmate affronted her.

> "Go back to Peru! You are Peruvian, why don't you speak Japanese properly?" My temper snapped. I chased him and shouted at him in Spanish. I had other fights also, though my sports club mates helped and supported me.

In the upper secondary school she was not bullied. Her sister was in a higher class and this helped. If anything, the fact that she came from Peru began to make her life easier, since everybody knew and treated her accordingly. When she reached high school age, she began to work in a supermarket at weekends, Members of the staff were mature and showed an interest in Peru. She could make Okinawan friends there.

Giovanni related having had a positive attitude during upper secondary school. He behaved cheerfully and had very little experience of being bullied. Acting as a foreigner was an advantage to him and he was popular among other pupils. Because he did not work hard at lessons, it was difficult for him to enter college. He told me proudly that he was lucky eventually to be able to do so on the recommendation of the headteacher. Giovanni's positive approach helped him with questions at school.

For example, when he was asked by some pupils whether Peru had electricity, and if people wore proper clothes, he replied that it was for the individual to find out. However, he said his cousin on the mainland had had a more difficult time.

> I think that *naichi* [mainland Japan] Nikkeijin have been more discriminated against by society than Nikkeijin in Okinawa.

Yukari experienced isolation rather than discrimination. When she first arrived in Okinawa from Bolivia, she felt homesick.

> I could see drawbacks to the Japanese lifestyle. It depressed me a little but I tried not to think about it and remembered the proverb, 'When in Rome, do as the Romans.' I often felt isolated but gradually got used to it. I tried to open up my mind. I noticed by doing so I could attract friends, especially at college. I could adapt to Okinawan society. It has become easier since I began taking a positive attitude.

By her approach, Yukari felt she could assimilate into Okinawan society. To Lucy, the degree of experiencing discrimination depended on having sufficient language skill.

> Yes, I experienced some discrimination at the beginning of living in Okinawa, but when I speak Japanese properly it has gone.

Thus, language is one exclusionary factor used by local people, and Nikkeijin exclude themselves because of inadequate language acquisition. Different language backgrounds serve to emphasize an 'us' and 'them' division. Almost all of my

informants spoke sufficient Japanese during conversations. As Lucy and Cecilia commented, when they obtained Japanese language skills they felt society accepted them. Such efforts in ethnic adaptation led them to social success in Okinawan society. De Vos makes a distinction between ethnic adaptation and adjustment. Adaptation is an assessment of social success as apparent in terms of occupation, education, and social mobility in a given society. Adjustment relates at a more psychological level (De Vos, 1982:76-77; cited in Tsuda, 2003:268). This approach can be supported among my informants: some were university graduated or had gained from other tertiary education, and were in professional careers. In the cases of Yukari and Giovanni, an open-minded attitude proved helpful in adjusting to the new social environment.

Diversified self-identity in Okinawa

Almost all my informants said that, after moving to Okinawa, they became aware of an ethnic identity and recognized some diversity in thought. From their narratives, self-identity can be clarified in the following three types: a single national identity; multiple identities; shifting identities.

I am Peruvian

Giovanni considered his mixed cultural background useful in terms of a life strategy.

> If I didn't give my name at upper secondary school, I was accepted as Japanese, otherwise I was seen as Nikkeijin. Actually, being Nikkeijin was an advantage. Class mates were concerned about me. I became someone of interest and everybody called me 'Johnny'. I think that there

are many persons of mixed background in Okinawa. One of my friends is half-Japanese and half-American, though he speaks only Japanese. I regard him as Japanese although his outlook is not. I myself do not suffer from an identity problem. I can use both a Peruvian and Japanese identity. I am Johnny in Okinawa. I am Peruvian. I do not mind being thought of as a foreigner.

I am Brazilian

Cecilia talked about her self-identity as follows.

I look on myself as Brazilian, not Okinawan. On first arriving, I could not accept the regulated life of the Japanese, but I thought it better to keep to the rules as far as I knew them. Brazilians are laid back and carefree. I hope Japanese can understand that Nikkeijin and other foreigners are not necessarily like that.

She had more than ten years experience of working in factories in mainland Japan. In the process of changing occupation type from non-skilled to office work, she applied herself to improving her understanding of the Japanese language. As mentioned earlier, she moved to Okinawa with her Nikkei Argentinian husband and, with her mother, opened a Brazilian restaurant on a busy street in Naha city. I suppose her self-identity connects with her business.

I discovered that some of my customers were Nikkeijin who chose not to disclose it. They were first generation who had experienced living in Brazil for a number of years. Maybe they did not have good memories of

that country. I could well understand their feelings because we did not have such a successful life there.

Giovanni and Cecilia shared an occupation: preparing and selling Brazilian cuisine. It would seem that both recognized the commercial advantage of a South American background for this.

I am an Argentinian who speaks Japanese

Amelia insisted that Nikkeijin meant having a special existence. "We are not foreigners, and Nikkeijin is Nikkeijin". She emphasized her Argentinian side through her ability to speak Spanish. Her multiple identities in Argentina has transformed into a single identity.

> My outlook is Japanese. But I am an Argentinian who speaks Japanese. As on the TV commercial, a human being is like a banana – unless you peel the skin you don't know what's inside. If I do not speak Spanish and use my Japanese name, I am Okinawan. When I give my first name – Amelia – people are surprised. In Argentina, I thought my attitude and gestures were Japanese-like, but in Japan I am told my demeanour is Argentinian, although this occurs less often.

As a strategy for coping with Okinawan society, the ability to speak two languages enabled her to acquire not only her present job as an interpreter but also as a presenter for the opening ceremony at the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival.

Similarly, Furio thought a more positive way of experiencing the ethnic category of Nikkeijin was the role it played in his family life.

> I am an Argentinian as my way of thinking is rather European. It is easier for me to think in Spanish rather than in Japanese. My artistic knowledge was cultivated in Argentina. It is my perception that my children are proud that their father is Argentinian and their mother is Japanese [Okinawan]. This is a rather unusual circumstance. I read Spanish books and speak Spanish at home. Of course, there are discrepancies within everyday life. I try to accept Japanese culture and customs in order to live at ease. It depends on the individual – some [Nikkeijin] cannot accept Japanese customs and some still have difficulty with speaking Japanese.

Furio had acquired a reputation as a Nikkeijin artist in Okinawa. Influenced by European artistic sensibilities, for him to identify as Argentinian may be expected. However, as time passed his art began to absorb elements of Okinawan culture.

> After I left Argentina, I felt the nostalgia sometimes grow when I listened to favourite music and recalled friends. I am sure that my work now is affected by Okinawan colour and material.

Amelia and Furio used their cultural background effectively under the official discourse category of *kikoku kenkeijin* (returned prefectural person or people). Both found a place in Okinawa to establish careers. It would seem that they adjusted to Okinawan society by regarding the status of Nikkeijin as something special.

A second pattern, that of multiple identities, may be considered from the approaches taken by Lucy from Peru, and Masaru and Patty from Argentina.

I am half-Japanese and half-Peruvian

Lucy's experience is perhaps common for Nikkeijin.

> I was confused over my ethnic identity because I was called Japanese in Peru and I thought of myself as Japanese. But on arrival in Okinawa I was regarded as a foreigner. My face is Japanese but I could not speak Japanese well. I came gradually to know the Okinawan dialect. People's attitude to me is the same whether I speak Japanese or not. Why is that so? The question of whether I am Japanese or not is difficult to answer, but now I dare to say I am half-Japanese and half-Peruvian.

As Lucy obtained sufficient Japanese by which to communicate better with native Okinawans, her self-identity changed. The awkwardness diminished when speaking Japanese, and she though of herself not so much a foreigner. Although she obviously distinguished the cultural differences between Peru and Okinawa, her work of teaching traditional island folk music made it necessary for her to connect with the part of herself that is Okinawan. Indeed, when Lucy referred to herself as half-Japanese she could have said half-Okinawan. Okinawan music was always an important part of Lucy's life.

> My grandmother used to say to me, "You should not play European music." She taught me how to play the sanshin and sing the songs. I learnt the spirit of Okinawan folk music from her. One day, I attended a

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wedding ceremony at which there was an Okinawan performance, with Okinawan clothes and music. It made a lasting impression on me.

In Peru, Lucy won a karaoke competition organized by the Okinawan Peru Association by singing a Japanese sentimental popular song. There was promise of becoming professional.

> While I toured to promote my record in Japan I realized that I was deeply affected by Okinawan music so I started to learn both traditional and modern Okinawan folk music. I feel that the melody produced by the sanshin is similar to Andean music, and this makes me calm.

She believed that even if people do not understand the language, they can appreciate the meaning of Okinawan folk song, not only through its rhythm but also through its particular expression. If Lucy's half-Japanese self-identity could be considered to be half-Okinawan, then it may well have emerged from her involvement in Okinawan music.

I am Japanese while being Argentinian

Masaru shared a similar family background to that of Furio, yet he described himself as half-Japanese and half-Argentinian.

> My wife is Okinawan and I do not speak Spanish with my family. I use Spanish only when I meet Nikkeijin. My father works in Argentina as a correspondent for the Okinawan Times newspaper. My brother live there, too. If my children want to go to Argentina, that is OK, no problem. I

want them to go abroad. But I am not going back to Argentina, as I have made my family here in Okinawa. I want to do something for both Okinawa and Argentina. I think of myself that I am half-Japanese, meanwhile I always have a consciousness of being Argentinian. To me, Uchinanchu means being Japanese as Okinawa is part of Japan.

He moved to Okinawa in 1980, subsequently marrying an Okinawan woman and starting a family. The consciousness of being Uchinanchu derived from settlement, from integrating into Okinawan society. Perhaps Marasu's position of deputy chair of the Okinawa-Argentina Association helped or caused him to maintain a close transnational tie with Argentina. He said that he wished to contribute to both countries through the association, which would accord with the Okinawan government's idea of *kikoku kenkeijin*.

Patty also saw her self-identity as multiple.

I see myself as being a little Japanese, a little Argentinian, and also Nikkeijin. This is because my personality was formed by knowing two cultures. Having Argentinian nationality is an advantage in getting a job teaching Spanish. If my nationality, like my face, were Japanese then it would be difficult. In this sense it is beneficial to be a Nikkeijin. I have not had difficulty with my identity since I can cope with situations. If I am told that a Japanese doesn't do this, I can say I'm Argentinian. If I am told an Argentinian doesn't like that, I can say I'm Japanese. I make it easy rather than take it seriously. What identity means to me is

belonging. The Japanese tend to classify people into little boxes – the Argentinians put people together in one big box.

After an eight year absence, Patty had made a return visit to Argentina. However, she soon decided the country was not for her any more, and when she was told by someone that she had become Japanese, she felt all right about it.

A third pattern of self-identity, displaying complexity and fluidity, emerges from the narratives of Saori and Kiyohide.

My identity is ambiguous

Kiyohide told how, as time passed, he came to regard his identity as intangible and ambiguous.

> I came to Okinawa at the age of twelve. It was a sort of watershed in my life. My parents thought it would be better for me to be educated in Japan. They are Uchinanchu and understand Uchinaguchi, so I thought of myself as being Uchinanchu at the time. Although I made friends through playing sports, I took a long time to adjust to Okinawan society. So did my sister.

He must have been noticed the differences between social identity and self-identity. As certain stages passed, his self-identity started to show some changes from being Okinawan to a more ambiguous one. When he was nineteen, he had to consider applying for Japanese nationality. He decided to go ahead since he

could obtain Brazilian nationality at any time. Shortly after, he changed his first name.

> Until I was twenty years old I used my Brazilian name 'Robert'. This gave me an advantage. I was often asked to interpret from Portuguese to Japanese, and vice versa, and the name distinguished me from others.

To obtain Japanese nationality meant not necessary to be Japanese. Kiyohide told me he had a Brazilian national flag at home, not a Japanese one. His family supported Brazil in the World Cup. All the same, he found himself not fully behaving as a member of his generation of Brazilian.

> When I am surrounded by second and third generation Nikkeijin, my Brazilian identity seems to leave me. I cannot perform fully as a Brazilian. For example, during the World Cup in 2002, others could express their feelings by shouting and applauding whereas I hesitated. In this sense I feel isolated.

Kiyohide's Brazilian cultural background persisted, even though he felt an Uchinanchu identity in childhood. He was able to take advantage of this as a teacher at secondary school. In his class he sometimes told his pupils about Brazil and the experiences of living there. He could tell a story not found in a text book. The class was taught the benefit of travel, to mainland Japan and abroad. While Kiyohide talked about Brazil, he continued to possess a strong consciousness of being Uchinanchu.

My identity changes according to time and place

Saori's case was not a simple one.

> At first I thought the Japanese were my fellows and that I would have a
> certain security because I lived in a Nikkeijin community in Peru and
> considered myself Japanese. But on moving to Okinawa I came to realize
> that my fellows were in Peru, they were not here, as nobody accepted me
> and I stopped regarding myself as Japanese. I could not understand the
> Japanese language very well and my fashion sense differed, but my
> physical features were Japanese, so people expected me to speak the
> language. I was reproached for not speaking proper Japanese. "You came
> from Peru, go back to Peru." My identity became confused and swayed –
> I was neither Japanese nor Peruvian. I asked myself, "Who I am?" I felt
> that life in Okinawa was a bad choice. It was different from my ideas.
> But I gradually became Peruvian by knowing Okinawa.
>
> ...
>
> Up until high school age I was made conscious that I was a foreigner
> here and I began to believe it. Although I had Uchinanchu friends,
> nostalgia about Peru dominated my life, so I spent many unhappy days.
> Thinking about why I was here made me angry and I really wanted to be
> back in Peru. At junior college I made Nikkeijin friends, and once I
> opened my mind I felt more comfortable. Whenever I met other Nikkeijin
> I was aware of being Nikkeijin. Our first thoughts would be something
> like, "I am Nikkei Peruvian, you are Nikkei Argentinian" but finally it
> did not matter. There are not so many differences between us. So my

ethnic consciousness became that of Nikkeijin. After a time, I came to wondering whether I was Peruvian or, because of a knowledge of Okinawan values and customs, Uchinanchu. My response was to quell this in me. By denying Okinawan things I tended to think Peruvian and became Nikkeijin.

Saori had a difficult time until she settled down in Okinawa. With strength of determination she worked her way through school and college eventually to go on to university.

> Now that I can speak good Japanese and am affected by Japanese culture, if I am asked generally whether I am Peruvian or Japanese, I reply 'both'. If I am asked the same question by a Japanese, I reply I am Peruvian. If I were asked it by a Peruvian, I dare say I would answer I am Nikkeijin. In short, my answer depends on the situation, which is ambiguous. I concluded that identity does not matter to me because I cannot define clearly what is what, and it is all very ambivalent. I can say this from my experience. People think identity is a serious issue, but to me it is not. If I am asked what Nikkeijin means, I could say that it is the particular ethnicity I belong to. I do not know whether I need an identity though I suppose I have one depending on the place. When I go abroad, my identity is here, but when I am here, my identity is fragile and unstable.

She described her state of mind as it was during the period that she felt sad and exclusion from Okinawan society.

Reminiscences of Peru supported me and I had pride in being a Peruvian.

I said to myself, "Do not give way, and hang on."

The above various shifts from being Japanese to Peruvian, and from Peruvian to Nikkeijin, and from Nikkeijin to either Peruvian and Japanese demonstrate a somewhat mobile example of cultural adaptation. Additionally, Saori talked about the consciousness of being Uchinanchu when she went to mainland Japan.

When I stayed in Tsukuba at postgraduate school on mainland Japan, I was not settled. I began to understand the difference between Okinawan and mainland Japanese ways. I started to think I was Uchinanchu rather than Japanese. It suited me.

Okinawan consciousness

During the time Nikkeijin of Okinawan family background are living on the island, their consciousness of being Okinawan is re-evaluated by Okinawan society through everyday interaction. When on the mainland of Japan, they are recognized as Okinawan by the population, a response which acknowledges and perhaps emphasizes differences between Okinawa and the mainland. In Saori's case, the sense of difference reaffirmed an Uchinanchu identity. Yukari, third generation Nikkei Bolivian, told of her experience.

I realized the relationship between Okinawa and Japan gradually. This is a small thing, but when I took a taxi, I noticed a difference. In Okinawa, the drivers are friendly as in Bolivia, but it was not like that in Tokyo. I began to avoid making eye contact. I felt intimidated somehow.

The sense of difference did not affect her self-identity.

> I have dual nationality and Japanese nationality was an advantage for getting a temporary job in the public sector. I was not conscious of my identity because I was blending in with society.

Sally, twenty-three years old second generation Nikkei Peruvian, arrived in Okinawa when she was seven. After passing through school she went to work in Tokyo and lived there for three years.

> During my stay in Tokyo, I newly recognized that I was Uchinanchu. My friends there were almost all Japanese. Although I had no particular consciousness of being Nikkeijin, I was Nikkeijin to people around me. I obtained Japanese nationality when I was twenty-one and so though of myself as Japanese.

Second and third generation Okinawan Nikkeijin confirmed a sense of difference in many respects between Okinawa and mainland Japan. Although they were aware of being 'other Japanese' while in their host countries, when confronted with the situation in Japan they approached their Okinawan ethnic identity. From conversations, it is apparent that mainlander perceptions of Okinawa tends to place Okinawan Nikkeijin with native Okinawans, yet self-identity among Okinawan Nikkeijin cannot necessarily be said to be Okinawan.

In this section I have examined self-identity among Okinawan Nikkeijin (Nikkeijin having a family connection with the island of Okinawa). Their social categorization

in the host countries is that of a Japanese ethnic minority, although there exists a slight distinction between Okinawans and Japanese. They identify themselves as being Japanese. On migrating to Japan, this idea is altered by native Okinawans and Japanese. The experiences of my informants reveal that self-identity may be switched according to time and place. I suggested three patterns. Firstly, in the process of settlement in Okinawa, a few migrants maintain an affiliation with their host countries in terms of national identity. They use this national identity as a life strategy in the sense that they consider being regarded as a foreigner a distinguishing characteristic in Okinawa. Secondly, some migrants identify themselves as part-Uchinanchu (Okinawan). This would follow the attitude of the Okinawa government which promotes the idea of Okinawan Nikkeijin being included in the greater Uchinanchu community. Finally, migrant self-identity shifts according to time and place. From the comments of my informants, I found that time and place are two very important factors for facilitating change in self-identity. The duration of settlement reflects how self-identity can alter. Within this duration, the gaining of better Japanese language skills and the confidence this brings may precipitate a shift in identity. When on mainland Japan, Okinawan Nikkeijin recognize a sense of difference which serves to mark out their Okinawan background, though not all adopt an Okinawan self-identity.

It is perhaps instructive to consider how Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa perceive Okinawan Nikkeijin living on the mainland. From Kiyohide:

> I think Nikkeijin who live on mainland Japan are not assimilated and do
> not readily associate with Japanese society. I think they are Brazilian.

From Masaru:

> We are not temporary workers, we have settled down. Okinawa has a free
> and easy atmosphere. If it were a big city, I would not live here.

And from Amelia:

> Okinawan Nikkeijin choose to live here. We are not *dekasegi* or
> temporary workers, therefore we can associate with each other away
> from the work place. We are return migrants but we do not have to live in
> a migrant community.

I would suggest that these comments show that Okinawan Nikkeijin regard themselves as settlers rather than temporary workers. This position can be supported by reasons my informants gave for coming to Okinawa, set out at the beginning of the chapter. It is also evident from occupational status. However, to generalize that Okinawan Nikkeijin living on the mainland are merely temporary workers would be unsafe. Indeed, I met Nikkeijin who intended to settle down in Oizumi and in Tsurumi.

Okinawan return migrants maintain organizational links with host countries (see earlier) through which they are able to form or continue mutual relationships. More importantly, these organizations also provide a link between the host countries and Okinawa. Thus, the transnational tie between two countries is seen to operate at the organizational level.

6.7 What 'homeland' means to Okinawan Nikkeijin

Chapter Five saw how Okinawan Nikkeijin living on the mainland regarded the concept of 'homeland'. The same was asked of Okinawan Nikkeijin interviewed in Okinawa. Furio, the freelance artist, talked about homeland in the following manner.

> My homeland is Argentina and my heart has always been there. My spirit and sense, personality, and character derive from Argentina, and I have not lost these even more than ten years later. My parents live in Argentina. I intend to go back one day, although I cannot be sure when that may be.

Amelia also thought of Argentina as being the homeland.

> But if I am asked why I don't go back, I reply that it would be difficult to resume my life there. It is better to put my life in Okinawa, and travel anywhere I like. Okinawa is a second homeland to me. When I lived in Tokyo, to go back to my country was to return to Okinawa, not Argentina.

Kiyohide lived in Brazil for only twelve years, as a child from birth, the period representing only a third of his life. But it was a precious time for him.

> Brazil is my home country. My mother's relatives still live there. I have many memories from my time at primary school, and some of playing football on the empty plot next to my house. I feel I have left something behind. I can imagine what Okinawa used to be and like to believe that the good side of Okinawa has remained. It too has lost something.

Masaru talked about homeland in terms of relationships.

> When I was in Argentina almost all my friends were Okinawan migrants
> or Nikkeijin and I thought my homeland was Okinawa. In Okinawa, all
> my friends are Nikkei Argentinian and I think my homeland is Argentina.
> I feel nostalgia for Argentina and my heart is there.

Saori still feels a strong sense of nostalgia about her homeland.

> Honestly speaking, I really want to go back to Peru. I want to see what
> has changed in Peru. It is my home country. I feel a deep attachment. I
> am afraid that I might lose my Peruvian ties. I tend to romanticize Peru
> through nostalgia. It is in my mind, in my memory. If there were job
> opportunities, political stability, and personal safety – if these conditions
> existed I would prefer to live in Peru, and to enjoy its culture and
> customs. I like Latin parties and music. I can feel spontaneous.

Almost all informants agreed that homeland was the place of birth and upbringing, at
least to a certain age. Brazil, Peru, Bolivia or Argentina remained in the hearts of the
individuals I spoke to. However, slightly different views were also heard. For
example, Yukari though of homeland as the place where she had become familiar
with her life.

> So far, I have thought of my homeland as Bolivia, but there is the
> possibility that Okinawa could become my homeland because I am
> married to a Japanese man and am expecting a baby this month. I am
> establishing my family life here.

I did not speak with Alberto Shiroma directly but came across an interview in the *Asahi* newspaper, 14th August 2002, which I edited for inclusion. By chance, I also met his brother in Okinawa city. Alberto, third generation Nikkei Peruvian, was leader of a Latin band made up of generational Nikkei Peruvians and native Okinawans. His idea of homeland related to the sound of instruments: the *chalango* (a small guitar) and *kena* (a flute made from a reed) both create music that reminded him of his grandparents and cousins, and the mountains of Peru. The land of personal beginnings and earlier life memories was not the only homeland.

> My parents were brought up with Okinawan traditional lullabies and I was, too. Indeed, when I first saw Okinawa I felt something resound at the bottom of my heart. In Peru, seventy per cent of Japanese migrants are Okinawan. There is a boundary between them that is expressed in the terms Okinawans and *tafukenjin* (Japanese from other prefectures). Okinawa was my ideal place when I was in Peru.
>
> ...
>
> In Okinawa I learned about the philosophy and soul of the island by through the sanshin and ryukyu drum. I wanted to know about the place more deeply so I studied its history. Gradually, I came to love Okinawa and my desire was to contribute to its society. I want to assimilate as a citizen. I really think that one of the significant things for our generation is to synchronize Okinawan culture with that of the previous home culture of returnees. It is a metaphor of typical Okinawan cooking: *chanple* is an Okinawan word that means to mix every ingredient. Okinawa will make its own world with this hybrid culture and one might

say that there is an Okinawan cosmology in the world. I would like to represent Okinawa abroad through my musical activities.

Alberto made Okinawa his family home, and his parents came over from Peru. Eventually he bought a burial plot in Okinawa. The significance in this was he had decided on the island of Okinawa as his eternal destiny. To Alberto, the concept of home was the point at which the country of birth and upbringing, and the adopted country from where came the ancestors, unite.

Thus, the concept of homeland for Okinawan Nikkeijin is sometimes solid and sometimes rather intangible. It is the place of origin and early development, yet it can extend imaginatively into the realms of nostalgia and sentiment, and influence a decision on where to have one's eventual grave. The consideration of a personal burial site may be derived from the ideology of religious belief (Bloch, 1982). I do not have sufficient ethnographic material to address in any detail the religious beliefs and practices in Okinawa, though I am certain further exploration would be rewarding. In particular, it would be useful to learn more about specific burial rites and practices such as 'double burial' (Hertz, 1960), and the process by which people's remains were returned to some Okinawan islands in the 1980s after being prohibited during the 1930s by the Lifestyle Reform Movement (see Chapter Five).

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, as in the preceding two chapters, I have used a subject-oriented approach to examine identity formation amongst Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa. I

note the existence of a different category for Okinawans within the Japanese migrant population in South American host countries, although all are called Japanese and occupy an ethnic minority category. First generation migrants from Okinawa held on to a strong Okinawan ethnicity. For these travellers, a shared background and retained identity was arguably an important element in their strategy for living in a foreign land alongside non-Okinawan Japanese. Home and family routines were to a large extent copies of Okinawan life. The local host culture was used mainly for purposes of convenience and comparison. In essence, there was only one identity in play.

Yet within the next generation, continuing into subsequent ones, changes take place. A single Okinawan identity is not reproduced intact. Some aspects of it are lost. A Japanese identity is assumed when it is beneficial, and this may be often – for instance, during education and for career development. Meanwhile, local culture is being absorbed, perhaps more so than is realized at the time. Second and third generation Okinawan migrants may hold three identities – Okinawan (Uchinanchu), Japanese, and host national – depending on the individual social milieu. In a geographically fixed place where one generation gives way to another, a single identity transforms itself into flexible multiple identities. However, fundamentally the progeny are foreigners, as were their parents, in a host country.

When subsequent generations of Okinawan migrants to South America make the move to Japan and Okinawa, they undergo a re-evaluation of identity. Almost all expect to be accepted as Japanese or Okinawan, yet the reality does not accord. A

number of factors contribute to this need for re-evaluation: the experience of being bullied during their time at school or in the workplace; the lack of sufficient Japanese language skills; an awareness of different life styles which in turn prompts an awareness of national identity. These pressures act to re-affirm a self-identity of Okinawan Nikkeijin. Within official discourse, the generational returnees are defined as *kikoku kenkeijin*, which emphasizes the view that they are not merely Nikkeijin but are on more intimate terms with Okinawa Prefecture. Even so, in everyday interaction they can feel exclusion and isolation. The individual sometimes makes a great effort to assimilate into Okinawan society, especially by way of Japanese language acquisition and contribution to Okinawan culture.

Over time, self-identity may come to be expressed in the manner of host nationality, or a multiple identity, or becomes ambiguous. Host nation identity seems to be used as a benefit to employment rather than resistance against exclusion. A description of feeling part-Japanese, which might be taken to mean part-Okinawan, and part-host nationality may be a desire to emphasize a comprehension of the island's culture and society: a blood tie is not enough, as it is perhaps for Nikkeijin on the mainland.

Self-identity may show elasticity depending on place and time. It is connected with an awareness of being Okinawan, especially when the individual is living on the mainland. Okinawan Nikkeijin regard themselves as settlers and not temporary work-ers, which (they perceive) would distinguish them from mainland Nikkeijin as well as assisting in their acceptance by Okinawan society. With regard to the transnational approach, Okinawan Nikkeijin may be said to conduct relationships between two

countries mostly in terms of cultural contribution. Links are undertaken at individual and organizational levels. Despite policies by the authorities to promote Nikkeijin integration into Okinawan society, there remains a blurred boundary between Nikkeijin and native Okinawans, though this does not represent a difficulty to integration to the extent as does the boundary between Nikkeijin and local people on the mainland.

Chapter Seven

Nikkeijin identity, transnationalism and diaspora

in mainland Japan and Okinawa

Introduction

The first chapter of this thesis presented an overview of the theory of migration and of literature on Nikkeijin. In Chapter Two I traced the context of Japanese migration to South America with an emphasis on Okinawan migrant movement in order to understand historical and structural features of earlier migration. Chapter Three describes the historical emergence and meaning of Nikkeijin as a discursive category and shows how Japanese governmental policy affects Nikkeijin return migration.

Chapters Four to Six presented case studies of Nikkeijin in three locations: Oizumi town in Gunma Prefecture; Tsurumi ward in Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture; and Okinawa Prefecture. Overall, the thesis focused on the shifting identifications of Nikkeijin across generations in both country of departure and in Japan and shows how Japanese perceptions of Nikkeijin impacts on Nikkeijin sense of self and belonging. I also explored the way in which Nikkeijin form ethnic communities in Japan, and compare and contrast the situation of Okinawan and mainlander Nikkeijin as they define and reformulate their ethnic identities on the mainland and in Okinawa respectively[1].

This final chapter draws together the ethnographic material presented in the preceding chapters in order to consider the broader insights on migration and transnationalism that arise from these historical and comparative case studies of Nikkeijin 'returning' to mainland Japan and Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent who have returned to Okinawa. The first half of the chapter reviews Nikkeijin self-identity and other identifications across each of the three field sites. The second half of the chapter considers how the complex social processes involved in Nikkeijin movement and identities are illuminated by, and add to, different ways of theorizing return migration, transnationalism and diaspora.

Substantively, the comparison of the earlier movements of migrants from the Japanese mainland and Okinawa to respective countries in Latin America, and the more recent 'return' migration by the subsequent generations to Japan and Okinawa reveal important differences. The self perceptions of Nikkeijin in mainland Japan are variable and many have attachments to both the country of departure and the receiving society, where they are largely excluded as ethnic others. Nikkeijin in Okinawa have similar attachments to both the country of departure and receiving society; however, while their self-perceptions are also variable they are better integrated into Okinawan society and are more likely to see themselves as settlers rather than as temporary migrants. Their attachments and cultural associations with countries in Latin America are neither negative attributes that exclude them from being Okinawan, nor simply a source of nostalgia and longing, but are often seen instead as positive features of belonging and affiliation within a diasporic Okinawan identity.

7.1 How Nikkeijin identify themselves

Within this thesis I have described and detailed official discourse, the perception of local native Japanese, and the self-identity of Nikkeijin in order to seek the factors involved in a formation of migrant identity. From conversations with Nikkeijin about their experiences and ideas regarding identity in home country and in Japan, and from the published literature of writers who have conducted their own research on and around the subject, Nikkeijin identity formation may be generally described as follows.

In the historical context, the first generation of outward migrants were aware of and had their Japanese identifications confirmed in their encounters with host cultures and societies in South America. They constructed ethnic minority communities in the countries where they settled. Home and family routines which they brought with them were to a large extent copies of Japanese lifestyles. This was no doubt reinforced by their reception in various host societies in South America as foreigners; that is, as being Japanese. At the same time, within Japanese ethnic minority communities a distinction was drawn between Okinawans and mainlanders: Okinawans were often seen as 'other' Japanese in the host countries, as reported in Chapter Two and Chapter Six. In the second generation, however, a change takes place. The single Japanese identity is not reproduced intact. Elements of surrounding cultures are absorbed and embraced. Second and third generation Nikkeijin come to hold more than one identity. The very flexibility and range of self-identity alters over time. For members of subsequent generations, their place of birth or upbringing was no longer a host country but rather became the accepted homeland, as many of my

informants stated. Subsequent generations affirmed two identities: one ethnic (Japanese); and the other national (Brazilian, Peruvian, and so on); with perhaps a later Nikkeijin identity added with the advent of large scale migration to Japan.

Nikkeijin of Okinawan descent present a self-identity similar to that of mainland Nikkeijin but with the attachment of an additional Okinawan ethnic identity (although some Okinawan Nikkeijin informants reported there was no difference for them, when in South America, between Okinawan and Japanese). The attachment, plausibly constructed in the context of Okinawan diaspora, has the potential for producing three or four identity categories: Japanese, South American national, Okinawan, Nikkeijin.

When first generation Okinawan Nikkeijin of the post-Second World War phase of migration returned to Japan and Okinawa, their self-identity showed little change. It was recognisably Okinawan (Uchinanchu), as Kouken in Okinawa and Mr Yaka in Tsurumi would confirm. An assumption may be made that self-identity among first generation mainland Nikkeijin returning to mainland Japan is likewise not greatly affected. They travelled as Japanese citizens, and the relocation did not appear as a social phenomenon, since it was an almost invisible movement at an early stage of return migration.

For members of a subsequent generation arriving in Japan, the supposed Japanese ethnicity was not always confirmed, and they sometimes encountered great difficulty relating to native Japanese. The newcomers at times found their hosts cold and

conservative in contrast to what they perceived to be the relative warmth and open-mindedness of their Latin American compatriots (Linger, 2001; Tsuda, 2003). There is also a perception of rejection, and a South American identity is reinforced. Most, perhaps all, Nikkeijin are aware of the irony of the situation. The term Nikkeijin describes someone of Japanese descent who is living in another country. According to the implied logic, when that someoncondition is removed and they should no longer be regarded as Nikkeijin. The reality, however, is that Japanese society *does* regard them as Nikkeijin, which means that they are treated as foreigners despite a supposed blood relatedness. That situation no doubt influences the ways they define ethnic identity and belonging. I summarize the different ways that people talked about self-identity in each of the three sites where I conducted research (Oizumi, Tsurumi and Okinawa), and explore differences and similarities between mainlander Nikkeijin and Okinawan Nikkeijin. Before doing so, however, I would wish to analyze in more detail dominant perceptions and constructions of Nikkeijin in relation to the concept of Japaneseness since that forms a crucial backdrop against and within which migrants articulate their own self identities.

Japaneseness and dominant perceptions of Nikkeijin

Nikkeijin commonly experience discrimination in daily interaction with Japanese nationals, and are often excluded from full participation in local society, though there are differences between migrants experiences in the mainland and Okinawa. Perceptions of Nikkeijin have several aspects. One is the negative image of social marginalization, in part the result of the majority of Nikkeijin in Japan being associated with unskilled labour. Nikkeijin may be viewed as descendants of those

who initially moved to Brazil and other countries because they could not survive in Japan and have now themselves returned to Japan because they could not survive economically in Brazil. Tsuda (2004) points out that many of his Japanese informants were unaware that Japanese-Brazilians often come from a middle-class background in Brazil. The traditional image of immigrant poverty is exacerbated by a general perception of South America as being poor and underdeveloped, although recent economic advancement in Brazil may temper this. Okinawa migration, however, is more likely to be viewed positively. A Nikkei Argentinian stated that elderly Okinawans might appreciate immigrants for their contribution to the Okinawan economy. Nikkeijin in Okinawa are seen not to form distinctive and potentially marginalized communities: rather, as I discuss further below (see also Chapter 6), they accord to the Okinawan government's encouragement of integration as 'returned' members of the Okinawan diaspora.

The other aspect of that discrimination has to do with evaluations of Japaneseness and expectations of conformity to dominant culture. Carvalho (2003) emphasizes that the concept of Japaneseness is significant when considering the identity of Nikkeijin (Chapter One, 1.3.3: Nikkeijin ethnicity). While most Japanese accept the ethnocentricity of westerners, and are prepared to tolerate or overlook differences, Nikkeijin are in appearance close to Japanese people. Because of this, Japanese society expects and requires them to behave as Japanese.

Here, I look at the idea of Japaneseness as it is constructed and distilled by the majority culture in relation to non-Japanese migrants and ethnic others within and

without the national homeland. In a study of identity among Koreans living in Japan, Fukuoka (1993) proposes that from the perspective of the host society the elements for determining the degree of being *Nipponjin* (Japanese) are blood, culture, and nationality. Although this formulation may be regarded as rather simplistic, it is perhaps useful for considering how the degrees of what can be called Japaneseness are socially established. Fukuoka provides the following table containing eight categories of people classified according to their presumed proximity to 'Japaneseness'.

TYPE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Blood	+	+	+	−	+	−	−	−
Culture	+	+	−	+	−	+	−	−
Nationality	+	−	+	+	−	−	+	−

Table 5: Classifications from Japanese to non-Japanese.
Source: Fukuoka (1993:5).

Against the item of Blood, a plus symbol signifies that a person possesses a putative genetic relationship with the indigenous Japanese majority population whereas a minus mark shows that the person is presumed to have no genetic relationship with the Japanese population. Fukuoka makes two important comments. Firstly, 'pure Japanese' does not actually exist in the bloodline because, since ancient times, people have arrived from the Asian continental and from the south (records indicate that, in the early nine century, about a third of the upper strata of Japanese society came from across the sea). Secondly, and perhaps more tellingly, the concept of Japanese 'blood' is exaggerated to distortion in the imagination of the Japanese people.

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Nor does there exist a 'pure' Japanese culture: its definition depends on who is defining it. Nonetheless, Fukuoka identifies the following attributes as positive markers of recognized Japanese cultural identity: speaking the Japanese language; engaging with Japanese lifestyle and customs; holding Japanese cultural values. A minus mark shows that if a person is perceived to lack one or more of those attributes they are presumed to have a different cultural background. Against the item of Nationality in the table, plus is for Japanese nationality, minus for a foreign nationality.

Fukuoka explains that Type 1 represents the normative category of 'pure Japanese'. Almost all Japanese would wish to believe that they fit within this category. Type 2 would apply to those, such as first generation Nikkeijin, who qualify on the basis of blood and culture but who hold different nationality. They are reputedly still Japanese in the eyes of Japanese society. The next category, Type 3, applies to *kikokushijo*[2] – typically, Japanese children brought up outside of Japan as a result of parents' career placement – who hold Japanese blood and nationality but may have internalized aspects of non-Japanese culture. People categorized as Type 4 have internalized Japanese culture and obtained Japanese nationality, but possess a different bloodline: these are exemplified by subsequent generations of *zainichi* Koreans (Koreans living in Japan), who were born and brought up in Japan without taking ethnic education. They are officially Japanese, their everyday language is Japanese, and they may use a Japanese name, but their Korean descent means they are perceived as non-Japanese by the larger society.

Two groups correspond to Type 5: one is *zanryu koji* – Japanese children abandoned in Manchuria at the end of the Second World War; the other is second or third generation Nikkeijin. These groups are deemed to have Japanese blood but possess a different culture and nationality. Type 6 would apply to first generation *zainichi* Koreans, who have internalized Japanese culture, but are of a different nationality and bloodline. People belonging to the Ainu minority, who live in the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido, are placed under Type 7. Ainu nationality is officially Japanese, yet there is a non-Japanese bloodline and a distinct Ainu culture. Lastly is Type 8, 'pure foreigners' who do not share blood, culture or nationality. At one time, Type 8 individuals overwhelmingly would be represented by Europeans, but more recently are from other areas of the world.

Of the three elements, blood is generally considered among ordinary Japanese people as the most important factor in deciding whether or not one qualifies as Japanese. Fukuoka's reasoning is based on the fact that while naturalized Koreans living in Japan exhibit Japanese cultural characteristics, they are not regarded as Japanese because they are deemed to lack the necessary Japanese bloodline. That may be contrasted to those, such as *kikokushijo* and Nikkeijin, who are normally regarded as Japanese because of blood descent. While Fukuoka contends that 'blood' is the most important symbol in determining Japaneseness, my findings show that cultural differences between native Japanese and Nikkeijin from South American countries are more divisive than any perceived blood association is uniting. Culture would seem the stronger factor over blood.

Fukuoka acknowledges a difficulty when classifying Okinawans in the scheme. No matter how energetically the Japanese government define Okinawans as Japanese, Okinawans continue to express themselves as Uchinanchu. They refer to mainland Japanese as *yamatonchu* – non-Okinawan. Arakawa (1971) is of the opinion that the outlook is common and cannot be erased and states that anecdotal evidence suggests that if a Japanese person asks someone from Okinawa whether they are Japanese or Okinawan, then the reply is expected to be the latter. The consciousness of being Okinawan prior to being Japanese does not derive from a sense of inferiority; rather, it is part of the Okinawan self consciousness engendered by specific social and historical processes. That may in part also explain why Okinawan return migrants are talked about and treated in different ways than their mainland counterpart.

In sum, what Fukuoka's analysis tells us is that there is no simple way of calculating Japaneseness. Whilst there may be a general opinion which presumes a straightforward connection between blood, culture and nationality, the situation is far more complex. Oguma (1995) argues that the Japanese need to be free from the myth of Japan as a homogeneous nation. Yet the concept not only remains robust in the minds of many Japanese, but also has a significant impact on the way that migrants, including return migrants of Japanese ancestry, are construed and which in turn has consequences for the way that they talk about and identify themselves.

Self-identities among Nikkeijin in Oizumi town and Tsurumi ward

Having provided a more general summary of the social situation that defines the ascribed identities of Nikkeijin and their ambivalent position in Japanese society, I

turn now to look at how migrants themselves talk about and formulate their identity. In the case of Nikkeijin residing in Oizumi town, self-identity among the second and third generation of Brazil Nikkeijin fall into the following three typologies:

1.Those who identify primarily in terms of a single Brazilian identity;

2.Those who articulate multiple identities: part Brazilian and part Japanese;

3.Those who embrace the term Nikkeijin: neither Brazilian nor Japanese.

Significantly, among the majority of my respondents there was no complete identification as Japanese in Japan. Rather, my informants fell mostly within the first type, adopting a national identity according to the country of departure. Regardless of the length of stay so far in Japan, and the form of settlement, they remained South American nationals. Especially in the case of male Nikkei Brazilians, they construed their return movement to Japan as that of an economic migrant fulfilling *dekasegi*, their purpose to accumulate earnings – perhaps to fund the building of a house or the setting up of a business – and to send remittances to their family. Their presumed aim was to return to South America as soon as possible. One informant said he was not personally concerned about the issue of identity, though he often travelled to Oizumi to buy Brazilian food and to talk to fellow Nikkeijin. This suggests that he sought a Brazilian ambience and unconsciously defined himself as Brazilian.

A centre like Oizumi's Brazil Plaza provides contact with Brazilian goods and taste. Nikkeijin visit 'Little Brazil' to buy Brazilian food and clothes, or to meet Nikkeijin compatriots in Brazilian restaurants or coffee shops. Even among my 'long term'

informants were those who consciously defined themselves in terms of their country of origin. As Miller and colleagues suggest, identities are constituted:

> ... through narratives of the self and constructed in relation to socially significant others and articulated through relations with particular people, place and material goods (Miller *et al.,* 1998:24).

Nikkeijin recreate Latin American culture in Japan. In ethnic restaurants and shops, they confirm their tastes in Latin American food and music and other goods or services. By doing so they are assuming their self-identity and embracing their national South American identity. Their 'habitus' (Mauss, 1968), or everyday behaviour and mode of life, is different to that of the Japanese.

Bourdieu, in his book *Distinction*, suggests that:

> ...tastes (i.e. manifested preferences) are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference. It is no accident that, when they have to be justified, they are asserted purely negatively, by the refusal of other tastes (Bourdieu, 1986:56).

Similarly, Howe proposes:

> ...tastes and sounds and touches are imbued with meaning and carefully hierarchized and regulated so as to express and enforce the social and cosmic order. This system of sensory values is never entirely articulated through language, but is practised and experienced (and sometimes challenged), by humans as culture bearers (Howe, 2005:3).

As an example, taste among Brazilian Nikkeijin living in Oizumi is demonstrated by a preference for Brazilian cuisine. Brazilian ingredients are used, and vegetables cultivated as they are in Brazil. This may be taken as 'a salient example of how everyday experience can become performative politics of ethnic identity' (Law, 2005:239) that becomes part of both the daily routine of everyday lives and the way that people talk about themselves and others.

My informant Filipe, a second generation Nikkeijin teaching at a Brazilian school in Ota city, was surrounded by Brazilian culture: he spoke only Portuguese at work and at home; his two children attended a Brazilian school in the area. If one of his students was worried about their identity, he would advise them to be Brazilian. His engagement with Japanese society as a Brazilian teacher satisfied his identity. To anyone visiting the school and enquiring about Nikkeijin identity, Filipe would almost certainly be considered Brazilian.

The second typology – the multiple identities of part Brazilian and part Japanese – is indicative of Nikkeijin who underlined the theme of blood in defining their identity. Pedro was a second generation in the process of *dekasegi*, yet he regarded himself as much Japanese as Brazilian. The Japanese bloodline was important to him in order to sustain his pride. He was brought up as the eldest son within a Japanese family system. Japanese nationality is based on the principle of *jus sanguinis* – awarded through blood. For Pedro, having Japanese blood confirmed him as Japanese at some basic level. In addition, Pedro's command of Japanese was sufficient for him occasionally to engage in semi-skilled jobs. Another second generation informant,

Willis was a graduate of a Japanese university, a banker and a voluntary translator. He wanted to differentiate himself from Nikkeijin who were in manual labour, saying they came from rural areas around São Paulo. Thus, it would seem that multiple identities derive not only through a Japanese blood relation but also from knowledge of Japanese culture, usually supported by an educational background, and Japanese language acquisition – at times, markers of class distinction (Bourdieu, 1986).

An instance of the third typology, relating to those for whom the term Nikkeijin itself becomes an ethnic category of self-identity, was provided by Rosa, a third generation return migrant. She regarded herself as neither Japanese nor Brazilian but living, in her words, in a gap between two countries. I suggest this interstitial space to be transnational, in which she underwent feelings of unease, a sense of fragmentation and tension, perhaps even pain. Such a sense of 'homelessness' derives from displacement in which the individual is disconnected from the country departed and not welcomed by the country arrived at. Rosa was able to have a holistic view in a relation between the two countries. Indeed:

> One thinks of identity whenever one is not sure of where one belongs; that is, one is not sure how to place oneself among the evident variety of behavioural style and patterns, and how to make sure that people around would accept this placement as right and proper, so that both sides would know how to go on each other's presence (Bauman, 1996:19).

Tsurumi ward in Yokohama has mixed ethnic minority populations, especially containing a large number of Okinawan residents. The self-identity among Nikkeijin

in Tsurumi ward (second or subsequent generations of Brazilians and Argentinians) is similar to that articulated by Nikkeijin in Oizumi: a single national identity; multiple identities; Nikkeijin who are neither national nor Japanese. Presumably, many Nikkeijin when employed in temporary manual work maintain their identity with South America. Ethnic business owners such as Silvi and Ricardo identified as being Brazilians. Ricardo embodied his Brazilian identity through serving Brazilian cuisine. Another example, Martha in Kawasaki, a long time resident and part-time teacher of Spanish, insisted her birth place was her homeland. The professional nature of the work she engaged in afforded her social status, and her identity was used strategically. Two of these three informants spoke Japanese well, though local language acquisition seems in these instances to have a limited influence in defining self-identity.

Only a small number of Nikkeijin among the subsequent generations regarded themselves as 'Japanese possessing a different nationality' before relocating to Japan, a pre-existing identity that they brought with them. Even when the reality was found to be different – that is, they were not embraced as Japanese – the notion that they were Japanese persisted. John in Tsurumi sought to highlight his Japanese roots. He asserted his self-identity as Nikkei *Braziljin*, which in his case can be interpreted as Japanese with Brazilian nationality. The firm connection with ancestral origins provides support both in the host country and the new environment. In this sense, at least to John, identity is not necessarily contextual and situational. Significantly, he did not claim his self-identity as wholly Japanese. A kind of multiple and complex identity formation was found as one characteristic of Nikkeijin identification.

The third typology (Nikkeijin who regard themselves as being neither Brazilian nor Japanese) as presented in Oizumi, was also found in one second generation Nikkei Brazilian in Fujisawa. Teresa stated that being Nikkeijin was a special existence in Japan, the term itself recognition of how the dominant society perceives people like her. She obtained a permanent visa and was determined to live in Japan together with her family as a settler. The issue of identity was not a serious matter to Teresa. Perhaps the secure status while at the same time possessing Brazilian nationality were both factors in redefining her identity.

On the whole, it would appear that the three typologies recur throughout Nikkeijin living on the mainland. My research found there is no specific difference between the two sites of Oizumi town and Tsurumi ward in Yokohama, and no differences between Nikkeijin and Okinawan Nikkeijin domiciled there. This is represented by a comment heard from a Nikkei Brazilian: 'Above all, we are all Nikkeijin [foreigners] in Japan'.

Among Okinawan Nikkeijin living in mainland Japan, an Okinawan ethnic consciousness does not appear on the surface. Yet when David in Oizumi ranked his self-identity as Brazilian first, Okinawan second, and Japanese third, the suggestion is that to an Okinawan Nikkeijin an ethnic consciousness of being Okinawan might be greater than being Japanese. After experiencing manual labour for several years in Japan, David set up a supermarket in Oizumi for Nikkeijin with help from Okinawan relatives and a credit facility organized by his fellows.

Self-identity of Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa

When the second and the third generation of Okinawan Nikkeijin reside not on the mainland of Japan but in Okinawa Prefecture, they may initially return to their ancestral homeland, maybe to a particular town or village, sites once familiar to parents or grandparents. Then they move to a town or a city. Even if relocating for work, they see themselves as more than mere economic return migrants. The sense of belonging is reinforced by the Okinawan government's use of the term *kenkeijin* (prefectural person or people) for Okinawan Nikkeijin abroad, and by the Uchinanchu Festivals in Okinawa as well as links maintained through associations. The phrase *ichariba chode* expresses the notion that everyone is a brother or sister from the first meeting. It is a reference to Okinawan openness, hospitality, and solidarity as a member of the Uchinanchu (Okinawan) diaspora.

By listening to the narratives of Okinawan Nikkeijin, their modes of self-identity can be summarized into three typologies, after the scheme above, as follows:

1. A single national identity: e.g. Brazilian;

2. Multiple identities: part national and part Okinawan;

3. Ambiguous and shifting identities.

Within these classifications, Okinawan Nikkeijin display some similarity to Nikkeijin in mainland Japan. Regardless of descent, Nikkeijin show a shift from some sense of Japanese ethnicity in their home country to a more pronounced South American national identity when in Japan (mainland or Okinawa). However, the reasons for adopting the South American national identity seem to be different between the two

groups. For mainland Nikkeijin, embracing South American national identity is at least in part a positive way of dealing with the perceived negative reactions of mainstream Japanese society: embracing one's foreign status. Nikkeijin in Okinawa also assume the South American national identity in order to differentiate themselves from native Okinawans. However, that is seen not as separate from but integral to their Okinawan affiliation. The experience of being an individual born and brought up in South America has a value and becomes part of a life strategy. For example, the skill of speaking two languages and knowledge of two cultures are seen as advantages as regards career opportunities or lifestyle development. Nikkeijin are able to introduce their cultural experience of South America into Okinawan society. The sort of work engaged in tends to be professional or artistic. While mainland Nikkeijin tend to form ethnic enclaves and communities which tend to engage with greater society essentially only in economic terms (and are more likely to be affected by economic recession), Okinawan Nikkeijin integration is over a wider sphere.

The difference is also seen in multiple identities, a presentation of which is apparent when Lucy described herself as being half-Peruvian and half-Japanese, by which could be inferred part Okinawan. Similarly, when Masaru said his self-identity was half-Argentinian and half-Japanese, Japanese here implicitly means Okinawan, since when he was in Argentina he thought there was no difference between Okinawan and Japanese. Masaru had a family in Okinawa and actively participated in the Okinawan Argentinian Association. Through such public engagement he was able to contribute to two places. In the home country, ethnic consciousness is embraced as Japanese or Okinawan depending on the situation. The term Japanese is often used

interchangeably with Okinawan, despite Okinawan Nikkeijin becoming newly aware of being different from Japanese when residing in Okinawa. Lucy's multiple identities derived to an extent from her occupation: teaching Okinawan traditional folk music. This supports a strong cultural aspect as a result of affiliation with Okinawan society rather than bloodline, and would contrast with the response of Pedro in Oizumi on the mainland. Patty embraced three identities: Japanese; Argentinian; Nikkeijin. It would seem that she recognised a potential in possessing multiple identity.

A significant difference between the two groups is that Okinawan Nikkeijin did not identify Nikkeijin as an ethnic category of self-identity, in terms of being neither Japanese nor South American national. It might be that Okinawan Nikkeijin are not in the state of 'homelandless' in a similar way same as Nikkeijin on the mainland. This is partly because they returned to an ancestral homeland in which their relatives reside and because they are accorded more formal recognition. Although Okinawa is a prefecture of Japan, situated on the geographical and political periphery and having cultural distinctiveness, Okinawan ethnicity persists as if under Japanese colonialism. Native Okinawans are able to accept Nikkeijin as possessing a 'same ethnic' trait. A Latin American culture is not an element of exclusion and marginalization to Okinawan society. Barth suggests:

> The innovators may choose to emphasize one level of identity among the
>
> several provided by traditional social organization. Tribe, caste, language
>
> group, region or state all have features that make them a potentially
>
> adequate primary ethnic identity for group reference, and the outcome

will depend on the readiness with which others can be led to embrace these identities, and the cold tactical facts (Barth, 1969:33-34).

Another possible reason lies in the way Nikkeijin perceive themselves and other Nikkeijin. Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa see themselves more as settlers and tend to regard Nikkeijin on mainland Japan as temporary sojourners, marginalized from Japanese society. This would indicate that Okinawan Nikkeijin are engaged in a process of assimilation into Okinawan society. They carry the consciousness of an Okinawan diaspora. Theirs is rather a newly discovered Okinawan identity not matching that of the native Okinawan's consciousness of Uchinanchu (Okinawan) identity.

In the process of settling, self-identity undergoes subtle changes. Kiyohide arrived in Okinawa in 1980, Saori in 1989, both of whom made the move when in their teens. Saori's experience was that of being bullied at secondary school which led her to question the idea of belonging. She identified as Peruvian as a reaction to the failure of her concept of Japaneseness which was removed from that of native Japanese. After familiarization with the Japanese language and acquisition of some Japanese culture, she recognized herself as becoming partly Japanese. A multiple identity emerged over time. Saori shifted identity to Peruvian if asked by a Japanese, and Nikkeijin if asked from a fellow Nikkeijin. On the mainland, her ethnic consciousness was affirmed as Okinawan. Should she return to Peru, she may revert to Japanese. Her identity is chosen according to time and place but also to the existence of 'others'. Thus, her identity is defined in situational social milieux.

Kiyohide represented a more ambiguous position. The identity stages passed from Okinawan (Uchinanchu) in his early years, because his parents were Uchinanchu, to Brazilian later, though he believed his Brazilian aspect was not the same as for other Brazilian Nikkeijin. His period of residence in Okinawa had been a long one, during which he changed his name from Robert to Kiyohide. The role as interpreter to newly arrived Nikkeijin from Brazil allowed him to maintain a Brazilian affiliation. At the same time as he was acquiring a stronger Uchinanchu identity by his presence in Okinawa and marriage to an islander.

From an examination of differences and similarities between the two groups (on the mainland and in Okinawa) regarding the formation of self-identity, one common feature emerges. Members of either group were not regarded as being Japanese or Okinawan in their presumed ancestral homeland. Both groups are similar in their 'foreignness'. The attitude of greater society confirms that Japan or Okinawa is not a homeland: many informants looked on home in their experience as the place of birth and upbringing. The ancestral homeland is a place remembered rather than place present, but it is possible that place present could in time turn into home for Okinawan Nikkeijin. This is partly because Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa would, as part of the process of settlement and integration, become affected by the distinction drawn between Uchinanchu (Okinawan) and *yamatonchu* (Japanese) on which native Okinawans are routinely schooled.

In thinking about differences and similarities between Nikkeijin in mainland and in Okinawa it is useful to consider a typology of identities as proposed by Castells

(1997): that which rationalizes the structure of domination – what might be called a *conformist* identity; that which attempts to resist domination – *resistance* identity; that which seeks the transformation of self or society – *project* identity. Both the self-identity of Okinawan Nikkeijin and the mainland Nikkeijin may be regarded in the light of the 'resistance identity' in so far as they emphasize their particular South American national origins. The difference lies in how their project identities are articulated. For the majority of mainland Nikkeijin, the South American national identity is not just a resistant identity but also tends to be the exclusive mode of articulating their project identities, whether or not they intend to stay in Japan. The latter is now the dominant way some social scientists have construed Nikkeijin identities. Sussman (2011), for example, in a recent book on return migration in Hong Kong suggests the following about Nikkeijin:

> Many of these returnees assumed reverse affirmative identities: they embrace Brazilian culture and identity, established Portuguese newspapers, and supported the Brazilian soccer team and its victories....others adopted an additive identity, acting Japanese among the locals and Brazilian among their returnee peers (Sussman, 2011:81).

Generations are not specified, though perhaps the first generation of Nikkeijin associate to an additive identity, and the second generation adopts reverse affirmative identities. Importantly, Sussman is unaware of the experiences of Okinawan return migrants. For Okinawan Nikkeijin, I suggest, the resistant or 'reverse affirmative' identities are accompanied by a more positive 'project identity' that includes and builds both on the integration of an Okinawan and a national identity component.

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7.2 Nikkeijin and return migration

In Chapter One, I reviewed economic theory, the historical-structural approach, migration system theory, structural theory, and transnationalism. Recent work on return migration also offers some potentially useful insights into thinking about how and why Nikkeijin return to Japan, though as I suggest below the phenomenon I detail extends beyond the strict sense of return migration (King and Christou, 2008:2) since it is – with occasional exception – the second and the third generation who are 'returning' to a country which their parents or grandparents left, and which they themselves may have never previously set foot.

Cerase (1974), for example, identifies four possible reasons for return migration: failure, conservatism, retirement, and innovation (quoted in Cassarino, 2004:4-5). An example from my fieldwork of Cerase's 'return because of failure' would be an Okinawan Nikkeijin living in Fujisawa who told me that her father regarded his return to mainland Japan as representing failure of his life in Argentina. His employment situation in Japan, such as factory work, was also considered shameful, and he did not wish to make contact with relatives in Okinawa. David, by contrast, who set up a supermarket in Oizumi for Nikkeijin with help from Okinawan relatives might be seen as an instance of success. 'Return for retirement' may be considered in the case of Mayumi who came to Oizumi after having been a construction engineer in Brazil. She was second generation and a deputy headmistress at Brazilian school.

The paradigms of 'return of conservatism' and 'return of innovation' (or dynamism) may be expressed in the way that return migrants and subsequent generations search

for either traditional cultural values or new lifestyles through return migration (King and Christou, 2008:13). However, as King and Christou (2008) indicate the quest for traditional cultures in particular is complicated by the specificities of return migration. They note that most post-war labour migrants to North-West Europe, North America and Australia came from rural areas in the various countries of origin; often these were villages in the poorest regions, hence the need to emigrate in the first place. For those migrants as well as the sons and daughters of these original migrants, such marginalized rural contexts offer unfavourable settings for a sustainable 'return'. For most, therefore, return to 'homeland' meant settlement in a larger town or city (King and Christou, 2008:14).

Similarly, in the case of Nikkeijin on the mainland of Japan, the second and the third generation settle in an industrial town or city according to the labour market, which is not necessarily where their parents or grandparents were from — indeed, Oizumi was not the ancestral home town of any my informants. Initial motivation for migration from Brazil to mainland Japan was that Brazil was undergoing severe economic downturn at the same time as Japan experienced a shortage of unskilled labour (Chapter Three). Japanese Brazilians, mainly first generation males, travelled to Japan in the 1980s as temporary labourers to work in small and medium-sized factories. There was a direct involvement by local employers who recruited Japanese Brazilians to work in Oizumi town; a similar situation could be found in Tsurumi. The wage difference between the two countries led the return movement to Japan. Early *dekasegi* workers (temporary economic migrants) had the intention of accumulating wealth and going back to Brazil. The model also applies for other

South American countries. Specific revisions in immigration control made it easier for the subsequent generations to work in Japan. Although the changes in legislation accorded Nikkeijin a right of abode, their employment in unskilled jobs placed them in a lower social stratum within Japanese society. The motivation to return to Japan underlines the income difference between South American countries and Japan which may be understood in terms of push and pull factors as proposed by classical economic theory (Roth, 2003; Tsuda, 2004).

In the case of Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa, the incentives to move to Okinawa were not solely or primarily economic and in some ways return migration for them was characterized by the desire to reconnect with their cultural origins and traditions. Some had already worked in mainland Japan, progressing to Okinawa for professional engagement or to run an ethnic business. Others relocated to Okinawa directly, perhaps to join family members. The reasons for their return migration often involved socio-cultural requirements or obligations: perhaps to look after family members or for purposes of *totome* (maintenance of ancestral traditions within the family), as described in Chapter Six. They may have made frequent visits to Okinawa in their youth, and be familiar with Okinawan culture and society. The maintenance of linkages with kin in Okinawa, through networks and associations, could be considered a pull factor in their return migration.

As I have indicated, however, the situation of Nikkeijin 'return migrants' challenges the apparent simplicity of the formulation, since they consist of emigrants of the first generation to third generation. The history of Japanese migrants covers more than

one hundred years. In return migration literature, there is very little about the second generation related to the ancestral homeland and their views of 'home' (King and Christou 2008:2). Return migration by subsequent generations blurs the concept of emigration and immigration, and home and host country dichotomies. This blurring of borders comes to the fore in the studies of transnationalism (Stefansson, 2004:7).

7.3 Transnationalism

Transnationalism, as advocated by Schiller and colleagues (1991, 1994, 1995), includes a multiplicity of involvements that migrants add to their social field in both and host societies. The authors call the actors 'transmigrants'. Transnationalism, a position whereby 'immigrants live their lives across national borders and respond to the constraints and demands of two or more states' (Schiller *et al*, 1995:54), is conceptually based on a framework that describes various interacting processes in terms of economic, social and political relationships, and cultural elements. The lives of transmigrants are thus constructed within complex contexts; they do not create simple identities grounded in a single society. Transnational space is defined as a social space as opposed to national and local interactional space (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002).

Brettell usefully highlights the difference between return migrants and transmigrants as follows:

> "The concept [of return migrants] should be reserved for those individuals who do go back to live in their sending communities. ...'Transmigrant' then remains a concept used to refer to individuals who maintain ties with

their homelands and become involved in the economic, social, religious, and political spheres of their sending communities as well as the host society ...simultaneously incorporated within more than one nation-state (Brettell, 2003:54)."

Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa fall into the category of return migrants in a simplistic way in that they do not (generally) return to sending communities of South America, whereas Nikkeijin on the mainland are clearly transmigrants. Okinawan Nikkeijin generally regard themselves as settlers rather than as temporary migrant workers, but they nevertheless continue to be involved in social and cultural networks that are clearly transnational. In that respect, I think that the concept of transmigrant incorporates and better describes their situation than simply that of return migrant.

Transnationalism in migration from Japan to South America

Following the original migration from Japan to South America, migrants were able to construct a social field between the host countries and Japan by the sending of remittances to what those first generation migrants still regarded as their original homeland. Correlation is found between the volume of remittances transferred to particular prefectures and the numbers of migrants from those areas (OKKI, 1974:32-33).

In the case of Okinawan migrants, money was also brought to Okinawa during visits. Remittances in total could be substantial; also, after the destruction caused by the

Second World War, large quantities of food and goods were despatched to the island from migrants in South America. Official records show that in return, the Okinawan authorities offered to institute a student exchange programme, and assisted in funding the construction of a hall for Okinawan migrants (Arakaki, 2002b:307). These actions serve to illustrate the mutual aid relationship maintained by the overseas community and Okinawa. The concept of transnationalism may thus be applied to the original migration. After all, with reference to Foner and to Mintz (Chapter One), the making of a transnational relationship by migrants is not a new concept. Possibly, 'the difference is mainly matter of degree and not of kind' (Tsuda, 2003:258).

Transnationalism in return migration

To focus on the transnational approach to return migration including that by second and subsequent generations, it is probably useful to talk about transnationalism in terms of transnational mobility, transnational identity, transnational social networks (Cassarino, 2004; King and Christou, 2008:15). Transnational mobility covers physical, symbolic and virtual movement, which keep migrants in touch with the place of origin and contribute to the creation of a 'transnational social space'. Repeated return visits are the most tangible expression of this. King and Cristou's case study of Greeks in Germany shows that such visits are regular, frequent events throughout migrant lives. Initiated by the first generation, the second generation follow too, often from an early age, so that they become keenly aware of the 'other place' in their family biography. Childhood visits are important to them for structuring the 'return project' (King and Christou, 2008:15). In my case study,

Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa exhibited similar behaviour with some conducting repeat visits in their childhood, and perhaps being sent to Okinawa for their education. In addition, in social network terms, return takes place when sufficient transnational resources, such as linkages and knowledge, have been accumulated to enable the move. Kinship ties and personal connections may be vital in getting a job (King and Christou, 2008:15-16).

Throughout this thesis, the phases of movement from Japan to South America have been represented by the term 'original migration' and the more recent movement from South America to Japan by 'return migration', even if, for some informants, 'return migration' might best described their anticipated return to South America (the description 'circular migration' sometimes seen in the literature does not seem suitable). A difference between the movements is the relative ease in which the modern migrant is able to maintain relationships between two countries. My Nikkeijin informants were made up of men and women, single and married, the latter perhaps with family. Some were engaged in unskilled jobs for companies within the manufacturing and food processing sectors. Migration to work was frequently described by the term *dekasegi* (to relocate temporary for the purposes of work), often while sustaining families in the home country by the sending of remittances. Others among my informants held white collar or professional positions such as in banking or teaching. Nikkeijin may be sojourners or settlers. The transnational concept, though, resides in the everyday lives of Nikkeijin. For example, one interviewee in Oizumi told me that he felt like a commuter between the home country and Japan. There are no doubt other Nikkeijin in mainland Japan who share

the feeling. Indeed, regardless of the length of stay in Japan, return migrants are often keenly interested in what is going in their home countries (generally identified as South American) and stay informed through the media. This may be a habit of lifestyle, or a conscious or unconscious affiliation with national culture. In the case of the cultural aspects of transnationalism among Brazilian immigrants to the United States, Margolis (1995) found that regular contact with relatives and friends back home had a high priority, and that families tended to remain functional across national boundaries. The contemporary world makes transnationalism that much easier.

The relationship maintained by Nikkeijin in Okinawa between countries is not so much by economic remittance (my observation was that very few Okinawan Nikkeijin send money from the island to the country of departure) but by cultural remittance. Particularly the younger generations are able to take part in exchange schemes for language learning, music, and other activities organized by cultural and educational institutions in Okinawa and the host countries. As an example, the Ryukyu-koku Matsuri Daiko (Ryukyu Kingdom Festival Drums) has branches in a number of South American countries. One of my informants described a drum band formed in Peru from Nikkei Peruvians who had studied at Okinawa Art University: this would represent a continuity of cultural exchange within younger generations of Okinawan Nikkeijin potentially to produce a hybrid culture. Social and institutional networks provide channels to the subsequent generation to reserve a tie between Okinawa and the host countries.

Forming transnational community

In the case study of Oizumi (Chapter Four), members of the Nikkeijin community were seen to have become unbound from their countries of origin in some ways while still connected in others. A notable development, as previously discussed, is the success of some migrant entrepreneurs and their ethnic businesses such as Brazilian restaurants, supermarkets selling Brazilian goods and foods, travel agencies, and schools. Shoko, founder of the Nikkei Brazil Centre, talked about responding to the desire for Nikkeijin children to be taught both Portuguese and Japanese in order that they could live either in Japan or Brazil. This does not necessarily signify only an act of resistance in regard to a subordinated position in Japan; rather it suggests a degree of attachment in terms of national loyalty and affiliation to the home country. In this sense, the emancipatory aspect of transnationalism which implies a counter-hegemonic political space (Kearney, 1991), and the potential of escaping from the hegemonic forces of nation-states and global capitalism (Schiller, Basch and Blanc, 1994:290), are not appropriate for the case of Nikkeijin. Guarnizo and Smith (1998:5) question the emancipatory aspect of the concept of transnationalism from the perspective of 'transnationalism below'. Although Nikkeijin are able to enter into Japan as unskilled workers by virtue of amended immigration law and thus to gain freedom from their home country's situation, it does not mean that they are free from national affinities or the demands of sending and receiving states. If anything, Nikkeijin construct an ambiance similar to that they enjoyed in the home country. Tsuda remarks that transnational migrant communities are not necessarily novel, and migrants do not always escape the disciplining power of the nation-state (Tsuda, 2003:258).

I commented in Chapter Six that a distinctive Nikkeijin community was not observed in Okinawa as could be found in Oizumi. While ethnic restaurants provided places of communication and mutual social interaction for Nikkeijin, that was only part of the role of such premises. Whereas Nikkeijin on the mainland tended to segregate from local residents, Okinawan Nikkeijin were more inclined to mix. Instead of forming a Nikkeijin community on the island, they maintain network ties with the departed host countries through organizations and associations. This may be understood in the light of an Okinawan diaspora and would suggest that many Okinawan Nikkeijin regard themselves as participants of an international community. The point is that a transnational community need not be concentrated geographically or socially but can be spatially dispersed while at the same time be seen to integrate to an extent with the surrounding society.

Thus, transnationalism offers a way of understanding migrants' ideas and how migrants maintain their relation between host and home countries. The approach tells us how the subsequent generation of Nikkeijin form their identities in the natal place and in the ancestral homelands of return migration. Furthermore, transnationalism illustrates 'the development of new identities among migrants who are not anchored in their place of origin or in their place of destination' (Al-Ali & Koser, 2002:4). This has led to the gradual *deterritorialization* of citizenship (Cassarino, 2004:9). From a transnationalism perspective, migrants' subjective perception of homeland and their self-identities show an insight into their process of integration – at whatever degree – into Japanese society.

To recapitulate, many Nikkeijin living in communities within urban areas of mainland Japan send economic remittances as understood by the term *dekasegi*. Okinawan Nikkeijin living in Okinawa tend to maintain social and cultural remittances at both an organizational level and an individual level through the various channels that exist in the home country and Okinawa Prefecture. The approach taken by Okinawan Nikkeijin may be usefully illuminated through a consideration of the concept of diaspora.

7.4 Diaspora

The word diaspora derives from the Greek verb 'to scatter'. It was originally associated with the wholesale dispersion of Jews after their Babylonian exile. The notion overlaps with the term transnationalism as a way of describing the global movement and experience of people between home nation country and host country. For example, Braziel and Mannur differentiate diaspora from transnationalism in that:

> ...where diaspora addresses the migrations and displacements of subjects, transnationalism also includes the movements of information through cybernetics, as well as the traffic in goods, products, and capital across geopolitical terrains through multinational corporations. ...It remains, above all, a human phenomenon – lived and experienced' (Braziel and Mannur, 2003:8).

After an examination of the material and discursive factors said to reshape the diasporic project, Tölölyan (1996) felt it useful to categorize dispersion into ethnic,

exile, migrant and racial diasporas. Clifford (1994) distinguishes between diaspora as a theoretical concept and diaspora as a historical experience. Meanwhile, Brah proposes that the concept of diaspora must indeed be historicized if it is to serve as a useful heuristic device; the term itself (she continues) has ambiguities and denotes communities of people dislocated from their native homelands through migration. In her opinion, 'voluntary' diasporas can be induced by colonization or demand for a workforce (Brah, 1996:179, 181-182). If, as Brah advances, the concept of diaspora would gain from an historicized approach, it might be possible to compare the perceptions of a Japanese diaspora and an Okinawan diaspora in the context of the contemporary return migration phenomenon.

Return migration from South America to Japan was accelerated by the Revision of the Immigration and Refugee Control Act, 1990 (Chapter Three). A possible interpretation of the revision is that the lawmakers considered descendants of Japanese migrants, born and raised abroad, to be Japanese by virtue of biological predetermination. The lawmakers may have been influenced by the earlier repatriation of *zanryu koji* (Japanese children stranded in northern China in the aftermath of the Second World War). During the 1980s, Japanese industry, especially subcontractors in manufacturing, sought Nikkeijin from South America in order to meet an acute shortage of labour. The underlying rationale was that Nikkeijin are as kith and kin. Lawmakers, policymakers and employers seemed to believe that biological descendants were able to bind with native Japanese. Arguably, the Government regards Japanese migrants and descendants living in South America as part of a diaspora, possessing an innate longing to return to the land of departure,

though the migrants do not necessarily see themselves as part of one. Reasons for a return to Japan are often more practical than any nostalgic longing for the ancestral homeland (Linger, 2003: 211). The concept of diaspora viewed in this light is a top-down perspective. Linger muses that Japanese Brazilians represent a dual diaspora, suspended between two possible homelands (Linger, 2001:26; 2003:211). The state of Japanese migrants spread throughout the Americas and Southeast Asia and the state of their longing and attachment may be accepted as diaspora; the 'longing to return' reported among Nikkeijin in Japan, when they refer to the country of departure, could also be considered to represent a form of diaspora. However, whilst 'I will go back home [to South America] some day in the near future' might possibly be interpreted as diasporic in terms of identification with and nostalgia for the home country, and consequently be described as a 'Nikkeijin diaspora', the view is not sufficient to gain support via the historicized approach. A characteristic of diaspora does not necessarily signify diaspora.

Okinawan diaspora

Relocation to Okinawa by migrants and their descendants having a familial background with the island carries a significantly more cultural attribute. Okinawan history tells of a diasporic experience. The Meiji government administered Okinawa as a virtual colony by abolishing Ryukyu Okoku (the Ryukyu Kingdom) in 1894 (Oguma, 1998). Benefits from central government policy in founding the Japanese nation on industry did not extend to the periphery; indeed, Okinawa was far from industrial centres (Nakasone, 2002:8). By 1935, approximately fifteen per cent of the island's population had moved to Osaka and Tokyo, and overseas to Taiwan, Borneo,

Sumatra, Java, Mexico, Cuba, Malaya, Micronesia, the Philippines, Hawaii, and the Americans (OKKI, 1974). Okinawan migrants were forcibly repatriated after 1946, though an economy impoverished by the Second World War could not support the sudden increase in numbers, and a second wave of emigration began. Okinawans departed for Argentina in 1948 and were followed by others to Brazil, Peru, Mexico, and Paraguay. The U.S. Civil Administration of the Ryukyus (USCAR) was set up to implement American policies and programmes; accordingly, islanders were encouraged to South America, to Colonia Okinawa and other locations in Bolivia, during the following decades (Chapter Two).

Okinawan diasporic identity cannot be understood apart from the effect of Japanese imperialism and colonialism (Tomiyama, 2002; Nomura, 2002). The pressure on Okinawans to assimilate to mainland patterns continued well into the twentieth century even to the extent, under the interwar period's *Seikatsu Kaizen Undo* (Lifestyle Reform Movement) of the suppression of language and customs. After the reversion of Okinawa to Japan in 1972, which was marked by sometimes violent protests and a strong call for Okinawan independence, a cultural resistance emerged. The island's authorities were inclined to express an ethnic identity, taking initiatives to promote an Okinawan international community such as the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festivals. The emphasis is on spiritual integration, maintenance of Okinawan identity, mutual help and business ties.

Nobel laureate Kenzaburo Oe was impressed by the survival of an Okinawan culture, despite the homogenizing and centralist culture emanating from mainland Japan. He

had this to say:

> No matter how Japanized (or 'Yamatonized') it may outwardly appear now, Okinawa still maintains its non-yamato cultural identity; and unlike the insular, unaccommodating and emperor focused culture of the rest of Japan, it is blessed with a richness and diversity peculiar to peripheral cultures. Its people possess openness to the world that comes from knowing the meaning of relative values (Oe, 1995:32; cited in Nakasone, 2002:23).

Following historic phases of physical diaspora, Okinawans now appear to be engaged in an ethnically-driven cultural diaspora, reaching out to the same places, and possibly beyond. For Okinawan Nikkeijin living abroad, the diasporic 'longing to return' component is significantly more apparent than for Nikkeijin of mainland background. Furthermore, when Okinawan Nikkeijin were relocated to the mainland Japan, they recognize themselves as Okinawan, embracing attachment to Okinawa. Indeed, an important difference between the two groups is that an Okinawan Nikkeijin will probably identify with an Okinawan diaspora whereas a mainland Nikkeijin is unlikely to recognize Japan-to-South America migration as any sort of Japanese diaspora.

Conclusion

My project pursues the cross-generational return migratory movement of Nikkeijin from countries in South America to Japan and to the island of Okinawa: these are presumed ancestral homelands. The return movement to mainland Japan is

characterized as *dekasegi*, for economic advantage, and is temporary, at least as a first intention. How many migrants will negate the return migration by another return, this time to the countries they regard as their real home, is a matter for the future. Of those who do go back to South America, having fulfilled – or, because of economic downturn, prevented from fulfilling – their purpose, it will be said the return migration phenomenon is over, and with it the transnational life. They could, of course, repeat the cycle, as a few have so done. For these travellers, the transnational existence would continue. As for Okinawan Nikkeijin, they will potentially remain in Okinawa as settlers since their initial motivations to migrate so often have an added aspect.

One of the primary objects of this thesis has been to discuss the concept of identity in return migration by Nikkeijin, to the mainland and to the island prefecture of Okinawa. Nikkeijin as a social category is constructed by Japanese official discourse. The social identity of Nikkeijin is suggested through Japanese lineage, yet it cannot exactly or even closely be the same because of reasons of different language and culture. Therefore, at the level of everyday practice, Nikkeijin are foreigners in Japan, forming an ethnic minority in a similar manner as found in other ethnic enclaves. My findings suggest that Nikkeijin who have returned to Japan show how collective identity is constructed socially, and how an individual's self-identity does not necessarily coincide with collective identity. In Japan, Nikkeijin is never Japanese. The social boundary between Nikkeijin and native Japanese persists as far as Nikkeijin remain within their ethnic communities and interact only to a limited extent. Ethnic consciousness runs along lines of national identity: e.g. Brazilian,

Peruvian, Bolivian, Argentinian. As Linger says, the category of 'Nikkei' or 'Japanese Brazilian' does not have the same meaning for those who place themselves within it (Linger, 2003:211-212).

Self-identity among Nikkeijin is multiple and elastic, and is adjusted according to the social milieu. It is a property of the individual and therefore offers the capacity to be controllable. Social identity, and categorization of the group, is a product of official discourse beyond the subject's individual will. It represents official power over the individual. Nikkeijin call on a flexibility of identities in order to cope with the new social and cultural environment they find in Japan. Okinawan Nikkeijin share aspects of self-identity with mainland Nikkeijin but there is an additional dimension connected to Okinawan ethnicity and culture. Their consciousness of being Uchinanchu (Okinawan) is accentuated when they set foot in mainland Japan. In Okinawa Prefecture, they have a potential for assimilation into Okinawan society by constructing an identity based on perceptions of an Okinawan diaspora and by broad interaction with native Okinawans.

In summary, I wish briefly to return to the literature on identity. In a contribution entitled 'Who needs "identity"?'. Hall sees 'identification as a construction, a process never completed' (Hall, 1996:2). He describes identity as strategic and positional, and expands as follows:

> ...identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly
>
> fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across
>
> different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and

positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly

in the process of change and transformation (Hall, 1996:4).

As presented in this chapter, my findings of the self-identity of Nikkeijin would tend to agree with the above proposal. Within the category of Nikkeijin, individual identity is generally not unified, neither does it necessarily accord with social identity through lineage as propounded by Japanese immigration laws. Hall also refers to an idea of 'suture'.

> I use identity to refer to the meeting point, the point of *suture*, between
>
> on the one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to
>
> 'interpellate', speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of
>
> particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce
>
> subjects, which construct us as subjects which can be 'spoken'. Identities
>
> are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which
>
> discursive practices construct for us (Hall, 1996:5-6).

Again, I can see how this may apply to my various informants. I interpret the concept of 'suture' as meaning the joining of the outside (social; that is, influenced by the perception of Japanese local residents and official discourses) and the inside (self) of identity.

Tsuda, in a conclusion of his own, states that in ethnically restrictive Japan, Nikkei Brazilians will eventually disappear into the majority populace through cultural assimilation and social mobility because their ethnicity is not racially 'essentialized'

(Tsuda, 2003:306). It is possible to take the point further. In South America, a degree of cultural assimilation is observed, notably by subsequent Nikkei generations, despite racial (physiologically manifest) differences. Also, Nikkeijin in South America have advanced in terms of social mobility, certainly from the plantation labour of the original migrants. One could argue, therefore, that when no such racial difference exists, then cultural assimilation and social mobility – and an eventual ethnic disappearance – would be easier and sooner. But there is a difficulty with the idea. South American societies, especially, that of Brazil, are multicultural and multiracial in outlook whereas Japanese society is not so accommodating. In my opinion, Nikkeijin will persist as an ethnicity in the industrial sites of Japan because of the cultural boundary that is formed between them and Japanese society, a boundary whose existence is firmly acknowledged as a result of official discourse and concepts embedded in the Japanese people, and which is reinforced by migrant response and habitus. A recent observation, reported in the media, is the use among the younger generation of Nikkei in Japan of the element *zainichi* in place of Nikkei – e.g. *zainichi* Brazilian (Ishi, 2007). The term, often applied to Korean residents, means a foreigner or foreigners staying in Japan. Notwithstanding any social mobility, Nikkeijin are (in my opinion) unlikely to see their minority ethnic position in mainland Japan much reduced within immediate generations. By contrast, among Okinawan Nikkeijin in Okinawa who regard themselves as settlers, there is evidence of cultural and ethnic identification. Their situation may be described as assimilation in the making because they are already at one level perceived to be part of a diasporic identity.

Some Nikkeijin return migrants will stay in Japan, and settle, again as some have already chosen to. Among them, there will assuredly be subsequent generations: 'return *nisei* (second generation)' and 'return *sansei* (third generation)'. Whatever the generation, whatever they are called, whatever the official category, it is certain that Nikkei identity will be 'constantly in the process of change and transformation'. I hope the best for new lives in the ancestral homeland.

Postscript

Time has passed since my field research. The economic situation in Japan has dramatically changed to bring about increasing unemployment and a widening of gap between rich and poor. It should be no surprise to learn that the situation affects the lives of many Nikkeijin. The number claiming social benefit provision has increased. The Japanese government has offered assisted return fare to the 'home country', a condition of which is no re-entry to Japan within three years, though the scale of applications has been relatively small (*Asahi Newspaper*, 16/12/09).

Chapter Seven – Notes

1. Some caution is nonetheless exercised. Discrepancy and ambivalence would also be found in the narratives of people who are not only migrants but also local residents. I am aware, too, that:

> …ethnic self-identifications are of great significance to some …But the salience of public self-identification should not be assumed and their personal content is never self-evident (Linger, 2003:212).

2. *Kikokushijo* are born in Japan and brought up, to begin with, in mainstream Japanese culture. They accompany their parents in a career transfer overseas and receive influence from the different culture that surrounds them. They then return to Japan to be immersed once more in the home culture (Kobayashi, 1983; cited in Goodman, 1990:10). Goodman notes that *kikokushijo* fare far better in education and employment than other groups and argues that they may represent a new class of Japanese schoolchildren (1990:5).

Appendix 1: A list of informants by field site

Oizumi town and Ota city in Gunma Prefecture (Chapter Four)

Name	Age/Sex	Generation	Country	Moved	Occupation	
Alfredo	56 M	2nd	Brazil	1992	worker	Okinawan
David	32 M	2nd	Brazil	1986	company director	Okinawan
Edmundo	50 M	2nd	Brazil	1990	worker	
Filipe	37 M	2nd	Brazil	1992/1998	teacher	
Hilda	40s F	3rd	Brazil	1998	journalist	
Luiza	23 F	2nd	Brazil	2000	teacher	
James	47 M	2nd	Brazil	1993	worker	
Kachiya	47 F	2nd	Brazil	1990	proprietor of coffee bar	Okinawan
Mayumi	54 F	2nd	Brazil	2000	deputy headmistress	
Takanori	50s M	1st	Brazil	1992	proprietor of general store	Okinawan
Miguel	37 M	2nd	Brazil	1990	co-owner of *futsal* centre	half Okinawan
Pedro	53 M	2nd	Brazil	1992	worker	
Rosa	29 F	3rd	Brazil	1992/1998	co-ordinator at a school	
Shoko	56 F	1st	Brazil	1989	founder of the Nikkei Brazil Center	
Willis	30 M	2nd	Brazil	1992	bank worker	

[Local residents]

Hiroshi, 40s M, manager in the council's international policy-making department

Ichiro, 40s M, former manager in the council's international policy-making department

Shigeru, 70 M, long-time resident, proprietor of camera shop

Sumiko, 60s F, long-time resident, retired

Takashi, 43 M, proprietor of camera shop

Yoshiyuki, 52 M, unemployed

Tsurumi ward, Yokohama, in Kanagawa Prefecture (Chapter Five)

Name	Age/Sex	Generation	Country	Moved	Occupation	
John	45 M	2nd	Brazil	1983	director of cramming school	
Ricardo	50 M	2nd	Brazil	1991	co-owner of Brazilian restaurant	Okinawan
Silvia	40s F	2nd	Brazil	1992	Owner of Brazilian restaurant	Okinawan
Teresa	43 F	2nd	Brazil	1988	worker	Okinawan
Marta	55 F	2nd	Argentina	1973	teacher of Spanish	Okinawan
Munenori	65 M	1st	Argentina	1992	business owner	Okinawan

[Local residents]

Yasuhiko, 70 M, business owner, Okinawan

Naomi, 20s F, daughter of Yoko (below), co-manager at Brazilian restaurant

Yoko, 58 F, married to Okinawan, owner of Brazilian snack bar, voluntary worker

Okinawa Prefecture (Chapter Six)

Name	Age/Sex	Generation	Country	Moved	Occupation
Amelia	43 F	3rd	Argentina	1986/1988	interpreter, translator
Masaru	57 M	3rd	Argentina	1969/1988	manager in a travel agency
Furio	48 M	3rd	Argentina	1985	freelance artist
Patty	34 F	2nd	Argentina	1987	teacher of Spanish
Kouken	60 M	1st	Bolivia	1983	owner of grocery shop
Satomi	32 F	3rd	Bolivia	1994	interpreter
Tetsu	78 M	1st	Bolivia	1979	
Yukari	33 F	3rd	Bolivia	1991	housewife
Kiyohide	34 M	2nd	Brazil	1980	teacher in a secondary school
Cecilia	38 F	3rd	Brazil	1986	co-owner of Brazilian restaurant
Giovanni	25 M	2nd	Peru	1991	co-owner of Brazilian pastel shop
Lucy	35 F	3rd	Peru	1987/1996	teacher of Okinawan folk music
Sally	23 F	3rd	Peru	1986	
Saori	28 F	3rd	Peru	1989	post graduate student

Appendix 2: Glossary

3K   Unskilled or semi-skilled (labour): *kitanai*, dirty; *kitsui*, difficult; *kiken*, dangerous.

buraziljin   Brazilian[s].

burakumin   Japanese underclass, a minority at the lowest social level.

chiiki kyosei   Mutual co-operation between local people and foreigners.

coloniajin   *Colono* (Portuguese): colonist, settler; *jin:* person, people.

dekasegi   Originally meaning to work away from home, the term has come to refer to temporary relocation to Japan from South America in order to take up work. Variant spellings in Portuguese are *dekasegui* or *dekassegui*.

dokyojin   People who come from the same place, e.g. village or town; compatriot(s).

etsukyosha   Transmigrant[s].

gaijin   Foreigner[s], alien[s].

gosei   Fifth generation (migrant[s]).

henna nihonjin   Strange (odd) Japanese person or people.

hojin   Japanese who live abroad.

honne   Private feelings and desires, possibly contrary to what might be expected by society. See *tatemae*.

ichariba chode   Okinawan phrase expressing the notion that everyone becomes a brother or sister from the first meeting.

ijuu   Migration.

imin   Migrant[s]. Originally, nomadic or shifting person or people.

issei   First generation migrant[s].

jin   Person, people. Normally used as a suffix.

jun nisei   Second generation (migrant[s]) not born in host country but brought as children.

kaigai ijuu   Migration overseas.

kaitaku imin   Pioneering migrant[s].

kengaijin   Person or people associated or associating with a prefecture other than one's own.

kenjin   Person or people associated or associating with one's own prefecture.

kenjinkai	Prefectural association[s].
kikoku kenkeijin	Person or people returning to home (or ancestral) prefecture.
kikokushijo	Repatriated (Japanese) children: typically, those brought up outside of Japan as a result of parents' career placement.
kyu imin	'Old' migrant[s], having arrived in the host country before the Second World War.
kyu issei	'Old' first generation migrant[s], having arrived in the host country before the Second World War.
minshuku	Japanese style bed-and-breakfast.
moai	Mutual help credit organization.
naichi	Okinawan expression relating to the Japanese mainland, or to a person or persons from there. See also *yamatonchu*.
nanbei Nikkeijin	Nikkeijin from South America.
nihonjin	Japanese person or people.
Nikkeijin	Japanese emigrant[s] or descendant[s] living anywhere in the world. The term continues to be applied on a return to Japan. In this thesis, Nikkeijin relates almost entirely to migration to and from countries of South America.
nisei	Second generation migrant[s].
omiai	Arranged marriage[s].
return migration	A return by a migrant or migrants to their country of origin. The term is sometimes applied, as in this thesis, across generations.
-san	Suffix of respect, equivalent to Mr. Mrs. Miss.
sansei	Third generation migrant[s].
satogaeri	Return to home town (to visit family members).
seisounen kai	Youth association[s].
shin issei	'New' first generation migrant[s], having arrived in the host country after the Second World War.
shugakusei	Foreign student[s] studying at Japanese language or technical school.
sumiwake	Separate habitation.
tafukenjin	Person or people from a prefecture other than one's own (mostly used by Okinawans).
tatemae	Behaviour and opinions displayed in public, as might be expected by society. See *honne*.
teigei	Okinawan laid back or easy going attitude.

teijusha	Long-term resident[s].
totome	An Okinawan tradition connected with ancestor worship at a family level.
Uchinaguchi	Okinawan dialect.
Uchinanchu	Used by Okinawans to refer ethnically to anyone of Okinawan ancestry (*Uchina*, Okinawa; *chu*, people).
yamatonchu	Okinawan expression for person or people from the Japanese mainland. See also *naichi*.
yonsei	Fourth generation migrant[s].
yuimaaru	(Okinawan dialect) Communal co-operation, mutual assistance.
zaihaku hojin	Japanese migrant[s] living in Brazil.
zainichi	Foreigner[s] staying in Japan. Usually refers to Koreans.
zairyumin	Resident[s].
zanryu koji	Children of Japanese parents abandoned in Manchuria at the end of the Second World War. (Full phrase: *chugoku zanryu koji to fujin*, refers to children and women.)

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