

# A Transnational Generation: Japanese Americans in the Pacific before World War II

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By the eve of the Second World War, thousands of second-generation Japanese Americans (Nisei) had lived and traveled outside the United States. Most of them had been sent to Japan at young ages by their first-generation (Issei) parents to be raised in the households of their relatives and receive proper Japanese education. Others were there on short-term tours sponsored by various Japanese organizations in the U.S. to experience the culture and society of their parents' homeland. Many also sought opportunities for employment or higher education in a country that represented an expanding colonial power especially during the 1930s. Although no official data exists to help determine the exact number of Nisei in Japan before the Pacific War, various sources suggest that about 50,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry spent some of their formative years in Japan. Of these Nisei, 10,000-20,000 returned to the United States before the outbreak of Pearl Harbor and became known as *Kibei* (literally, "returned to America").<sup>1)</sup>

The Nisei who migrated to Japan at young ages and those who embarked on subsequent journeys to Japan's colonial world in the Pacific rarely appear in the popular narratives of Japanese American history. The U.S.-centered immigrant paradigm has confined the history of Nisei to the interior of U.S. political and cultural boundaries. Moreover, the Japanese American internment during World War II and the emphasis on Nisei loyalty and nationalism have been dominant themes in the postwar scholarship and public history of Japanese Americans. Consequently, the Nisei who were educated in Japan—particularly the *Kibei* who returned to the U.S. before WWII—have remained controversial figures in both the Japanese American community and scholarship. Many of them have been stigmatized as disloyal figures in the internment camps because of their education in Japan as well as their varied responses to the war.

Few scholars in the U.S. before the proliferation of transnational research in the 1990s were willing to come to grips with the history Japanese Americans educated in Japan. Many scholar-activists who sought to uncover the injustice of the internment found it difficult to write about Nisei who grew up in Japan when "Nisei as Americans first" was the political motto that drove the movement for redress as well as the history of unquestioned Nisei loyalty.<sup>2)</sup> At the same time, the U.S.-centered immigrant paradigm has largely overlooked the experiences of Nisei in prewar Japan and other locations in the Pacific.

While the history of Nisei who experienced Japan remains a difficult topic to pursue because of the demands of bilingual and transnational research, it nevertheless offers important and meaningful analytical alternatives to the dichotomous U.S. immigrant paradigm. The 50,000 or so

Nisei who traversed across the Pacific before WWII were a group of migrants that defy the notion of the United States as the final terminus of immigrant history. Their experiences also challenge the prolonged concept of the U.S. as the “host nation.” The history of Nisei in Japan is one that potentially revises the role of the U.S. as a country of immigrants: to Nisei migrants in Japan, the U.S. represented the “sending nation.” More accurately, it is a history that revises the existing model of immigration history by complicating the linear and predictable notions of the so-called sending and receiving societies. Examination of judicial and diplomatic records as well as periodical sources in both Japanese and English from the 1930s reveals how Nisei migrants’ daily contact with transnational political developments impacted their actions and dilemmas.

Moreover, re-examination of Nisei transnational generation in the pre-internment context reveals that the existing anti-Japanese sentiments on the U.S. West Coast before WWII had already compounded the negative public perception of those Nisei educated in Japan. Influential anti-Japanese intellectuals depicted the 50,000 Nisei in Japan in the 1930s as potential agents of Japan’s political and economic ambitions in North America. These anti-Japanese propaganda actively described Nisei educated in Japan as a culturally monolithic and essentially pro-Japan group. At the outbreak of Pearl Harbor, Japanese American elites’ effort to promote the assimilated and loyal Nisei image further marginalized Kibei, targeting them as a cultural and political antithesis of Americanized Nisei.

## 1. A Transnational Generation: Nisei Migrants in Japan

There have been recent inquiries among migration scholars about the extent to which the lives of second generation have been embedded in multiple sociopolitical, cultural, and legal settings that encompass multiple nations. However, their studies focus almost exclusively on second-generation communities within the U.S. borders. They position the U.S.-born generation in similar transnational “social fields” that have shaped the lives of their first-generation immigrant parents. Like their parents, the second generation may be physically situated in a country of permanent settlement, but they are under constant influence of legal and cultural institutions of both the so-called “host” and “sending” countries. These studies also emphasize developments in international and diplomatic relations involving both nations that can have significant implications on the lives of the second generation. Theorists also add that second-generation communities may find ways to respond to the social and political realities created by these transnational forces that they constantly come in contact with.<sup>3)</sup>

An example of this type of second-generation transnationalism could be found in the Japanese American community in the 1930s when the long existing anti-Japanese agitation on the U.S. West Coast heightened amid Japan’s aggression in China. As noted by David Yoo, when the mainstream press in the U.S. relentlessly accused Japan’s actions in Asia, many Nisei felt that they and their first-generation (Issei) parents would bear the direct public wrath in the form of intensified racial

hostility against them. Nisei writers responded to this situation by using English-language articles in community papers to convince the general public that the hostility against Japan in the international arena was fueling the anti-Japanese sentiment in the United States.<sup>4)</sup>

There exists a theoretical debate on how salient this type of second-generation transnational engagement was. Some scholars argue that like the Nisei writers in the above example, the actions and choices of the second generation operate fundamentally in transnational social fields. Others disagree, noting that by virtue of being geographically and culturally rooted in the U.S., many among the second generation did not possess the language and cultural capital necessary to adequately grasp transnational developments.<sup>5)</sup> In both arguments, however, the second generation remains essentially a U.S. based group whose contact with transnational social fields occurs primarily in terms of the social relations of their “ethnic” group with other groups, as well as with the U.S. society at large.

On the other hand, the U.S.-born Nisei who experienced international migration is a unique group of transnational individuals whose experiences transcend the limits and premises presented by both sides of the debate. There is no question that the lives of these Nisei migrants were in the matrix of transnational in the most pervasive way. Their experience and identities were both socially constructed and self-defined in terms of their presence in both Japan and the United States. Tracing their movements and experiences, therefore, offers a unique analytical lens that can help explore both the embeddedness of Nisei lives in multiple transnational social fields and the Nisei engagement with complex transformations in legal, political, and diplomatic issues in the years preceding WWII.

## **2. Nisei Transnational Migrations and Citizenship**

The 1920s marked the beginning of what is commonly regarded in Japanese American history as the “exclusion era,” as a number of legal and judicial measures to exclude Japanese in the United States were established during this decade. For example, the U.S. government in 1922 enacted the Married Women’s Independent Nationality Act, or better known as the Cable Act. This law forced American women marrying “aliens ineligible to citizenship,” including all Japanese nationals, to withdraw their U.S. citizenship. In 1922, the same year Congress passed the Cable Act, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Takao Ozawa v. United States* had ruled that Japanese nationals did not qualify to acquire naturalization rights reserved for “free independent whites,” formally establishing Japanese as “aliens ineligible to citizenship.” Then, the Immigration Act of 1924 effectively halted further immigration of Japanese to the United States.

As Asian American studies has become a bona fide teaching and research field since the 1970s, so has the history of these exclusionary laws in studies and classrooms alike. The landmark Supreme Court decision in *Ozawa v. United States* has been treated primarily as an example of racism based on pseudo science that tapped the white (more specifically, “Caucasian”) as the only

race worthy of granting naturalization rights. Essentially upholding the Naturalization Act of 1790, which had limited the racial prerequisite for naturalization to only “free white persons,” *Ozawa v. United States* established the first-generation Japanese immigrants in the United States as permanent aliens without citizenship rights. Similarly, the 1924 Immigration Act has been regarded in studies and classes as a law that excluded potential first-generation migrants from Asian and southern and eastern European countries that had been targeted by racist immigration policy designed to regulate the population of unwanted ethnic groups from these regions. Thus, foreign-born migrants, such as Japanese nationals, were thought to be legally subject to this exclusionary law.

However, little has been written about Nisei, who were U.S. citizens by birth, as a group that became *legally* subject to these exclusionary developments against first-generation immigrants. This is because the studies on the implications of these historical developments have focused on people in the United States, while the Americans of Japanese ancestry in Japan also became the primary targets of these legal and judicial changes in the 1920s. The changes in legal status of Issei in the U.S. in fact had serious implications on the citizenship of Nisei who resided overseas in the 1920s and 1930s.

In early September 1928, nineteen-year-old Walnut Grove, California native Toshiko Inaba arrived at the Port of San Francisco via a trans-Pacific vessel from Japan. At the age of three Inaba had been sent to Kumamoto Prefecture to be raised by her uncle's family. After spending sixteen formative years of her life in Japan, Inaba decided to return to her country of birth with an intention to resettle permanently. However, her reentry to the United States was denied by the immigration authorities, who determined that Inaba had lost her U.S. citizenship while living abroad and no permission had been granted to her for readmission to the U.S. soil. The immigration officers reviewing her papers discovered that she had married and divorced Torao Yamamoto, a Japanese national, during her sixteen-year residence in Japan.<sup>6)</sup> They most certainly interpreted Inaba's marriage history as a legal ground on which she had ceased to be American citizen; that when Inaba married a Japanese man ineligible to U.S. citizenship in Japan, she had voluntarily withdrawn her U.S. citizenship vis-à-vis the Cable Act of 1922.

The Cable Act and *Ozawa v. United States* worked in tandem to strip Inaba of her U.S. citizenship, while the Immigration Act of 1924 served as the legal measure that directly contributed to the denial of her return to the United States. As someone who withdrew her U.S. citizenship by marriage, Inaba was undoubtedly regarded by the U.S. immigration officers as a naturalized citizen of Japan, as the contemporary Nationality Law of Japan had stipulated. And Inaba's admission to the U.S. soil was denied as a result of the racialized quota system established by the 1924 Immigration Act, which all but excluded Japanese immigration to the United States. Therefore, in the eyes of the U.S. immigration officers, Inaba had become a Japanese citizen and an immigrant no longer eligible to the U.S. citizenship or admission to the United States. This sudden change of Inaba's national identity was not by her choice, but by the mandate of law and the High Court of the United States

that had changed the legal and racial status of Japanese while she was away from home.

As a result, Inaba soon found herself detained at Angel Island Immigration Center across the bay from San Francisco waiting for a deportation order. Her family in California hired lawyers to appeal the Immigration Commission's decision to detain Inaba but to no avail. After a series of unsuccessful hearings conducted by the Board of Special Inquiries, Inaba filed a petition to the U.S. District Court for her admission as an American citizen and to fight the imminent order for her deportation. As the hearings on her case dragged on, Inaba would remain imprisoned at Angel Island for over a year.<sup>7)</sup>

As Inaba chose to fight her way home by filing court appeals, she argued that her marriage to Yamamoto should have been null and void in the first place because the said marriage had not been in accordance with Japanese marriage law. In an appeal, Inaba via her attorneys claimed that the marriage had taken place "without her own knowledge and without the consent of her parents," which was required by law in Japan in order for a marriage to be legally recognized. She claimed that she found out about her alleged marriage with Yamamoto some four months later in September 1927. Then she "caused her family record to be changed so that she would no longer be a member of Yamamoto's family, but a member of her own family." This act constituted, according to Japanese laws existing at the time, Inaba's "complete and absolute" release from the alleged marriage.<sup>8)</sup>

However, the opinion of the presiding judge was hardly sympathetic to Inaba's plight. U.S. Circuit Judge Rudkin upheld the Board of Special Inquiries decision for Inaba's deportation and reiterated the legal ground on which her marriage to Yamamoto had stripped Inaba of her U.S. citizenship. As to Inaba's claim that the marriage had taken place without her knowledge, Rudkin responded that the "only evidence of coercion was the fact that her husband was selected for her by her relatives, according to Japanese custom." "If such coercion will invalidate a marriage between Orientals," the judge added, "it is a matter of common knowledge that few, if any, of such marriage, will result, or can result, in expatriation."<sup>9)</sup> Thus, Rudkin's opinion, which was based primarily on "culture" rather than the legality of Inaba's marriage, effectively upheld the racially designed citizenship and immigration laws of the 1920s.

The Toshiko Inaba case reveals the complex outcomes of the anti-Japanese and anti-immigrant sentiments in the United States, the discriminatory immigration policy, and the racially and ideologically driven interpretation of American citizenship before World War II. Inaba's experience demonstrates that these legal and judicial measures had unexpected consequences when U.S.-born citizens of Japanese ancestry became direct targets. As the U.S.-Japan relations began to sour in the 1920s and especially in the 1930s with Japan's military aggression in China, the presence of these American citizens of Japanese ancestry in Japan became a diplomatic issue that neither of the two governments had dealt with before. Although the U.S. immigration and nationality policies during this period were designed to exclude the first-generation Japanese immigrants from the American system, the U.S.-born Nisei who lived overseas (namely Japan) had to face the possibility of falling

victims to the legal measures that had originally intended to limit the rights of their parents' generation. Inaba's experience revealed that as long as these exclusionary legal institutions existed, Nisei women living in Japan constantly faced the possibility that they would not be allowed to return to their homes in the U.S. upon their marriage to Japanese men.

### 3. Transnational Implications of the Kibei Movement and Anti-Japanese Sentiment

The Toshiko Inaba case proved that the exclusionary U.S. immigration law was effective enough to not only make it nearly impossible for Japanese nationals to enter the U.S. soil as immigrants, but also deny readmission of overseas Japanese American women who had gotten married to Japanese men. Long after Inaba's deportation in January 1930,<sup>10)</sup> however, California's leading anti-immigration activist V.S. McClatchy thought the Immigration Act of 1924 was not exclusive enough to stop the influx of all individuals of Japanese race. Throughout the 1920s McClatchy had authored anti-Japanese articles, such as "Guarding the Immigration Gates" and "The Japanese Problem in California." In the 1930s, McClatchy began to pay closer attention to the existence of Nisei in Japan, and incessantly warned the American public of what he alleged was Japan's plan to dispatch 50,000 Kibei to the U.S. West Coast and Hawaii as its agents. For instance, in a widely circulated article in 1937, McClatchy claimed that the Japanese government had indoctrinated the Nisei residing in Japan with "duties and loyalty of Japanese citizenship" and had a plan to send them back to the U.S. to lead Japan's ambition to "force entrance for her emigration into" North America. McClatchy also argued that Kibei freely infiltrated into the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), an emerging Nisei community and civil rights organization, and had thus gained logistical and organizational prowess to their operation as Japanese agents.<sup>11)</sup>

While it is true that the campaign to send Nisei in Japan back to the United States gained a nationwide momentum throughout Japan in the 1930s, the reasons for this so-called "Kibei movement" were far more complex than McClatchy's allegation. This was an era the articulations of Americanism, loyalty, and cultural dualism had complex meanings to Japanese Americans of all ranks. And there were Nisei leaders who valued the cultural and linguistic assets possessed by Kibei and welcomed their return to the U.S.

For example, James Yoshinari Sakamoto, publisher of the *Japanese American Courier* and one of the founding fathers of the Japanese American Citizens League, emphasized Nisei's position as the future of what he conceived as a new "Pacific Era." Born and raised in Seattle at the turn of the twentieth century, Sakamoto recognized quite accurately the growth of Nisei, both in number and influence, would surpass that of their parents' generation in the coming decades. While emphasizing the importance of Nisei's "Americanism," Sakamoto nevertheless saw in the second generation what he believed to be a cultural asset that made them potentially better Americans than even Americans of European ancestry. Yuji Ichioka notes that Sakamoto believed that the Japanese virtue of loyalty, which Nisei children inherited by growing up in Japanese households in America,

would enable them to become more loyal citizens of the United States. Furthermore, Sakamoto believed Nisei's Americanism made them suitable candidates for the role of bridging between the land of their birth and the land of their ancestry. Sakamoto encouraged Nisei to learn the language and customs of their parents. Having spent some time in Japan himself, he believed that these cultural assets would help Nisei better understand the complex international conditions in the Pacific in which they could render their service as promoters of better understanding between the United States and Japan.<sup>12)</sup>

Also, there was a more immediate and practical reason for the Japanese community in America to encourage the Nisei in Japan to return to the U.S. permanently. As noted by Brian Hayashi, the issue of farm inheritance prompted the Japanese Association in California to actively sponsor the "Kibei movement." As many Issei farmers on the U.S. West Coast reached the retirement age, they hoped their sons, especially ones that had been sent to farming areas in Japan and acquired some agricultural management skills along with Japanese education, would return and take over the family farms.<sup>13)</sup> Thus, just as sending Nisei children to Japan at a young age had been an economically suitable option for many Issei parents in the United States, especially around the time of the Great Depression, the family economy again played a critical role in encouraging the Kibei movement.<sup>14)</sup>

Upon their return to the United States, many young adult Kibei indeed played central roles in creating political spaces for other recently returned Kibei, including joining the Japanese American Citizens League, as McClatchy pointed out. In 1935, Kibei leaders in Southern California established the Kibei Section within JACL's Los Angeles Chapter. In the following year, San Francisco Kibei groups were integrated into JACL. Despite the romantic notion of cultural dualism, many Kibei also shared the experience of social marginalization in both Japan and the United States as the cultural and racial "other." And according to Mitsuhiro Sakaguchi, many Kibei were compelled to organize their own groups within the larger Nisei community as a way to facilitate their own collective political voice.<sup>15)</sup> Young Kibei writers also played active roles in publishing literary magazines and used these publications as a creative space to grapple with the meanings of their transnational experiences.<sup>16)</sup>

However, these activities and the increasing number of Kibei in the U.S. became a constant target of criticism by anti-Japanese authors like McClatchy, who effectively utilized his personal connection to anti-immigration groups within California as well as leading newspapers. His commentaries were widely published in newspapers throughout the West Coast, many of which were owned by another leading anti-Japan and anti-immigration agitator William Randolph Hearst. In his correspondence to Hearst, McClatchy made sure to supply his studies and commentaries on the Nisei in Japan and the Kibei movement.<sup>17)</sup>

The anti-Japanese sentiments and the negative public perception of Nisei educated in Japan had a far reaching transnational consequence. McClatchy's commentaries caught the attention of Japanese American community newspapers as well as Japanese news agency Domei Press, which

fed translations of McClatchy articles to local newspapers in Japan. In the first half of 1937, these stories of McClatchy's anti-Nisei messages were often accompanied by a report that the U.S. government had an imminent plan to ban the return of all Nisei residing in Japan. Often described as the "Cannon Bill," if such legal measure had passed, according to this report, any Nisei in Japan who had failed to register themselves with the U.S. diplomatic missions would permanently lose their privilege to return to their homeland. This report was so widely circulated by the Japanese press that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo soon received a number of requests for confirmation of the news as well as for an instruction to the Nisei living in Japan on the proper course of action. A letter from the governor of Wakayama Prefecture included an urgent request for clarification of the matter described in *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun's* Wakayama Edition on June 11, 1937. Referring to the "Cannon Bill," the paper reported that the U.S. had launched a legislative campaign to block the return of Nisei from Japan as a response to the ongoing Kibei movement. This legal measure would go into effect as early as July of that year, according to the paper, which admonished local Nisei residents to report to the U.S. Consulate General to register their American citizenship and denounce any intention to seek permanent residence in Japan.<sup>18)</sup>

As a report from the Japanese Consul General in Los Angeles that year clarified, however, any immediate enactment of such exclusionary law was unlikely and that the reports on the U.S. banning of overseas Nisei had actually started out as a rumor that spread rather quickly.<sup>19)</sup> However, this incident demonstrates the centrality of the issue of citizenship among the Nisei in Japan, so much so that the potential loss of their citizenship and the consequent expatriation of thousands of American-born Nisei would become a significant diplomatic issue at the time when the tension between the two nations was growing. The "Cannon Bill" fiasco also demonstrates that the Nisei in Japan had experiences that were deeply embedded in legal and political institutions in the U.S. and Japan, as well as the anti-Japanese sentiments in the United States.

The Consul General's clarification of the rumor, and even the repeal of the Cable Act in 1936, far from ended the overseas Nisei's fear over the potential loss of their U.S. citizenship. In early 1939, about 150 Nisei residents in Japan from nine organizations under the flagship of the League of Young Japanese Americans convened in Tokyo for a special meeting. The League had organized the meeting to provide a one-day information session on Nisei citizenship. The purpose of this gathering was to help ease the anxiety within the Japanese American community in Japan about the possible loss of their U.S. citizenship while residing overseas.

The keynote speaker at this meeting was Tetsuichi Kurashige, a Nisei journalist who had resided in Japan for 10 years. A graduate of the University of Oregon School of Law, Kurashige had written articles for the Tokyo-based *Japan Times Weekly* on the issue of Nisei citizenship. A self-proclaimed legal expert in citizenship laws, Kurashige gave a speech that offered information that very much reiterated the changes placed into Japan's Nationality Law in 1924. In his response to the heated questions from the audience about the matter of Nisei citizenship and marriage, Kurashige offered textbook answers: first, Japan's Nationality Law allowed Nisei to choose between

U.S. and Japanese citizenships; and second, one could lose his or her U.S. citizenship by becoming a naturalized citizen of another country or formally pledging allegiance to the government of another country. He also assured the audience by explaining that a Nisei woman would not lose her U.S. citizenship by marrying a Japanese man,<sup>20)</sup> since the Cable Act had long been repealed.

Hardly more informative than what the Nationality Law had already stipulated, this meeting in Tokyo nevertheless proved that many Nisei in Japan had to live with varying degrees of fear that the life choices they made while living overseas might strip them of their citizenship. Almost a decade after Toshiko Inaba's deportation from San Francisco, the effects of legal measures designed to regulate the immigrant generation (Issei) still had equally significant implications for the lives of American citizens of Japanese ancestry living overseas. Furthermore, the anti-Japanese activists in the U.S. were now targeting them as the enemy.

#### **4. Legacy of Nisei Transnational Experiences: “Kibei” as a Political Construction**

In this way, the lives of Nisei in Japan were connected to both Japan and the U.S. in the most tangible manner, as transnational individuals who experienced, coped with, and responded to real life issues and dilemmas. However, these transnational migrants' complex experiences and identities were grossly misunderstood and distorted in the years preceding the Pacific War. And at the outbreak of Pearl Harbor, the mounting racial hysteria further compounded the negative image of Kibei as a pro-Japan element. This image largely shaped the notion of “Kibei” as a culturally and politically pro-Japan group. In the history dominated by the language of loyalty, the Kibei in the internment camps were often stigmatized as violent and disloyal elements or draft-dodging protesters—the image that has largely been engrossed in the popular historical memories of Japanese American internment. This image had made many of them the very antithesis of the heroic, masculine, and loyal Nisei represented by the JACL leaders and Nisei WWII veterans.

Even before the Presidential Order for the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans was issued in 1942, the JACLers in their zeal to prove their loyalty had even gone so far as to cooperate with federal authorities by identifying Kibei as disloyal and potentially dangerous individuals. For example, JACL's Southern District Council established an “Anti-Axis Committee” in December 1941, immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The committee sought to demonstrate the Nisei's unequivocal loyalty to the federal and local authorities. It deliberately policed and monitored the activities within the Japanese American community and furnished the authorities with a list of all Kibei members of the JACL's Los Angeles Chapter as a potentially subversive group. The committee not only pledged their cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and military authorities, but also nativist and anti-Japanese groups like the Native Sons of the Golden West, sponsors of McClatchy's California Joint Immigration Committee.<sup>21)</sup>

The war might have presented these Nisei elites with an urgency to shape a collective Japanese American identity as loyal Americans. However, their deliberate targeting of Kibei as the

political and cultural other did not emerge out of a vacuum. The existence of Nisei in Japan and their biculturalism before the war had contributed to the allegation made by anti-Japanese activists like McClatchy that Nisei could be as foreign as their first-generation parents. Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt of the Western Defense Command, who recommended the mass removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans on the West Coast, made such an argument. He insisted in the post-removal report that the Kibei were a “homogenous, unassimilated element” who possessed “ties of . . . custom and indoctrination of the enemy.” He argued that the Kibei’s ideological contamination of the rest of the Japanese American community could not be ignored,<sup>22)</sup> and thus, in his eyes, made the whole community vulnerable to turning pro-Axis. Such assumption of cultural homogeneity and imperialist indoctrination cast the Kibei as the most dangerous pro-Japan elements among Japanese Americans even before the internment commenced.

Thus, Nisei migrants’ diverse transnational experiences had multiple consequences. They were welcomed and embraced by the Japanese American community as cultural brokers and leaders in the 1930s. Simultaneously, the existing anti-Japanese sentiment in the U.S. helped cast them as potentially dangerous individuals. It is important to consider these multiple aspects of how the identities of these Nisei (and Kibei) were socially constructed. Also, it is equally important to remember that despite the public opinions that were often against them, Nisei migrants in the 1930s and 1940s responded in diverse ways to various political, social, and diplomatic pressures. Some returned to the United States before the war at the request of their parents and many others remained in Japan as permanent settlers. Many upon their return to the U.S. actively participated in creating social and political spaces for the fellow Kibei. Many protested, in peaceful or violent ways, in the internment camps during WWII. Many also actively cooperated with the JACLers and the internment authorities and even volunteered to serve in the U.S. war efforts against Japan. Some who remained in Japan served in the Japanese military and saw actions against the Allied troops in Asia-Pacific. In order to illuminate this diversity and complexity inherent in the lives of this transnational generation, it is imperative to consider the prewar historical conditions encompassing multiple national spaces that help contextualize the individual Nisei migrant experiences.

## Notes

- 1) Paul R. Spickard, *Japanese Americans: The Formation and Transformations of an Ethnic Group* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996), 89, 167; See also Robert Lee’s introduction to Mary Kimoto Tomita, *Dear Miye: Letters Home from Japan, 1939 – 1946*, edited by Robert Lee (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 18 – 19, and Yuji Ichioka, “Introduction” in Karl G. Yoneda, *Ganbatte: Sixty-Year Struggle of a Kibei Worker* (Los Angeles: Asian American Studies Center, University of California, Los Angeles, 1983), xii. *Zaibei Nihonjinshi* [“History of Japanese in America”] in 1940 reported that 10,000 Nisei returned to the United States from Japan, which left the number of Nisei remaining Japan to be 20,000: *Zaibei Nihonjinshi* (San Francisco: Zaibei Nihonjinkai, 1940), 1117 – 1118. Brian Hayashi notes that figures suggested by contemporary estimations are probably too low: See Brian Masaru Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy: The Japanese American Internment* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004), 44 – 45, 238, n. 11.

- 2) For critique of the history of Nisei loyalty and nationalism, see Yuji Ichioka, "The Meaning of Loyalty: The Case of Kazumaro Buddy Uno," *Amerasia Journal* 23: 3 (Winter 1997–1998): 44–71, and Naoko Shibusawa, "The Artist Belongs to the People: The Odyssey of Taro Yashima." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 8: 3 (October 2005): 259.
- 3) Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters, eds., *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 3–17.
- 4) David Yoo, *Growing up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture among Japanese Americans of California, 1924–49* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 87–90
- 5) Levitt and Waters, eds., *The Changing Face of Home*, 4.
- 6) "Honpō ni oite kōnin shitaru nikkei shimin no shiminken sōshitsu ni yoru sōkan ni kansuru ken," May 1, 1930, Nikkei gaijin zakken [Records on foreign residents of Japanese ancestry] Volume 1, K.1.1.0.9.1, Diplomatic Record Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.
- 7) Ibid.
- 8) *Toshiko Inaba v. John D. Nagle, Commissioner of Immigration* (N.D.Cal. 1929), petition for writ of habeas corpus, No. 19919 L.
- 9) *Toshiko Inaba v. John D. Nagle, Commissioner of Immigration*, San Francisco, Calif. (9th Cir. 1929).
- 10) "Honpō ni oite kōnin shitaru nikkei shimin no shiminken sōshitsu ni yoru sōkan ni kansuru ken."
- 11) V.S. McClatchy, "The Story of Japanese Immigration: Japan Demands What May Not Be Conceded," California Joint Immigration Committee Document 507, September 1937, William Randolph Hearst Papers (hereafter "Hearst Papers"), Box 5, Folder 19, BANC MSS 77/121C, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- 12) Yuji Ichioka, "A Study in Dualism: James Yoshinori Sakamoto and the *Japanese American Courier*, 1928–1942," in Yuji Ichioka, *Before Internment: Essays in Prewar Japanese American History*, ed. Gordon H. Chang and Eiichiro Azuma (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), 95–109.
- 13) Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 48.
- 14) It should be noted that the immigrant practice of sending their second-generation children to the home country to be raised by relatives was not a phenomenon unique to Japanese immigrants in the United States. Italian immigrants, for instance, sent their American-born children to Italy to be raised by their relatives, especially at times when economic recessions affected the economic life of immigrant families: See Dino Cinel, *From Italy to San Francisco: The Immigrant Experience* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), 127.
- 15) Mitsuhiro Sakaguchi, "Kibeī nisei o meguru danshō: Seattle kibeī nikkei shimin kyōkai no soshiki to katsudō o chūshin ni," *An Annual Review of Migration Studies* 7 (March 2001): 30.
- 16) For example, see the first issue of *Shūkaku* (November 1936): *Shūkaku: Nikkei amerika bungaku zasshi shūsei* 1 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997).
- 17) V.S. McClatchy to William Randolph Hearst, January 10, 1938, Hearst Papers.
- 18) Governor of Wakayama Prefecture to Director, America Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (June 28, 1937), Nikkei gaijin zakken, Vol. 3., K.1.1.0.9.3., Diplomatic Record Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.
- 19) "Nikkei shimin kibeī kinshi un'nun no fūsetsu ni kansuru ken" (June 29, 1937), Nikkei gaijin zakken, Vol. 3., K.1.1.0.9.3., Diplomatic Record Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.
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