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# The Era of Open-Ended Dual Life

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# Not ‘Uprooted’ or ‘Transplanted,’ But ‘Open-Ended Dual Life’: The *Shin-Issei*, Japanese Contemporary Migrants to the U.S.

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## Abstract

Although missing in mainstream studies of American immigration in the post-1965 Act era, the volume of native Japanese living in the U.S. today (called the *shin-issei*) is three times that of the prewar Japanese-American community on the U.S. mainland. Their curious absence from the mainstream studies results from the traditionally entrenched frame, ‘immigrants’, that does not unfit their migrant patterns. This paper explores the *shin-issei*, portraying their characters in three parts: (1) *akogare* (‘longing or desire’) for the West grown in Japan in the late nineteenth century, (2) a statistical sketch of the *shin-issei* over the last several decades, and (3) previous studies. Backed by their country’s economic global reach, what push/pull the *shin-issei* are socio-psychological drives and/or big corporations’ business strategies. For them, migrating to America is not an event of being ‘uprooted’ or ‘transplanted’ but a reachable *akogare* for open-ended dual life between the West and their mother country.

**Keywords:** *shin-issei*, *akogare*, contemporary migration, dual life.

## Introduction

Contrary to their images being basically missing in mainstream studies of American immigration in the post- 1965 Immigration Act era, the volume of native Japanese living in the United States today is actually three times that of the prewar Japanese-American community on the U.S. mainland (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2010). What makes members of this community far less visible in academic discourse than in the real world—such as in Lower Manhattan, New York—is a notion of migration that tends to overlook anything other than immigrants (or illegal immigrants), a product of economic migration theory intertwined with what is called national models (e.g., Castles, 2007: 353-55). The shadow of this traditionally-entrenched notion obscures many important aspects of contemporary migration, such as socio-psychological motives, big corporations’ business strategies, the transnational characters of mobile individuals, and status adjustment processes.

This paper explores native Japanese living in the United States, today called the *shin-issei* (literally ‘new first generation’), portraying their particular migrant characters in three parts: (1) *akogare* (‘longing, desire, or

idealization') for the West (Kelsky, 2001: 26), a modern Japanese socio-psychological inheritance since the late nineteenth century, (2) a statistical sketch of the *shin-issei* in the last several decades, and (3) previous studies.

The first part, titled *akogare*, outlines the opening of Japanese migration to the United States in the prewar era and then its reopening in the immediate postwar years. Although labour migrants, or the *issei* ('first generation'), tend to draw the full scholarly attention, the first wave from Japan was composed of non-labour migrants, mostly students, who emerged from Japan as their country abandoned its Tokugawa-era seclusion policy (Sawada, 1996). In the immediate postwar years, the stream of Japanese migration to the United States was reopened by a large number of so-called war brides, i.e., Japanese women who married U.S. servicemen stationed in the occupation of Japan (e.g., Glenn, 1986). These two waves, although formed in different eras, can be seen as stemming from an unvarying Japanese collective psychology, that of *akogare* or 'yearning' for the West, implanted during Japan's groundbreaking Meiji Era, during which it opened itself for modernisation following the Western model (Nitobe, 1891).

A statistical sketch depicts the trend of the *shin-issei* in the last several decades. Like most other contemporary migrants to the United States, they can be categorised by their legal status into two groups: (1) legal permanent residents (LPRs) (or, the traditionally so-called immigrants) and (2) long-term visitors (LTVs), i.e., holders of any visa that permits them to stay longer than a certain period of time for tourism (usually 90 days). In terms of their migration goal, however, the boundary between the two is not clear-cut. On the one hand, the majority of contemporary migrants is initially LTVs, and some of them for some reason switch their status to LPR—in a process usually taking years. On the other hand, although widely so presumed, LPRs' settlement is not necessarily permanent; many in this category maintain dual lives in open-ended scripts, according to surrounding environments, such as personal relationships and macro political-economic conditions.

In understanding contemporary international migration patterns, the above-mentioned status adjustment process from LTV to LPR (Min, 2006: 8-9) and the transnational character of the individuals involved (Massey and Malone, 2002: 474) are centrally important. Migrants today indeed hardly follow the path of the national model, i.e., being 'uprooted' from the sending country and 'transplanted' into the American soil. Likewise, their motives to migrate cannot be explained simply by economic theory. In the prewar era, though, exactly reflecting such theory, the *issei* left their home villages precisely because of joblessness; in contrast, the *shin-issei* embark on their journeys owing to their nation's thriving economy.

Previous studies on the *shin-issei*—although few—indicate that there are two ways for the *shin-issei* to leave Japan. Some individuals do so by their own desire/choice and others, obligation/need. Of the former (most primarily students pursuing various degrees), some try to find pathways to LPR status; however, their initial desire/choice alone hardly determines their final destination. Rather, many are driven by circumstances to abandon their adventures in the land of *akogare*, which tends to, in reality, remain foreign to them in many important aspects (e.g., social identity, cultural grammar, and/or visa) (Minamikawa, 2005). A majority of the latter (obligation/need) consists of corporate transferees assigned to their companies' overseas branches, called the *chūzaiin* ('residents'; e.g., Okada, 1993). Their assignment is temporary, usually for four to five years; conversely to the former, however, this does not mean that they never get lost overseas. When they find "life in the foreign country... more suitable and more comfortable," some of them—including even 'executives'—renegotiate their employment contract with their companies in exchange for LPR status (Befu and Guichard-Anguis, 2001: 8).

Like many other contemporary migrants, the *shin-issei* are, so to speak, adventurers in the globalised environment, seeking socio-psychological satisfaction, placing themselves in ongoing, self-adjusting processes. *Akogare*, a primary pull factor for their overseas journeys, may be illusionary; in turn, nevertheless, it does help generate a reality, a social reality which one can call 'the era of dual life' between the land of *akogare* and their mother country.

# ***Akogare*, a Modern Japanese Inheritance**

## **The Opening of the Stream**

The roots of the *shin-issei*, in terms of their socio-economic backgrounds and purposes for visiting the United States, can be traced back as far as the late nineteenth century. Forcefully broken into by the Western powers, feudal Japan easily lost its ever-uncontested shape, and modernisation of the nation—a process begun during the Meiji Restoration—turned out to be imperative. Under the circumstances, *ryūgaku* ('study abroad') grew as a boom among ambitious youth coming from merchant or ex-samurai class. Although most studies of Japanese migrants to the United States focus solely on labour migrants, the first wave—though relatively small in number—was formed by these non-labour migrants, including students, writers, merchants, and government officials (Sawada, 1996: 7).

The abolishment of the feudal class system, a major task of the modernisation project, raised young men's hopes "to become successful entrepreneurs, renowned scholars, or even ministers in the government" (Yanagida, 1957: 1). Aimed at them, a "number of magazines, books, and pamphlets specifically devoted to *tobei*" ('crossing to America') were published, hinting that "their prospects for achievement lay" in *ryūgaku* (Sawada, 1996: 92). Along with this impetus, some leading intellectuals attempted to identify the new Japan as European and no longer as Asian through their argument known as *datsua-nyūō* ('exit Asia, enter Europe') (Sakaiya, 1991: 1). The feeling of *akogare* for the West arose about this time—inevitably coupled with that of "racial inferiority towards Caucasians" (Unoura, 1999: 238).

Other than the Pacific Coast, where the *issei* sought jobs, the only region in the United States that saw an increase in the population of Japanese expatriates by 1920 was the Northeast (Daniels, 1988: 152). It consisted of the non-labour migrants, whose volume swelled from 41 in 1880 to 3,613 in 1920 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). Unlike the *issei* on the Pacific Coast who struggled against "the anti-Japanese exclusion movement" (Ichioka, 1988: 5-6), the non-labour migrants in the Northeast "did not encounter... [such] acts of hostility" (Sawada, 1996: 19).

Taking root about the turn of the twentieth century, the Japanese community in New York notably contributed to "the intercourse between the United States and Japan" (Nitobe 1891: 165-73). The first Japanese import food store, Katagiri Co., was established in Manhattan in 1903, and Japan's central bank, the Bank of Japan, opened its first overseas office in New York in 1905 (Hosler, 1998: 48-9). Prominent figures among the permanent residents included Dr. Jokichi Takamine, a renowned chemist who founded the Nippon Club in New York in 1905, and Dr. Hideyo Noguchi who left Japan as a student in 1900 and then became a resident scientist at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. Not every non-labour migrant was successful, for sure; many were rather frowned upon in Japan as "a blot on Japan's national image" (Ichioka, 1988: 24). Either way, the stream of Japanese non-labour migration into the United States did not dry up until the outbreak of the Pacific War.

## **The Reopening of the Stream**

Following the non-labour migrants and then the labour migrants, the third wave consisted of a large number of Japanese women called the war brides who married G.I.s placed in postwar Japan. As the servicemen brought their popular culture—music, fashion, and style of interaction—into Japan, the feeling of *akogare* for the West, which had been made taboo during the war, swiftly grew anew among the masses (Yoshimi, 2003: 438-41) including, most notably, these women. Typically, the war brides met their husbands in the U.S. military bases where they had jobs as sales, service, clerical workers, or waitresses (Glenn, 1986: 60).

Other Asian countries, after World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, also sent war brides to the United States. Yet, by far the largest influx was from Japan. Between 1947 and 1964, 45,857 women entered the United States as wives of U.S. citizens from Japan, compared to 22,536 from China and 6,423 from Korea, among other sending nations (Wolgin and Bloemraad, 2010: 47). Certainly, however, not all of these women were war brides. Because of its own postwar economic growth, Japan was soon experiencing “unprecedented contact with the foreign” (Ivy, 1995: 47), and intermarriage involving Japanese began taking place in other ways—as we will see later.

This means that although the war brides reopened Japanese migration to the United States after the war, their migrant character in political and economic terms should be seen as unique, belonging neither to labour migrants nor to non-labour migrants. Lately, however, one can observe markedly common themes shared between the war brides and their contemporary counterparts, i.e., female *shin-issei*. Among other things, in terms of their gender characteristics apparently enamouring them to (mostly white) American men, coupled with their passionate *akogare* feeling for the West (and for ‘the white man’) (Kelsky, 2001: 8), their patterns are, as it were, inherited by the female *shin-issei*, whose intermarriage rate in the United States is indeed by far the highest among other foreign-born Asian women (Lee and Fernandez, 1998: 323-42). To be noted, though, the themes they share are not necessarily delightful, some of which will be discussed later.

## A Statistical Sketch

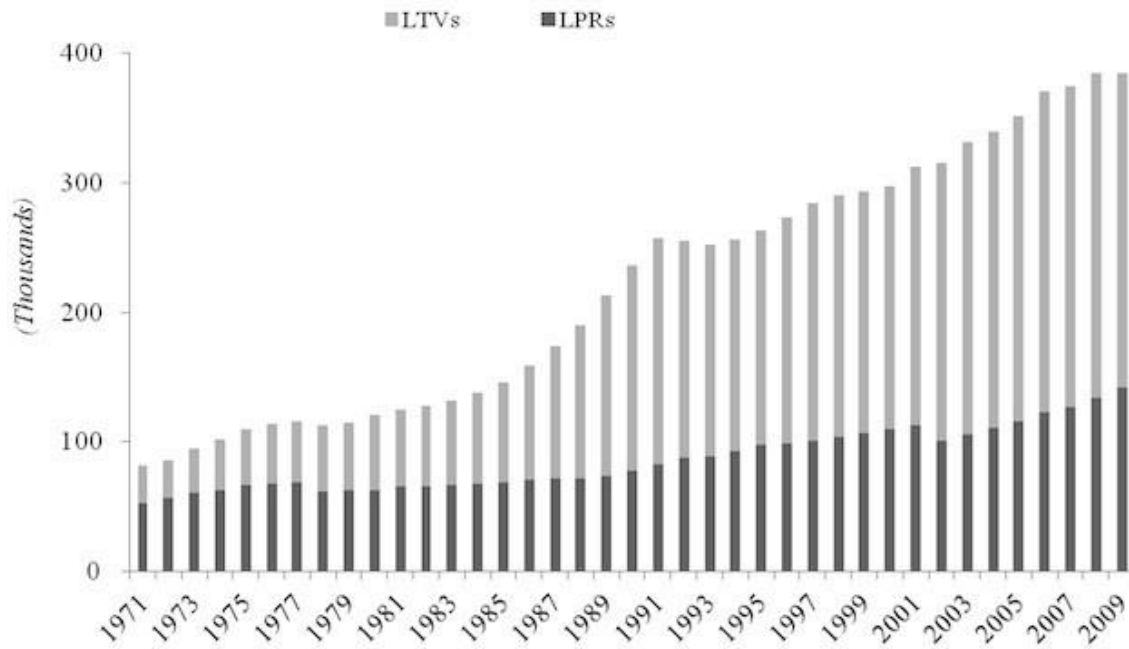
In 2009, according to Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2010: 40), more than 384,000 Japanese nationals lived in the United States. In this figure, persons with no Japanese citizenship, such as the descendents of the prewar migrants, are not included, but those with dual nationality are, such as LPRs. From this fact alone, it is unclear as to how many naturalised *shin-issei* U.S. citizens are included here; presumably, not all of them keep dual nationality.

True, the Japanese naturalisation rate has been by far the lowest among other Asian migrants to the US, because they “lack a desire for citizenship acquisition” (Yang, 2002: 385). Between 2003 and 2009 alone, even so, 13,000 Japanese natives became U.S. citizens (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2010a). Although difficult to determine its true extent, the number of the *shin-issei* must be larger than Japan’s ministry maintains.

Of those included in the data, more than a third (37%) were LPRs in 2009 and the rest (63%), LTVs. Notably, this number of LPRs alone (142,017) was larger than that of the prewar Japanese-American community on the U.S. mainland (approximately 127,000) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). Compared to the relatively small number of non-labour migrants in the prewar years, moreover, the LTVs today account for nearly twice that of their LPR counterparts.

Between 1971 and 2009—or during the post-1965 Immigration Act era—the LTVs (i.e., those called non-immigrants and absent from mainstream studies) increased by 8.4 times and the LPR (immigrants), by 2.7 times. The most eye-catching growth of the LTVs was seen during the latter half of the 1980s (by a factor of 2.5 times), running parallel to Japan’s surging economy. In the next decade, as an apparent trace of status-adjusting practices, the number of the LPRs increased by 1.41 times, a factor visibly larger than any of those in the previous decades. Unmistakably, the *shin-issei* are forming patterns quite different from those of the *issei* in terms of, most essentially, what pushes and or pulls them.

**Figure 1. Japanese Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) and Long-term Visitors (LTVs) Living in the U.S., 1971- 2009.**

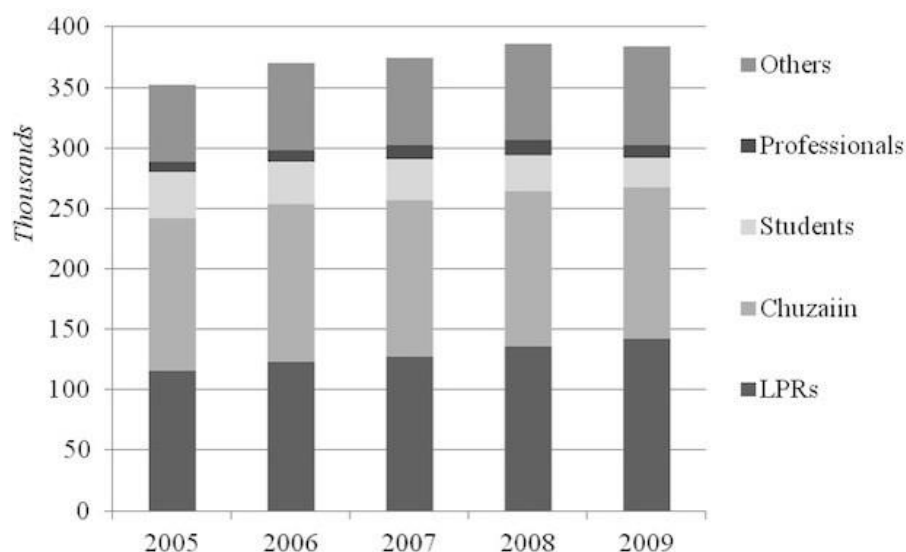


Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2010

Events—political, social, economic—in the United States also shape their migrant patterns. Among other instances, the 9/11 terror attacks in 2001 discouraged not only many LPRs from keeping their permanent resident status but also LTVs from switching their status. The result was a 10-percent decrease of LPRs. As for the LTVs, on the other hand, although the number of students decreased, that of the *chūzaiin*—also nicknamed *kigyō-senshi* (‘corporate warriors’)—did not. Since many LTVs chose not to switch their status, their overall volume increased by 7 percent.

Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2010) provides a further breakdown of its expatriates into several categories. Curiously, though, ‘students’, a very important subcategory in LTVs, seem to be merged in ‘others’. Appropriating the data from IIE Open Doors (2010), hence, I have separated out their volume from ‘others’, and adjusted that of ‘others’ accordingly. The resulting breakdown of the *shin-issei* in 2009 was as follows: the LPRs (36.9%) and the LTVs (63.1%) whose subcategories consisted of the *chūzaiin* (32.5%), students (6.5%), professionals (2.9%), and others (21.2%) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2010; IIE Open Doors, 2010).

**Figure 2. Shin-Issei by Status, 2005-2009**



Sources: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2010; IIE Open Doors 2010

According to the ministry, ‘professionals’ include attorneys, accountants, physicians, artists, designers, chefs, sports instructors, religious workers, and so on; ‘others’ include government diplomats, consular clerks, journalists, workers of NGOs or NPOs, employees of locally run businesses, and so forth; and all figures include their families.

Between 2005 and 2009, the volume of the *shin-issei* overall kept growing. The LPRs steadily increased by 23 percent. Among the LTVs, on the other hand, the *chūzaiin* remained unchanged. Quite notably, though, students decreased by 36 percent; that is, they lost more than a third—the implication of this for the *shin-issei* phenomenon will be discussed in the following part. Conversely, professionals increased by 33 percent and others, nearly by 30 percent. Both of them can be considered as direct sources of the growth of LPRs—and students, probably a fundamental root of the presence of the entire *shin-issei*.

## Previous Studies

This part summarises previous studies on the *shin-issei*. Unfortunately, though, not much scholarly attention has been paid to the *shin-issei* phenomenon so far. Indeed, even the definition of the term *shin-issei* itself is far from uniform or is simply untouched in previous studies. Although Japan’s ministry provides its own categorisation, as examined above, it shows nothing within LPRs and, hence, gives no hints about the status-adjustment process.

There are usually only two ways for the *shin-issei* to obtain LPR status; namely, through the preferences given to “immediate relatives of U.S. citizens” (likely through marriage) and through “employment-based preferences” (i.e., work visas) (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2010b). Unlike other Asian counterparts, the *shin-issei* rarely take the route that propels ‘chain migration’ (i.e., ‘family-sponsored preferences’); they move as individuals not as families (Hosler, 1998: 63-66). Of the former (i.e., marriage), nearly 90 percent are female, and of the latter (work visa), about a half are male. Based on these issues, the *shin-issei* are categorised into four groups for a summary of the previous studies; namely, the *chūzaiin*, entrepreneurs, female *shin-issei*, and students.

The first group in this categorisation (the *chūzaiin*) is comprised simply of corporate transferees and their families. The second group (entrepreneurs) consists mostly of those who have switched their statuses from LTV to LPR, via work visas. The third group (female *shin-issei*), the most complicated among other groups, includes any subcategories of LTVs and LPRs, but does not constitute a major part of the *chūzaiin* or entrepreneurs. Of the fourth group (students), many are female, indeed, but the topic of intermarriage will be devoted exclusively to the third group; as for students as a whole, a potential prospect for the *shin-issei* trend will be discussed.

## **The Chūzaiin**

One-third of the *shin-issei* are corporate transferees and their families. Typically, the *chūzaiin* are married men in their 30s or 40s, and many of them have children (Goodman, 1990: 22). To be noted, though, they are not necessarily accompanied by their families in their overseas assignment. They take their families if the host country belongs to the Western world, such as the United States, where their children can learn Western languages and cultures (Okada, 1993: 5). Their wives often share this idea, and hence are inclined rather to stay in Japan with their children if the host country is otherwise. *Akogare* shapes this decision making.

The *chūzaiin* system can be traced back to the 1970s. In the beginning, those assigned to New York lived in Queens (ibid.: 5). Shortly, however, as their companies' profits grew, they (and their successors) began moving to better living environments; their rent was (and still is) paid by their companies as a necessary expense. Currently, their residential areas include Manhattan, Westchester, Bergen County (New Jersey), and Fairfield County (Connecticut). The New York Japanese School was founded in Queens specifically for their children in 1976, and it moved to Greenwich in Connecticut in 1992, renamed as the Greenwich Japanese School.

New York City's living prices, though expensive to most people, appeared to be rather economical to the *chūzaiin*. On overall average, the cost of living in New York was 28 percent lower than in Tokyo (Sullivan, 1992: 64). This relative cost of living difference remains more or less the same today; Tokyo has been placed as the world's most expensive city since the 1980s, and New York, about the 10th (Brooke, 2003). What additionally made the *chūzaiin* become like 'Gulliver' in terms of expenditure was their high incomes, "more than twice the average earnings" of their European counterparts (Hosler, 1998: 52).

Always under control of their headquarters in Japan, they are attached to Japanese cultural patterns during their journey, and their wives follow suit. As Sullivan (1992: 237) observes, the *chūzaiin* tend to "live in enclaves, send their children to their own schools, and party among themselves." This does not mean, however, that they are never tempted to take risks of losing their good socio-economic standings in favour of a freer life hinted in the land of *akogare*. If they are, they either seek a job at another company in the host country or begin their own businesses locally as entrepreneurs (Hosler, 1998: 63).

The size of the *chūzaiin* population has been maintained by steady circulation. That is, as one family leaves, another fills that position. This means that the number of Japanese who have lived in the United States as *chūzaiin* or their families is increasing every four or five years by more than 100,000, and so is that of Japanese children born in the United States (Okada, 1993). So far, nonetheless, "there is almost no literature on these [*chūzaiin*] families" (Abe, 2005: 2).

One of the most important roles *chūzaiin* wives are expected to play throughout the U.S. sojourn period is preparing for the return to Japan. Concerns commonly shared among them include: children's education in Japan, their entrance exams, bullying, friends' and relatives' lack of understanding of their intercultural experiences, and re-



entry shock (Isa, 2000: 28).

When returnees carelessly talk about negatives of Japanese society, that can be taken as *gaikoku-boke* ('demented from living overseas') (Goodman, 1990: 64). Although *akogare* is shared widely, this does not mean that the realities of in-group favouritism can disappear just for that reason alone, and many indeed may feel offended by the returnees' newly-acquired cultural behaviours, which may appear to be pushy *gaikoku-boke*. As a result, *ex-chūzaiin* families tend to be quiet about their overseas experiences, and one may even wonder where this ever-increasingly large population can conceal itself.

## **Entrepreneurs**

Scholars of immigration often emphasise the importance of 'ethnic niches', through which distinct ethnic occupational specialisations develop (Foner, 2000: 91). Korean immigrants' specialties, such as grocery stores, for example, would have been unthinkable without their "dense web of trade associations, churches, and friendship and kinship ties in the Korean community [that] has provided help with business information, loans, and staffing problems" (ibid.: 96). Similar patterns are observed among other ethnic groups including Indians and Chinese (Portes and Manning, 1986). Their entrepreneurship can be seen as a collective instrument of ethnic adaptation.

Their counterparts from Japan, however, appear to be quite different in many respects, such as the mode of entry into the United States, the motive for starting a business, and the lack of interest in naturalisation. Hosler (1998: 57), seen as the very pioneer researcher on *shin-issei* business owners (Min, 2001: 83), calls them "a new breed of entrepreneurs."

In the 1970s—by which time Japan's GNP had surpassed that of every European country—Japan began sending sizable numbers of tourists, *chūzaiin*, and students to the United States. This environment soon yielded Japanese small businesses catering to these compatriots. Today their targets are comprised of a mixture of Japanese and American customers, serving them through such businesses as restaurants, supermarkets, travel agencies, commercial real estate firms, hair salons, and so on, all of which are in turn raising another web of *shin-issei* business runners.

Nearly three-quarters of the *shin-issei* entrepreneurs studied by Hosler (1998: 59-82) in New York (72%) initially entered the United States either as tourists (31%) or LTVs whose subcategories included students (22%) and *chūzaiin* (18%). Typically, they are male (82%), 48 years old, with 15 years of education, married, have stayed in the United States for 20 years, and have been in business for 13 years. The most frequently mentioned work experience was 'Japanese small business in the United States', followed by 'Japanese firms', 'U.S. firms', and 'owning a business in Japan'.

Hosler (ibid.: 200) observes that "other things than money" motivate the *shin-issei* entrepreneurship. The 1990 Census figures show that self-employed workers earned more income than salaried workers, and that this tendency was especially clear among Asian immigrants; however, the Japanese nationals in the metropolitan area appeared to be the opposite (ibid.: 34, 79). As noted above, most of the self-employed *shin-issei* were previously salaried workers (for Japanese or U.S. firms), meaning that their incomes were likely to be higher.

For the *shin-issei* entrepreneurs, again, ‘other things’ are more important than ‘money’ in their motives to start businesses. The most frequently stated ‘other things’, according to Hosler (ibid.: 85), included ‘Wanted the challenge of something new’ (54%) and ‘Wanted to be my own boss’ (34%). For them, then, running a business in the United States is a personal adventure for socio-psychological satisfaction rather than purely economic ambition—let alone a collective instrument of ethnic adaptation.

### **Female *Shin-Issei***

Although the majority of the *chūzaiin* and *shin-issei* entrepreneurs are male, the rest of the *shin-issei* are predominantly female. Including all levels, for example, 70 percent of Japanese students in the United States in the 1990s were female (Yamashita, 2008: 105). Between 2003 and 2009, more notably, three-quarters of the *shin-issei* who obtained LPR status were female (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2010b).

Their intermarriage rate is very high, higher than any other foreign-born Asian women, and according to the 1990 census, even higher than U.S.-born Japanese-American women (Japanese-born, 54.3%; U.S.-born, 34.2%) (see Lee and Fernandez, 1998: 335). Of the female *shin-issei* who obtained LPR status, about three-quarters did so through the preference for “immediate relatives of U.S. citizens” (likely to be through marriage) (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2010b). As discussed above, other than their gender characteristics appealing to American men as well as their passionate *akogare* feeling for the West, they share remarkably similar traits with their predecessors, i.e., the war brides, though coming from quite a different era and a different social environment.

In terms of assimilation—the importance of which tends to give way today to the valuation of ‘diversity’—both the war brides and the female *shin-issei* married to Americans are pattern breakers. Although ‘intermarriage’ is considered a “by-product of structural assimilation” (Gordon, 1964: 80), their marriage by and large precedes their assimilation in depth. When the war brides tried to obtain U.S. citizenship, indeed, what disturbed them were English and cultural literacy (Herbison and Schultz, 1990: 7). According to Day (2000: 182), similarly, a *shin-issei* mother “cried a river” when her six-grade daughter said to her, “I wish you were an ordinary mother,” meaning ‘a mother who speaks English’.

Unhappily, though, they also share the tendency of being targeted by some pejorative labels in Japan; their romance with outsiders seems to induce what Dower (2000: 135) calls a “piercing wound” to a sense of collective identity. Before they left Japan, the war brides were spitefully mistaken for *pan pan* (‘prostitutes’), and parents took such marriage as a “shame” (Storrs, 2000: 206-07). For the women themselves, their marriage meant “some degree of alienation and ultimately separation from parents and other kin” (Glenn, 1986: 59). Stigmatising labels are still today attached to Japanese women having non-Japanese partners. In the late 1980s, for example, some began calling such women ‘yellow cabs’, a sexual slur against those who according to Ieda (1991: 1) “let anyone take a ride easily.” Quickly, low-brow men’s weekly magazines elevated this alleged yellow-cab phenomenon to “scandal of the year” (Kelsky, 2001: 134), as if soothing, or rather evoking, the psychology of the piercing wound.

One of the things that does distinguish between the war brides and the *shin-issei* (including men), though, is a custom called *satogaeri* (‘occasional return to hometown’)—traditionally practiced by wives in Japan. For the *shin-issei*, this tradition is now a transnational custom. Almost all *shin-issei* including those married to U.S. citizens return to Japan once in a while—typically, every summer for a week or two—and stay at their parents’ places (Hyodo, 2012: 187). Possibly carrying personal and business purposes together, this frequent reunion—together with the Internet connection—helps maintain or even develop social and/or economic ties to their mother country. Most war brides, sadly though, could not afford *satogaeri* to Japan this often.

## Students

In 2009, more than a half of Japanese students in the United States (52.6% of 24,842) attended undergraduate schools, about a fifth (21.7%) pursued graduate degrees, less than a fifth (17.4%) joined non-academic schools, and the rest (8.3%) worked under OPT (Optional Practical Training) (IIE Open Doors, 2010). OPT, a potential main entrance pathway to LPR status, permits international students to work for a certain period of time after completion of their degree. Through this, in principle, students can find jobs with work visas, i.e., moving into the category of 'professionals' or 'others' and thereby obtaining LPR status. For this reason, students are seen as an important subcategory of LTVs (Dreher and Poutvaara, 2006). As will be discussed below, however, their pathways to LPR status are rarely paved in reality as nicely as youth magazines imply.

The *shin-issei* phenomenon was boosted, to a great extent, by a *ryūgaku* boom emerging in the latter half of the 1980s. The boom grew further in the 1990s, during which Japan sent the largest number of international students to the United States (IIE Open Doors, 2010). This led to an increase of Japanese LTVs as a whole by nearly 20 percent (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2010).

Several factors made the wind favourable for this *ryūgaku* boom. First, although by tradition, Japanese big corporations used to rule out job applications from those who finished no Japanese college—i.e., those acting like non-Japanese—because of the labour shortage resulting from the surging economy in the mid 1980s, they softened this policy (Mori, 1994: 127). Second, the Plaza Accord in 1985—a U.S. diplomatic strategy led by President Reagan to reduce the trade imbalance—drastically devalued the U.S. dollar against the Japanese yen (e.g., Schaeffer, 1997: 47). Within a year and a half, the yen was twice as strong against the U.S. dollar, meaning that the value of Japanese students' funds in yen doubled in U.S. dollars.

The *ryūgaku* boom, however, did not last long. The so-called bubble economy burst in the early 1990s, and the traditional policy in the Japanese business culture was revived. On the other hand, furthermore, many students gradually discovered that contrary to what Japanese youth magazines suggest, not only is obtaining U.S. work visas difficult, but also the jobs they can choose have to be ethnically related (Law, 2002: 6). Ironically, most of these overseas students leave Japan to become more "international" (Mori, 1994: 152), in the course of which they become confined to an ethnic job enclave.

Following the 9/11 terror attacks in 2001, as if it were a cue, the volume of students from Japan started shrinking. Not just the fear for the terror attacks, but the aforementioned factors as well as the atmosphere, highly constricted by the U.S. reactions to the attacks, may have dispirited the feeling of *akogare* for 'living in America'. The fact that the volume of students from Japan keeps waning may indicate that the *shin-issei* phenomenon is now facing a turning point in terms of, at least, its *akogare* character.

## Conclusion

The *shin-issei* form the fourth wave of Japanese migration to the United States, following (1) the non-labour migrants embarking on *ryūgaku* in the Meiji era, (2) the labour migrants or the *issei* who developed the so-called Japanese-American community in the prewar years, and (3) the war brides reopening the flow of Japanese migration to the United States in the immediate postwar years. In terms of their size, although neglected in mainstream studies of American immigration, the *shin-issei*—or even their LPRs alone—comprise the largest wave

among other counterparts from Japan.

Several important events took place in a chain reaction in the last several decades, each of which helped the *shin-issei* phenomenon grow. They included: (1) the Japanese economy's global reach in the late 1960s; (2) the *chūzaiin* system arising in the 1970s; (3) the emerging boom of overseas tourism followed by that of *ryūgaku*; and (4) the rise of *shin-issei* entrepreneurship serving growing numbers of Japanese expatriates. The trend of these events made a big stride in the latter half of the 1980s.

The previous studies were summarised upon a categorisation of the *shin-issei* based upon such clues as the way they leave Japan, the way they obtain LPR status, and the sex ratio among them. The summary, thus, focused on the *chūzaiin*, entrepreneurs, female *shin-issei*, and students. Among other categories, the importance of students in the *shin-issei* phenomenon was emphasised. They form a primary entrance to a dual life, through which to follow various trajectories. Nearly three-quarters of them are women, many of whom later choose dual lives with American husbands and their children (Hyodo 2012). Among male students, some grow to be entrepreneurs (or their employees) or come back later as *chūzaiin* (ibid.). It was discussed, however, that as the *ryūgaku* boom is waning visibly today, it may be about time for the *shin-issei* phenomenon to change its patterns.

The *shin-issei* pursue images and dreams of life in America which do not necessarily stem from reality *per se*. Regardless, these images and dreams in turn have actually yielded such substantial matters as socio-economic foundations, (inter)marriage, and/or parenthood. For many of these *shin-issei*, the term 'adventure'—or self-adjusting processes in two or more different worlds—will become in the course of time synonymous with 'life' itself. Trajectories of such new life in this globalised era, notwithstanding, seem to be still largely out of sight from mainstream studies.

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