



**T.C.
EGE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü**

**NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITIES AS REFLECTED IN
THE INTERNMENT NARRATIVES BY
JAPANESE-AMERICANS**

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Serhan BULANIK

Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

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ETİK KURALLARA UYGUNLUK BEYANI

Ege Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne sunduğum **Negotiation of Identities as Reflected in the Internment Narratives by Japanese-Americans** adlı yüksek lisans tezinin tarafımdan bilimsel, ahlak ve normlara uygun bir şekilde hazırlandığını, tezimde yararlandığım kaynakları bibliyografyada ve dipnotlarda gösterdiğimi onurumla doğrularım.

Serhan BULANIK

PREFACE

This study, entitled “Negotiation of Identities as Reflected in the Internment Narratives by Japanese-Americans”, has been completed for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in American Culture and Literature at the Social Sciences Institute, Ege University. My scholarly interests in ethnic American literature, race, ethnicity & immigration, and life writing have been the driving force for this study to emerge and develop. Although there have been some studies on the identity dilemma of the Japanese Americans who were interned, notably on Monice Sone’s *Nisei Daughter* and Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston’s *Farewell to Manzanar*. However, no detailed study has been carried out on Mary Matsuda Gruenewald’s *Looking Like the Enemy* before. Additionally, no study has compared and contrasted these selected three narratives and reflecting how each author experienced the internment and how it affected their ethnic and national affiliations. Rather than focusing only the identity theme, this study has taken a holistic approach to analyze the identity negotiation and dilemma in the historical, social, and political contexts of the United States. This study, furthermore, has applied various identity theories by cultural critics, and included Critical Race Theory, Asian American stereotyping, and racism. The purpose of this thesis, therefore, is to reveal how the historical, cultural and political agenda of the United States took its toll on these authors, how they experienced the internment, how it affected their perception about themselves as both Japanese and American, and how they affiliated and identified themselves as they reflected in their internment narratives. I hope this thesis will provide a new perspective on the Japanese internment in terms of the identity concept, and present a thorough analysis of how each of these authors perceived the internment and reflected it through their candid words in their memoirs.

I would like to express my gratitude to my dear supervisor Associate Professor Esra SAHTİYANCI ÖZTARHAN for her guidance and support. I am indebted to her for her invaluable and constructive feedback throughout this study.

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Serhan BULANIK

ÖZET

Tezin amacı II. Dünya Savaşı sırasında Japon tecritinin Amerika Birleşik Devletleri doğumlu, Nisei denilen ikinci jenerasyon Japon kökenli Amerikalıların kimliklerini nasıl etkilediğini, kendilerini yeniden kurgulamak için etnik ve ulusal kimliklerini nasıl müzakere ettiklerini incelemektir. Mary Matsuda Gruenewald'ın *Looking Like the Enemy* (2005), Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston'ın *Farewell to Manzanar* (1973), ve Monica Sone'nin *Nisei Daughter* (1979) adlı tecrit anlatılarının Japon kökenli Amerikalıların kendileri tarafından yazılması ve tecrit hakkında doğrudan bilgi vermesi nedeniyle bu çalışma için seçilmiştir. Bu anlatılar farklı yazarlar tarafından farklı dönemlerde yazılmış olsa da, kendilerini yalnızca Japon olarak mı, yalnızca Amerikalı olarak mı yoksa hem Japon hem de Amerikalı olarak mı tanımladıkları sorusu, tek ana ortak tema olarak dikkat çekmektedir. Ayrıca bu anlatılar, baskıya karşı genel ve ortak bir anlatı oluşturup II. Dünya Savaşı sırasında Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin uyguladığı ırkçılığa, ayrımcılığa ve ideolojiye meydan okumaktadır. Tecrit sona erdikten sonra uzun süre sessizliğini koruyan bu Japon kökenli Amerikalı kadın yazarlar, kimlik ikilemlerini yansıtır, kendilerini Amerikalı mı, Japon mu, ya da hem Japon hem de Amerikalı mı olarak tanımlamakta nasıl mücadele ettiklerini gösterip tecrit sürecindeki deneyimlerini anlatarak sessizliklerini bozmuş olurlar. Bu tecrit anlatıları üç açıdan incelenmiştir: Birincisi, Japonların tarihsel geçmişi bağlamında, neden Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'ne göç ettiklerine, nelere maruz kaldıklarına ve II. Dünya Savaşı sırasında toplama kamplarında neler yaşadıklarına dair genel bir bilgi verir. İkinci olarak, bu anlatılar kimlik kavramının nasıl tek bir benliğe indirgenemeyeceğini, toplumsal ve tarihsel bağlama bağlı olarak nasıl değişebileceğini örnekler. Ayrıca, ırkçılığın ve ırka bağlı kimlik oluşumunun etnik azınlık gruplarını dışlamanın bir yolu olarak Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'ne nasıl derinlemesine işlendiğini kanıtlamaktadır. Son olarak, bu tecrit anlatıları, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin ırkçı ideolojisiyle yüzleşen karşı-anlatılara dönüşmektedir. Bu anlatılar, ayrıca bu yazarlara deneyimlerini, mücadelelerini ve kimlik ikilemlerini ifade etmeleri için bir alan sağlamaktadır. Son olarak bu anlatılar, tecritin ve toplama kampının kimlik

algısını arpıtarak bu yazarların etnik ve ulusal kimliklerini sorgulayıp müzakere etmelerini nasıl tetiklediğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Japon tecriti, Kimlik, II. Dünya Savaşı, Nisei, Irkçılık



ABSTRACT

The purpose of the thesis is to examine how the Japanese internment during World War II affected the Nisei, U.S.-born second-generation Japanese-Americans, in terms of their identity and how they negotiated their ethnic and national identities to reconstruct themselves. Mary Matsuda Gruenewald's *Looking Like the Enemy* (2005), Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston's *Farewell to Manzanar* (1973), and Monica Sone's *Nisei Daughter* (1979) were chosen for this research on the ground of offering first-hand information about the internment by Japanese-Americans themselves. Although the narratives were written in different periods by different authors, the question of whether they identify themselves as only Japanese, only American, or Japanese-American stands out as the one major theme. These narratives, furthermore, form a collective narrative against oppression and challenge racism, discrimination, and the ideology of the United States during World War II. These female Nisei authors, who kept their silence for a long time after the internment ceased, break their silence by writing their internment experiences; reflecting their identity dilemma and demonstrating how they struggled in identifying themselves whether as American or Japanese, or Japanese-American. These internment narratives are analyzed in three aspects: Firstly, the historical background of the Japanese provides a fundamental understanding of why they immigrated to the United States, what they suffered, and what they went through at the internment camps during World War II. Secondly, these narratives exemplify how the concept of identity is not essentialized and subject to change depending on the social and historical context. They also prove how racism and racial identity formation are deeply embedded in the United States as a way of ostracizing ethnic minority groups. Lastly, these internment narratives become counternarratives that confront the racist ideology of the United States. They also provide a space for these authors to express their experiences, struggles, and identity dilemmas. These narratives, finally, demonstrate how the internment distorted the perception of their identities and catalyzed the negotiation of their ethnic and national identities/affiliations.

Keywords: Japanese internment, Identity, World War II, the Nisei, Racism

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INTRODUCTION

The United States has been oftentimes accused of racism and discrimination throughout its history. Racism, exploitation of people, who are different from white people based on their appearance, and oppression have been known as the ideology of the ruling power from the day the United States was founded. All ethnicities other than white have been marginalized, ostracized, and victimized throughout the history of the United States. The white settlers, first, genocided and assimilated the indigenous peoples of the Americas into their own perception and creation of American culture and society based on their discourse of “noncivilized and barbarian people”. Africans, later on, were brought and enslaved, classified, and hierarchically categorized below the white people based on their skin color. Chinese immigrants, furthermore, were prohibited from immigration in the early 19th century for the fear of yellow peril and overabundance. Finally, the United States interned its own Japanese-American citizens, the Nisei, with their first-generation parents, the Issei, after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor during World War II based on their race rather than what they had claimed as “war necessity”.

The oppressed and silenced ethnic minorities in the United States have found a way to get their messages across and their voices to be heard through writing throughout history, which increased remarkably especially after the civil rights movement took place, causing the revival of the ethnic and oppressed minorities. Writing has always been one of the means for telling stories whether as fiction or nonfiction. In the case of ethnic minorities, writing has been a political area where the ethnic authors deconstruct the ideologies of the authorities and express their traumas, dilemmas, and negotiate their past to reconstruct themselves. Japanese-Americans, in this regard, also told their stories and internment experience in the sociocultural, historical, and political contexts through writing novels, memoirs, and autobiographies. These internment narratives are particularly important because they hold a special place in both American literature and history as first-hand accounts of the wartime, documenting the wrong-doings of the United States against its own citizens and explaining how Japanese-Americans felt about themselves and how their lives were

affected through such a treatment. They are also important because they make up the majority of Japanese-American literature.

Even though the Japanese-American authors wrote their novels, memoirs, and autobiographies about the Japanese internment in different time periods, most of them have common themes. The one major theme is the negotiation of identities based on racism and assimilation due to the institutionalized racism of the United States, monoculturalism, and the narrow-mindedness of the white American society. These narratives prove the racism against the U.S.-born Japanese-Americans and their immigrant parents that occurred in the context of social life, education, and employment. In terms of identity, the second generation, the Nisei, grew up in both cultures as Japanese and American. Unlike their immigrant parents, they are more assimilated into the mainstream culture and speak English well. This, further, creates a generation gap that exacerbates the identity negotiation of Japanese-Americans. The Nisei, further on, are aware of the fact that they are neither quite Japanese nor quite American. The internment, however, proved how American citizenship would not keep Japanese-Americans safe solely based on their birth-right American citizenship, which proved the racism and anti-Asian sentiment, even though they had a cultural and national affiliation to the United States. This theme, therefore, will be clearly observed from various angles throughout this thesis.

In all the internment narratives that have been selected to analyze for this thesis, the struggles that Japanese-Americans had to suffer are observable. Apart from the identity negotiation, they also had other issues concerning their internment such as the living conditions at the camps, the collapse of family structures, and the widening gap between the Isei and Nisei. Writing life narratives, however, is more focused on the internal struggles and how one perceives the world around them, and how they make meaning out of their experiences. This identity theme, therefore, undoubtedly stands out the most, congratulating all these narratives written by different Japanese-Americans in different periods under one theme based on their negotiation of identities. How was it like growing up as an ethnic minority in the United States before and during World War II? How did Japanese-Americans identify themselves before the internment? Only as Japanese, only as American, or Japanese-American? How did the internment of

Japanese-Americans affect their identification with their ethnic and national identities? How did they handle the racism and discrimination during World War II? How did they survive the internment? How did it affect and change their lives and their authentic selves? These questions, thus, identify the fundamental objectives that this thesis will address. Given the historical and political context along with identity theories and concepts that are provided in the theoretical background, this thesis, then, will explore how assimilation through the essentialized American identity, and the internment played a role in the negotiation of identities and the ethnic and national affiliations as reflected in *Looking Like the Enemy* by Mary Matsuda Gruenewald, *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, and *Nisei Daughter* by Monica Sone.

The concept of identity and its politics have gained momentum since the civil rights movement during the 1960s through multiculturalism and the revival of ethnic consciousness. The oppressed people and ethnic minorities no longer wanted to subjugate to the major white society and authority since they did not acknowledge and pay any attention to the diverse ethnic backgrounds as a result of monoculturalism and the myth of melting pot theory. These notions associated a predisposed American identity with its citizens. The motive behind this ideology was to mold them into a common identity and in the same category and have them abide by the core values of the United States so that they can control and keep order in a nation composed of immigrants from diverse backgrounds.

Although the Nisei were aware of their dual cultural affiliations and their fragmented identities as Japanese and American, they could not pinpoint where they actually belonged and whether they should identify themselves with only as American or Japanese, or if there could be a blend of the two together. Their internment, on top of it, exacerbated their questionings about themselves and the space they placed themselves in. These fragmented identities, concurrently, also pervade through the internment narratives by Japanese Americans. Throughout their narratives, the subjected and oppressed Japanese-American authors retell their experiences, their negotiations, and how they identified themselves and where they belonged. As these narratives discuss the very notion of identity, various forms, theories, and concepts of identity become applicable to analyze these internment narratives critically, which will help

understand how they dealt with their dilemmas, and how they felt as both Japanese and American during the wartime, and whether they found a way to reconstruct their identities.

Chapter One gives an overall historical background of Japanese immigrants and their American-born children in the United States. This background accounts for the motives behind the immigration of Japanese people, how they made the United States their new home, and how they struggled to adapt to a new society and culture. It further delves into the pre-internment historical background between Japan and the United States, describing the reason for the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and later on how the United States retaliated and interned Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast. It moreover touches on the historical and political context during the internment period when the United States bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki with nuclear weapons. Lastly, it unloads the closure of the internment camps and how Japanese-Americans readapted to their lives and how they received the national redress for what the United States did to its own citizens and what is provided for the loss of Japanese-Americans.

Chapter Two lays out the theoretical background of this thesis. It elucidates, first, the concept of identity, embodying several valuable viewpoints of Cultural Studies scholars (poststructuralists, postcolonialism, cultural critics). Michel Foucault and Louis Althusser, for instance, are mentioned for their notion of ideology and subjectivity which affects the construction and perception of identity. The ideology and power relations of American culture and the U.S. government under the jurisdiction of F.D. Roosevelt is, thus, highlighted and understood better from the perspective of Japanese Americans. Further on, various concepts and theories of identity and its construction and meaning are presented through scholars such as Anthony Giddens, Jacques Derrida, Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha.

The socio-political construction of national American identity, further on, is analyzed through its historical development. First, the melting pot theory, a symbol of assimilation, is covered as a foundation of monoculturalism and a civic assimilationist model that unifies all different kinds of people into one, absolute identity that lacks diversity. Secondly, Werner Sollors' theory of "Consent and Descent in American Culture", in this vein, supports the construction of American identity by the notion of

"consent" where people from different nations and backgrounds come and consent into American culture voluntarily in order to blend into the mainstream American culture. Finally, the repercussions of postmodernity take place in terms of the fragmentation of identity which is fueled by the civil rights movement starting in the 1960s, resulting in the salad bowl theory which stands for diversity, multiculturalism and fragmented identities, ethnic pride, etc. As a result, the prevailing cultural aspects in the historical context of the pre and post World War II era will be understood better through analyzing the concepts and the historical development of the national American identity, comparing the melting pot theory (monoculturalism) and the salad bowl theory (multiculturalism).

This chapter, furthermore, provides the concept of race and the racial formation theory of Michael Omi and Howard Winant in the context of American history and society to understand the racism behind the internment of Japanese-Americans. In the same vein, stereotyping of Asians and especially Japanese-Americans based on race is highlighted to give a sense of how the mainstream white society conceived the interned Japanese and how they reflected their anti-Asian sentiment through their stereotypes. Finally, critical race theory and critical Asian theory provide different approaches to analyzing the selected internment narratives and deconstruct the ideologies perpetuated by the United States and their effects on Japanese-Americans.

Chapter Three provides the critical analysis of the identity concept as reflected in the selected internment narratives. The first one among these narratives is *Looking Like the Enemy* (2005) by Mary Matsuda Gruenewald who was 16 years old during the internment. This narrative explicates the experiences of Mary, her brother, and her parents first at the Pinedale Assembly Center in California and then at Minidoka Relocation Center in Idaho. Mary explicitly narrates how it was like growing up as Japanese and American and how she felt during those years as if she were the "enemy" of the United States. Mary accounts for deep and candid explanations about how she identified herself and navigated her Japanese and American identities. Her introspection and negotiation of identities throughout the narrative reveal the assimilation and racism of the United States and further challenges those ideologies by how they affected Mary, causing trauma and dilemma between her two worlds.

The second internment narrative is *Farewell to Manzanar* (1973) by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston who was 7 years old at the time. Jeanne gives a detailed account of the living conditions inside the internment camp in Manzanar where she and her family were interned, leaving their home in Santa Monica, California. Jeanne also mentions how she thought her American citizenship would save her from being interned, however, she realizes that her race is the sole reason why they ended up in internment camps. Jeanne's survival technique in a white majority society reveals as disregarding her Japanese identity and forcing herself to become completely American. This act, however, proves futile because as much as she tries to pass by as a "white" American, she realizes that her appearance will always reveal her Japanese ethnicity and that she cannot change her biological phenotype.

The last narrative to be analyzed is *Nisei Daughter* (1979) by Monica Sone who was 21 years old when Monica and her family were uprooted from their home in Seattle and relocated to Minidoka, Idaho. As this autobiographical memoir was actually written and published in 1959, it is recognized as the first autobiographical account about the Japanese internment and is, therefore, regarded as a canonical work in American literature. Sone uses her Japanese given name Kazuko Itoi throughout her narrative which starts from her childhood years. She portrays how it was like growing up as both Japanese and American and how she performed differently at home and in American society, giving a detailed account of both Japanese and American cultures and their lifestyles and shows how she feels trapped between them. Sone also constantly moves between her Japanese and American identities negotiating in order to reconstruct her identity. She thinks that she has to identify herself with only one identity. Sone, however, realizes that blending her two identities together could be possible as well.

All these internment narratives are one of the best primary sources giving detailed information about what actually happened to Japanese-Americans during World War II and how they perceived and experienced the internment as ethnic minorities in such a time when identity politics did not even exist and they had to prove themselves as loyal Americans by affiliating themselves to the United States only and thus oppressing their ethnic identities, creating an identity dilemma for the Nisei. Gruenewald's *Looking Like the Enemy*, Houston's *Farewell to Manzanar*, and Sone's

Nisei Daughter are, therefore, focused on the concept of identity through negotiating their ethnic Japanese identity and national American identity to form a balance between their dual identities, reconstruct themselves, and cease their identity dilemma.



CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Japanese Immigration to the United States

The United States has been a nation of immigrants since the day the first white settlers set foot onto the continent and founded the country. The country that was founded by various European groups has become one of its kinds to harbor immigrants from the 19th century to the 21st century. The country founded by the immigrant pilgrims, has become the nation of immigrants to this date. Undoubtedly, such a young nation with its fledgling yet steady power attracted people from all over the world.

Asian people, for instance, were one of those immigrants that saw the potential of the United States for the opportunities and wealth that it offered. They first settled in Hawaii by the 1830s. They were primarily from East Asian countries such as China, Japan, Korea, and Philippines. The primary wave of Asian immigration to the mainland United States took place only during the California Gold Rush that started in the 1850s. The majority of these immigrants were Chinese. The new opportunities attracted them to immigrate to the United States in the hope of earning more money and sending it back to their families in China. Asian immigration to the United States, however, was not as much welcomed as for their European counterparts due to the fact that they did not look like the Caucasian race. While Chinese people found jobs and worked hard, white Americans were not content with the job opportunities offered to them as they claimed that Chinese people were stealing their jobs (Robson 13). The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, therefore, was passed to stop new Chinese immigrants from entering the United States for 10 years. The act, however, did not limit other Asians to immigrate to the United States. Japanese immigrants, for instance, were not affected by this law and therefore started immigrating to the United States in 1891 which, according to David Robson, “filled that void in the national workforce” as there was still a shortage for low paying labor. (14)

According to W. Scot Ingram people have two reasons to migrate to a country, one being the push factors, which are caused by the negative life conditions in their homeland and the second being the pull factors, which are the more affluent living conditions and the opportunities that the new country harbors for the newcomers and, thus, attracts these people (Ingram 5). Japanese people were among those who were dreaming of the American dream and therefore the Japanese immigration falls right in these factors. Japan had been an isolated country for a long time until an American naval commander named Matthew Perry broke through the isolation when he landed on the Japanese lands in 1853. His big force daunted the then-leader of Japan and they ended up signing a treaty which effectively brought the finale of Japan being a closed country and it enabled Japan to open her doors to the United States. When a new emperor named Maji¹ took the throne in 1868, the nation laid the foundation of how Japan would turn out to be in modern history as with this new regime, the country brought “manufacturing, trade and international relations to Japan” (12).

This new era for some Japanese, however, was not easy to bear as “thousands of people were displaced because their land was taken out of cultivation or their homes were taken away” (Lee 1). This push factor caused poor Japanese people to look for opportunities in the new world and the stories of people working in the United States and making more money reinforced their motive. Moreover, Japan was now no longer an isolated country and Japanese people were free to move abroad thanks to the Maji regime, which, as a result, played a pivotal role for the first Japanese immigration wave to start (Ingram 25). Jonathan H. Lee further states that the Japanese immigrants were contract laborers who worked in agriculture and “they were like the Chinese who were mostly “dekaseginin”, or sojourners, who were young men who intended to work for a limited time and then return to Japan with their earnings from abroad” (Lee 1-2).

Japanese people who were ready to immigrate did not end up in the mainland of the United States in the first place. On the contrary, they immigrated to Hawaii from 1885 to 1894, which back then, did not even belong to the United States; it was still a territory of the United States and this made it easier for Japanese immigrants to move to the U.S. land later on. According to Ingram, half of the Japanese immigrants did so,

¹ Enlightened one, W.Scott Ingram.

who ended up settling in the West Coast, mostly the California and Washington states (Ingram 12). More specifically, Hill, El Dorado County by Sacramento, California was the first place where the Japanese Immigrants settled on the mainland of the United States (Ng 2).

Life became more and more difficult to endure for Japanese immigrants to the United States. Similar to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 that prohibited immigration to the United States from China, the U.S. also passed the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 and 1908 under the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt that prevented the Japanese from immigration as anti-Japanese sentiment increased. The first immigrants, however, were male laborers. While the Gentlemen's Agreement disabled the continuation of the immigrants, it did not, however, stop the immigration of Japanese women who entered into the United States under arranged marriages or also known as "picture brides". As intergenerational marriages were not allowed during the time, Japanese men brought women of their own ancestry and married them. Further on, a couple of bills were passed to the detriment of the Japanese immigrants which affected their immigrant experience. The U.S. government passed, for instance, California Alien Land Law to dispossess Asian immigrants of owning land in 1913. Following this law, the Supreme Court ruled, in 1922, that Asian immigrants were not qualified for naturalization. And the Immigration Act of 1924 not only restricted the Japanese, it also restricted immigration from European countries considerably. A small number of the first generation of Japanese immigrants in 1935, however, started to obtain American citizenship on the condition that they served in the U.S military and defended the United States against possible attacks and if they are already permanent residents of the United States.

The first generation of Japanese immigrants is called the Issei; they were the first ones coming to the new world in hope of a better life and also it was harder for them to adapt into a new culture, society and the English language. According to Wendy Ng, the first Japanese immigrants were cognizant of the discrimination that Chinese people were exposed to, which made the Japanese act wisely, resulting in adapting Western style attitude, clothes and life style (Ng 5). Similar to Chinatowns, the Japanese formed

their own culture called “Nihomachi” or Little Tokyo and they mostly worked in agriculture.

The second generation of Japanese immigrants is called the Nisei and they are the descendants of the first generation immigrants “growing up in two worlds” (5). Unlike the first generation, the Nisei were born in the United States and they were given the right of citizenship due to the “jus soli”² which still considers anyone who is born in the United States as a citizen. If there has to be made a distinction between the Issei and the Nisei. David Robson explains it as “while the Issei remained steeped in Japanese traditions, the Nisei came of age in American culture; they attended public schools and pledged allegiance not to Japan but to the United States (Robson 22). Additionally, the Nisei grew up speaking both languages, English at school, Japanese at home which helped them maintain their culture and ethnicity. As Wendy Ng also states, “there was great pressure for Nisei to become Americanized and assimilated” (Ng 6). And this generation made up most of the Japanese who were incarcerated and interned during World War II.

Finally, the third generation of Japanese immigrants is called the Sansei. Only a few of the Sansei were interned during World War II because the majority of them were born during the baby boom. (7). Their parents did not want their children to go through the same problems they encouraged them to grow up as more Americans and successful in both their social and education circles and as a result, “a great deal of emphasis was placed on assimilation” (7). As a matter of fact, the Nisei did not learn Japanese, which made it harder for them to connect a bond with their grandparents who were incarcerated and learn more about their experience at the internment camps.

1.2 World War II and Evacuation

The majority of nations aimed to capture vast lands to have a greater power and dominance in the international arena throughout history. It would, however, necessitate wars and bring along casualties, affecting their citizens. The inter-state relation between Japan and the United States was not different considering this. As David Robson states,

² Translated as “the right of soil”, which enables birthright citizenship.

“the diplomatic relationship between Japan and the United States had never been warm. The rapport between the starkly different nations and cultures was further frayed by Japan’s imperial ambitions in the 1930s” (Robson 25). It was imminent that the fate of the Japanese immigrants and their U.S. born children, thus, would change by World War II.

Japanese imperialism, indeed, continued with Manchuria being invaded in September, 1931. Another great invasion took place on the mainland of China in July, 1937 by the Japanese forces. Furthermore, in September 1940, Japan landed on French Indochina, which is Vietnam today because Japan was against the Chinese expansion so they wanted to limit their access to arms, ammunition and oil. However, the Pacific Ocean was pretty much under the United States’ control, they asked Japan to withdraw from Manchuria and China by threatening them with economic sanctions on Japan. As Japan did not want her access to oil and other resources to be cut, the Japanese government signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy on September 27, 1940, which effectively made Japan an ally in the Axis Powers.

The Neutrality agreement between the Axis powers and the Soviet Union restrained the Soviets from attacking. If Japan decided to attack the U.S. or the Britain, they would be safe from the attacks of the Soviet Union thanks to the Neutrality agreement. The United States and Netherlands (Dutch East Indies) put a halt on oil supply and exports to Japan due to Japan’s invasion in Indochina. The Japanese power, nonetheless, did not bow to the restrictions. As a result, Japan decided to declare war on the United States.

Japan’s surprise attack took place on December 7, 1941 at a U.S. naval base near Hawaii. Nearly 20 American naval vessels, battleships and airplanes were destroyed. More than 2,400 Americans died, and 1,000 people were wounded ("Pearl Harbor Bombed"). President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the next day, December 8, 1941, asked the Congress to declare war on Japan through giving his “Day of Infamy” speech, which resulted in the United States’ entering into World War II. Additionally, Japanese Americans living on the West Coast raised questions for the U.S. government for the fear of espionage, and secretly working for the Japanese government as Lieutenant General DeWitt states, “we are at a war and this area – eight states – has been

designated as a theater of operations... [There are] approximately 288,000 enemy aliens which we have to watch and I have little confidence that the enemy aliens are law-abiding or loyal in any sense of the word....Particularly the Japanese. I have no confidence in their loyalty whatsoever” (qtd. in Ng 16). Apart from posing a possible “threat”, there was another issue hovering over the Japanese, which was accumulated throughout U.S. history; the prejudice against Asians. After all, “the removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast and their incarceration was the culmination of the movement to eliminate Asians from the West Coast that began nearly 100 years earlier” (“A Lesson In American History: The Japanese American History”). Indeed, racial prejudice and racism against Asians, or more specifically, of Japanese ethnicity is another major motive behind the internment. Because even if the government suspected possible espionage, this would not have been possible for all of the internees considering that the interment did not segregate people by their age or how Japanese they were, “new born babies, young children, the elderly, the infirm, children from orphanages, and even children adopted by Caucasian parents were not exempt from removal. Anyone with 1/16th or more Japanese blood was included” (“A Brief History of Japanese American Relocation During World War II”).

Franklin D. Roosevelt, therewith, signed the Executive Order 9066, which legitimately made it possible for Japanese Americans to be incarcerated, which was for the most part shocking because no other Americans were incarcerated before no matter what their ethnicity was: “Never before had the government cast aside core principles of American democracy, in the spirit of protecting the people, land, and war effort from the perceived threats posed by people of a certain nationality” (Wyatt 9). Indeed, it is ethnicity and racism that resulted in incarcerating people of Japanese origin.

Military zones were established in the areas with a high rate of Japanese Americans living; California, Washington, and Oregon. Approximately 117,000 people of Japanese ethnicity were affected by this internment; majority of them were American citizens (“Japanese Internment Camps”). The U.S. government established the War Relocation Authority, on March 18, to take charge of the internees and later on to find jobs for them.

First Civilian Exclusion Order appeared on March 24, 1942 and these orders were passed through California, Washington and Oregon states. It showed instructions of the necessary evacuation of Japanese Americans. The evacuation process took place during the spring and summer months of 1942. People took only what they could carry with them and the journey into the unknown for their future started, “parents, grandparents, and children huddled together wearing identification tags and waiting for the buses or trains that would take them away. Where they would go and how long they would be gone remained a mystery” (Robson 38).

1.3 Internment and Aftermath

By June 1942, Japanese Americans were located in temporary camps named as “Assembly Centers”. They were, however, moved from these centers to permanent camps that were founded and regulated by the War Relocation Authority in October 1943. There were 10 of them; Gila River (AZ), Granada (CO), Heart Mountain (WY), Jerome (AR), Manzanar (CA), Minidoka (ID), Poston (AZ), Rohwer (AR), Topaz (UT), and lastly Tule Lake (CA) (Tonai 32). The largest one was in Tule Lake (CA) which housed 18,789 internees and the smallest one in Granada (CO), hosting only 7,318 internees. (Robson 45) The location of the camps had been carefully considered and chosen accordingly given to the fact that they were almost in the middle of nowhere, giving them a desert-like atmosphere; “most were characterized by chilling cold, oppressive heat, and unrelenting wind and dust” (Wyatt 38). Most of the camps were surrounded by barbed-wire fences and there were security guards equipped with armor, and they were being watched over from towers (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 158).

Living conditions at the camps were saddening; people lived in barracks of 100 to 120 feet measurement, which were divided into rooms where they had the basic survival kits such as a stove, blankets and mattresses (Robson 45). The barracks also provided laundry and showers, which undeniably left no privacy for the overcrowded population and was hard to endure for some internees as an ex-internee, Ruth Yonemoto explains, “that was the hardest thing to get used to... there’s a stall with about ten or

fifteen shower heads, and there you are having to go take a shower, so we used to wait until about three o'clock in the morning. Circumstances were very humiliating" (qtd. in Robson 45-46). Apart from the living conditions, there was also this feeling of puzzle and resentment against the United States by its own citizens of Japanese ethnicity; "stress, boredom, and loneliness dogged many of the confined people, and self-esteem suffered as loyal Americans saw themselves perceived as traitors and prisoners" (Wyatt 41).

Day to day life at the camps resembled just like any other day for other citizens outside of the camps, as Grodzins states, "life begins each day with a siren blast at 7:00 a.m., with breakfast served cafeteria style. Work begins at 8:00 for the adults, school at 8:30 or 9:00 for the children (qtd. in Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 169). The sole reason for working for the adults was to spend their time and serve the community. When it comes to education, the fact that the children internees needed their education was not considered thoroughly before the camps were established. There were also not many teachers among the internees; bringing teachers outside of the camps was considered as well, however, the conditions at the camps were not serving enough to those teachers. The final conclusion was to educate the children by the Japanese internees who had gone to community colleges (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 171). Education was also important for another factor considering the internees; "the curriculum covered standard subjects, but underlying this education was an emphasis on Americanization, citizenship, and loyalty to America" (Ng 42). People spent their time through social activities; playing football, basketball and other sports. They also practiced their cultural pass time activities such as arranging flowers and ink painting, "sumi", and sumo wrestling. The majority of the camps also included libraries for the internees to utilize. The recreation halls were used for religious services according to the internees' wish (Ng 43; Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 173).

The Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, who was appointed as the chief of the Western Defense Command in replace of the previous commander General DeWitt, was against the incarceration of American citizens of Japanese ethnicity and Ickes expressed his views in a letter addressed to President Roosevelt in 1943 saying that "the

result has been the gradual turning of thousands of well-meaning and loyal Japanese into angry prisoners... [This] bodes no good for the future” (qtd. in Robson 56). As much as Ickes wanted to exterminate the internment, the President did not correspond to his wish.

Among these upheavals and the tumultuous times, there were also a number of cases waiting to be heard about the internees. Minoru Yasui, for instance, an American army officer, was against the order and did not want to comply with the curfew order that ordered the internees be present at the camps between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. According to him the order contradicted with the U.S. Constitution, asserting that “it makes distinctions between citizens on the basis of ancestry” (qtd. in Robson 58). Akin to Yasui, another one was Gordon Hirabayashi, who rebelled against the curfew and then was sent into jail. Both of these cases were heard by the U.S. Supreme Court in May, 1943 with no positive bearings for these internees. Nevertheless, the more compelling cases belonged to the Nisei Fred Toyosaburo Korematsu and Mitsuye Endo. Korematsu thought that if he could make himself look less Japanese, he would not have to be incarcerated. As a result, he had a surgical operation to change the shape of his eyes. However, he was still a target by the police because he did not give himself in for evacuation. When the police found him, he claimed that his name was Clyde Sarah and that he was of Spanish-Hawaiian origin. The fact that he could not speak Spanish gave away the truth and the police also figured out that he had changed his draft card. The whole situation proved nothing but that the Japanese Americans could be treacherous. (Ng 84; Robson 61)

The case of Mitsuye Endo, on the other hand, resulted in a positive way concerning the future of Japanese American internees. She was born and educated thoroughly in the United States and she could not speak Japanese. Her brother was also serving in the U.S. army. A civil rights lawyer named James Purcell thought that her not being able to speak Japanese and the fact that she had all her education in the U.S. could prove her right not to have any connection to the Japanese government, which would eventually overrule the exclusion order for the internment. The lawyer Purcell requested

a court order of *habeas corpus*³, which demands that without any evidence of a potential crime, a person cannot be held captive in detention and thus must be set free (Robson 61). Both Endo and Korematsu cases were heard by the Supreme Court on the same day in October 1944. The Korematsu case was ruled against, but the Endo case was unanimously voted; Mitsuye Endo was not found guilty and it was decided that the government had no jurisdiction to detain neither Endo nor other faithful citizens of Japanese ethnicity in the internment camps. As the court states:

We are of the view that Mitsuye Endo should be given her liberty. In reaching that conclusion we do not come to the underlying constitutional issues which have been argued. For we conclude that whatever power the War Relocation Authority may have to detain other classes of citizens, it has no authority to subject citizens who are concededly loyal to its leave procedure. (qtd. in Ng 88-89)

During World War II, Public Proclamation no. 21 was issued by the U.S. Major General Henry C. Pratt, which would go into effect on January 2, 1945. It meant that the Japanese American detainees could finally leave the internment camps. The final and the actual termination of the internment was actualized when the President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. The closing of the camps, nevertheless, did not make everything easier for the interned masses because many of them had already lost their jobs and their financial situation was not good. Aya Nakamura, a former internee, states “I was shocked to see what had happened, our home being bought by a different family, different decorations in the windows; it was our house, but it wasn’t anymore” (qtd. in Robson 64) Many of the families who lived together now also faced the sorrowful result of being separated from one another to make a better life. Some communities in the places with the Japanese population before tipped in and helped the internees to make their adaptation slightly better; in San Jose,

³ A Medieval Latin phrase, literally translated as: [we, a Court, command] that you have the body [of the detainee brought before us]

California, the Buddhist church served as a 'hostel', housing single young people and families" (Ng 99).

The Evacuation Claims Act was passed by the Congress in 1948 to help the Japanese Americans ask for compensation from the government. This compensation money might have helped them a bit to start their lives all over again, however, there was still pertaining another bitterness that no one would ever compensate for; it was their psychology and trauma (102). It was only the President Gerald Ford who, for the first time in U.S. history, called the wartime relocation as a "national mistake" and made a promise "that this kind of action shall never again be repeated" (qtd. in Robson 70) in 1976. As a result, the Commission on War-Time Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) was founded by the Congress. Its main purpose was to investigate the internment extensively. Personal Justice Denied was published by the Congress and it was stated "that prejudice and war hysteria rather than national security led to the denial of basic rights to Japanese Americans and their families" (qtd. in Robson, 70). The Redress administration, as a result of this, paid \$20,000 to those who were still alive and were interned as a formal apology.

As it is observed, Asian immigration to the United States first started in the middle and late 19th centuries mainly from China, Japan, Korea, and Philippines. These new immigrants saw the United States as a land of opportunities. The motive behind their immigration was economic as they did not get by well in their homelands. Asian immigrants, however, faced discrimination and racism based on their physical appearances that were different from the members of the WASP society. The overabundance of Asian immigrants, furthermore, caused a fear of Asian dominance over the United States. The fact that white people faced unemployment due to the loss of jobs taken by Asian immigrants fueled the anti-Asian sentiment more. As a result, first the Chinese, and later the Japanese were prohibited from immigration to the United States.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Identity Theories

2.1.1. Cultural Critics and Theorists

The phenomenon of identity has long been under the scope of academia from anthropology to sociology, from cultural studies to literature. Individuals have, too, always questioned themselves to find out who they are and where they belong. The nature of identity has been altered over time, specifically by destroying the essentialist perspective of the Enlightenment as it did not answer each individual's problem and failed to see their uniqueness. The essentialist perspective of identity got fragmented and split through theories and doctrines such as poststructuralism, postmodernism, postcolonialism, and movements perpetrated by ethnic minorities and other oppressed individuals.

Identities are not essentially hereditary, rather, they are productions of speech and acts that human beings identify themselves with and they can take various forms such as ethnic, cultural, gender, and so forth (Smith 33). According to this, individuals, then, configure their own identities through their discourses and interactions with the people around them. Identity also acts as a bridge between the past and the current time in the context of culture and collective memory. It is, additionally, a link to power and ideological relations (Rutherford 19). Identity, then, becomes a synthesis of these relations both of the present and the past. Identities, however, are not concrete subjects, they are, rather, emotional links between individuals and their subjective identification of themselves, which does not take a definitive shape because the emotions are likely to change depending on the social and historical contexts (Barker and Galasinski 28).

Jamaican-English scholar, Stuart Hall who is one of the most prominent cultural critics, describes identity, in his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", as what we create throughout our lives; it is an unfinished act of recreating oneself, which is

contingent upon how one represents himself/herself (Hall 222). This representation can take various forms; culture, for instance, is what Hall associates identity with and accounts for how two different meanings cultural identities can take. The first concept of cultural identity is an accumulation of the mutually shared history and customs that congregate people under the same label and gives them one shared identity, which is absolute and preserves traditionality (223). In this sense, cultural identity is, in a way, a collective identity that harbors individual selves under the same umbrella. In the second sense, Hall puts forward that cultural identity can take the form of reinventing oneself because as much as culture stems from a mutual history of people, it also belongs to the future because social and historical contexts are bound to change, which affects individuals to identify themselves within how they are positioned given the sociocultural context (225). That is why cultural identities can evolve through time and label us with an altered sense of identity.

In his "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities" essay, Hall, further on, parallels identity as if it were a platform where individuals are occupied with various parameters such as our own identity versus other people's identities, our personality versus society, and through these people have to undergo and create a meaning for themselves (145). And that is why this process is ambivalent and contradictory because it is the way we divide and separate ourselves from other people, from ourselves, and the sociocultural context, and only then can we unite ourselves once again and make ourselves visible the way we want to be seen in a form of narration (147). Our identities then become a metaphor of a warrior who is constantly in a war on our minds with its surroundings and have to defend and adapt itself to various phenomenon so that we can tell a narrative by the way we situate ourselves in it as a way of presenting ourselves to the world.

Hall, further, makes a distinction between identity and identification in a linguistic sense in the book he edited, *Questions of Cultural Identity*. Identification, here, is taken as a discourse that we enunciate, connecting our past with us and situating ourselves in the current situation, and producing a discursive act through language, which is a conscious and strategic act (3). As much as how we feel inside about our identity depending on the context, we also actively participate in identification through

our use of language in enunciating it, thus, we create a sense of identity through our discourse while talking to other people around us strategically. Our identities, thus, are fragmented and never absolute, and it is contingent upon how we identify and talk about ourselves, and how we situate ourselves in various settings in an adaptable and transitive way.

Finally, Hall gives, in a book chapter entitled “Identity in Question”, a total account of identity and summarizes it by comparing and contrasting in three different categories from a historical and philosophical aspect namely enlightenment subject, sociological subject, and post-modern subject. In the first category, identity is considered as the sole characteristic of a human being that is a reflection of the enlightenment thought that considered individuals as conscious who act by reason, not emotion (275). Identity in this first sense, then, was not subjected to any alterations through the course of an individual’s life and it was quite centralized around the self, which was an essentialistic way of perception. In the second sense, sociological subject, identity is considered as an agent that links an individual with the outer world and its surroundings. In this way, people demonstrate their identity through identification with the culture, which bounds themselves with their culture, personalize it and thus create a fulfilling meaning out of their lives (276). In this sociological subject, then, there is a reciprocal relationship between the culture and the individual as the culture becomes a ground where the individual reflects their identity, and the individual also becomes a subject of the culture by subsuming to the characteristics of that culture. The postmodern subject, however, approaches identity as an everchanging, unstable, fragmented concept that is mutually exclusive and an unfinished process. Unlike the enlightenment subject, the postmodern subject is more malleable and uncircumscribed. And it is subjected to the identification by the historical context as the self is elastic and reflective of the events revolving around the individual (276-77). In this postmodern subject, then, the essentialist view of the Enlightenment shatters and turns into an anti-essentialist one that knows no boundaries and always regenerates itself.

From a post-colonial perspective of identity, Homi Bhabha, in his paper “The Commitment to Theory”, mentions how one forms and reconstructs themselves and finds meaning through the negotiation process by which he calls the “third space”. By

splitting the self, the individual can engage in an interpretation of the self. Bhabha, correspondingly, mentions how the fragmentation and split of the self are anti-essentialistic and how it distorts the historical synchronic perception of the self. The third space, thus, acts as an interventionist of the homogenous cultural identity that subjects individuals under the same category (20-21). The third space, then, is a platform where an individual can negotiate themselves from various aspects where time is not fixed and the context is ever-changing. This third space, eventually, creates heterogeneous individuals whose identities are different from one another and are a product of the conscious, discursive acts of articulation.

In his interview with Jonathan Rutherford, Bhabha, furthermore, mentions the notion of hybridity. In the postcolonial sense, Bhabha asserts that the third space becomes the hybrid form of two cultures that are produced through cultural and linguistic translation and provides a new space from where individuals can take various subjective positions. It is an arena where individuals can take the power of the authority and interpret themselves, their surroundings, and the others, and position themselves through negotiation and identification without being subject to an essentialist and assimilationist way (211).

In his book *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha mentions how minorities in a major culture find meaning through various deliberate acts that they participate in. From the minority perspective, therefore, how an ethnic individual feels towards or against the mainstream culture depends on how they perform in the culture. The conscious knowledge of being different in the mainstream culture causes the ethnic subject to negotiating themselves perpetually so that they can produce a hybrid sense of identification (2). This deliberate act of negotiation, then, is a way of feeling secure and belonging to the majority, rather than being a minority who feels like an outsider. Through this identification, however, the individual does not succumb to an already existing identity, rather, they aim to create one of an ideal image that is on their mind and it is the adaptation of the self to that image (45). This interrogation of identity, then, necessitates an active role of the individual who is willing to find a place for themselves in the mainstream culture through ambivalent ways of reconstructing their identity,

which the individual does not find ready, rather, they work hard to situate themselves in a concept they create.

Bhabha, furthermore, asserts that identity is an imagined phenomenon of an individual who strives to achieve it through identification. An individual can reach that imagined identity through negotiation where they split themselves and reconstruct themselves over and over again. The process of identification is also a representation of a longing and a wish that an individual has to be like the other around them. It is an identity construction through other people and selves (51-52). This imagined identity, then, acts as a perpetuator for the minority to willingly shape themselves so that they can become part of the majority. Emulating other people, thus, becomes a means toward achieving their goal.

From the post-structuralist point, Jacques Derrida also believes that identities are not essentialist, rather, they are plural and susceptible to change. Derrida gives his account using language as analogous to identity, explaining that we cannot completely rely on language as a means of communication, because it is not an absolute area where every word has one, absolute meaning. Rather, language is a result of interactions and experiences that we have through dialogues and the ideologies surrounding us (Tyson 249). Language is, then, too malleable and contingent upon the historical and social context which uses it as a tool to disseminate an ideology of the powerful one, thus, it is a subject to alter itself, and that is why it is discursive and ambivalent. While we can have an absolute concept of something on our mind, the way we associate that concept with words, signifiers, however, vary.

According to Derrida, signifiers are, then, deferral, that is, they depend on the discursive acts and subjective interpretation and comprehension because symbols do not have one meaning (Tyson 252). In a similar vein, while some concepts and thoughts may seem positive and prevalent, some might be perceived as negative and meaningless depending on the historical, social, and cultural context. The notion of *différance*, thus, is constructed on the non-existence of one ultimate, absolute, cohesion between the signifier and the signified (Derrida 88-89). Our discourses, then, determine the meaning of the symbols, which is a reflection of our thinking and feeling about a certain phenomenon or a subject in a specific time, place, and context. The meanings, thus, are

the final products of how we distinguish one signifier from the other. Lastly, Tyson believes that people do not have actual identities, rather, they are a reflection of how we comfort ourselves in deception. Identity is, therefore, a false notion because the word itself is not absolute. Because people are fragmented by their experiences and thoughts, and how they interpret identity varies from one person to another (257). Since our discursive acts and interpretations determine our multiple/fragmented/split identities, then, our subjectivity accounts for what we make of ourselves.

From the sociological perspective, Anthony Giddens comments, in his essay entitled "The Trajectory of Self", on identity almost like homework that the individual subject has the only authority, ability, and answer of. It is the perpetual reinvention of people through their actions, participations, and experiences throughout their lives that determine who they are. Understanding oneself truly, thus, forms the basis of coming to terms with oneself so that people can be proud of who they are (252). People can, then, only make sense of themselves if they deliberately work on how to reinvent themselves. This reinvention of oneself, thus, necessitates a true understanding of oneself without delusion. Similar to the previous-mentioned critics and theorists, Giddens also asserts that our subjectivity is not absolute, rather, it is always on the way, inclusive of all parts of our lives, and changeable upon the context. That is why people always question themselves in whatever context they find themselves in and with their surroundings (252). It requires active participation in what is going on around us and active observation and interpretation so that individuals can progress and improve themselves. Lastly, this project of identity, which individuals reconstruct, requires a story, and only then can the individuals look at their past and evaluate objectively what they have been through and how they acted in a given context and make sure what they accomplished (253). By looking at their past as if they were reading a book, the individual, then, engages in an active reading of a self-narrative that is an accumulation of their life experiences revealing the development of an authentic self.

Apart from these afore-mentioned critics who maintain the discourse that individuals play an active role in determining their selves and identities through their own conscious and deliberate efforts, some critics purport the opposite as the individual has no power in discovering their true selves and situating and reinventing themselves,

rather, individuals are merely subjects of the ideology that states and institutions have by dictating them on the individuals.

The French philosopher, Louis Althusser, is one of them. In his book, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, he maintains that the only ideology that exists and is visible out there is the subject, which has the absolute power to use on its subjects (28). In this sense, then, people become the subjects who subordinate to the rules and conventions of the subject that has the power. Accordingly, people, then, cannot construct their own identities because they are already constructed "subjects" by the ideology that prevails. Althusser calls this process of people being altered into subjects by the subject as "interpellation" (30).

This interpellation takes place through what Althusser calls "State Apparatus" that involve military and state police power, which are visible only in the public space and are characteristically physically repressive as they control and dominate over "its subjects". Althusser's notion of Ideological States Apparatuses, on the other hand, involves the concrete objects and bodies where the repressive state apparatus finds itself a body through which it commands its subjects psychologically/ideologically. Ideological State Apparatuses, thus, engage with people through private spaces such as the church, education, religion, family, communication mediums, books, sports, and political systems (11-12). It is, therefore, worth considering that according to Althusser, everyone is a subject in the world as they all are part of these institutions where they engage through participation and discursive acts. Through this ideological oppression, furthermore, people are left with only what the absolute subject presents to them. People have no personal choices to reflect on and act through it. Rather, the subject hands out what people can do and cannot. People, therefore, become "individuals" only the way as the ideological power and sees fit (34). Individuals, then, live in almost like a prison world where everything is a disillusion, a forced reality where people are essentialized and become homogenous as if they were products of mass production.

In the same vein, another post-structuralist, Michel Foucault, also believes that people are merely subjects of an ideology and have no power to control their lives and, therefore, construct their identities. According to Foucault, the prevalent "Doctrine" around people is what constructs individuals' identity. It is through the doctrine that

individuals show their loyalty to one absolute truth and ideology (63). This subjugation of individuals, then, is a collective action where individuals accept the doctrine blindly and become subjects of the ideology. Foucault also mentions how people enunciate only what they are allowed to. Discourses around individuals are also restricted by absolute power so that people can be suppressed and not oppose the authority (52). Individuals, then, are not only essentialized and deprived of their authentic selves and their power of constructing their identities, but they are also muted and deprived of their freedom of speech. The discourses, moreover, determine who can engage in discursive acts and who cannot as it requires specific qualities from the individuals. Thus, these platforms where individuals can speak are only half-free are, thus, they do not allow equality (61-62). The freedom of speech of the individuals, therefore, is not accessible to all kinds of individuals and it is also only partly available to the one who can use it. Foucault, lastly, suggests how the dominant doctrine of a given country can also assimilate people into its agenda and, thus, alter them through its expectations, conventions, values, and rules. This assimilation, as a result, bases the foundation for the individuals where they can serve to the authority, and demonstrate and prove their loyalty (56). As a result, not only the already existent individuals of a society succumb to being controlled and lead their lives under the identity the doctrine determines, but the newcomers also become a subject of the authority through assimilation which causes them to leave their old identities behind and obey the new 'given' identities without opposing it.

As it is observed, the concept of identity that the Enlightenment had valued got fragmented and resulted in non-essentialist perspectives that allow the individual to form their own subjectivity and present the power to identify themselves. For Stuart Hall, identity is never fixed and it is always a process. Cultural identity, according to Hall, is also bound to change depending on the social and historical context. Homi Bhabha believes that individuals who live in between cultures create a third-space as an identity process; they question themselves and reconstruct their identity where they feel complete. As for poststructuralist Jacques Derrida, identity is what individuals create through their discursive acts as their identification defers meaning from another meaning. Anthony Giddens, on the other hand, asserts that identity is like a narrative

that individuals create and witness how they change throughout their lives. Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault, furthermore, state that individuals have no authority to identify themselves because they are already subjects of an ideology that rules over them. All in all, just like the concept of identity has fragmented, there are also different and similar perspectives about identity by these scholars and theorists. The internment memoirs that this thesis aims to analyze, thus, innately question this enforced, essentialist aspect identity that did not allow any space or right for Japanese Americans to cherish their ethnic identity and object to the authority. They were, rather, oppressed and assimilated into one identity by the power of the ideological state that resided within the U.S. government. These Japanese-Americans, after all, have all hyphenated identities that tie them together with the country where they were born and raised through its mainstream culture, and, therefore, identify themselves as American, and also with their ethnicity that connects them to their ancestral and authentic cultures through their parents and their upbringing in their households through Japanese culture as well. By these memoirs, these Japanese-Americans reveal that they cannot identify themselves with only one identity because they do not have only one identity, which forces them to negotiate between their ethnic and American identities. They, therefore, show how it is destructive, traumatic, and quite hazardous for people to be assimilated into one identity through the power of the government, and thus become a subject to be otherized, overcast, and hated based on their race or how they “looked like”.

2.1.2. Historical and Political Development of American National Identity

The American identity, like the other types of identity, is also a socio-historically constructed concept. The United States, from the time it was founded, has attracted millions of people to a new life. As all the immigrants came from different countries, they also brought their own cultures and customs with them. The myth of melting pot, to that end, became a rationale to assimilate and modify immigrants into one category and one common culture, overlooking their ethnic identities and assigning them with a new political and ideological identity based on the nation itself.

The national identity is a notion that is formed intentionally based on socio-historical contexts in a way for people to affiliate themselves collectively under a broader and comprehensive category (Barker 252). It is, therefore, an imaginary phenomenon that people get engaged to show their respect, love, and affinity to their countries through symbols, discursive acts, and dialogues (Barker and Galasinski 124). It is, therefore, a representation and performance of emotions and loyalty that citizens have within themselves. It is, also, a way of carrying forward the traditions, values, rules, and collective memories of people, which were historically cultivated into their cultures, through this “imaginary” identity (Barker 252). In a similar vein, the concept of citizenship is, then, also analogous to national identity. After all, citizenship is one of the identities people identify themselves with on the grounds of a common, shared history and culture, which they strive to appreciate and glorify through their civic duties and responsibilities (415).

Werner Sollors explains, in his book *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture*, the national American identity through the notions of “consent” and “descent” from the perspective of Anthropology and then discusses the American identity through the melting pot theory. From this anthropological sense, then, “descent” stands for what people inherit such as blood and physical characteristics. “Consent”, on the other hand, is how individuals identify themselves with whatever they would like to. In this sense, “consent” includes active participation of the individual, thus, making it an autonomous individual who has the power and authority of situating themselves (6). From this point onwards, Sollors describes how the melting pot theory emerged and how it served as the perfect platform where individuals consent through their descent. The melting pot theory, thus, originally emerged from a four-act play, entitled *The Melting-Pot*, written by an English Jew named Israel Zangwill. The play revolves around a Jewish family in New York and retells how they reconstructed themselves and lead their new lives (66). Sollors, furthermore, asserts that becoming an American means accepting, valuing, and submitting to the American ideals which cannot be inherited, individuals, therefore, have to consent themselves to mold themselves into this new American identity, leaving their original backgrounds behind (70). The melting pot theory, in a way, then, resembles what Althusser and Foucault

talk about state oppression. It is what the United States tried to impose on the new immigrants for them to adapt to this new society and culture and give them an identity to identify themselves with and be loyal to this welcoming land. He also mentions that Zangwill's play created a common ground, and became a mediator for individuals from different backgrounds to unite them together (74).

One of the most famous accounts of how immigrants adapted to the new country and what it meant to be American and what it took to become an American is probably the narrative of the French-born and later on a naturalized American citizen, Jean de Crèvecoeur. In the third letter "What Is An American?" from his book, *Letters from an American Farmer*, Crèvecoeur gives a succinct description of what an American means to him:

He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. (54-55)

Crèvecoeur believes, as it is seen, in the melting pot theory is a necessary tool for becoming a true American citizen. It is only through rejecting one's past life and culture that one can truly join the pot and melt into becoming an American. This new creation is an amalgamation of various kinds of people from different countries and cultures who meet at the same point for a new and better life. The melting pot theory, concurrently, resembles what Althusser and Foucault maintain as one of the ways the state oppresses people, modifies them, and includes them into its system. The melting pot theory is what the United States tried to impose on the new immigrants for them to adapt to this new society and culture and give them an identity to identify themselves with and be loyal to this welcoming land.

Heike Paul, in their essay entitled "E Pluribus Unum?: The Myth of the Melting Pot", mentions how the motto *E Pluribus Unum* became the embodied phrase,

symbolizing the melting pot theory as a way of congregating people under the same category, giving them a national identity where they belong through participating willingly (258). The motto, then, stands for how the United States identifies itself with the image of all-welcoming regardless of race and ethnic backgrounds of its citizens, and thus, creates a collective identity of which people can be a part. Paul also points out a significant characteristic of the melting pot theory and the motto of *E Pluribus Unum* by asserting that newly founded countries and communities necessitate a story that would include the foundation of this new country and by whom it was founded. It lays out a foundation stretching back to history as well as signaling into the future as a legacy where how people from different walks of life came together and developed a community for their ideals based on the common values, and that is why the melting pot theory developed into a great narrative of the United States (259). Analogous to what Giddens asserts about how individuals project their identities and reconstruct themselves through a narrative, nations and “states” too, then produce a narrative to reach each individual and absorb them into itself by making them its subjects. As the melting pot theory identified each individual with the same label of national American identity, it, however, also overlooked racism that is still present today and the authenticity of each individual that is from various ethnic backgrounds (282). This essentialist ideology of ascribing individuals with one absolute identity, thus, becomes quite problematic and nonhumanistic as it does not consider the authentic characteristics and the needs of each individual. As an example, Paul, lastly, criticizes how the melting pot theory failed to include African Americans and Native Americans, as it mostly included white European immigrants as it is also the case in Zangwill’s play (285).

Bhikhu Parekh, in his paper entitled “What is Multiculturalism?” that he presented at the Multiculturalism Symposium in 1999, states that the notion of multiculturalism first emerged back in the 1970s in Canada, Australia, and then in the United States and the United Kingdom, and Germany respectively, expanding to other countries as well. According to Parekh, multiculturalism does not mean an absolute truth that politically and systematically positions individuals, rather, it is merely a way of a comprehensive perspective that centers around the individuals’ lives. He further explains its basic three tenets for what they mean to individuals. Firstly, he recognizes

that people are born into a culture that shapes and modifies them characteristically and thus gives them a sense of belongingness through its social conventions and values. He, however, admits that this culture does not implicitly determine how an individual should act or identify themselves, rather it lays a background that affects the way individuals think and make their decisions accordingly. Secondly, since all cultures have their authenticity, it is not enough for them to appreciate their own culture, on the contrary, it needs other perspectives of different cultures so that the diversity can emerge mutually.

Parekh further believes that it would be impossible to lead a life that is so self-involved in one culture in this globalized world. And lastly, he asserts that each culture is innately pluralistic in that it includes all walks of lives and various customs and individuals, which means that cultures themselves have plural identities that are always in flux and contingent on historical and social contexts and individuals and that cultures are always in an ever-changing discourse in variety (1999). Based on this, then, Parekh strongly supports the non-essentialist view of individuals' self-identity and that all cultures should cherish the diversity residing within themselves, rather than making their individuals a subject under the auspices of them. Multiculturalism, on this basis, becomes an enemy of monoculturalism, which the melting pot theory emerged from, for imposing its essentialist view on the individuals by ignoring their authenticity and assimilating them into its doctrine.

Parekh, furthermore, draws attention to an important point by asserting that even though multiculturalism value individuals' own identities, it should still congregate people in harmony so that individuals can also participate in a national discourse, which he calls a civic national identity (1999). This civic model of national identity, then, acts as a mediator between individuals and the government as it allows individuals to emphasize their intrinsic and authentic selves while preserving a national narration to which they belong. Parekh regards this as a reciprocal relationship where both sides are in a dialogue that feeds each other positively and preserves the overall peacefulness and the human rights that each individual entails (1999). Compared to the essentialist American identity that the melting pot theory tried to impose on the immigrants and the individuals, this non-essentialist civic national identity is more pluralistic and

understanding in its doings towards individuals. This American national identity, then, does not overlook different races and ethnicities and subjugate them. It, therefore, emerges only as an invisible tie to the nation through which individuals fulfill their civic duties.

Parekh, in his book entitled *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*, furthermore, asserts that the civil right movements, which started with black people's righteous demands for their basic human rights and later on included other oppressed minorities such as women, the LGBTQ, and other ethnicities such as Japanese, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and non-Europeans, catalyzed the notion of multiculturalism to steep in the United States and made it its new, altered agenda for its diverse citizens (5). The civil rights movement, then, caused a kind of revival for the ethnicities that woke them up and stand up for themselves by demanding their rights through their overlooked and oppressed identities.

Charles Taylor, in his book *The Politics of Recognition*, also maintains that this new multiculturalism and reconstructed way of identity resulted in identity politics where individuals take an active role for their uniqueness to be recognized (38). This identity politics, then, encourages oppressed individuals to be politically assertive than they have ever been before and gives them authority over their own lives and identities.

In a similar vein, Heike Paul, also mentions how this emerged multiculturalism in the United States during the 1960s destroyed the melting pot theory/myth by giving individuals the right to identify themselves with how they feel and how it encouraged cultural diversity, which came to be known as "salad bowl" (Paul 291). Based on Althusser's and Foucault's terms of repressive state ideals and "ideological state apparatuses", multiculturalism, then, does not "interpellate" individuals and oppress them. It, rather, encourages and supports minorities to put their ethnic identity and affiliation before their national American identity, and present and identify themselves through their hyphenated identities such as Japanese-Americans, African-Americans, etc. The melting pot theory, therefore, effectively gave in to the "salad bowl" notion. Taken the salad as a metaphor, it symbolizes the diversity and differences that each individual brings onto the table/the common ground where they make "a salad" using different and diverse "ingredients".

The national American identity, as it is seen, was constructed with the melting pot theory when immigrants from diverse backgrounds immigrated to the United States and consented into American society through leaving their old selves behind and become one with the absolute and monocultural national identity, which is also stated through descent and consent notions of Werner Sollors. Taking into account these political and historical conditions and strategic aims, the American identity, then, started to evolve from its assimilationist, monocultural point only after its essentialist perspective got destroyed through the civil rights movement that occurred during the 1960s, causing an ethnic revival, changing “the melting pot” concept into “the salad bowl”, and transforming the nation’s repressive agenda into multiculturalism where ethnic minorities can freely identify themselves with their ethnicities as well. It is important, for this reason, to take into account how the assimilative American identity affected the interned Japanese Americans through its ideological construction and how it was used to psychologically force them into one category and deprive them of their ethnic identities, which takes place as the negotiation of identities in the memoirs with which this thesis is concerned.

2.2. Race and Racism in the United States

2.2.1. Racial Formation Theory

Racism and the concept of race have intrinsically been a part of the United States from the day it was founded. It affected all ethnic minorities in various forms, resulting in horrendous acts such as genocide against Native Americans and the enslavement of African Americans. Race, too, is a constructed system of categorizing people who look different from the white majority. It becomes the rationale in the hands of the ideological state power to control the minorities systematically and institutionally. It also closely pertains to the essentialist perspective of identity.

The etymology of the word “phenotype” stems from the combination of two Greek words; *phainô* (to appear) and *tipos* (type). The literal meaning of these words, therefore, means how someone looks based on their physical characteristics and types.

The world we live in that is based on social and cultural systems we have built over time focuses on the differences of people depending on how they appear, whether they look alike or unlike, which causes power relations (Jordan and Weedon 252). Its historical foundations, on the other hand, reside in social Darwinism that essentializes people in absolute, stable, and homogenous terms such as their descent (hereditary) and appearance; most notably the skin color. Based on these concepts, the dominant power categorizes people (Barker 248). Roderick A. Ferguson perceives this racialization as an active way of inscribing people. The “bodies” of the minorities become a material upon which the dominant group penetrates its hierarchical, superior agendas such as discrimination, brutality, genocide, and otherizing (191-92). The other side of racism, lastly, pertains to the worth of people. Tracing back to the Enlightenment, the notion of racism has paved the way for the dominant group to determine the value of other people based on their physical appearances and capabilities as if they were the jury deciding on the lives of the “contestants” (Barker 256).

Michael Omi and Howard Winant maintain in their book entitled *Racial Formation in the United States* that race is a social construction for classifying people as it emerged as a way of labeling the European immigrants to the United States under a category based on their cultural characteristics and appearances. This social construction, therefore, enabled the newly founded government to take control and rule over its citizens in an orderly way according to its benefits. This racial theory, also, especially benefitted the white European settlers since it became a tool to take advantage of the enslaved Africans, and they considered it almost like the doctrine of this newly founded country so that there could be an ordinance (3). The concept of race, then, became a part of the national narrative of the United States that went hand in hand with the melting pot theory in terms of their common notion of subjugating and oppressing people.

Omi and Howard propose, furthermore, that the racial formation theory is fundamentally based on marginalizing and otherizing the people whose identities, appearances, and ways of lives do not align with that of the majority. It is because of this race-based otherizing that the United States produced its doctrines to dominate its minorities unequally. This “racial otherizing” eventually took the form of genocide

towards Native Americans, and the enslavement of Africans. The notion of race became a kind of a framework that justified the actions of the white settlers and the oppression they placed on the minorities, and as a result, it increased inequality even more (106-7). The oppressors, then, base their actions and create their agenda basing it on a systemically produced notion to actualize their motives. It is thus what they call is the racial formation that is based on an otherizing theme to dominate "different" people socially and systematically, "We define racial formation as *the sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed*" (109). Racial formation, therefore, becomes a material in the hands of the powerful one, which it shapes and modifies for its purpose.

Race, moreover, is malleable to change depending on the context and the meanings it is associated with; it is a flexible concept that does not follow a strict, stable pattern. Even though the race is a biological concept between humans and other beings, it still denotes the physical appearances of people that the system ostracizes and otherizes in a social and historical context. It is, therefore, a random, repressive, and systematized way of categorization (110-11). In this way, it is once again attributable to Althusser's ideological state apparatuses for its agenda of subjecting its "subjects". Overall, both the concept of race and the racial formation theory, then, form an umbrella term for oppressing otherized people so that the government and institutions can have control over those individuals, promoting injustice and fostering inequality.

All in all, race, rather than a biological concept, has become a social concept through a systematic construction and categorization of people hierarchically. The racial formation theory of Michael Omi and Howard Winant, therefore, account for how the United States has used the concept of race to discriminate people based on their physical appearances, and depending on its agenda. The ideologically constructed notion of race and the racial formation theory reveal the motive behind the internment of the Japanese Americans that is reflected in the memoirs. The memoirists show how the U.S. government imposed its racist agenda basing it on the Pearl Harbor incident and covering it under "war hysteria" to claim that the Japanese Americans could sabotage against the U.S., thus, making them enemies in their own countries. The memoirs also depict how disruptive racial formation can be and how racism can cause trauma and

psychological breakdown forcing them to negotiate between their ethnic Japanese and civic national American identities.

2.2.2. Asian American Stereotyping

Asian Americans have been subjected to stereotypes that are produced by the white majority on the ground of their appearance and acts. Japanese Americans, too, have been stereotyped as the “yellow peril”, “perpetual foreigner”, and “model minority”. The political aspect of stereotyping and how it developed especially in the context of Japanese Americans is helpful to analyze the internment memoirs as the Japanese American memoirists reveal how the power relations work and how they become a subject based on negative connotations given by the government and white Americans.

Stuart Hall, in his book *Representation: Cultural Representations*, asserts that stereotyping is based on a racial representation of the other who looks different from us. Hall, further, states that the minds of human beings work systematically and schematically where they give meaning to everything around them from objects and animals to flowers and other people. This affiliation of meaning to objects and concepts is accumulated in cultures and shared throughout generations. Whenever someone sees an object that might have similar characteristics to, for instance, a chair, that person is bound to identify it with the already existent concept in their mind. They, therefore, fit the image on their minds into something that they come across (257). Stereotyping also involves the reduction of some particular moments, actions, and glimpses of someone's lives into a general, an absolute picture that becomes malleable to exaggerate or downplay the characteristics of a particular group (258). It is, therefore, a way of essentializing people and identifying themselves with one absolute characteristic. Stereotyping is also concerned with the splitting of images between what is conventional and what is aberrant from what is customary (258). It, then, acts as a categorizing machine, sorting out the good and essential ones from the bad and unnecessary ones and excludes people who do not fit into the “system”, which establishes the binary opposition of “us” and “them” (Barker 263-64). In this sense,

then, stereotyping is a way of establishing a socially constructed structure. It also serves the major power so that it can rule over its subjects (Hall 258), which is analogous to Foucault's term of ideological state apparatuses because it only emerges as a question of power relations (Barker 263). Another type of stereotyping, moreover, is fetishism, which refers to the imaginary mind of people. It is a projection of a pre-existent stereotype onto an actual body so that they have a half-life experience on their mind (Hall 263). Fetishism, therefore, becomes a representation through identifying someone using the stereotypes.

As for the stereotyping Japanese Americans, the most obvious and recurrent ones are the "yellow peril", "perpetual foreigner", and the "model minority. The "Yellow Peril" stereotype first emerged back in the 1870s during the California Gold Rush period where lots of Chinese people immigrated to the United States and worked for relatively low wages that made it hard for Americans to find a job, and that is how Americans made up the stereotype against the Chinese immigrants as a pejorative, based on their skin color (Yang) and identifying them with dirt and other characterizations such "as heathen, morally inferior, drug addicted, savage, or lustful" (Schaefer 295). The overabundance of the Chinese immigrants, on the other hand, posed a threat for Americans and the U.S. government for the fear that might overrule the Americans and capture the government considering their imperial power of China back then (Kawai 113). The overflow of Chinese immigrants and the lack of jobs for American citizens, therefore, eventually led to the Chinese exclusion act that prevented them from immigrating to the United States in 1882. This Chinese exclusion act, moreover, meant that a more comprehensive restriction would be eminent for other Asian immigrants from Japan, Korea, India, and such. These new Asian immigrants, after all, had placed the Chinese immigrants in terms of labor and were also subjected to similar racist discourses and behaviors (Lee 550). Japanese immigrants, on the other hand, outnumbered other Asian immigrants. This fact, therefore, made them the new "yellow peril" (550) through a racist discourse by the white Americans. Japan also had become the new imperial power after China in the Pacific which also triggered the United States and its citizens to have a biased and racist perception toward Japanese immigrants as they posed a threat as well (Kawai 113). The attack on Pearl Harbor,

therefore, affirmed the fears of the U.S. government and Americans and made them even more aggressive and racist towards Japanese Americans. The yellow peril stereotype, thus, surged and echoed more than ever, resulting in the Pacific War between Japan and the United States, which led to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. During wartime propaganda, Japanese people were characterized and mocked for what they looked like. They were often portrayed as “subhuman apes and gorillas, treacherous in nature and though morally corrupt and mentally and physically lesser to the Americans” (Yang). Even though these racist stereotypes based on their appearances occurred a long time ago, its repercussions are still quite present in the present day which haunts both Japanese Americans and other Asian people (Schaefer 295).

The second stereotype that is affiliated with Japanese Americans and other Asian Americans is called the “Perpetual Foreigner”. In contrast to the “yellow peril” stereotype, this one seems to accept the fact that Asian Americans are, too, finally a part of the United States, however, they now perceive them as unadjusted foreigners who will never acculturate into the mainstream society. They are, moreover, deemed as “unassimilable” (Lee et al. 76), which means that how hard they try to assimilate them, Asian people will eventually fail. This stereotype has also been made public a lot of times to promote this racist agenda and disseminates this ideology in a broader context through popular culture, where they have been portrayed “as passive, smart, and nerdy. Not insignificantly, he spoke with a rather thick “Asian” accent” (76).

The last and the most contemporary stereotype is the “Model Minority” which treats Asian Americans as almost “the survivor” who, despite all the odds and prejudices, achieved to be successful, affluent, and hardworking. They are also perceived as modest, restrained, and peaceful as they achieved their success by working hard and through education, not by protesting. It is also believed that the model minority stereotype is a concrete example of how everyone can manage wherever they put their mind to (Schaefer 294). Asian Americans, therefore, are promoted by the whites as the model group so that other minorities would follow in their steps and become a model minority as well (Lee et al. 70). This promotion as the model ethnic group, on the other hand, results in group tensions among other ethnic minorities,

antagonizing and setting them against one another (73). The stereotype, moreover, promotes the color-blind racism in a way that it overlooks the racism against the Asian Americans on the fact that they are successful and have a high place in the eyes of the government and the public, and thus perceive them as not a subject to racism (Kawai 115). This belief, however, does not change the fact that just like other ethnic minorities, Asian Americans still keep facing racism and encountering these stereotypes in real-life situations. This is why racism and stereotyping in the United States is so deep institutionalized that the Critical Race theory tries to deconstruct it by fighting against its fundamentals.

The stereotypes against Asian Americans, furthermore, seem to be very flexible and contingent upon the context where they are situated. For instance, when Asian Americans achieve something and do a job successfully, the dominant majority perceives them “as the model minority” and appreciates them. When Asian Americans, however, do something that would make the white people look inferior to them, the white Americans perceive it as a threat and otherizes them with the yellow peril stereotype (115). The civil rights movements, overall, marked the turning point for the ethnic minorities and oppressed people in realizing that the government perpetually used “race” as a socially constructed instrument to reach its goals, rather than based on the actual biological sense. That is when the ethnic minorities and social justice activists began to deconstruct the race that the U.S. government has been imposing on them (Ferguson 192).

In the internment memoirs, the stereotypes emerge during wartime propaganda in a way to antagonize the Japanese by assigning them negative characteristics based on their appearance. The Japanese American memoirists reveal how the media from movies to newspapers and magazines depicted them as cunning, insidious, backstabbing with crooked teeth, yellow skin, and with spectacled eyes, and how these stereotypes fueled racism and anti-Asian sentiment even more. They also reveal how these stereotypes made them feel uncomfortable and traumatized them by the way of the depictions.

2.2.3. Critical Race Theory

The internment memoirs provide information and stories to deconstruct established images and misconceptions about Japanese Americans and other Asian Americans. Apart from all the theories that were discussed and explained in detail above, the Critical Race Theory (CRT) supplies another perspective to look at the power and race relations by deconstructing the fundamentals of race and racism as reflected in the internment memoirs.

Richard Delgado, one of the most important figures of CRT, disseminated this theory to a large audience through his book entitled *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* where he accounts for how the critical race theory emerged and what it aims to accomplish. CRT was formed as a movement by social activists and academics during the 1970s to challenge the institutions in terms of racism and their repressive ideologies. It, therefore, aimed at deconstructing those notions to promote social justice for the minorities and the oppressed. At the core of its deconstruction subject, the main target is the foundations of the essentialist, enlightenment ways of perception and actions towards individuals (28). CRT, moreover, strictly took the civil rights movement of the 1960s in its agenda to foster and expand its scope even further (29). Some of its most prominent activists include Richard Delgado, Alan Freeman, and Derrick Bell.

Some of the basic tenets of CRT include "ordinariness" which means that institutions, states, and oppressors internalized (institutionalized) racism within themselves so much that they cannot even realize they are being racist toward other people because they are color-blinded by their attitude and that is why it becomes difficult to cure racism (8). The second tenet refers to "interest convergence" which means that racism becomes a mutual interest for both the affluent white supremacists and for the white, narrow-minded proletariat who take advantage of racism for their benefits. The third notion is called "social construction", which deems racism as a socially constructed phenomenon by the oppressor rather than a natural occurrence or an inherited one (9). In this regard, it aligns with what Omi and Howard describe racism as a deliberately planned rhetoric of the states. The fourth tenet emphasizes the unstable

and arbitrary notion of racism which serves the majority/the oppressor to ostracize different minorities at different times haphazardly as long as it serves the purpose (9). Another one is the "intersectionality" which stems from the belief that, for instance, when an African American woman becomes a subject of racism based on skin color, her gender is always overlooked which promotes sexism, and thus her two identities are essentialized to one (9). Critical Race theorists, therefore, advocate for intersectionality and demand that each individual should be regarded by their multiple identities, not only one. The last tenet "unique voice of color" holds the belief that all the ethnic minorities that are non-white share a common, collective history of oppression experienced through racism, and thus the white cannot understand what they have been through to solve the inequalities. People of "color" can only truly understand their struggles and stand up to bring justice by their authentic voices (11).

2.2.3.1. Asian Critical Theory

One branch of CRT that addresses specifically the problems and discrimination towards Asian Americans is called Asian Critical Theory. Developed by Museus and Iftikar, it aims to advocate for the social injustices and racism that Asian Americans face daily by deconstructing the fundamental misbeliefs. (Iftikar and Museus 935) Asian Critical Theory builds on the tenets of CRT by adding some alternative perceptions for analyzing the experiences of Asian Americans. Three of them are substantially worth including for the analysis of the internment memoirs by the Japanese Americans. The first one is called Asianization, which holds the belief that each individual who falls in the racial category of "Asian" is essentialized to one overarching category that fails to address each ethnicity (Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese) that belongs to the Asian "race". It also fights against the stereotypes of Asian Americans such as "model minorities", "yellow perils", and "perpetual foreigners" (940). The second tenet is called "(re)constructive history" which aims to alter the misconception that Asian Americans have always been reticent and submissive to the authority and that is why they keep facing discrimination and racism. To deconstruct this wrong notion, it is necessary to rewrite a history that highlights the

accomplishments and the power of Asian Americans. Finally, the last one is called "story, theory, and praxis" which encourages the personal stories of Asian Americans to be heard so that they can counter back to the ideas and stereotypes produced by the dominant white society and provides for the lacking knowledge about Asian Americans (941).

The internment memoirs that this thesis aims to analyze, overall, fall in the category of all these tenements, and specifically the last tenement of Asian Critical Theory because through such stories as these internment memoirs, the Japanese Americans provide a first-hand account of what it meant to be a Japanese American in the United States and how they survived the traumatizing experience of the internment during World War II.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNMENT NARRATIVES BY JAPANESE-AMERICANS

3.1. Negotiation of Identities as Reflected in the Internment Narratives

These narratives are chosen for this thesis on the fact that they are all first-hand accounts written by the Japanese-American internees. As they are nonfiction narratives, they also provide accurate information about one part of U.S. history that affected all Japanese-Americans. The fact that all these narratives were written and published in different years brings a different and fresh perspective on the analysis of the internment memoirs in a diachronic sense. Although these Japanese-American women writers were from different cities and came from different family backgrounds and had their subjective perspectives on themselves, they all had a similar concern about their conflicted identities as both Japanese and American. In this sense, the central and important theme of these narratives is their negotiation of identities. Being the children of immigrants born in the United States, they all have the same concerns and dilemmas belonging to two worlds. Their exploration of their identities, negotiation, and affirmation of their dual selves, however, are both similar and different at the same time. All these narratives, furthermore, portray the trauma of the internment and the narrators' disappointment with the U.S. government. These writers, concurrently, take different steps to deal with the vehemence of their situation during the internment and their confusion about who they are. And finally, these narrations also demonstrate how they arrive at the point where they could make sense of the reality in their subjective ways and reconstruct their identities and move on with their lives.

Kim Elaine maintains, in *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context*, that the Nisei internees wrote their experiences to challenge and destroy the stereotypes about Japanese Americans that were created by white Americans out of bias and discrimination (4-5).

Alpana Sharma Knippling, too, highlights, in *New Immigrant Literatures in the United States: A Sourcebook to Our Multicultural Literary Heritage*, that the motive behind *Nisei Daughter* was to counter strike against the stereotypes about Japanese Americans and create a new perspective of them in the eyes of white America. *Nisei Daughter* is also important based on the identity problem that Japanese Americans had faced during the internment time, and their tough experiences in the cultural and social context (131).

Ann Rayson, in her article “Beneath the Mask: Autobiographies of Japanese-American Women”, draws attention to the writing of the internment experience from a gendered perspective. She asserts that almost all the autobiographic narratives about the internment were written by Japanese-American women. She finds her point on the fact that Japanese-American women handled their destroyed self-confidence caused by the internment better because their self-confidence never aligned with that of the Japanese-American men in the first place. The perception of Japanese-American women as exotic, submissive, and soft made it easier for them to be received rather better than Japanese-American men in the mainstream culture. It was, therefore, much easier for the Japanese-American women to have an objective interpretation of their experience and conveyance of it (45). Rayson finally touches on the fact that writing life narratives offered the Japanese-American women an opportunity, which was not allowed because of racial and gendered discrimination that was present in both American and Japanese cultures, to recreate and reconstruct their identities, as well as to voice their experience (57).

Shirley Geok-Lin Lim highlights, in her article “Twelve Asian American Writers: In Search of a Self-Definition”, that Sone’s story is rooted in a sociological perspective as she aimed to write her(story) all over again, and that is why it is abundant with reflections of herself and the Japanese Americans in that period (57). *Farewell to Manzanar*, on the other hand, shows the hardship to converge Houston’s both American and Japanese identities together as she is both the oppressed and affiliated with the oppressor which shows the profound ontology of being both Japanese and American (64). Overall, the internment experience of Japanese Americans foregrounds the

introspective analysis of Asian Americans which confronts the exotic perception by the white and enables them to reconstruct their selves (64).

Betty Ann Bergland argues, in her article “Representing Ethnicity in Autobiography: Narratives of Opposition”, that autobiographies written by ethnic authors holistically form a body of counterstories against the state ideologies (70). She accounts for it based on the fact that ethnic writers demonstrate their identity dilemma with an ideological aim which calls for personal politics (70). She highlights that as ethnic writers also reflect their ethnic cultures, these ethnic narratives are all counternarratives against “American identity politics” (87). The internment narratives disclose the ideological state oppression and represent its repercussions of trauma and identity dilemma. These narratives, moreover, contribute to the collective solidarity of ethnic minorities and oppressed individuals and stand out as textures of multiculturalism (87).

Rocío G. Davis highlights, in his article “National and Ethnic Affiliation in Internment Autobiographies of Childhood by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and George Takei”, the power relations and the assimilation of the Japanese-Americans as the internment narratives demonstrate identity negotiations between national and ethnic identities, the authors, thus, instinctively reflect how Americanization is strategic progress of identification and not a fixed affiliation. These narratives, further on, deconstruct the essentialized history that often overlooks the minorities and reveal their oppressed stories, and offer alternative stories about what happened and how it affected the minorities (356). By writing their subjective stories, furthermore, these writers themselves get the authority to represent themselves rather than to be represented by the majority (357).

Floyd Cheung elaborates on why it took long for Japanese-Americans to talk about their experience in her book review on *Looking Like the Enemy*. According to her, firstly, many of the internees were deeply embarrassed by what happened to them even though they were innocent. Secondly, their cultural philosophy, stoicism, did not allow them to express their weakness, rather it meant that they had to endure what happened to them, which explains why the concurring mantra of “shikata ga nai” as “it cannot be helped” permeates in these narratives. And lastly, they did not want to come off as

nagging because of their internment when they found out about the Nazi camps, which they deemed worse than their own experience (93-94).

According to Cheung, moreover, what differentiates Gruenewald's *Looking Like the Enemy* is that Gruenewald leans forward on her psychology much more than Houston does in her *Farewell to Manzanar* in which Houston depicts the realities of the internment camp and the life within those barracks in detail (94). Gruenewald also express exclusively all the insecurities she had during the internment and employs those feelings in her writing as "she recounts her fears, periods of religious doubt, and depressive episodes" (94).

In her review of *Nisei Daughter*, Mitsuye Yamada confesses how the Japanese-American community did not acknowledge Sone's memoir as a valuable literary work and overlooked their fellow writers because of the way Japanese-American submitted to the perspective of the "white America" (91). Yamada's view of Monica Sone as a controversially powerful Japanese-American woman explains why *Nisei Daughter* is more than a life story with its ideological discourse against the U.S. government and ideological propagandas that took a toll on its citizens (91). *Nisei Daughter* also plays an important role in transmitting the experiences of the Isei and Nisei to the Sansei and the generation yet to come so that they can find out more about their past; "Nikkei should consider how those precepts of a mere half-century ago affect them today" (92). That is why it holds a historical value as well.

Forrest E. LaViolette in her review of *Farewell to Manzanar* highlights the value of this narrative on the basis that it contributes to the emerging notion of multiculturalism or "cultural pluralism" both in the United States and Canada by allowing readers to find out about what it meant to be a Japanese-American during World War II (406).

Guiyou Hang states, in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Asian American Literature*, that the Internment memoirs focus on the in-betweenness of the authors and their search for where they belong by separating their dual identities as "Japanese" and "American" (64). They further review both *Farewell to Manzanar* and *Nisei Daughter* in terms of their subject matter. Other than criticizing and condemning the Japanese internment, *Farewell to Manzanar* also challenges the institutionalized racism

that interned them based on their race (449). *Nisei Daughter*, on the other hand, offers a great deal of detailed information about Japanese Americans; their family, experiences, and surroundings. It also confronts and condemns the racist ideology of the U.S. Finally, it also clearly portrays Sone's negotiation of identities (448).

3.1.1. Looking Like the Enemy

Looking Like The Enemy: My Story of Imprisonment in Japanese-American Internment Camps (2005) narrates the evacuation and internment experience of Mary Matsuda Gruenewald, who was 16 years old when she was interned along with her father Heisuke, her mother Mitsuno, and her brother Yoneichi at Pinedale Assembly Center in California and later at Minidoka relocation center in Idaho. She narrates how their life on Vashon Island, which is twenty-minutes away from Seattle, changed after the Pearl Harbor incident. She delivers what it meant to be a Japanese-American and how she tried to position herself whether she was American or Japanese, or both in those years. Her unfortunate experience had a tremendous impact on her emotionally and psychologically, which she narrates poignantly and elaborately in this story. Compared to the other narratives that this thesis aims to analyze, Gruenewald wrote her story quite a bit late and published it only in 2005, which she explains in *Prologue – Breaking the Silence* why it was only until she took part in a writing class that she could come to terms to face her past and begin narrating her experience, “At last, I was telling my story—a *Nisei* no longer willing to be silent” (Gruenewald).

According to Gruenewald, being silent was the only way to move on with her life because if she had thought of what had happened to them she would not have had the courage and strength to build a better future. Visiting the past, moreover, was agonizing. Moreover, as most of the Japanese American internees kept their silent, historians regarded them as a “silent generation”, that is also why, Gruenewald explains, she could not talk about her experience to her children because she did not want to let them see the parts of her that were distressful and that she did not want to come off as helpless. Finally, she dedicates this book to her fellow internees that were not able to express their sorrow, anger, and find solace through telling their experience because

they thought it would not be perceived well and appropriate in such times when they got ostracized by the white American society. And she hopes that people will judge the United States better for what it did to its citizens and what people can do and change against such racist and inhumane acts in years to follow.

After the prologue, Mary paints a picture of her life and her mundane world starting from the childhood memories that she had with her family in the first chapter. She contrasts her life before the attack on Pearl Harbor with the aftermath of the attack that changed her life and other Japanese-Americans. Mary, moreover, gives clues about how her ordinary American girl life would take a different turn and bury her worry-free memories:

After church my brother and I wished everyone a good week ahead and left for home. As we walked I studied the Bible verse I had received and repeated it until I memorized it for next Sunday. It was my last carefree morning preoccupied with all the trivial cares and worries of a sixteen-year-old American teenager. It was also the last time I fully believed I was an American. (Gruenewald ch. 1)

Matsuda gives an overall picture of how an ordinary teenage girl would spend her Sundays, reciting verses from the Bible and attending church services like her fellow American citizens. She implies that her belief of being an American would soon shatter and get her baffled about her identity and keep her away from all the things she used to do before the internment. In this way, she suggests that the internment of Japanese Americans would reinforce the racial categorization and racial bias against them as being “outsiders”. Due to the restrictions that the U.S. government held against Asians, Matsuda’s parents were forbidden to become citizens through naturalization. Matsuda and her brother Yoneichi, however, were granted their born-right citizenship. Nevertheless, being a citizen of the country would not make everything easier for them as they are aware of their race would get in the way: “We were sure our citizenship would protect us, but still, we were afraid.” (ch. 1)

Now I had a gnawing feeling of guilt—guilt for being Japanese. I didn't want to think about the possibility that now American people would consider me as the enemy. (ch.1)

As the reality unfolds, Matsuda fears that her ethnicity and race would pose a threat to herself and her ethnic group due to Japan's bombing the Pearl Harbor. Matsuda begins to feel insecure about her ethnicity and race and that it might outweigh her national American identity/citizenship. Considering the period, ethnicity was not cherished because of the overarching idea of national identity; being loyal and a model citizen for the nation. It, further on, suggests that being an American citizen would not preclude being considered as an enemy due to her race.

Matsuda finds it hard to go to school the next morning, feeling scared after Japan, where she belongs due to her parents, attacked Pearl Harbor. She seems to be developing internal hatred and assumes that everyone would hate her because even though she is an American citizen, she does not look like one. This situation causes embarrassment mixed with resentment: "I assumed that everyone was prejudiced and didn't want to have anything to do with me. In one of my classes, I began to cry as much from confusion as frustration. Crying seemed to be the only thing I could do. I thought, *I am an American yet I don't look like one. I am Japanese but ashamed that I am.*" (ch. 1)

Much to her dismay, her teachers and friends at school were not hostile against her, nor did they discriminate against her. However, this fear of the eminent and unknown future was not only a burden on herself, on the contrary, her non-Japanese friends were also fearing of what the future would hold for their friends of Japanese ethnicity:

My classmates offered their silent support, and I was grateful, but my perception had changed. Now, I felt like an outsider. Ever since the third grade, when one of the white kids called me a "Jap," I knew I was different. But still, we got along pretty well. Only now, things were not the same. (ch. 1)

Her realization that she was different from her other fellow Americans did not occur as a consequence of the Japanese attack. She was already well aware that she was different and she faced racism and name-calling before. What this tremendous attack meant for her, however, was peculiar and bore consequences. Because it did not only concern her, rather it concerned the whole Japanese minority. And her American identity was at stake because of what she looked like, not because of how well she performed as a U.S. citizen (ch. 1). Even though her parents instilled them in the notion that ‘America is made up of people from all walks of life from many countries of the world,’ and that ‘the equality of all of the people, and tolerance, are keys to living peacefully together’ (ch. 1). She could not make sense of the current turmoil that was hanging on them and she feels that her efforts of becoming a good citizen turned out not to be effective at all: “We had tried so hard to promote favorable relations between the Japanese community and our neighbors, but I assumed that all our efforts had been ruined” (ch. 1).

As the anti-Japanese propaganda arose, Matsuda started to feel insecure and turned in on herself as a result of fear of racism and what it seems like social allineation: “I began to withdraw more and more. I started to drop my eyes whenever anyone approached me. Never much of a talker, I spoke even less in those months following Pearl Harbor” (ch. 1). The growing tension and propaganda against Japanese soldiers took another form through the depiction of them in a racist way that further complicated Matsuda’s understanding of her identity:

The caricatures of Japanese soldiers featured on the covers of such widely circulated magazines as *Time* showed them as jaundiced bespectacled men with squinty, slanted eyes. They had huge, white buckteeth framed by a sardonic grin. The tiny button nose with high prominent cheekbones, and large pointed head under a miniature, grotesque military cap made the Japanese soldier look like a crazed monkey or an insane degenerate. (ch.1)

Even though she and other Japanese American citizens had nothing to do with the Pearl Harbor attack, their racial features would blame them for conspiring with the Japanese

government. It might suggest that the outside features would always yield against their inner selves as American citizens. The racial categorization of Japanese people, further on, would include other Asian groups, especially the Chinese, to compare between them and the Japanese:

The December 22, 1941 issue of *Time* magazine contained an article, “How to Tell Your Friends From the Japs.” It discussed how even an anthropologist has difficulty telling the difference between Chinese and Japanese people. Some examples were that Chinese are taller and slimmer, not as hairy, and their facial expressions are more placid, kindly, and open. (ch.1)

Matsuda implies that this must be how non-Asian American citizens think of her. Not because of what she does, or performs as a loyal citizen, but because of how she looks like. She is also well aware of the fact that she cannot do anything to change how she is perceived by her looks because it is biological and that is why she feels entrapped in her race: “I had a terrible feeling of guilt by association, but there was no way I could change my skin color, my eyes, my straight black hair, or my name. Shame and self-loathing framed my sense of myself. Yet, that’s the way it was—I looked like the enemy” (ch.1). As a result of the surrounding circumstances, Matsuda starts to show physical symptoms such as having stomach pains and lack of appetite. She also finds herself captivated by nightmares where she tries to run away even though she fails and suddenly wakes up, perspiration and in need of breathing in (ch. 1).

Even though she was Japanese by her race and ethnicity, she was also an American by her birth-right citizenship and upbringing in the United States that resulted in developing her national identity. However, this incident might have made it clear that she might have to choose between the two to exist, rather than co-exist. This widening gap in her ethnic affiliation and national identity signifies the in-betweenness of the self that would, later on, prove to be true by the internment:

Am I Japanese? Or am I American? This became the defining question I ruminated over daily. From my earliest memories, I had been both. I grew up playing hopscotch and jacks, learning *kendo* and *ikebana*. I studied U.S. history at school and Japanese on Saturday. For breakfast I ate scrambled eggs and *mochi*. Dinner could include fried chicken and sushi. I always felt that I was Japanese-American and I belonged in America, that I was part of the group. Before December 7, 1941, it never occurred to me that I was not. (ch. 1)

This in-betweenness between ethnic and national identities was not the case for their parents, the first generation of Japanese Americans, the Issei. As the Nisei were born and raised in the U.S., they were more Americanized through the assimilation by national identity, monoculturalism, which made a huge strike between their parents, given the fact that the Issei were not even the citizens: “Like many children of immigrants, Yoneichi and I often found ourselves in the awkward position of serving as translators for our parents when interacting with the larger community. Inevitably, as the second generation, the *Niseis*, we became more American through our school activities, friendships with non-Japanese students, and exposure to the media” (ch. 2). Even though they were more Americanized in their behavior and affiliation, they were, nonetheless, raised by Japanese parents, which meant that the upbringing would also harbor the Japanese way of living and its traditions and perspective of life. It is suggested that the household environment was more geared towards the Japanese ethnicity even though they hold American values as well and that sometimes it could be challenging to find the balance between the two worlds growing up:

My brother and I, with the help of the radio and all of our other outside activities, were typical American kids in many ways. Throughout childhood and our teen years, Yoneichi and I found ourselves caught between the traditions of our parents and the influences of our thoroughly American friends. As the obedient daughter, I never complained, but I

longed to go with my friends to buy candy and ice cream, or wear makeup, or go to movies and dances. (ch. 2)

One evening, Matsuda and her family received a call from one of their family friends, advising them to get rid of anything that had any tie to Japan and Japanese culture, which might be considered as proof of alliance to the Japanese government. Appalled by this, they started to look for what could be possibly taken for the Japanese. They gathered all their stuff in a box ready to set fire in the hopes that getting rid of them might secure their loyalty to the American government and would lift the “disloyal” label off them. All the family pictures, Japanese dolls, Japanese literature books, magazines were placed in the box. They recited: “‘*Gomen nasai ne*—Forgive me for what I am doing.’ ‘*Gomen nasai ne*—Forgive me for what I am doing.’” as the family pictures caught flame and got burned. This act, caused by the fear of being interned and getting labeled “disloyal” apparently resulted in removing a cultural heritage that signifies a cultural identity, the authenticity of Japanese Americans, the only reminder of their ancestral lands and background: “Each of us looked at them for a long time, noticing how delicate and perfect these dolls were in every detail. The heaviness in my chest made breathing difficult. I was powerless to stop what we had to do” (ch. 3).

Matsuda, later on, acknowledges that the decision they took to get rid of their cultural symbols and artifacts that affiliated them to Japan was out of desperation and hope that they might get away from being locked up in internment. However, those hapless attempts and efforts were in vain and proved nothing under the constitution act signed by Roosevelt. (Ch. 3) It was also in vain because they still hoped that they would be considered non-Japanese by cutting off their ethnic background, while it was the appearance and features that fueled the racism, not their performance of ethnic or national identity:

After all we have done to protect ourselves, nothing has changed. My hair was still coarse, straight, and black. My skin was yellow, and my bespectacled eyes were small and slanted. We tried to erase our

Japanese history by destroying all those precious things, but we couldn't escape from the way we looked. Nothing could change that. And in the end, all that mattered to the United States government was what we looked like. (ch. 3)

When Yoneichi told Mary and her parents that he and Mary were considered “non-alien” and her parents “aliens”, they were shaken by shock because after all Mary and Yoneichi were born in the United States and they had their birth-right citizenship, however, the government must have not cared about their national identity as they were more focused and biased against their race, or the rising Japanese/Asian sentiment: “Now, because of our Japanese heritage, we were the “non-aliens” and our parents were the “aliens.” I was puzzled by that official designation. *Aren't I a citizen? I asked myself. Why do they have to call us non-aliens? What does that mean?*” (ch. 4). The political atmosphere and the rising racism act, in a way, as a catalyzer in exploring what she is and, therefore, creates confusion about her identity. Mary implies that blaming her parents because of their Japanese ethnicity and race would be completely dishonoring, however, she seems to have thought about it because it was the reason she was not perceived as a true American citizen:

I was American in my feelings. Therefore, I felt totally unprepared for the turmoil that came from feeling American yet being punished for being born of Japanese parents. I loved and honored my parents—to blame them for my misery was consciously unacceptable, though it occurred to me in the fleeting recesses of my mind. (ch. 4)

Before Mary and her family departed for their internment, some neighbors of them said goodbye and brought food and drinks to be supportive of them during those tough moments when Japanese Americans fell into disrepute for being considered as “disloyal” because of how they looked like. Mary suggests that their non-Japanese friends and neighbors, on the contrary, have no issue with how they look, unlike the government. It might be argued that while the U.S. government had the agenda of

“melting pot”; assimilation through monoculturalism and using the national identity, for that effect, the populace, however, seem to have a more multiculturalist mindset that did not overlook the differences their fellow citizens had, on the contrary, they cherished the authenticity of each individual and learned to live unanimously in peace:

And it “confirmed what my parents had told Yoneichi and me many times: ‘This is a wonderful country to live in.’ Although my parents were from a different country, it didn’t matter to our Vashon neighbors. Their friendly welcome reinforced their assurances that tolerance and acceptance of people’s differences were real in this community.” (ch.5)

When the day came for the Japanese Americans to leave their homes and head for their internment, they were met with soldiers to accompany them from the Vashon island where they lived. However, what they saw was overwhelming because the soldiers were carrying guns and giving orders around as if they were not American citizens but solely enemies: “We all stopped. I couldn’t believe what I was seeing. *Are we going to be treated as prisoners of war and executed?*” (ch. 5). Mary makes it clear and highlights that the soldiers were acting like a body of the government, full of anger, hostility, and racism against Japanese Americans which was reflected in their speech: “‘Get outta here, you God damn Japs!’ he shouted. ‘I oughta blast your heads off’” (ch. 5). In such a moment Mary seems to think that this internment might have turned out to be good because even though her non-Japanese friends were not racists, some racists people believed what the government purports on the premise of their supposed allegiance to Japan and that it might be better to disappear from the spotlight temporarily until the hatred subsides: “*Maybe it’s a good thing we’re leaving. Maybe hysteria over the war news and the media frenzy could make it too dangerous for us to remain here. Maybe the government is trying to protect us.* I was too frightened to make any sense out of it” (ch. 5). However, this thought soon fades away when Mary faces with the reality upon seeing the internment environment, looking like a prison to hold them inside, cutting their access to the outside world: “As we entered the camp I stared at the barbed

wire. *Why is the barbed wire facing inward?* I thought. *Isn't the government putting us here for our protection?"* (ch. 6).

The internment camp also makes Mary realize something that she has never realized before that everyone here belongs to her Japanese ethnic background and they are completely secluded from the outside based on their race. She also highlights that she is not used to seeing such a big amount of Japanese people because her environment back home was mostly composed of white people:

Everywhere I looked there were hundreds of people with brown eyes, black hair, and yellow skin, just like mine. On Vashon Island where we had come from, the majority of the people were white with a generous sprinkling of Japanese, Chinese, and a few Filipino men. I had never lived in a place where everyone looked the same. (ch. 6)

While it might be expected that in an environment full of Japanese people might ease the severity of the situation due to the collective experience they are having, it causes another disappointment on the fact that all these Japanese people being locked up reminds her of the sheer fact that their race was the motive behind this governmental act on the premise of protecting the nation against another possible attack by the Japanese government. But it was also the reality and she seems to be resentful and humiliated because of what she looks like as she gets used to being around other Japanese people:

Being a part of the majority in the internment camp did not give me a feeling of well-being at all. To the contrary, it felt humiliating since our common ancestry was the reason that all of us had been rounded up against our will. I was ashamed to be part of the Japanese majority. (ch. 6)

While the trauma and confusion make people bewildered and keep their faith and hope pass away, one might expect to mourn or go against it and resist the oppression. This, however, is not the case with Mary's family or the Japanese way of

life because they show their strength and resistance through silence and acceptance of their current state as Mary's mother asserts: "Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Marysan. And because we are Japanese, we have to take this. *Shikata ga nai, desu yo*—It can't be helped, that's the way it is" (ch. 6).

The atmosphere and feeling of being locked up in prison, further on, rises when Mary wakes up early in the morning to use the bathroom and she has to go across the path to access the bathroom. However, while she is on her way, she notices a big sparkling light coming through a searchlight that the guards in the watchtowers use. Mary suggests that that light not only reveals her face but it also exposes her privacy in terms of the most basic need of humans. It might also be suggested that since she and other Japanese Americans are interned, their citizenship does not hold any value because they are conceived as disloyal citizens who must be handled and watched over for their every step, similar to prisoners:

Blinded and stunned, I felt invaded. Powerless to stop the searchlight from bearing down on me, I fled back to the barracks. The light followed me and waited at the doorway as I hid, pressing my body against the inside wall of my family's living space. Finally the searchlight resumed its automatic circuit. Shaking in the darkness I realized, *At seventeen, I am a prisoner of war in my own country.* (ch. 6)

During their internment in Tule Lake, there were all sorts of things for the Japanese Americans to enjoy and pass their time doing different activities such as playing sports, performing religious rituals, going to school, and putting on dance and musicals. One time Mary's dance instructor was asked to organize a dance event and for which Mary and her friend Ardith were chosen. Mary implies that the music soothed her and kept her close to her ethnic heritage for a while, which she was ashamed of. And it once again made her feel that maybe she did not have to pick one side and that she could live with both of her identities coexisting in her personality: "The music and the movements took me to a peaceful place where the two cultures unified for a brief time. I felt whole—Japanese by heritage and American by birth" (ch. 7). However, this

brief moment of feeling wholesome came to an end while Mary and Ardith were dancing in their kimonos when the searchlight flashed again from another watchtower. Performing two identities seemed in vain because of the prison-like environment: “I wasn’t accepted in the white community, but when I tried to be Japanese, I felt annihilated” (ch. 7). Mary implies that while in such an authentic and important moment where she finally managed to balance her identities, the sole reminder of the government, or the searchlight being a metaphor for racism put a shadow on her and made her believe that it was impossible to be both in such a monocultural system where diversity was not welcomed and racism was fueled by the government:

I dropped my eyes and froze. My legs felt heavy, my arms like a stone. I struggled to regain my composure. Vulnerability and fragility exposed my old confusion: *Am I Japanese or am I American in this barbed-wire camp, about to perform a Japanese dance?* I was chilled to the bone in the hot desert air and sick to my stomach. *Can I really do this?*. (ch. 7)

It was not until three months since the Japanese people were interned that Mary felt the urge and need to open up to her mother about how she was going through this internment and how hurtful it was for her as an American citizen, which she was tied to and all the value she put into it, which, in the end, caused her harm in terms of identity dilemma:

Instead of feeling good for having done my part and being rewarded, I feel double-crossed. I thought every American citizen was supposed to have life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That’s what we were told in school back home, but that isn’t what we have here.” (ch. 8)

What hurt most, according to Mary, was that they had to continue the national tradition of pledging allegiance to the United States as a token of loyal citizens and part of their national identity before their classes in the internment camps started. While talking to her mother, she further implies that it felt surreal and nonsense to pledge allegiance to

the U.S. flag while she and her fellow people were regarded as the enemy and thus interned:

‘We had to pledge allegiance to the American flag,’ I fumed. ‘I could see the barbed-wire fence in the background. I don’t think we should have to do that here, do you?’ I asked bitterly. Of course, there had been hundreds of times that I enthusiastically repeated the pledge back home, but we all did it without giving a thought to what it meant. (ch. 8)

Mary’s mother, after hearing her daughter’s disappointment and questioning herself, decides to tell Mary an old Japanese story in which the world of a Japanese deity is conquered and destroyed by her cruel brother and the deity goes into seclusion taking the sunshine with her and the outside world surrenders to darkness and catastrophe, however, others gods cannot take it anymore and brings music to the deity and through music and dance the deity regains her power and steps outside to fights the darkness. After this story, Mary realizes that every silver lining must indeed have a cloud and that she will be able to make sense of all of it once they are back in the outside world again. Mary suggests that through her mother’s wise choice of story and nurturing behavior, she finds hope again and that is what matters in the face of oppression and hardship:

In that moment I felt enveloped in her love, and my doubts quieted. Mama-san and her story had lifted me out of this time and terror into a world beyond war, a calm and serene world—the world of her love and hope. I took a deep breath as my anger dissipated. *Some day I will be able to see things differently*, I told myself. *We will go on*. (ch. 8)

Even though Mary finds hope and courage from time to time, she finds herself dragged in dismay and seems to not help it because of this trauma she has to undergo. It is implied that the trauma caused by the internment, which originated out of racism, keeps affecting Mary how hard she tries to subside it. It also keeps shattering her identity and hampers her to understand who she is at her core and make sense of everything going

on around her because according to her, this was not a type of living and therefore there was no future to hold on to:

There seemed no point in living. I didn't have the energy to think about the future, I just felt trapped. Imagining the time when I would get out seemed impossible. I often thought, *When will I begin a normal life again? Will I ever get to go to college? When will I have the freedom to come and go as I please?*. (ch. 8)

As Mary suffers through racism and trauma, her parents try to figure out how they can help Mary to take it easier and develop a thick skin during this experience. Mary's father, for instance also admits that it is: “‘Mary-san's first taste of *haiseki*—*prejudice*. It's a big dose to swallow all at once” (ch. 8). What they believe is that if she can get through past this, life will be easier for her if she faces other kinds of racism in the future (ch. 8). Mary's mother, on the other hand, also believes that the reason why Mary is suffering is the fact she and her husband are of Japanese origin and that the fault is theirs, not Mary's. It is suggested that even though Mary's mother herself is a first-generation immigrant and was exposed to racism more than Mary, she seems to believe that her race is the factor of this internment, not the war hysteria: “‘she is suffering so much and it's because you and I are Japanese. Mary-san had no choice in the matter. I know it does no good to look at it that way, but still, it makes my heart ache” (ch. 8). Mary's father further makes a point by comparing their life on Vashon island to other Japanese people's lives in California in terms of being a subject to racism. As their environment on Vashon island had less prejudice against Japanese people, their experience with racism was less than those Japanese people living in California because as it is implied, when people are faced with racism, they develop a defense mechanism to cope with it, which, is not the case with Mary's family:

‘It would be different if she had grown up in California where *haiseki*—prejudice by the *hakujin*—white people—is more obvious. The Japanese there got used to it and figured out how to band together for moral

support to look out for their own interests. We thought we were so lucky living on Vashon where our kids were protected. If we had lived in California, this would not be such a shock to her.’ (ch. 8)

The efforts of Mary’s parents seem to be working for Mary to have a less severe impact because of the trauma and she finds solace and supports having such caring and understanding parents. Since this experience is a collective one, she does not have to go through it alone. Their strength and stoic philosophy is what keeps them together and works a stimulation to look forward to happiness and hold on to hope for the better: “We were all in this together. Bathed in their unconditional love and respect, my fear and depression decreased. They had given me a future, a model for my life” (ch. 8). Mary also refers to their hasty act of getting rid of their cultural Japanese stuff by making a necklace out of shells as a remembrance of her experience. It could be also a metaphor for what they lost before coming to the internment camp. Even though they lost their cultural momentos, Mary attempts to create one against all the odds both to compensate for their past and also to symbolize their experience to a solid proof: “It was as though I was piercing each experience, one by one, to form a necklace of memories. Years later the shells from Tule Lake would be one of only a few mementos from my time in internment camps” (ch. 9).

Mary’s attempt to console herself and understand who she is does not follow a consistent pattern because of the situation she finds herself in surrounded by the barbed-wire fences because that constantly reminds her of her being an enemy. She also believes that even though she has done everything according to rule, and she has been a good citizen by fulfilling civic responsibilities, the fact that the U.S. government considers race more than her national identity convinces her that she will never be considered as a wholesome American because of her race:

Shame and anger kept crowding in as we faced the daily indignities of being imprisoned. These thoughts and feelings threatened to overwhelm me. I was now convinced, *America will never accept me as a full-fledged*

American. Here I was in a self-contained community that didn't feel like a community at all. More and more I felt as if I were in prison. (ch. 10)

One of the most hurtful things that happened during the time of the incarceration was probably when the WRA (War Relocation Association) decided to designate who was a loyal citizen and who was a disloyal citizen by setting up a questionnaire form that was to be filled in by the interned Japanese people. Only then the WRA would decide who could leave the camp for their education or employment outside the camp. The questionnaire meant that if they chose to answer as No-No for the two questions, it meant that there would be a punishment or a further extended incarceration time. If they answered Yes-Yes, they would be considered loyal citizens to the U.S. government. It also put the first generation of the Japanese in a bizarre position, because if they chose No-No, they would be deported back to Japan since they were not U.S. citizens. Answering Yes-Yes would be the best option not to be separated from their children and keep living in the United States, but it also meant that they would renounce their Japanese loyalty and end up being no citizen of both countries. However, it bore a possible, serious consequence for the Japanese males; if they answered Yes-Yes, they would be recruited as soldiers to possibly fight against the Japanese government, which meant that they would agree to the possibility of dying during an attack while representing and defending the United States. The questionnaire overall deepens the already torn-up identities of Mary and other internees even further by forcing them to decide on one identity and it exacerbates their trauma of the internment:

Question 28 seemed even more mysterious and sinister. I thought, *I am an American citizen. Why would I have any allegiance to the Japanese emperor? Why are they asking me that question?* It was baffling. I didn't get it. And what did these questions mean to Papa-san and Mama-san? There seemed to be something unspoken here. Are these trick questions? I began questioning the government's motives, and felt overwhelmed with dread and confusion. (ch.12)

Not only did the questionnaire forced them to choose between their ancestral country and the country they are living in, but it also caused in-group conflicts and polarization among the Japanese internees as Mary tells. Some groups formed to go against the internees who opted for Yes-Yes and threatened them, and interestingly they were more concerned about their Japanese fellows who lived in the Northwestern because they were also aware of the fact that those fellows had a calmer and accepting environment with their white fellow citizens and therefore they would choose Yes-Yes. Japanese people who would choose Yes-Yes were also afraid of being labeled “inu” meaning betrayer. This would further seriously damage the collective Japanese group, resulting in separation and causing altercations. Mary implies that this fact made it extra harder for them because this time they were facing to be the “other” and being ostracized by their people of the same origin, on top of the U.S. government:

I had never been so terrified in my life. Suddenly I was hated not just by my government but by other Japanese-Americans. *Why?* I thought. *Just being from Washington State makes them think my family and I are disloyal to our own kind. This is totally insane.* (ch. 12)

Just like the Issei, the Nisei were also obedient to the government or authority. So, protesting or opposing the government was never an option. They valued being a good citizen of the country they lived in and worked diligently to fulfill their civic duties. As a result, they had to accept this situation and their internment and go through it even though it was hurting and traumatizing. It was shared by all the Japanese people interned in the camps and it has become a cultural memory. A cultural memory where they were stripped of their privacy, rights, and their voice because of what they look like and because of the racism against Asian people:

The sudden loss of all these rights forced me to realize that this whole mass movement against the Japanese in America was the culmination of more than a halfcentury of anti-Asian prejudice. And no one, not even the highest court in the land, the Supreme Court, would defend us. The

clear message to me was that we did not deserve to be in the world because we were different. And because we were different, we must also be bad. (ch.12)

Throughout her negotiation of identity, Mary also mentions about the time she first realized she was different from her other friends on the fact that she was Japanese and how her friends took a distance once one of her friends called her a “Jap”: “I remembered the first time I knew I was different. A blonde girl in the third grade pointed a finger at me, curled her lips into a snarl and said, ‘You’re a Jap.’ All my playmates stared at me and drifted away” (ch. 12). To her luck, her mom was there to comfort her by assuring her that those people were making such comments to make them feel superior and better without thinking how it would break someone’s heart. As Mary suggests, that comforting worked out and she was able to let it go. Little did she know back then was that such a commentary about her would take a much more enormous form that would end up in interning all the Japanese people: “That blonde girl would be replaced by a far more powerful individual, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt who, through Executive Order 9066, made the decision that took away my world and the life that I had known and loved” (ch. 12). Deciding by answering the questionnaire was a hard pill to swallow for her in regards to her identity. It seems like her negotiation of identity was thrown on the table and was made legit by a governmental paper, which made her decide immediately who she really was or whom she could pose as who she was. Mary implies that she actually wanted to say No-No to oppose the government and authority but as it was not the case for her and her family because of the way they were raised, she was hesitant to do so. She also wanted to make sure if her future would be better had she chosen to answer Yes-Yes. This negotiation, further fueled by the questionnaire put her in a dilemma and trap: “As my family awaited my decision, still I hesitated. Although I knew “Yes Yes” was the right choice, it broke my heart. It felt like giving in to the bully in the schoolyard” (ch. 12).

It is implied that Mary eventually realizes there is no other way to get out of the camp besides answering Yes-Yes and she thinks as long as she can be with her family, it does not matter to her whether she is betraying her ethnic origin or cannot protest

against the U.S. government because the only reality she has is her family, who makes sure that Mary is not alone and that they will stand by her no matter what, which causes a sense of belongingness: “*They were my country. Each one looked at me with kind eyes and with a slight bow of their heads, they each acknowledged me and my place as a full member of this family*” (ch. 12). This realization and acceptance of the harsh conditions transforms herself and impedes her to take a huge step within herself to challenge her and she starts to act and think like a grown-up: “‘I’d like to look back and remember that, in the middle of this crisis, I was able to see my family take everything that was happening and use it all to help me grow up.’ In that moment, with their patience and love, I became an adult” (ch. 13).

After some time when the U.S. attacked Japan, bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the atom bombs, Mary felt like a part of her identity shattered which made her feel like she was no longer an American, for a short period, but she was Japanese because of the horrific event. However, she also makes it clear that since the U.S. government won the war, she kind of felt proud as an American citizen but her Japanese side was in great anguish: “when I saw the pictures of Japanese people burned and charred by the atomic blast, I was heartbroken for them. I was an American by birth, but at that moment, I was Japanese.... My tears were a mix of relief and anguish. Even though a part of me was glad the United States won the war, the Japanese part of me was speechless with grief and horror” (ch. 16). Here, Mary seems to have formed a dual identity both as an American and Japanese, and these identities are fluid in themselves because when something bad happens concerning one of her identities, one of them rises on the surface, causing the other one to subside and vice versa. Especially after what she has been through as a Japanese American; she seems to handle dreadful life challenges adultly, and acts and reacts accordingly.

Mary asserts that she returned to Minidoka in 2004 after sixty years since she left the internment camp to attend a pilgrimage by previous internees and their family members to the internment sites with the Nisei and Sansei around the United States. Her return made her previous experiences and trauma relived once again however this time she knew she would not be incarcerated again. During the pilgrimage, she talks to other Niseis and Sanseis to hear about their experiences and talk about their experience as

Japanese Americans. One afternoon she sits at a table to have lunch with other Japanese Americans and she starts talking with some Nisei women and two women from Japan. She mentions that she has never been to Japan and she does not have any interest in doing so. Her reticent statement causes looks and questions from other Japanese Americans, upon which Mary explains that: “some years ago a *Nisei* friend of mine had taken a group of physicians and pathologists to Japan. Because he looked like a Japanese citizen, he was publicly ridiculed because he did not speak the language “properly.” ‘I have never forgotten that,’ I said. ‘I am not willing to put myself into that position’” (Ch. 19). Here Mary implies that even though she looks Japanese, she does not know how to speak Japanese and she is much more assimilated into American culture and she is afraid of being labeled “disloyal” once again, this time not by the white society, but by her native land and ethnic origin and getting rejected of the Japanese society. Her past experiences and trauma keep her from exploring her native land and seems to put an obstacle of who she is inside and outside, which causes her not to achieve her ethnic identity completely.

Mary mentions, in the afterword, that the Nisei started to express their stories openly only after the 1990s and that some of them still find it difficult to go back in time and tell their experiences to the world. She, moreover, underscores how the third generation, Sanseis, found it unbelievable that their parents did not fight back against the government, asking ““Why didn’t you fight back?”” or ““Why did you go like sheep to be slaughtered without any resistance?”” (Gruenewald). These questions, as Mary tells, are what triggered her to open up and talk about this awful part of U.S. history. She also thinks that telling her story is especially important after the United States faced terrorist attacks. She hopes that history will not repeat itself by interning other people under such treats based on their ethnicity.

All in all, Mary portrays her unique yet sorrowful experience growing up as an ethnic minority in the United States and being a victim of racism and assimilation. She explains that the evacuation and internment happened to get in the way while she was already struggling with her identity and the treatment of the U.S. government during World War II made it extremely difficult to develop a healthy achieved ethnic identity. On the contrary, it has caused Mary to bury her ethnic identity to look more loyal as an

American citizen because that was the only way to survive during those times. However, her pilgrimage to the previous internment sites and getting acquainted with other survivors and family members of the internment experience made her question herself about who she really is: “This lunchtime discussion inspired me to begin to change my thinking and explore more of my life, especially the part of me that is Japanese. It has taken me sixty years to come to terms with who I am. The country of my ancestors is no longer my enemy” (ch. 19). Mary makes it clear that it took her sixty years to achieve her ethnic identity finally and she feels like she no longer holds resentment neither to Japan nor the U.S. Her experience and trauma being a minority in American society might have caused her to have a hard time compared to what people from other races or ethnic origins have to go through. However, it has also made her stronger and showed her what it takes to reinvent and accept her authentic side and figure out who she really is so that she can live a somewhat more balanced life, cherishing her both identities and live at ease.

3.1.2. *Farewell to Manzanar*

Farewell to Manzanar (1973) tells the story of the Japanese American experience during World War II and the internment of Japanese Americans from the perspective of Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston who was only 7 years old back then when she, her papa, mama, and older brothers, Bill and Woody were relocated at the Manzanar camp in California, leaving their home back in Santa Monica. As Jeanne grows up and perceives her surroundings, her narration also changes. She reflects her insecurities, doubts, grief, and confusion about her ethnic and national identities/affiliations from different stages of her age. Her discourse and rhetoric account for her confrontation against the racist and ideological act of the U.S. government and illuminate this dark part of U.S. history, countering against the injustice they had received. Jeanne, furthermore, gives a full description of the living conditions at the internment camps. She also divides her narration into three the first one pre-internment, during-internment, and post-internment. The last chapter explains the motive behind the title of the memoir in detail.

Houston states, in the foreword that, it has taken her twenty-five years to talk about her internment experience. The more she talked about the more she realized this book would not only be about their experience at the camp but it would also shed a light on how it affected her and her family psychologically. This narrative, moreover, helped her make sense of her past and get closure: “Writing it has been a way of coming to terms with the impact these years have had on my entire life” (Houston).

When Jeanne was born, her family was living in Inglewood where her father was busy making a living out of fishing. It was only later that they moved to Ocean Park near Santa Monica. As Jeanna explains they were the only Japanese-American family living there (Houston ch. 2). She also implies that her father was very content with this fact as he did not wish to be in any specific group or labeled through his ethnicity (ch. 2). However, when Jeanne’s father was arrested accused of selling oil to Japanese ships, her mother decided to move down to Terminal Island where she felt safer because they were not the only Japanese family living there unlike in the Ocean Park. And as Jeanne asserts, it was the first time that she lived together with other Japanese people and that gave her angst all the time (ch. 2). This explanation seems rather odd given the fact that she must have felt safer around other Japanese people, however, her upbringing in a racially isolated environment must have had a huge impact on Jeanne in a way as if something would have been bound to happen because of living as a group or being labeled belonging to a certain ethnic group. What surprises most is that her father would reprimand his children saying: “‘I’m going to sell you to the Chinaman’” to discipline them when they acted naughtily (ch. 2). This kind of fear took a toll when Jeanna started kindergarten and sat next to a Caucasian having a little bit of Asian appearance to her:

I was the only Asian in the class. They sat me next to a Caucasian girl who happened to have very slanted eyes. I looked at her and began to scream, certain Papa had sold me out at last. My fear of her ran so deep I could not speak of it, even to Mama, couldn’t explain why I was screaming. For two weeks I had nightmares about this girl, until the teachers finally moved me to the other side of the room. And it was still

with me, this fear of Asian faces, when we moved to Terminal Island.
(ch. 2)

This depiction of the fear of Asian people, even though she is of Asian race, seems a bit contradictory at first, given the fact that the sole reason for the Internment was mainly due to the increasing racism against Japanese people. However, as it could be inferred from the upbringing of Jeanne, it is understandable that both her Father's threat and isolated growing up might have conjured up the image of Asian people in her mind and that it became a subject to be feared because she felt more secure in a majorly Caucasian environment. It can be also concluded that this is a foreboding of what would happen in the future concerning her race and ethnicity.

It is not until they moved to a minority town called Boyle Heights during the speculation that there might be an internment camp to keep Japanese people in that Jeanne encountered racism for the first time after she had been enrolled in a local school, explaining that her teacher was quite reserved and distant towards Jeanna and that she would never help Jeanne out with her homework or a subject that she could not really understand:

This was the first time I had felt outright hostility from a Caucasian. Looking back, it is easy enough to explain. Public attitudes toward the Japanese in California were shifting rapidly. In the first few months of the Pacific war, America was on the run. Tolerance had turned to distrust and irrational fear. The hundred-year-old tradition of anti-Asian sentiment on the West Coast soon resurfaced, more vicious than ever. Its result became clear about a month later, when we were told to make our third and final move. (ch. 2)

It can be concluded that the Caucasians started to act differently than usual towards Japanese people because of the ongoing war and after the Pearl Harbor attack. Even though Japanese Americans had nothing to do with it, the public and the government

felt the need to blame someone for that act and Japanese Americans might have seemed to be the easiest target for them to project their racism covered in military necessity.

After they were incarcerated at the camp, Jeanne mentioned the living conditions and the experience of what they went through. One of the most prominent effects other than identity was the fact that her family began to shatter especially their traditions as a family such as having meals together but now it was almost impossible to have a family meal because everyone was around somewhere and had to eat by themselves: “Before Manzanar, mealtime had always been the center of our family scene... Now, in the mess halls, after a few weeks had passed, we stopped eating as a family. Mama tried to hold us together for a while, but it was hopeless” (ch. 5).

Jeanne also mentions how her family as a whole slowly faded away and lost their pre-war way of living, worth, and self-esteem because of living en masse and the way they were perceived by the government. Adding that they did not completely recover from this trauma after the internment ended, it took many years to come together as a family especially after Jeanne’s father passed away (ch. 5).

Jeanne further mentions how the lives of the Issei and the Nisei collided at the internment camp. It is observable that both the generations experienced the internment differently and authentically because of their background and notions about life, country, nation, and belonging: “It helps me understand how Papa’s life could end at a place like Manzanar. He didn’t die there, but things finished for him there, whereas for me it was like a birthplace. The camp was where our lifelines intersected” (ch. 6). As the first generation of Japanese people immigrated from Japan, they brought their culture and tradition together with them and started to adapt to the American society and culture as much as they could do so. Their pattern might have ended up in acculturation while at the same time belonging to their ethnicity and home culture. However, the second generation was born in the United States and they were U.S. citizens by birthright and they all were educated in American schools by the American Education which meant that they were molded by the American, white, caucasian ideals and order. It could be also added that the melting pot theory paved its way to give everyone the same American identity without embracing or cherishing the differences that each immigrant harbored within themselves. Additionally, their national identity proved by

their birthright citizenship might have made them feel like they belonged to two different worlds, unlike their first-generation parents. It could be deduced, from this fact, that the internment affected the second generation more than it did to the first generation because their national identity was at stake and it did not protect them. Their ethnic identity outweighed more in the eyes of the government. The internment might have woken up the second generation, the molded American citizens, to realize that even though they were American citizens and how hard they tried to perform their national identity, their racial and ethnic background would win it all the time.

Jeanne goes on to express that the time they spent in the internment camp at Manzanar made life monotonous and dull knowing that they cannot go out to the outer world and all they have is the reality of the inside. As a coping mechanism she purports that they learned how to control their anger and cope with distress by simply going with the flow of the life inside the camp and remembering their lives before the internment:

The fact that America had accused us, or excluded us, or imprisoned us, or whatever it might be called, did not change the kind of world we wanted. Most of us were born in this country; we had no other models. Those parks and gardens lent it an Asian character, but in most ways it was a totally equipped American small town, complete with schools, churches, Boy Scouts, beauty parlors, neighborhood gossip, fire and police departments, glee clubs, softball leagues, Abbott and Costello movies, tennis courts, and traveling shows. (ch. 12)

As Jeanne mentions, even though the U.S. government imprisoned its own citizens on the basis of their race and ethnicity, there is no other form of life for them to contemplate just because they are imprisoned as the whole Japanese community. After all, they still desire the way they were raised around the Americanized environment with their culture, entertainment, and fun because it is part of their identity.

Having passed already 2 years, the Japanese internees found out about the imminent closing of the internment camps within 12 months, thanks to the Mitsue Endo case, which called forth the rightful decision of releasing American citizens regardless

of their race, Jeanne and her family began to ponder about how they would fit in the American society after what had happened. They were mainly anxious about how society would welcome them, or not. If they would hate them or prejudice them as Jeanne mentions: “Three years of wartime propaganda – racist headlines, atrocity movies, hate slogans, and fright-mask posters – had turned the Japanese face into something despicable and grotesque” (ch. 16). Jeanne also mentions about the time they spent at the internment camps caused the gap between the Japanese race and other races to increase, which made the Japanese look more marginalized than ever (ch. 16). It could be said that while the internment of the Japanese by the government caused Japanese Americans to feel stuck between their identities and forced them to figure out who they are, caused, in a wider perspective, the American society to think of them negatively and fueled the racism.

After hearing out the experiences of some Japanese resettling on the east coast gave the other interned Japanese and Jeanne a hard lump to swallow. It was about some gossips about possible physical abuse and racism towards the Japanese. These speculations, undoubtedly, must have affected Jeanne in a way that her perception or the image she had of the “outside world” began to shatter and changed form: “I would listen to the stories and I would cringe. And this was both odd and confusing to me, because ever since we’d arrived, the outside world had loomed in my imagination as someplace inaccessible yet wonderfully desirable.... ..” (ch. 16). Jeanne was also worried about her future because of the uncertainty that life would hold for them. Even though she was not scared of the physical abuse or even wouldn’t want to believe such an act would happen to her ethnicity, she still felt nervous deep inside her (ch. 16). In such unprecedented times, it must have been impossible to imagine how they would continue living their lives after the internment would end as if nothing had happened. What Jeanne felt most was the internal guilt that Jeanna explains as:

It was the humiliation. That continuous, unnamed ache I had been living with was precise and definable now. Call it the foretaste of being hated. I knew ahead of time that if someone looked at me with hate, I would have to allow it, to swallow it, because something in me, something about me

deserved it. At ten I saw that coming, like a judge's sentence, and I would have stayed inside the camp forever rather than step outside and face such a moment. (Ch. 16)

It is understandable why Jeanne feels like she is the one to blame for what happened. She believes that because of her race and ethnicity, it was fair how they would be treated as an enemy even though the second generations held also American citizenship. Even though Jeanne and other interned Japanese had nothing to do with choosing their race, It could be also inferred that accepting the reality about the hostility towards the Japanese seems to cause them to develop guilt feelings about who they are and exacerbate their trauma even further. And to prevent this she seems to think, at such a young age, that she would get away with the racism and the hardships she would have to face in the outside world were she to keep living in the internment camp.

What aggravated the in-betweenness position and feeling even further was the unfortunate bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Even though the United States might have seemed to take her revenge, it took a toll on the innocent Japanese people which seems to have affected Japanese Americans directly as well because as much as they belonged to the United States, they also belonged to Japan, Jeanne explains that the bombing of Hiroshima brought forward another significant milestone in their lives after the bombing of Pearl Harbor: "This was strange, as awesome, as mysteriously unnerving as Pearl Harbor had been. And in the same way that the first attack finished off one period in our lives, so this appalling climax marked the end of another" (ch. 17). Jeanne seems to suggest that while Pearl Harbor had them imprisoned in their birth country, proving their American citizenship would not protect them because of their race, the Hiroshima bombing seems to have caused their Japanese identity to diminish in the eyes of other Americans. Jeanne further relieves that: "At least we were no longer *the enemy*. But the atomic bombing, if anything, just sharpened our worry" (ch. 17). Even though the Hiroshima bombing affected the Japanese Americans psychologically, it also worked out in a way that the Japanese Americans would no longer be considered an enemy as they hoped despite their concern.

Later, it becomes clear that what they feared about the outside world was in vain, at least to Jeanne. What they thought, during their internment, about the racism and physical attacks on the Japanese seem to be only imagination and rumor. Rather, no one seemed to care about it as Jeanne explains: “In our isolated world we had overprepared for shows of abuse. If anything, what greeted us now was indifference. Indeed, if the movements of this city were an indication, the very existence of Manzanar and all it had stood for might be in doubt” (ch. 19). Regardless of their fears and worries, there seems to be nothing grave posed on the Japanese about a physical attack or direct racism. Jeanne seems to be content about the indifference of people towards the Japanese, hoping that it would skip her past. However, when Jeanne restarts school, she finds herself in a very bizarre position when one of her friends get astonished by Jeanne’s English skills after she has read a part out loud from a book: “When I finished, a pretty blond girl in front of me said, quite innocently, ‘Gee, I didn’t know you could speak English.’ She was genuinely amazed. I was stunned. How could this have even been in doubt?” (ch. 20). Here, it seems that even though Jeanne hoped and realized people would not care, her biggest fear found her in the classroom. Once again she seems to notice that her appearance would stand in the way regardless of how well she can speak English or how a loyal American citizen she is. Jeanne also implies that her Japanese features will always make it harder for her to be considered as a full American citizen. According to Jeanne, this racist experience that she had as a child was the first true one that proved how her race and ethnicity would cause such misunderstanding, racism, and ostracization in her life:

It isn’t difficult, now, to explain her reaction. But at age eleven, I couldn’t believe anyone could think such a thing, say such a thing about me, or regard me in that way. I smiled and sat down, suddenly aware of what being of Japanese ancestry was going to be like. I wouldn’t be faced with physical attack, or with overt shows of hatred. Rather, I would be seen as someone foreign, or as someone other than American, or perhaps not be seen at all. (ch. 20)

This internal acceptance of being someone else rather than an American or being nothing at all seems to cast Jeanne away from exploring her identities and forming a stable one. It can be said that encountering racism from her American fellow citizens, further on, marginalizes Jeanne and causes her not to develop both her ethnic and national identities healthily. Interestingly, Jeanne claims that she could not quite fathom the real reason why they interned other than the casualty of the war between Japan and the United States, she also mentions that she did not frankly question the core reason during the time she spent at the internment camp, but this racist encounter at the school must have answered the real reason why Japanese people were interned in the first place: “But now I’d reached an age where certain instant knowledge that brought with it first buds of true shame” (ch. 20). As a result of this, Jeanne asserts that she deep down wished to be invisible by other people as a way of escaping racism towards her because of what she looks like, which is what causes her to get attention and glances. Jean also states explicitly that their race was the reason for the internment of 110,000 people (ch. 20). Moreover, she mentions the built-up racist perception of Asians in the United States over time, which actually caused the Asian people to believe that they deserved such appalling treatment from White people and it was a common belief shared by all Asian people: “It’s an attitude easy for nonwhites to acquire in America. I had inherited it. Manzanar had conformed it. And my feeling, at eleven, went something like this: you are going to be invisible anyway, so why not completely disappear” (ch. 20). Here, Jeanne admits that the internment of the Japanese people and the time she spent at Manzanar was tangible proof of the racism against them. While Jeanne seems to want to be invisible from the public sphere, a part of her does not comply with it, because she feels like she has to try and confirm that she was much like everybody else in the United States regardless of what she looks like and that people should not be astonished upon hearing her speak English like a native speaker because she is a native English speaker after all: “From that day forward I lived with this double impulse: the urge to disappear and the desperate desire to be acceptable” (ch. 20). These contradictory and binary notions of having oneself accepted by the majority regardless of her race, and the wish to be invisible could mean that both her ethnic and national identities coexist in her personality and they seem to be at war with each other from time to time depending on

the reaction she gets from white people, which undoubtedly could make it harder for her to develop a whole identity for the time being.

Contrary to her expectations, however, Jeanne finds out that her ethnic background would not cause her to be ostracized by other people depending on the situations as she explains: “I soon learned there were certain areas I was automatically allowed to perform in: scholarship, athletics, and school-time activities like the yearbook, the newspaper, and student government” (ch. 20). This, unfortunately, would not mean that she could perform freely on other social events for what she really is, such as being invited to a friend’s house, which was not welcomed well due to some obscure conventions. And as a result of this, as Jeanne asserts, she had to accept this half-freedom imposed on her as a child, which seems to her now as an adult, quite exasperating: “If refused by someone’s parents, I would never say ‘Go to hell!’ or ‘I’ll find other friends’, or ‘Who wants to come to your house anyway?’ I would see it as my fault, the result of my failings. I was imposing a burden on them” (ch. 20). Once again Jeanne elucidates that the acceptance of her racially discriminated subject position and her insufficient power of yielding to it lead to the internalization of racism. However, there are some times that she feels like she needs to conquer to perform and be visible apart from school activities so that her platform where she can freely be who she is could expand: “I wanted to declare myself in some different way, and – old enough to be marked by the internment but still too young for the full impact of it to cow me – I wanted in” (ch. 20). It seems apparent that Jeanne actually wants to be recognized as much as any other American citizen is and tries so hard to achieve that because getting accepted, considering such turbulent times, must have been the only way to exist and also find a balance between her identities.

One of the areas she wanted to conquer, as Jeanne explains, was the Girls Scouts. She finds out that the classmate who commented on Jeanne’s English reading skills, Radin, was actually a member of the Girls Scouts. Jeanne, hoping to get a yes, asked her if it would matter for her to join the Scouts considering the fact that she is Japanese. Her friend, on the other hand, had no idea whether it would be a problem or not. However, she suggests that she could ask her mother as her mother is an assistant leader in the Girls Scout. The next day she finds out that Radin’s mother stood in the

way because of Jeanne's race, which made Jeanne furious (ch. 20). However, Jeanne also mentions how she got closer with Rodin and how her white friends tried to do their best to support and defend Jeanne in any unwanted and unpleasant moments as Jeanne talks about Radine: "She felt obliged to protect me. She would catch someone staring at me as we walked home from school and she would growl, 'What are *you* looking at? *She's* an American citizen. She's got as much right as anybody to walk around on the street!'" (ch. 20). This act and reaction of Radine in an attempt to defend Jeanne might have been quite delighting and acknowledgeable, which might have caused her to feel like her American identity and citizenship were actually confirmed by a white and even was shout out to other passersby. It was apparently an initiative and brave reaction which Jeanne would not have been able to perform herself because of the trauma and racism she encountered, which Jeanne explains as:

I would much rather have ignored those looks than challenged them. At the same time I wondered why my citizenship had to be so loudly affirmed, and I couldn't imagine why affirming it would really make any difference. (If so, why hadn't it kept me out of Manzanar?) But I was grateful when Radine stuck up for me. (ch. 20)

Here, Jeanne explicitly asserts and questions why her Americanness/American identity would have to be announced and confirmed because after all she still looks Japanese and that confirming her American identity would not change a thing about her race. Jeanne seems perfectly aware of the fact that citizenship and race had never been crossed paths and have always been binary oppositions for monocultural societies. After all, during those years multiculturalism was not around, which meant that cherishing and celebrating one's ethnicity and culture was unthinkable because of the monoculturalism and the notion of the melting pot that meant for every new immigrant to get into a shape in one, same form. The melting pot notion might have caused the acculturation to and upbringing of immigrants into the American society and culture, it, nevertheless, did not save Jeanne and other Japanese Americans from racism and discrimination.

There is also, as Jeanne explains, a boy Scouts for dads and their sons which resembles a fraternity whereas the Girl Scouts resemble a sorority. The Boy Scouts, as explained, found it entertaining and lovely to watch Girl Scouts practicing in their short and tight outfits in front of them, which Jeanne elaborates on as something erotic and found it inexplicable back then: “At that age I was too young to consciously use my sexuality or to understand how an Asian female can fascinate Caucasian men, and of course far too young to see that even this is usually just another form of invisibility” (ch. 20). Throughout the memoir, this is the first time Jeanne talks about her sexuality in a way that is linked to her ethnicity and identity. Jeanne, moreover, implies that it was not until she grew up that she understood how she could have actually used her sexuality to her advantage so that she could be admired and possibly get accepted by non-Japanese men as she further explains how sexual objectification is linked to her internment trauma: “It simply happened that the attention I first gained as a majorette went hand in hand with a warm reception from the Boy Scouts and their fathers, and from that point on I knew intuitively that one resource I had to overcome the war-distorted limitations of my race would be my femininity” (ch. 20). It is apparent here that her trauma of the internment that caused her negotiation of identity, as Jeanne believed, could be alleviated at one point by her sexuality, as Jeanne believed, and the objectification of Asian females in the eyes of white men which is apparently a way of being invisible as a Japanese as she suggests, or a way to shadow her ethnicity by highlighting her sexuality in an attempt to look like someone who could be worth to be perceived and affirmed.

Another area to conquer or a platform where she could perform without barriers for Jeanne during her negotiation of identities was to become Miss America. Much to her dismay, however, her father was not supportive of this desire as Jeanne explains:

It was a pride that Papa didn't share. While I was striving to become Miss America of 1947, he was wishing I'd be Miss Hiroshima of 1904. He would counsel me on the female graces, as he understood them, on the need to conceal certain parts of the body, on the gaudiness of smiling

too much. But his tastes could not compete with the pull from the world outside our family. (ch. 20)

It is understandable why her father did not share the same perspective as her daughter, Jeanne. For one, her father was an Issei which meant that their race and ethnicity of the origin country was how they identified themselves, and they were not born or raised in the American culture and society, for that reason his perception shaped by Japanese culture, ideals and values did not align with that of American culture. Secondly, it could also be a result of how the U.S. government treated Japanese Americans, causing him to believe that she would never be accepted thoroughly as an American so there was no point in becoming a Miss American while she could easily be Miss Hiroshima without having to defend herself for her identity, for what she is.

Apart from the alcoholism problem of her father, this clash of ideas about being Miss America or Miss Hiroshima had another huge impact on the relationship she had with her father because, as Jeanne asserts, he either refused to attend for the occasions where Jeanne participated or the times he agreed to attend for other occasions he saw fit where he distressed Jeanne and filled her with shame (ch. 20). One example of it was when Jeanne took part in a dinner party that was organized for the scholarship society and where her parents attended wearing their best costumes, as Jeanne elaborates on it as “overdressed” (ch. 20). She also mentions that it was the first time and occasion where her parents got together and spoke to Caucasian after they had left the internment. The most bizarre and unwanted scene was when Jeanne’s father went up to the principal to meet and greet him, in a way that threw Jeanne off:

He pressed his palms together at his chest and gave them a slow, deep, Japanese bow from the waist. They received this with a moment of careful, indecisive silence. He was unforgivably a foreigner then, foreign to them, foreign to me, foreign to everyone but Mama, who sat next to him smiling with pleased modesty. Twelve years old at the time, I wanted to scream. I wanted to slide out of sight under the table and dissolve. (ch. 20)

Considering her age at the time it is understandable why Jeanne became ashamed of her father's bow to a Caucasian. Ever since the internment, Jeanne had been struggling with belonging and having herself accepted by American society. Even though she was able to perform her Japanese side/identity at home, she could not perform as an American citizen out in the world. One of the ways she figured out to be confirmed by the Caucasian was acting and behaving like any other Caucasian American. As Jeanne implies, however, her father's gesture with the bowing revealed a part of the identity that she has been keeping in the depths of her. It was with the aim that the outside world would not perceive her completely Japanese, something other than American as she was already aware of the fact that she looked like Japanese, but if she could hide all the socio-cultural tags and traditions that would link Jeanne to her ethnic origin, she could be accepted easily as Jeanne clearly remarks by shouting out using all her letters in capitals: "THAT BOW WAS FROM THE WORLD I WANTED OUT of" (ch. 21).

The world that she wanted, Jeanne mentions further on, was that of Radine. She explains the similarity that Radine and herself shared was the economic background of their families; Radine's family were poor white people from Texas while Jeanne's parents were poor immigrants that lived on the money her father made from fishing. As time passed by, they formed quite a close friendship where they both saw the world from the same perspective and differences were not as sharp as they would turn out to be when their future would separate into their own paths when they started high school (ch. 21). Already felt indignant because of not having accepted to join the Girls Scouts, Jeanne elaborates on how easy it was for Radine to move up the ladder in society especially in scholarly practices and in social life:

She was asked to join high school sororities. The question of whether or not I should be asked was never even raised. The boys I had crushes on would not ask me out. They would flirt with me in the hallways or meet me after school, but they would ask Radine to the dances, or someone like Radine, someone they could safely be *seen* with. (ch. 21)

She makes a point by how her friend, Radine, did not even feel the need to ask for something in order for her to participate in something because it was like a silver spoon in her mouth for Radine, she did not have to fight for her identity to be confirmed whereas Jeanne would have to ask to participate in these kinds of events because the society would not include her because of what she looks like as Jeanne implies. Another poignant fact Jeanne makes clear is that how boys would find it easier to ask Radine out whereas they would not dare do so when it came to Jeanne because of what the society would think of them if they were to be seen with a Japanese girl. Here once again, Jeanne explains how her looks, her race, made it harder for her to fully function in American society and caused her to fall short on such simple, humane feelings, and experiences.

The next distressing fact for Jeanne was how Radine became a song girl, which was tremendously a big thing during those days according to Jeanne, for her school while she knew that she would never become a song girl because it was unimaginable for a Nisei student considering the fact that even to be chosen as a majorette for the school marching band would cause many problems (ch. 21). However, Jeanne explains how she insisted to have a chance for this big occasion because after all, she had already managed to become the first Asian majorette for the Girls Scouts. Determined, she went up to the band teacher to ask to join. Although the band teacher knew how experienced Jeanne was compared to other contestants, he still had to ask about it because no Asian student had ever been chosen to represent the school by becoming a song girl. Jeanne also makes it clear how she learned to be apologetic towards the ones who decided whether it was possible for her to take part in such events (ch. 21). Jeanne also describes how these social events actually dispatched her from Radine knowing that they were once best friends and treated almost like the same, which now took another direction as they grew up, causing Jeanne to feel bitter for the discrimination she had to experience:

This sort of treatment did not discourage me. I was used to it. I expected it, a condition of life. What demoralized me was watching Radine's success. We had shared everything, including all the values I'd learned from the world I wanted into, not only standards of achievement but

ideas about how a girl should look and dress and talk and act, and ideas of male beauty—which was why so many of the boys I liked were Caucasian. (ch. 21)

From these words, it seems that Jeanne has developed accepted inferiority because of her race and ethnic background because of all the discrimination, racism, and inequality she has had to go through in American society. She makes it clear that she was molded as an American because of the environment where she grew up and learned the Caucasian way of life and values since her birth. It, however, did not make a difference for the advantage of Jeanne because of the monoculturalism and racism of the U.S. government as well as of the American society. Another social platform where she found it unbearably difficult to perform was the dating life. Influenced by the American society and culture, she apparently developed a liking to only Caucasian men because after all that was what the majority of the Caucasian girls desired and that was the world Jeanne would want to be welcomed into. As mentioned above, while boys did not want to be seen with a Japanese girl, she explains how she also never made an attempt to talk to Caucasian boys fearing what her father would say and how he would react because, as Jeanne details:

That would mean coming to Cabrillo Homes to pick me up, and the very thought of one of his daughters dating a Caucasian would have started Papa raving. He would have chased the fellow across the grass. This was my dilemma. Easy enough as it was to adopt white American values, I still had a Japanese father to frighten my boyfriends and a Japanese face to thwart my social goals. (ch. 21)

It is evident that while she has to fight so hard to be confirmed by the Caucasian world, she also has to fight against her father. Since her father would never accept the fact that her own daughter would date a Caucasian boy, it marginalizes Jeanne further and leaves her in a dilemma between the two worlds. Acknowledging the fact that she was raised to be an American, her background was still that of Japanese and her race was the main

factor causing her a complicated and challenging life she has already had and will have ahead of her. It is also a description of how different world the Issei and Nisei have, and how these two generations separated from each other, developing a generational gap due to their values, environment, and upbringings. This gap is also another determinant causing the dilemma for Jeanne because after all, what she desires and envies most about is that her friend Radine, much like any other Caucasian, do not have to be in a dilemma for their identities and fight for it as Jeanne asserts: “I never wanted to change my face or to be someone other than myself. What I wanted was the kind of acceptance that seemed to come so easily to Radine” (ch. 21). Jeanne makes it clear that she has no problems with her appearance itself, what puzzles and saddens her is the fact that her face causes such hardships in a majority Caucasian country where no other ethnicities did not find a chance to be cherished yet. It is safe to claim that her identity negotiation is mostly caused by the social hindrance for her to perform in all areas of life, which is caused by racism and equality that was supposed to include everyone regardless of their race. Jeanne, further, talks about how this experience has haunted her even to her adulthood causing her to feel appalled and desperate:

To this day I have a recurring dream, which fills me each time with a terrible sense of loss and desolation. I see a young, beautifully blond and blue-eyed high school girl moving through a room full of others her own age, much admired by everyone, men and women both, myself included, as I watch through a window. I feel no malice toward this girl. I don't even envy her. Watching, I am simply emptied, and in the dream I want to cry out, because she is something I can never be, some possibility in my life that can never be fulfilled. (ch. 21)

It is surprising that she still has a dream where she is remembered by her memories of the past inequality, discrimination, and racism that outcasted, ostracized her from the mainstream culture and society because of her race. The white girl with blue eyes she sees in her dream, as she implies, is an encapsulated symbol of what she would have accomplished in her life, and all the positive attraction she would have received from

other people, making her feel confirmed and part of the culture she was born into, rather than being marginalized because of her racial and ethnic background in the past. The context of the dream, as Jeanne highlights, was perpetuated because of the post-effects of the internment trauma and her experience being a Japanese American during such tumultuous war times:

It is a schoolgirl's dream, one I tell my waking self I've long since outgrown. Yet it persists. Once or twice a year she will be there, the boyfriend-surrounded queen who passed me by. Surely her example spurred me on to pursue what now seems ludicrous, but at the time was the height of my post-Manzanar ambitions. (ch. 21)

Back to the contest, Jeanne decides to get dressed as an exotic girl because after all, she could not defeat the caucasian contestants if she were to dress like them, and most definitely she would have not been well-received if she were to look like too much Japanese with the traditional clothes. And her exotic costume, as Jeanne suggests, turned out to be well, getting attention from the boys with whistles (ch. 21). The next day she finds out through her friend Leonard Rodriguez that the teachers were manipulating the votes coming into the ballots for the fear of what parents would say if Jeanne, a Japanese student, would win the contest to be a queen. That truth and the manipulation of the votes, as a consequence, dashed Jeanne's hopes (ch. 21).

Back home, that evening, things were not easy, either. From that time Jeanne had not told her parents about the song contest and that she had decided to run for the school's queen for the fear of their reactions. Her father, getting enraged, reprimanded her, eventually, about the outfits she used to wear for the majorette practices which caused all the attention from Caucasian boys. Now he was fearing her getting chosen by the half-naked clothes she was wearing which would make the hakuin boys vote for her. He seems to be also scared of the fact that her own daughter would marry a Haukijn boy in the future. Her mother, on the other hand, was more moderate and was aware of the changes her daughter was learning as a young adult (ch. 21). While Jeanne wanted to belong to the mainstream Caucasian society, her father seems to be scared and

desperate not to lose her daughter into the culture that once imprisoned them. Her father's treatment could also be said to be a symbol of the Japanese world she did not want to be associated with because that would not be welcomed in the world she desired to be acknowledged. As a result, her father decides that Jeanne should attend a Buddhist church after her school is out so that she can learn some Japanese manners and lifestyle. For Jeanne, however, it would turn out to be a vain attempt as she explains:

It was far too late for odori classes to have any effect on me and Papa knew this. But he owed it to himself to make one more show of resistance. When I signed up, a few weeks later, I lasted about ten lessons. The teacher herself sent me away. I smiled too much and couldn't break the habit. Like a majorette before the ever-shifting sidewalk crowd, I smiled during performances, and in Japanese dancing that is equivalent to a concert violinist walking onstage in a bathing suit. (ch. 21)

Jeanne implies that the classes would not destroy her American manners and values because she was born into it and that was what she was exposed to outside of her household. It became a part of her so that she could socially function well. This bitter fact that she was dismissed from the classes, as Jeanne states, upset her father and caused him to feel a grudge against her daughter. Jeanne, however, highlights that her father deep down felt actually proud of her on the fact that Jeanne learned how to be independent and go after the things she herself desired to pursue, which also reminded him of his own adamancy and determination (ch. 21). As for her mother, she even helped Jeanne to choose her dress for the coronation on the contest day. Jeanne suggests that unlike her father, her mother has always sided with her against her father. On the matter of the dress she would wear, however, her mother agreed with her father as they did not want their daughter to show her body too much, unlike other students who would have no problem with showing their skin. As a result, they bought a white ball gown that covered her legs and made her look dignified and eloquent which Jeanne herself agreed (ch. 21). Jeanne also mentions how her mother always showed her

confirmation for Jeanne in rather a silent way and it was also valid for the coronation day, hoping that her daughter would win it to be a queen, which Jeanne puts forward as: “Acceptance, in her eyes, was simply another means for survival” (ch. 21). Unlike her father, Jeanne’s mother seems to know that the only way to exist for who they are and get acknowledged for what they do was through confirmation by the majority.

On the coronation night, Jeanne explains that she supposed everyone was talking about her dress behind her back. Also that the gym was so crowded with too many spotlights on, which made Jeanne feel overwhelmed under such a heavy and massive gown that made her wish that she would have worn her short-cut sarong, which helped her win the contest in the first place. On second thought, Jeanne highlights, she realized that wearing the short-cut sarong would have been wrong and that her father might have been right all along:

What was I doing out there anyway, trying to be a carnival queen? The teachers who’d counted the votes certainly didn’t think it was such a good idea. Neither did the trustees. The students wanted me though. Their votes proved that. I kept walking my processional walk, thinking of all the kids who had voted for me, not wanting to let them down, although in a way I already had. It wasn’t the girl in this old-fashioned dress they had voted for. But if not her, who *had* they voted for? Somebody I wanted to be. And wasn’t. Who was I then?. (ch. 21)

These words of hesitation reveal that Jeanne actually seems to be accepted and confirmed by the majority by not the dresses she would wear, but by being herself with authenticity. She reveals that the boys did not vote for her for this gown she wore to the coronation, it was for the short-cut sarong that exposed her body. Jeanne implies that the Asian female objectification was the driving force for her to win the contest. On the coronation night, she became aware of that fact. She also acknowledges that her attempts to win the contest did not actually belong to her, rather it was a projection of what she desired to be, and deep down she knew that she was actually not. Once again, the identity negotiation of Jeanne emerges because of the socio-cultural environment

and the fear of being ostracized, marginalized, and discriminated against even though she was an American citizen by her birthright and upbringing. The coronation night, as a consequence, reminded her of these bitter truths about herself and the cruel world outside. Jeanne, for a moment, seemed like she had wanted to run away from the reality and go back in time when nothing was out of her hands:

I wanted to laugh. I wanted to cry. I wanted to be ten years old again, so I could believe in princesses and queens. It was too late. Too late to be an odori dancer for Papa, too late to be this kind of heroine. I wanted the carnival to end so I could go somewhere private, climb out of my stuffy dress, and cool off. But all eyes were on me. It was too late now not to follow this make-believe carpet to its plywood finale, and I did not yet know of any truer destination. (ch. 21)

At this point, it is revealed that all the attempts she had made in the past to be someone else rather than herself in the hope of getting acknowledged by the Caucasian world proved to be wrong to herself. She might have won the contest and become the first Asian school queen, which is tangible proof of her acceptance against all the odds. Jeanne, however, realizes that it is merely a play pretend, rather than being herself. It could also be interpreted as a defense mechanism she had developed over the years to overcome her accepted inferiority and learned helplessness.

In the last chapter, Jeanne talks about how she managed to understand what their internment really meant over the years. She makes it clear that she found it shameful for such a treatment imposed on them for being guilty of something that they had no control over. Jeanne also makes a reference to the school queen contest and the coronation night by acknowledging her make-believe behaviors and thoughts during those years: “In order to please my accusers, I tried, for the first few years after our release, to become someone acceptable. I both succeeded and failed. By the age of seventeen I knew that *making it*, in the terms I had tried to adopt, was not only unlikely, but false and empty...” (ch. 22). It seems interesting how she refers to “getting accepted” by the accusers as “to please”. Once again, she implies that every hardship she has had to bear

in her life was a result of her race, and since she could not change her race, she had to cover it with something desirable, something that would grab all the attention; her sexuality that she used to develop a personage that would be accepted in the eyes of the Caucasian society, which would bring her all the satisfaction and equality she yearned to have like her Caucasian friends. Later on, Jeanne enunciates that she needed a reason and a foundation to acknowledge her bittersweet past so that she could be herself and accept herself before anyone else attempts to do so (ch. 22).

She also talks about her private life explaining that she is the first person in her family who earned a college degree and married a non-Japanese. Jeanne explains that her past memories about the internment and the time she spent at Manzanar never came up to the surface during the years she was building her life with her husband, and Jeanne also explains how she searched for ways to live in accordance with the Caucasian society. (Ch. 22) During those years, she further states, they talked about visiting Manzanar, where they were interned, however, Jeanne always felt insecure and hesitated going back to that place because of her anxiety (ch. 22).

Jeanne, further on, talks about the time she met a Caucasian photographer in 1966 who worked temporarily at Manzanar and knew how the environment was like and could comprehend what the internment might have meant to the Japanese people. Jeanne, however, could not pull up herself and start to talk to her about Manzanar, as she explains:

This time it was not the pain of memory. It was simply her validation that all those things had taken place. Someone outside the close community of Japanese Americans had actually seen the camp, with its multitude of people and its swarm of buildings on the plain between the mountains. Something inside me opened then. I began to talk about it more and more. (ch. 22)

She seems to finally have found solace and a feeling of being understood by someone out of her race for the first time, by someone for whose world Jeanne fought so hard to get herself accepted. It becomes clear that all those years what Jeanne needed to hear

and be reminded of was the validation of her internment, her traumatizing post-internment effects, discrimination, inequality, and racism she had to resist. Jeanne also adds that her father's life came to an end when they were interned at Manzanar but that her own life started to blossom there (ch. 22). It is understandable, though, how the two generations had a different experience and outcome caused by the internment. The second generation was mostly America-born children that would learn how to survive from their early years on and eventually get into a shape where they would know how to handle possible ill-treatments in their future. Jeanne also explains that when sometimes she thought she dreamed about her time at Manzanar was actually a way out of that reality and that experience, which she calls her as "Manzanar mentality" that she had to harbor for all those years. However, their trip to Manzanar, as Jeanne states, had a different effect on her than she had anticipated: "Now, having seen it, I no longer wanted to lose it or to have those years erased. Having found it, I could say what you can only say when you've truly come to know a place: Farewell" (ch. 22). It is clear that Jeanne finally made peace with her past and traumatizing experience that caused her identity negotiation to find herself a place in the Anglo-American society. She seems to be full of forgiveness and grateful for what she suffered because, without those experiences, she would not have been the same person as she is today. In other words, this trip seems to have had a healing effect on Jeanne that enabled her to see and interpret her experience from the start in a vivid way and understand its traumatizing repercussions on her life and identity:

This visit, this pilgrimage, made comprehensible, finally, the traces that remained and would always remain, like a needle. That hollow ache I carried during the early months of internment had shrunk, over the years, to a tiny sliver of suspicion about the very person I was. It had grown so small sometimes I'd forget it was there. Months might pass before something would remind me. (ch. 22)

Referencing the title of the memoir itself, Manzanar becomes a metaphor for Jeanne where she resolves her conflicting identities and reconstructs herself as Japanese-American rather than just identifying herself with one essentialized identity.

In the afterword, Jeanne states that this internment story is probably the first disclosure for the new generations of Japanese Americans to learn about their past and witness what their older generations had to experience. According to her, furthermore, this story has already helped a lot of young Japanese Americans to look into American history from the perspective of their ethnicity, rather than learning it through general history (Houston). Finally, she mentions that this new edition of her memoir was published while the effects of the 9/11 attacks were still resonating in the nation. She highlights her appreciation on the fact that while Japanese Americans were interned based on their race out of wartime necessity, Muslim Americans were not a target of such a racial based act actualized by the government, which she finds it as a huge and positive change on the basis of U.S. democracy (Houston).

Overall, Jeanne's story and search for her identity display a ray of emotions and clashes between her two cultures. The racist and assimilative agenda of the U.S. and being a minority in a white-dominant society lead her, unavoidably, causes her to disregard her ethnic identity and turn her back on her heritage, and fully immerse herself in her American identity to feel secure and belonged to the dominant society. Her immigrant parents' behavior and their views on Jeanne increase the gap between them more, which also adds to her embarrassment about being Japanese. Jeanne's efforts performing herself American and being a part of American society, however, do not always work out the way she anticipates, which makes her realize that she does not completely belong there, either. Her negotiation of identities takes quite a long time to unify her identities and worlds and recreate an authentic identity where she feels she belongs to both worlds.

2.1.3. *Nisei Daughter*

Nisei Daughter, written by Monica Sone and published originally in 1953, is regarded as one of the important pieces in Asian American literature because it is the

first nonfiction life narrative written about the Japanese-American internment. Monica Sone uses her Japanese-born name, Kazuko Itoi. Sone's depiction of her life in Seattle gives the perspective of an American girl, when, however, she shares her memories about her family and her Japanese background, she comes off as more Nisei, rather than only American. Monica portrays her worlds and cultures with detailed examples of how they celebrate both Japanese and American cultural events, and how they have both Japanese and American food at home. By including her visit to Japan with her family in the narrative, Monica describes how Japanese children did not perceive her as "Japanese" because of the way she dressed and the way she acted. This contrast of not being perceived as neither Japanese by her own ethnic members nor American by the mainstream American culture account for the identity dilemma and negotiation of her identities throughout the narrative. The internment and the racist agenda of the U.S. government, furthermore, exacerbates her perception and increases the gap between her Japanese and American identities as she cannot pinpoint where she belongs and how she should identify herself.

In the Introduction to the memoir of the 1979 edition, S.Frank Miyamoto gives elaborates on the gap between the Isei and Nisei and states that he regards this memoir as a "search for identity" (Introduction). He further explains that because the Isei did not speak English well as their children did, it made a gap between them as the Nisei grew up learning all the cultural idioms and phrases and received their education in American schools. The Isei were also not eligible to hold U.S. citizenship whereas their children had birthright citizenship, which made it difficult for them to acculturate into American culture and society. The Nisei, on the other hand, could not speak Japanese very well because their knowledge was not enough. They were, also, naturally more exposed to American culture rather than their Japanese heritage. It, however, did not change the fact that they were still the racial minority between their American friends, which made it difficult for them to be considered truly American. Compared to their parents, they were not quite Japanese, either. That is why the Nisei often pondered about their identity because they were part of both worlds and they were also not; they could not decide where they belonged. Miyamoto further states that compared to other Nisei children, however, Kazuko was rather closer to her parents' cultural background and it

might have been because of this that her grasp of knowledge on the Japanese language was better than her peers. Finally, the identity dilemma was a serious phenomenon that resonated with the Nisei before and after the internment. *Nisei Daughter*, in this context, is such a book where Sone negotiates her identities and tries to find where she belongs.

Monica opens her memoir by expressing how she realized she was someone different than she thought she was, and different than other people around her in society. Her opening statement about her identity reveals so much about how she will develop an understanding of her authenticity as a Japanese American and what hardships she will have to bear in terms of identity negotiation and finding herself a place in the Anglo-American community:

THE first five years of my life I lived in amoebic bliss, not knowing whether I was plant or animal, at the old Carrollton Hotel on the waterfront of Seattle. One day when I was a happy six-year old, I made the shocking discovery that I had Japanese blood. I was a Japanese.
(Sone 3)

Monica makes use of metaphor, comparing herself to a “plant” or an “animal” to explain the state she found herself in. The plant or animal metaphor that she uses could mean that she was living a stable life where she had no control over and not aware of the reality and the truth about herself. It is also interesting how she refers to her past childhood as happy, but now that she has discovered she was Japanese, Monica implies that her happy childhood is now over. Her choice of the word “shocking discovery”, moreover, implies her astonishment as if she was something else other than a human being. As Monica explains, her mother revealed the truth about their true identities on a Sunday afternoon in a calm behavior. After that, Monica asks her mother how she could have Japanese blood. Much to her dismay, her mother explains that she is not the only one having Japanese blood, on the contrary, both her parents and siblings have Japanese blood, as well. Mary’s brother, Henry, further on, asks her in a rather puzzling way to comprehend why it would matter for her mother to explain the truth of their identity. It becomes clear, from that on, the motive behind her mother’s reveal about their Japanese

identity: "So, Papa and I have decided that you and Ka-chan will attend Japanese school after grammar school every day" (4). This plan of their children attending Japanese school every day once their classes are over at their formal school seems to have caused trouble and distressed Monica as she expresses: "Terrible, terrible, terrible! So that's what it meant to be a Japanese — to lose my afternoon play hours! I fiercely resented this sudden intrusion of my blood into my affairs" (4). Monica suggests that before the discovery of her true ethnic identity, she used to have control over the things she used to do as she would see fit. But now her mother's explanation about her identity stood in the way of her daily life, slowly taking control of her world, which is why she feels "conquered" and nervous because she does not want to go to another school other than her regular school, Bailey Gatzert School (4).

Monica's discovery of her ethnic identity, considering her life in a Caucasian society and culture, undoubtedly, seems to have affected her identity development as a child on the fact that it would create another parallel world where she would have to make sense of everything once again, which would mean getting education by the Japanese way and getting exposed to Japanese culture. It seems like after the talk with her mother on the identity revelation scattered Monica's identity into two; one being Japanese, and the other, American, causing Monica to draw a line between her previous life and the life that awaits ahead of her:

Until this shattering moment, I had thought life was sweet and reasonable. But not any more. Why did Father and Mother make such a fuss just because we had Japanese blood? Why did we have to go to Japanese school? I refused to eat and sat sobbing, letting great big tears splash down into my bowl of rice and tea. (4-5)

As a result, as Monica highlights, she has started to refuse the truth about her identity which is projected on her rejection of food and loss of appetite. She also suggests why it would matter to have Japanese blood, especially why it would matter to her parents. She seems unaware of the difference and importance of ethnic identity in a monocultural Anglo-Saxon culture, which implies almost like a premonition that she will discover

one day the importance of her ethnic background and why her ethnic identity will matter. Monica also touches on how she had never made sense of the concept of being Japanese and being labeled by it until her discovery: "Up to that moment, I had never thought of Father and Mother as Japanese. True, they had almond eyes and they spoke Japanese to us, but I never felt that it was strange. It was like one person's being red-haired and another black" (5). Monica, however, discloses how she saw everybody around her, especially the appearance of herself and her parents as having Asian facial features, which she never linked to the concept of ethnicity and race, rather she perceived them as a natural appearance much like anybody else having different hair colors, eye colors and various appearances. Monica also mentions her upbringing in terms of the food they ate. She explains that they had both Western and Oriental meals and how her mother immigrated to the United States without having any cooking skills, which she acquired only later with the help of her husband. She makes certain of the fact that though they have had both of the dishes of the two worlds, they mostly stuck to basic American foods (13). This seemingly rather little information actually delineates how Monica's upbringing was influenced by American culture in a larger context and how it plays an important role in her identity negotiation.

Monica, further on, paints a picture of another scene about her discovery of other ethnicities and walks of life other than herself and her family when she goes out, taking a stroll in downtown with her friend Matsuko. Astonished, as a child, Monica explains her state of mind upon that realization:

There were some pale-looking children who spoke a strange dialect of English, rapidly like gunfire. Matsuko told me they were "hagu-jins" white people. Then there were children who looked very much like me with their black hair and black eyes, but they spoke in high, musical singing voices. Matsuko whispered to me that they were Chinese. And now Mother was telling us we were Japanese. I had always thought I was a Yankee, because after all I had been born on Occidental and Main Street. Montana, a wall-shaking mountain of a man who lived at our hotel, called me a Yankee. I didn't see how I could be a Yankee and

Japanese at the same time. It was like being born with two heads. It sounded freakish and a lot of trouble. Above everything, I didn't want to go to Japanese school. (18-19)

Monica demonstrates her exhaustion of finding of the real world and its people around her, having different characteristics, various identities, and belonging to different cultures, yet, however, how they all also manage to coexist in the same neighborhood. Instilled in American culture since her birth and later her association of herself with the Yankees seems to have had a bigger hold on Monika's identity as she states how she has always considered herself a Yanke. The realization about her identity and other people's identities seem to puzzle Monica on the fact that how she could ever associate herself with two identities at the same, and how she could live with them in one body. That combination seems rather impossible and preposterous to her because she resembles it to having two heads (18-19). In the concept of identity negotiations and monocultural American society, she implies how having two identities would make things harder for her.

Later on, Monika explains how she eventually ended up going to the Japanese school, Nihon Gakko, which her parents made them attend. She compares both schools she attended and how the Japanese one differentiated mostly to her understanding. She shows how attending two schools made her feel like and how she found herself in different situations:

Nihon Gakko was so different from grammar school I found myself switching my personality back and forth daily like a chameleon. At Bailey Gatzert School I was a jumping, screaming, roustabout Yankee, but at the stroke of three when the school bell rang and doors burst open everywhere, spewing out pupils like jelly beans from a broken bag, I suddenly became a modest, faltering, earnest little Japanese girl with a small, timid voice. I trudged down a steep hill and climbed up another steep hill to Nihon Gakko with other black-haired boys and girls. On the playground, we behaved cautiously. Whenever we spied a teacher within

bowing distance, we hissed at each other to stop the game, put our feet neatly together, slid our hands down to our knees and bowed slowly and sanctimoniously. In just the proper, moderate tone, putting in every ounce of respect, we chanted, "Konichi-wa, sensei. Good day." (22)

Considering her age, her constant change of identities depending on the school she attends and the people she gets to be surrounded with must have caused a great burden on her. It is worth indicating how Monica's word of choice and use of the metaphor, "like a chameleon", looks analogous to what she referred to herself as "a plant or an animal" in the first chapter of the memoir. It becomes clear only now that she feels like a "chameleon" because she has to change her identities depending on the environment much like a chameleon does on the surfaces it would go and stay. Monika also mentions the stark difference between Japanese and American cultures, which she interprets as strict behavior and obedience that reigned all over the Japanese school:

As time went on, I began to suspect that there was much more to Nihon Gakko than learning the Japanese language. There was a driving spirit of strict discipline behind it all which reached out and weighed heavily upon each pupil's consciousness. That force emanated from the principal's office. (24)

Finding out that she is Japanese and that her forced education at Nihon Gakko would not only mean learning Japanese, it would also include the Japanese culture, set of rules, traditions, and manners. It would mean that she would have to construct her identity once again, this time as a Japanese, as Monica states: "It was not enough to learn the language. We must talk and walk and sit and bow in the best Japanese tradition" (24). The way Monica talks about her Japanese school implies how she is actually reluctant to be instilled in the Japanese culture from scratch because of the burden it imposes on her shoulders considering the fact that she had already learned American manners and values since her birth which made her a part of the American culture and society. As Monika implies, her reluctance to yield to Japanese culture would be futile after all:

Mr. Ohashi and Mrs. Matsui thought they could work on me and gradually mold me into an ideal Japanese ojoh-san, a refined young maiden who is quiet, pure in thought, polite, serene, and self-controlled. They made little headway, for I was too much the child of Skidrow. As far as I was concerned, Nihon Gakko was a total loss. I could not use my Japanese on the people at the hotel. Bowing was practical only at Nihon Gakko. (28)

Once again, through her choice of words, Monica demonstrates her perception of the Japanese culture in contrast to American culture, describing the ideal girl that her schoolmaster and family friend Mrs. Matsui envisioned to create, highly instilled in the Japanese culture. It could be implied that the American culture, according to her perception of Japanese culture, seems to be more languid, comfortable, and full of freedom. She also suggests how she resists her ethnic identity and how she stays loyal to her national American identity. Monica, later on, contemplates how ridiculous it would be to make the traditional Japanese bow to the people who worked at the hotel as they were, and they would make fun of it (28). She also implies that the Japanese manners would not be useful outside of Nihon Gakko because she is aware of the fact that she lives in an Anglo-American society and that the only way she can function well and feel like herself is the continuum of her American manners rather than that of Japanese. Monica, moreover, mentions how she would wait impatiently for her classes at Nihon Gakko to end so that she could go back to her real life, her real “world” where she feels content, full of life, and excited rather than staying in such dull and disciplined Japanese school (28). In terms of this comparison and contrast of the two worlds, Monica, furthermore, gives a detailed explanation about how these two identities blended into each other as she grew up and how they meant two different things to her resting upon the events she celebrated:

Most of the time my life rolled by in pretty much the same fashion as it did for my yellow-haired, red-haired and brown-haired friends at grammar school. With them I enjoyed the national holidays – Lincoln’s

Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. But there were other times when things happened which could only happen to a Japanese. (66)

Here, Monica suggests that while she shared most of the values and traditions of the American culture with her friends, she also had another world where only the Japanese were entitled to enter into. Monica, furthermore, seems to comprehend, to some degree, what being Japanese meant by acknowledging the fact that while she commemorated and celebrated American holidays, she would also have to attend for the Japanese counterparts; as a result of belonging to two worlds. She also explicitly indicates her awareness of both her national American identity and her ethnic Japanese identity for the first time in her memoir by this statement.

In chapter 5, Monica writes about their first trip to Japan to visit her father's parents, while the parents of her mother were coming to take care of their hotel when they would be gone to Japan. When they arrive in Japan, Monica observes how people wear differently than she is accustomed to seeing in America. She, however, herself draws attention by the way she dresses in Japan: "People stared at our foreign clothes and I felt self-conscious" (91). Monica suggests that even though the Japanese clothing style strikes her as different, she herself becomes a different subject in the eyes of the Japanese people because of her American way of clothing. Monica also mentions the way Japanese people enter into their houses, taking off their shoes and how they eat their meals with all the family members gathered around on the ground and what set of rules she and her siblings have to follow accordingly:

Maids in kimonos and white aprons bowed and slipped about quietly. They bowed and arranged individual trays of rice, clear soup, fish and vegetables on the floor. They bowed and departed. I wondered if we were supposed to bow in return each time. Somehow in this setting, bowing looked graceful and natural. (91)

It is clear that Monica lacks the traditional way of acting and behaving in the Japanese culture because of her Americanized way of upbringing. It also proves, as a result, how distant she is from her ethnic background. Monica, moreover, demonstrates her cultural appreciation of bowing in that environment. While she was hesitant to do the bowing and distant to her ethnic-cultural behavior back in the United States, she seems to develop an understanding of cultural appreciation in her native land. It is also linked to the identity negotiation theory where the subject seeks to belong to a specific environment by doing the expected, perceived-to-be true notions of social behaviors to melt into the target culture. It is, therefore, appropriate for her to follow her ethnic and cultural set of rules and show her Japanese side to her Japanese fellows.

As their trip unfolds, Monica makes it clear that she cannot fully fathom all the Japanese cultural rules and seems to not agree with all of them, which makes her lose her spirits and it gets on her nerves. An example of it is when her mother warns her children to sit in the appropriate position while Monica felt like she wanted to act freely and sit as she would see fit. These nuances make her feel like their trip to Japan would have its ups and downs and might not turn out to be as joyful as they had hoped (92).

Monica, on another account, talks about how they come across some children on the street when they were bidding a visit to their grandfather in a village called Takayama and how those children noticed Monica and her brother were different from Japanese children in their appearances as Monica states the words of those children saying, "Look, they must be from America. They certainly wear odd clothes" (96). As mentioned above, the way Monica and her siblings dress causes them to be perceived as Americans rather than Japanese despite their facial features that belong to the Japanese race. Monica implies how they are regarded as foreigners in their ancestor land. Finally, the children stop teasing them and accept Monica's brother, Henry, among them, leaving Monica out because of her manners and stance against them, "They never invited me nor spoke to me, but I tagged along anyway. The boys tried to ignore me as all girls deserved to be ignored, but I noticed that they sneaked many side glances, puzzled and bewildered, for in their books, girls did not behave as I did" (99). It is worth highlighting the implication Monica makes about how her American identity revealed itself that caused her to not to be regarded as an ordinary, traditional Japanese

girl and how it resulted in for her not belonging to the Japanese society because of her manners.

One of the most striking cultural differences and comparisons she makes between Japan and the United States is probably when she encountered the way traditional Japanese people bathe in the countryside, which is different than how they bathe in the city. The city bathing culture is separated into a men section and women section where everyone takes a bath collectively, with no privacy. To Monica's surprise and unwillingness, she accompanies her mother to the women's section where she has a bath with people she has never encountered before and indicates how she felt uncomfortable (100). In the countryside, however, as Monica explains, they fill rain buckets with water out of wells and how she is astonished by the way one maid named Masako fills the bucket religiously and makes a comparison with America about how they use separate faucets both in their kitchen and bathrooms and how they can get both cold and warm water out of them. The maid, however, retorts unappreciated the American way saying, "I can't imagine what it would be like, to get all the water you need without working for it" (100). Monica, further, is shocked by the way the water in the tub is heated with a fire set under the bucket and some herbs scattered into the water, which kind of frightens Monica as she explains: "I felt as if a delectable broth was being prepared to receive my squirming body" (100).

Monica makes a further statement about the lack of privacy once again, and how the Japanese people have developed a kind of custom for such an occasion: "I knew a true Japanese had a unique device of 'not seeing things' if the social situation called for 'not seeing things,' even if the object was right in front of his eyeballs" (100-101). Here, she implies a glimpse of the Japanese culture, giving details about their way of perception of their surroundings and their characteristics. Monica also suggests how she displaces herself from the mainstream Japanese culture by referring to "The Japanese people" and how she does not belong to that cultural norms. She, moreover, includes how her parents are accustomed to this way of bathing and how they seem not to bother when they have no privacy and compares herself with them:

Father and Mother would stare at the walls as if they had seen no one. When she later emerged, they greeted each other with ceremony and warmth as if they had just come face to face for the first time. It should have worked well for taking baths in the open, too, but I, who had been conditioned to bolting the American bathroom door securely, felt uncomfortable. (101)

Here, Monica hints at her identity positioning in the American culture by even the simple way of bathing, which, in a larger context, means the indisputable values of privacy and freedom of the American culture. She also implies a subtle comparison between the individualist American culture and the collectivist Japanese culture. As a result, she feels more secure and at home with the individualist American culture and that is what she identifies herself most without denying her Japanese side. Monica emphasizes this very notion of belonging to two distant worlds and how content she is to be back “home” as she and her family arrive back in the United States after their journey to Japan:

Suddenly as if a heavy weight had slipped from my chest, I realized we were home again, and my visit to Japan receded into the background like a sad, enchanted dream. We had explored the exotic island of the Japanese. I had felt the charm of its people. I had been impressed by its modern cities as well as by its historic beauty, but I had felt I was an alien among them. This was home to me, this lovely Puget Sound Harbor stretched out before us. Tomorrow we would wake to the old familiar landmarks of Seattle — Magnolia Bluff, Smith Cove, the slender pinnacle of Smith Tower, and the stretch of Alki Beach. This America, where I was born, surrounded by people of different racial extractions, was still my home. (107-108)

Monica, here, fortifies how her American identity outweighs her Japanese identity. Even though she shows appreciation and bewilderment towards Japan and its cities, she

still feels like an outsider to the Japanese community, which is understandable because she was not born and raised in Japan and it is a natural outcome that she feels this way. She also implies how she has grown up to acknowledging the concept of races existing around her and how she takes it as a cultural richness of the United States. Her stance on the matter of race seems quite mature compared to her first reaction when she found out she was Japanese and how it stroke her extraordinary as a little child.

From chapter 6 onward, named “We are Outcasts”, Monica implies how her life will change and how her Japanese identity will cause her toward identity negotiation to exist in the American society, face racism and discrimination because of her race, and understand what it really means to be a minority in Anglo-American culture. She makes it clear by explaining how landlords refuse to rent their houses to her mother. Monica tells that because her sister Sumiko fell ill during the winter because of her asthma, her doctor advises Monica’s family that Sumiko should get as much rest and sunlight as possible. As a result, Monica’s parents decide to rent a cottage house by the sea for the summer near Alki Beach (111). Following the decision, Monica and her mother go out the following days for cottage hunting, however each time they try to speak to house owners, they either get told that the house is too expensive for them to afford or that they were already rented by some other people, causing Monica and her mother returning home empty-handed and loss of hope. On the night of that day, Monica eavesdrops her parents’ talking about the cottages and renting and she hears how her mother’s explanation about why they fail to rent one because they are Japanese (113). This explanation of her mother puzzles Monica and it causes her to ponder on what renting a cottage has got to do with being Japanese, which she interprets as unreasonable:

Surely Mother was mistaken. Why would it make any difference? I knew that Father and Mother were not Americans, as we were, because they were not born here, and that there was a law which said they could not become naturalized American citizens because they were Orientals. But being Oriental had never been an urgent problem to us, living in Skidrow. (113)

This might be the first time Monica secondhandedly witnesses how her Japanese blood and Oriental facial appearances would hinder them from acting freely in the American society even though she is aware of the fact that she and her siblings are American citizens by birthright, even though her parents are not. Resentful about this remark, Monica accompanies her mother to look for a cottage house for rent a few days later. On their first visit to a house, they get hurtful and racist remarks from the house owner, "I'm sorry, but we don't want Japs around here" (114). These words, undoubtedly, cause Monica and her mother to feel defeated and discriminated. On the way to look for other houses, Monica's mother consoles her and explains this racist behavior to her daughter in a calm attitude:

Ka-chan, there are people like that in this world. We have to bear it, just like all the other unpleasant facts of life. This is the first time for you, and I know how deeply it hurts; but when you are older, it won't hurt quite as much. You'll be stronger. (114)

As her mother states, this is the first time Monica witnesses first-hand racism in her life that troubles and puzzles her. Her mother's way of comforting her daughter signals a prognostication about the continuous discrimination and racism and what hardships it will cause for them to face in their lives and how she will learn to cope with it. As a reply, Monica wonders if it is something bad to be Japanese, which her mother resents and admonishes her to be proud of what she is and explains that belonging to a specific race would make no difference in the eye of God because after all they are all connected as humans (114). For Monica, however, this was something big to suppress all at once, causing her to feel a ray of emotions as she puts forward: "All day I had been torn apart between feeling defiant and then apologetic about my Japanese blood. But when I recalled the woman's stinging words, I felt raw angry fire flash through my veins, and I simmered" (115). The way Monica uses the binary oppositions of feeling "defiant" and "apologetic" implies that she will have to navigate between American and Japanese identities and it signals constant negotiation of the two identities in the days ahead of her. This imminent probability begins to crystalize when Monica realizes how the state

conflicts between Japan and the United States take their toll on them as she states, “Gradually I learned in many other ways the terrible curse that went with having Japanese blood. As the nations went, so went their people. Japan and the United States were no longer seeing eye to eye, and we felt the repercussions in our daily lives” (118). The way Monica refers to having Japanese blood as a curse is noteworthy to analyze. She seems to believe that being Japanese is innately burdensome, which brings forward only troubles and hardships. The connotation she imposes on the word “curse” also implies how Japanese people are the ones to blame when they encounter a problem and difficulty without even thinking whether the opposite might cause it or not.

Monica further explains how people’s reactions began to change toward her and other Japanese people. She highlights that she even hesitated to pass by Chinatown because she realized that Chinese people too threw glances at her, indicating as if she was culpable of something she had no control of (119). She also depicts how the media presents the Japanese people, making them look like a despicable ethnicity with irritating facial features: “The Japanese was always caricatured with enormous, moon-shaped spectacles and beady, myopic eyes. A small mustache was perched arrogantly over massive, square buck teeth, and his bow-legged posture suggested a simian character” (119). It is evident that when Japan caused an international problem with the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Japanese minority living in the United States became the first receptor of the ridicule and hatred towards anything and anyone related to Japan. It could also be interpreted as how the American newspapers and magazines reflect their abhorrence by drawing them in a wicked, devilish way as if they were implying how insidious, cruel, and secretive nature of the Japanese that were living among them. This general perception of the Japanese given the circumstances were resonating in the society as Monica expresses her experience:

When stories about the Japanese Army on the other side of the Pacific appeared in the newspapers, people stared suspiciously at us on the streets. I felt their resentment in a hundred ways — the way a saleswoman in a large department store never saw me waiting at the counter. After ten minutes, I had to walk quietly away as if nothing had

happened. A passenger sitting across the aisle in a streetcar would stare at me coldly. (119)

As Monica depicts her fear, resentment, and shame and explains how she had to face the challenge of being labeled with Japan for its cruel attack and endure with the glances of the society, it becomes clear how she will have to navigate between her American identity and Japanese identity, causing her a dilemma. Even though Monica is an American citizen, furthermore, she is automatically bounded in this attack due to her ethnicity which labels her as someone different from the American society, someone not American, but the enemy. This bitter fact proves itself to be true when Monica and her family decide to go for a swim on a Sunday and get rejected by the manager on the fact that they are Japanese: “‘Sorry, we don't want any Japs around here.’ We said, ‘We're not Japs. We're American citizens.’ But we piled into the car and sped away trying to ignore the bruise on our pride” (119). As Monica suggests, their birthright American citizenship would not protect them because the society will see what they look like, not who they really are, which reveals a great amount of how racism towards Japanese people was prevailing among the people.

In the following chapters, Monica reminisces about her school education as a child and a young adult. She talks about how she turned out to be a passive teacher as a result of her teachers who did not give her or any other student a chance to give their opinions, including both the Japanese school and American schools. Monica highlights the incapacity of expressing herself at high school where her teachers anticipated and encouraged their students to state their own opinions and interpretations in classes such as literature, history, and civics (131). Monica, moreover, compares herself as a Japanese and other Japanese students with American ones, expressing the starking gap between them:

Although I had opinions, I was so overcome with self-consciousness I could not bring myself to speak. Some people would have explained this as an acute case of adolescence, but I knew it was also because I was Japanese. Almost all the students of Japanese blood sat like rocks during discussion period. Something compellingly Japanese made us feel it was

better to seem stupid in a quiet way rather than to make boners out loud. I began to think of the Japanese as the Silent People, and I envied my fellow students who clamored to be heard. (131)

Here Monica implies that even though she was molded in the American culture and learned its values since her birth, she still could not act like a typical American student in such simple ways as voicing their thoughts and making criticism of school subjects. She parallels the Japanese identity to being stoic, silent, submissive, and passive whereas the American identity, in her comparison and contrast, appears to be free and full of self-confidence, assertive, and unapologetic. It can be said that, as much as Monica tries to believe and display herself as more American than Japanese, her Japanese identity eventually surfaces in most unexpected, significant times and settings, predominating her American identity. Such an example also takes place when Monica realizes how severe the Pearl Harbor bombing would echo in her life, which would incline her to turn her back on her Japanese identity and lament over the injustices she would have to suffer:

I felt as if a fist had smashed my pleasant little existence, breaking it into jigsaw puzzle pieces. An old wound opened up again, and I found myself shrinking inwardly from my Japanese blood, the blood of an enemy. I knew instinctively that the fact that I was an American by birthright was not going to help me escape the consequences of this unhappy war. (145-146)

It is also observable here how Monica's tone changes when talking about her ethnic identity, referring to it as "the blood of enemy". This play of word could mean two different things, one is that how she distances herself from being labeled as Japanese, and fully wrap herself up in her American identity. The second one is that how she acknowledges her part of Japanese identity and blames herself because of her race, expanding her dilemma in negotiating her identities even further, as she expresses her

then-current state of mind: “with every fiber of my being I resented this war. I felt as if I were on fire” (147).

While Monica and her Nisei fellows were feeling at lost and grasping in the dark for their dilemma of identity negotiation, their parents, on the other hand, much like all the other Isseis, were not as devastated as their Nisei children, which would bring about the generational conflict between them once again:

Henry and I used to criticize Japan's aggressions in China and Manchuria while Father and Mother condemned Great Britain and America's superior attitude toward Asiatics and their interference with Japan's economic growth. During these arguments, we had eyed each other like strangers, parents against children. They left us with a hollow feeling at the pit of the stomach. (148)

It is expected how the reactions and preconditioned values and perceptions would vary between the two generations. The first generation of Japanese people, the Issei, for instance, was not born in the United States and only immigrated there at a specific age. They were rather acculturated into American culture and society, rather than born into it and educated in American values, thus causing a lack of American identity. The second generation, the Nisei, on the other hand, developed intrinsically an American identity since their birth in the United States through their Americanized education, their performance, and communication in the American society. Their Japanese side, Japanese identity, however, was only circumscribed in their household, resulting in an underdeveloped identity compared to their American identity. While the Nisei would feel torn apart between their identities and find them negotiating over which of their side would outweigh either of them. The Issei, however, were mostly concerned about only their Japanese identity and frustrated by the treatment of Anglo-American society and culture towards Asian people. As a result of this, it was expected for conflicts and dissidence to occur in their households.

In terms of identity, further on, Monica asserts how she found it unbearable to face the reality that was cast upon her, expressing her defeat, so to say, when President

Roosevelt explained the decision of going to war with Japan: “I writhed involuntarily. I could no more have escaped the stab of self-consciousness than I could have changed my Oriental features” (150). Here Monica implies that up until that moment of declaration of war, she had been able to overlook her Japanese identity, and embracing her American identity more. However, the turn of events caused by Japan’s attack, made her face her ethnic identity and race, resulting in no overlooking this side of her because even if she was an American, her Asian features would stand out more than her Americanness during the war times and the zeitgeist of the American social environment where the cherish of diversity and ethnic proudness were lacking.

During the first precautions and measures taken, the Issei men were the first target by the U.S. government on the ground of their cooperation with the Japanese government. As a result of this, most Issei men were taken out of their houses and imprisoned to be interrogated by the government (151). Such was the imminent case for Monica’s father, which put them on their guard for a possible raid from the government. That panic and despair, as Monica states, called forth her haplessness:

Once when our doorbell rang after curfew hour, I completely lost my Oriental stoicism which I had believed would serve me well under the most trying circumstances. No friend of ours paid visits at night anymore, and I was sure that Fathers hour had come. (151)

Monica highlights here how the notion of stoicism that belonged to her Japanese side faded away upon the fear of her father being taken away. It could be a reference to her loss of cultural and ethnic identity that would no longer matter for the fact that it caused her to be perceived as an enemy. On this matter, furthermore, Monica’s family heard that any items and souvenirs that signify a cultural tie and cultural identity would be a threat against the FBI and the U.S. government and that the FBI would consider anyone preserving cultural belongings associated with the Japanese government (154). Although Monica and her family did their best to get rid of them, they were, however, unable to throw everything out. Monica, furthermore, explains how she set fire to the Japanese language books she owned, which she thought would be useful when she

would teach her children the language in the future. She, however, could not destroy her precious doll that her grandmother had sent as a gift from Japan (155). In terms of identity, as it was mentioned above, the loss of cultural and ethnic identity that started when Monica thought her stoicism would no longer be effective, is further fortified, with the attempts of destroying cultural belongings. It could be inferred that this annihilation caused by fear left the Issei empty-handed. Now their only observable cultural tie was broken, what they had left with was only their Japanese identity, which signaled hostility and induced discrimination. From the point of the Nisei, it could be interpreted that doing away with the cultural symbols weakened their already feeble ethnic identity further, and, drew them away from their Japanese identity. The only identity that they could hang on was the American identity, but that was shadowed by racism and fear.

In February 1942, the imminent decision had arrived. It would mean that anyone related to the Japanese race would have to be removed whether they were U.S. citizens or not, which was also echoed and supported by nationalist people as Monica cites their allegation: ““Throw the whole kaboodle out. A Jap's a Jap, no matter how you slice him. You can't make an American out of little Jap Junior just by handing him an American birth certificate”” (158). Even though this is a statement made by extreme nationalists, it still proves how racism prevails, ignoring and downgrading their birthright citizenship and even ridiculing them on the grounds of the blood and race they own. Monica and other Niseis, analogously, strongly believed that they would not have to be interned thanks to their citizenship, however, much to their dismay, it proved to be wrong. Monica, as a reply, asserts her state of mind accordingly: “Once more I felt like a despised, pathetic two-headed freak, a Japanese and an American, neither of which seemed to be doing me any good” (158-59). Monica once again uses a metaphor to refer to her identity dilemma as “two-headed freak”, as if it were impossible to have two identities, or in other words, how having one identity could have been easier for her so that she would not have to worry about her American and Japanese identities that were at stake during the war period. Related to her identity, Monica, further, mentions how she felt like when she got a haircut on the evacuation day, leaving her distressed:

When I went into the bathroom and looked into the mirror, tears suddenly welled in my eyes. I was crying, not because it was the last time I would be standing in a modern bathroom, but because I looked like a cross between a Japanese and a fuzzy bear. My hideous new permanent wave had been given to me by an operator who had never worked on Oriental hair before. My hair resembled scorched mattress filling, and after I had attacked it savagely with comb and brush, I looked like a frightened mushroom. On this morning of mornings when I was depending on a respectable hairdo so I could leave town with dignity, I was faced with this horror. There was nothing to do but cover it with a scarf. (167)

Here Monica suggests how she felt like and regarded herself as a “cross” between two images, one being Japanese, and the other “fuzzy bear”. She also implies how her haircut revealed her Japanese identity more to the public and how that made her feel like she had something to hide as if she was naked. It could also be analogous to how prisoners get their haircut before going into prison. Similarly, it could further suggest that the Japanese would be regarded as prisoners and enemies under the jurisdiction of the United States, which would explain the treatment towards them, as Monica, too, suggests when she looked around and saw the wired fences and how the guards were standing at the towers holding guns: “I remembered the wire fence encircling us, and a knot of anger tightened in my breast. What was I doing behind a fence like a criminal? If there were accusations to be made, why hadn't I been given a fair trial?” (177). Monica seems to still believe that her American identity would at least have been useful for her to be judged righteously whether she did something to deserve this treatment or not, rather than being treated as a criminal. She, however, seems to realize that she does not mean anything else other than a Japanese to the U.S. government, as she explains:

Maybe I wasn't considered an American anymore. My citizenship wasn't real, after all. Then what was I? I was certainly not a citizen of Japan as my parents were. On second thought, even Father and Mother were more alien residents of the United States than Japanese nationals for they had

little tie with their mother country. In their twenty-five years in America, they had worked and paid their taxes to their adopted government as any other citizen. (177)

Considering all the false accusations and the discrimination based on her race, Monica once again finds herself negotiating between her identities. She seems to be at loss to make anything out of the situation she is in. One thing she is sure of, though, is that she does not hold Japanese citizenship, unlike her parents. Monica, moreover, highlights the fact that her parents have differed a lot from Japanese nationalists due to the years they have spent working in the United States, living in the Anglo-American society, and experiencing the American culture. She also implies that her parents accultured and integrated into the American culture through their loyalty and civic performances. Her negotiation of identity, thus, also includes the distinction she makes between her parents, the Issei, and herself, a Nisei, which seems to be a line where she jumps on and about to decide who she is. The internment, additionally, widened the gap between her American and Japanese identities because the internment was the proof of how her ancestry was held responsible and treated and how her American identity turned out to be worthless, making her lose her belief in the American values: “Of one thing I was sure. The wire fence was real. I no longer had the right to walk out of it. It was because I had Japanese ancestors. It was also because some people had little faith in the ideas and ideals of democracy” (177-78). Monica implies that the injustices and the challenge of the American democracy made her realize that she took her American identity for granted, and as a result, her American identity got hurt and weakened alongside her Japanese identity, correlatively. In an internal monologue, Monica assesses everything and evaluates the conditions she has been through up until now and what the internment meant to her:

I knew that the greatest trial ahead of us would be of a spiritual nature. I had been tense and angry all my life about prejudice, real and imaginery. The evacuation had been the biggest blow, but there was little to be gained in bitterness and cynicism because we felt that people had failed

us. The time had come when it was more important to examine our own souls, to keep our faith in God and help to build that way of life which we so desired. (186)

Monica, here, mentions how it would affect their spiritual nature, which she implies to be their psychological level because this internment did not cause physical wounds on the interned Japanese, rather it affected their psychology, causing trauma. Although the Japanese had always been aware of the discrimination and racism in the American society, and the Nisei, like Monica, negotiated between their consent national American identity and descent ethnic Japanese identity, they had never become a target of the government collectively, based on their ethnicity. This internment, however, seems to have drawn a line and caused their ethnicity to distinguish and label them, ignoring the American citizenships of the Nisei, which must have played a huge role in widening the gap in their negotiation of identity.

In 1943, the War Relocation Authority ruled to let the Nisei enter into the American society and continue living their lives as long as they showed their loyalty to the American government and proved that they found a job waiting for them outside of the camp. For Nisei students, however, acceptance into a university sufficed for their release (216). This reentrance into American life would mean significant changes for the Nisei because they would not be allowed to resettle on the West Coast, rather they had to go east and settle there. According to Monica, this resettlement on the East Coast meant a new challenge and opportunity to hold onto her life that she thought she had lost due to the internment:

Up till then America for me had meant the lovely city of Seattle, a small Japanese community and a desperate struggle to be just myself. Now that I had shed my past, I hoped that I might come to know another aspect of America which would inject strength into my hyphenated Americanism instead of pulling it apart. (216)

Monica here puts forward the difference between her pre-internment life and the after-internment period and what they mean to her. Her pre-internment life revolved mainly in Seattle and her mundane activities, growing up, discovering, and negotiating her identities. The post-internment, on the other hand, seemed to offer surprises, new challenges and meant regeneration for her. Her tone sounds like she is hopeful and willing to leave her past behind to mend her war-broken American and Japanese identities, hoping to strengthen them and knit them up to each other once again.

As Monica describes her experience living in the Midwest, she makes sure of how she was cautioned to behave well and harmoniously so that the Caucasians would not be threatened by her, causing Monica to act like she was invisible. Eventually, she finds out what the public would think about her: “but I discovered that an Oriental face, being somewhat of a rarity in the Midwest, made people stop in their tracks, stare, follow and question me. At first I was dismayed with such attention, but I learned that it was out of curiosity and not hostility that they stared” (219-20). Monica suggests that while the mainstream life and the Caucasians living on the West Coast had rather a bad perception of the Japanese, and other Asian people, the Midwestern people, on the contrary, had rather a vague idea of what they were like because of the low density of Asian immigrants in the Midwest. This fact seems to have turned out to Monica’s advantage because the Midwestern people did not have any prejudice against them, which meant that she would not be labeled as an enemy. Monica also mentions how Midwesterners considered the Chinese for their loyal friendship with the U.S. government and how they mistook her for being Chinese and thought that Monica was a famous Chinese celebrity (220). Monica, moreover, touches upon how her Asian features made her look like she was almost like a tourist, which brought certain kinds of social manners: “When I stepped into a department store or a market, a clerk would spot me instantly and rush up to wait on me, burning with curiosity. The clerks were invariably pleasant and sociable and they complimented me on my English” (220). Monica here shows implicitly how the Midwesterners were living in their small bubbles, far from ethnic diversity. She also suggests that even though she was welcomed kindly and treated respectfully in the public services, the bafflement and admiration of people upon her English seem to suggest that she was far away from being considered as an

American due to her Asian features, which provides insight about the mentality and the social structure of the environment she was surrounded within those days.

The last chapter, "Deeper into the Land", serves almost like a resolution for Monica's negotiation of identities, and acknowledgment and appreciation of her ethnicity. As it is observed, Monica talks about her visit to her parents who were still behind the fences at the Minidoka camp and how that trip made her feel like and reminded of her the bitter times she had: "When I stepped into our old barracks room, I felt as if I had returned to a shell of a prison" (231). She, further, explains that some Isseis, who desired and hoped to back to the West Coast, had to stay at the internment camp because they were not allowed to go back to the West Coast unless the government would lift the restrictions, which included Monica's parents as well (231). Before she leaves the camp, Monica pays a visit to some of her acquaintances. Perhaps the most important one, in terms of her identity negotiation, is her father's friend Mr. Sawada. As it is revealed, Monica had heard from his father about Mr. Sawada's son falling a martyr in Italy during World War 2 after he volunteered to fight for the U.S. army, voting "YES-YES" on the questionnaire to prove his loyalty to the U.S. government. As Mr. Sawada and Monica continue their conversation, Mr. Sawada lets Monica read the last letter his son had written to him. As Monica reads his words and listens to Mr. Sawada, she realizes how much they had sacrificed and still how Mr. Sawada and his deceased son sounds grateful to the U.S. despite the ill-treatment against Japanese Americans and accepts it as only a predictable and natural cause of the war and understands it better as an old, wise man, which George reflects in his letter, quoting his father's last remark: "'It is for the best. For the good of many, a few must suffer. This is your sacrifice. Accept it as such and you will no longer be bitter'" (235).

After a couple of days, it was time for Monica to bid farewell to her parents and leave the camp once again. Monica shows how her mother expressed her resentment and took the responsibility for the cause that was cast upon her children on the ground that she was of Japanese ancestry during their final conversation, "When the war came and we were all evacuated, Papa and I were heartsick. We felt terribly bad about being your Japanese parents." It could be interpreted that even though Monica's parents were the first generation without any citizenship and differed from their Nisei children

culturally and growing up, immersed in American culture, and had nothing to do with the war and internment, they seem to realize how harder it must have been for their U.S. born children who also had an American identity hyphenated by their ethnic Japanese identity, which caused so much trouble for them. In a very unexpected response, Monica tells her mother about how she feels about her identity and what she has learned so far:

No, don't say those things, Mama, please. If only you knew how much I have changed about being a Nisei. It wasn't such a tragedy. I don't resent my Japanese blood anymore. I'm proud of it, in fact, because of you and the Issei who've struggled so much for us. It's really nice to be born into two cultures, like getting a real bargain in life, two for the price of one. The hardest part, I guess, is the growing up, but after that, it can be interesting and stimulating. I used to feel like a two-headed monstrosity, but now I find that two heads are better than one. (236)

After all the hardship and troubles she has been through, Monica expresses her gratitude for belonging to two worlds, even though one of them made her life somewhat difficult considering a monocultural, homogeneous, and predominantly Anglo-American culture and society. Her father, additionally, reflects his ideas and inferences about what America meant to him as a first-generation immigrant and how the actions of the U.S. government took its toll on their Nisei children, revealing them what America is capable of doing based on discrimination and racism, and hoping that the Nisei perceive America from a wider angle now. He also states that the loss of the Issei, in terms of economy, racism, and the restrictions to attain American citizenship, is bigger due to this war and internment (236-37).

Monica's last remarks about her parents, seem to support this great loss as she was saying goodbye to them and noticing: "They looked like wistful immigrants. I wondered when they would be able to leave their no-man's land, pass through the legal barrier and become naturalized citizens. Then I thought, in America, many things are possible" (237). As Monica suggests the American dream is still achievable against all

the odds and that it means different things to each individual. She also implies her positive thinking about her parents' becoming American citizens someday just like she is and get what they deserve upon all the hard work and sacrifices they shed in the United States. Monica, lastly, elucidates on how her perception of her identity negotiation has evolved and also expresses how she has managed to tie her American and Japanese identities up together and how content she is to live with two identities and belong to two cultures intertwined into one compared to what she used to think as a "two-headed freak" when she was little:

I had discovered a deeper, stronger pulse in the American scene. I was going back into its main stream, still with my Oriental eyes, but with an entirely different outlook, for now I felt more like a whole person instead of a sadly split personality. The Japanese, and the American parts of me were now blended into one. (238)

As it is seen, Monica finally manages to put an end to her negotiation of identities and bridges the gap between her two worlds. Her "connected" identities make her feel like she finally belongs to both cultures because she embodies them both in one body.

Overall, Monica too starts her narrative with her conflicting identities, describing herself as someone weird, which shows her identity dilemma and her lack of knowledge about how to acknowledge her authenticity as being bicultural. Monica's discourse at first makes her look like a more assimilated American-self rather than Japanese-American which accounts for the environment she has grown up socially and identified herself as American to belong like her American friends. Her realization of how she could unify her identities and live as a whole person occurs when she is outside of the camp, studying at university. As she joins the outer world, she gains a whole understanding of how her ethnic members are treated by the U.S. government that she thought she fully belonged. Her visit to see her parents and the letter of her deceased friend make her realize that her Japanese side, too, is valuable to acknowledge and co-exist with her American identity.

Critically analyzing all these internment narratives, it becomes clear that all these Japanese-Women had gone through the same phenomena of identity dilemma, however, in different ways. They all show how their identities often fluctuated while growing up and before the internment and during the internment. Their fluctuation of identity is a way of negotiation on where they belong or where they should belong. Mary Matsuda Gruenewald often enunciates her frustration and disappointment because of the internment. She constantly goes between how she manages to cope with the trauma of living in an internment camp and her hopelessness as if the internment will never end and she will never be free. Her acceptance of herself and situating her identities takes a long time and is triggered by the pilgrimage she takes to an internment camp. Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, on the other hand, blames herself and her parents because they are Japanese, and internalizes the racism to find a reason behind their internment. Jeanne, furthermore, tries so hard to be recognized as only American by consciously and willingly performing herself as an American girl, and ignoring her Japanese identity to blend into mainstream American society where she is only acceptable by her American identity, and not Japanese identity, nor Japanese-American identity as assimilation and monoculturalism was the center of the U.S government and American culture. Monica Sone, moreover, gives great detail on her life before the internment. Her descriptions of the internment camps and living conditions are short. She, however, truly portrays how a Japanese-American family lived, what they did to make money, how they traveled to Japan to visit her grandparents and how she experienced another kind of ostracization. It is only half the narration where she starts to talk about the internment. Her acknowledgment of her identities and constructed one takes much shorter than the other writers. Her reconstruction of identity, however, differs from Gruenewald and Houston. While they recognize both their Japanese and American selves and position themselves easily, Monica blends her two identities into one.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, identity theories, political and historical configuration of American identity, stereotypes, the racial formation theory, the concept of racism, and the lenses of critical race theory and critical Asian theory have been applied to analyze the concept of identity that pervades through the selected internment narratives. These internment narratives, in response, reveal themselves as counter-narratives against the institutionalized racism and assimilation ideology of the United States that specifically targeted Japanese-Americans during World War II. These narratives then not only provide a close introspection into the experiences and struggles of the Japanese-American authors, but also become an area where the authors reconfigure their identities through negotiating, self-formation, and self-representation. These authors have to forge themselves to understand what their national and cultural identities mean to them and find a way out for their subjective process of identification and negotiation of their national and cultural affiliations. In this sense, these internment narratives become a collective voice of cultural resistance and opposition to the oppressive power, the United States in its historical context. As these narratives are innately products of the social and historical context of the United States, the identity formation of these authors becomes political and ideological. These narrations, moreover, become an act of rewriting history, giving authority to the oppressed ethnic subjects to talk about their experience and give insight to their struggles rather than other people writing about the internment history of which they were not part.

The identity theories of poststructuralist, postmodernist, and postcolonial scholars all resonate throughout these narratives, demonstrating the ways and strategies the Japanese-American authors figured out to survive in the WASP society and challenged the oppressive ideologies of the United States to deal with their identity dilemma and their process of self-identification through their discursive acts and behaviors, and contemplations about the place where they belong. In Althusser's and Foucault's terms, the United States becomes the repressive state that uses ideological state apparatuses to subject its own subjects and oppress them systematically, disregarding their rights and ostracizing them based on their race. These narratives

clearly highlight the ideological state apparatuses as they depict how they felt like they were in prison behind the barbed wires with armed guards watching them over from watchtowers. The identity of Japanese-Americans is therefore reduced and essentialized under one category as only Japanese and their American identity is disregarded by the state power. In Stuart Hall's terms, all these stories of the authors prove how identity is a never-ending process and how one creates their identity through representation. In terms of Hall's cultural identity concept, these authors reinvent themselves as the context they find themselves constantly changes historically and socially. Homi Bhabha's concept of third-space also reveals in these narratives through the negotiation of their ethnic/cultural and national identities from a new perspective that becomes the third space to make sense of everything going on around them, to interpret their fragmented identities, and to cope with the internment trauma and identity dilemma. This third space eventually allows them to consciously and deliberately recreate their authentic selves through their discursive acts. In a similar vein, Jack Derrida's notion of *différance* is also observable through the negotiation process of these authors as they have fragmented identities, rather than one absolute identity, their interpretations of themselves and their acts determine who they are through their subjectivity. And as from the perspective of Anthony Giddens, as subjectivity is always an ongoing process depending on the social, historical, and political contexts, these narrative reveal how the subjectivity of the authors change considering their lives before, during and after the internment, as well as through the process of negotiating their identities.

These internment narratives, furthermore, expose how race and racial formation in the United States are not haphazard phenomena as in biology; rather, they are socio-politically conceptualized notions that the state and society in power use to categorize and subjugate its citizens. All three authors make it explicit that they were interned due to their "race" and that their American citizenship did not prevent this treatment. Based on race, stereotyping Asian Americans, and especially Japanese-Americans also emerge in these narratives. The authors express how the media and public portrayed the Japanese as evil, childish with crooked teeth and spectacles. They further exclaim that these stereotypes helped promote anti-Japanese propaganda during World War II.

Mary Gruenewald's story reveals how she undoubtedly and faithfully trusted the U.S. government and how it failed her. This internment experience made her realize that her ethnicity was the core reason behind this treatment. Her affiliation to the United States becomes weaker as her struggles increase. She finds solace in her family and around other Japanese people who shared the same fate. Even though she had thought she was a part of the American society as she was born and raised in that environment, she never thought that she had to be treated differently. The internment, however, proves that she is actually different from white Americans and that is how they are treated based on their race. Although she resents the United States, she cannot let her national affiliation go away completely because her American identity is a part of her, too. Since she is also aware of the fact that proving her loyalty as an American citizen is the only way to exist, she performs her civic duties for her survival even though she realizes that her ethnic identity has to be subordinated. At this point, however, Mary does not disregard her ethnic identity completely; rather, she chooses to perform through her American identity. Her visit to the Minidoka camp with her fellow Japanese-American internees reminds her of the past and how she had to suppress her ethnic identity because of the government and the harsh conditions. After so many years, this visit makes her realize that she no longer has to oppress her ethnic identity because now she acknowledges both sides and can combine them without any fear for her survival.

Jeanne Houston's negotiation process involves her desire to be invisible as she realizes she cannot fully exist as Japanese in a WASP culture, that is why she forces herself to perform like an American without her ethnic background. Her desire to be like her white friends and her embarrassment about her Japanese parents reveal how the war and internment affected her psychology and how it enforced assimilation unconsciously as the only way to survive. Jeanne takes 25 years to come to terms with her ethnicity in her visit to Manzanar. This location site brings her memories back and causes her to realize that what had happened to them was indeed cruel and that they had nothing to do with it; they were not responsible for such a treatment. That is when she acknowledges that her Japanese ethnicity was not to blame and that it was ideologically used by the United States to keep them behind the barbed wires. This visit to the

internment camp, then, resolves the wartime trauma that caused her to doubt her identity. As a result, this place becomes a metaphor for the turning point where the lives of Japanese-Americans started anew and ended for their immigrant parents.

Nisei Daughter demonstrates that the concept of identity is actually a formation process that one has to figure out throughout their lives. As it is observed, Monica Sone begins her narrative by asserting that she was quite surprised when she found out that she was Japanese as her mother told her. This realization of her ethnic identity and race commences her search for identity. Puzzled by the two identities that she inherited through descent and consent causes Monica to describe herself as "two-headed freak" Monica Sone's visit to Japan with her family, moreover, reveal the limbic state where Sone finds herself clearly. As she observes, she is not quite perceived as Japanese either by her own people based on her behavior and way of dressing. This realization puzzles her sense of identity even more. Throughout her negotiation process, Monica, at the end of the narration, finally realizes how Japanese-Americans sacrificed themselves for the United States which made her realize that how her ethnicity is not to be blamed for and how she can reconcile her two identities together and coexist within those identities.

Before and during the Japanese internment, the National American identity was the only true and undisputable identity that everyone born in the U.S. associated themselves with. Awareness of ethnic identity, or the cherishment of ethnic identities, thus ethnic pride was out of the question. Through multiculturalism and the civil rights movement, ethnic pride arouse and ethnicities came to be celebrated rather than be subordinated under the national American identity.

The lack of civil rights movement and knowledge of diversity before and during World War II caused them to negotiate their identities. That is why the Nisei are often mentioned as the silent generation because the postmodern notion of diversity and the concept of fragmented identities did not exist in those days. Essentialized identity dictated by the U.S. government could not be challenged. Being American and identifying oneself with it, thus, were the only way to survive for the Nisei. The Issei, on the other hand, was already considered immigrants, and not citizens, because they were prohibited from getting citizenship.

The internment, thus, becomes the catalyzer, reminding them that their race precedes their American identity in the eyes of the government and white American society. Americanization, furthermore, is enforced through war and internment. These representations of identity negotiation, then, reveal the ideology of assimilation through the essentialist identity model, racism, and lack of diversity. The internment, concurrently, marginalizes the Japanese by treating them as "the other", depriving them of the American identity, their U.S. citizenship, which counters with the melting pot theory. It, directly or indirectly, causes them to negotiate between their identities and find a meaning and a name to label themselves with. I argue, therefore, that the internment had multiple consequences on the Nisei, firstly, they faced institutionalized racism, and got marginalized which taught them that their American citizenship holds no value. Secondly, to show and prove their loyalty to the U.S. government, they tried their best to accept such treatment and go along with it. They were already different than their first-generation immigrant parents. Thirdly, thus they hold both cultures' values and notions due to their upbringing in American culture and Japanese culture, which caused a war on their mind about where they belong to and whether it could be possible to blend both American and Japanese identities. Because of the internment, now they saw that ethnicity and race were a big issue for existing in the American society, and the only way to get accepted was through their national affiliation to the government even though that meant some of them had to suppress their ethnic identity.

As identity formation is a never-ending process, they all, at some point, realize how they can identify themselves as both Japanese and American without feeling any guilt and fear. All these narratives demonstrate the monocultural environment of the United States and the assimilation ideology through the essentialist, one absolute identity imposition by the state before the civil rights movement took place until the 1960s. Even though their subjectivity and ways of dealing with the trauma and identity dilemma show similarities and differences, they all prove the effect of the war and internment on their identity, causing them to negotiate their authentic selves. These narratives also reveal how identity is political, a strategic way of existence, and fragmented rather than unified and essentialized. These stories prove that identity formation is subjective, discursive, and contingent upon the social and historical

contexts. These internment narratives are together also become counternarratives challenging the disruptive history, politics, and racism within the United States. Writing these narratives, further, enables them to make their voices be heard and reason their past struggles from a perspective of their present selves at the time they wrote these narratives. The act of writing their stories, finally, signal that their generation is no longer silent and not afraid to expose the harsh reality from their perspective as oppressed ethnic minority group during World War II, which brings forward the rewriting of their history by themselves, not by someone else.



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This thesis witnessed quite contradictory and unprecedented events that had happened around me and the whole world. First, I held my dear nephew, Çınar, in my arms when he came into our lives in January 2019. The next thing was the shocking outbreak of the COVID-19, which turned our lives upside down. Finally, I had to bid farewell to my beloved late grandmother, Şükran Bideci, whom we lost in April 2020.

I was on an emotional roller coaster throughout this process, but I have grown up, challenged myself, and seen my capabilities. I have also learned to channel my frustration into an effort through despair, hopelessness, and my yearning to “breathe free.” I hope that this product of the present-hell I am living in will be the ticket to a better future or a future-paradise as I would like to imagine.

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