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A Japanese Santa Claus: A Nikkei Subject and Lévi-Strauss's Gift Theory in *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest*

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Abstract: Japanese American writer Karen Tei Yamashita's first novel, *Through the Arc of the Rainforest* (1990), portrays protagonist Kazumasa Ishimaru as "a Japanese Santa Claus", depicted as having a plastic ball spinning in front of his face. Yamashita presents this magic realist hero as a satire of Japan in the 1990s, which became the developed nation needed to support the developing world under the new Marshall Plan. Focusing on Kazumasa's participation in charity, this essay explores the gift economy embodied by this Japanese immigrant character. Inspired by Claude Lévi-Strauss's 1952 essay "Burned-out Santa Claus", Kazumasa's Nikkei subject position not only criticizes American capitalism but also Brazil's postcolonial mentality. Supporting the idea that Lévi-Strauss sympathizes with Jean-Jacques Rousseau's concept of innocence, the last part of the essay probes the idea of Kazumasa as an innocent subject who challenges the dichotomy between American capitalism and postcolonial Brazil.

Keywords: Santa Claus; Claude Lévi-Strauss; gift theory; Nikkei subject; magic realism; Jean-Jacques Rousseau; innocence



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At the beginning of her first full-length postmodern novel, *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest* (1990), Japanese American writer Karen Tei Yamashita mentions French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss¹. Yamashita visited São Paulo, Brazil, in the 1970s for field research on Japanese immigrants and probably likened herself to the Jewish French anthropologist, who had devoted himself to indigenous studies in Brazil. Yamashita sought to observe Japanese immigrants who implement their own kind of agriculture in Brazil from the perspective of someone who shares their Japanese background. However, what Yamashita saw was not the Nikkei as an ethnic minority, such as the indigenous people that Lévi-Strauss encountered in the remote forests of the Amazon, but rather the Nikkei as a colonizing subject of the developing world.

We can imagine the feelings of Yamashita, who wrote her second novel based on the history of Japanese immigrant groups in Brazil, from an anecdote that comes from when she was finishing *Through the Arc*. During her stay in Brazil from 1975 to 1984, Yamashita conducted interviews in a Japanese community of socialist Christians, the model for her second historical novel, *Brazil-Marú* (1992)². After collecting the materials for this novel, however, she became stuck writing the novel that was supposed to be her first work³. Thus, she started to write *Through the Arc*, completing it before *Brazil-Marú*. Yamashita projects the image of a Nikkei colonist who cultivates the Amazon and develops a business onto Kantaro Uno, the central character of *Brazil-Marú*. On the other hand, with her use of magic realism, she interposes a rebellious element in the representation of the colonial Japanese through Kazumasa Ishimaru, a Japanese immigrant character in *Through the Arc*.

The problem with understanding Yamashita's works in the framework of existing American ethnic literature lies in the fact that the Japanese characters in her novels were not based on the shared historical consciousness of oppressed Japanese Americans in the United States, i.e., collective memories such as plantation labor and internment camps. For example, the main characters in *Through the Arc* and *Brazil-Marú* are portrayed as colonial

or upper-middle class Nikkei subjects in South America⁴. However, this Nikkei nature provides an impression of rootlessness in the everyday environment of American society rather than an essential quality rooted in the nation of its origin and historical elements passed down through generations, even in Yamashita's *Tropic of Orange* (1997), *I Hotel* (2010), and her latest work, *Sansei and Sensibility* (2020). Along with the magic realism and the satirical messages of Gabriel García Márquez and Jorge Luis Borges, the South American writers who influenced Yamashita, her works question the sense of American studies scholars who belong to the American state⁵. Like Garcia Marquez's magic realist hero, an old man with enormous wings, Yamashita presents Kazumasa's Japanese diaspora as a cultural Other, but also includes a satirical portrait of Japan's 1990s geopolitical status vis à vis the United States.

Because of the capitalistic portrait of this Japanese protagonist, the final scene of Kazumasa's quiet and happy life in the Amazon is open to debate. The novel focuses on a young Japanese immigrant who comes to Matacão, a fictional location in Brazil, and the plastic ball that floats around his forehead. Kazumasa features as a storyteller who talks about the lives of the people he becomes involved with. At present, *Through the Arc* is generally considered as an anti-globalization novel due to its depiction of the theme of the environment and the employment of the magic realist style, and it can be interpreted as a social satire about the capitalist desires of those involved with Matacão and the destruction of nature that follows in accordance with postmodernism⁶. Such an interpretation suggests that Yamashita seeks to criticize Kazumasa's Japanese background, because he is represented as a Nikkei colonist who exploits Brazil's natural resources to develop his business. However, the novel simultaneously depicts Kazumasa as an "innocent" farmer who escapes from the apocalyptic space of Matacão and spends the rest of his life peacefully in the great forest at the end of the novel. Although the American, European, and indigenous characters involved in his business experience a tragic demise, with Kazumasa seemingly the cause of the apocalyptic end to Matacão, he survives. What intention can we surmise for Yamashita?

Critics have focused on Kazumasa's dysfunctional nature and his "happy" ending. We can easily regard this character as an antihero or trickster because of the novel's categorization as postmodern literature⁷. As Ursula Heise points out, the storyline that ends happily for Kazumasa significantly deviates from the destruction of nature, the novel's theme, and we can even consider it "a flaw" in the work (Heise 2008, pp. 104–5). Jinqi Ling, focusing on Yamashita's spatial politics in this novel, also concludes that this pastoral ending displays the "satirist's inability to identify any fundamental social agency for changing the fallen world she denounces" (Ling 2012, p. 110). Regarding Kazumasa's Nikkei subject, which interrupts the discourse of an anti-globalization novel, the work only emphasizes its dysfunctional unreality and does not examine it further.

However, it is by no means meaningless to seek some significance in Kazumasa's Japanese background if we consider that this Nikkei figure, who plays a pivotal role in the story, is the only Asian immigrant present in the novel, despite the text's magic realist style that scatters characters of various ethnicities throughout the story⁸. Amy Bahng, in her argument on this literary piece as a piece of speculative fiction that disturbingly resists the narrative of enlightenment, describes Kazumasa's ball not only as a representation of Japan as "hungry for resource-rich territories" in the 1930s, but also as reflecting "more contemporary investments of Japanese global capital in Latin America" (Bahng 2018, p. 35). Bahng's point is insightful for the analysis of Kazumasa's acts of giving as a Japanese businessperson in the 1990s. If a Japanese person with a ball in front of his face represents Japan's capitalist and imperialist desire, the presentation of Kazumasa as a farmer "without a ball" in front of his face at the end of the novel takes on more autonomous connotations, demonstrating Yamashita's "speculative" perspective regarding this Nikkei subject from a different cultural context.

This is because Kazumasa's seemingly dysfunctional nature appears to allude to the heterogeneous traits of the Nikkei in Brazil, where globalization was taking place in

the 1990s. At the same time, such a quality seems to be related to racial characteristics, constructed based on Lévi-Strauss's anthropological viewpoint mentioned above. This paper, therefore, aims to reexamine Yamashita's use of magic realism in this novel from the perspective of Lévi-Strauss's anthropological gift theory. Regarding the method, this paper notes that Kazumasa's nickname, "the Japanese Santa Claus" (p. 61), refers to Lévi-Strauss's early essay "Le Père Noël supplicié" ("Father Christmas Burned at the Stake"), and focuses on his presentation of the gift giver at Christmas—Santa Claus—as an alien trait in Christian nations. Next, this paper focuses on Kazumasa's acts of giving in the novel and analyzes how his position as a Japanese immigrant reflects Lévi-Strauss's Santa Claus. Finally, this paper attempts to clarify the novel's storyline, in which Kazumasa's "innocence" resonates with Lévi-Strauss's solitary subject by criticizing Brazil's postcolonial mentality under U.S. capitalism.

Although we have already pointed out the danger of viewing globalism as a postmodern phenomenon and considering it separately from history, Lévi-Strauss demonstrated in the 1950s that globalism was a phenomenon that could appear under various historical conditions⁹. Based on an incident in 1951, his essay "Le Père Noël supplicié" criticizes the destruction of various local cultures within a nation under globalism from a historical perspective. This paper pays attention to that essay, among many of his works, because we can recognize not only that the novel depicts Kazumasa's acts of giving as a satire of the capitalist aspect of Japan in the 1990s, but also that these acts involve appropriating elements of non-Christian culture.

Lévi-Strauss's essay considers the Marshall Plan, the American gift policy implemented to help European countries after World War II, and reveals his unique view of France. Because of the Marshall Plan, many American products flowed into France, which suffered unprecedented financial difficulties after the war; this brought about rapid Americanization in France. In particular, Santa Claus, who travels around France at Christmastime, was regarded as a symbol of American capitalism that this gift policy brought about. The French Catholic Church responded to the situation by "sentencing this American icon, Santa Claus, to death" by public burning in 1951 under the pretext that he represented the root evil of American globalism that defiled the nativity of Christ and commercialized Christmas.

My argument centers on the symbolic ambiguity of Santa Claus, the immigrant giver whom the Catholic state sought to drive out. Lévi-Strauss suggests the potential existence of an element of a heterogeneous culture under Santa Claus's mask of American capitalism. Before Christian missionaries, Christmas in Europe was simply a ritual to offer gifts to the dead in the name of comforting the souls of ancestors and the god of nature. Originally, Santa Claus was an icon from Asia Minor in the latter half of the third century and was unrelated to European Christianity. It is also thought that the ritual of gift giving is similar to the Native American Pueblo Indians' rites of nature worship, kachina worship, and the "Demon" Saturnalia in the Roman era¹⁰. In that case, although the French Catholic Church "executes" Santa Claus as a manifestation of American globalism, in reality, this icon is merely an aggregation of things that represent a "cultural hotch-potch" that deviates from Christian principles (Ibid., p. 39). If this is the case, it is possible to apply the interpretation that this act was an attempt by Catholicism, the national ideology of France, to wipe out various cultures inside the country by projecting the image of a different culture onto the icon called Santa Claus, rendering it the "Other".

This Santa Claus narrative suggests the duality in this immigrant giver who deviates from Christian principles—an aggregate of heterogeneous cultures centering on an embodiment of American capitalism and nature worship. In *Through the Arc*, Yamashita projects the above duality onto an ethnic Japanese man called Kazumasa, and rewrites the Santa Claus theory by placing it within the historical framework of the Brazilian Nikkei.

Before analyzing Yamashita's theory of Santa Claus, let us first examine the position the Nikkei occupy in Brazil. The Nikkei began to acquire the image of an elite group between the 1960s and 1980s because of Japan's rapid economic growth. However, even in

the 1990s, after Japan's bubble economy had burst, the Nikkei were regarded as a group that could enhance national strength and a model that Brazil could follow, demonstrated when Tsuda Takeyuki called the Nikkei in Brazil "a group that receives positive discrimination" (Takeyuki 2003, p. 73).

However, there is already a foundation for accepting this Japanese diaspora in Brazil, because the idea of "cultural cannibalism" is rooted in nationalism, whereby a country enhances national power by fully recognizing its economic weaknesses and gladly subsumes the cultures of other countries¹¹. For Brazil, the model minority is not related to the Western and Portuguese compradors who directly evoke the history of the European colonial era, but rather postmodern Asian immigrants. Brazil wants the Nikkei to be a minority group that coexists in the nation but is never racially assimilated. The Nikkei are inassimilable immigrants whom the country welcomes, as they develop their businesses independently and strengthen the national power of Brazil. Takashi Maeyama also called the Nikkei a "non-Western modernization model" (Maeyama 1997, p. 367).

According to Lévi-Strauss's theory of Santa Claus, Kazumasa, the Japanese Santa Claus, obviously fits the image of Japanese businesspeople in the 1990s who adopted American-style strategies in Brazil. In fact, the 1990s was also a time when Asian (especially Chinese) businesspeople assumed the strategy of American capitalism and were engaged in transnational activities based in the developing world¹². A link is formed between the image of the Japanese who came to Brazil in the 1990s under the influence of such Asian businesspeople and the image of the Nikkei elite who emphasize Japan as their country of origin. We can recognize this link in the superficial depiction of Kazumasa, a Japanese millionaire with a ball floating around his forehead—a Japanese immigrant who exhibits the capitalist "empire" of Japan in the developing world (Lesser 2002, pp. 38–39). An American businessperson, T. B. Tweep, develops a plastic business and earns enormous wealth. In contrast, Kazumasa is a good-natured man and generously gives money to the poor without expecting anything in return, which earns him the nickname of the "Japanese Santa Claus" (p. 61).

Kazumasa also presents a heterogeneous quality in that he engages in giving while becoming involved in the commercialized economy of Brazil, which is rapidly becoming capitalist. In most cases, we might regard the foreign qualities of immigrants negatively in a nation-state. However, this aspect of the Nikkei in the Republic of Brazil stresses its particular historical background: it formed its identity not through exclusion by the state or social oppression, but through the state's request that it remain "foreign".

In fact, Kazumasa's act of giving is a satire of Japan's economic situation in the 1990s. The Marshall Plan in the 1950s, which forms the core of Lévi-Strauss's theory of Santa Claus, led to the idea of the "New Marshall Plan"—that Japan should provide aid to the developing world because it had developed a surplus economy by the 1980s and so was an advanced donor country. The latter half of the 1980s also saw Japan becoming the number-one creditor country in the world, whereas the United States shifted from being a large creditor country to a large debtor country. Japan suddenly became the focus of attention as a surplus country, with the associated responsibility. However, Japan's economic power to assist the developing world in place of the exhausted United States was not at the level of a national-scale policy, as was the case with the United States. Instead, Japan could provide support merely at the local and individual levels through businesses, etc.¹³

Because of that, Japan's international economic aid has also been described as "faceless aid", as it does not showcase national politics compared with other countries (especially the United States) (Nagata 1990, pp. 236–37). Moreover, Japan was the only Asian economy that achieved high growth in this period, and was described as an alien nation that suddenly emerged in the developing world compared with other established Western economies¹⁴. The vague depiction of Kazumasa's alien appearance is consistent with this aspect of Japan's international reputation in the 1990s. His existence as an individual certainly remains fuzzy throughout the novel, and despite the wonderfully striking visual image of a Japanese man with a ball floating in front of his forehead, we do not know in detail what

Kazumasa looks like, except simply that he is a young Japanese millionaire with black hair. When *Forbes* magazine published his picture, it reported only that his facial expression and facial features were “obscure” (p. 87).

Adding to this ambiguous portrait, despite Kazumasa’s devotion to giving, people do not thank him, and the poor overwhelm him with more demands (p. 148). When we review the novel from the perspective of giving, Kazumasa is obviously a satire of Japan in the 1990s, expressing its ambiguity in the historical framework. In fact, Japan in the 1990s was in a vague position between Brazil and the United States in terms of international politics. Brazil had followed the United States economically until the 1980s. However, it began to advocate for independence from the superpower through structural reforms as its fundamental diplomatic aim in the 1990s¹⁵. On the other hand, the Nikkei became less influential, even though they were once significant trading partners in Brazil: compared to the 1970s, a boom period for Japanese businesses, Brazil lost ground to Southeast Asia in the 1980s and then to China in the 1990s. The vague and featureless physical depiction of Kazumasa and his unappreciated giving therefore reflect the economic situation of Japan.

The act of giving that Kazumasa performs as a relief effort ends in failure. Although he makes a fortune in Brazil because of the luck brought by the ball floating around his forehead, he spends most of the money on the relief support agency he sets up. However, the things Kazumasa gives to people through relief efforts are not what they truly need.

He [Kazumasa] realized further that his pleasure in granting any wish was as ephemeral as the wish itself: a woman who received a washing machine had no plumbing to run water to it; a family with a new refrigerator had no food to store in it; wheelchairs broke down without oil and repair; medical facilities had no personnel to run them. (p. 148)

His act of giving without demanding anything in return arises from Japan’s sense of obligation, tinted with pity toward Brazil. Such an act obviously cannot win the sympathy of Brazilians. In addition, Kazumasa himself is a “parachute kid” who cannot survive in the competitive Japanese society of the 1990s¹⁶. His mother, out of concern for his future in Japan, decides to send him to South America, where people are relatively welcoming to immigrants and engage in less competition (pp. 9–10). There is a substantial psychological chasm between Kazumasa and the Brazilian working class who are forced to live hand to mouth. He is unable to give gifts that meet their demands, which frustrates him even more, and he realizes the futility of his giving as he becomes aware of the limit of his ability to save people.

Let us note that Kazumasa’s innocent personality drives this anticommercial activity of giving, beyond the fact that he is simply a satire of Japan in 1990s Brazil. Yamashita often applies words such as “innocence”, “infant”, “simple”, and “child” to Kazumasa, an adult male, to emphasize his peculiar personality¹⁷. This is because of the ball, “a tiny impudent planet” that stands between him and others, protecting him from being contaminated by ideologies. Kazumasa, like Rousseau’s *Émile*, is free from the capitalist desires by which the other characters are haunted. His innocence is manifested in the character’s act of giving. Having made a fortune, he puts most of his money into his support agency. This relief fund is distributed based on the method of “stealing from the rich and giving to the poor” (p. 81). It produces “recycling capital” by taking the money from the upper class and directly releasing it to the working class (p. 81). Although greedy people sometimes deceive the good-natured Kazumasa and demand that he give more than they need, he does not notice that they are deceiving him and diligently recycles capital according to the “pure” ethos of salvation. What was Yamashita’s chief intention when she inserted such a childlike, innocent quality into a satire of the Japanese diaspora in the 1990s?

Lévi-Strauss’s devotion to Jean-Jacques Rousseau is helpful in understanding Kazumasa’s Nikkei subject. Although Rousseau’s theory has not been well received by postmodern or poststructuralist critics, Lévi-Strauss positively evaluates the Rousseauian solitary figure as an autonomous element uncontaminated by knowledge. As T. M. Luhmann states (Luhmann 1990), “Be in the world rather than be knowledgeable of it” (Lévi-Strauss

1995, p. 408); Kazumasa throughout the novel occupies the position of an innocent observer impervious to others' disastrous demises. Such innocence, which Yamashita again depicted in her second novel, *Brazil-Marú*, recalls Kazumasa's inassimilable nature. As the quote from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile* at the beginning of *Brazil-Marú* demonstrates, innocence indicates the state of human freedom—the natural state—uncontrolled by civilization in Yamashita's novels. The character Émile can acknowledge himself without relating himself to others.

He [Émile] considers himself without regard to others and finds it good that others do not think of him. He demands nothing of anyone and believes he owes nothing to anyone. He is alone in human society. . . . He has lived satisfied, happy and free insofar as nature has permitted. (*Brazil-Marú*, p. 2)

Innocent refers to a mental state unaffected by ideologies as well as the human trait of being self-contained. Lévi-Strauss discovered the same Rousseauian solitary subject in *Tristes Tropiques*. Recognizing the common ground these theorists share, Yamashita presents Kazumasa as "being in the world" without being contaminated by any ideologies.

This solitary attitude indicates the basis of the heterogeneous quality whereby an immigrant becomes a member of the Republic of Brazil by maintaining a natural state of innocence, staying out of the affairs of others, and displaying differences from others. What Lévi-Strauss faced in his research on the indigenous people in Brazil was the reality of the Republic of Brazil, where people of numerous ethnic backgrounds maintain cultural diversity due to their inassimilable qualities. In this case, we can argue that Yamashita, who is aligned with Lévi-Strauss's cultural anthropology, was also trying to find an independent and alien quality whereby people coexist with other cultures as a component of diversity rather than being integrated into a multicultural state through assimilation into the group of Japanese Brazilians.

As mentioned previously, Lévi-Strauss's Santa Claus bears the face of a cultural Other under a capitalist mask, and his act of giving evokes the ancient nature worship that humans conducted before the time of Christian missionaries. In nature worship, giving is a human act of turning nature into the "Other" and expressing gratitude by respecting and recognizing it as an independent personality. The sense of coexistence is prioritized before the integration with nature.

This idea of coexistence is reproduced in the relationship between Kazumasa and the ball in *Through the Arc*. The ball's identity is a spirit of nature that sleeps deep underground in Matacão, Brazil (p. 3), and it declares that it is a possessing spirit that has been reborn in this world to exert revenge against humans who exploit nature. However, despite this claim, the ball does not possess Kazumasa himself, the very provider of its host body. In addition, although Kazumasa cannot communicate smoothly with the people around him, he can freely communicate and sympathize with this natural spirit without exchanging words (pp. 5–6).

Despite his inability to communicate with people, the novel depicts Kazumasa as a man who is able to hear subaltern voices in nature. When he attends a plastic excavation works, he becomes keenly aware of the cruelty of humans' destruction of nature, which breaks his heart: "Kazumasa saw, smelled, and tasted everything. He saw the beauty of the earth, smelled rotting things, felt the heat of the fire that burns the great forest down and people's sweat of labor" (pp. 144–45). While Kazumasa's position as a Nikkei colonist is aligned with the exploitation of nature, he has a pantheistic heart that sympathizes with nature, a voiceless subaltern.

Kazumasa's innocence is an implicit criticism of Brazil, which is rapidly becoming capitalist, and conversely exposes its postcolonial mentality that has abandoned the spirit of taking nature into consideration. The Republic of Brazil develops the idea that its natural resources belong to the nation when it faces its history of being dominated by the West:

Brazil had once before emptied its wealthy gold mines into the coffers of the Portuguese Crown and consequently financed the Industrial Revolution in England. This time, if there was any wealth to be had, it had better remain in Brazil. (p. 96)

Brazil's postcolonial spirit, driven by suppressed collective memory, repeats the act of invasion against nature that the West committed against Brazil. Because of this natural exploitation and the typhus that contaminates plastic, an apocalyptic end comes to Matacão, which reveals Brazil's obsession with the history of persecution and the inability to escape from postcolonial politics between the colonizer and the colonized.

Despite this apocalyptic worldview, in the final part of the novel, Kazumasa becomes a farmer who creates a farm deep in the Amazon rainforest:

He [Kazumasa] immediately took his wife, Lourdes, and his children to a farm full of tropical fruits and grapevines that expands for acres and to a plantation that grows pineapples, sugarcane, sweet corn, and coffee beans. Rubens wheeled happily around the guava orchards, while Gislaine sat in the branch of jaboticaba tree, sipping the sweet and white flesh from the dark-colored skin. Kazumasa ran around Lourdes like her other child, putting miniature bananas, large avocados, and mangos that were reflecting the sunset into her basket. (p. 211)

The ending presents Kazumasa's idyllic and happy later life with his new family: Lourdes, his Catholic and working-class wife, their disabled son, Rubens, and their daughter, Gislaine, who takes care of her brother. Kazumasa's innocent personality contradicts the perception of Japanese colonists and embodies the inassimilable Nikkei who coexist with others. We can consider that Kazumasa's embodiment of the nature of the Japanese diaspora is not a deviation from the viewpoint of the entire work, but rather is rooted in the Republic of Brazil and created by Yamashita through careful consideration of the historical context of the Nikkei from a cultural anthropological perspective. Lévi-Strauss's Santa Claus represents the "cultural Other." This icon of American capitalism was burned at the stake and expelled from the Catholic nation of France. In contrast, Yamashita's Japanese Santa Claus, Kazumasa Ishimaru, quietly coexists in the hinterland of the Republic of Brazil alongside other entities of alien cultures as one of the members who form the Republic.

The magic realistic description of the Japanese diaspora in *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest* is based on the non-Christian motif in Lévi-Strauss's essay on Santa Claus. Yamashita satirizes Japanese immigrants in Brazil in the 1990s, but simultaneously criticizes Brazil's postcolonial mentality from the perspective of the Nikkei's heterogeneous quality, which deviates from the country's capitalist image by identifying Kazumasa as the gift giver. We tend to attach an image of dysfunctionality to inassimilable subjects in a nation-state. Paradoxically, however, they are significant precisely because they maintain an independent system. The historical basis regards such alienness as an autonomous characteristic of the people of multiethnic Brazil.

Brazil's history has recognized different cultures as national components that it needs because of their dissimilarities. This presents a kind of paradoxical nationalism, whereby a country welcomes rather than rejects unassimilable subjects and recognizes them as emblematic of the state actors. Such nationalism must have had a refreshing appeal for Yamashita, who, as a Japanese American, has constructed her identity through a continuous dialogue with the ideology that insists on the hegemony of a nation while living under pressure to choose between socially forced assimilation and/or rebellion in the mainland United States.

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Notes

- 1 Karen Tei Yamashita. *Through the Arc of the Rainforest*. Author's Note. Apart from the above, Yamashita also refers to Lévi Strauss in Circle K Cycles (2001) by commenting on his concept of "saudade" (nostalgia) (pp. 135–36). (Yamashita 1990, 1992, 2000, 2001).
- 2 This community is called "Comunidade Yuba (the Yuba Farm)". Refer to the list below for the material on this farm. Teruyo Ueki, "From Najio to Brazil: Footprints of Isamu Yuba Who Maintained the Spirit of Aliança"; Kai Kimura Japan among Different Cultures. (*Japan among Different Cultures* 1996; Hamada 1976; Nozoe 1982; Kimura 1996; Ueki 2003).
- 3 The direct reason for this interruption in writing is that Yamashita could not achieve her original purpose of interviewing first generation female immigrants about the situation on farms between the 1920s and 1970s. Yamashita reports that she could not help but find it disappointing that the interviews ended up predominantly recording the opinions of first-generation male immigrants because the husbands immediately barged into the conversations when she tried to ask the women about the situation (*Words Matter*, p. 323).
- 4 Ong in *Flexible Citizenship* (1999) describes such a strategy by overseas Asian (Chinese in this case) elites in the Third World (Ong 1999, pp. 51–53).
- 5 See the following site for the section in which Yamashita refers to herself as an Asian American writer: Yamashita. "An Interview with Karen Tei Yamashita." By Gier and Tejada (<http://social.chass.ncsu.edu/Jouvert/v2i2/yamashi.htm>) (accessed on 13 July 2011) (Gier and Tejada 1998).
- 6 The reviews that specifically regard this work as an ecology novel are as follows: (Wallace 2000, pp. 137–53).
- 7 For a postmodern approach to Kazumasa's dysfunctionality in this work, see: (Chen 2004, p. 606; Rody 2000, p. 638; Yamaguchi 2005, p. 28).
- 8 Makino considered Kazumasa Ishimaru to be dysfunctional according to the postmodernist framework when comparing the pairing of Kazumasa and Lourdes, the housekeeper to the Djapans, with a middle-class Brazilian couple, and argued that Kazumasa is a "foil" to emphasize the realism of the latter pair, who lack postmodern elements (pp. 319–20). Unlike that approach, the purpose of this paper is to reexamine Kazumasa's autonomy from Lévi-Strauss's cultural, anthropological point of view rather than from the position of postmodernism. (Makino 2011; Makino 2012).
- 9 See the paper by Paul Jay for a detailed description of the concept of globalism and its origins, which insists on understanding globalism in a historical framework (Jay 2010, pp. 31–52).
- 10 "Santa Claus Burned at the Stake" (pp. 15, 26–28, 38, 63).
- 11 This 1920s modernist nationalism in Brazil was described as "cannibalism." See the following criticisms: (Motohashi 2005, pp. 55–56; Imafuku 1994, pp. 121–22).
- 12 Ong reports on the reality of Chinese immigrants in the 1990s, who were developing businesses according to the system of American capitalism in the developing world while forming a Confucian brotherhood with the locals (pp. 141–51).
- 13 Incidentally, the person who called for Japan to take the lead in implementing the new Marshall Plan was James Robinson, chair of American Express (Nagata 1990, pp. 206, 216).
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 237. The image of alienlike Japanese is introduced in the theory of the uniqueness of the Japanese.
- 15 The administration of Brazilian President Cardoso, who assumed office in 1995, was viewed as aggressive toward the United States while maintaining friendly relations with the country (Koyasu 2004, p. 171).
- 16 "Parachute kids" refers to relatively wealthy Asian men in their teens whose parents sent them to study in the United States (especially southern California) and thus left their homeland in the 1980s and 1990s. Refer to the following for a detailed definition: (Zhou 2009, p. 202).
- 17 Yamashita uses the word innocence to describe Kazumasa on the following pages of the novel: pp. 24, 36, 86, 105, 211.

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