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Social Integration: A Cultural Study in Philip Kan Gotanda's play The Wash

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Abstract

Social integration is the process of integrating minorities into the dominant society. It is a changing process in which all individuals have to engage in negotiation to create and maintain peaceful social ties. To comprehend the social integration process more fully, the Fourfold Model of Acculturation of minorities' experiences in the dominant society will be employed. Philip Kan Gotanda is among the Japanese American playwrights whose plays, men and women, fight over how Asian Americans should struggle to be a part of American society from different viewpoints. The study aims to explore the social integration of the second generation of Japanese Americans in the United States. In this study, social integration of Japanese Americans from the second generation as themes has been examined through the play The Wash by Philip Kan Gotanda. The study traces Nobu's attempts to come to terms with his cultural maintenance and the need to adopt the cultural norms of American society. The study concludes that Nobu's acculturation process is affected by racial discrimination in American society and his desire to keep his Japanese cultural heritage.

Keywords: *Fourfold Model of Acculturation, Philip Kan Gotanda, Racial Discrimination Social integration, The Wash.*

Introduction

Contact between people from various cultures is not a new phenomenon. People have travelled the world throughout recorded history in search of better lands, safety from risk and calamity, commerce, conquest, and colonization, or just for fun and adventure. Meetings between individuals from various backgrounds have been made possible by these activities. The involved individuals' original social structures and cultural practices have transformed, and new societies have emerged.

Global population growth and the growing socioeconomic divide between high- and low-income nations have acted as "push" forces, causing people from less economically developed parts of the world to move to more economically developed parts of the world in search of a better way of life. Simultaneously, internal migration from rural to urban regions has been caused by urbanization in several countries. An increase in political, ethnic, and religious conflicts has resulted in massive bloodshed in numerous regions of the world. As a result of these conflicts, there has been a significant increase in the number of people seeking refuge in other countries. All of these initiatives have encouraged global migration. (Desjarlais, Eisenberg, Good & Kleinman, 1995).

Integrating immigrants into dominant cultures has become a serious challenge in many Western and non-Western nations in recent decades. As a result of this expansion, an

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increasing number of sociological studies have concentrated on immigrants' integration. According to integration theories, there is a significant correlation between different kinds of integration (Esser, 2001). These forms include: (1) structural integration, which refers to the position of immigrants within society and its fundamental institutions (Heckmann, 2005); (2) cultural integration, which refers to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and unique behaviors for a particular nation or region (Heckmann, 2003); and (3) social integration, which refers to regular contact and interactions with locals (Haug, 2003). Richard Alba and Victor Nee (1997) identify social integration as the process of integrating minorities into the dominant society's social structure. Increasing degrees of social integration without abandoning original identity leads to a narrowing of the social divide between groups and a closer alignment of values and practices (Alba & Nee, 1997). Many studies have focused on cultural, social, and structural integration by investigating the elements influencing immigrants' assimilation in terms of knowledge, skills, social networks and status in society (Bevelander & Veenman, 2006).

Japanese immigrants, for instance, set out for the United States in 1884 in search of peace and wealth, escaping an unstable home country in exchange for a life of hard work and the chance to establish a better future for their children. In Japan, rapid urbanization and industrialization after the Meiji Restoration in 1868 led to serious social upheaval and a decline in agriculture. They increasingly sought a better life outside of their native islands as farmers were forced to leave their property and employees were made jobless by foreign competition. As Japanese wages decreased and rumours of a thriving United States economy spread, it became impossible to resist the temptation of the United States (Edwards, n.d.). Japanese immigrants face a range of acculturation difficulties when they are exposed to more of the customs, beliefs and social norms of American society. Asian Americans face basic issues as a result of the existence of two conflicting worldviews: their own culture's and the dominant culture's, each of which has varying degrees of effect on different individuals.

Acculturation refers to the process of integrating cultures and the consequent changes. "Acculturation comprehends those phenomena that result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 149). Acculturation is becoming a more important topic for a number of converging reasons, including: (1) new technologies for high-speed, high-volume transportation and communication make it simpler for cultures to interact globally; (2) Every year, millions of new migrants are displaced by war, political oppression, economic inequality, and adverse environmental conditions; and (3) Regional and global free-trade agreements promote worldwide marketing and the hiring of qualified individuals from all over the world (Bevelander & Veenman, 2006).

The theatre acts as a mirror of society, either correcting it or presenting it as it is. Asian American theatre, as a theatre of minorities, gives attention to the socioeconomic circumstances, conflicts and hardships of immigrants while also educating viewers and fulfilling their intellectual demands. Asian American writers fall under the group of writers who write in a number of genres and on a wide range of topics. Asian American literature does not share a common ancestry, but rather focuses on specific cultural features. Regardless of the differences in experiences, the common ground is frequently centered on the acculturation process and social and cultural integration among the main characters in those works. Although Asian American playwrights come from many ethnic backgrounds, they still have some of the same values. Every dramatist addresses the Asian American experience in a unique way. They all dispel prejudices, enhance the audience's knowledge of Asian American identity and promote better racial tolerance and understanding (Ibrahim, 2016).

Philip Kan Gotanda is a Japanese-American writer who has had a significant impact on introducing Asian American experiences to mainstream American theatre. *The Wash*

(1987) is considered the third piece of Gotanda's family trilogy, which consists of *A Song for a Nisei Fisherman* and *Fish Head Soup*. It revolves around a small cast of characters, each with their own unique perspectives and personalities. The play depicts Japanese Americans' struggle to identify themselves within two cultures: American culture and Japanese culture. *The Wash* is mainly about Nobu Matsumoto, who has split from his wife, Masi, at her demand, though each of them is in their sixties. Masi frequently interferes with Nobu's newfound life as a bachelor by stopping by to pick up and drop off Nobu's weekly laundry as one of the obligations she still believes a Japanese wife must fulfil for her husband. Their two daughters feel differently about the separation; Marsha, the more conventional of the two, seeks to pull her parents back together, but not even Nobu and Masi's fond memories of their courting in a World War II internment camp can succeed in doing so. The second daughter, Judy, who is no longer close to her father after being married to a black American, has supported her mother's quest for independence. The severity of Nobu's traditional values is not revealed until Masi tentatively starts dating a widower named Sadao; he is then inflexible, obstinate, and reclusive, making it difficult for Kiyoko, a widowed restaurant owner who has fallen in love with him, to get past his barriers and convince him to start a new life with her. (Gotanda,1991). Nobu and Masi are imprisoned by their lengthy, enduring marriage as well as by the memories of their imprisonment during World War II. The experience of internment camp has had a lasting impact on both their lives and the play itself (James,1988).

The Wash is one of the realistic plays that presents an overview of the acculturation process of Japanese Americans for the second and third generations (Nisei). Through the course of the play, the characters are divided into those who have flexibility and want to adjust to the new circumstances and those who are inflexible and rigid and fight change (Dunbar, 2005). This study tackles mainly the social integration of Nobu's character as an Asian American in the United States and the impact of racial prejudice on his acculturation process. The main suggestion of the current study is that social integration into a dominant society is directly linked to positive psychological acculturation and the characteristics of the host society. There are several acculturation models that have been dealing with how immigrants choose an acculturation attitude when they are in the process of adjusting to the dominant society. The Fourfold Model of Acculturation classifies immigrants' choice of acculturation strategies depending on the individual's desire to maintain their original culture or seek to integrate into a dominant society. This highly influential model is adopted in this thesis to investigate the "social integration" of the play *The Wash*, written by Philip Kan Gotanda.

FOURFOLD MODEL OF ACCULTURATION

John Berry usually used the Fourfold Model as a method for analyzing the acculturation of two cultures (Kwak & Berry, 2001). Early in the 1970s, Berry set up the Fourfold Model of the Acculturation Process based on two independent dimensions: immigrants' links to their original cultures and to their settlement societies. These links refer mainly to the acculturation attitudes (individuals' preferences for involvement in both cultures) and behaviors or social contact they engage in (their social knowledge, relationships and skills) (Berry, 1974). To keep up with global expansion and openness in recent decades, bidimensional models of acculturation have increasingly supplanted unidimensional models (Van de Vijver and Phalet, 2004). Thus, the framework of bidimensional forms of acculturation raises two issues: to what degree individuals want to keep their original or heritage culture and identity, and to what extent they want to engage with the new society. These two issues helped in the creation of the Fourfold Model of Acculturation by John Berry, Jean Phinney, David Sam and Paul Vedder (Berry, 1997).

The Fourfold Model is a bilinear model that divides acculturation strategies into two categories. The first dimension searches to what extent individuals think it is valuable to

keep or reject the native culture and the second dimension seeks the significance of adaptation or rejection of the dominant culture. This model lays the groundwork for research on acculturation attitudes. (Berry et al., 1987). It is divided into four sections that discuss how people might communicate their desire to acculturate. It is divided into four sections that discuss how individuals might communicate their desire to acculturate. They are: (1) assimilation is a strategy when individuals have little interest in cultural maintenance and prefer to adopt the cultural norms of larger society; (2) separation is a strategy that demonstrates individuals rejection of dominant culture while adopting cultural maintenance; (3) integration occurs when individuals seek the adaptation of mainstream culture and the maintenance of their culture of origin; and (4) marginalization refers to the state of rejection of both cultures (Rudmin, 2003). These sectors describe individuals' attitudes as well as group expectations of the dominant society.

Acculturation attitudes can be predicted in some cases. For instance, if a society is referred to as "a melting pot society" assimilation is accepted as an acculturation strategy because these societies are harmonious and homogenous. In a multicultural society, an integration strategy is adopted in which two cultures are recognized and considered. Individuals use a separation technique in communities that practice segregation. Individuals preferred the marginalization strategy in some culturally excluded communities. Whereas Arends-Tóth and Van de Vijver demonstrate that individuals' adaptation of acculturation methods varies according to their public or private spheres of life. For example, an individual's private life may reject the principles and conventions of the host society while publicly adhering to the dominant culture (Arends-Tóth, Judit, & Van de Vijver, 2004).

However, characteristics of society are governing the individual's choice of strategies: the social system of the host society, which means when individuals immigrate to different segments of society, such as regions with weaker economic and ethnic hierarchy, they may face limited social mobility and community participation in a disadvantageous community. The theory of "Segmented Assimilation" can better characterize the assimilation of immigrants as individuals and groups into uneven sectors of the host culture's society, mostly because socioeconomic status dictates integration into the top, medium, or lower classes (Zhou, 1997).

In American society, attitudes towards acculturation were predicated on the assumption of assimilation with immigrants of white color because American history, attitudes and policies are founded on ethnic hierarchies. For members of dominant (mainly White Anglo-Saxon) and subordinate cultural (e.g., visible racial-cultural) groups historically, group relations between White Anglo and all other racial-cultural groups in the United States have altered psychological, social and cultural adjustment. For instance, the concept of a melting pot presupposed that all immigrants to the United States would freely abandon their indigenous heritages and embrace pre-existing white Anglo-Saxon cultural standards from the mid-1700s through the early 1880s (Zangwill, 2017). This ecologically varied melting pot has experienced an "Americanization" process between the late 1880s and the mid-1950s. The concept of cultural plurality or cultural unity supported the assimilation of various racial and ethnic groups into mainstream American culture through Americanization. Several countries adopted the idea of cultural plurality in the early twentieth century, but America only recognized and accepted the concept of multiculturalism in the 1980s (Fredrickson, 1999). Thus, American culture became linked with a core cultural plurality with a broad variety of groups, traditions, and histories whose Americanness resided primarily in the embracing of diversity as a national ideal. At some level, cultural pluralism may have made it possible for noticeable racial and cultural groups to coexist in dangerous settings. Yet, vigilance against oppressive conditions can have unintended negative consequences for individuals and communities, such as alienation and isolation from resources and support, which limits an individual's ability to reach their full potential (Karaganis, 2001).

When all four strategies of the Fourfold Model of Acculturation considered, it is possible to have varied degrees of preference for each strategy. For example, an individual may favor both integration and separation since both techniques reflect a preference for the preservation of one's cultural heritage and identity. This leads to two points: first, it is not possible to refer to the "degree" or "level" of acculturation (such as "very acculturated"), only to the degree or level of support for each of the four strategies. When the term "level of acculturation" is used in the literature, it is widely intended to mean a level of assimilation. Second, if the duration or frequency of contact or the degree of engagement in broader society are suitable, the term "level" is appropriate; this usage has been characterized as contact acculturation (Mishra et al., 1996). These four strategies are not static but dynamic and the use of one of them depends on various factors, circumstances and features of the settlement society prior to acculturation, like the degree of closeness between cultures, their cultural identity, the dimensionality of the original culture, level of education, gender, language and personal expectations and perceptions of the new culture. It is believed that the most desired strategy is integration, while marginalization is less preferred. Furthermore, studies proved that adopting integration as a strategy in the acculturation process resulted in better immigrant adaptation (Berry et al., 2006).

NOBU'S SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Nobu Matsumoto is a 68-year-old and retired worker from the second generation of Japanese Americans (Nisei). The play opens and ends at Nobu's place, the old family home. Nobu is Masi's ex-husband and the father of two daughters, Marsha and Judy. He is an inflexible character since he refuses to let go of his father's Japanese mentality and the past. He is a multidimensional character since he has inner conflict. On one side, he keeps Japanese's culture in his daily life when Nobu sips green tea, uses chopsticks and so on. The character consumes nukemono and tempura and talks in Japanese many times, like "NOBU: Kagoshima ka? My family's from there." (Gotanda & Omi, 1995, p. 145). Nobu attempts to live in America in isolation since he cannot interact with American society.

Nobu is one of those who wants to simply maintain their native cultural identity and avoid engagement with people in American society by using a separation strategy. This tactic is viewed as a type of segregation on a societal level (Hirschman,1983). On the other side, Nobu is stuck in the past. He is unable to get out of the internment's psychological walls because of his culture, background and personality. He despises change; whenever he eats at Kiyoko's restaurant, he always sits in the same seat and orders the same meal. Kiyoko and Curley Sakata, Kiyoko's chef, discuss Nobu's recurrent behaviors:

> CURLEY (approaching): And dat's your seat, huh? All da time you gotta sit in dat same seat. Last week Mr. Koyama was sitting dere — I saw you come in— you left and came back later when dat seat was open. What'sa matter, your butt got l magnet for datseat? …
>
> CURLEY: (Moving away, to Nobu.) And you always order da same thing. (Gotanda & Omi,1995, p.145)

Curley, who is also from the Nisei generation, makes the comment. Yet Curley, who is in his mid-fifties, and Nobu are so different in lifestyles and attitudes towards life that they establish the generational distinction between them. Curley frequently mocks Nobu: "That's the problem with you katonks. You buggas from the mainland all the time too serious." (p. 176). Susan Abbotson advises Curley to embrace life as it is and make full use of it. Although Curley and Nobu both have a distinct sense of who they are, Curley is more accessible since he is not scared to express himself and does not control his

behavior. He gets criticized, but he still enjoys beer and does not pay attention to the concerns of others. Curley mocks Nobu by calling him "[o]ld magnet butt" when he talks, meaning that he views him as an old-fashioned Japanese man who is unwilling to change (Abbotson,2003). That is why Masi's new answering machine confounds Nobu in Act 1, Scene 11:

> NOBU: Masi? You Got any … Masi? (MASI'S phone machine kicks in. NOBU doesn't know how to deal with it) MASI RECORDED VOICE: Hello. This is Masi Matsumoto, I'm not in right now, …. Thank you. Bye-bye…(NOBU listen to the message end, the beep sounds. He's panicked, not quite sure what to do). (Gotanda & Omi,1995, p. 168)

This may infer, from the preceding dialogue, dealing with modern technology makes it obvious that Nobu feels uncomfortable. Nobu finds it hard to change since he is an American with strong ties to his Asian heritage. Thus, Nobu's has an orientation towards cultural separation as well as integration.

Throughout the play, Nobu's behaviors and attitudes are justified. He adopted the separation strategy because of American society's racial attitudes towards Asian Americans in general and Japanese individuals in particular. Indubitably, the experience of hostility, rejection and discrimination is one element that predicts poor long-term adaptation for those groups who are less well-being (those who are the objects of negative ethnic attitudes) (Clark et al., 1999).Thus, the characteristics of the host society play a critical role in the effective adoption of the new society's culture. Even if immigrants might favour integration, the final decision about acculturation tactics is inevitably influenced by what members of the host society permit. For instance, when there is a stronger perception of discrimination, separation and marginalization are more likely to happen and assimilation is less likely to occur (Barry & Grilo, 2003).

Although Asian Americans came from a variety of historical, linguistic, racial and ethnic backgrounds, they all experienced exclusion and isolation since they experienced racial discrimination in American society. Just after the Civil War, when Asian immigrants began to enter the country, they were denounced as inadmissible outsiders who were degrading American labor by leading barbaric lifestyles that did not necessitate the higher pay earned by whites (Nakagawa, 2018, April 27). By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Asians were demonized as the "yellow peril," an enigmatic race of mysterious others who would conquer the west if they were not stopped. Fear of the "yellow peril" was the driving force behind American anti-Japanese prejudice. This kind of propaganda was initially used against the Chinese and then, subsequently, the Japanese. Because of the American public's uncertainty over the differences between Chinese and Japanese people and the rise of Japanese immigration to the West Coast, both groups were frequently perceived as a single racial menace (Van Alstyne, 1951).

War experiences of American Japanese in internment camps during World War II following Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbour in December 1941 similarly have harsh consequences, especially for the Nisei generation, for many reasons. First, they begin to doubt their own identities and whether it is moral to continue living in the host country. Second, Japanese Americans' hopes for "freedom, equality, and wealth" were crushed by World War II. Third, they were sent to prison camps and treated as enemies. Fourth, during the war, they lost their hard-earned houses, businesses and farms, as well as their status and pride. These things had given Asian Americans and the Nisei, who, especially, had to deal with the upheaval of the community they had grown up in and the uncertainties of the post-internment era. Lastly, they had to deal with their new positions as the community's leaders during a period of significant transition as well as being the parents of the Sansei, the third generation of Japanese Americans, at the same time (Fukurai & Yang, 2017).

In the play, Nobu's rigidity is his inability to accept racial differences or speak positively about "Kurochan" (blacks) and Mexican neighbours. Masi explains Nobu's disorder: "So you don't like white people, you don't like black people, you don't like Mexicans ... who do you like? Huh? monku, monku..." (Gotanda & Omi,1995, p,178). Thus, Japanese Americans are incredibly unaware of how much racism has impacted their daily lives. How it compels them to behave in a variety of odd ways. This manifests as self-hatred and overcompensation. According to Huong Nguyen, discrimination predicted greater negative adaptation on a variety of psychological, social and academic indices (distress, depression, self-esteem, life satisfaction, delinquency, relationships with family, peers and teachers, school grades, reading scores and academic aspirations) (Nguyen, 2004).

Jung Byung-eon's article "*Spatialization of Trauma and Healing of Wounds in Philip Kahn Gotanda's Family Plays*", makes the claim that the trauma suffered by Japanese Americans spatially manifests in the uncontrolled ownership of their "overwhelming experience" of the incident by drawing on Cathy Caruth's idea of trauma. Even though these "anger and self-loathing" experiences are internalized and sometimes even silenced, their trauma is repeatedly spatialized in their daily lives, physically separating them from one another, as demonstrated by the immersion in the search for their own space, the absence of communication between family members and a severing of social relations (Jung, 2018).

Remarkably, Nobu himself spent time in camps as a prisoner during World War II, which impacts him since he feels that his value as a human being in his new country is nonexistent. Nobu makes no explicit or direct reference to the case of incarceration. As a result, the memory is repressed to the extent that it seems as though the incident never happened. Only when events or places associated with it are mentioned is the confinement in a concentration camp inferred. Even if it is not mentioned specifically, most of the recollections that come to mind for him right away are concerning the happenings at that time. He is continually reminded of the incident of his imprisonment and is enraged, but he is unable to express his feelings in detail. Even if they intentionally try to escape their surroundings by fishing, memories frequently bring back the anger of such tragedy (Jung, 2018). For instance, Nobu talks with Masi in Act 1, Scene 5, "MASI: Her place is cozy, neh? NOBU: Marsha's? Looks like the rooms back in Camp. MASI: Nobu, the Camps were over forty years ago. At least she's clean. Not like the younger one" (Gotanda& Omi, 1995, p.154). Even decades later, traumatic experiences are still suppressed in their unconscious, where they eventually manifest as spatial imagery, notably songs for second-generation fishermen. The trauma is mentioned often throughout the camp's stables, at the Pledge of Allegiance, in the Hall of Compensation Hearing, at dance party and in shop (Krippner et al., 2012).

Nobu's attempts to get over the wounds left behind by his traumatic background in the camp are dashed by the prejudiced American system. He believes that he will not get the chance to live out American ideals (Weinraub,1994). The stage primarily serves as an embodiment of the guilt, self-denial and lack of affection or communication experienced during this phase. Randy Barbara Kaplan (2002) asserts that Nobu is preoccupied with "anger and self-loathing" (Kaplan, 2002: p.71). However, Nobu experienced distress before, during and after the war. Nobu feels inferior because of this discrimination. This inadequacy leads to self-loathing. He cannot assimilate; that is not possible. Interestingly, he would rather confine himself to the past's cocoon than change with the times. Nobu is suffering from the memories of his imprisonment, which occurred more than 40 years ago. Based on the idea that "Man is the product of his environment, and of conditions", Nobu is a victim of discrimination in the United States' society (Riazanov, Marx, & Engels,1973).Despite his self-centered nature, Gotanda depicts Nobu in a sympathetic light as a victim of his imprisonment during War World II and his subsequent troubles connecting with white Americans.

As a consequence of Nobu's war experience, he cannot coexist with any other race, not only with white people but also with another minority. In the play, when Nobu refuses to accept Judy's marriage, his younger daughter, to an African American or even see his only grandchild, states "NOBU: No, no. Japanese marry other Japanese… not these damned ainoko [biracial people]" (Gotanda & Omi,1995, p. 182). In addition to racism, the conflict between the father and the daughter exists because acculturation disparities and familial conflict are linked, according to significant research involving a variety of immigrant communities. In many of the more collectivist communities from which immigrants come, this process for immigrant youth involves not only splitting from their parents, a practice that may be unfamiliar, but also separating from the legacy culture that their parents passed down to them (Trimble & Dickson, 2005).

Another impact of the war experience is that it makes Nobu emotionally inaccessible. He loves his wife and daughters, but his pride keeps him from showing it and he cannot accept their independence. Gotanda comments on the consequences of war experiences in an interview in the daily broadsheet "*East Bay Times*":

> If you're Japanese American, this part of history, the internment camps, is part of your body …, I was born post. War in the 1950s and the camps Weren't talked about a lot, but they were certainly there, they had a huge effect on the psyche and behavior of entire communities. It's absorbed weather it's talked about or not. (Jones,2007)

Thus, Gotanda shows the audience that the psychological trauma of Nobu is faced by many families of the Nisei generation after their return from war. In addition, Nobu and Masi's marriage breaks down because of his inner conflict and failure to get the chance to live out American norms. He is unable to provide his wife with the love and care she needs because he is troubled by his failures in the past. Marsha reveals his poor treatment of Masi through the following dialogue: Act 2, Scene 10,

> MARSHA: He's a nice man… He treats her like a very special person… He takes her fishing … He teaches her how to bait the hook and cast it out… They even dig up worms in his garden at his house. I saw them. Side by side… I MEAN DID YOU EVER DO THAT FOR MOM!! (Pause. Quieter) Did you? (Gotanda &Omi, 1995, pp. 191-192)

When they parted, Nobu found it difficult to accept that his wife had abandoned him permanently. This is only one of the reasons he never asks Masi to come back,

> MARSHA: ... so stupid. You are. You're stupid. All
>
> you had to say was, "Come back. Please come back."
>
> You didn't even have to say, "I'm sorry." (Continues)
>
> NOBU: (Overlapping) I'm your father ...
>
> MARSHA: Mom would've come back. She would've.
>
> That's all you had to say. Three lousy words. "Please
>
> come back."
>
> NOBU: (Overlapping) I'm your father ...
>
> MARSHA: You ruined everything. It's too late! YOU
>
> WRECKED EVERY THING!! (Pause. Composing herself)
>
> I'm so mixed up. When I look at Mom, I'm happy for her.
>
> When I think about you ... I don't know. You have Kiyoko.
>
> (Gotanda & Omi, 1995, p. 192-193)

Nobu is clearly aloof, emotionally inaccessible and a rigid traditionalist. His society also pushes him to doubt that a woman can act independently, so it is not only his ego that leads him to believe this. Nobu's perception is traditionalist since he is influenced by his original cultural conventions. He cannot believe his wife has abandoned him for good, which is why he never asks Masi to return. He takes her visits to bring him meals and clean his laundry as natural because he still considers it her responsibility. As Nisei women who sacrificed themselves in the name of their husbands and their families. Therefore, Nobu expects his marriage to mimic those found in traditional Japan (Fei & Sun, 1992).

Through Nobu's character, Gotanda demonstrates his capacity to comprehend both the external manifestations of racial discrimination and the interior effects of racism, as well as how they affect each family member. In addition, he criticizes Asian Americans for contributing to the extent of racism's effects by tolerating it without protest. He states his point of view:

> Internalized racism is a fact of life. If you live in America, you have been infected by it. By internal I mean how we buy into racism, how we participate in it, and how engage in a kind of dance of allowing ourselves to be victimized. (Gotanda & Omi,1995, p. xxiii)

In terms of racial discrimination, he thinks that Asians are a marginalized minority in American culture based on the environment he grew up in and the insights he was taught. Racists usually make an effort to keep them from revealing their actual selves, which has an impact over time. Racism has been steadily internalized in the way that Asians perceive themselves and respond to racial prejudice (Tse-Hsuan Le, 2020).

In addition to racial attitudes and war experience, nostalgia keeps Nobus in his past. He longs for the way life used to be, but as the ancient lullaby melody he sings suggests, other people's lives move on and Nobu is left behind. In Act 1, Scene 6, Nobu sings a song that his father used to sing him to sleep at the restaurant:

> (…Nobu is left alone. He sits for a moment in silence. Then, he begins to quietly sing. First softly, then growing in volume.)
>
> NOBU: Nen nen kororiyo okororiyo,
>
> Bōya wa yoi ko da nen ne shina.
>
> Bōya yo mari wa doko e itta?
>
> Ano yama koete sato e itta. (Gotanda& Omi, 1995, p.158)

Translation:

> Sleep, sleep, hushabye
>
> Little boy, good boy, go to sleep now
>
> Little boy, where has your ball gone?
>
> Way over the mountains to the distant fields. (Gotanda, 1991)

For immigrants, the nostalgia makes adapting to a new culture a difficult task. Nobu even keeps the same kite design (Abbotson,2003). Moreover, Nobu refuses to change the kite's design despite Masi's requests to do so, claiming that "My father did this" (Gotanda & Omi, 1995, 142). At the end of Act 1, Scene 9, Nobu imagines his kite flying high, expressing his yearning for the greater freedom he felt as a child, but the weight of his own life and the traditions he feels obligated to follow keep him and his kite down (Abbotson, 2003). In fact, kite embodies three themes in Japan: the Samurai warrior, the luck of "the boy-hero Kintaro," who lived in the mountain with the dangerous animals and the Kabuki players of the holy performances (Ruhe, 2006, p. 2). In this regard, the kite stands for Nobu's need for faith, bravery and strength, the three qualities required for

him to continue living as an integrated Japanese-American individual. The kite is also associated with a variety of metaphorical connotations. To begin with, the kite is a symbol of freedom in the play. Since then, Nobu has decided to stay inside the cell he has built for himself and never escape. As a result, he is an escapist figure, seeking refuge and consolation in kite buildings, which leads to temporary forgetting. Kite-making is an art form that focuses on the clashing social realities of a culture in transition from Asian to American and on the search for a Japanese identity. In addition, it is a lucky charm given to the first son (Ruhe, 2006). Furthermore, the metaphorical connotation of flying a kite implies taking control of one's future. Nobu cannot control his fate since he is unable to fly the kite. Later on, this point is made in Act 2, Scene 13:

> JUDY: I can't believe he gave the kite to Timothy. He gets
>
> so mad if you even touch them. And he never flies them.
>
> (Pause)
>
> MARSHA: (Moving the kite) No. He never flies them.
>
> (Gotanda& Omi, 1995, p.197)

Nobu's kite represents his freedom. He finds it difficult to comprehend America's possibilities because he believes that his Japanese ancestry prevents him from making use of them (Ruhe, 2006).

At the end of the play, Nobu's acculturation strategy changes to integration when he hands his grandson, Timothy, the kite as an act of acceptance; Timothy, whose ties to his cultural heritage are less, could be more able to fly it (Abbotson, 2003). Moreover, it refers to the act of passing Japanese tradition from generation to generation. Nobu's gift to Timothy signifies his acceptance of the latter as a new member of the family as an American who has roots in Japan. It also signifies the conclusion of the generational dispute between Nobu and his daughter over their daughter's interracial marriage. Judy finds her father's actions surprising. By doing this, Nobu hopes to instill courage and strength in his grandson because, in Japanese culture, a newborn baby is traditionally given a kite to represent courage and strength (Kanzaki, 2015). However, after realizing his ignorance about Masi and Sadao's romance, Nobu breaks the kite at a specific point. This represents a rupture with the customs of his forefathers. Additionally, it gets the audience ready for the fact that Nobu's close ties to his roots may alter.

Another Japanese cultural symbol, beside the kite, is Japanese songs. At the end of Act 2's scene, the audience hears Nobu sing the Japanese song "Donguri" to Timothy,

> NOBU:(Singing)
>
> Donguri koro koro, donguri ko
>
> Oike ni hamatte, saa taihen
>
> Dojō ga dette kite, "konnichiwa"
>
> Timothy isshoni, asobimasho …
>
> (Gotanda & Omi, 1995, p.184)

It is a popular children's song. The Japanese culture emphasizes the appreciation of the natural world, so this song stresses "aesthetic appreciation for nature," in which a loach and an acorn converse in a pond:

> A corn, a corn, rolling along
>
> Fell into a pond, what will we do?
>
> Up comes a loache fish, says "Good afternoon."
>
> Timothy, let's go play together. (p.184)

Nobu always sings a Japanese lullaby when he does. This suggests that he misses his boyhood in Japan. It is obvious that Nobu used to soothe his girls to sleep with this song. In Act 1, Scene 7, the audience hears Masi and her daughter Judy having the following conversation at one point:

MASI: Daddy used to.

JUDY: Used to what?

MASI: Get up at night and feed you kids.

JUDY: Dad? You're kidding.

MASI: He used to sing to you. No wonder

you kid would cry. (They laugh.). (p. 159)

Even though Nobu lives in the past, he still cares about his family. By singing the lullaby to his girls, Nobu expresses his affection for them. Additionally, in this lullaby, he shows his love for his grandson, Timothy. Children's folk songs are passed down through the generations. Songs are passed down to younger generations as part of an elementary cultural tradition that introduces them to affect-regulatory techniques as well as musico-linguistic principles. Formal song transmission is rooted in numerous normative claims and interests, such as maintaining cultural legacy and promoting collective and national identity, as opposed to informal singing, which typically fulfils affect-regulation purposes in familiar situations. Japanese American songs are an important means for creating hope, cohesion, resistance and a sense of identity. While struggling for place in American society, the Japanese-Americans sought, through music, some energy to retain ties with Japan and foster ethnic traditions (Manes, 2012). Rajiha Kamel Muthana suggests that Nobu has partially integrated into American culture as Nobu believes that his Japanese ancestry restricts him from experiencing America's possibilities; hence, he is unable to do so. At the end of the play, Nobu finds himself alone, which appears to be an unavoidable fate given his cultural heritage and unwillingness to adapt to changing conditions completely. (Muthana, 2019).

Nobu experiences life events that are rooted in intercultural encounters and result in acculturative stress. These emotions frequently involve intensified depression (associated with the feeling of cultural loss) and anxiety (associated with ambiguity about how one should behave in the new community) (Oberg, 1960). Nobu's acculturative stress comes from the responsibility of his role in keeping the Japanese cultural heritage and from how he lives and adapts to the new circumstances. He has negative psychological adaptation since the acculturative difficulties do exist but are not entirely overcome, stress is higher and the outcomes are more negative (Ward, 1996). Yet when acculturative issues are severe and not resolved, the immediate consequences can be disastrous and stress levels can be crippling, leading to personal crises and frequently anxiety and despair. Good cultural adaptation is typically predicted by the successful pursuit of the integration acculturation strategy and by minimal cultural distancing (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). People in this situation realize that they are dealing with issues brought on by intercultural encounters that cannot be solved merely by adjusting to or assimilation into them.

Change can occur along two distinct axes, one of which is the preservation or erasure of the previous culture and the other is participation in or adoption of elements of the new culture. An individual may therefore have a greater or lesser degree of either of the two cultures in question. The final result depends on the proportional level of interaction between the two intermingling cultures (Berry, 1988). Nobu's sense of duty towards his original culture limits his participation in dominant culture in a limited and hesitated way. Eventually, the stressors, like Nobu, overcome this cultural shock by developing their own methods to deal with such negative experiences and after that, they integrate into the

dominant culture, as Nobu did. However, he maintains his Japanese lifestyle from the very beginning of the play. He regularly visits Kiyoko's restaurant and traditional Japanese shop. Nobu's acceptance of his mixed-race grandson alludes to Nobu's integration into American culture, which takes up the whole play. Besides, he comes to terms with his separation from Masi at the end of the play.

Nobu's partial integration comes simultaneously with Vijver and Phalet's suggestions for the acculturation process. Vijver and Phalet suppose that acculturation is a process of change in the direction of mainstream culture. Immigrants will invariably adapt to the settlement culture at whatever speed of the process (Van de Vijver & Phalet, 2004). Nobu's character is multidimensional and full of the contradictory motives and feelings that characterize the human predicament. Vijver and Phalet embody specific Asian American qualities and beliefs while also being products and agents of a certain historical experience. This kind of uniqueness, a "painterly quality," has distinguished Gotanda as a chronicler of the Asian American experience in general and the Japanese American experience in particular (Lee, 2006, p. 298). However, Gotanda states that Asians are determined enough to preserve their cultural principles in the face of overwhelming cultural pressure. In scene 13, Nobu sings a lullaby and gives the kite to Timothy as a sign of acceptance as well as an action to pass the Japanese tradition from the older generation to the new generation. (Muthana,2019).

> I can't believe he gave the kite to Timothy. He gets so
>
> mad if you even touch them. And he never flies them.
>
> (Pause)
>
> MARSHA: (Moving the kite) No. He never flies them.
>
> (Gotanda & Omi, 1995, p. 197)

Gotanda makes sure that despite Nobu's self-centred actions, the audience still has pity for him since he is lost between two cultures. Nobu spends a lot of time there as a strict Japanese American. Gotanda has a sympathetic and impartial approach towards Nobu. Gotanda's goal is to educate the audience about all sides of Japanese American society rather than assign blame, leading to a greater understanding.

Conclusion

In light of what has been discussed above, social integration is one of the different kinds of integration, which also includes cultural and structural integration. Social integration relates mainly to the process by which individuals of minorities integrate into host societies without losing their original cultural ties. It removes segregation and provides access to many aspects of communal life. The most important factor in determining a migrant's well-being is their social integration, or how much they identify with their host country and how much they see themselves as contributing members of society. The study concludes that racial discrimination is a crucial factor in the character's integration into American society. Racial discrimination has severe effects on Asian Americans in general and Japanese individuals in particular. Japanese immigrants have been subjected to racist attitudes since their first arrival on American soil. The most important event that had a negative impact on Japanese individuals was the internment in camps during the Second World War following Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbour in December 1941. This racial attitude towards Japanese individuals from the second generation impacts their social integration into the American community. Through Nobu's character, Gotanda demonstrates the psychological impacts of war experience on individuals in the second generation, which also have negative effects on their family unit.

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