

The military advance of the Communists during the autumn months, plus the failure of the August 19 currency reform measures, presented ECA with a set of conditions different from those which were considerably existing at the time Congress passed the China Aid Act in April 1948.

During November the critical shortage of vital supplies in the cities, particularly of food, produced some vigorous action by Roger Lapham and the whole ECA organization to move up shipping schedules and pick up urban ration commitments with United States-financed food in December, rather than depending on indigenous Chinese food until January, which had been the original plan. ECA borrowed rice from the British colony of Hongkong, arranged to divert to China a

couple of Army flour ships, and bought coal from Japan to make up in part for dwindling supplies from the Communist-threatened Kailan mines in North China. The whole program was placed on an emergency footing; while the longer-range industrial program continued to make plans and do preliminary engineering work, no equipment had been purchased.

As this is written, ECA's China Program generally is in process of change to meet the new conditions, without any clairvoyant knowledge of what the future will bring. But the people helped by American aid this year, and the techniques developed to make sure that the aid is used properly, will both outlast the one-year Act which ECA is administering in China. Both may play an important part in whatever happens next.

THE JAPANESE IN BRAZIL

BY EMILIO WILLEMS

THE STATE OF SAO PAULO, which absorbed nearly all the Japanese immigrants to Brazil, had received by 1940 a total of 186,769 Japanese. The remarkable fact that more than 100,000 of these arrived after 1930, their departure from Japan coinciding with the seizure of political control of their homeland by a group of radical nationalists, adds significance to the history of their settlement and the extent of their assimilation in the New World.

The Japanese in Sao Paulo numbered only a few hundred before 1909, but by 1914 the total had risen to 14,465. Their colonization during and since that time may be divided roughly into three areas: the Ribeira Valley near the southern coast, the central area near the state capital, and several new or frontier regions in the interior of the state. The Ribeira Valley consists of well-watered lowlands suitable for rice, banana, and sugar-cane cultivation. The first twenty years of Japanese settlement in this area, however, was made difficult by great distances and a lack of adequate roads. The Japanese introduced Chinese tea in the face of competition from the better-known English tea. When English tea imports ceased during the last war, Ribeira Valley tea conquered the market and was exported on a large scale. At the present time tea constitutes the most important crop of the area. Within the two municipios where the Japanese have established themselves there are districts in which Japanese outnumber Brazilians; but these two municipios in 1939 had only 4,516 inhabitants born in Japan out of a total population of 51,703.

The center of the second area of Japanese coloniza-

tion is Mogi das Cruzes, a middle-sized town on the railroad line between Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. There the Japanese established themselves mainly after World War I. The soil in this area has been in use for at least two centuries, and when the Japanese arrived cultivation had been almost abandoned; but the demands of the growing state capital nearby made profitable the raising of vegetable crops even from poor soil. The Japanese were among the first to realize this opportunity. Settlement has been aided by cheap land and easy communication. In this area too the Japanese constitute only a small minority, although by 1934, when they numbered 1,683 out of a total population of 42,783, there were already many second-generation Japanese.

By far the most important of the three areas of Japanese settlement is that which consists of new or frontier regions, the soil of which has been brought under cultivation within the last twenty-five years and in part much more recently. There are five such regions, named for the great railway companies which were the main factors of penetration and land utilization: Mogiana, Araquarense, Noroeste, Alta Paulista, and Alta Sorocabana. The coincidence of Japanese immigration with the opening of such new regions has an important bearing on the character of Japanese settlement there. The trend has been described as follows:¹

In the western parts of Sao Paulo tremendous and rapid advance is being made in the carving out of the forests new farms, in establishing thriving towns and cities based on trade, and in creating new municipios. These newly opened areas are rapidly becoming the centers of production of such staple commercial crops as cotton, coffee, and tobacco. Interestingly

1 T. Lynn Smith, *Brazil, People and Institutions*, New York, 1946, p. 578.

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enough, these areas are also the localities where the greatest break with tradition is occurring and the small farm system making the greatest competition for the established systems of large-scale competition.

The Japanese used several methods in exploiting the frontier. Japanese colonization companies bought large stretches of virgin land and sold them in lots to immigrants who had brought some capital from Japan. Many Japanese became renters or share-croppers, and many others worked as laborers on coffee or cotton *fazendas*—but always with an eye to becoming landowners as soon as possible. Their progress toward the independence of land ownership has been rapid. At the present time Japanese rural workers are almost non-existent; a considerable number of immigrants own *fazendas* and hire Brazilian labor.

In the frontier areas, again, the Japanese form small minorities. In no municipio do they exceed twenty-five percent of the total population, and in many they constitute less than ten percent.

Social Contact and Education

The extent of social contact or isolation of the Japanese with respect to the native population was examined some months before the war by means of an inquiry conducted in 220 public schools in the state of Sao Paulo. In the selected schools, Japanese or descendants of Japanese constituted at least twenty percent of the pupils, but only seven schools consisted entirely of Japanese pupils. Statistics were obtained for 11,087 primary-school pupils, of whom 6,023 were Japanese or descendants of Japanese.²

The inquiry showed that less than twenty percent of Japanese pupils did not speak Portuguese before their enrolment (this percentage was slightly higher in rural districts). Thus it can be said that in four-fifths of all cases social contact with Brazilians during pre-school years was intimate enough to carry over essential knowledge of the Brazilian language. About thirty percent of the Japanese pupils spoke Portuguese fluently without a foreign accent; in the urban centers this percentage was 42.42, and reached a high of 65.81 percent in the coastal zone. Nearly thirty percent of the pupils were unable to write Japanese, and there were 166 pupils who did not even speak Japanese.

It is significant that, with a few exceptions, the Japanese settlers have demonstrated the highest interest in the establishment and development of public schools. The reasons for this attitude are easy to understand. The type of commercial agriculture practiced by most Japanese settlers requires a knowledge of Portuguese and of Brazilian business practices and legal institutions. Illi-

teracy in the local language is therefore to be overcome at any price. But the public school accomplishes another purpose which is not always welcome to the older generation: it is an effective means of assimilation, especially on the secondary and higher levels which bring young Brazilians of Japanese descent into contact with Brazilian urban culture.

Other figures show that there is considerable movement by Japanese within the country itself. In the frontier areas, forty-one percent of those surveyed had been born in municipios other than those in which they lived at the time of the survey. This spatial mobility is a conspicuous factor in assimilation. Traditional Japanese culture is based on such locality groups as the extended family, the neighborhood group, and the village community. The immigrants are, in a sense, fragments broken off from local structures in Japan, and they tend to rebuild these structures in the New World. In order to do so, however, individuals and families must live together for some time in the new surroundings. If fresh migrations take place, social reorganization in the old pattern becomes increasingly difficult. Old controls cannot be reestablished, and the traditional culture is likely to disintegrate. During such disintegration any society becomes more receptive to new cultural values.

The aforementioned survey gave special attention to the status of religion among the Japanese immigrants. The number of Catholics was relatively high—30.30 percent of the Japanese children. This and other figures show that organized public worship connected with Buddhism and Shinto is far from being comparable to the church-like structures which have been established in the United States and Hawaii. The Brazilian Japanese do not even have churches in the material sense of the word; the author's own field work in the Ribeira Valley failed to reveal the existence of any shrines or temples. One Buddhist priest was found who sometimes conducted funerals, but when he was asked to put on his vestments he had to search for them at the bottom of an old trunk, and there was every evidence that they had not been worn for years.

Prejudice Against Mixed Marriages

There was never any appreciable lack of marriageable women among the Japanese immigrants, and they were able to maintain the pattern of ingroup marriage. But for succeeding generations it seems necessary to distinguish three factors which have kept low the number of mixed marriages: (1) racial differences, (2) cultural differences, and (3) class differences.

There is little doubt that race prejudice exists among the Japanese. But an inquiry conducted in Sao Paulo several months before Pearl Harbor showed that some young middle-class Brazilians also had a preventive attitude toward marriages with Japanese. It was, however,

² The inquiry showed that only 26.36 percent of Japanese children were born in Japan. The rest are Brazilians by law and social consensus.

impossible to determine whether this prejudice was based on racial or on cultural discrimination. As there is no clearly defined and socially approved form of race prejudice in Brazil, it seems probable that cultural reasons were predominant.

Japanese traditions of marriage have little in common with the romantic love pattern of Brazilian society. Some young men of Japanese parentage, fearing community or parental sanctions, keep away from contact with Brazilian girls. Mixed marriages do occur occasionally; in the public survey, seventeen of the enrolled children were of mixed Japanese-Occidental origin. In urban centers, where the control of the older generation is weakening, mixed marriages are slowly increasing. The military defeat of the homeland was accompanied by a moral defeat for the elders, and overt rebellion against tradition is more frequent now than a few years ago.

Brazilians with whom the Japanese commonly come in contact are, in their great majority, rural laborers whose economic, occupational, and educational inferiority is beyond question. Many second-generation Japanese in the Ribeira Valley were asked why they did not marry Brazilian women. Almost all the answers indicated that class differences and perhaps class prejudice act as strong obstacles to this kind of marriage.

Survival of Ultra-nationalism

Japan's military expansion and the concept of co-prosperity in a great Asiatic empire were readily approved by many Japanese in Brazil and in particular by homesick newcomers engaged in the difficult struggle of adjustment. A mystical faith in Japan's destiny, interwoven with messianic elements, arose in many Japanese colonies, and its evolution kept pace with the successes of Japan's armies.

During the war, however, many groups were split into two divergent parties: a moderate one which condemned political fanaticism, and a radical one whose leaders founded Shindo Renmei and other less important secret societies. It should be noted that the moderate group was obviously connected with longer residence in Brazil and with economic and social interests which stimulated a favorable attitude toward assimilation. Shindo Renmei became, for the newly-arrived and the poorly adjusted, a means of escaping from frustration and resentment. The moderate group, however, held the leadership; among its members were the heads of land companies, banks, cooperatives, and other Japanese enterprises.

The radicals found unexpected support in the assimilation policy inaugurated in 1938 by dictator Getulio Vargas. Under this policy Japanese schools were closed and Japanese-language newspapers forbidden. When the Pacific War began all Japanese associations were dissolved or placed under government control. More than

100,000 Japanese who had not had time to learn Portuguese were suddenly isolated. Their sources of information were reduced to the secret newspapers and pamphlets of Shindo Renmei, which spread fantastic political rumors and lies among the settlers. Thousands of Japanese, thus cut off, refused to believe that their homeland had been defeated.³ Shindo Renmei did all it could to maintain this disbelief. Many moderate Japanese leaders in the colonies were murdered, and the Brazilian police had to be employed to halt the terror and confusion.

Shindo Renmei's Appeal

Government control imposed on Japanese enterprises and the dissolution of Japanese associations undermined the prestige of the moderate leaders. In their places emerged fanatic nationalists, prominent among them the members of Shindo Renmei. This secret society, founded in 1944, expressed the following aims: (1) diffusion and improvement of the Japanese spirit; (2) preservation of Shintoism; (3) preservation of the Japanese language among the settlers and their descendants; and (4) acceptance of the New Order which Japan was establishing in Asia. The society's leadership included members of the Japanese aristocracy who had found no counterpart of their former power and prestige.

Opposed to assimilation, Shindo Renmei nevertheless recognized that the tendency was difficult or impossible to halt. The society therefore advocated return to Japan. Many Japanese were persuaded to sell their land cheaply and prepare to sail home; the Brazilian authorities intervened with accurate information about Japan's defeat. The criminal aspects of Shindo Renmei's efforts became more and more pronounced, and its principal leaders were finally arrested and deported to Japan.

The acceptance of Shindo Renmei's ideology by many settlers may be explained by several factors: the subordination patterns of the original culture, which predisposed immigrants to accept ideas and orders from the leading class; the poor educational background of many Japanese; the lack of accurate information about current events; and the emotional state of mind produced by rumors, terror, severe police control, and social disorganization.

There were, however, many Japanese who were skeptical about Shindo Renmei. Thousands of Nisei already lived in a different world where extreme Japanese nationalism could not penetrate. The moral defeat of the Isei vindicated and enhanced the position of those who have rebelled against the isolating traditions of their former homeland.

3 Some months after the defeat of Japan, hundreds of Japanese traveled from the interior to the coast to share in the reception of the victorious Japanese navy which was supposed to arrive at the principal seaports of Brazil.