

学位論文題目

Nisei Soldiers in the Korean War: Gender and Ethnic Perspectives on the Service Experience during the Early Cold War

氏名 Miyuki Daimaruya

This paper analyzes the service experience of Japanese American *Niseis* (second-generation Japanese) in the Korean War (1950-1953), focusing especially on Californian cases. The paper asserts that *Nisei* soldiers in the Korean War took the social role of *the cold war soldier*. This means *Nisei* soldiers in Korea represent both anti-communism and a symbol of domestic racial integration. The U.S. government tried to demonstrate to the entire world that the U.S. was superior to the East—especially the Soviet Union—because U.S. society had gotten over racial discrimination. This role suited U.S. policy: as Jennifer A. Delton suggests, “anti-communism and the Cold War enabled and fulfilled the New Deal’s reform agenda.”

In the U.S. military, 1948 was a remarkable year of rebuilding and reinforcing the U.S. armed forces using strategies of gender and ethnic inclusion. In June, U.S. President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, and the U.S. military accelerated integration of *minorities* — both men and women of all races — under Cold War *liberalization* policies. Subsequently, the Korean War was the first *active duty* after 1948’s military reorganization, and was certainly the turning point for domestic *minority* soldiers. For all *Nisei* soldiers, the Korean War was also a significant moment. Since all *Nisei* males served in racially segregated units, such as the 442nd regimental combat team and the 100th battalion, during WWII, the Korean War was the first war in which *Niseis* participated in racially integrated units. However both academics and the public have largely ignored the history of *Niseis*’ military service in Korea. In fact, there have been few studies about *Nisei* soldiers after Japanese segregated units were dissolved in June 1946.

This paper examines the service experiences of *Niseis* in the Korean War, analyzing both cinematic images of *Nisei* soldiers in Korea and several real cases. It analyses how military service during the Korean War affected their lives as *Nisei*. In order to investigate the social role of the *Nisei* as the *Cold War soldier*, the paper poses) three research questions: First, how were *Nisei* soldiers represented in the U.S. media during the Korean War period? Second, did *Niseis* in Korea obtain *full citizenship* owing to take the social role of Cold War soldier? Third, were there any differences in service experience by gender?

Here are my research perspectives. First, the paper examines the impact of the early Cold War system on *Nisei* military service in Korea. Previous Japanese American studies have treated the period—the late 1940s to the end of the 1950s—as just “after WWII”; however, the period is also the beginning the Cold War era. Conversely, the paper investigates how *Nisei* service affected early Cold War policies related to gender and ethnicity. Several types of source material, including Hollywood films, ethnic newspapers, veterans’ memoirs written by the veterans themselves, and my own original interviews with veterans, are discussed in the course of my analysis.

The paper consists of four chapters. The first chapter discusses previous studies and describes the research method of the paper.

Chapter two investigates media images of *Nisei* soldiers, especially focusing on Hollywood film in the 1950s. The representation of the *Nisei* as a male combat soldier in the battlefield creates the image of an

ideal racial minority. This presentation of *Nisei* was not only caused by the stereotypical anti-communism of the fifties but also by *liberal* filmmakers who wanted to enlighten audiences, to open eyes concerning racial discrimination in U.S. society. Filmmakers highlighted the presence of *Nisei* soldiers on the battlefield in order to prove Japanese Americans' loyalty, though the U.S. government had denied it during WWII. Film representation shows the position of Japanese Americans in the U.S. drastically changed before and after the Pacific War, as defeated Japan became a friendly and important ally for the U.S. under the Cold War system. Thus, the Cold War made it possible for *Niseis* to serve in U.S. military under relatively favorable conditions compared to other racial minorities.

The following chapters discuss soldiers' personal experiences. Chapter three examines the experience of a *Nisei* male as a combat soldier in Korea and how these combat experiences transformed his *citizenship* conditions as a *Nisei* man in U.S. society. Though legally an American citizen by birth, his *citizenship* was conflicted until he joined the Marines. On returning to America as a Korean War veteran, he had a privileged position because he had proved his strong loyalty and nationalism through his service. However, being a Korean War veteran also meant returning to common citizen-life carrying trauma as a former-combatant. In short, he could not obtain *full-citizenship* through the service because he had to embrace his difficulties as a *returning soldier*.

The last chapter focuses on the rare case of a woman soldier who served in the U.S. Air Force Nurse Corps during the Korean War period and the effect of service on her *resettlement* experiences as a *Nisei* woman. The greatest difference between female and male service cases is that women in uniform took part in *feminized* duties in the military, so they mainly served on home ground. Despite the conservatism of the 1950s, being a combat nurse allowed a *Nisei minority* woman to be part of the U.S. military, and this service made her Japanese American *resettlement* successful. Ironically, her military career during the fifties helped her to re-enter American mainstream society, where once she had been rejected because of her race. The case might be categorized as demonstrating the *militarized-citizenship* of racial minorities.

I conclude that the *Nisei* soldier in Korea appeared as a *Cold War soldier*, an image created not only by government policies of the early cold war but also by the *liberal* desire for an image of racial-equality in U.S. society. In addition, the personal experiences of service and volunteering remade *Niseis* into Cold War soldiers themselves.

The beginning of the Cold War helped former Japanese internees to re-enter American society both ideologically and practically. The most unique point of *Nisei* soldiers in Korea is that they have become *forgotten soldiers* because the U.S. could not win the Korean War; however *Niseis'* service images have remained as symbols of their personal reliability and loyalty. This complex situation also has helped to create stereotypical Japanese American images of a *model minority*, beginning in the late fifties in the U.S. In short, it is important to understand the history of *Niseis'* military service during the Korean War, particularly given how changing gender and ethnic politics operated during this period of service.