In the next paragraph I will be connecting dots and points from Allisons’s Japanese Mothers and Obentos and Anderson’s Imagined Communities.

To a country that is wrought over with incessant internal civil wars and embroidered in some of the major international conflicts over its history, it is hardly surprising to see the kind of sacrifice, so to speak, that many millions of Japanese people have been willing to put forward. It is no surprising that the intensity of a history of nationalism, and willingness toward a common ideology is consolidated with painstaking cultural regimens, a prime example seen in the obentos, or lunchboxes, that Japanese mothers prepare for their kids. The inordinate impact that a bento box has on the mothers, the kids, and nursery school teachers are bewildering to the unbeknownst. Japanese food goes beyond being a mere functional object used for sustaining health and vigor, it represents a sign of culture, as Alisson noted, and mothers have an almost societal duty in preparing for them professionally. The children are supposed to finish and meanwhile appreciate the obentos; Nursery school teachers are obsessed with obentos while reflecting a child’s behavior over other more apparent and obvious alternatives. The fellow children create an environment of peer pressure and alienates those who does not conform. To what end did the obentos achieve? Just like how the print-languages laid the bases for a communal consciousness in Anderson’s argument, the obentos did something similar. The obentos is a universally shared experience of the Japanese people; Each conversation connects the Japanese to their shared past, each time reconfirming and self-identifying their Japanese origin. Most cultures do offer similar counterparts, but rarely do they go as far as the Japanese in trying to establish a common ground. The Japanese obentos follow a strict style of color, texture, and the idea of showcasing nature, non-mainstream traditions are not honored. It is almost invigorating to think that the people residing on the Japanese isles hundreds of years back have may have different kinds of food inside their lunchboxes, if they even exist. Now we see a single uniform and distinctive style and naturally think about what has lost on the way. Unsuccessful styles phase out of history and their last practitioner either conforms or becomes an outcaste. Parallel to the print-capitalism as languages-of-power, similar argument can be made for the Japanese food culture, and the obentos. From differing families, the children

all practice the routines of finishing up the obentos and mothers create obentos all in a meticulous fashion. The obentos really transcends social and economical barriers and gives the Japanese people of a sense of so called ‘a deep, horizontal comradeship’ while disregarding the unavoidable ‘inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each’. (Anderson, 7) From whence, we noticed how obentos are really tools to aid the Japanese people in conjuring up an imagined community, for which they are willing to sacrifice and devote to.