2005

# "Bitter sweet home": celebration of biculturalism in Japanese language Japanese American literature, 1936-1952

Junko Kobayashi
*University of Iowa*

# "BITTER SWEET HOME": CELEBRATION OF BICULTURALISM IN JAPANESE LANGUAGE JAPANESE AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1936-1952

by

Junko Kobayashi

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in History
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

July 2005

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Stephen G. Vlastos

## ABSTRACT

My dissertation "'Bitter Sweet Home': Celebration of Biculturalism in Japanese Language Japanese American Literature, 1936-1952" explores Japanese-language Japanese American literature as a discourse of identity politics among Japanese Americans between 1936 and 1952. *Shūkaku*, the first Japanese American translocal and multi-genre literary journal, published its inaugural issue in November of 1936, and 1952 marked the publication of *Ibara aru shiramichi* (Thorny path) by Asako Yamamoto, which was one of the earliest sustained literary accounts either in English or Japanese of the wartime experiences of Japanese Americans. One of the major goals of this dissertation is to uncover the muffled voices of Japanese Americans whose primary language was Japanese. I further scrutinize the ways in which Japanese Americans valued the tradition of English-Japanese bilingualism, and how bilingualism played a central role in the formation of Japanese American identity. From the 1930s through the Pacific War when the relationship of Japan and the US was the most hostile, and even after the war when Japan-US relations changed dramatically, Japanese Americans felt acute pressures to suppress Japanese language and culture which had become associated with political sympathizer with Japan, the enemy, and therefore disloyalty to the US. Even under such intense pressure, however, bilingualism remained a critical tool for Japanese Americans to maintain and reconfigure their identity. They carefully guarded the tradition of biculturalism grounded in bilingualism to preserve a distinct identity against the intensified pressures of Americanization with the emphasis on English-only monolingualism.

The wartime political environment imposed a racially polarized discourse of American identity that singled out Japanese Americans as disloyal group and gave new impetus to Americanization programs. I argue that Japanese language literature provided

writers protected space within which they engaged politically charged discussions on such topics as racialized and gendered politics of loyalty and retaining biculturalism under the increasing pressure of Americanization. After the war, as the issue of disloyalty receded, Japanese language literature acquired a new role as a critical resource for Japanese Americans to commemorate wartime experiences, and to rebuild cultural and psychological ties with Japan and Japanese culture.

Abstract Approved: _____
Thesis Supervisor

_____
Title and Department

_____
Date

# "BITTER SWEET HOME": CELEBRATION OF BICULTURALISM IN JAPANESE LANGUAGE JAPANESE AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1936-1952

by

Junko Kobayashi

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in History
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

July 2005

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Stephen G. Vlastos

Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

_____

PH.D. THESIS

_____

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

Junko Kobayashi

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in History at the July 2005 graduation.

Thesis Committee:

_____
Stephen G. Vlastos, Thesis Supervisor

_____
Linda L. Kerber

_____
Paul R. Greenough

_____
Shelton Stromquist

_____
Scott R. Schnell

To my family of blood and of relation

血縁と結縁の家族に捧げます

In writing this book I was sustained by my admiration for and sympathy with people who found themselves at odds with Japanese society as they were experiencing it. I was attached to them and to the idea of a society different from the one currently silencing them. Attachment can come from birth and literal kinship, shared experience, intellectual empathy, or sheer fantasy. It doesn't guarantee the quality of the criticism, its rightness, but it can explain why one brothers to criticize a structure, a set of practices, in the first place. Bothers, that is, for reasons other than or in addition to economic concerns, which I do not mean to dismiss inasmuch as economic well-being is essential to our capacity to think, to give and take pleasure, to live humanly.

To reduce all criticism of Japan to bashing is to congeal a complex of people, places, food, cars, movies, estures, longings into a ridid singularity, "Japan," populated by "the" Japanese. Ditto for America. It kills the possibility of declaring a complicated love.

Norma Field, *In the Realm of a Dying Emperor: Japan at Century's End*

ことばはいきもの。世界は限りなく濃密。このいきものを手にして世界に向かっていくのが文学。文学は人間が精一杯世界と向き合ったときの一つのかたち。

ノーマ・フィールド、『祖母の国』

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

May I continue to live consciously and humbly to acknowledge my debt to all the people who have made me who I am. Thank you for all your support and guidance from the bottom of my heart.

In particular, I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to: Chako-chan, my sister who has taught me the deepest meaning of our lives; Mitsuru and Kiminobu Kobayashi, my parents; Yūko Taniguchi, my sister; Masae Tadachi, my grandmother. They have patiently waited for nine years to witness me obtaining the Ph.D. When I informed my grandmother about my graduation, she stated that she had known this would happen one day, since my late grandfather Yoshikazu Tadachi had predicted it long ago. Thank you, Ojīchan. I wish you were here with us.

I also wish to acknowledge my gratitude to Aminta I. Pérez, my partner, who believed in me when I could not even trust myself. Without your belief in me, support and love, I could not have done it. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to Mr. Alejandro Pérez and Mrs. Minerva Pérez, my parents-in-law, who welcomed me into the Pérez clan from the very beginning as an honorary Mexican. My sincere gratitude for each and every members of the Pérez clan for your warm acceptance of me as a member of the clan.

I would like to acknowledge my genuine appreciation and honor to Grand Master Yong Chin Pak and Master Min Seok Kang for guiding me with patience in becoming a better martial artist and human being. Without learning the "indomitable spirit" and the concept of perseverance, I could have never reached the place I stand now. I also would like to thank Mrs. Jing-shu Zhu Kang for your support, friendship, and patience when we often keep Master Kang from going home on time. My gratitude extends to Master Brian

Hayes, Master Scott Williams, and fellow martial artists in the University of Iowa Hap Ki Do club and Kang's Martial Arts Academy.

I feel very fortunate and honored to have Dr. Stephen Vlastos as my advisor for the past eight years. I would like to express my gratitude and intellectual debt to Dr. Vlastos, Dr. Linda Kerber and Dr. Paul Greenough for their guidance and encouragement in becoming a historian. My gratitude extends to professors, fellow graduate students, and most importantly to Mary Strottman, Jean Aikin, and Pat Goodwin in the Department of History at the University of Iowa.

Since I have not been professionally trained in English-Japanese translation, translation of Japanese literature, particularly poetry, into English was an ardent and often overwhelming task. Without the support and friendship of Marilyn Adildskov, Robin Tierney, and Dr. Adrienne Hurley, I could not have accomplished the daunting task of translation as exhibited in this study. However, all the mistakes and short-comings are strictly my own.

Living on a minimum income as a graduate instructor with the additional financial support from my family, financial supports at crucial points enabled me to complete this project. I wish to acknowledge the generosity of the James and Sylvia Thayer Short-term Research Fellowship at the University of California at Los Angeles. Without the supports of Jeffery Rankin, Supervisors of Reader Services at the Charles E. Young Research Library at UCLA and other staff members, my archival research would not have been as pleasant and fruitful. I would also like to extend my gratitude to two Japanese Studies librarians at the Main Library at the University of Iowa, Ellen Hammond and Chiaki Sakai for their assistance in navigating the maze of Japanese language materials.

Many people outside of the Department of History at the University of Iowa have guided my development intellectually, artistically, and personally. I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to: Minoru Kanazawa, my junior high school teacher; Karen

Campbell, Paul McGrath, Keiko Noguchi, Kimiko Nozawa and Mizuho Murayama, *senseis* in Aichi Prefectural University who are all dedicated teachers who taught me how to think critically; Dr. James Randall from Coe College; Dr. Demetria Iazzetto, Program Director, the Urban Education Program in Chicago; Dr. Margaret Bass, Dr. Michaeline Crichlow and Dr. James Giblin from the African American World Studies Program at the University of Iowa; Dr. Gary Y. Okihiro at Columbia University for aspiring me through his works and in person to become a radical Asian American intellectual with integrity; Dr. Jane F. Bourgeois and the staff at Synchronicity for the moment of peace and healing; and my dear friends, Nobuko Mizuno from senior high school; Emi Inoue, Yūko Katō and Minako Iura, with whom I survived Sōgō Eigo at College; Fujiko Isomura and Lorraine Mortorelli from Coe College; Fumiyo Mizuno for your confidence in me; Cherry Muhanji who mentored me and healed my broken heart; Masa, a feminist, activist, and jazz saxophonist; Cathy Arellano, my best and the first Mexican American friend who introduced me to la historia y las tradiciónes of Xicanos/as; Janet Winston; Rika Houston and Brian Ten; Crystal Lewis-Colman, David Lewis-Colman, Sharon Romeo, Aya Matsushima and Michelle Armstrong Partida whose friendship finally convinced me that academic world can be livable after all; Steve Armstrong who supported me the darkest part of my struggle against depression; Judy Sivertsen and Mike Sansen for your friendship; Lisa Kim, Marcia Morris, Breshawn Kim-Morris, Cammie Toloui and Ziggy Q. Kotchetkov for always being there for me; Cherríe L. Moraga and Celia Herrera Rodríguez for welcoming me to your circle of the "familia de 'scratch'" and showing me a tiny light of hope against the odds that we lesbians of color have to face in our lives; and borrowing the language of Audre Lorde, "those who I can not yet afford to name."

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

# INTRODUCTION

来ても見れば
わけもなく　ただわけもなく
緑の海のなつかしく
打ち返る波にあてどもなく
想ひを寄せて
白いなぎさに立つてゐる
何も見えない海に汗と垢にゆれて
ただ故国へとどいてゐるだらう緑の
海のなつかしく
潮の音のする
白いなぎさに立つてゐる

I came to the ocean shore
For no reason, no reason at all
Drawn to the green sea
And ponder the surf
Ebbing and flowing
As I stand on the white sand beach
I can not see a thing
Engulfed in sweat and dirt
Being rocked by the vast ocean
This green ocean, I wonder, reaches to my home
This green ocean, I feel, is so dear to me
As I hear the roar of the tide
I stand in the white sands beach

Keiji Yukimura, "Umibe" (The Beach)

This poem, "Umibe" (The beach), appeared in January 1945 in the sixth volume of *Tessaku*, the Japanese language literary magazine published by Japanese Americans confined in the Tule Lake concentration camp, one of the ten camps in which Japanese Americans were imprisoned during World War II.[1] Jōji Yamashiro, who was born in Hawai'i, grew up in Okinawa, and returned to the US in his teens, wrote this poem in the South Pacific where he served in the US Army as an intelligent agent. Yamashiro

[1] Keiji Yukimura, "Umibe" (The Beach) *Tessaku* vol 6 (January 1945), 76, *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6, edited by Satae Shinoda and Iwao Yamamoto, (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997), 30, hereafter cited as *Tessaku.* Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

belonged to a group called Kibei Nisei, a subgroup of Nisei, second generation Japanese Americans who received part or all of their education in Japan.[2] Shortly before the opening of the Japan-US war, Yamashiro was drafted into the US military, and he volunteered to serve in military intelligence in the Pacific theater in time of war.[3] From the South Pacific, Yamashiro sent letters to his older brother, Masao Yamashiro, who was incarcerated at Tule Lake. Masao described the letters as written in "concise but fluent English"[4] to let his brother know that he was OK. "These letters were only means to connect us," Masao recalls in his essay originally published in 1973 in *Rafu Shimpō,*[5] and "they were carefully composed not to cause any problems for him or me due to the censorship."[6] Among these carefully crafted English letters, the poem, "Umibe," was the sole text the brothers shared in Japanese, the language they call their mother tongue. As an active member of the *Tessaku* literary circle in the Tule Lake camp, Masao Yamashiro decided to publish his brother's poem, using the pen name, Keiji Yukimura. As Masao

---

[2] For detailed discussion of generational terminology such as Kibei, see section below, "Generation as Useful but Problematic Category of Analysis."

[3] Nisei men's status regarding their citizenship right and obligation to serve the US armed forces drastically changed over the course of World War II. Immediately after the US declared war against Japan, Japanese American men in the National Guards and the Army were either given honorable discharges, or segregated into army camps in Arkansas and Alabama to perform non-combat duties. The only exception to this rule was in relation to those who were serving military intelligence using their bilingual ability. On March 30, 1942, the US War Department ordered a cease to the induction of Nisei into the armed forces on the West Coast. It was not until January 14, 1944 that the draft eligibility of Nisei was fully restored. See Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982), 187, 246, hereafter cited as *Personal Justice Denied*; Masayo Duus, *Unlikely Liberators: The Men of the 100th and the 442nd,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 19 and 54.

[4] Masao Yamashiro, *Tōi taigan: Aru Kibei Nisei no kaisō* (Distant shore: Memories of a Kibei Nisei), (Tokyo: Gurobyū Sha, 1984), 269, hereafter cited as *Tōi taigan.*

[5] *Rafu Shimpō* is a Japanese American daily published bilingually in English and Japanese in Los Angeles.

[6] Ibid, 269.

read his brother's poem, he "pictured [his] brother engulfed in solitude on the white beach. That silence embodied the agony of a Kibei Nisei, which made [him] cry and cry."[7]

Jōji Yamashiro's "Umibe" is, without a doubt, American literature.[8] In recent years, scholars in American Studies have debated how we should expand the definition of American literature to include texts written in languages other than English. In his essay "For a Multilingual Turn in American Studies," originally published in 1997, Werner Sollors reclaims the tradition of multilingual scholarship against the current of monolingual and Anglophone centered American Studies scholarship.[9] The term "Americanist," Sollors reminds us, originally referred to those who studied diverse languages of American Indians; thus "Americanist" refers to a scholar whose research requires the knowledge of multiple languages.

I am one of many scholars engaged in an interdisciplinary project who is responding to Sollors' call for "attention to the significance of languages for American Studies."[10] My dissertation explores Japanese-language Japanese American literature as a discourse of identity politics among Japanese Americans between 1936 and 1952. *Shūkaku*, the first Japanese American translocal and multi-genre literary journal, published its inaugural issue in November of 1936, and 1952 marked the publication of

---

[7] Ibid, 271.

[8] Although Japanese language Japanese American writers adopt family-name first and -given-name second order, I use given-name first and family-name second order in this study in order to be consistant with my calim that these writers are indeed important part of American literary tradition. In order to avoid confusion, even when I describe names of Japanese, I use given-name first and family-name second order. The choise is solely of practical, not of an attempt to anglicizing Japanese.

[9] Werner Sollors, "For a Multilingual Turn in American Studies," *American Studies Association Newsletter* (June 1997), <http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/interroads/sollors1.html>.

[10] Ibid.

*Ibara aru shiramichi* (Thorny path) by Asako Yamamoto.[11] Yamamoto is a pen name used by Hisa Aoki, who first immigrated to Hawai'i with her husband Tokubun Aoki, a Buddhist minister. Born in 1900, Aoki had an exceptionally high educational background for a Japanese woman, having graduated from Yamagata Women's Secondary School, Tokyo Higher Normal School for Women, and the Education Department of Nihon University. After immigrating to the US, Aoki taught Japanese language in Honolulu, Hawai'i, Oakland, and Los Angeles. Using her pen name, Asako Yamamoto, she regularly contributed essays and children's stories as a guest writer for Los Angeles based bilingual daily, *Kashū Mainishi* led by Fujii Sei.[12] *Ibara aru shiramichi* was one of the earliest sustained literary accounts either in English or Japanese of the wartime experiences of Japanese Americans.

One of the major goals of this dissertation is to uncover the muffled voices of Japanese Americans whose primary or preferred language was Japanese.[13] I further scrutinize the ways in which Japanese Americans valued the tradition of English-Japanese bilingualism, and how bilingualism played a central role in the formation of Japanese American identity. From the 1930s through the Pacific War when the relationship between Japan and the US was the most hostile, and even after the war when Japan-US relations changed dramatically, Japanese Americans felt acute pressures to suppress the Japanese language and culture which had become associated with political

---

[11] Asako Yamamoto, *Ibara aru shiramichi* (Thorny path) (Tokyo: Shirahashi Insatsujo, 1952), hereafter cited as *Ibara aru shiramichi.*

[12] Like many of her counterparts in Japanese American literary circles, Aoki self-published the collection of her essays, *Kokoro no kage* (Shade of one's heart). I have not yet been able to locate this book either in any library and/or archive.

[13] Although I use the terms, "Japanese language literature" and "English language literature" to indicate the primary mode of language, it is important to keep in mind Japanese American literature in either language IS BILINGUAL BY NATURE. For example, compared to Japanese literary writings during the same time period, Japanese American Japanese writings contain far more English phrases and expressions which are common among Japanese Americans, and which are not easily understood by Japanese readers in Japan.

sympathizer with Japan, the enemy, and therefore disloyalty to the US. Even under such intense pressure to conform to monolingual Americanization, however, bilingualism remained a critical tool for Japanese Americans to maintain and reconfigure their identity. They carefully guarded the tradition of biculturalism grounded in bilingualism to preserve a distinct identity against the intensified pressures of Americanization with the emphasis on English-only monolingualism.

**Unheard Voices of Japanese American Expressions**

"Nokosareteinai Nisei heishi no shuki" (Nisei soldiers did not leave their writing behind) is the title of the essay in which Masao Yamashiro reintroduced his brother's poem in 1984. Mentioning Shōhei Ooka's novel, *Nobi* (Wild fire) which was based on the author's experience as a surviving soldier of Japanese Army in the South Pacific, Yamashiro lamented the absence of realistic writings of Nisei soldiers' experiences in the Pacific.[14] He complained that until recently accounts of wartime service by Nisei in the Pacific theater had merely celebrated Nisei: loyalty in serving in military intelligence and providing aid and comfort to Japanese civilians in war zone.

Speaking of his brother's emotional agony, Yamashiro writes:

> For my brother, it was such a grave decision to volunteer for the US army that he felt as if he had to completely shed his attachment to Japan. Nor was my brother the only one. Most of the Kibei Nisei who participated in the Pacific War had lived in Japan as children, running bare foot around the mountains and fields of Japan. They could not help but feel affectionate toward Japan. They loved Japan as much as the "disloyal" Kibei Nisei in Tule Lake. Since their situation did not permit ambivalence in their loyalty to the US, they quickly and deliberately denied the

[14] Masao Yamashiro, *Tōi taigan*, 268-69.

> emotional agony that would have come from consciousness of themselves as Kibei Nisei fighting against their homeland.[15]

But Yamashiro does not believe that one can so easily "get rid of the past which lurks deep in one's consciousness." "Those Nisei," he warned, "might think they had gotten rid of the past completely, but the past is not simply suppressed."[16] Out of this extreme condition, his brother's poem, "The Beach" emerged. Discussing the aesthetic of the poem, Yamashiro argues that his brother purposefully chose the ambiguous language to ensure his and his brother's safety:

> When my brother writes "I can not see a thing / Engulfed in sweat and dirt / Being rocked by the vast ocean," does he refer to the battlefield, or does he refer to the feeling of helplessness felt by those who had to undergo inexorable historical process? When he says "[reaching] to my home," is the home America, or is it the "home" of childhood which the roar of tide which he tries to purge from his inner psyche?[17]

---

[15] Ibid, 272.

日本を相手にして戦うことは日本人としてそれまで生きて来た心情とも、きれいに訣別し、清算しなければならないほど、厳粛なものだったようだ。私の弟だけではない。太平洋戦争に参加した帰米二世の多くが、つい帰米する前まで日本の山野を素足で走り回り、同じ日本人として生きて来た。日本に対して、感情が無かった筈はない。彼等は、ツールレーキの帰米二世に勝るとも劣らないほど、日本を愛していた人たちだった。ただ、忠誠の内容がいい加減なものであってはならないため、自分の中の帰米二世がドラマとなって咲く前に蕾のまま摘み取ってしまっただけである。

[16] Ibid, 272-73.

意識下に生きている過去は、決して消し去ることは出来ない。それはただ、抑圧されているにすぎない。恐らく、そうした極度に抑圧された状態から、「海辺」と言う弟の詩は作られたのであろう。

[17] Ibid,

象徴的であるのもそれがためである。「何も見えない海に汗と垢にゆれて」ては、戦場のことなのか、それとも、いやおうなしに、歴史の通過するときの、人間の置かれる小さな存在感を言っているのか……。「故国」へとどいているだろう」の「故国」は、アメリカ本国のことなのか、それとも心の中で整理してしまった幼いときの潮の音のする「ふるさと」のことなのか・・・・・何も言わず、説明もせず、白いなぎさに立ったとき、母の胎内の安らかな状態にあることを拒否された帰米二世のドラマは、外部に現れることなく消え去っている。私がぽろぽろ泣いたのは、何も言わない弟の心

Masao Yamashiro completely understood how his brother felt and what his brother really meant in his ambiguous language. It is the heavy burden of silence that his brother had to endure that made Yamashiro profusely cry:

> When he stood silently on the white beach, the agony of Kibei Nisei is suppressed. The root of this agony was their loss of primordial peace inside their mothers' wombs. My brother's poem made me cry because I understood so well he who would not utter a word.

Although not all Japanese Americans had to endure the extent of pain shared by the Yamashiro brothers, all Japanese Americans felt both the pressure to remain silent and the urge to express their feelings. For social historians whose goal is to recover the muffled and silenced voices of the oppressed from the collective amnesia, Jyōji Yamashiro's poem and his brother's commentary alert us to where we should look for the voices, and how we should listen to such voices.

Although Yamashiro provocatively remarks that "Nisei Soldier did not write memoirs," his brother's poem convinces us that there ARE writings by Japanese Americans that have realistically –to borrow Yamashiro's phrase – captured the emotional experiences of Japanese Americans. The common stereotype is that Japanese Americans, particularly Issei and Nisei, are by nature "silent," and sociological, anthropological, and psychological studies have suggested various explanations, including historical trauma theory and cultural background. But often, the problem of "silence" is not so much a matter of not speaking. Rather, the problem lies on the side of the listeners who can not or will not listen to what is expressed.

---

がよく解ったからである。

Sollors' critique of language as "the blind spot" in American Studies pinpoints the core of the problematic image of Japanese Americans as "silent" people. Scholars of Japanese American Studies have not yet paid sufficient attention to Japanese language Japanese American literature, one of the critical sources of Japanese American expressions. Except for a few translated anthologies of Japanese poetry such as haiku published during the war, there is little translation available in English for Japanese American literature in the Japanese language.[18] There is no monograph length study either in literary criticism or in socio-cultural history of Japanese language Japanese American literature. The situation is only somewhat better in the academic world in Japan. Satae Shinoda and Iwao Yamamoto call for more scholarly attention to Japanese language Japanese American literature and their pioneering scholarship includes the republication of major literary magazines produced by Japanese Americans between 1936 and 1985 which has made these critical resources much more accessible.[19]

There is also a need for more extensive study of early English language Japanese American literature. Prior to the 1970s when scholars began to pay more attention to so-called ethnic literature, scholarship on Japanese American literature in the English language paid little attention even to the early English language Japanese American writings. In the introduction to *Dear Miye: Letters Home from Japan 1939-1946* (1995), Robert Lee emphasizes the historical significance of the letters of Mary Kimoto, a Nisei woman who spent the volatile years between 1939 and 1946 in Japan: "Had they been published at the time [in 1947], [Kimoto's letters] would have been the first English-

---

[18] Violet Kazue de Cristoforo, ed., *May Sky There Is Always Tomorrow: An Anthology of Japanese American Concentration Camp Kaiko Haiku* (Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Press, 1997); Keiho Soga, Taisanboku Mori, Sojin Takei, and Muin Ozaki, *Poets behind Barbed Wire* (Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 1983).

[19] Satae Shinoda and Iwao Yamamoto eds., *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* (Anthology of Japanese American Literary Journals) (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997), hereafter cited as *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei.*

language account of a Nisei woman's experience."[20] However, during the two decades after the conclusion of World War II when a master narrative of World War II as "a single story of the conflict, a nostalgic epic of unity and heroic sacrifice" of the Allied side, dominated the US mainstream society, Kimoto's writings were not welcomed. Thus, Kimoto's letters "became quite literally part of the hidden transcript of Japanese American history."[21]

The commercial failure of John Okada's now-classic *No-No Boy* is a telling example of the extent of dominance of what Lee calls as "a single story" or master narrative of World War II. Okada explores the deep wounds questions of loyalty opened within Japanese American community through the protagonist, Ichiro, a Nisei who was labeled "disloyal" due to his refusal to serve the US armed forces during the war. The public audience in the 1950s – both mainstream and Japanese Americans – were not ready to deal with Okada's explicit treatment of a "disloyal" character that subverted the era's master narrative of the war.[22]

Although some may consider Etsu Sugimoto's *Daughter of the Samurai* (1928) and Shidzue Ishimoto's *Facing Two Ways: The Story of My Life* (1935) as predecessors of a sort for Japanese American women' s writing, Monica Sone's *Nisei Daughter* (1953) was the first book-length account of a Nisei woman's life, published in the English language by a mainstream publisher. *Nisei Daughter* is an autobiography of Sone, a Nisei born and raised in Seattle. It chronicles the first twenty some years of Sone's life,

---

[20] Robert Lee, "Introduction" in *Dear Miye: Letters Home from Japan 1939-1946* by Mary Kimoto (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 2, hereafter cited as *Dear Miye.*

[21] Ibid, 2.

[22] Robert Lee, "Introduction" in *Dear Miye*, by Mary Kimoto, 2. It took almost two decades for Okada's *No-No Boy* to be re-discovered and rescued from "obscurity" by members of the Combined Asian-American Resources Project (CARP), "committed to the living tradition of Asian-American thoughts and action." See Lawson Fusao Inada, "Introduction" in John Okada, *No-No Boy,* (Seattle: Combined Asian American Resources Project, 1977), iii, hereafter cited as *No-No Boy*.

highlighting her anguish over two seemingly irreconcilable cultures and identities, American and Japanese. Although Sone introduces various perspectives within the Japanese American community, the "I" in her narrative strongly identifies with "American" culture and identity, while expressing great discomfort with and distancing herself from "Japanese" culture.

Social historians and literary critics began to uncover the vibrant Nisei subculture before the war. Parallel to the development of Japanese language literary movement, Nisei writers in the English language began to find the outlet to their creativity in the literary sections of ethnic newspapers such as *Rafu Shimpō* and *Kashū Mainishi* published in Japanese American communities. English language Japanese American writers organized writing groups and developed support networks. Perhaps the most notable example was the literary journal, *Reimei*, in which Tarō Katayama, a Nisei writer, published his short story, "Haru" (Spring) in the spring 1933 issue.[23] Needless to say, internment interrupted the prewar literary group, but Nisei writers continued to write in and out of the camps. Robert Lee summarizes the wartime impact on the emerging Nisei literature:

> The war and internment ruptured any chance that Nisei writers might have had to gain access to an audience outside the Japaense American community. Although internment camp newspapers continued to publish an occasional short story, few accounts of Nisei life aimed at a wide non-Nikkei[24] audience appeared in print before the end of the Second World War. Toshio Mori's short stories depicting life in the Nikkei communities, which had begun to appear in magazines such as *Common Ground* in 1940, would have to wait until 1949 to be collected and published. In the same year, "Seventeen Syllables," Hisaye Yamamoto's poignant short

---

[23] Taro Katayama, "Haru" *Reimei* 1:3 (Spring 1933), reprinted in *Ayumi: The Japanese American Anthology*, edited by Janice Mirikitani, (San Francisco: The Japanese American Anthology Committee, 1980), 120-29.

[24] The term "Nikkei" refers to people of Japanese descent regardless of generation or citizenship status.

> story of a woman's bitter life on a family farm in central California, appeared in *Partisan Review*.[25]

Susan Schweik, literary critic, reminds us of the "potentially paralyzing obstacles for writing"[26] that the wartime forced removal and incarceration experiences imposed on Nikkei writers. Suyemoto Toyo, Nisei writer, writes in her 1983 essay, "Writing of Poetry": "During the mass evacuation of the Japanese in 1942, my family and I were moved out of Berkeley to the Tanforan Race Track in San Bruno, California, and that spring my dated poetry notebook shows an abrupt gap in my writing."[27] Despite this statement, however, Schweik uncovers that Suyemoto soon reconvened writing and published them in and out of Topaz camp in Utah where she and her family were incarcerated after their temporal incarceration at Tanforan. Schweik poses an important question: "How should we, do we, read both the poems and the gap today?"[28] Building on the feminist critical readings of women's lyric, and insisting on the importance of paying attention to "equally salient and immediately pressing social categories such as race, ethnicity, citizenship, loyalty"[29] in addition to gender, Schweik argues that the war and the internment did not make writing impossible; instead, writing became more than ever important for Japanese Americans as tools of resistance, record-keeping, humor and satire, implicit communication and reflection. Importantly for women, in particular, wartime conditions made writing for many of them possible for the first time in their lives. "Despite all the obstacles…," Schweik asserts that "a vigorous, complex wartime

---

[25] Robert Lee, "Introduction" in Mary Kimoto, *Dear Miye*, 2-3.

[26] Susan Schweik, "'Pre-Poetics' of Internment: The Example of Toyo Suyemoto" *American Literary History* 1:1 (Spring 1989), 89, hereafter cited as "'Pre-Poetics' of Internment."

[27] Quoted in Schweik, "'Pre-Poetics' of Internment," 89.

[28] Schweik, "'Pre-Poetics' of Internment," 89.

[29] Ibid, 89.

Nikkei literary culture developed, particularly in the camps."[30] Nisei women developed subculture within larger Nikkei literary cultural space: as historian Valerie Matsumoto's study suggested, Nisei women "[integrated] both the Japanese ways of their parents and the mainstream customs of their non-Japanese friends and classmates."[31] Nisei women writers and artists such as Mine Okubo, Toyo Suyemoto, at Topaz, Utah, and Hisaye Yamamoto and Wakako Yamauchi at Poston, Arizona "formed newfound work-sustaining female [and generation-specific] networks in the camps, offering each other inspiration and encouragement."[32] Schweik,'s question, "How should we, do we, read both the poems and the gap today?" is a central question of this dissertation about the Japanese American writers who expressed themselves in the Japanese language.

## Generation as Useful but Problematic Category of Analysis

Historically, generational identifications have had significant meaning not only for scholars but also for the community members themselves in Japanese American communities. Generational terminologies in Japanese such as Issei, Nisei, Kibei and Sansei are commonly used in English to designate generational identities. Issei refers to the first generation immigrants to the US from Japan. Issei are the parents of the Nisei, "the second generation," born in the US, and Issei are the grandparents of the Sansei, "the third generation." Antoher important generation marker in this study is Kibei. As

---

[30] Ibid, 93, my emphasis.

[31] Ibid, 95.

[32] Ibid, 96.

mentioned earlier, Kibei is a subgroup of Nisei who were born in the US, but were sent back to Japan for part of their childhood.

The Japanese term, Kibei literally means "returning to the US." According to an estimate in 1944, there were approximately 9,000 Kibei American citizens, composing about ten percent of the Japanese American population. Some Issei parents sent their children back to Japan to their grandparents or other relatives for economic reasons, others did so for educational and cultural concerns, which often accompanied specific gender attributes: for male children, many parents considered the combination of a US background (particularly citizenship) and Japanese schooling advantageous for their future careers; for female children, many believed it was crucial to learn "proper" behavior and position in family and society.[33]

In his "Generation as a Sociological Problem," sociologist Daivd Kertzer criticizes the confusing usage of the concept, "generation," by social scientists. Kertzer asserts that social scientists confounded multiple meanings of generation "as a principle of descent relationship with concepts related to age and historical time."[34] Kertzer calls for more precise usage of generation as a concept, and suggests limiting the useage of generation more precisely to relations of kinship descent. Using the narrow definition of generation, Kertzer believes, will add clarity: "Examining generation in conjunction with age opens up a research agenda that may be obscured where age, cohort, and generation are used interchangeably."[35]

---

[33] Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 52-53. Also see War Relocation Authority, Community Analysis Section, "The Kibei," 2-4.

[34] David Kertzer, "Generation as a Sociological Problem," *Annual Review of Sociology* 9 (1983), 142.

[35] Ibid, 143.

Kertzer's suggestion has significance for this study. Although generational markers have been historically important in Japaense American communities, many Japanese Americans prefer to use the term Nikkei (of Japanese descent) both as noun and adjective to refer to themselves today. *The Encyclopedia of Japaense American History* suggests why Nikkei increasingly becomes the preferred term:

> Its increasing usage might have something to do with the breaking down of the generational terms – Issei, Nisei, Sansei, Yonsei – beyond the fourth generation (Gosei would be the next one). (How would one designate the child of one immigrant and one Sansei parent? Sansei and non-Japanese American parents? Nisei and Yonsei parents?)[36]

In addition to the problem of confounded the meaning of generation as Kertzer suggested, these examples reveal the core problem of generational terminology that there is no neat, clean-cut division of generational lines in the communities.

Further, generational terminology alone does not articulate the complexity of Japaense American communities. For example, even among Issei who immigrated between 1885 and 1924, there are roughly three dintinctive groups based on the time of their immigration, gender, and age. The first group of immigrants was primalily single young male who came to the US as laborers to earn money to eventually return to Japan. Later, an increasing number of these men decided to settle in the US, transforming the sojounor to settler mentality. This transition was intensified particularly after the Gentleman's Agreeement of 1907-8. The Agreement facilitated the immigration of the second group, women from Japan who came to the US as picture brides, who, upon arrival, became the wives of Issei men. Generally speaking, these women were ten to twenty years younger than their prospective husbands.

---

[36] Brian Niiya, ed., *Encyclopedia of Japanese American History: An A-to-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present, Updated Edition*, (New York: Checkmark Books, 2001), 303.

The third group of Issei was refered to as "Yobiyose Issei," deriving from the Japanese verb, "yobiyoseru" (to send for, summon). Toward the end of the first wave of immigration, children immigrated to join the older members of their families who were already in the US. These Issei were born in Japan, but were at least partially raised in the US. Although the "Yobiyose" group belongs to the Issei in terms of generation, their age are much closer to Nisei.

This study will utilize conventional generational markers in order to idenfity relations of kinship descent within the Japanese American community. However, it continues to scrutinize other factors such as age, historical context, gender, and individual differences. This is critical not only to address the problems that Kertzer articulated, but also to reexamine dichotomous wartime stereotypes attached to specific generations regarding loyalty: While Nisei were viewed as "loyal," Issei and Kibei were often automatically assumed "disloyal" due to their proximity to Japan. Generational markers have to be used thoughtfully; otherwise they obscure, rather than reveal the historically specific and complex experiences of Japanese Americans.

## Chapter Outline

In order to historicize the poems and gap during the wartime effectively, we need to turn our attention first to the vibrant literary cultures of the prewar Japanese American community. The first chapter situates the pre-war literary movement in the vibrant ethnic culture that developed within Japanese American communities of the 1930s prior to World War II. Chapter One focuses on the six volumes of *Shūkaku* (Harvest), a literary journal published on the West Coast between November 1936 and June 1939.[37] *Shūkaku*

[37] *Shūkaku* Vol 1-6, in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 1, edited by Shinoda Satae and Yamamoto Iwao, hereafter cited as *Shūkaku.*

provided members of various local communities across the West Coast the opportunity to share in public, and to some extent, legitimize, unpopular, ambiguous, contradictory, but very human thoughts, feelings, and sentiments. I argue that Japanese language literature provided a place, particularly for Issei and Kibei Nisei to express sentiments and opinions which might undermine political efforts to present a united and coherent image and vision of the Japanese American community to the outside. Embracing their literature as part of a distinct Japanese American culture, writers discussed sentiments of aging Issei who faced increasing anti-Asian sentiment; the dilemmas of Kibei who were situated between Issei and Nisei and Japan and the US; and Japanese American identity politics which needed to negotiate the growingly hostile relations between the US and Japan, both expanding imperial powers in the Pacific.

The second chapter looks at the formation of Japanese-language literary circles and publications under the conditions of internment of West Coast Japanese Americans. Japanese language literature was one of the many examples of cultural assets that Japanese Americans were able to reconstruct in America's concentration camps. Utilizing pre-war translocal and inter-generational networks of writers, Japanese Americans quickly reorganized literary circles in the camps. These literary activities were placed under the supervision of the Community Activity Section and Adult Education Department of the War Relocation Authority (WRA), the camp administration. Through these branches, the national WRA office at Washington D. C. attempted to carry on "Americanization" of internees, and construct English-only environment as much as possible.

Local WRA staff, however, soon realized that the primary interests of internees, particularly among Issei and Kibei, were directed towards classes and activities with Japanese cultural orientation. Although the pattern of enrollment did not satisfy the goal of "Americanization," the local WRA staff welcomed internees' participation in Japanese cultural activities that defused frustration, bolstered morale and contributed to peace in

camp life, while deterring internees from unfavorable activities such as gambling. Once the local WRA administrators understood the benefits of Japanese cultural activities, including literature, the staff took a relatively relaxed attitude as long as these activities did not generate conflicts, either among internees or between internees and the camp administrators.

In this laxly controlled environment, Japanese American writers moved to reclaim Japanese cultural practices which had been stigmatized since the day of the Pearl Harbor attack due to the politicization of anything Japanese. Many writers believed that literature had healing power, and literature could assist their efforts to "preserve" their culture against all odds including the trauma of forced removal, the desolate conditions of the camps, and the Americanization efforts imposed upon them. As historian Gary Okihiro asserted, Japanese language Japanese American literature became "vehicle" and "means" by which they resisted the pressure of Americanization, and continued to cherish their distinct identity, including ethnic pride, grounded in bi-culturalism.[38]

The third chapter examines the question of loyalty as explored by Nisei men classified as "disloyal" in Japanese language literature produced in the camps. For many Japanese Americans but particularly for the Issei generation born in Japan, and Kibei who had spent part of their formative years in Japan, the issue of national loyalty was never simple even before Pearl Harbor and Japan's declaration of war on the United States. The subsequent internment of persons of Japanese ancestry based solely on a presumption of disloyalty greatly complicated their feelings of loyalty. The decision of the WRA in February 1943 to administer loyalty questionnaires to all internees seventeen years and older forced the Japanese American community to declare national allegiances in the starkest terms. In particular, the questionnaires forced a new set of questions on

---

[38] Gary Okihiro, "Religion and Resistance in America's Concentration Camps," *Phylon* 45:3 (1984), 220-33, hereafter cited as "Religion and Resistance in America's Concentration Camps."

the second generation Japanese American men of draft age. Their already complex question was further complicated by the challenge of masculinity that the gendered language of questionnaires imposed.

I argue that Japanese language literature provided a protected space where interned writers could express complex and contradictory sentiments regarding loyalty and military service. Japanese language literature functioned as what James Scott has conceptualized as "hidden transcripts," revealing "off stage" discourse hidden from the internal as well as external power holders' surveillance. In the highly politicized environment of the camps during and after the loyalty questionnaires, Japanese Americans experienced the opposing pressures of two equally chauvinistic nationalisms: "100 % Americanism" propagated by the US government on the one hand, and on the other Emperor-centered Japanism espoused by a minority faction of pro-Japan Japanese Americans who proudly took on the identity of disloyalty. In this highly charged setting, writers were able to contest the binary construction of loyalty in literary writings.

The fourth chapter explores the sustained literary among Japanese American writers immediately after the war. Although wartime pressures of self-censorship somewhat relaxed after the war with the dramatic changes of Japan's relationship to the US from what was considered enemy to junior partner, Japanese American writers felt renewed pressure derived from the Cold War context. In his critical study of the politics of memory, remembering, and history, historian David Yoo pointedly characterized the pressure of silence in the post-war: "In trying to secure a future in cold war America, most Nikkei opted for silence, since they knew too well how disastrous the label of disloyalty could be."[39] The politics of this self-imposed silence figured significantly in the post-war formation of Japanese American community politics. Historian Lon

---

[39] David Yoo, "Captivating Memories: Museology, Concentration Camps, and Japanese American History," *American Quarterly* 48:4 (December 1996), 682, hereafter cited as "Captivating Memories."

Kurashige argues that postwar Japanese American leaders abandoned the pre-war emphasis on creating ethnically exclusive economic and cultural community, and instead emphasized Americanism based on racial integration. [40] While community leaders celebrated so-called loyal, respectable, and assimilated Japanese Americans, they silenced the challenging and contesting voices from the disloyal, women, and youth delinquents, among others.

Almost all members of the Japanese language literary community could not live as professional writers, and the arduous task of rebuilding their livelihoods imposed major obstacles for continuing their literary activities. Under those conditions, poetry and especially haiku and tanka, Japanese style poetry, flourished in the pages of ethnic newspapers such as *Rafu Shimpō* and *Kashū Mainichi* of Los Angeles. In the 1950s, prominent members of literary circles began to reconvene local literary meetings, and some even self-published their literary works.

In the literary sections of ethnic newspapers and self-published books, Japanese language writers seemed to feel less pressure to conform their writings to the dominant postwar ideology of Nisei leadership because their writings targeted a linguistically limited readership within the Japanese American community, and because their publication did not rely on American mainstream publishers. Thus, at the time when Japanese American writers in the English language were mostly silent, particularly about their wartime experiences, Japanese language writers were able to carve out a space to express concerns and sympathy to Japan and to commemorate their recent memory of wartime incarcerations. Although they did not explicitly criticize mainstream politics of the community, the ways in which writers commemorated the wartime experiences did

---

[40] Lon Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival, 1934-1990,* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2002), 119-150, hereafter cited as *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict.*

not closely follow the mainstream politics of Japanese Americans which exclusively celebrated the “loyals” and prominent and seemingly Americanized Issei.

# CHAPTER I

## HARVEST OF IMMIGRANT LIFE: *SHŪKAKU*, LITERARY MOVEMENT OF THE WEST COAST, 1936-1939

In his self-published 1962 anthology of autobiographical essays and poems, *Mitsubachi no uta: Shi to zuihitsushū* (Song of the bee: Poems and essays), Akira Togawa, an Issei Japanese American poet, described the decade of the 1930s as the most vibrant period for Japanese language Japanese American literature. The years of 1935 and 1936, according to his recollection, were "the years that literary activities among Japanese in the United States were the most vigorous."[41] Togawa justified his observation by referring to the publication of the inaugural volume of the literary journal *Shūkaku* (Harvest), which appeared in November1936. Japanese American writers self-financed six volumes of *Shūkaku* between November 1936 and June 1939.

In this chapter, I will explore the social history of *Shūkaku,* analyzing specifically the ways in which this literature contributed to discussions dealing with identities in regard to race, ethnicity, nationality, and gender within the Issei and Kibei of Japanese Americans. I argue that Japanese language literature provided a place for predominantly Issei and Kibei writers to express sentiments which were not constrained by political efforts within the Japanese American community to present a united and coherent image and vision to the outside world. After providing a social context for the publication of *Shūkaku,* I explore three themes that frequently emerged in the poems and fiction of these

---

41 Akira Togawa, *Mitsubachi no uta: Shi to zuihitsush* (Song of the bee: Poems and essays) (Tokyo: Aporon Sha, 1962), 202, hereafter cited as *Mitsubatchi no uta*.

在米日本人の文藝の最も盛んな時代だつたと思ふ。

writers: Issei sentiments on life in an unwelcoming country, Kibei's aloofness from both Issei and Nisei, and the impact of the Japan-China War on identity politics of Japanese Americans.

Compared to the earlier publications of Japanese language Japanese American literature, *Shūkaku* had several distinctive characteristics that reflected the maturation of the Japanese language literary movement in America. *Shūkaku* was the fruition of the trans-local networks established among Japanese American writers along the West coast of the United States.[42] Before *Shūkaku*, there were numerous Japanese American literary journals and self-published books in the Japanese language; however, these publications were both highly localized and limited to a specific genre (i.e. an anthology of poems by a poetry society). Created by individual writers or local literary circles, these publications had limited circulation.

*Shūkaku* was published by *Hokubei Shijin Kyōkai* (the Association of North American poets). The association was established in September 1936, but was preceded by an organization centered in Southern California, called *Nanka Shijin Kyōkai* (the Association of Southern California poets). The renaming and reorganization of the association reflected members' efforts to extend the network of writers beyond Southern California. In the first volume of *Shūkaku*, the editors declared their purpose:

> …to create the Association of North American poets as a publishing venue for poets and writers, as well as a forum in which all members of the literary community would be able to get to know and encourage one another.[43]

---

[42] Iwao Yamamoto, "Maboroshi no bungeishi, *Shūkaku*: *Nikkei Amerika bungaku zasshi shūsei*, 1, kaidai" (Mythical literary journal, *Shukaku*: Anthology of Japanese American literary journals 1, introduction), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 1, 18-19.

[43] *Shūkaku* vol 1 (November 1936), 30.

皆んなで知り合ひ、はげまし合ふ機会を作り、作品を発表する機関を作りたいといふ希望から在米詩人及び一般文芸人によつて「北米詩人協会」なる団体が作られました。

According to the membership directory published in the first volume of *Shūkaku* (November 1936), *Hokubei Shijin Kyōkai* had fifty-two members. The largest concentration was the thirty-five writers residing in Los Angeles, followed by San Francisco, Seattle, Central and Northern California, and Colorado. In five months, *Shūkaku*'s membership rose to eighty-five, according to the membership directory published in the second volume in April 1937. In addition to the steady growth in membership in each locale, the San Francisco literary association, *Bungei Kyōkai* (Literary Association), joined *Hokubei Shijin Kyōkai*, bringing twenty-two members into the *Shūkaku*'s membership. The expanded association renamed itself *Bungei Renmei* (Literary Federation).

The growth of *Shūkaku*'s membership was partly due to its editorial policy of soliciting and publishing across literary genres, including free style poetry, haiku and tanka, which were more formalized Japanese styles of poetry, short stories, personal essays, and literary criticism. Free style poetry dominated the first volume: out of thirty-three contributions, twenty-eight were free style poems. As time progressed, however, the dominance of free style poetry declined, reflecting the diverse interests of the membership: free style poems comprised thirty-two out of forty-eight entries in the second volume; twenty-four of thirty-nine in the third volume; seventeen of twenty-nine in the fourth volume; twenty of forty-five in the fifth volume, and sixteen of forty-one in the sixth volume.

Editing of the journal was also a trans-local project. *Bungei Renmei* members in the three cities with the largest membership, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle, either shared or rotated the responsibility for editing. The first volume of *Shūkaku* was edited by writers in Southern California, particularly in Los Angeles; the second volume was co-edited by writers in Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles; the third volume was edited mostly by writers in Seattle and Los Angeles; the fourth volume in San

Francisco; the fifth volume in Seattle; and the sixth volume in Los Angeles and San Francisco. The editors of *Shūkaku* devoted space in the journal to enhance communication between writers across regions. Readers as well as writers contributed letters, self-introductions, short pieces of literary criticism, and reports on literary activities.

*Shūkaku* was a *dōjin zasshi* or literary coterie magazine, financially supported by the membership fees of its parent association. Members of the association paid fifty cents a month which in addition to a subscription entitled them to submit their literary creations to the editors elected by general membership annually for consideration for publication. In the beginning, the association made ambitious plans to publish *Shūkaku* quarterly, which proved to be impossible.[44] The first volume was published in November 1936; the second in April 1937; the third and fourth in September 1937; the fifth in October 1938; and finally the sixth in June 1939. The page number of each volume ranged from thirty pages of the first volume to one hundred and four pages of the fifth volume. The third volume of *Shūkaku*, for example, published forty literary works which include three essays on literary criticism, five essays, twenty-four free style poems, four *tanka* and *haiku* poems, and four short stories. In addition, two artists, Shōko Fujikawa and Shirō Miyazaki contributed their wood cut printings.

*Shūkaku* should be situated in the wider historical context of literary publishing in Japan, in which *dōjin zasshi* played a critical role particularly during the 1920s and 1930s by providing opportunities for publication of unknown or emerging writers. Japanese writers often spoke of *dōjin zasshi* as *dōjō*, training places for martial artists, where they tempered and improved their writings. In the middle of the 1920s, the writer Jun Takami described the decade as the "unprecedented 'golden age' of *dōjin zasshi*" when the number of literary magazines listed in *Bungei Nenkan*, the national literary almanac,

---

[44] Ibid, 30.

exceeded 1,100 each year during the 1920s and 1930s.[45] Younger writers tended to start off their literary careers by associating themselves with a certain *dōjin zasshi*, which became the institutional vehicles for the emergence of new literary movements. Like their counterparts in Japan, members of *Shūkaku* used their journal as a place to collectively polish and improve their writings. Many pages of *Shūkaku* were devoted to literary criticism and discussion of the literary merit of entries in the previous volumes. In addition, the association held seminars on writing at least once a month.

As a literary organization located in the US, *Shūkaku* proclaimed its distinctive mission to be the exploration of themes arising from Japanese life in the US. The concept of a distinctly Japanese American literary sensibility was first raised in the 1910s and 1920s by Kyūin Okina. Okina, an Issei writer, lived in the US between 1906 and 1924. He pioneered the claim that Japanese American literature should reflect the lives and realities of Japanese immigrants.[46] Many prominent members of *Shūkaku* embraced Okina's vision of distinct Japanese American literature as reflecting daily lives of immigrants in the US in opposition to critics who asserted that Japanese writers could not produce anything "authentically" Japanese in a foreign land.

---

[45] Quoted in *Nihon kindai bungaku dai jiten* 4 (Dictionary of modern Japanese literature), (Tokyo: Kōdan Sha, 1977), 298.

[46] During the 1990s, Kyūin Okina attracted scholarly attentions from Japanese American scholars in Japan. Okina immigrated to the US from Toyama prefecture in Japan in 1906. He was active in literary circles in Seattle and northern California throughout his stay in the US until 1924. Upon returning to Japan, he continued to be active in literary as well as journalism circles. During the war, he moved back to his hometown in Toyama from Tokyo. Thanks to this move, most of his manuscripts, unpublished novels, diaries and literary criticism remained unharmed by the US strategic bombing of Tokyo. Re-discovery of these sources inspired scholarly attention to Okina's life and work during the 1990s. See, for example, a Kibei writer, Masao Yamashiro's "Nikkei bungeijin taikai" (Conference of literary writers of Japanese descent), originally published in *Rafu Shimpō* on April 17, 1991, and republished in his *Kibei nisei: Kaitaishiteiku "Nihonjn"* (Kibei Nisei: Disintegrating "Japanese") (Tokyo: Satsuki Shobō, 1995); Kinpei Hieda, *Hikkon Okina Kyūin no shōgai* (Writing spirit: Life of Okina Kyūin) (Tokyo: Katsura Shobō, 1994).

In the preface to the inaugural volume of *Shūkaku*, Bunichi Kagawa, a renowned Issei poet who wrote both in English and Japanese, discussed his vision of Japanese American literature:

> There are many difficulties that those of us who find ourselves living in the United States – for various and diverse reasons – must now face. We are the only ones who understand our particular experience and we are the only ones capable of solving the problems born from our circumstances. The thoughts and feelings expressed in the literature that we write – be it in poems, novels or essays – provide us with extremely effective tools for transforming our present condition. *Shūkaku* is a means for us to put this idea into practice and to benefit from the work accomplished in our finest literature. [47]

For Kagawa, Japanese American literature was not, and should not be detached from the day-to-day lives of Japanese people living in the US. The relationship between literature and the realities of Japanese American lives continued to be the major themes of debate among the *Shūkaku* memberships. In the fourth volume, for example, Tadashige Ōkubo, an Issei writer and literary critic from San Francisco, criticized the third volume which he thought, as a whole, did not substantially reflect the distinctive experiences of Japanese immigrants:

> Wouldn't it be good if *Shūkaku* were to have the distinctive flavor of immigrant life? I am not saying that we need to exaggerate this difference, but it would be a shame if *Shūkaku* were to lose all distinction from journals published in Japan. [48]

---

47 *Shūkaku* vol 1 (November 1936), preface.

私共は色々な事情でアメリカに生活してゐるものであるますが、生活が生活であり得るのはそこに人間として必ず直面しなければならない問題があればこそでありませう。その意味で特殊な事情と環境のうちに今かうして生活してゐる私共は、其処に異つた新しい、私共でなければ解決できない問題があまた有ることを弁へてゐるものであります。そうした問題に就て、まだそれらの解決に就て、考へ、感じ、経験したことを詩、小説、評論などの形式をかりて最高の程度にまで生かしてゆきたいのが私共の願ひであり、『収穫』はその願ひを実践に移してゆく上の便宜を興へる機関として生れたものであるます。

48 *Shūkaku* vol 4 (September 1937), 19.

Ōkubo further argued that *Shūkaku* ceased to reflect the flavor of Japanese American lives, it would lose its identity and became indistinguishable from Japanese literature in general. Ōkubo insisted that *Shūkaku* preserve its characteristic as Japanese American.

Other contributors to *Shūkaku* disputed the argument that Japanese as a literary language was "too old" or "too formulaic" to express the new experiences of the life in the US. They also took issue with the claim by Japanese cultural purists that "authentic" Japanese literature could not be produced outside Japan. Deisō Takayama, a poet, satirized those who insisted that the American landscape was too new to fit to the expressions in Japanese-style poems such as haiku and tanka: "To think that haiku and waka are unable to accommodate new feelings or to celebrate a new landscape is to have too formal an opinion of haiku and waka."[49]

Akira Togawa insisted that Japanese American poems, no less than poems from Japan, expressed the inner sentiments of "sabi" and "wabi,"[50] traditionally regarded as the essence of Japanese literary aesthetic, by quoting his fellow poet, Sōshi Oka's poem:

> On the sack containing loofah seeds
> I wrote "loofah seeds"[51]

---

全体から言って『収穫』の作品にもっと「移民地の色」があつてよいのではなからうか。何も移民地気分を誇張する必要はないとも言えるが、日本内地で出版する物と、異色の無いのは或る意味でこの雑誌の恥とも言えるやうに思ふのである。

[49] Ibid, 6.

・・・俳句や和歌が新しい感覚はさて置き、新しい景色をさへ歌ひ得ない事を意味すると・・・御高見である。

[50] "Sabi" and "wabi" refer to sentiments and feelings which embrace the concept of beauty in frugality, poverty, and simplicity. Various Japanese arts, including haiku and tea ceremony, pursued these sentiments as fundamental principles of art.

[51] Ibid, 55.

へちまの種の袋の上にへちまの種と書く

Togawa was deeply touched by this poem which elegantly expressed simple and calm joy of cherishing the moment of gardening. This feeling of appreciation for the moment became more striking, Togawa continued, when one considered the "poet's serenity in writing loofah seed on the sack, despite all the trials of immigrants in a country that denied them the right even to own land."[52] Togawa cited this poem in countering the claim of Isensui Ogiwara, a renowned poet who after visiting the US, claimed that America, being a fundamentally different land and culture, could not produce "authentically" Japanese poems expressing feelings of "wabi" and "sabi."

Another characteristic that made *Shūkaku* distinctive from earlier Japanese American literature was that *Shūkaku* was inter-generational, reflecting the editors' and writers' attempts to bridge generations and languages (Japanese and English). Despite the general association of the Japanese language with Issei, a significant number of second generation writers participated in *Shūkaku*. Approximately one third of the writers who contributed to the first volume of *Shūkaku* were Kibei. The editorial policies of the magazine mirrored attempts to "bridge" the two generations: Issei writers often encouraged Nisei to explore themes related to the second generation experiences. In his essay, "Wakai shijin tachi ni" (To young poets), Sasabune Sasaki, a well-known Issei writer and journalist, encouraged "young people" to write, exploring their own style while acknowledging their connection to "older people." [53]

Tadashige Ōkubo, another Issei writer, urged Nisei and particularly Kibei who were fluent in Japanese, to develop their own literary voices. In his essay, "*Jyōji* ikō" (After *Jyōji*), Ōkubo insisted that "[within] the realm of literature Kibei Nisei should use

---

[52] Ibid, 55.

旅とか移民地とかいふ気持をすつかり捨ててしまつて、法律上には許されぬ土の所有権など問題とせずにへちまの種の袋にへちまの種と書いてゐる作者のゆったりとした気持、・・・

[53] Ibid, 8-10.

their unique ability to read and write Japanese to express each and every one of their dreams and feelings."[54] Nor was *Shūkaku's* attempt to be inter-generational limited to Japanese language literature. The third volume of *Shūkaku* contained an English language section, introducing Nisei English literature to the Japanese language literary community. Even though it did not materialize, Kamiyama Heihachi, de-facto secretary-treasurer and a writer himself, proposed the establishment of a section for young children, particularly those who attended Japanese language schools.[55]

## "Pacific Era": Japanese American Communities in the 1920s and 1930s

In order to understand and appreciate the significance of *Shūkaku*, the project must be situated not only in the history of Japanese language Japanese American literature, but also in the socio-political and cultural history of Japanese Americans during the 1930s. Since the 1980s, historians have begun to explore prewar Japanese American experiences, criticizing the tendency of earlier scholars to focus exclusively on Japanese Americans' wartime experiences.[56] These studies prove that it is critical for

---

[54] *Shūkaku* vol 6 (June 1939), 15.

帰米二世は日本語を書けると言ふ特権を文芸に利用して、各自の希望或ひは心理を発表すべきだ。

[55] *Shūkaku* vol 3 (September 1937), 52.

[56] Early academic studies of the wartime experiences of Japanese Americans were predominantly written by scholars who were substantially involved with, or associated with the administration of the concentration camps. Examples of these studies include: Alexander Hamilton Leighton, *The Governing of Men: General Principles and Recommendations Based on Experience at a Japanese Relocation Camp* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945); Dorothy Thomas and Richard Nishimoto, *The Spoilage: Japanese-American Evacuation and Resettlement During World War II* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1946); Dorothy Thomas, *The Salvage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954); Dillon S Myer, *Uprooted Americans: The Japanese Americans and the War Relocation Authority During World War II* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1971).

historians to understand prewar Japanese American history so that wartime atrocities inflicted upon Japanese Americans are not situated in "an utter historical vacuum," to borrow historian Yuji Ichioka's words. These more recent works collectively suggest the critical importance of the 1920s and 1930s as years of transformation.

For Issei, the 1920s and 1930s were the "nadir" of the communities' efforts to resist anti-Japanese movements. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, Japanese immigrant communities underwent a major transition from being "sojourning" immigrants, emphasizing temporary residence in the United States, to communities of "permanent" settlers. In order to adapt to life in the United States, and to combat anti-Japanese campaigns which emphasized the "inability" of Japanese to "assimilate," Issei

---

Challenging this scholarship, two areas of studies developed in the 1980s, examining Issei and Nisei experiences. Thoroughly examining primary sources both in Japanese and English language, Yuji Ichioka pioneered the study of Issei experiences in his *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), hereafter cited as *The Issei*. Building on Ichioka's scholarship, Azuma Eiichiro explores inter-ethnic relationship between Japanese Americans and other Asian Americans such as Filipino Americans before the war. See Azuma Eiichiro, "Interstitial Lives: Race, Community, and History among Japanese Immigrants Caught between Japan and the United States, 1885-1941" Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 2000, hereafter cited as "Interstitial Lives."

Nisei identity politics before the war is another topic that recent scholars began to explore. For the pioneering study, see Jare Takahashi, "Japanese American Responses to Race Relations: The Formation of Nisei Perspectives," *Amerasia Journal* 9:1 (1982), 29-57. Vibrant subculture that Nisei created in the 1920s and 1930s attracted historians' attention, as it reflected the complex process of Nisei navigating and negotiating the expectations and legacy of culture from their parents and those of mainstream society of their birth. See Eileen Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawaii* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Lon Kurashige, "The Problem of Biculturalism: Japanese American Identity and Festival before World War II," *Journal of American History* 86:4 (March 2000), 1632-1654; and David Yoo, *Growing up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture among Japanese Americans of California, 1924-49* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), hereafter cited as *Growing up Nisei*. Valerie Matsumoto's studies examine how the politics of gender complicated the process of racial/ethnic identity politics of the Nisei. See her studies, "Desperately Seeking 'Deirdre': Gender Roles, Multicultural Relations, and Nisei Women Writers of the 1930s," *Frontiers* 12:1 (1991), 19-32, hereafter cited as "Desperately Seeking 'Deirdre'"; "Redefining Expectations: Nisei Women in the 1930s," *California History* 73:1 (Spring 1994), 45-53, hereafter cited as "Redefining Expectations"; and "Japanese American Women and the Creation of Urban Nisei Culture in the 1930s," in *Over the Edge: Remapping the American West*, edited by Blake Allmerdinger and Valerie Matsumoto, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 291-306, hereafter cited as "Japanese American Women."

community leaders adopted various strategies ranging from moral reform campaigns targeting gambling and prostitution to what Yuji Ichioka called "superficial assimilation" campaigns that promoted adoption of "American" clothing and mannerisms.[57]

Two US Supreme Court decisions were devastating to the struggles of Japanese American communities to gain acceptance in American society. The 1922 decision in *Ozawa v. U.S.* definitively ruled that legally Issei, being neither "free white [persons]" nor "[persons] of African nativity or descent," could not become US citizens. Japanese Americans experienced another blow the following year. Beginning in 1913, various Western states passed alien land laws, preventing Japanese, along with other Asian immigrants, from owning agricultural land. In 1920, the state of California passed an even more restrictive alien land law, chiefly aimed at Issei as "aliens ineligible to citizenship," that also prohibited leasing and sharecropping. The Japanese Association of America brought a series of test cases challenging the constitutionality of alien land laws. In November 1923, the US Supreme Court heard four of these test cases, all of which resulted in defeats for the Japanese Association. Japanese American communities experienced yet another blow from the anti-Japanese movement with the Immigration Act of 1924 which terminated further Japanese immigration to the US.

Facing intensified anti-Japanese campaigns, Japanese Americans nevertheless attempted to construct an optimistic world-view based on the concept of the "Pacific Era." Japanese Americans imagined the "new" civilizations of the US and Japan joining hands across the Pacific that would replace the "old," declining civilizations of Europe across the Atlantic.[58] This world-view was intricately connected to belief in Nisei as a "cultural bridge" between the US and Japan. Under the increasing tide of anti-Asianism,

---

[57] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei*, 176-196.

[58] Yuji Ichioka, "Kengakudan: The Origin of Nisei Study Tours of Japan," *California History* 73:1 (Spring 1994): 32-33.

Japanese American communities re-focused on the Nisei as their "hope" for the future, since they, unlike their parents, had US citizenship by birth. With the rising population of Nisei reaching adulthood, the future of the community increasingly came to be discussed in terms of "the Nisei problem."[59] Nisei themselves played an active role as older Nisei began to organize exclusively Nisei organizations to build generational as well as racial/ethnic solidarity through religious and civic organizations.

Charged with the burden of "proving" themselves in the politically charged context of the 1920s and 1930s, Japanese American community leaders carefully constructed images of Japanese Americans as "respectable," "able-to-assimilate," and distinct from other Asians and people of color.[60] Generally speaking, Japanese American writings in English, addressed the majority white American community, and reflected extreme caution as to how to represent their communities (i.e. "positive," "respectful," or "Americanized"). English language writings were conditioned by the need to counter the anti-Japanese agitators' claim of Japanese Americans' inability to "assimilate." Japanese language writings, in contrast, tended to target the Japanese government or prominent leaders in Japan to gain diplomatic support for their cause. Japanese immigrants in the US could not assume the support from the Japanese government or elites in Japanese society. As historian Yuji Ichioka's study demonstrates, reflecting their class bias, Japanese governmental officials tended to consider Japanese immigrants in the US "lowly workers" who caused "diplomatic embarrassment," thus the welfare of Japanese immigrants was usually a low diplomatic priority.[61]

---

[59] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei*. Especially see chapter 6 and 7 where Ichioka discusses Japanese American struggles against Asian Exclusion and the 1924 Immigration Act. Describing the years between 1920s and 1940s as "the Nisei Era," David Yoo calculates that Nisei outnumbered Issei in California by 1940. See David Yoo, *Growing up Nisei*, 3-5.

[60] Eiichiro Azuma, "Interstitial Lives."

[61] Striking example of this relationship between the Japanese government and the Japanese American community was the termination of Picture Bride Practice in 1920. See Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei*, 173-75.

Yuji Ichioka offers an interesting anecdote in his discussion of the Japanese American community's campaign to "superficially assimilate" in US society. Leaders of the Japanese immigrant community concentrated on the issue of clothing and encouraged Japanese immigrants to adopt American dress to "avoid being perceived as foreign interlopers":

> From a Japanese perspective, Americans perceived Chinese immigrants as unassimilable aliens, in part, because the Chinese had refused to adopt American clothing. Aware of this fact, as early as 1892 Tanaka Tadashichi had insisted that the Japanese railroad section hands working under his office wear American work clothes, and even eat American food, to differentiate themselves from Chinese laborers. During hot summer days in Japan, it was common for Japanese workers to wear only a loincloth or a light Japanese-style bathrobe with wooden clogs. Wary of Japanese workers being seen as "backward Asiatics," Japanese immigrant leaders sternly admonished anyone who walked around in such scanty Japanese outfits, no matter how hot it was.[62]

Ichioka's story captures the strong self-disciplinary tendencies of the Japanese American community, and indicates how certain mannerisms, behaviors, and even feelings were "censored" in the political struggle against the anti-Japanese movements. What is less clear is how the immigrant workers themselves reacted to these demands by the community leaders, particularly during the hot summer. Did workers share the view of their leaders? Was conformity to American standards of dress due to the pressure from the community leaders and their employers? Did the workers revert to more comfortable Japanese clothing when not subject to the gaze of community leaders?

Japanese language literature, as a "closed" literary genre, provided a place for Japanese Americans, particularly Issei and Kibei, to express sentiments and opinions that might undermine the political effort to present a united and coherent image of the community. I am <u>not</u> presenting a dichotomous picture of assimilation narratives in

---

62 Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei*, 185.

political writings in contrast to resistance narratives in literature; rather, I suggest a similar function of Japanese language literature to what Lila Abu-Lughod identified as the role of poetry in Bedouin society in her study, *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*.[63]

In *Veiled Sentiments*, Abu-Lughod analyzes the roles of lyric poems called *ghinnawa* in Bedouin socio-cultural and political life. She observes that individuals, particularly women and youth, are able to express "sentiments of romantic love" or "sentiments of weakness" in *ghinnawa*, even though these sentiments violate the socio-cultural code of modesty and honor. Because *ghinnawa* is highly "conventional" and "formulaic" in its literary style, she argues that *ghinnawa* "provides *a modest way of communicating immodest sentiments* of attachment and an honorable way of communicating the sentiments of dependency."[64] Through the study of *ghinnawa* Abu-Lughod uncovers a rich reservoir of "personal feelings" otherwise difficult to reach.

Although sentiments reflected in *ghinnawa* are highly "personal," Abu-Lughod further asserts that *ghinnawa* plays an important "political" function in Bedouin community. She suggests that a form of poetry be viewed as the community's internal "corrective" to the codes of morality and honor, the very ideology that maintains the "order" of the community. If these codes are enforced too rigidly, there will be little space for human intimacy. Although sanctioned by the formality of the style, poetry "reminds people another way of being and encourages, as it reflects, another side of experience."[65]

---

[63] Lila Abu-Lughod, *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1986).

[64] Ibid, 240, emphasis added.

[65] Ibid, 259.

Japanese language Japanese American literature, I argue, played an analogous role by providing writers an outlet for the expression of personal feelings which were not, in James Scott's theory, "legible" outside the ethnic community. Three themes emerge in the pages of *Shūkaku*: first, Issei's sentiment toward their increasingly distant relationship to Japan; second, Kibei's feelings of "aloofness," not belonging either to Issei or Nisei; and finally, various ways in negotiating identities of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, and class in the context of the Japan-China War, which broke out in July 1937. In the politically charged dynamics of Japanese American communities in the 1930s, *Shūkaku* provided its readers in communities across the West Coast the opportunity to participate in a discourse on the Japanese American experience that was unsanctioned, ambiguous, contradictory, and also very human. It therefore provides a rare window through which scholars can examine diverse visions of the identity politics involving race, ethnicity, nationality, and generation within the prewar Japanese American community.

## Bitter-Sweet Home:
## Issei Sentiments on Life in the Unwelcoming Country

Yoshio Nishimura, an Issei writer, characterized Issei literature in the 1930s as one of "sighing and remembering" (tansoku to tsuioku). Issei literature, Nishimura argues, captured the "sighs" of Issei who were aging in an increasingly hostile country. As a generation, Issei underwent a major transition in their mentality from "sojourner" to "permanent settler" immigrants more than a decade earlier. Despite their attempt to make America "home," many Issei's ambitions and dreams were shattered by the series of legislative and judicial defeats during the 1920s discussed above. While anti-Japanese sentiments and racist immigration acts prevented Issei from feeling "at home" in the US, the idea of returning "home" to Japan had increasingly faded away as a realistic plan.

While experiencing mixed emotions regarding "home" Issei were not free to express their true sentiments toward "home" due to the political strategy promoted by the Japanese American political leadership discussed above. In this environment, literature provided an opportunity for Issei writers to explore conflicted feelings about "home" in an historical moment when neither the US nor Japan offered an unambiguous answer to the loaded question of where home might be.

When Issei authors wrote about Japan, their writing often invoked a sense of loss and loneliness caused by the growing distance from Japan. Morio Hayashida captures this "distance," as particular memories attached to Japan fade away from his memory:

> Coo pigeon, coo pigeon!!! A little girl begs me to sing
> I smile bitterly, having forgotten the lyrics.
> …
> The pain of hard labor saturates the soul of a man past thirty
> Is this all that is left?[66]

"Hato poppo" (Coo pigeon) is a short, simple, and popular folksong in Japan. The author can not help but to "smile bitterly" when he can not respond to the innocent request of a small girl. The fact that he no longer remembers the lyrics to the song symbolizes the growing distance from his Japanese home after years of hard labor in America.

Even Issei who had reconciled themselves to having become distanced from Japan had to face the unchanging expectations of their parents and other relatives in Japan. Frequently, they were reminded of the distance to Japan when they were confronted with unchanging expectations – be it about the length of their stay in the US, or the measure of their success by wealth, achievement, or marriage – expectations which

---

66 Hayashida Morio, "Gantan" (New Year's Day), *Shūkaku* vol 4 (September 1937), 14.

鳩ポッポ、鳩ポッポ！と娘の子が私に唄へとせがむが
歌詞を忘れて、私は苦笑する。
・・・
三十過ぎの男心にしみ込むのは疲労のなやみ！それだけであらうか。

their relatives in Japan kept alive. Rihei Numata's poem, "Shōji to Kanshō" (Sliding door and Sentiment) captures an awkward, but emotionally charged moment between a mother and her son ("I" in the poem), who is about to embark on a return voyage to the United States.[67] In a short poem consisting of four stanzas and nineteen lines, Numata emphatically uses the mother's words twice: "Ikuna to tomewasenga," (I won't stop you, but…).[68] The mother repeats this line all morning, but the son pretends not to hear her, while he repeatedly reads the same page of a book. Both mother and son are helpless in this situation: the only manner in which the mother can express her objection is by indirectly addressing her son with the short and unfinished phrase: "I won't stop you, but…" The son is left speechless because he knows her wish, and yet he needs to return to the US.

Akira Togawa's poem, "Kurai kokyō," (Dark Hometown), more explicitly describes the socio-economic circumstances explaining why the son can not return to Japan despite his mother's wishes:

…
Mother,
You ask me to come home as quickly as possible
Even one day ealier
But once I return, how will we eat?
Ten *kan*[69] of mulberry leaves cost sixty *sen*[70]
Caterpillars are two *yen* and fifty *sen* a *kan*
Could we live without going into debt?
I mean, who will pay the peasants for their sweat?

---

67 Numata Rihei, "Shōji to Kanshō" (Sliding door and Sentitment), *Shūkaku* vol 1 (November 1936), 4.

68 Ibid, 4.

行くなと、止めはせんが

69 Premodern Japanese measurement system of weight. One *kan* approximately equals 3.75 kg.

70 Japanese currency. 100 *sens* equal 1 yen.

Yearning for home I open my mother's letter
After reading it, my heart is pitch black.[71]

The poem centers on the frustration of the son who confronts the bleak prospects of a rural peasant's life in Japan and his mother's unrealistic expectations for his return. Like Numata's poem, Togawa narrates the poem from the vantage point of the immigrant son; he feels frustrated and helpless, situated between the reality of his socio-economic position in Japan, and the unchanging expectations of his aging mother.

The inability to communicate or hesitant communication between mother and son extended to matrimony. In Japanese immigrant communities where the arranged marriage, including the picture brides system, was commonly practiced, marriage for men symbolized attainment of full manhood and economic accomplishment since only those who saved enough money could afford a bride. Shibatarō En's poem, "Henji" (Response), reflects the helpless feeling of an Issei man who can not meet his mother's expectations in terms of his marriage. The poem starts with a quote from the mother's letter:

Soon you will be thirty
It's about time to find a bride.[72]

---

71 Akira Togawa, *Mitsubachi no uta*, 135-36.

・・・
お母さん
１日も早く帰れと言はれても
帰つてからどうして食つて行くのですか
桑の葉十貫が六十銭
繭一貫が二円五十銭
それで借金せずに暮らして行けますか
百姓の汗の償ひは
一体誰が為して呉れるのですか
懐かしく開いた母の便りであるが
読み終へた私の心は真暗にされて仕舞つた。

72 Shibatarō En, "Henji" (Response), in *Shūkaku* vol 1 (November 1936), 12-13.

お前も
もうすぐ三十の歳を迎へるのだ
早く嫁でももらひなさい

The son attempts to write back to his mother, but is unable to find anything to write about except his life of struggles with little prospect of even temporary employment. The ending of the poem invokes a feeling of a growing distance between the son and his mother in Japan:

> Oh mother,
> The sun has gone with the pipe's smoke
> And I haven't replied to your letter.[73]

For many Issei men, inability to marry meant failure to achieve expected success in the new world. An announcement of marriage, along with socio-economic achievements, constituted important news to report to family back in Japan. Saburō Katō's short story, "Mr. Okino's Tears" (Okino-san no namida), depicts the striking contrast between successful and unsuccessful immigrants within the Japanese American community. Through the protagonist Shimazō Okino who has achieved little success, Katō articulates the ambiguous feelings of loss and envy of an aging Issei man. Okino's feelings of failure are contrasted with the sense of success, confidence, and accomplishment of another Issei character, Shigematsu Yamada, and a young energetic group of Kibei Nisei whom Mr. Okino barely knows.

Yamada is a successful Issei man of Okino's age who is planning to go back to Japan soon. Recognized for their long-standing contributions to a Prefectural Association (Kenjinkai), both are attending a celebration dinner. Dressed in old, shabby dress clothes, Mr. Okino feels awkward and out of place throughout the dinner. In contrast, in Okino's eyes, Yamada embodies "success" in his dress, confident attitude, and the wealth which

---

[73] Ibid, 13.

母よ
返事は書けぬまに、日は
パイプの煙と消へてゆく。

enables him to return to Japan. Looking at Yamada who is now happily drunk on sake and basking in people's attention, Okino bitterly reflects on his fate:

> As immigrants we all started from the same place but 'survival of the fittest' has drawn a clear line through us separating the successes from the failures. Mr. Yamada is cheered as he crosses the finish line, while I have barely left the starting line and fumble around like a fool. To be honored like this by the Prefectural Association, as someone who has not managed to return once to Japan in the forty years since I came to America, is to be marked as an aging and feeble failure.[74]

With a growing feeling of self-pity, Mr. Okino no longer holds back his tears as he drinks the sake in front of him shot by shot. As if to symbolize the distance between Mr. Okino and Mr. Yamada's triumphant departure to Japan, his tears blur the vision of Mr. Yamada, who is now standing with the cup in his hand surrounded by well wishers.

At the time when Japanese Americans needed to present "uplifting" and "successful" images of their communities to mainstream American society, friends and relatives, and elites and leaders in Japan, the sentiments expressed by Mr. Okino were disruptive. However, behind the "presentable" images of the community, many Japanese Americans needed to share these feeling of loss, anxiety, and self-pity, since for many their lives did not meet the expectations of success imposed by their own community. Writing "fiction" in the Japanese language, many writers felt comfortable giving vent to feelings and sentiments that would be otherwise difficult to articulate. Judging from readers' comments published in *Shūkaku*, literary works which reflected "local color" or

---

74 Katō Saburō, "Mr. Okino's Tears" (Okino-san no namida), *Shūkaku* vol 2 (April 1937), 16

俺達移民はその出発点が同じであつた丈けに、優勝劣敗の数が線を引かれた様に判然としてゐる。既にゴールに入つて歓呼の声に迎へられてゐる彼等、まだ出発点にまごついてゐる自分の姿は何と云ふ愚な事か、俺はこうして県人会の表彰を受けたものの、それは只渡米以来四十年いまだ日本へ帰へれない、老衰第一世の極印を押された様なものである。

"the color of immigrant community"[75] were overwhelmingly popular.[76] This popularity is evidence of the readers' hunger for a literature that validated their complex feelings and sentiments in their day-to-day lives in the US.

**In Between Generations: Kibei's "Aloofness"**

In the sixth volume of *Shūkaku* (June 1939), Tamato Morita contributes his senryū (comedic and often satirical verse, usually composed in seventeen syllables). In a humorous and matter-of-fact tone, he describes the state of Kibei within Japanese American communities:

> Neither with Nisei
> Nor with their parents
> Can Kibei get along[77]

Corresponding to the concept of Nisei as the "cultural bridge" discussed earlier, Kibei youths, who spoke Japanese and who had a superior understanding of Japanese culture compared to their non-Kibei Nisei counterparts, were often expected to play the

---

[75] Both "local color" and "color of immigrant communities" are direct translation from Japanese American writers in *Shūkaku*. "Local color" is a translation of "chihō shoku" 「地方色」, and "color of immigrant communities is a translation of "iminchi no iro"「移民地の色」.

[76] In prefaces, editorials, letters, and essays, all six volumes of *Shūkaku* contain at least one writing, which claims the importance of literature in *Shūkaku* to reflect distinct flavor of, and daily lives ("seikatsu" 「生活」) of Japanese in the US.

[77] *Shūkaku* vol 4 (June 1939), 17. Senryū is one style of verses, usually composed with 17 (5-7-5) syllables, developed and popularized in the middle of Tokugawa period. An essayist Ogawa Akimichi (1735-1815) defines senryū as "playful verse that comments on human behaviors, virtues and vices, noble and base emotions, thoughts of upper-and lower-class people, and all the other matters that make up this life on earth." Quoted in Makoto Ueda, *Light Verse from the Floating World: An Anthology of Premodern Japanese Senryu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 20.

二世とも親とも帰米折り合はず

role of "bridging" Issei and Nisei, as well as the countries of the US and Japan. Despite this idealized expectation of being a "cultural bridge," however, many Kibei, as articulated in Morita's senryū found themselves isolated from both Issei and Nisei, facing the difficult tasks of negotiating more than two languages and cultures which continued to clash. Minoru Kiyota, a Kibei, depicts his increasing awareness of tension between Kibei and non-Kibei Nisei in his autobiography, *Beyond Loyalty: A Story of a Kibei*, published in 1997. Kiyota spent his childhood under his maternal grandparents' care in Japan between 1934 and 1937, and came back to his mother in the US in his teens. Soon after his return to the US, Kiyota observes the tension between Kibei and non-Kibei Nisei:

> The Nisei tended to believe that successful assimilation was vital to their survival in American society, so most of them struggled to mold themselves after the patterns set by the dominant Anglo culture. They hoped that would somehow assure their future security and success in this country.[78]

In contrast, most Kibei were less motivated to assimilate into the US mainstream culture. "But we Kibei," Kiyota continues, "who had received much of our childhood training in Japan, still had a spiritual foothold in Japanese culture. On the one hand that foothold gave us a firmer sense of identity, but on the other it rendered some Kibei less capable of fully assimilating into American culture."[79] The two contrasting attitudes toward assimilation resulting from the distinct childhood experiences in terms of language and culture, created tensions between the two groups of second generation Japanese Americans. This tension within the Nisei group was sometimes reflected in the usage of the term, Kibei. Some Nisei used the term as a pejorative term to tease their counterparts, who retained strong elements of Japanese culture and identity.

---

[78] Minoru Kiyota, *Beyond Loyalty: The Story of a Kibei* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 59-60.

[79] Ibid, 59-60.

As several scholars, including historians Valerie Matsumoto and David Yoo, have shown, the decades of the 1920s and 1930s were important years for the emergence of Nisei subcultures which were distinctive not only in terms of ethnic and gender identities, but also in terms of generational identity as Nisei. However, these subcultures – be it Nisei-led Buddhist interdenominational organization or Nisei women's public sphere built around a newspaper columnist and advisor, Ann Nisei – were mostly composed of English language speakers and writers.[80] Kibei were the minority and distinctively Kibei themes tended to be overlooked. In this context, Japanese language literature offered one of the few avenues to express experiences and feelings specific to Kibei. Reflecting the general effort to be "inter-generational" as a literary movement, *Shūkaku* encouraged contributions from Kibei writers.

A starting point of an analysis of writing on Kibei is recognition of the considerable hardship and disillusionment they experienced in both countries even as Kibei were viewed as vital bridge between Japan and America in the Pacific Era.[81] Considering that these concepts emerged in major part as a response to the US rejection of Japanese Americans, it is not surprising that proponents idealized Japan. Issei parents, community leaders, and teachers in Japanese language schools sometimes implanted young Nisei with ethnocentric, nationalistic, and idealized visions of Japan prior to their departure to Japan.

Once in Japan, however, many young Nisei found it difficult to adjust to life in Japan despite, or ironically because of, their ethnic ties to Japan. Nisei encountered the

---

[80] David Yoo, *Growing up Nisei*, 46-48, 137-140. Also see Valerie Matsumoto, "Desperately Seeking 'Deirdre,'" 19-32; "Japanese American Women," 291-306; "Redefining Expectations," 45-53.

[81] This theme interestingly parallels to non-Kibei Nisei's re-negotiation with the US particularly when they face the reality of racism after they graduate from post-secondary education, despite their "successful Americanization" through education system. David Yoo attributes this as one of the major factors to the emergence and development of Nisei sub-culture, "in many ways separate and separated from the larger society. See Yoo, *Growing up Nisei*, 25.

scorn of Japanese who criticized Nisei as being "not Japanese enough" despite their physical appearance. While Japanese often indulge the language incompetence of foreigners who did not look "Japanese," they expected Japanese Americans, or anybody else who looked "Japanese," to speak the language fluently. In addition, Nisei, who gained entry to elite circles in Japan due to their unique cultural and educational background, frequently experienced the class bias of higher class Japanese toward Japanese American immigrants. Miya Sannomiya, a college-educated Nisei and journalist from Hawaii, witnessed such bias toward Nisei during her stay in Japan. In the mid 1930s she participated in round table discussions of the "Nisei problems." Describing her experiences at one discussion, she asserts:

> No one there, except one prominent Christian woman educator, knew I was a Nisei. The whole discussion failed because not one constructive idea was taken up seriously. The participants spent the whole afternoon in derisive laughter and critical remarks about the "outlandish ways of these Niseis," their "horrible, low class, boorish, country style Japanese speech,"…They all nodded solemnly as one speaker said, "The Nisei are children of low class, peasant emigrants, so what could we expect of them?"[82]

Politics of gender added another dimension to Japanese perceptions, and therefore, reception of American-born Nisei. The Nisei Survey Committee, composed of nine Nisei women at Keisen Girls' School during the late 1930s, conducted a sociological survey on the status of Nisei by utilizing a questionnaire, which was answered by approximately 440 Nisei residing in Japan at the time. The Committee reported that women in general faced harder adjustment to life in Japan due to the stricter expectation for women in society. The gender specific usage of Japanese language was one of the most challenging obstacles for Nisei women:

> Furthermore women, in particular, have been taught to be careful of their speech; so the Nisei women have greater difficulty in their

[82] Quoted in Yoo, *Growing up Nisei*, 35.

> language adjustment than do the men. It is with the use of honorifics that women find their greatest problem in language. Although in present-day Japan less stress is placed upon rank or position in society still the usage of honorifics prevails. A Nisei with little knowledge of the Japanese-language might, at first, use the same terms in addressing any person from the maid to a woman of rank. There is a time and a place for everything and this is especially true with regard to the Japanese language.[83]

Along with gender specific difficulty in language, daily customs such as properly sitting on one's knees, tended to be more confining for women, and women met harsher criticism than men when their behavior did not conformed to what was considered proper "social etiquette."

Mary Kimoto's letters from Japan to her friends in the US vividly capture the day-to-day struggles in the midst of racialized and gendered politics of a Nisei woman adjusting to life in Japan. Kimoto was a Nisei from Ceres, California, who spent seven and half years between 1939 and 1947 in Japan. For the first few years, Kimoto lived in the house of Mr. Nagata, a principal of the Rikkō Kai (Japanese Christian organization) academy. At first, Kimoto was enthusiastic about her life in Japan, after experiencing the disillusionment of a Nisei with a college degree finding little prospect of suitable employment in the US. Her letters reveal motivation, curiosity, and excitement to learn as much about Japan as soon as possible. Writing to a former "tom-boy" Japanese American mate, Miye, in California, Kimoto half-jokingly expresses her excitement about taking martial arts lesson, which was unusual for Japanese women:

> And I'm going to take kendo! I tried to persuade some girls to take it with me but they wouldn't except that girl from Siam and she's going to quit. Fumi says she'll lose her dignity. None of these girls look like they'd take it anyway, except for the Korean woman, who said she's already taken it. But I think it's going to be fun. I am as big as the average boy here. So I don't think I'll be too much of a weakling for them. Those girls must want to act like the weak clinging female, but that stuff is not for the likes of me, the

---

[83] Nisei Survey Committee, *The Nisei: A Survey of Their Educational, Vocational, and Social Problems* (Tokyo: Kokusai shuppan insatsusha, 1939), 29-30.

> big Amazonian! I wanted to take judo too but was too bashful. I'd love to be able to knock down anybody with judo.[84]

At the Nagatas, however, Mrs. Nagata closely scrutinized Kimoto's outgoing nature. Mrs. Nagata construed Kimoto's "friendship" with one of her sons, Iza, as "inappropriate." For Mrs. Nagata, it was shockingly improper for an unmarried Kimoto to "chat with" her unmarried son at night. Kimoto, however, did not foresee Mrs. Nagata's criticism. In her letter to Miye, Kimoto complains about the confining restrictions now imposed upon her:

> Oh boy, oh boy – now I do feel like writing! Mrs. Nagata just got through bawling me out. First time – And I never knew that she felt that way about it. She told me to go to bed at ten o'clock after this. And to quit running around. And not to talk to Iza at night. She said she worried so much about me that it made her sick![85]

Sannomiya's experience at the meeting discussed earlier reveals the intertwining politics of nationality and class in Japanese criticism of Japanese Americans. Kimoto also experienced various attacks on Nisei from Japanese, which twisted class, gender, and nationality. Nisei women's "unwomanly" behavior was often deemed "American" as reflected in a comment made by a Japanese man when Kimoto overheard: "The old guy said she must be from America because a Japanese girl would never climb fences like a boy."[86] As an historian of modern Japan, John Dower suggests, one of the stereotypical perceptions of America in the growingly militant Japan was excess of "individualism" to the extent of promoting a lack of order, structure, and discipline. What Kimoto encountered was a Japanese man's criticism of the American "national" character,

---

[84] Mary Kimoto, *Dear Miye,* 34.

[85] Ibid., 75.

[86] Ibid., 93.

specific to women, who were arbitrarily judged "loose" by Japanese standard of women's modesty.[87]

As in the Nisei Survey Committee discussed above, gendered aspects of the Japanese language caused additional problems for Kimoto in her adjustment to Japan. Even Kimoto, who had in general resisted internalizing the socially imposed virtue of "femininity" both in the US and in Japan, could not help but feel awkward and self-conscious under the close scrutiny of Japanese over her proper usage of "feminine" Japanese language. Describing her experience of travel to Hokkaidō, she confessed to Miye in her letter: "I felt very self-conscious at first. I had to tell them that I was a Nisei because otherwise they would think me very rude and stupid the way I acted and talked. I don't know the fancy feminine language and how to be polite."[88] Kimoto's inability to master "feminine" speech patterns invited continuous criticism from Mr. Nagata:

> Mr. Nagata told me the other night that I am still "wild." According to him, I should have lived in a strict Japanese home so that I would have been molded into a humble, sweet Japanese woman. His home was not good for me because Iza uses 'coolie' language; consequently I am not exposed to feminine speech. However if I had been imprisoned in such a home I would have hated Japan and might have gone back by now. Fumi was in a strict home and couldn't ever go out, so she can't wait to return home next month.[89]

What Kimoto described here was a Japanese tendency to "reform" the "wildness" of "American womanhood" into the "modest" "Japanese woman." Ironically, what Mr. Nagata construed as "disservice" to Kimoto's reform process was a better environment, unlike "prison" for her friend, for her enduring years of adjustment.

---

[87] John Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).

[88] Mary Tomita, *Dear Miye*, 96.

[89] Ibid, 122.

**Kibei Literature in *Shūkaku***

By the time Kibei returned to the US, after spending several years in this unwelcoming environment, they had a very different vision of Japan from the idealized Japan imagined by many Japanese Americans. Upon returning to the US, Kibei also had to readjust to American life. Culture shocks go both directions: Kibei who crossed the Pacific twice now faced further culture shock in the place of their birth. Kibei literature in Japanese language reflected the efforts of Kibei to re-negotiate their relationship both to Japan and to the US, providing a rare public place which encouraged the expression of their feelings and discussion of how to re-adjust to their lives across the Pacific.

In his short story, "Shōnen tenin" (A boy clerk), Shizuka Takeda presents the transformation of a Kibei in the US.[90] The protagonist, Haruichi, is a Kibei who works at a "zakkaten," East Asian souvenir store, as a salesperson. About ten other store assistants work with Haruichi, the majority of whom are college educated Nisei, unable to find employment anywhere else. On his trip to Japan, the store manager, Mr. Akita, asked Haruichi to come to the US to work at his store. Haruichi is excited about the sudden opportunity, and yet is nervous about living in an English language environment. Mr. Akita impatiently encourages Haruichi, emphasizing Nisei's incompetence: "Nisei are like that, they're lazy and don't pay attention. Someone like you, well, you'll soon be ahead of them."[91] Mr. Akita's comments feed Haruichi's growing feeling of superiority

---

[90] Shizuka Takeda, "Shōnen tenin" (A boy clerk), *Shūkaku* vol 3 (September 1937), 39-42.

[91] Ibid, 39.

二世なんか、そりあ、気が附かないんだ、ボンクラで[ぬ]え、だから、君など、すぐに上に立つさ。

toward Nisei. Haruichi is now determined to work hard at the store "even on Saturdays and Sundays" to meet Mr. Akita's expectations.

Haruichi finds that the reality of life in the US is much different from Mr. Akita's account. Young Haruichi, though struggling with his English, begins to understand the different dynamics of human relations at the store. Mr. Akita does not have as much authority or status at the store as he had implied. Other employees generally regard him as an unlikable and unfriendly "middle manager" who cares only about his reputation in relation to the owner, rather than the welfare of the workers. Haruichi is most fond of Mr. Yasuda, another clerk who is intelligent, far more educated than anybody else at the store about East Asian history and culture, and "leftist" in his concern about the welfare of his fellow workers. Threatened by Mr. Yasuda's intelligence and popularity, Mr. Akita antagonizes him at every possible opportunity.

Following an incident in which one of the employees was injured, Mr. Yasuda attempts to protect the rights of the injured worker, negotiating compensation with the owner. The next day Mr. Yasuda is fired, and workers at the store helplessly sigh: "Mr. Yasuda just doesn't get a break."[92] While Haruichi observes people around him talking about Mr. Yasuda, he feels frustrated, and angered by the hypocrisy of Japanese moral education embraced by Mr. Akita.

> Why is it that shūshin (prewar moral education) is seen as the most important subject in school, when 'righteousness' and 'morality' don't really help you at all. You can't survive in this world without understanding how the game is played, without having a few tricks of your own."[93]

---

[92]Ibid, 41.

安田さんは結局損な人だ。

[93] Ibid, 42.

カラクリづくめでなければ生きてゆけない社会、正義だの、道徳だのでは損ばかれすると言ふのに、修身は依然として学科の一を占めてゐるではないか、・・・

The story ends with a frustrated and confused Haruichi wishing to find and talk to Mr. Yasuda.

Considering Haruichi's attitude at the beginning of the story, trying to overcome his anxiety by believing in the superiority of Kibei over Nisei, the story's ending suggests the significant transformation that Haruichi has undergone. Mr. Akita symbolizes a simplistic understanding of the Japan-US relationship, promoting an ethno-nationalistic sense of superiority in young Haruichi's mind. What is significant, in the end of the story, is the indication that Haruichi is stepping out of the protective custody of Mr. Akita and his ethno-nationalistic belief in his attempt to talk to Mr. Yasuda. Considering the prevailing tension existing between Kibei and non-Kibei Nisei, Haruichi's move signals the author's message for both groups to go beyond their stereotypical perceptions of each other.

Gender politics figure significantly in the literature about and by Kibei writers. Although extremely ambiguous, E Nagisa's poem, "Otoko to onna" (A man and a woman) addresses a gendered dimension of Kibei identity politics reflected in a Kibei couple's conversation that expresses their feelings of alienation and isolation from both Issei and Nisei once they are back in the US:

> …
> With tears in his eyes
> The man told the woman
> "In between the Issei and the Nisei is a very lonely place to be"[94]

---

[94] E Nagisa, "Otoko to onna" (A man and a woman), *Shūkaku* vol 3 (September 1937), 34.

> ・・・
> 男が女に言った、
> 目に涙をためて、
> 一世と二世の間に居るのは寂しい、と。

The woman answers, "me too," and yet as a coping strategy to deal with his loneliness, the man keeps dreaming about Japan, which causes his girlfriend to wonder about the future of their relationship:

> He seemed to be dreaming about Japan.
> As the woman peered into his face she wondered,
> "Is there really a place for me?"[95]

The exact reason why she cannot dream about Japan like her boyfriend is not explicitly discussed in the poem. We are not told whether she had personally experienced the confining expectations and difficulty of adjusting to Japan specific to women. Nevertheless, the distance between a man who dreams of Japan, and a woman who worries about the future of the relationship is suggestive of the gender specific experiences of the Nisei generation in relation to Japan.

Masaru Mimuroji's short story, "Futari no saikai" (We meet again) also discusses gendered elements of Kibei's negotiation with the two countries.[96] The gender dynamics of the couple, however, is directly opposite to what is presented in E's poem. Yutaka, a male Nisei protagonist, is about to meet with Akemi, his ex-girlfriend from five years before. During those five years, Akemi left for Japan, but came back within half a year as if she was fleeing from there. Akemi is a talented seamstress, and she is, in general, a confident person. Still, Akemi can not stand life in Japan. The details of Akemi's experiences in Japan are not discussed in the story. Historical sources such as Mary Tomita's letters indicate the peculiar difficulties faced by talented and independent-

---

[95] Ibid, 34.

そして日本を夢みるらしい男の顔を
女は覗きながら思ふのだつた、
私が居ては駄目なのかしら、と。

[96] Masaru Mimuroji, "Futari no saikai" (We meet again), *Shūkaku* vol 3 (September 1937), 44-47.

minded Nisei women in adjusting to life in Japan. Looking at what happened to Akemi, Yutaka abandons completely the idea of going to Japan. The author narrates that what Yutaka learned in the past five years is "reconciling with a life" which does not seem to have the possibility of "remarkable" success:

> These past five years of struggling had forced Yutaka to radically change his philosophy on life. He had tried to live in the moment and embrace his wild side, now he was calm and steady and planned for the future. In other words, his hopes were much more modest…"[97]

This new perspective on life seems to bring a new affectionate feeling toward Akemi, who is hurt because of her failure in Japan. Rather than finding reasons to criticize her, Yutaka's affections grow toward Akemi, as they share feelings of broken dreams. The indications of a renewed relationship between Yutaka and Akemi at the end of the story suggests how to attain "peace" of mind after experiencing broken dreams and disillusionment in both countries.

Kaoru Maki's short story, "Wakame" (Young leaf) depicts a deeply intimate and sensual friendship between two female friends that provides a critical source of emotional support in their life as Kibei in the US.[98] Kiyo visits Noriko in her employer's house while her employer's family has gone for a weekend trip. Imagining Noriko's reaction to her surprise visit, and "picturing one by one Noriko's lively expressions, Kiyo revels in pleasure."[99] Kiyo is twenty years old, a year younger than Noriko, and feels deeply attracted to Noriko:

---

[97] Ibid, 46.

これは、五年間のうらぶれの生活が、彼の性格的なワイルドな生活理論を根底から修正し・・・・・いひかへれば、気持ちを地味にし、対生活観を変質せしめ、無軌道なものの考え方をすることを何時の間にか完全に封じてしまつた証左であると云ふことも出来た。

[98] Kaoru Maki, "Wakame" (Young leaf), *Shūkaku* vol 5 (October 1938), 69-71.

[99] Ibid, 69.

> Kiyo's rich skin glowed crimson red, like a raging fire. Kiyo had met Noriko at a time when her own uneasiness made it difficult for her to make close friends. Kiyo used to have an almost sister-like relationship with Noriko's sister. However, after Noriko's sister's sudden arranged marriage four months ago, Kiyo gradually withdrew out of consideration for the new couple. Kiyo admired to the point of envy Noriko's cheerful and optimistic personality despite her childhood hardships: Noriko's father had taken her to Japan when she was six and left her to his sister's house. For the next ten years, Noriko was forced to live as an unwelcome guest as she was passed from one relative to another's house.[100]

As Noriko welcomes Kiyo into the house and rattles off plans for the weekend, Kiyo "feels a strong desire to hold on to what she feels only toward Noriko as something precious."[101] Like many Kibei, Kiyo experienced many difficulties getting along with her family upon returning to the US. In particular she did not get along with her father, who she feels, was too invasive of her personal life. Only to Noriko can Kiyo feel comfortable in revealing all of what she thinks and feels.

> The love between parents and their children is supposed to be the most natural thing in the world – in my case it's nothing more than an act. I don't even feel anything that resembles love. I get irritated the moment my father says anything to me, but I don't think he knows how I really feel because I never say anything about it.[102]

---

生き生きした記子の表情を一つ一つ考へ乍ら喜代は心洗はるる楽しさだった。

[100] Ibid, 69.

野性的なたくましさを思はせる艶々とした皮膚には、燃える様な紅がしつくりと似合った。予定より四ヶ月も早くばたばたと結婚してしまった記子の姉と、血が交流してゐるんだとからかはれる程仲よしだつた喜代が、新家庭への遠慮からだんだん足遠くなり、仲々無条件で好きになれる友達の出来ない病的なまでに神経質の自分を持て余してゐる時「気紛れ屋」と目指して現はれたのが記子だった。六歳の折、父親が日本へ連れて行き叔母の家へ置きっ放しにしたままの十年余、親類中を住み回り、色んな苦労をしたといふ割合に暗いかげの無い、万事にあけすけな記子の性格は、喜代のそれの反動みたいで羨望に似た好もしさで眺めてゐるものだつた。

[101] Ibid, 70.

記子に丈感じられる軽い気持を何か貴重なものの様に取扱ひたい欲望でふくらむでゐた。

[102] Ibid, 70.

Marriage is one of many issues about which Kiyo and her father don't see eye to eye. Many other Nisei women experienced similar situations in relation to the different generational expectations of marriage.[103] Kiyo complains to Noriko:

> In general things are fine, but lately my father keeps droning on about marriage: but it is hard to accept his idea that I must marry a wealthy man. So, I am supposed to be married off for profit like a horse, give birth and multiply like a good pig, and then die quietly like a cat. I know it angers father to hear me talk like that, but it is my life we are talking about.[104]

Listening to Kiko's complaints, Noriko advises her not to take matters too seriously: "I swear, you look like you are bearing the burden of the entire Kibei generation on your back."[105] She also encourages Kiyo to trust her own feelings:

> Of course we can never know what the right thing to do is in advance, or know exactly how things will turn out, but if you remain true to yourself and stand firm you will be all right. There is no reason why you should deny all your feelings about your father and force yourself to fit into his plans.[106]

---

親子の愛情といふものが、極自然なものであるとすれば、私のは御芝居よ。一寸も愛情らしいものを感じないんですもの。そして一々パパの云ふ事に反感を持つの。でも口に出しては云はないからわからないと思ふけど

[103] Matsumoto, "Desperately Seeking 'Deidre.'"

[104] Maki Kaoru, "Wakame" (Young leaf), Shūkaku vol 5 (October 1938), 70-71.

平常の事はまあいいとして、近頃のパパと来たら結婚の亡者みたい。「女[は]結婚すべきものなり」は承認するとしても、金のあるひとへーは難物よ。私ええそしたら、馬の様に結婚して豚の様に子を産み、猫の様に死んで行きますつて云ふのよ。パパ、怒つちまふけど、私だつて困るわ。

[105] Ibid, 70.

まるで、「帰米」全体の悩みを一人で背負ひ込んだ顔付きで大変よ。

[106] Ibid, 71.

で、自我を押し通した結果がどちらへ転ぶかは後でないとわからない事だけど、喜子は自分で歩調を合はして行けないと知つて、感情を殺してまで入つて行く必要はないと思ふわ。

Listening to her advice, Kiyo feels attracted to Noriko, particularly her "toughness," nurtured by a difficult life and by the loss of her parents. "Kiyo looks straight into Noriko's eyes as she remembers what Noriko happened to reveal: I am not particularly obsessed with being virgin, but neither am I willing to throw it out too quickly."[107] The story ends with Kiyo determining to control her own life. "Moon light shines blue, and wind gently rustles the leaves on the tree. It is a night when everything is beautiful." Kiyo seriously considers departing from her father's vision of what her life should be:

> "I don't want to become another dumb machine that just happens to have flesh, and if that's how I feel I have to leave this house," Kiyo forced herself to conclude. Dreaming about venturing out into the unknown world and searching for all that she wanted, Kiyo could feel a sudden surge of emotion as the blood coursed through her veins. She felt that she would burst with passion.[108]

The reference to departure to an unknown world suggests a homoerotic relationship with Noriko as well as rebellion against her family as she determines to break away from her father's control. Through exploration of the relationship between Kiyo and Noriko, Maki presents a radical possibility of independence and homoerotic relationships as a resolution to the dilemmas of female Kibei.

Various Kibei writers addressed the theme of re-negotiating social relations after returning to the US. Their firsthand experiences of life both in Japan and in the US left

---

[107] Ibid, 71.

惜しくはないが、棄てるでもない貞操ー と何時か漏らした記子の述懐をふと思ひ浮かべ乍ら真直ぐに瞳をみつめてゐた。

[108] Ibid, 71.

・・・まだ皮膚のある器械にはなりたくない、その為には矢張り家庭との別離を断行—と真剣に考へてみるのだつた。あらゆるものへの探求、そして未知の世界へ自分をふりかざして進む姿、喜代は逆流する血に燃えてゐた。

very little room to idealize either society. *Shūkaku* provided a unique venue for Kibei to express their feelings and give voice to sentiments threatening the solidarity of the Japanese American community.

**On Japan-China Relationship**

In a tanka poem published in the October 1938 volume of *Shūkaku*, Nogiku Itoi, an Issei woman writer from Seattle, evoked America's racism as an admonishment to Japanese Americans who criticized Japan's invasion of China.

> Those friends of ours who criticize Japan
> Should first take a look
> at US history[109]

Itoi's poem represented one stand in the complex response of Japanese Americans to the outbreak of war between Japan and China in July 1937. Japan's military expansion to East Asia intensified the tensions not only between Japan and China, but also between Japanese Americans and mainstream American society, which generally viewed China as the victim of Japanese aggression. Many ethnic newspapers took a pro-Japan stance in their editorials, particularly aiming their positions against pro-China sentiments in the US.[110]

The last three volumes of *Shūkaku*, which were published after the outbreak of the war between September 1937 and June 1939, reveal a surge in national pride, attributable

---

109 *Shūkaku* vol 5 (October 1938), 27.

日本を責める輩よ先づ米国の過去の歴史を省よとぞ

110 Yuji Ichioka, "Japanese Immigrant Nationalism: The Issei and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-41," *California History* 69:3 (1990), 260-75. David Yoo discusses how Nisei responded to this war, examining the English section of Japanese American newspapers in his *Growing Up Nisei*, 87-90.

at least in part, to the racial humiliation Japanese Americans experienced on a daily basis in their lives in the United States. Many Japanese Americans, particularly Issei, took a pro-Japan stance, participating in community activities such as fund-raising and the preparation of care-packages in support of the home country.

For some writers, Japan's war in China engendered pride in Japan's burgeoning cultural sphere that encompassed both colonial settlers and overseas immigrant communities. For example, in the June 1939 issue of *Shūkaku,* Heihachi Kamiyama, de-facto secretary-treasurer of *Shūkaku*, noted with pride about the expanding network that linked writers in the Japanese language, whether colonists or immigrants.

> *Shūkaku* travels around the globe… A poetry society from Pyongyang, Korea sent us a copy of their literary journal *Yamabiko* (Echo). They sent us a letter of welcome – forging communication between writers in a colonial situation and writers dealing with the conditions of immigration.[111]

In addition to this expanding concept of Japan as a transnational cultural sphere that linked Japanese writers across the Pacific, *Shūkaku* writers were conscious of the impact of the war on daily life in Japan itself. Rationing and shortages were becoming common in wartime Japan, and *Shūkaku,* which was sent to Japan for publication, was also affected. In the "chatting" section, entitled "Saron" (salon), in the sixth volume of *Shūkaku*, published in June 1939, Tsuyuko Matsuda, an editor, apologized in advance for the anticipated decline in the quality of paper for this volume:

> We are assuming that the paper quality for this volume will be poor, though we won't know for sure until it's done. In Japan right now most people don't know where their next meal is coming from.

---

[111] *Shūkaku* vol 6 (June 1939), 59.

『収穫』も遠くへまで行くものだ。朝鮮の京城から山彦詩社発行の『山彦』と云ふ同人雑誌が郵送されて「どうぞよろしく」と植民地の文人から移民地の我々に御挨拶の手紙が来た。

> The question of paper quality certainly seems frivolous in light of such economic hardship and national crisis.[112]

If the concern about the quality of the paper was luxurious and rather trivial, the news of family members drafted into the military in Japan, or killed in the war, brought the reality of war much closer to Japanese American communities.

In examining the English language sections of Japanese American newspapers, historian David Yoo observes that the Japanese American press:

> [Deflected] attention away from the conflict itself and focused on the 'racial victimization' of the Japanese American. Journalists presented the Nikkei as victims of misinformation and 'propaganda' spread by China, Chinese Americans, and their American allies.[113]

Yoo asserts that this focus on "racial victimization" was a generation-specific strategy of the Nisei to mediate between the country of their ancestry and that of their birth in the increasingly tense relationship between Japan and the US since the early 1930s.

Close examination of Japanese language literary writings, however, reveal that the strategy of "racial victimization" was adopted widely and across generations in the Japanese American community. Many literary works in *Shūkaku*, too, used the model of "racial victimization" to explain the plight of Japanese Americans during the Japan-China war. In addition, these works suggest the rise of pro-Japan nationalism among Japanese Americans as a "liberating" response to white racism toward Japanese Americans.

---

112 Ibid, 62.

これは雑誌が出来上がらぬと判らぬ事ですが多分紙質がグツと悪くなるだらうとの予想なんです。あの非常時日本の経済的困難の中にさへ耐へしのんでゐる、故国の人々の喰うや喰わずの苦労に較べると、紙質がいいの悪いのなんて全く以って贅沢な話です。

113 David Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei*, 87-90.

Two short stories, published in *Shūkaku* after the outbreak of the Japan-China war present female Japanese American house servants as victims of "ignorant" and "closed-minded" white employers who recuperate their gendered and racial oppression through vicarious identification with Japanese imperialism. Tamaki Matsuno's short story, "Senji shōkei" (Snapshots of the wartime) explores the impact of the Japan-China war on the lives of a Japanese American domestic servant. The protagonist, Sumie, is an Issei woman working in a white household as a housemaid. Painfully aware of her employers' anti-Japanese stance, Sumie explains to herself that she is a "victim" of "ignorant" white Americans. Despite her pride in Japan's military success, Sumie cannot disregard her economically and socially subordinate and therefore vulnerable social condition. When subject to the gaze of white Americans, as when riding the bus, she must engage in self-censorship. Though Sumie is eager to read news about the war in the Japanese language magazines, she does not feel comfortable opening up those magazines full of Japanese nationalistic images, while seated next to white passengers.[114]

The relationship between Sumie and Helen, her employer's daughter, illustrates the power dynamic experienced by many Japanese Americans that silenced them. Although her employers do not discuss the war, fourteen-year-old Helen harasses Sumie, criticizing Japan's "barbaric" behavior in China. Though Sumie can think of various retorts, her limited command of the English language prevents her from eloquently expressing her thoughts:

> "I don't know. I am busy right now - please leave me alone?" That was it. That was the extent of how Sumie could respond to Helen's taunting. If her English were fluent she wouldn't be in this position, she would be able to stand up for herself. But Helen just kept rattling on as though she knew that Sumie lacked the schooling and confidence for a proper defense.[115]

---

[114] Tamaki Matsuno, "Senji shōkei" (Snapshots of the wartime), *Shūkaku* vol 4 (September 1937), 41.

[115] Ibid, 44.

Here Sumie is portrayed as "victim" of "ignorant" Helen who takes advantage of Sumie's limited English ability.

The impact of the war on Sumie's life also takes gendered forms in which a parallel is drawn between masculine military service to the nation and feminine service to the household. Sumie's brother in Japan notifies her that he has been drafted into the army, and begs her, the only unmarried female sibling, to come back home to take care of their mother. The story suggests Sumie's determination to go back to Japan is clearly tied to her sense of patriotism. Sumie, who believes that she serves the Japanese nation by embodying the traditional feminine value of filial piety, can in this manner symbolically take revenge on those who have been hostile to her, including Helen:

> I am just going to tell Helen, that little brat, that my brother has gone to fight in the war, and that any enemy of his is an enemy of mine. I don't want to stay even one more day in a house that sympathizes with his enemy. "Hire a Chinese girl to take my place, that would please you wouldn't it? But you will know which side China is on before the year is out – if you're not a total fool, that is." With those words I will walk right out of the house and go straight back to Japan. I can not let my mother remain alone there all by herself.[116]

---

「知りません、わたし今忙しいの、あつちへ出て行つてくれません？」
これが精々である。ばりばりものが言へるくらゐなら、こんな小娘を説服するづらゐ訳もない事だのに、澄枝の泣かされる原因の半分以上は自分自身の不自由な語学にあることが、彼女にも解らぬことはない、そのもどかしさへ付け入るやうにヘレンは澄枝を眼の敵のやうにまくし立てるのであつた。

116 Ibid, 51.

そして、うちのヘレン、あの小娘にも言つてやろう、わたしの弟が戦争に行つたのだ、弟の敵は私の敵です、私の敵をよく言つたり同情したするような家にもう１日も居たくない。私の代わりに支那のガールを雇つてあげれば支那人もよろこぶし、あなたも幸せでせう、けれど支那がよいか悪いかよくお解りになるまで一年もかかりはしないでせう。若しあなたが莫迦でないなら。とそう言つて、あの家を出てやろう。そしてやはり直ぐ日本へ帰ろう、母一人家に残して置くわけにはいかないー

Whether Sumie actually acted on her fantasy is not known, but in her mind, "revenge" against her victimization by pro-China whites is materialized in her intensified pro-Japanese attitude.

Mimi Matsuoka, a non-Kibei Nisei writer, also portrays Japanese Americans during the Japan-China War as racially "victimized" by misguided white Americans in her short story, "Kimigayo" (My Highness). [117] The title is named after the Japanese national anthem whose lyrics pray for the longevity of the Japanese emperor. As the title reveals, the story, like Matsuno's, captures the growing sense of pro-Japan nationalism. Mimi, the protagonist, is a Japanese American woman, who works as a live-in servant at Mrs. Himan's house in San Francisco. Mrs. Himan calls Mimi whenever the newspaper carries articles on the Japanese army's atrocious behaviors in China: "'Mimi, take a look at this picture. The poor Chinese. Why does the Japanese army pick on such a weak people? What do you think?'"[118] Mimi endures Mrs. Himan's behavior for a long time. At first, Mimi tries to "educate" Mrs. Himan, citing accounts of the war in the English section of the Japanese newspaper. One day after listening to Mrs. Himan's accusations against Japan, Mimi comes to a sudden realization about her employer:

> Mimi suddenly recalls a friend's remark that educated white Americans do not talk to their Japanese employees about the Japan-China incident. Mimi experiences a sudden sense, reasoning that Mrs. Himan must be uneducated, since she only believes in what appears in English newspapers.[119]

---

[117] Mimi Matsuoka, "Kimigayo" (My highness), *Shūkaku* vol 5 (October 1938), 66-68.

[118] Ibid, 66.

ミミ。この写真を見て御覧。チャイニースは可哀そうよ。ジャパニーズの軍隊はどうしてこんなに弱い者をいじめるんでせう。ミミはどう思ふ？

[119] Ibid, 66.

「教養の有る白人の家庭では、働いて居る日本人に、今度の事変に就いては何も言はないことよ」
私の友達の一人がかう言つて居ます、ミセス・ハイマンは無教養に違いない。英字紙の記事ばかり有難がつて居るんですもの。

Although Mimi can rationalize away Mrs. Himan's criticisms of Japan and affirm her own understanding of Japan as a "victim" on the international stage, Mimi sometimes feels lonely because of her inability to communicate with Mrs. Himan. It feels as if the gulf between "East" and "West" can never be crossed. Mimi is consoled one night, however, when she finds out that a Japanese man lives next door as a servant. Late at night after playing a Japanese folk song on his harmonica, he plays "kimigayo," the Japanese national anthem. Listening to the song, Mimi finds consolation in her loneliness; although isolated in the white household, hearing the national anthem re-affirms her Japanese-ness. The circle of identification is now complete, as Mimi, who is objectively victimized by white racism, feels emotionally bonded to Japan which is unjustly criticized because it is "corrupted by Chinese propaganda."

Both Matuno's and Matsuoka's short stories portray Japanese American's embrace of Japanese imperialism primarily as a defensive response to white racism while blaming the Chinese for Americans' hostility toward Japan. In contrast, Saburō Katō, an Issei writer, positions Japanese and Chinese immigrants as equally subordinate to white America and therefore natural allies whose friendship is subverted by Japanese imperialism in his short story, "Mistā Yama to Shinajihen" (Mr. Yama and China Incident).[120] Katō describes the transformation of "friendship" between a protagonist, Yama, an Issei male servant, and Wong, a Chinese American cook, who live in adjacent rooms in their employer's house. For several years before the outbreak of the war, Yama and Wong, as household servants, made a vertical "alliance," called "Japan-China alliance." Yama loves to drink, while Wong enjoys smoking cigars. Since Wong does not drink, the mistress only entrusts Wong with a key to the liquor cabinet in her attempt

120 Saburō Katō, "Mistā Yama to Shinajihen" (Mr. Yama and China Incident), *Shūkaku* vol 5 (October 1938), 72-80.

to regulate her husband's drinking habit. Taking advantage of this access, Wong occasionally leaves alcohol in Yama's room, for which Yama exchanges cigars that he sneaks out from the master's jacket at laundry time. Yama is circumspect in deciding what he takes and what he does not: he honestly returns expensive items like the master's watch and wallet in order to maintain his employers' trust; however, he considers cigarettes, cigars, gum, and such as the "side benefits" of his job.[121]

The outbreak of the Japan-China War affects the "Japan-China alliance" between Yama and Wong. Rather than responding chauvinistically and therefore terminating the "alliance," Yama and Wong struggle to make sense of the impact of this conflict on their personal relationship. On the day that the news of the Japanese army's southern advancement is reported, Yama leaves two cigars on Wong's table. When Yama visits Wong's room later, the cigars are gone, but Wong will not acknowledge receiving the cigars. A week later, when a cup of whisky appears on Yama's table, he drinks it, but refuses to acknowledge it came from Wong. The next day, however, a smiling Wong stops by and offers a pint of dry gin to Yama. Wong starts the conversation:

> "Yama, do you have the cigars?"
> "Yeah, three."
> Yama hands over the cigars that he sneaked out from the living room on the second floor several days ago. Then, Yama says:
> "Wong, neither of us can control the war, but we can be still friends, can't we?"
> "Sure, we are the best of friends."
> "All right, then. Everything will be as it has been."
> "Sure." [122]

---

[121] Ibid, 75.

[122] Ibid, 76-77.

「ヤマ、葉巻を持つてゐるか」
「ウム、三本あるよ」
二三日前、二階のリビングルームからこつそり持つて来た葉巻を渡した、物々交換が終ると、ヤマは口を切つた。
「ウオング、戦争は戦争でお互いに仕方がねえ、俺達はどこまでも友達だらうなあ」
「勿論、二人は最良の友人さ」

As the conditions of war worsen, and reports of the Japanese army's atrocities are sensationally reported in the US press, the friendship as well as the stability of the "Japan-China alliance" is shaken. Around the time of the fall of Nanking, the capital of China at the time, Yama discovers that he has less than his usual meal at his dinner table. Yama suspects it is Wong's revenge, but not knowing for sure, decides to keep quiet.

During the holiday when he returns to the Japanese American community, Yama witnesses a rising atmosphere of pro-Japan sentiments. As he listens to the patriotic music coming out of the speakers on the street, Yama ponders the costume parade in the community that he participated in last year. Yama dressed as a China-man, wearing Chinese clothes and shoes that he borrowed from Wong. He won first prize and he split the prize money with Wong. Wong was very happy. Thinking of the current conflict, international as well as his own, Yama feels sad, and contemplates the irony of the war:

> Even if I asked Wong to borrow his Chinese clothes, he would not do it. Even if I wore Chinese costume, I won't win the prize. It is almost like a dream to experience this transformation in feeling, this shift in friendship. Neither Wong nor I can do anything about this, looking at each other as "enemy," but we are neighbors only separated by a wall...[123]

Yama's attitude is strikingly different from the protagonists in the previous two stories, who embraced the rising pro-Japan sentiments. Yama is fatalist and regrets the breakdown of his friendship and the "Japan-China alliance" he shared with Wong. The

---

「それなら何んでも今迄通りに仕様ぜ」
「勿論」

123 Ibid, 78-79.

・・・今年彼に支那服を貸せと云ふても決して承諾はしないだらう、支那服を着て出た所で、賞には入らないだろう。僅か一年の間にこれ程の感情のくひちがいを生じた事も夢のやうだし、お互に相手を敵視してゐながら、壁一重隣りに住んで居て、生活の為めとは云へ、それをどうする事も出来ないのも避けられない、・・・

author, Katō narrates the story from the vantage point of Yama, whose perspective reflects the situation of Japanese Americans who live side by side with Chinese Americans. In their daily interactions, national affiliation figures strongly in their identity politics, but before the Japan-China war personal relations were not over-determined by competing nationalisms. In fact, the episode of Yama's and Wong's collaborations in Yama's cross-dressing subtly suggests that national identities are social constructs that are negotiable.

*Shūkaku* provided a trans-local public space for literary-minded Japanese Americans to share their feelings, sentiments, and commentary on international conflicts. What writers shared in six volumes of *Shūkaku* was not a set of uniform visions or a singular political stance, but diverse ideas within Japanese American communities, criss-crossing different localities, gender, generations, and depicting various positions on the political spectrum. This literary movement, based on a strong trans-local network became an important social as well as cultural resource in the years of forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans from the West Coast during World War II. Understanding the social history of *Shūkaku* helps us to understand how and why Japanese Americans throughout the ten concentration camps actively and quickly organized literary circles for writing, socializing, and mimeograph publishing. As various historical works on the wartime experiences of Japanese Americans have suggested, generational rifts, already surfaced in the pre-war years, were intensified as Issei and Kibei were viewed as "pro-Japan," therefore "trouble-makers," while the camp administration attempted to establish pseudo-leadership in the camp by utilizing "pro-American" Nisei.[124] In this context, *Shūkaku* might have provided an important model

[124] Roger Daniels shows the US government growing skepticism toward Kibei as well as Issei in his *Concentration Camps USA: Japanese Americans and World War II* (New York, Chicago, and San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972), 106. Gary Okihiro elaborates how postwar scholarship as well as wartime sources have maintained and re-enforced

to create an outlet for suppressed feelings and expressions, particularly for Issei and Kibei who found themselves under varying, and much more intensified "surveillance" of their thoughts and feelings.

the stereotypical visions of Nisei as "pro-American," an Kibei and Issei as "pro-Japan" in his study, "Tule Lake under Martial Law: A Study in Japanese Resistance," *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 5:3 (Fall 1977), 71-85, hereafter cited as "Tule Lake under Martial Law."

# CHAPTER II

## RESILIENCE OF BI-CULTURALISM: JAPANESE LANGUAGE LITERARY MOVEMENT UNDER INCARCERATION

The period between 1941 and 1945 witnessed major transformations in Japanese Americans' prewar world views and identity politics. The outbreak of World War II and hostilities between the US and Japan shattered the prewar Japanese American communities' efforts to negotiate a trans-Pacific identity premised on cooperation of the two countries. For Japanese Americans, Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor was perhaps the most startling and devastating news. Within hours of the attack, the FBI swept through Japanese American communities in California, Oregon, Washington, and Hawai'i, arresting community leaders, including Buddhist priests, Christian ministers, Japanese language teachers, martial arts instructors, businessmen, and journalists. In her autobiography, *Nisei Daughter* (1953), Monica Sone depicts the anxiety-ridden atmosphere of the Japanese community in Seattle as it experienced the swift and arbitrary arrests of people in the community. When Mr. Yorita, a grocer making a house delivery, regaled the family with stories of FBI arrests and investigations, Monica's mother suggested that he, too, should be on guard. "They wouldn't be interested in anyone as insignificant as myself!"[125] he retorted. But the following week, the Sone family found out that Mr. Yorita was wrong. The new delivery boy who replaced Mr. Yorita explained: "Yep, they got the old man, too, and don't ask me why! The way I see it, it's subversive to sell soy sauce now."[126] As the delivery boy's sarcasm suggests, after Pearl

---

[125] Monica Sone, *Nisei Daughter,* 153.

[126] Ibid, 153.

Harbor even everyday cultural practices came to be increasingly problematic as markers of Japanese American identity and loyalty.

Soon after Monica's mother received the following advice from Mrs. Matsui, whose husband had recently been taken into FBI's custody:

> You must destroy everything and anything Japanese which may incriminate your husband. It doesn't matter what it is, if it's printed or made in Japan, destroy it because the FBI always carries off those items for evidence.[127]

After hearing similar stories from other women, the family decided to destroy many, if not all of their Japanese possessions. The entire family members "worked all night, feverishly combing through bookshelves, closets, drawers, and furtively creeping down to the basement furnace for the burning."[128] Monica's contribution to the fire included her old Japanese language schoolbooks which she had preserved in the hope some day of teaching her own children Japanese. There was, however, one possession that Monica cherished so much so that she could not bear the thought of destroying it:

> But when I came face to face with my Japanese doll which Grandmother Nagashima had sent me from Japan, I rebelled. It was a gorgeously costumed Miyazukai figure, typical of the lady in waiting who lived in the royal palace during the feudal era. ... I decided to ask Chris if she would keep it for me. Chris loved and appreciated beauty in every form and shape, and I knew that in her hands, the doll would be safe and enjoyed.[129]

Henry and Sumi, Monica's siblings, had to experience similar parting with childhood mementos: Henry gave up the toy samurai sword that he had brought back

---

[127] Ibid, 154.

[128] Ibid, 155.

[129] Ibid 155.

from the family's trip to Japan, while Sumi destroyed books and magazines that her cousin in Japan had sent her.

If the American-born Nisei like Monica and her siblings had to undergo heart-wrenching destruction of childhood possessions, Monica's Issei parents had to sacrifice books they treasured: "Father piled up his translated Japanese volumes of philosophy and religion and carted them reluctantly to the basement."[130] As a passionate lover of literature, her mother, Monica observed, "had the most to eliminate." Monica's mother was an active member of the prewar Japanese literary circle in Seattle. Using the pen name Nogiku Itoi she contributed her own poems and critical commentary to *Shūkaku*, and helped edit several volumes. As the Sone family purged the home of everything Japanese, she sacrificed "her scrapbooks of poems cut out from newspapers and magazines, as well as her private collections of old Japanese classic literature" in the furnace fire.[131] When the family finally finished, it was past midnight and they went straight to bed. "Wearily we closed our eyes," Monica recalls, "filled with an indescribable sense of guilt for having destroyed the things we loved. This night of ravage was to haunt us for years."[132]

Emotionally wrenching scenes like this were enacted up and down the West Coast as families felt compelled to destroy some of their most precious possessions. The personal items the Sone family destroyed were not even remotely related to national security, but they succumbed to the pressure to do whatever they could to avoid the appearance of disloyalty. When in February 1942, President Roosevelt signed the Executive Order 9066 setting in motion the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans from the West Coast, more and more Japanese Americans destroyed personal

---

[130] Ibid, 156.

[131] Ibid, 156.

[132] Ibid, 156.

possession and mementoes, not only because they were only allowed to bring what they could carry to the camps, but also because they feared inviting future trouble at a time when it indeed appeared that buying or selling soy sauce was subversive.

This chapter looks at the formation of Japanese-language literary circles and their publications under the conditions of internment of West Coast Japanese Americans. Confined behind barbed wire in concentration camps where overt political expression was closely monitored and frequently restricted, Japanese-language literature, along with other Japanese arts and crafts, became important vehicles for the expression of identity politics, particularly for Issei and Kibei. In the camps, Japanese Americans faced new institutional pressures from the War Relocation Authority (WRA), the camp administration, as it implemented a program to promote Americanization, including a policy to institute an English-only environment.

During the 1970s and 1980s, historians Arthur Hansen and Gary Okihiro presented a revised view of Japanese American resistance under wartime incarceration. What Okihiro calls the orthodox scholarship generally viewed Japanese American resistance as sporadic and exceptional, caused either by accumulated frustration in the initial adjustment to the conditions of the camps or agitation by minority pro-Japan groups. Hansen and Okihiro, in contrast, viewed resistance more broadly as they situated wartime treatment of Japanese Americans as the logical extension of, rather than an aberration from, prewar anti-Asian racism. In doing so, they redefined "resistance" as Japanese American efforts to maintain cultural practices of Japanese American communities against the increasing pressures of the Americanization efforts imposed by the WRA.[133]

---

[133] For the most recent historiography of Japanese American resistance, see Gary Okihiro, "Japanese American Resistance" in his *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (New York: The Columbia University Press, 2001), 164-174. Also see Gary Okihiro, "Japanese Resistance in America's Concentration Camps"; Gary Okihiro, "Tule Lake under Martial Law"; Gary Okihiro, "Religion and Resistance in America's Concentration Camps"; and Arthur A.

While orthodox scholarship only identifies overt political confrontations between the internees and the administration as "resistance," revisionist scholars trace persisting forms of Japanese American resistance even under conditions of "stability" from the administrative perspective. Japanese American resistance appears to disappear, Okihiro argues, only to the extent that resistance moved from protest to assertion of cultural autonomy. Using the examples of a New Year's Party at the Gila River camp and Issei parents' influence over Nisei children, revisionist scholars highlight the successful resistance particularly by elderly Issei males in reclaiming their powers in the community through the "traditional matrices of Japanese institutions, values and relationships."[134]

In this chapter, I will first discuss the formation of Japanese language literary movements in the camps, and then discuss both informal and formal control of the WRA over the literary movement. Following the contextualization of the wartime literature, I will discuss the ways in which writers claimed distinct Japanese American identities grounded in bi-cultural tradition. In the context of multiple pressures to suppress Japanese culture, the wartime Japanese language literary movement became a form of resistance through which some Japanese Americans sought to retain their cultural identity. Indeed, many writers discussed the retention of Japanese culture as a way to preserve their ethnic identity against the pressures of Americanization. As Okihiro and Hansen asserted, Japanese language Japanese American literature became "vehicle" and "means" by which they resisted the pressure of Americanization, and continued to cherish their distinct ethnic identity, grounded in bi-culturalism.

In producing Japanese language literature in the context of internment, writers did more than challenge the WRA's program of Americanization. As noted above, Arthur

---

Hansen, "Cultural Poitics in the Gila River Relocation Center 1942-1943" *Arizona and the West* 27:4 (Winter 1985), 327-362.

[134] Gary Okihiro, "Japanese Resistance in America's Concentration Camps," 32.

Hansen has shown how elderly Issei men used the occasion of traditional Japanese holidays to assert their authority against the WRA's pressures to create "Americanized" community led by cooperative Nisei. While writers resisted the WRA's Americanization effort, they also critiqued their fellow internees' political actions. Thus, literature provided a space for relatively free reflection on the political turmoil among interned Japanese Americans. Japanese language literature not only functioned as a base of resistance against the administration, but it also provided a cultural space where writers engaged in critiques of fellow Japanese Americans.

## Japanese Language Literary Movement under Incarceration

From the early stages of the internment, Japanese Americans quickly organized literary circles for writing and socializing. The literary circles were part of a broader movement of self-initiated cultural activities that proliferated in the camps. In the prologue to his *Beauty behind Barbed Wire: the Arts of the Japanese in Our War Relocation Camps* (1952), Allen Eaton describes how he was pleasantly surprised by the flourishing production of arts and crafts initiated by Japanese American internees throughout the camps he visited.[135] As a director of arts and social work of the Russell Sage Foundation and a trustee of the American Craftsmen's Council, Eaton had devoted himself to the preservation of crafts in the United States. In addition to numerous books and articles celebrating US immigrants' arts and crafts, Eaton organized major exhibitions, including the American Rural Art exhibition held in Washington in 1937 and

[135] Allen Eaton, *Beauty behind Barbed Wire: The Arts of the Japanese in Our War Relocation Camps* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1952), hereafter cited as *Beauty behind Barbed Wire*.

the American crafts exhibition in the U.S. Pavilion at the World's Agricultural Fair at New Delhi, India in 1959.[136]

During the early stages of Japanese American internment, Eaton had proposed to Dillon Myer, the Director of the WRA, an "exhibition of attractive handicrafts in the War Relocation Camps" as a means to teach the general public "the rich and varied contributions our immigrant people have brought to our life and culture."[137] Although Myer promised the cooperation of the WRA, he told Eaton that the WRA could not appropriate any funding for arts, since this would invite the condemnation of the WRA as coddling. Unable to secure financial support, Eaton had to give up the plan for the moment. Yet, he maintained contacts with friends he had made in several camps who soon sent him packages of various handmade artifacts. Inspired by what he saw, Eaton praised the initiative and creative spirit of internees whose crafts mitigated the desolate environments of the camp:

> In all the camps, too, they had begun to make their bleak surroundings more attractive by planting gardens, and trying to make their tar-paper barracks more beautiful and therefore livable – almost literally out of nothing, for store-bought supplies were not available. Barren camps were being transformed gradually into attractive homes and communities.[138]

In the summer of 1945, Eaton visited five camps and sent photographers and assistants to remaining camps in order to document arts and crafts as they were produced, including calligraphy, costumes for plays, embroideries, flower arrangement, flower

---

[136] Other works of Eaton include *Immigrant Gifts to American Life: Some Experiments in Appreciation of the Contributions of Our Foreign Born Citizens to American Culture* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1932), and *Handicrafts of the Southern Highland* (New Work: Russell Sage Foundation, 1937). For the biographical information of Eaton, see obituary in *Handweaver and Craftsman* 14:2 (Spring 1963), 32.

[137] Allen Eaton, *Beauty behind Barbed Wire*, 3.

[138] Ibid, 4.

making, furniture, gardens, miniature landscapes, painting, semiprecious stones, tea ceremony, and wood carving. Eaton noted that public exhibitions were held in each of the ten camps, which were open to the internees, the WRA staff, and the visitors from the surrounding communities.

In particular, Eaton commends artists and teachers who "set the first example"[139] by encouraging others and themselves engaged in creative works in the uncertain and chaotic conditions of "Assembly Centers," hastily erected detention centers which housed Japanese Americans while they were waiting for the construction of more "permanent" camps. The arts and crafts activities, in Eaton's view, both raised morale and enhanced quality of the life under incarceration.

The Art school organized at Tanforan "Assembly Center," previously a race track grounds in the San Francisco Bay Area turned into a temporary detention quarters, is an example of the initiatives of the Japanese American artists that Eaton praised. In her essay, "The View from Within," Karin Higa describes how within three weeks of their arrival in Tanforan, a group of Japanese Americans, led by Chiura Obata, opened the Tanforan Art School on May 25, 1942.[140] Japanese American artists transformed a building in the race track into a flourishing art school. The school offered some ninety-five classes a week from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. over twenty-five subject areas such as figure drawing, landscape, still life, mural painting, art appreciation, interior decoration, cartoon drawing and architectural drafting. Students' ages ranged from six to seventy years old. Not only did the Tanforan Art School offer students the opportunity to study, it also provided opportunities for public exhibitions of the artworks produced by students as

---

[139] Ibid 96.

[140] Karin Higa, "The View from Within" in *The View From Within: Japanese American Art from the Internment Camps, 1942-1945*, edited by Karin Higa (Los Angeles: Japanese American National Museum, UCLA Wight Art Gallery, and UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 1992), 19-44.

well as instructors. Between June and September 1942, artwork from Tanforan was exhibited both inside and outside the Tanforan camp at International House and the YWCA in Berkeley, Mills College, and the Pasadena Art Institute.[141]

The scope of the accomplishments of the Tanforan Art School, Higa asserts, was possible due to the high concentration of Japanese American professional artists in the San Francisco Bay area and the networks they had created before the war. Chiura Obata, the leader of the school, had been a member of the art faculty of the University of California at Berkeley since 1932, and his former colleagues and students assisted Obata's endeavor by frequent visits to Tanforan to deliver art supplies.[142] The legacy of Tanforan Art School accompanied Japanese American internees as they were transferred to various more "permanent" camps. Obata, along with other artists such as George Hibi, Hisako Hibi, and Mine Okubo re-opened the school at Topaz, Utah, as part of an Adult Education Program.

Although differing in scope and scale, the Japanese language literary movement followed a similar pattern of development as the Tanforan Art School. Enthusiasts of literature quickly organized literary activities even before the WRA developed policies governing these activities. For example, poets Keizan Yagata and Bonsai Ishikawa organized the first Japanese poetry circle at Poston in September 1942. Since all publications in the Japanese language were prohibited in the camp at the time, Yagata and Ishikawa hand-wrote several of the more humorous poems on poster-size paper and placed them on the walls in the mess halls. While people were waiting in line for the meals, they could enjoy the fellow internees' poems. This instant public art was labor-

---

[141] Ibid, 21-22.

[142] Ibid, 23.

intensive: it took Yagata and Ishikawa two full days to post the poems in all thirty six mess halls in the camp.[143]

Internee-initiated literary activities gradually developed into more specialized literary groups. In addition to a number of poetry journals devoted to free-style poetry, haiku, senryū, and tanka, five multi-genre literary journals were published in four camps between 1942 and 1945. The most prolific was *Posuton Bungei* which was published in twenty-five volumes between February 1943 and September 1945[144] in Poston, Arizona. In addition, six volumes of *Hāto Maunten Bungei* were published between December 1943 and September 1944 in Heart Mountain, Wyoming; three volumes of *Wakoudo* between May and August, 1943 in Gila River, Arizona; seven volumes of *Dotō* between July 1944 and June 1945 in Tule Lake, California; and nine volumes of *Tessaku* between March 1944 and July 1945 in Tule Lake, California. The output is extraordinary particularly considering the fact that the WRA at best merely tolerated activities involving Japanese language and cultural practices. Japanese-language literary publications were self-financed. Following the prewar customary practice, literary groups charged membership fees to finance publication of the first volume. Then, profits from the sales of the first volume were used to pay the costs of publication for the next volume.

Literary movements that developed within the camps drew upon networks nurtured in prewar Japanese American literary movement across the West Coast that

---

[143] Shinoda Satae, "Bōkyō no sōgō zasshi *Posuton Bungei*" (Longing for home: Multi-genre Magazine, *Poston Bungei*), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 8, 10.

[144] Entire volumes of *Posuton Bungei* were not available. Shinoda Satae extensively searched for the entire collection of *Posuton Bungei* when she and her colleague were compiling anthology of Japanese language Japanese American literature. Due to the difficulties of keeping one's belongings in the camp and the process of relocation, Shinoda assumes that some volumes, particularly the earlier ones, hardly survived. Judging from the duration and frequency of *Posuton Bungei* publication, Shinoda estimates that between twenty-five and thirty volumes were published.

provided a critical foundation of organizational and publication skills for literary circles within the camps. New networks developed linking writers in different camps as people moved between camps, and mail service allowed continuous communications between interned writers and even outside the camps. Internees were able to obtain copies of journals published in distant camps, and writers contributed literary works to journals published in other camps. Since the WRA restricted access to most Japanese language publications, literary journals produced in the camps provided important entertainment for the general Japanese reading public.

As described above, the Japanese-language literary movement at Poston camp begun publication through the hand-written poems posted in the mess halls. The Poston Poetry Society, led by Keizan Yagata and Bonsai Ishikawa, reorganized as the Poston Literary Association, which published its literary journal, *Posuton Bungei*. It appears that the first volume was published in February 1943, and *Posuton Bungei* continued its publication for the following three years. Classified as "Japanese type recreation" by the WRA, the Association received little financial supports. However, the membership fees and profits from sales enabled the publication. In order to appeal to as many readerships as possible, the editors welcomed writings in every literary genre. It also appears that they tried to be inclusive with respect to publication, publishing the great majority of submissions. While many other Japanese language literary movements in different camps were led by Kibei, Issei writers and poets such as Keizan Yagata, Bonsai Ishikawa, Akira Togawa, and Nobuo Matsubara dominated the leadership of the Poston Literary Association.

In the Heart Mountain camp, groups of tanka, haiku, and senryū writers were quickly organized by prominent leaders from the prewar literary circles. For example, Shasui Takayanagi who organized tanka society, studied tanka in Japan before he immigrated to the US in 1917. Before the war, he served a contributing editor for poetry submissions for several Japanese West Coast ethnic newspapers: *Nichibei, Rafu Shimpō*,

*Kashū Mainichi*, and *Kakushū Jiji*.[145] After internment at Heart Mountain, he joined with prewar poets Kentetsu Kurokawa who led the senryū society, and Shibao Tokoishi, Muin Fujioka and Hosoe Fujioka who organized the haiku society to launch *Hāto Maunten Bungei*. In the first volume published in December 1943, the editors declared their purpose to "provide the literary sensitivity to the life in the camp which tends to be desolate."[146] Addressing fellow writers, the editors expressed the wish that the journal encourage continuing efforts in reflection, artistic sensibility, and writing. Three poetry societies that had formed in the camps sponsored the publication of the journal, but it also published essays and short stories in addition to free-style poetry and classic Japanese style poetry.

*Hāto Mountain Bungei* included illustrations drawn by Estelle Ishigo. Ishigo, a Caucasian American, chose to accompany her Japanese American husband, Arthur Ishigo, when the evacuation order came. In drawings and paintings, Ishigo depicted various scenes from camp life, including cover illustrations of all six volumes of *Hāto Mountain Bungei*. In the April 1944 issue, Ishigo contributed two drawings and free verse poems in addition to the artwork on the cover. The first drawing depicted a cook in the camp mess hall ringing the bell to announce mealtime. Below the drawing, Ishigo's poem was printed both in English and in Japanese translation.

> Bells in every land
> go beyond fences as far as they will
> telling of life of learning or food,
> bring all in faith to head their song.[147]

---

[145] For the bibliographical information on Shasui Takayanagi, see Honmitu Matsumoto, *Fukkō senjyō ni odoru kikan dōhō* (Prominent returnees on the road of the reconstruction) (Los Angels: Tōyō Insatsujyo, 1949), 207.

[146] *Hāto Mountain Bungei* vol 1 (January 1944), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 7, hereafter cited as *Hāto Mountain Bungei*.

[147] *Hāto Mountain Bungei* vol 5 (April 1944), 27.

The drawing suggests tranquility as the cook looks relaxed, smoking a cigarette under a bright sky. But her poem reminds the reader of the reality of incarceration because only the sound of mess hall bell can go beyond the fence.

The second drawing also critiques the internment as it shows three boys flying kites behind barbed wire. The accompanying poem evokes freedom: "The air and the sky is all their own/sailing on a kite to greet the clouds…"[148] But in contrast to the kite that spirals upward in the sky, the Japanese American children are enclosed by the barbed wire in the foreground of the drawing.

*Dotō* and *Tessaku*, literary journals published in Tule Lake camp, began publication after Tule Lake was designated the "segregation center" for men and women labeled "disloyals" in October 1943. Throughout the war, loyalty questions weighted heavily on members of the entire Japanese American community whose loyalty was officially declared suspect because of their Japanese ancestry. The issue of loyalty was further complicated in February 1943, when the War Department and the WRA administered the loyalty questionnaires. The loyalty questionnaire was intended to facilitate recruitment of male Nisei into the US army and the gradual release of "loyal" Japanese Americans for college and employment outside the camps by providing positive evidence of their loyalty. However, as is discussed below in Chapter 3, numerous respondents were classified as "disloyal" because of the arbitrary nature of the questionnaire and were thus transferred to Tule Lake along with the pro-Japan internees.

*Dotō* was published by former members of the Gila Young People's Association (GYPA) who had been classified as "disloyal" and transferred to Tule Lake. After their transfer to Tule Lake, in March 1944 they formed a new organization, the Tule Lake Young Men's and Women's Association (TLYMWA) and began to publish *Dotō*, an organizational newsletter. Like its predecessor at Gila River, TLYMWA addressed

---

[148] Ibid, 28.

community welfare issues, focusing on cultural and leisure activities: it organized cultural and sport activities such as talent shows, movie showings, arts and crafts shows and baseball tournaments which often served as fundraising activities for the Association. These activities not only enriched the desolate camp life, but also garnered funds that supported publication of *Dotō*.[149] The first issue of *Dotō* was published in July 1944, and was followed by six volumes at one to three month intervals. Although a newsletter containing announcements and activity reports of various divisions of TLYMWA, *Dotō* also published essays, short stories and poetry contributed by members. The membership consisted mostly of Kibei but included some Nisei fluent in Japanese, referred to as "Jun Nisei" (pure Nisei). Two Kibei members of TLYWMA, Akira Fujita and Kyōshi Hashimoto, edited the first volume of *Dotō*. Unlike *Tessaku*, the other literary journal published in Tule Lake, *Dotō* editorial policy was to publish as many submissions as possible in each issue. Fujita was born February 17, 1920 to parents who were farming in Brawley, California. He was sent to Japan at the age of two to his grandparents in Shimizu, Shizuoka. In 1937, he entered Waseda University, one of the most prestigious private universities in Tokyo, but withdrew from his school in 1940 to return to the United States. In prewar Los Angeles, Fujita attended high school as he worked as a "school-boy." During the war, he was first interned at Poston, and then transferred to Tule Lake after the loyalty questionnaire. He became a central editorial member of *Dotō*, and also contributed writings to *Tessaku*. Based on his writings before and during the war, Fujita later published highly autobiographical fiction; *Nōchi no kōkei* (Landscape of the Farmland) in 1982 and *Tachinoki no kisetsu* (Season of Evacuation) in 1984. He

149 Shinoda Satae, "*Dotō*" in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 3, 5-16, hereafter cited as "*Dotō.*".

conceived these works as first two books of trilogy, covering the prewar, wartime and postwar. Unfortunately he never completed the third book.[150]

Kiyoshi Hashimoto, also known as Kyōshi Hashimoto, was born in Los Angeles, and raised in Fukuoka prefecture, his father's hometown. After he graduated from the local high school, he studied preparatory school of Rikkyō University in Tokyo. He boarded the last ship, *Tatsutamaru*, from Japan to the US before the outbreak of war.[151] He was first interned in Manzannar, and transferred to Tule Lake. Fujita and Hashimoto shared similar upbringings, and bonded together as "literary youths" (Bungaku seinen).

*Tessaku* was a peer-reviewed literary magazine. Nine volumes of *Tessaku* were published between March 1944 and July 1945. Aiming to produce a literary journal whose quality would match that of *Shūkaku*, published on the West Coast during the 1930s, the editors of *Tessaku* conducted extensive peer-review of the literary submission they received. Shinoda Satae, a pioneering scholar of Japanese language Japanese American literature, considers *Tessaku* the highest quality literary publication among Japanese language publication in the camps. In the late fall of 1943, several Kibei writers, including Masao Yamashiro, Jyōji Nozawa, and Kazuo Kawai, congregated at the barrack of Bunichi Kagawa, an Issei poet who had published extensively both in English and Japanese before the war. Even though Kibei writers considered Kagawa the most prominent writer in the camp, Yamashiro, Nozawa and Kawai became the official leaders of the group because of their US citizenship. Facing the possibility of deportation to Japan, *Tessaku* members considered their writings and journals the "last" blossoming of Japanese language Japanese immigrant literature. They printed eight hundereds copies of the first volume, and sold the journal for twenty-five cents a copy in the camp canteen.

---

[150] Akira Fujita Papers, Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

[151] Shinoda Satae, "*Dotō*" 9.

On average, 1,000 copies of *Tessaku* were printed, and were quickly bought up by readers hungry for Japanese language reading materials inside and outside of Tule Lake. Profits from the sales of *Tessaku* were used to finance the publication of the next volume.[152]

## Formal and Informal Regulation of the War Relocation Authority on the Literary Movement

The internees' enthusiasm and commitment to literature were the central factors in the vigorous development of Japanese-language literature in the camps. What distinguished camp literature from the prewar literary movement was the impact of both formal and informal control imposed by the WRA. Along with all aspects of life in the camps including cultural and leisure activities, literary activities were placed under the supervision of the Community Activity Section and Adult Education Department of each WRA camp. Japanese language literary activities, however, did not quite fit with what the national WRA office at Washington DC envisioned. According to the national WRA administrative manual, the focus of the Community Activity Section and the Adult Education Department was placed on the "Americanization" of Issei and Kibei by promoting an English-only environment in the camps as much as possible. The purpose of adult education was defined as the provision of "education essential to relocation and to adaptation to American community life," while the Community Activities Section mission was to encourage Japanese Americans to participate in activities "typically American in concept" in order to "facilitate the relocation process and the basic

---

[152] Shinoda Satae, "*Tessaku*: Hatten tojyō no Kibei Nisei bungaku" (*Tessaku*: developing literature of Kibei) in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 5, 5-20.

objectives of WRA..."[153] The national WRA perceived the "Americanization" effort to be essential to the process of future relocation and re-integration of the "loyal" internees to life outside of the camps.

Contrary to the administration's primary focus on Americanization and English classes, the interests of the internees, particularly among Issei and Kibei, were directed to the traditionally Japanese arts and crafts classes, including flower arrangement, flower making, go (a Japanese board game), Japanese theater, Utai, Shigin, Shakuhachi, and sewing school. Data collected by D.A. Conlin, a staff member of the Adult Education program at Poston, shows that at its peak, enrollments in sewing schools and arts and crafts classes exceeded 3,600, which constituted 90% of the adult education enrollment.[154] Despite the priorities of the national WRA policy, local WRA staff soon realized the failure of the national WRA vision regarding the adult education program. Although the pattern of enrollment did not satisfy the goal of "Americanization," the local WRA staff welcomed internees' participation in Japanese cultural activities, which defused frustration, bolstered morale and promoted peace in the camp while deterring internees from unfavorable activities such as gambling. D.A. Conlin reflected perceptions of many local WRA staff in each camp when he reported that adult education programs which had little to do with "Americanization" did make a significant contribution "to the morale and well being of the community."[155] This view was echoed in the exit interview of the head of the adult English educator at Poston. "Most important

---

[153] U.S. Department of Interior, War Relocation Authority, *Administrative Manuals*, 30:5, Community Activities, dated 15 June 1944 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office).

[154] D.A. Conlin, "Adult Education: Final Reports," Microfilm Reel 311, Japanese [American] Evacuation and Resettlement Study Records (JERS), BANC MSS 67/24c, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, hereafter cited as JERS.

[155] Ibid.

thing in camp is to Boost Moral. The Isseis are the most frustrated."[156] *Posuton Bungei*, which mostly involved Issei, was considered to play a positive role in easing tensions in the camp. Duncan Mills, Project Director, and C.W. Powell, Assistant Project Director at Poston praised and encouraged the project in the 1945 New Year edition of *Poston Bungei*:

> Activities like these tend to contribute, and to preserve, the qualities of serenity, of reflectiveness and sensitivity without which community life would be less rich. Such groups reflect credit not only upon their faithful members, but upon the community in which their art is practiced.[157]

From the perspective of camp administrators, Japanese language literary activities played an important role along with arts and crafts classes in building a harmonious environment.

Once the local WRA administrators understood the benefits of Japanese cultural activities and adult education programs other than those designed to promote "Americanization," the staff took a relatively relaxed attitude toward so called Japanese activities. Japanese games, sports and cultural activities were tolerated as long as these activities did not generate conflicts, either among internees or between internees and the camp administrators. Nevertheless, the basic strategy of the WRA did not change in its efforts to create orderly communities behind barbed wire. They still aggressively promoted Americanized Nisei community leaders who cooperated actively with the administration at the same time that they disfranchised Issei from community politics. The administration made manipulative appeals to community harmony in order to silence criticism of administrative policies. Administrators, while maintaining relatively relaxed

---

[156] Interview with "N," the head of Adult English who is leaving, 21 April 1943, Microfilm Reel 257, JERS.

[157] *Posuton Bungei* (January 1945) in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 10, 2.

attitude towards cultural activities, continued to closely monitor Issei and Kibei lest they tried to assert political power through community organizations.

Because they needed camp administrators' permission to publish their literary journals, literary associations were eager to avoid suspicions of themselves as "trouble-making" organizations. Most of the literary groups in the camps responded by practicing an editorial policy of self-censorship and avoided potentially controversial subjects. For example, *Tessaku's* editorial policy explicitly announced that the journal would not publish "political writings," "criticism of the US-Japan war," or writing "directly criticizing the WRA," regardless of the quality of the work.[158] Example of self-censorship at work is seen in how the editorial board of *Poston Bungei* dealt with Ichirō Satoda's short story, "Shiganhei" (Volunteer). Even though the editors awarded Satoda second place of 1945 New Year contest, they refrained from publishing the story.

> It is with sincere regret that we announce our decision to postpone the Satoda's story. At this particular moment in time we can not afford to publish material that might be misunderstood as political criticism. We ask for the understanding of the author and of our loyal readers. [159]

"Shiganhei" was never published in later volumes of *Posuton Bungei*.

In order to gain initial approval for publication, organizations were required to submit a complete translation of the first volume to the administration. The editors of *Dotō* carefully selected and edited the content, and submitted the translation to the administration. Comprehensive surveillance of the journals, however, was impossible due to the limited number of bilingual staff in the administration. In the case of *Dotō*,

---

158 *Tessaku*, vol 3 (July 1944), 23.

159 "Henshū kōki" (Afterwards) *Posuton Bungei* (February 1945), 88.

・・・時節柄その表現乃至字句に多少誤解を招く憂ひありと認め、編集会議の結果甚だ遺憾乍らその発表を暫時見合すことに一決した。この点作者並びに愛読者諸氏の御諒怒を乞ふ。

once the administration decided that the journal was harmless, it did not require the group to submit a translated copy of subsequent volumes, which allowed editors and writers more latitude in navigating guidelines in the later volumes.[160]

No matter how careful the editors were, however, Japanese-language publications never acquired complete freedom from surveillance. In his retrospective essay on *Tessaku*, Jyōji Nozawa, one of the central members of *Tessaku* circle, recalls FBI investigations of *Tessaku*'s editors. While they were editing the fifth volume, three editors, Kazuo Kawai, Masao Yamashiro and Nozawa, were summoned by FBI agents:

> It seems that my essay series "Short Wave" had caught their intention. Many people used hand made radios to intercept Japanese broadcasts and after reading my title – "Short Wave" – the FBI figured that I might be privy to some information that they could squeeze out of me. They subjected each of us to three rounds of increasingly strenuous questioning. They wanted to know who owned shortwave radios, and they seemed to think that we had information about the murder of the cooperative manager Hitomi. There was nothing I could do but "I don't know anything" to all of the questions they asked. The questioning was so stressful – I smoked three cigarettes that the FBI agents gave me – that I was completely exhausted when they released me. [161]

Surprise investigations were a powerful reminder of restrictions upon literary expression. In the camps, editors and writers self-censored what they conceived to be controversial topics, knowing the power of the administration to censor such writings or

---

[160] Shinoda Satae, "*Dotō*," 9.

[161] Jyōji Nozawa, "*Tessaku* no omoide" (Memory of *Tessaku*) in *Nanka bungei senshū* (Anthology of Southern California Literature), edited by Akira Fujita, (Tokyo: Renga Shobō, 1981), 201.

河合、山城、私の順序で管理部へ呼ばれたが、彼らの目的は私が書いた「短波放送局」にあったやうだ。その頃、館府内では手製のラヂオで日本の放送を聴取してゐる人が多かった。・・・FBI は短波放送局の見出しを見て、私をしぼったら何らかの手掛りが掴めるのではないかと考へたらしい。質問は前後三回に亘って繰り返され、執拗を極めたが、ショートウエーブの所有者、人見殺害事件の手掛り等を掴もうとしてゐることが判った。私は何を聞かれても「知らない」と答へるより他なかった。質問中私は三本も FBI の煙草を喫ひ、極度の精神緊張からクタクタになって放免されたが・・・。

even ban the journal. When it came to the actual administrative surveillance, however, the WRA was only able to check the writings selectively.

## Claiming Ethnic Identity:
## Literature as a Ground of Resistance and Discussion

In this laxly controlled environment, Japanese American writers moved to reclaim Japanese cultural practices which had been stigmatized since the day of the Pearl Harbor attack due to the politicization of everything Japanese. Writers particularly embraced Japanese cultural artifacts and practices as irreducible elements of ethnic heritage which bound all Japanese Americans together. While writers embraced Japanese cultural identity, they simultaneously criticized the ways in which Japanese identities were used in camp politics. Japanese language Japanese American literature in the camps not only revealed how Japanese Americans claimed their ethnic and cultural identity against the pressures of Americanization, but it also exposed the contested nature of Japanese identity among Japanese Americans in the camps.

Japanese cultural practices that flourished throughout the camps did not remain unnoticed by the Caucasian social scientists who worked for the WRA and by Nisei whose cultural orientation was more American. In documenting the role of Japanese culture in camp life, some observers minimized its significance. Marvin K. Opler, Community Analyst at Tule Lake from 1943 to 1946, took particular interests in folkloric cultures of Tule Lake internees, and published three scholarly journal articles on sumō tournament, senryū poetry, and folk beliefs and practices based on the field research conducted at Tule Lake by his assistants and himself.[162] Rather than identifying these

[162] Marvin Opler, "A 'Sumo' Tournament at Tule Lake Center" in *American Anthropologist* 47 (1945), 134-139; Marvin Opler and F. Obayashi, "Senryu Poetry as Folk and Community Expression" *Journal of American Folklore* 58:227 (January-March 1945), 1-11,

cultural practices as Japanese American, Opler understood them as temporal "cultural revivalism" exclusively among Issei under the uncertain circumstances in Tule Lake.[163] Opler asserted that these practices mainly provided escape and refuge from the dull realities of the life in the camp, and sometimes functioned as a means through which Issei satirically reflected on the conditions in which they were placed. But Opler only saw these cultural activities as temporal due to the unique conditions in the camp. As "a part of total nativistic reaction," he asserted, camp culture lost its significance quickly after the end of the war.[164] Opler dismissed any significance of camp culture beyond its barbed wire perimeter.

Although Opler identified Japanese cultural practices as Issei phenomena, other observers noted the broad influence of Japanese cultures on Nisei in the camps. In her autobiography, *Nisei Daughter* (1953), Monica Sone writes about "the *geta* craze" in the camps which even engulfed Nisei who tended to incline more toward American material culture. Unpaved streets in the camps created a problem of mud, and Sone and her sister desperately tried to purchase galoshes through mail order. When that did not work, they pleaded for galoshes with their friends outside the camp. But it was *geta* not galoshes which eventually solved the problem of mud.

> When I first saw an old bachelor wearing a homemade pair [of *geta*], his brown horny feet exposed to the world, I was shocked with his daring. But soon I begged Father to ask one of his friends who knew a man who knew a carpenter to make a pair for me. My gay red *getas* were wonderful. They served as shower clogs, and their three-inch lifts kept me out of the mud. They also solved my nylon problem, for I couldn't wear stockings with them.[165]

---

hereafter cited as "Senryu Poetry"; and Marvin Opler, "Japanese Folk Beliefs and Practices, Tule Lake, California" in *Journal of American Folklore* 63:250 (October-December 1950), 385-397, hereafter cited as "Japanese Folk Beliefs and Practices."

[163] Opler and Obayashi, "Senryu Poetry," 4.

[164] Opler, "Japanese Folk Beliefs and Practices," 385.

[165] Monica Sone, *Nisei Daughter*, 181.

Although Sone explains that her adoption of *geta* was derived from utilitarian needs, it is not difficult to identify cultural appreciation by Nisei in "the *geta* craze."

The intergenerational phenomenon of Japanese material culture alarmed the camp administration, which had assumed that the camps provided "a rare opportunity for an educational program to help these people understand America."[166] As early as September 1942, the WRA staff began to identify an opposing trend in the camps, "Japanization," to borrow anthropologist John F. Embree's word. Embree, who had done extensive fieldwork in Japan and Hawai'i before the war, worked for the WRA to document the program, and his reports were often used as handbooks on Japanese culture for the WRA staff.[167] In his report, "Notes on the Poston Project," dated September 9, 1942, Embree wrote:

> An obvious trend in both Gila and Poston is the Japanization of American evacuees as a result of living in a concentration center made up exclusively of Japanese. The former association with whites are gone, identification with America is blighted, and the large number of older Japanese form a constant pressure to identify themselves socially as well as racially with the Japanese. Many young people who never did this before are now proud to do so by present circumstances.[168]

---

[166] D.A. Conlin, "Adult Education – Final Reports," Reel 311, JERS.

[167] Embree's 9-page report, "Notes on the Poston Project" was circulated widely among the WRA staff with the preface Dillon Miyer, director of the WRA:

> The successful administration of the WRA program, … will be dependant to a great extent upon an understanding of the cultural background of the Japanese people and their American children and grandchildren. John F. Embree, who recently has assumed responsibility for documentation of the WRA program, in the office of Reports, has conducted studies in both Japan and Hawaii, and is recognized by his colleagues as being well qualified to report on Japanese race and culture. The accompanying notes on Dealing with Japanese Americans are commended to the attention of all WRA staff members.
>
> See John F. Embree, "Notes on the Poston Project," September 9, 1942, Reel 187, JERS.

[168] Ibid.

Contrary to the optimism of the WRA to promote "Americanization" in the camps, Embree asserted that prewar conditions in the camps were stifling the trend towards Americanization that existed before the war. He further noted that the trend of Japanization had even begun to engulf the younger generation, which was unthinkable before the war. Edward H. Spicer, a social scientist and Community Analyst at Poston camp, noted a similar trend in his speech addressed to the school teachers in Poston: "[the] evacuation program has suspended assimilation which heretofore was going forward" since "Poston is providing for cultural isolation," and "the racial differences are permitted to persist," since minimizing such differences through intermarriage was no longer an option.[169] Both Embree and Spicer were alarmed at the degree of Japanization occurring in one of the most controlled "communities" behind barbed wire.

The WRA staff treated pervasive phenomena of Japanese cultural practices in the camps as aberrational, if not as pathological products of the camp environment. What they failed to perceive was how Japanese American themselves, particularly Issei and Kibei, understood their activities. Many writers in the camps believed that literature had healing power, and literature could assist their efforts to "preserve" their culture against all odds, including the trauma of forced removal, the desolate conditions of the camps, and the Americanization efforts imposed upon them. In his preface to the first volume of *Tessaku*, Bunichi Kagawa, a renowned Issei poet, explained the reasons why *Tessaku* members decided to publish a literary journal despite all the difficulties they had to surmount: "Despite the fact that we are currently deprived of our freedom and are forced to live in internment camps," he wrote "we have not lost ourselves. We have not lost our culture. This [publishing literature] is one of the ways we can demonstrate that we can

---

[169] E. H. Spicer, "Problems of Racial Minorities in a Democracy," Reel 241, Japanese American evacuation and resettlement records, BANC MSS 67/24c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

survive this trial with ourselves intact."[170] Echoing the *Shūkaku* writers' assertion before the war, Kagawa emphasized the value of their literature as an expression of distinct Japanese American culture. Kagawa also encouraged other writers to continue writing and publishing as a demonstration of their cultural survival.

In the desolate environment of the camps, writers found inspiration in something that they would have normally overlooked. Monica Sone humorously documented how her mother, Benko Itoi, found inspiration in dandelion flowers. When the family arrived at Puyallup "Assembly Center," Itoi noticed the beauty of yellow flower in the barrack the family was assigned, while other family members were shocked with the deprived condition of their living quarter. Their "home" for five family members was a mere "18 by 20 feet, the size of a living room" with one small window. The "floor" was made up of two by fours laid out directly on the ground, and dandelions had found their way out through the cracks of the flooring. Pleased with the "shaggy yellow heads," Itoi declared to the family members, "Don't anyone pick them. I'm going to cultivate them." Managing to find inspiration, Itoi continued to write poetry: she frequently contributed her *tanka*, classic Japanese style poetry, and critiques of other in *Kōgen*, a tanka journal published in Tule Lake camp under the leadership of Hisahito Azuma and Yoshihiko Tamari.[171]

---

[170] Kagawa Bunichi, "Sōkan no ji" (Preface to the first volume) *Tessaku* vol 1 (March 1944), 1.

その主なるものとして私たちは現在自由を奪われた収容所生活をしてゐるとは云へ、自分たちの文化―すなはち自分を決して失ってゐるものでないといふことを実際に於て示すに適した試練をうけてゐる点を挙げることが出来る。

[171] There is only limited information about *Kōgen*, a tanka journal, published in Tule Lake. Contribution to *Kōgen* came from various camps, including Heart Mountain, Minidoka, Poston, as well as Tule Lake camps. Publication dates of earlier volumes were not known, but the eighth volume was published in March 1945, followed by the ninth volume in May 1945. Several volumes of *Kōgen* were collected in Microfilm Reel 364, JERS.

Benko Itoi was not the only poet who drew inspiration from dandelions. Shizu Kirita, Issei writer and wife of renowned Issei poet Bunichi Kagawa, published an essay, "Tanpopo no Hachiue" (Potted dandelion) in the seventh volume of *Tessaku* on February 1945.[172] Her husband Bunichi Kagawa brought back a dandelion which alone had blossomed in front of the camp latrine. The couple planted the dandelion in a gallon can, and nurtured the plant. Of the dandelion, Kirita wrote:

> Although the life in the camp is desolate, it made me realize the happiness to pour my love onto the dandelion. Under the normal circumstances, I would not even notice the dandelion by the roadside when I stepped on it. It is a kind of joy that only human being could enjoy, and it is a gift from the life in the camp.[173]

Kirita's friend, a poet who visited their barrack, wrote a poem about the potted dandelion. Discussing her fond memories of various gardens created by internees in Manzannar camp where Kirita was interned earlier, she emphasized the importance of finding beauty in the desolate life of the camp.

Various writers praised the resilience and creativity of Japanese American artists in the desolate environments of the camps. Writing in the June 1943 issue of *Posuton Bungei*, Keizan Yagata, a poet and editor of *Posuton Bungei* praised the artistry of Kakunen Tsuruoka's painting: "The other day Mr. Tsuruoka from camp three told me that he found inspiration in all of the familiar things surrounding him. I was touched by his masterpiece that he had created out of this desolate desert.[174] Overcoming the initial shock of life in a remote and barren setting, Tsuruoka did not give up his artistic impulses.

---

[172] Kirita Shizu, "Tanpopo no Hachiue" (Potted dandelion) *Tessaku* vol 7 (February 1945), 10-13.

[173] Ibid, 13.

[174] *Posuton Bungei* (June 1943), 1.

去る頃第三キャンプの鶴岡画伯が絵画の題材となるものは身近に充ち満て居ると云はれて荒涼たる砂漠からの傑作を示されたのに胸を打たれた。

For Yagata, the poet, Tsuruoka's work served as a powerful inspiration and reminder that the creative impulse can overcome even the most difficult circumstances.

While Tsuruoka was an established painter, writers also drew inspiration from the amateur arts and crafts of fellow internees. Arita Hagumu, the writer, was inspired by his wife's dedication to her flower arrangement class. Regardless of the severity of the weather, she explored the fields and hills, looking for plants and flowers for her art. In an article published in the December 1944 issue of *Posuton Bungei*, he recorded his feelings upon attending a flower arrangement exhibition: "You can see the personality of the artist even in the artwork of beginners, the effort of the artist is evident. I was struck by the elegance of [her] work." Praising the exhibition, Arita wrote: "Even in the dessert flowers blossom."[175] Flower arrangement, a traditional Japanese art, was typically practiced by women, and before the war it was often taught by Japanese American instructors who had studied in Japan. But as practiced in the camp, flower arrangement reflected distinct experiences of Japanese Americans rather than traditional Japanese art. In Arita's phrase, "Flowers blossoms even in the dessert" conveys the celebration of Japanese American artistic expression in the harsh environment the camps had forced upon them.

Contributors to Japanese-language literary journals praised even artisan crafts like woodcarving as evidence of the resistance of Japanese cultural traits. Writing in the second volume of *Dotō*, which was not dated but was probably published between August and September 1944, Seimei Fujioka documented the inspiration he received by looking at wood craft exhibition, and he explicitly celebrated the Japanese essence in its

---

[175] Arita Hagumu, "Ikebanaten" (Flower arrangement exhibition) *Posuton Bungei* (December 1944), 54.

初歩の方のだと思はるる作品にしても、作者の個性がその上に表現され、其の苦心の跡が、歴然と窺はれて、実に何んとも言へない奥床しい感に打たれたのであった。

沙漠にも花が咲く。

art form. In his essay, "Tawagoto" (Rubbish Talk), Fujioka wrote about a type of woodworking that many Japanese Americans, talented or not, engaged. In the fields, they searched for pieces of what was called "iron wood." Ornaments could be produced by rubbing and polishing the pieces of wood. When Fujioka observed rare "artistic" pieces of "iron wood" craft displayed at exhibitions, he reported, he felt an "ethno-nationalistic" pride of being "Japanese": "The unexpected beauty of the artwork at the exhibition was striking. I swelled with national pride when I realized that this empty desert could not stop Japanese people from producing beauty."[176] For Fujioka, products of camp culture symbolized the resilience of Japanese American creativity even under desolate conditions. His appreciation of the resilience of spirit and ingenuity of his fellow internees strengthened his ethno-national pride as a Japanese American.

The Japanese-style outdoor theater, constructed by Japanese American internees in Poston was also a source of ethno-national pride. Shibai, Japanese style theater, was very popular in Poston where a theater group both built their own outdoor theater and frequently performed for residents. The enthusiasm and popularity of Shibai appears closely related to the pride camp internees took in staging performances of a distinctly Japanese form of theaters. As Matsubara Nobuo asserted in his short story, "Shizukana Seikatsu" (Quiet Life), published in December 1944 issue of *Posuton Bungei*,

> Kicked out of California, forced to live in this blazing hot desert, we were suffering in so many ways. A theatre group was formed in the hopes of cheering us up as we battled the heat and the dust, as well as malnutrition. The people in the theatre group then became instrumental in building our own theatre. It might not have been much to look at, but it was our very own. This was not

---

[176] Fujita Seimiei, "Tawagoto" (Rubbish talk) *Dotō* Vol 2 (publication date unknown), 27.

嘗ての展覧会の折には思ひがけない立派な作品に接して、索漠たる砂漠の中の生活にあっても精進して止まない気概が感じられて、日本人でなくてはと民族的意識を強うした次第であるます。

> some government-administered project, it was built by us, through our initiative and cooperation. That is why it is so valuable.[177]

The fact that the theater was built by the internees themselves, promoted by their own initiative, made it a special symbol showing Japanese Americans reclaiming their culture. Most strikingly, the theater was built in the traditional Japanese style, with a "hanamichi," an elevated passageway, running from the stage to the dressing room. Using the word, "Dōhō" (Japanese word for people or countrymen) to refer to fellow Japanese Americans, Matsubara reflects ethnic pride of Japanese America in the construction of this theater building.

Writers also found proof of the survival of a vibrant ethnic culture in mundane artifacts that were part and parcel of daily camp life. In his essay, "Kyanpu zakkan" (Camp Impressions), Masao Yamashiro, a Kibei member of *Tessaku*, writes about his impressions of the various nameplates he discovered in front of each barrack: "Some are written in Chinese ink, some curve their names in relief, some are very colorful, and some are written in English…"[178] For Yamashiro, nameplates were only one means through which Japanese American internees showed their artistic expressions; they also engaged in wood-carving, ornament-making, and/or jewelry-making in the camps.[179]

---

[177] Matsubara Nobuo, "Shizukana Seikatsu" (Quiet life) in *Posuton Bungei* (December 1944), 83-84.

加州を追はれ、この炎熱沙漠の中で悶々の情やる方なく、土埃と酷熱と栄養不良とに苦しめられてゐた同胞を慰めやうとして結成された劇団、そしてその人々を中心として建てられた劇場だ。仮令外観は貧しく共政府が建ててくれたものではなく、我々同胞が自発的に協力して造り上げたものであるだけに貴いものだ。

[178] Yamashiro Masao, "Kyanpu zakkan" (Camp impressions) *Tessaku* vol 1 (March 1944), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 5, 2, hereafter cited as "Kyanpu zakkan."

・・・標札が墨で書かれたり、浮彫にされたり、色彩で流されたり、横に走ったり・・・

[179] Ibid, 3. Yamashiro wrote that while some created elaborate nameplates, others "picked up the scrap wood, and curved the name of girlfriend; the scrap wood was sometimes transformed into a tiny *geta* (Japanese wooden clogs) necklace, which was worn by the creator's lover; some cut the pit of the peach seed, and created a ring."

Within these cultural artifacts Yamashiro traces the emergence and evolution of a distinctly Japanese American camp culture. Of the nameplate, he writes:

> We made a conscious effort to consider the housing that was provided to us "our home." With that consciousness, people probably began to make nameplates at first for the visitors and mail…
>
> We were bored, we had lots of time on our hands, and [arts and crafts] were interesting. I think that is how the camp culture first came to life.[180]

Creating a name plate for the family's quarters served a purely utilitarian purpose and might have started as an act of killing time amidst the boredom of camp life. But collectively, the decorative name plates described by Yamashiro also signified the transformation of a barrack, assigned by the government, into *their* home. The name plates themselves incorporated a commitment to bi-culturalism in the face of pressures from the WRA administration to enforce uniform Americanization: the rich variety of styles included Japanese calligraphy, English lettering, elaborately ornamented, and colorful. Name plates were signs of a distinctively Japanese American community representing the fusion of Japanese and American cultures.

While Monica Sone explained "the *geta* craze" from the utilitarian perspective, in an essay titled "*Geta*" (Japanese wooden clogs), writer Bunichi Kagawa provides deeper insight into how *geta* contributed to the reconstruction of Japanese American life in the

---

板の節を拾って来ては、好きな女性の名前を彫ったり、小さな下駄となって恋人の胸にぶら下ったり、桃の種を載っては指輪を創り出したのであらう。

[180] Ibid, 3.

興へられた家を「我が家」と意識し、意識されて、最初は訪問客と郵便物の為に、標札も姿を見せたのであらう。・・・

退屈だったし、時間もあったし、面白かったし、かうしてキャンプの文化は最初の萌芽を生じたのかも知れぬ。

camp. Right after the forced removal and incarceration, Kagawa writes, people were at a loss:

> Honestly, we had just lost our homes, our savings were gone, many of us were separated from our families, and we had no idea where our friends were. With the chaos of the war breaking out we were thrown into such a state of confusion and anxiety that we had no idea about what we should do.[181]

"Geta," Kagawa pondered, "seemed to help us to recover from this mental state."[182] Kagawa depicted the transformation of *geta*'s role in camp life. At first, people made *geta* out of scraps of wood simply as a way of coping with muddy, unpaved streets in the camp. As time progressed, *geta* becomes more elaborate, reflecting people's ability to acquire special wood suited for *geta*-making, and their willingness to devote time to decorating *geta*. In a mildly ironic vein, Kagawa commented that *geta* had even acquired the status of an art form, appearing in an arts and crafts exhibition in the camp. Similar to Yamashiro's conceptualization of nameplates, Kagawa placed *geta* in the larger context of cultural activities within the camp, making camp existence at least bearable. Kagawa suggested: "Our life achieved that status because we re-discovered our true self. Despite our circumstances as enemy aliens, we strived to rebuild our lives."[183] As we saw earlier in Sone's narrative, once *geta* became popular, the cultural

---

[181] Kagawa Bunichi, "Geta" (Japanese wooden clog) *Tessaku* vol 8 (April 1945), 26, hereafter cited as "Geta."

実際、家もなくなり、財産も根こそぎ失って、或るものは親兄弟とも別れて仕舞ひ、親しくしてゐた友人、知人もどこへやられたのやら、一戦争がまき起した混乱にまぎれて襲ひよる暗い不安と動揺に私たちは戸惑うばかりで、自分で自分が何をしてゐるのかさへ分らない有様だった。

[182] Ibid, 27.

その茫然自失の世界から自分をどうやら取戻すことが出来たのは下駄のお蔭であったやうな気がする。

[183] Ibid, 28.

phenomena called "*geta* craze" influenced Nisei as well. In making mundane artifacts the subjects of literary discourse in the camp literature, writers such as Yamashiro and Kagawa celebrated how Japanese Americans were able to reconstruct their lives through maintaining and creating their distinct culture.

In contrast to the utilitarian explanation that Sone provided, and contrary to the WRA's concern for "Japanization" of Nisei, Japanese American writers welcomed cultural phenomena such as "the *geta* craze" as a mark of the emergence of a healthy Japanese American culture in the camp. Suggestively, most visible symbols of this emerging camp culture were Japanese: Poston's theater building, art of flower arrangement, and geta. Yamashiro asserts that cultures created in "temporary" living conditions were also part of "ethnic culture." Using an analogy of an illegitimate child, Yamashiro suggests: "If a child conceived while you were 'fooling around' is still your child, then the culture born out of 'temporary living' is still 'ethnic culture.'"[184] For Kagawa, the essence of self necessary for the reconstruction of a viable culture under conditions of internment is "Japanese." After Kagawa immigrated to the US, he had ceased wearing *geta*. The first pair of *geta* that he wore in the US was in the camp, and it reminded him of his childhood in Japan. Similarly, many participants of arts and crafts classes were introduced to traditional Japanese arts for the first time in the camps since for many lives as immigrants did not often allow time for what was considered leisure activities. Kagawa writes: "…I experienced a funny feeling that I became Japanese again for the first time after I started wearing *geta*…"[185] After the traumatic experience

---

だが生活がそこに達するやうになるまでには、私たちが自分自分の本然の姿を再び見出して、そこに戦時敵国外人の境遇は境遇として、自分たちの生活再建に身をくぐらせたからである。

[184] Yamashiro, "Kyanpu zakkan," 6.

戯れで出来た子が、やはり自分の子である如く、かりそめの生活の産んだ文化は、やはり民族の文化だ。

[185] Kagawa, "Geta," 26.

of feeling compelled to ward off suspicion by purging their homes of Japanese artifacts right after Pearl Harbor, and in the face of continuing pressure of Americanization in the camps, Kagawa's affirmation of *geta* constituted a powerful reclaiming of Japanese American culture and identity that included Japanese material culture.

While writers embraced a Japanese essence in the camp culture, this essence was neither a nostalgic gesture toward Japan nor a political statement of identity politics. Many writers attempted to remain independent from the escalating political turmoil, and expressed criticism of politics among the internees in their stories. In his short story, "Chishikijin no sekinin," (Responsibility of the Intellectual), Sadao Maruyama criticizes the isolating and divisive effects of "politics" in the camp through the struggles of Mr. Machida, an Issei man. Mr. Machida's experiences with the camp politics as a block leader is bitter, as people continue to bring sources of troubles and conflicts. Maruyama was sympathetic towards those who initially became involved with camp politics out of a sense of responsibility to the people. He suggested that such political leadership did not usually last long due to the lack of prolonged support from the masses:

> In the camp, it is the end of your luck when the people count on you even once… …It doesn't matter if you asked to be left alone, you wouldn't be left alone… and then one false step on your part and they would throw you to the dogs. In the camps everything is acted out in extremes. One day you are a hero and the next day – when you are no longer of any use – you get stomped on.[186]

---

・・・私は下駄をはくやうになつてから初めて日本人になつたやうな妙な気分を味はつた。

[186] Maruyama Sadao, "Chishikijin no sekinin," (Responsibility of the intellectual) *Tessaku* vol 1 (March 1944), 53-54.

全く、キャンプでは一度大衆に「見込まれる」と、善くても悪くても、それが運のつきだと言ってよかった。（自分の生活に還りたいと思っても、周囲がさうしてくれなかった。よければよいでみんなわんさわんさで押しかけて来て主人公を神経衰弱にしてしまひ、反対に期待に背いたり、過って踏み外しでもしようものなら、今度は骨までしゃぶりつくしてしまはねば気がすまぬのが、）総てに極端なキャンプの行き方だった。今日英雄に押し立てられてゐても、有用性が無くなると明日は何処に蹴落されるのかわからなかった。

People, like Mr. Machida who became involved with camp politics, usually became disillusioned, as they were torn between conflicting demands. Ultimately, camp politicians felt caught in the middle, misunderstood and criticized by both sides. As a result, "escapism" and "indifference" became prevalent attitudes. Manabu Chiyoda, another writer in *Tessaku*, observed that people were reluctant to participate in any kind of "political" meetings as they attempted to avoid trouble.[187]

Kagawa shared the critical view of camp politics and emphasized the ethnic solidarity that *geta* created among Japanese Americans as an alternative vision of the community operation:

> …the fact that everybody was wearing *geta* reminded us that we were all forced together in this place because we were Japanese, and that because we were together in these difficult conditions we needed to stand by one another. Just seeing someone in *geta* would make you feel kindly towards them.[188]

For Kagawa, "geta," as a Japanese cultural artifact, served as a powerful symbol of unity derived from the shared hardship of wartime. This unity, Kagawa warns, is weakening after so much turmoil in the camps over troubles regarding cooperative and mess halls, the registration process of the loyalty questionnaires, the issue of the draft and the re-segregation movement pursued by the pro-Japan group, among others. Kagawa misses the earlier atmosphere of harmony among Japanese Americans symbolized by *geta*. Criticizing the divisions created through political turmoil, Kagawa calls for

---

[187] Chiyoda Manabu, "Shinya shichō" (Muttering to myself at night) Tessaku vol 4 (August 1944), 38.

[188] Kagawa, "Geta," 27.

私たちが今は同じ境遇のもとにひとつ処にあつめられてゐる日本人であり、これから先き皆が慰め合ひ力づけ合つて生きなければならないのだと、身に迫って特々と感じたのも、それは誰も彼もが下駄をはいてゐるといふ心易さから自ずと湧き出して来た感情であった。

Japanese American solidarity, using *geta* as a symbol. "Everybody enjoyed *geta*. It did not matter whether you were old or young, whether you were Issei or Nisei."[189]

In the second volume of *Tessaku*, Fujio Tanizaki published a short story, "Chichi mo hipparareta" (My Father Was Also Taken Away), which vividly depicts experiences of a Japanese American family whose father was arrested by the FBI right after the beginning of the war. Japanese language literature produced in the camp often took as its theme the experiences of random arrest, forced relocation and incarceration. Tanizaki's story documents the experiences of one family and by sharing one particular story with other Japanese Americans, he began the work of constructing collective memory of the internment experience and practices that preserved bi-culturalism while under profound pressure not to do so.

Tanizaki follows the travails of Japanese Americans after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor through the story of Kenji, the high school age son of the family. Both at work and in school, Kenji is hyper conscious of his "Japanese" face, and feels threatened once he is outside Japan town. In Japan town, everywhere he sees preparations for forced evacuation and incarceration: more and more businesses are closed with each passing day, and public notices are posted everywhere informing residents of the process and schedule of evacuation. In front of one handbill, several old men loiter, discussing the red line on the map which demarcates yet another zone of evacuation.

> "Around here, we don't have to move yet. When are we gonna go?" A man sighed.
> "We will go wherever we end up going." The man standing next him bitterly retorted.
> "No need to hurry. Whenever we go is not gonna be a nice place. The longer we can stay here, the better." Another man said

---

[189] Kagawa, "Geta," 29.

下駄の味はひには老人も子供もなく一世もまた二世もなかったのではなからうか。

> humorously as he put an unlit pipe in his mouth. Everybody laughed.[190]

Fujioka's story captures the tumult and uncertainty of the Japanese American community right after the evacuation order was announced.

Back at home, Kenji sees new signs of upheaval: almost all the furniture had been sold or given away. A few things were left at the corners of the house, and the tools that the father had been using to make crates were scattered on the front porch. When Kenji stepped in the house, he heard his mother talking on the phone on the second floor in Japanese. From the tone of the mother's voice, Kenji intuitively knew the father had been taken away. Although the family had prepared for this for a while, Kenji suddenly froze and then started crying.

It took a week and the help from a Caucasian friend for the family to finally find out that their father was incarcerated in a Civilian Conservation Corps Camp (C.C.C. camp) some thirty miles away. A friend in the neighborhood drove Kenji and his mother and sister to the camp to see their father. The camp was located in the valley of a mountain, and was surrounded by barbed wire. Outside the barbed wire, detainees' families and friends formed a long line. Visitors stood outside the barbed wire and were allowed only two minutes to converse. Kenji felt overwhelmed by the tragic scene of people, who having finished the visitation, headed back, holding back tears.

Their name was called rather quickly, and Kenji followed his mother and sister toward the barbed wire fence. Somebody inside the fence was calling out the father's

---

190 Tanizaki Fujio, "Chichi mo hipparareta" (My father was also taken away), *Tessaku* vol 2 (May 1944), 49.

「此の辺は未だだ、何時になるかなあー」と呟いた。

「行く所へ行く」隣の男が吐き捨てる様に答へた。もう一人のひょろ高い男は、「何も急いで行かんでも、どうせろくな所ではないから、一日でも永く娑婆に居ったほうがええ。ハハハアー。」と笑って火の付いていないパイプを銜へた。皆笑った。

name, and soon the family was reunited over the fence. As the mother started to talk to the father quickly in Japanese, the guard yelled at her: "Speak in English!!" The father answered the guard, "All right." The mother continued to speak in Japanese as she looked at the memo she had prepared, while she inserted English words such as "and" and "but" so that the guard would think they were speaking English. The two minutes flew away like a second, and the sister quickly told the father that they brought him clothes and gifts, which would be delivered to him after being inspected. Kenji wanted to say something, but he did not know what to say. The father looked at Kenji and quickly said, "Study hard." As the family headed back to the car, they turned to look back at the camp. They spied a figure that resembled their father staring at them as he waved his cap. Not sure whether it was the father or not, all three of them waved back to him.

Powerfully symbolized in Tanizaki's story is the resilience of bi-culturalism among Japanese Americans at the very time they experienced the harshest pressures to erase any affiliation with Japan. Despite the guard's order, the mother kept speaking Japanese to her husband by loudly interjecting common English words. Here we find a poetic evocation of the centrality of ethnic culture in Japanese American strategies of resistance as historians of Japanese American resistance have argued. Japanese language literature in the camps testifies to the historical continuation of Japanese American struggles to retain their distinct identity from prewar to wartime. These efforts were further intensified against the administration's pressure of Americanization.

Although resistance historians have only identified the effort to reclaim male Issei authority through culture and religion, closer examination of Japanese language sources reveal contestation to that authority as well. Symbolically, in Tanizaki's story, it was the mother who engaged in bicultural actions as her husband was taken away from the family. While Japanese language literature functioned as an important medium to retain and strengthen the cultural heritage of Japan under the enormous pressure of Americanization, it also provided a space where members of the community were able to

engage in critical discussions regarding identity and politics, including challenging the traditional male, patriarchal, heterosexual, and ethnically Japanese authority within the community.

# CHAPTER III

## CONTESTED POLITICS OF LOYALTY: JAPANESE LANGUAGE LITERATURE IN AMERICA'S CONCENTRATION CAMPS

> In my high school scrapbook, many of my Kibei Nisei friends preferred their signature with phrases like "while in a foreign country," or "visiting a foreign country," despite the fact that we were born in the US. At that time the war had not yet fractured our lives. These gesture, I think, expose our true, uncovered feelings before the issue of loyalty/disloyalty became the inescapable issue for us.
>
> Masao Yamashiro, *Tōi Taigan*

So wrote Masao Yamashiro in 1972 in the column of *Rafu Shimpō*. [191] Suggesting the lack of sharp generational distinction between Kibei and Issei, Yamashiro further comments on the wartime impact on Japanese American generational identity. As a Kibei, Yamashiro felt much closer to Issei due to the similarity in cultural experiences, than to so called "Jun Nisei" (pure Nisei) who were born and raised in the US:

> Reading this now, I find it very interesting that the problem of "loyalty" and "disloyalty" did not even enter our consciousness. We were demurely obedient to the law… It was only after the experiences of wartime incarceration that tribal consciousness as Kibei Nisei began to emerge, which awoke the horizontal tie among Kibei Nisei. Before the war, we were isolated from each other: As weak "individual" who did not possess enough strength

---

[191] Masao Yamashiro, *Tōi Taigan*, 228.

あの頃の私の持っているハイスクールのアルバムの中のよせ書きを見ると、アメリカで生まれているのに、多くの帰米二世が「異国にて」とか、「外国に来て見て」とか書いてある。まだ戦争は私たちの人生の真只中を通過しなかったし、忠誠・不忠誠の問題以前の偽らざる気持ちがはっきり表現されていて、今読んでみても興味深い。

> to resist the tide of the era. Nor were we united by resentment toward the discrimination that our citizenship right was completely ignored.[192]

Yamashiro suggests that the wartime experience created a stark division of generational identities within Japanese American communities which were less pronounced before the war. As above quotes eloquently express, even before Pearl Harbor and Japan's declaration of war on the United States, the issue of national loyalty was never simple for many Japanese Americans, particularly for Issei and Kibei. The subsequent internment of persons of Japanese ancestry based solely on a presumption of disloyalty to the US greatly complicated the understating of their own political identity. The decision of the WRA in February 1943 to administer loyalty questionnaires to all internees seventeen years and older forced Japanese Americans to declare national allegiances in the starkest terms. In particular, the questionnaires forced a new set of questions on second generation Japanese American men of draft age. The gendered language of the questionnaires further complicated the loyalty issue by making willingness to serve in the US Army the litmus test of political allegiance.

The loyalty questionnaires were the product of the War Department and the WRA each having their own purposes. Following the announcement of Secretary of War Henry Stimson on January 28, 1943, to form a segregated all-Nisei combat units, the War Department proposed administering questionnaires entitled "Statement of United States Citizens of Japanese Ancestry" to draft-age Nisei men (seventeen year old and older) as a preliminary screening process prior to voluntary enlistment. At the heart of the lengthy

---

[192] Ibid, 223-224.

忠誠・不忠誠の問題意識でなかった。私たちは法律に従順だった。・・・帰米二世の横のつながりとして強い種族意識が出来たのは、収容所に入れられたからであり、それ以前は、ばらばらの弱い「個人」だったし、個人には時代の流れを押し返すだけの力はなかった。立ち退きで市民の存在を無視されたリゼントメント（怒り）もなかった。

loyalty questionnaires were two questions framed to require yes or no answers. Question number twenty-seven equated loyalty with willingness to perform the exclusively male soldiery duty: "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?" Question number twenty-eight inquired:

> Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance to the Japanese Emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?

Affirmative answers to these two questions would enable Nisei men who had been categorized 4-C, the category used for "enemy aliens," to volunteer for the Army.[193]

In the fall of 1942, Dillon Myer, the National Director of the WRA, decided to speed up the relocation of "loyal" Japanese Americans from the camps to unrestricted areas of the country where their labor was needed. Full scale relocation necessitated classifying all internees' loyalty status. When the War Department proposed to conduct voluntary registration of draft-age Nisei men, the WRA jumped at the opportunity and adapted the War Department's questionnaire to its own purposes by administering the loyalty questionnaires to all internees over the age of seventeen irrespective of their gender and citizenship status. The WRA modified the War Department questionnaires for Nisei women and Issei of both sexes. The questionnaires were titled "War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance," and question number twenty-seven was amended to read "[if] the opportunity presents itself and you are found qualified, would you be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the WAAC?"[194]

---

[193] Dorothy Thomas and Richard Nishimoto, *The Spoilage* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1946), 56-57, hereafter cited as *The Spoilage*; Roger Daniels, *Concentration Camps USA: Japanese Americans and World War II* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972), 112-13, hereafter cited as *Concentration Camps USA*.

[194] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 57-58.

The project director of each of the WRA camps and the captain of the Army recruitment team became responsible for the actual execution of the loyalty questionnaires. While the War Department officials anticipated resentment toward the recruitment of Nisei men, the WRA administered the questionnaires without careful planning, clear instructions, or explanation of the legal consequences. The title of the questionnaires, "Application for Leave Clearance" was misleading and aroused fear among those who preferred to stay in the camps rather than face hostility on the outside without personal and community resources. Little explanation was given for the absurdity of asking Issei men and elderly women to declare their willingness to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the WAAC.

Neither were the legal consequences to one's citizenship status addressed. For Issei who were barred from US citizenship, forswearing "any form of allegiance to the Japanese Emperor" entailed huge risks: answering yes appeared to render them stateless in a hostile America, while answering no would brand them as disloyals and make them subject to deportation. A few days after the loyalty registration had started, the WRA prepared substitute question number twenty-eight for Issei: "Will you swear to abide by the laws of the United States and take no action which would in any way interfere with the war effort of the United States?" The distribution of the substitute questions, however, was late and partial. Family members sometimes decided to answer the same way to keep the family from being separated or simply to maintain a united front. Thus, one finds young Nisei who had never set foot in Japan answering no in accordance with their parents' wishes. Some internees who felt no loyalty to Japan answered no on principle, in protest against the racial injustice of forced removal from their homes and incarceration. For Nisei men of draft age answering no was also a way to avoid military service, whether acting in principled opposition to the injustice of internment or to avoid risking their lives.

The loyalty questionnaires forced Japanese Americans to choose between the US and Japan without regard to the complexities of their individual situations. Whatever the motives and circumstance of individual respondents, however, once they recorded their answers, the binary labels of "disloyal" and "loyal" over-determined issues of identity. The form of the questionnaire elided all the complexities and contradictory feelings surrounding Japanese Americans' wartime loyalty. Everyone who answered no to either question twenty-seven or question twenty-eight, or qualified their yes answers in any way, were sent to the Tule Lake segregation center for "disloyals." Those who answered no to both questions were called "no-no boy." The term soon entered the list of common vocabulary among the internees, which was sometimes used in a scornful manner toward young male "disloyals." The usage of this term mirrors highly gendered politics of loyalty: "no-no boy" presumed importance of loyalty question only to men, while symbolically erasing women's responses to the loyalty questions. After Tule Lake camp was designated as a "segregation" center in the fall of 1943, its population reached 18,789 on December 25, 1944, making it the largest of the ten internment camps.[195]

I argue in this chapter that in the context of internment and the trauma of the loyalty questionnaires, Japanese language literature provided a protected space where interned writers could express complex and contradictory sentiments regarding loyalty and military service. In the highly politicized environment of the camps during and after the loyalty questionnaires, Japanese Americans experienced the opposing pressures of two equally chauvinistic nationalisms: On the one hand "100 % Americanism" propagated by the WRA and the Army with strong support from the Nisei-dominant Japanese American Citizens League (JACL); and on the other, Emperor-centered

---

[195] Although WRA intended to segregate "loyal" and "disloyal" Japanese Americans, roughly one forth of the populations, including 4,517 citizens, were classified as "loyal" Japanese Americans. Some "loyals" accompanied the "disloyal" family members to the Tule Lake, and about 6,000 original residents in Tule Lake camp remained in the camp after the camp became the "segregation" center.

Japanism espoused by a minority faction of pro-Japan Japanese Americans who proudly took on the identity of disloyalty. In this highly charged setting, Japanese-language writers were able to contest the binary construction of loyalty.

Particularly after the US military's decision to draft Nisei men, the WRA promoted 100% Americanism in the form of two gendered stereotypes of Japanese American patriotism and loyalty: a masculine image assigned to Nisei men as hyper-patriotic soldiers, and a feminized image of a patriotic home front where parents, wives and sisters enthusiastically supported Nisei soldiers. Both stereotypes were propagated in WRA photographs. Hikaru Iwasaki, a WRA staff photographer, captured a snapshot of a Nisei soldier, Kenneth Iwagaki, who was about to go overseas, sitting with his parents. The caption to the picture reads: "Mr. and Mrs. Harry J. Iwagaki, from the Heart Mountain Center, are mighty proud of their two soldier sons."[196] The Issei parents sit behind their uniformed son smiling demurely. In another WRA photograph, Mrs. Sakai, a Nisei woman, shows her friend the Purple Heart medal that her husband received. The caption emphasizes the "pride" of Mrs. Sakai as the supportive wife of a US soldier: "My husband gave me the Purple Heart, added Mrs. Sakai, because he knew in my small way I was fighting beside him and that we are both fighting for the same cause…"[197]

The War Department and the WRA staged public events in the camps to reinforce their message. When Nisei soldiers were killed in combat and posthumously awarded medals, military officers presented the medals to the soldiers' families in the camps during a public ceremony.[198] The WRA also arranged a tour to camps by Higa Taro, a

---

[196] War Relocation Authority Photographs of Japanese-American Evacuation and Resettlement, BANC PIC 1967.014, Box 16, Group 10, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/dynaweb/ead/calher/jvac>.

[197] Ibid, Box 13, Group 31.

[198] The WRA photographers took several snapshots of the public presentation of the medals in the camps. Ibid, Box 13, Group 64.

highly-decorated Hawaiian born Kibei and Private First Class from the 100th Infantry Battalion. The JACL sponsored Higa's tour in cooperation with the WRA to promote the loyalty of Japanese Americans. Conducted in Japanese, Higa's lectures were specifically geared toward Issei. Anonymous report included in Tarō Higa's papers explains:

> …to Japanese speaking parents there had been little opportunity to hear of actual battlefield conditions through the radio or to personally converse with returned veterans who could speak their own language. Pfc. Higa was the first opportunity for an eye-witness recital to persons of Japanese ancestry about the treatment their boys were undergoing through training and under battle condition.[199]

Utilizing Higa's ability to reach Japanese-speaking audiences, the JACL attempted to "aid the war effort," and "to promote national unity,"[200] demonstrating the patriotism of Nisei soldiers. Through these and other spectacles the WRA actively promoted Japanese American patriotism.

In direct opposition to this brand of pro-American nationalism, a minority group of Japanese Americans presented a pro-Japan counter narrative by demonstrating hyper nationalism to Japan. This brand of nationalism, too, was highly gendered. Particularly in the Tule Lake segregation center, the pro-Japan group resisted the image of the loyal Japanese American by embracing a chauvinistic nationalism toward Japan. They particularly celebrated the "Japanese" manhood of young male members through public displays of militaristic drills, marches, and exercises. Although the group was a minority even within the Tule Lake camp and operated as an underground organization until mid-1944, the group exerted considerable influence on the camp population by use of rumors, intimidation, and coercion to silence oppositional voices and movements. In the last half

---

199 Tarō Higa Papers, Japanese American Research Project Collection (Collection 2010), Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles, Box 153, Folder 8.

200 Ibid.

of 1944, the group operated more openly and mounted a resegregation movement, petitioning the Tule Lake administration to create a separate residential area away from internees whom they considered not sufficiently "loyal" to Japan. The pro-Japan group presented an alternative identity to the WRA's image of pro-American Japanese America; its extreme chauvinistic stance reinforced, rather than deconstructed, the loyalty binary.

The Kibei writers Tadashi Itō and Jyōji Nozawa, both classified as "disloyal" by the WRA, gave voice to the great ambivalence towards military service in the U.S. army felt by Japanese Americans positioned between the extremes of "100 % Americanism" and wartime Japanese nationalism. Born in Hawai'i, Itō was living in San Francisco when the war between Japan and the U.S. started. Despite having served in the U.S. military before the war, Itō became a "no-no boy" in Gila River camp by answering question 27 and 28 in the negative and was transferred to Tule Lake. Born in Los Angeles, Nozawa was sent back to Japan as a child and grew up in Kanda district in Tokyo. He returned to Los Angeles in 1938 where he finished high school. Influenced by his father who worked at *Rafu Shimpō*, a Japanese American bilingual newspaper in Los Angeles, Nozawa developed a love of literature and became friends with Kibei writers in the Los Angeles area such as Kazuo Kawai and Masao Yamashiro. He was first interned in Granada camp in Colorado, and was transferred to Tule Lake camp as a "disloyal," following the administration of the loyalty questionnaire.

James C. Scott has suggested an analytic frame of the "hidden transcript," a concept that locates resistance by subordinate groups in discourse that "takes place 'off stage,' beyond direct observation by power holders."[201] I argue that Itō's and Nozawa's stories about the impact of military service on Japanese American families constituted

---

[201] James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 4-5.

"off stage" discourse in two senses. First, because their stories were written in the Japanese language, they were less likely to be scrutinized by camp administrators. Second and more importantly, both the camp administration and Japanese American internees considered literature to be "culture," a site of expression of "feelings" and "emotions," rather than "politics" and "ideology."

I also argue that the "off-stage" discourse of loyalty that Itō and Nozawa created did not challenge the gendered construct of wartime nationalisms. Their writings invariably dealt with men's identities in relation to the question of loyalty, and female characters, if present at all, remained peripheral. The question of loyalty was explored exclusively through male relations: father, son, brother and male friends. Their writings, while challenging the binary construct of loyalty enforced by the WRA and the pro-Japan nationalists, reinforced the gendered perception of the question of loyalty as an exclusively male matter.

## The Limits of Permissible Dissent: Gila River Young People's Association and *Wakoudo*

Tadashi Itō's first story to address the psychological complexities of loyalty and military service appeared in the inaugural issue of *Wakoudo*, the Japanese-language literary journal published between May and August 1943 in the Gila River camp by the Gila River Young People's Association (GYPA). The torturous process through which GYPA gained permission from the WRA to launch *Wakoudo* reveals the politically charged atmosphere in the camps created by the administering of the loyalty questionnaires. It also illustrates the limits to permissible dissent and the constraints under which writers like Itō made their interventions into the Japanese American discourse on loyalty. Predominantly a Kibei organization, GYPA was organized on

November 1, 1942 in the Butte community at Gila River camp to promote Japanese cultural and sports activities.[202] GYPA was not able to begin publication of *Wakoudo* until May 1943 because in the volatile atmosphere surrounding the administering of the loyalty questionnaire and the recruitment of Nisei soldiers, Gila River camp administrators viewed GYPA with suspicion as a political group fostering pro-Japan sentiments. Only after the arrest of the original leaders who had spoken out against Nisei enlistment and the election of new leaders, was GYPA permitted to proceed with publication of a Japanese-language literary journal.

Based on the pervasive wartime stereotype of Kibei as "disloyal," not only the WRA but also some Japanese American community leaders expressed concerns or directly opposed the GYPA. The views of Robert Spencer, a community analyst employed by the Gila River WRA, were typical of WRA administrators who worried that Kibei groups like GYPA would become "tools or pawns" of the radically pro-Japan Issei group.[203] Spencer identified two conflicting groups of Issei leaders in the Butte camp at Gila River. The first was cooperative with the administration and actively supported the US war effort by encouraging Nisei to enlist in the US army. The second, often labeled as "agitators" and "pro-Japan," directly opposed the former group and the US war effort.

---

[202] Gordon Brown, the WRA community analyst at Gila River, reported that the GYPA had about 400 members, three quarters of which were Kibei. The remaining quarter consisted of Nisei who grew up in the US. Reflecting the pervasive wartime stereotypes of "loyal" Nisei vs. "disloyal" Kibei, GYPA is often seen as "the Kibei" organization in opposition to "the Nisei" JACL. Although identity labels such as "Kibei" and "Nisei" are helpful, they certainly are not comprehensive in elaborating the more complex dynamics of each organization. GYPA was predominantly, but not exclusively, a Kibei organization whose membership was open to all young people in the camp. Also, the GYPA had about 400 associate Issei members. See Gordon Brown, "The Seinenkai" 5 page report, 27 April 1944, Reel 1, U.S. Department of Interior, War Relocation Authority, "A Collection of Publications Issued by the U.S. War Relocation Authority" [microform] (Los Angeles: UCLA Library Photographic Dept., 1970), hereafter cited as "The Seinenkai."

[203] Robert Spencer, "Kibei Group," 41 page double-spaced report, Microfilm Reel 284, Japanese [American] Evacuation and Resettlement Study Records (JERS), BANC MSS 67/24c, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, hereafter cited as JERS.

Spencer argued that while "agitators" welcomed the formation of GYPA, "loyal" Japanese Americans opposed GYPA on the grounds that "the Kibei [offered] a front which [was] divided, and against interests of unification" of the community.[204] Although GYPA's constitution espoused community cooperation, promotion of general welfare of camp residents, and cultural and sports activities, "loyal" Issei and Nisei leadership and the camp administration were weary of GYPA's political motivation.[205]

Shōtaro Hikida, a Kibei who served as the Gila River WRA Community Activity Section, was typical of many camp residents in his ambivalence toward GYPA. Before the war, as secretary of the Japanese Association of San Francisco, he witnessed antagonism between the local Kibei organization and the JACL whose membership was predominantly Nisei. Based on this experience, he was wary of the GYPA creating divisions within the community. At the same time, he believed that GYPA could serve a useful purpose by mitigating tensions that were developing within the camp:

> But on the other hand, taking it in good faith, I thought through organization of Kibeis into good cooperative body can iron out some of the differences existed between the two groups, and solve this problem which had been considered one of the most serious problems of Japanese in this country.[206]

Despite his hope, however, conflicts between GYPA and JACL intensified in the four months after GYPA was established.

---

[204] Ibid.

[205] "Constitution for the Gila Young People's Association," adopted 1 November 1942, Microfilm Reel 274, JERS.

[206] Shōtaro Hikida, "Gila Young People's Association" 5 page report, 19 November 1943, Microfilm Reel 284, JERS, hereafter cited as "Gila Young People's Association." Hikida's ambivalence toward GYPA was not a typical view among the Gila River WRA staff. In her note on Hikida's Report on GYPA, Hankey, Hikida's supervisor, questioned the validity of Hikida's report: "In the light of attachment made in Tamie's and X's report, and many impressions gained from talking to persons who make no secret of pro-Japanese sympathies, I am convinced that Hikida has applied considerable whitewash." See Hankey, "Notes on Hikida's Report on G.Y.P.A." 25 September 1943, Microfilm Reel 284, JERS.

Two events that GYPA hosted in late 1942 raised tensions within the camp community. The GYPA proposed to hold an art exhibition that would run from December 5-7 (Saturday through Monday), 1942. The WRA prohibited holding the exhibition on December 7, fearing a demonstration to celebrate the anniversary of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Although the GYPA insisted that the exhibition was not intended as a pro-Japan event, the WRA issued a permit for only December 5 and 6. But when December 5 and 6 turned out to be rainy and cold, GYPA asked permission to extend the exhibition one more day to December 7. The administration relented and allowed the exhibition to remain open on December 7. Hikida praised the event as among the most successful community events. Despite the success and credit that GYPA received, rumors soon spread that GYPA members had staged a nationalistic ceremony at the end of the exhibition, singing the national anthem of Japan. Hikida expressed his concern about the impact of such rumor:

> …I could not help but feel that such rumor may have been originated by anti-Kibei group and hoped that such contradictory rumor and publicity may not become initiative for Gila Young Peoples to take aggressive policy toward certain organization, resulting in disharmony of groups within our community…[207]

In his report, Hikida defended GYPA, strongly refuting the allegation since he himself did not witness the alleged ceremony. More importantly, the incident reveals the bitter political rivalries among Japanese American groups within the camp. Although tension between Kibei and Nisei antedated internment, the wartime stereotype of Kibei as "pro-Japan" became a convenient and powerful tool to attack organizations like GYPA.

New rumors against the GYPA circulated after the New Year Celebration of 1943. GYPA members made *mochi*, rice cakes, a few days before the New Year, which they distributed to families in the camp for the New Year celebration. This was much

---

[207] Hikida, "Gila Young People's Association."

appreciated by the camp community and enhanced GYPA's reputation. The more popular GYPA became in the community, Hikida observed, the more hostile certain groups of Nisei became toward the GYPA. On New Year's Day, a Japanese national flag was raised on a hilltop west of the camp, and GYPA was immediately blamed. GYPA leaders flatly denied the allegation. As criticisms of the GYPA mounted, however, Hikida observed that GYPA leaders became more aggressive toward certain Nisei and administrative officials. Also, GYPA leaders began to associate more closely with a group of Issei who were considered "radical" and "pro-Japan."

Tensions developing in the camp culminated in direct confrontation between JACL and GYPA over the issue of voluntary enlistment of Nisei men to the US army. Two delegates from the Gila River chapter attended the national convention of JACL held in Salt Lake City in January 1943, where a resolution favoring the immediate draft of citizens of Japanese ancestry by the US military was passed. Many members of GYPA were opposed to the resolution and rejected the notion of sacrifice for the government which had mistreated them. When the two JACL delegates returned to the Gila River camp, GYPA asked them to attend their meeting. Hikida reported that the atmosphere at the meeting was intense and many in attendance feared a possible outbreak of violence. Fortunately, GYPA president George Yamashiro managed to keep the meeting under control.

Soon after, however, the JACL-GYPA confrontation developed into camp-wide turmoil when a U.S. Army recruitment team visited the camp and began the registration of loyalty status.[208] On February 8, 1943, the Army registration team, composed of Captain Thompson and a Nisei sergeant, arrived at Gila River camp. The team's mission was to recruit Nisei volunteers and explain the procedure of loyalty questionnaires. The GYPA leaders remained outspoken in opposition to military registration, and they

---

[208] Ibid.

publicly resisted during the meetings held by the Army registration team. In his report titled "The Rise of Political Pressure Groups in the Gila Community," dated on February 15, 1943, Robert Spencer, the WRA community analysts reports the hostile protests against Nisei enlistment, exhibited by the members of GYPA.

> In the recent week when the Army delegation came in order to effect a general registration for defense work and open up the volunteering of Nisei into the Army, the Kibei were among the most rabid of the groups opposed to Army enlistment. … In every such meeting, members of the Kibei Club were present. … The Kibei group was ever the first to raise such issues as 'There is now no necessity for enlisting in the Army inasmuch as by acceding to evacuation, we have fulfilled our part in the war effort of this country.' Being present at one or two meetings, I noted the direction of Kibei questions. The Nisei were far more willing to cooperate with the speakers. On one occasion, Captain Thomson, the officer in charge of the recruitment and registration, passed the Kibei during the evening and was greeted by cat-calls and boos and stated that he heard called after him such spithets as 'bakatare onagure', likewise 'kill the son of a bitch' and so on.[209]

Opposition and resentment toward army recruitment was not limited to pro-Japan Kibei. Another report filed by Spencer described the feeling of resentment aroused when Captain Thompson announced "a quota of 300 to 350 volunteers was expected from Gila":

> This statement aroused intense resentment among the evacuee leaders, who pointed out that the Japanese Americans had already shown their patriotism by cooperating in the government plan for evacuation, that their present situation represented a denial of all their rights, and that enlistment in the Army, under these conditions, was not a privilege but an unbearable sacrifice.[210]

The Army registration team was strongly resented particularly by the Issei. In a meeting in the Canal section of the camp, Captain Thompson only received a lukewarm

---

[209] Robert Spencer, "The Rise of Political Pressure Groups in the Gila Community," 15 February 1943, Microfilm Reel 284, JERS, 58-59.

[210] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 68.

reception. Reflecting the intensifying tensions between JACL and GYPA, the Nisei sergeant of the recruitment team "was greeted with howls of derision and was not allowed to present his prepared speech"[211] at a meeting in the Butte camp.

On the first two days of registration on February 11 and 12, the administration found more than half of those registering were answering no to questions twenty-seven and twenty-eight. At this point, the administrators summoned community leaders and threatened them with prosecution for violation of the Espionage Act in order to prevent what they saw as organized pressure against registration. Nevertheless, some continued to be outspoken about their positions. The administrators took more drastic action, calling in the FBI and arresting more than twenty people. Among them were nine members of GYPA, including Yamashiro and Fukumoto, who were sent to Moab Internment Camp in Utah, run by the Justice Department.

After the arrests, GYPA members elected as their new president Masao Maruyama, a Kibei from Los Angeles in his mid twenties. Under Maruyama's leadership, GYPA studiously avoided involvement in camp politics and was finally allowed to publish a literary journal, *Wakoudo*. Prior to publication, editors had to present translations of the entire issue to the administration for approval. Gordon Brown, the WRA Community Analyst at Gila River, was reassured by the content of the journal, even though he was aware of several expressions of "pro-Japan" sentiments: "Except for a few, wherein pride in Japanese ancestry was stressed, the published pieces seem sentimental and unreal, and presumably were put in to encourage what was considered fine writing."[212]

---

[211] Ibid, 69.

[212] Gordon Brown, "The Seinenkai," 2. In this report, Brown explicitly blamed Yamashiro Masao, the first president of GYPA as politically maneuvering the organization to secure his own power. Characterizing Yamashiro as an able, but cunning leader, Brown accused him of using his position at the GYPA "to secure power for his group and to spread his own power in the community." While Yamashiro worked on "political activity," Brown asserts that only a small influential minority followed Yamashiro's lead, but a considerable number of the

Brown was correct in his assessment that *Wakoudo* was not subversive. However, he missed the point that literature was more than an exercise in "fine writing." Within the context of the camp experience the Japanese-language literary movement had the potential to be more than a literary exercise. One sees in these publications the creation of what Jurgen Habermas calls a "public sphere." While sources rarely document how readers responded to the literature, the size of the readership of Japanese language literary journals suggests they filled a vital need. The leading journal, *Tessaku*, published in Tule Lake between March 1944 and July 1945, printed on average 1,000 copies of each volume, which were quickly sold out at the camp canteen. The copies of *Tessaku* were also circulated outside the Tule Lake camp through the mail. A medium of literature opened space for writers and readers to engage in critical reflection within the regulatory regime of wartime concentration camps.

## Gendering Loylaty: Tadashi Itō and *Wakoudo*

Itō's short story, "Chichi no kotoba" (The Father's Words) published in the inaugural issue of *Wakoudo* takes as its theme the profound ambivalence felt by many Japanese Americans confronted with the loyalty questionnaire and the military recruitment of Nisei.[213] Praised by the editors of *Wakoudo* as a "fine piece, exploring

---

GYPA membership remained indifferent to politics. According to Brown, these supposedly apolitical members were interested only in the cultural activities, such as library privileges, the arts and crafts shows and the recreational activities. After the politically-active minority were arrested and sent away from Gila River, the GYPA "seems no longer to have been outwardly aggressive. Its influence, which continued in some degree, was pervasive rather than violent."

[213] Itō Tadashi, "Chichi no Kotoba" (The father's words), *Wakoudo*, vol 1 (May 1943), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 2, 23-29, hereafter cited as "Chichi no kotoba." Itō was an active member of GYPA and a prolific contributor to *Wakoudo*: writing in both his real name and his pen name, Noguchi Sōhē, he contributed at least one work to each three volumes of *Wakoudo*, published in May, June, and August of 1943. After he was transferred to Tule Lake as a "disloyal," he continued to be active both in *Tessaku* and *Dotō* circles.

the agony of the father whose sons were divided by the differences between the Kibei and Nisei," the story explores the complex emotional responses that a family has undergone in answering the loyalty questionnaire. While Itō situates his exploration of the complexities of the loyalty question in a family, the women are completely absent in this story. The lack of female presence construes loyalty as an exclusively male issue to be explored through male relations between fathers and sons, and between brothers.

The two sons, one a Kibei and one a Nisei, in the end choose to answer the loyalty questionnaire in a way that will divide them into disloyal and loyal camps.[214] Focusing on their thought processes, Itō depicts both characters as courageously and honestly facing their personal dilemmas.

The older brother plans to answer no to both questions, but he worries about losing family property in California which his father had placed under his name.[215] He explains to his father why he wants to answer no, despite the possible economic and legal outcome of his answer:

> For someone like me who grew up in Japan, [answering No to the questionnaires] seems not just natural but the only thing to do. It comes down to an instinct, not a matter of right and wrong. I am not sure I am making myself clear, but I think you understand, Otōsan.[216] I do not like that answering no instantly makes me "disloyal" and in the extreme case, a "dangerous element." But I guess that's how I'd be labeled just because I didn't join the army. That's just going to happen to folks like me who said No…[217]

---

214 *Wakoudo*, vol 1 (May 1943), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 2, 2.

215 This was a common practice in pre-war Japanese American communities to combat the Alien Land Law in the state of California, which prohibited Issei from owning land.

216 "Otōsan" is an affectionate and respectful term for father in Japanese.

217 Itō Tadashi, "Chichi no Kotoba," *Wakoudo* vol 1 (May 1943), 23, in United States, War Relocation Authority, "A Collection of Publications Issued by the U.S. War Relocation Authority" [microform] (Los Angeles: UCLA Library Photographic Dept., 1970), Reel 1.

日本で育って来た僕としては、それが最も自然な、といふよりはむしろ心然な感情であり帰結だと思ふのです。それは善悪を超越した純粋な魂のあらはれだと僕は思ふのです。この心の状態はとても言葉では言ひ現すことの出来ない、何と言っていいかお父さんには解つて戴けると思ふのですが。ＮＯと答へることが直ちにこの国に対して不

The father understands the dilemma of his son, for he, too, has a stronger attachment to Japan than to America which he considers his second home. He supports his son's decision, and advises him to act according to his honest feelings.

Meanwhile the younger brother decides to volunteer for the US military. After realizing that his younger son has seriously thought through his decision, the father supports him as well. He tells both sons to follow what they believe in and to be true to their feelings. Knowing that his two sons will end up on opposing sides of the loyalty question, the father embraces the seemingly contradictory feelings toward the two countries as common feelings of Japanese Americans. He asserts:

> I, too, am Japanese after all, and Japan will always be our homeland. How can we forget Japan? ... However, I can not wish for the defeat of America, either. America is my second home. For you, it is where you are born. These feelings may appear contradictory, but they are spiritually linked. Both arise from our experience of sadness and sufferings.[218]

Although the loyalty questionnaires did not allow expression of ambivalence, the father suggests that feeling affection for both Japan and the US is commonly the lived experience of Japanese Americans. Once this common experience is recognized, the two brothers will be united in spirit.

---

忠誠であるとか、危険分子だといふ風に極端に解釈されるのは自分としては嫌ですが、しかし積極的にこの国の軍事行動に参加しないといふことは少なくとも形の上では不忠誠と見做されるのが当然で、僕としてもＮＯと答へた者の運命について考へない訳ではありません。

[218] Itō Tadashi, "Chichi no Kotoba," 24.

私もやはり日本人だ。そして日本は私達の永遠の祖国なのだ。どうして日本を忘れることが出来よう。・・・しかし、私はアメリカの敗北を祈る気もちにもなれないのだ。アメリカは私の第二の故郷なのだから。矛盾したやうだがこの二つの感情の中には共通の悲哀と苦悩を通ってきた魂のつながりがあると思ふ。

To his sons whose answers to the loyalty question will place them in opposing camps, the father urges continued support of each other. Reflecting his understanding of racism in America, he warns his sons:

> At present, the Negro will always be a "Nigger." The situation may not change even after the war. Negros may never be emancipated from their fate, which is as dark as the color of their skin. Perhaps we Japanese share the same destiny with the Negro in this continent. Only time will tell…
>
> Even though you boys are brothers, you are on different sides of the fence. The contrast appears stark. The different worlds you occupy are reflected in the fact that one of you calls me "Otōsan" and the other calls me "Papa." This is nobody's fault, and it can't be helped. As you confront the problem, however, face reality fair and square and make your decision on pure motives. This means that you two will be of the same mind.[219]

Comparing Japanese Americans to African Americans, the father sees a grim future for Japanese Americans in the United States. Facing his sons, however, he struggles not to be pessimistic about his sons' futures in America despite the anti-Asian discrimination that he has endured. The older son answers his father's plea, and affirms his unbridled determination to be sure he and his younger brother continue to support each other in their struggles, despite the "loyal" and "disloyal" labels soon to be imposed on them: "Although Jun (younger brother) and I take different paths, we are heading in

---

219 Itō Tadashi, "Chichi no Kotoba," *Wakoudo* Vol 1 (May 1943), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 2 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997), 28.

現在黒ん坊はどこまでも黒ん坊だ。戦後も亦恐らくさうであるかも知れない。そして永久にその皮膚の如き暗黒な運命から解放されることがないかも知れない。それと同じやうに、この大陸に於ては、日本人は何処までも日本人でしかないかも知れない。それらすべては未来に属する問題なのだ。・・・

お前たちは兄弟でありながら両極端に対立してゐる。それは如何にも鮮やかな対照に見える。お前たちの一人が私をお父さんと呼び一方がパパと呼ぶやうに、お前たちの世界は異なってゐるのだ。それは誰の責任でもない。あるがままにあらせるより仕方のないことだ。しかしお前たち二人はどちらも純粋な動機からこの度の問題に直面し、自分をいつはることなく正々堂々とそれに対処している意味に於て、お前たち二人は同一の精神に生きてゐるのだ。

the same direction. I think both of us are shouldering the burden of our time. We will confront our destiny arm in arm."[220] Although their choices divided them, the two brothers strive to support each other as each bears his own burden.

Itō's story "Chichi no kotoba" expressed the fervent hope that the dichotomous choices forced on Japanese Americans by the loyalty questionnaire and military service would not fatally divide the family, and by extension the Japanese American community, into opposite camps. Nevertheless, divisions and antagonisms persisted to some degree in every internment camp, including Tule Lake which the WRA designated the "segregation center" for "disloyals." From the standpoint of the WRA, internees' answers to the loyalty questionnaire neatly divided loyals from disloyals and simplified camp administration by creating ideologically uniform communities. Nothing could be further from the case, however, as Itō and other ambivalent "disloyals" discovered after being transferred to Tule Lake.

## Impact of Loyalty Questionnaires at Tule Lake

In the Tule Lake camp, the loyalty questionnaires added to the discontent of a restive and angry population that had mounted protests against discrimination, ill-conditions in the camps, and exploitation of their labor.[221] After being designated a

---

[220] Ibid, 29.

潤と僕とは歩む路こそ違ってゐますが目指す方向は同じで、共に悲しき時代の十字架を背負ってゐるのだと思ゐます。その悲しみの中から僕たちは手を握り合って起ち上って見せます。

[221] For the detailed studies of the Tule Lake camp, see Donald Collins, *Native American Aliens: Disloyalty and the Renunciation of Citizenship by Japanese Americans during World War II* (Westport, Connecticut.: Greenwood Press, 1985); Gary Okihiro, "Tule Lake under Martial Law: A Study in Japanese Resistance," *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 5:3 (Fall 1977): 71-85; Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoiladge*.

"segregation" center for "disloyals," the Tule Lake camp experienced massive movement of people in and out of the camp during September and October 1943, which reorganized the political power structure among the internees. A strike organized by agricultural workers in October 1943 united camp residents for the first time following the reorganization of the camp population after the loyalty questionnaires. On October 15, 1943, after a fatal truck accident, camp agricultural workers began a work boycott to protest unsafe working conditions. The camp population supported the agricultural workers, who also demanded improvement of living conditions in the camp. They elected 64 representatives, called Daihyō Sha Kai (Committee of the Representatives), to negotiate with the camp administration. During the negotiation, Tule Lake Project Director Raymond Best secretly brought in agricultural workers from Topaz and Poston to harvest the crops. Best's action outraged the striking workers of Tule Lake, who were further enraged by the fact that workers from Topaz and Poston were paid higher wages.

While Daihyō Sha Kai continued unsuccessful negotiations with the WRA, sporadic violent incidents in the camp led to the military take-over of the camp. On November 1, 1943, a group of Japanese American young men went to the camp hospital to encourage internee hospital workers to join the demonstration to support the Daihyō Sha Kai. Dr. Pedicord, the chief medical officer, attempted to block these men from entering the hospital, and they responded by roughing up Dr. Pedicord. On November 4, 1943, Yukio Baba, a internee police officer witnessed three trucks moving out of the mortor pool, which he thought were transporting food out of the camp to the strikebreakers from Poston and Topaz. When the word spread to camp residents, a number of angry people gathered to prevent further shipment. Several groups, armed with baseball bats and sticks, attacked WRA officials: Schmidt, the Chief of Internal Security, was assaulted, and the house of Project Director Best was surrounded by an angry crowd. Feeling overwhelmed, the administration called in the military. The Army

arrested several men on the spot as well as Daihyō Sha Kai members, who were incarcerated in "the Stockade," an isolated detention area created within the camp.

On November 13, 1943, the Army declared martial law, which was in effect for about three months until January 15, 1944. While the Army attempted to suppress the Daihyō Sha Kai, the leaders who were in hiding advocated a policy of "passive noncooperation with the Army and WRA, continuance of the partial strike, refusal to betray the hidden leaders, and refusal to elect a new representative body."[222] Meanwhile, Project Director Best sought to take back control of the camp from the Army by establishing a new leadership council. Aside from the intention of Best, the leadership council sought improvement in camp life and release of the detainees in "the Stockade." In a camp-wide election held on January 11, 1944, the moderate won by a narrow victory.

At the same time, an underground group of pro-Japan Japanese Americans organized a movement to "resegregate" "true Japanese" from others within the camp. Although Tule Lake was designated as a segregation center for "disloyals," the WRA label of "disloyal" hardly united Tule Lake residents. In addition to individual perspectives on one's "disloyal" status, camp administrators divided the population into five classifications.[223] Furthermore, many internees perceived their status as "disloyals" flexibly. The Tule Lake WRA allowed and sometimes encouraged them to change their answers to the loyalty questionnaires. The resegregationsit group criticized ambivalent internees as "not Japanese enough," and pressured them to prove their disloyalty.

---

[222] Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 161.

[223] The five categories are those who answered no to a question regarding national allegiance; those who refused to answer the question above; those who applied to repatriate or expatriate to Japan; those who expressed interest in accompanying or remaining with a relative in any of the above three in order to maintain family integrity; and finally the original Tule Lake residents who refused to move out of the center despite their "loyal" status. Thomas and Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*, 303.

Although the Resegregationists remained a minority, the group developed into a highly institutionalized chauvinistic organization and tried to enforce conformity to militant Japanese nationalism throughout the camp. Japanese manhood was central in the Resegregationists' construction of nationalism: they organized a Young Men's Association for the Study of the Mother Country, to prepare young Kibei and Nisei men to become upstanding Japanese citizens after their repatriation. Members studied Japanese language, history, and political ideology and publicly demonstrated their masculine patriotism to Japan in highly regimented and militaristic activities, including marches and exercises. A parallel organization whose members pledged absolute loyalty to Japan advocated immediate return to Japan. Members adopted specific hairstyles and clothing to mark their identity as "true Japanese": following wartime Japan's regulation, male members shaved their heads, and female members adopted clothing and hairstyle customary to wartime Japan.

## "Disloyal" Narratives on Loyalty: Writing of Jyōji Nozawa

In the politically charged environment of Tule Lake, where the label of loyalty was frequently manipulated by the administration and the internees for sectarian political ends, literature served both writers and readers as one of a few ways to frame nuanced visions of loyalty politics. Exploring the lives of so called loyal Japanese Americans, Jyōji Nozawa articulated the price they paid in a racist country. Nozawa was one of the central members of Tule Lake literary movement and edited several volumes of *Tessaku*. In October 1943, along with some one hundred and twenty Japanese Americans in the Granada camp, Nozawa was classified as "disloyal" and transferred to Tule Lake camp. In a retrospective essay published in 1965, Nozawa recalled his instinctive reaction to the

pro-Japan masculine identity imposed on him and a companion by other Tule Lake inmates:

> When we went to the mess hall the next morning, we were met with a round of applause and the block manger's praise. He said, "We are pleased to welcome you, true Japanese men." Although Mr. Yamashiro and I belonged to the "disloyal" group, we had different reasons for becoming "disloyals." I did not become disloyal in order to be proud of Japan. Although I didn't have to worry too much about the draft, I made sure that I would not end up in the battle fields in the Pacific. This was how I became "disloyal."[224]

Feeling uneasy with the block manager's perception of them as "true Japanese men," Nozawa and Masao Yamashiro, another Kibei writer, quickly packed up, moved to another block in the camp, and became active participants in the camp's literary movement.

In stark contrast to Gila River WRA's treatment of *Wakoudo,* the Tule Lake administration permitted publication of *Tessaku* despite its predominantly Kibei membership. In Tule Lake, the WRA's regulatory efforts were directed towards explicitly political organizations. In fact, as the following report demonstrates, camp administrators commented favorably on the harmless nature of *Tessaku* as a literary group:

> Another project-wide Seinen, still smaller, publishes the only literary magazine, called Tessaku, or "Iron Fence" (from tetsu, "iron" and saku, "fence"). The group will accept no material even

---

224 Nozawa Jyōji, "Tessaku no omoide: Sōran no kanpu Tsūru Rēki" (Memory of *Tessaku*: Turbulent camp, Tule Lake) in *Nanka Bungei senshū* (Anthology of *Nanka bungei*) edited by Fujita Akira, (Tokyo: Renga shobō, 1981), 191, my emphasis.

翌朝メスホール（食堂）に行くと部落支配人から、「真の日本男子を迎へることは喜ばしい」と、クスグッたいやうな祝辞を述べられ、拍手をもって迎へられた。

山城君も私も不忠誠組になって来たとは云へ、それぞれの理由があってのことだ。何も日本男子を誇りたくて、来たわけではない。私は召集される心配はなかったが、若し採られて太平洋戦線にでも送られては堪らないといふ気持から、不忠誠組といふ安全地帯を選んだつもりだった。

> remotely concerned with center politics and its iron-clad rule is to avoid mention of the war in the poetry, sketches and short stories which fill its pages. Its leaders consciously wish to provide artistic outlet (and escape) from the drab realities of center life.[225]

Indeed, Tessaku's editors adopted an editorial policy not to publish "political writing, critical writing of the Japan-US war, or writing which protested the policies of the center administration" in order to sustain the publication of the journal.[226] However, it would be a mistake to view the literary movements as mere diversions from the boredom of camp life. Even the title of the journal, Tessaku, which strongly connotes the fences surrounding the camp, is political, symbolizing the life of incarceration. Japanese language literature enabled writers to explore the issue of Japanese American loyalty "off-stage" in a culturally-protected discourse. Authors were able to voice opinions and sentiments that would otherwise provoke controversy within the camp community. For readers, the literary works expressed visions at variance to those promoted both by the WRA and pro-Japan factions.

In the seventh volume of *Tessaku*, published in February 1945, Nozawa contributed a short story, "Shiganhei no chichi" (The Father of the Volunteers). "Shiganhei no chichi" explores the impact of loyalty and military service on a Japanese American family. Although the mother appears briefly in the story, the central focus is placed on emotional struggles of Mr. Sahaku, an Issei "loyal" father.[227] Like Itō's "Chichi no kotoba," "Shiganhei no chichi" explores the question of loyalty through male relations between the father and the sons.

---

225 "Special Report on Center Trends," 18 October 1944, 9 page report, Microfilm Reel 166, JERS.

226 *Tessaku* vol 3 (July 1944), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6, 23.

227 Nozawa Jyōji, "Shiganhei no chichi" (The father of the volunteers), *Tessaku* vol 7 (February 1945), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6, 42-61.

When Masuo and Shōji, Mr. Sahaku's two elder sons, reveal their desire to volunteer for the US military, he acquiesces. Believing that citizens have to perform their obligations as well as claim their rights, Mr. Sahaku determines that he supports his sons' decisions. Although he wishes to keep at least his youngest son from joining the military, Saburō, the third son, is drafted soon after Mr. Sahaku sends off his two elder sons.

As a chief cook in the mess hall and a devout Christian, Mr. Sahaku enjoys a good reputation within his block in the camp. After he sends his two sons off to the US military, however, many of his peers begin to treat him with reserve and even suspicion. Their attitude toward Mr. Sahaku reflects the way in which Issei expressed opposition and resentment toward the Army's recruitment efforts of Nisei men. In particular, people who strongly identify with Japan attack Mr. Sahaku's masculinity as a patriarch of the family: they criticize Mr. Sahaku for lacking patriarchal authority and being too willing to accede to his children's wishes. Some even call him "inu," a derogatory term for spy or informant for the camp administration. Initially, Mr. Sahaku ignores the criticism, dismissing his opponents' views as "unrealistic" and even "irresponsible" for those who live in the US. However, the environment in the camp gradually becomes unbearable. Mr. and Mrs. Sahaku decide to apply to be relocated, and soon thereafter the couple is able to get out of the camp to settle as live-in cook and servants for a white household in Michigan.

The employer is extremely pleased with the couple, not the least because their three sons are serving in the military. In order to cheer up the couple who constantly worry about the fate of their sons, the employer organizes a small party for them. Several good friends of the employer, all of whom are white, attend the party, and offer Mr. and Mrs. Sahaku encouragement and sympathy. At the end of the party, Mr. Sahaku, slightly drunk, steps out to the porch which commands a grand view of Lake Michigan. As he smokes, he ponders the day's event:

> Even if the sympathy was temporary, Sahaku didn't care. He does not mind that these words could be uttered only by those who are in the superior position. At least for Sahaku, the words sound as if they reflected urgent truth.
>
> Your sons are fighting for the country which boasts such magnificent vistas as Lake Michigan. They are fighting to protect democracy and liberty. They are also sacrificing themselves for their race in order to eliminate racism. This is what his employer and the employer's friends told him. Although not particularly moved by these sentiments, he thinks that he is not paying too high a price for the country which he has adopted as his home.[228]

What is significant in this quote is the author's critical perspective on sympathy offered by liberal white Americans to Mr. Sahaku. Mr. Sahaku keeps emotional distance from his employer and his friends: their words of sympathy only provide temporal consolation, or do not particularly move him. Although Mr. Sahaku remains skeptical of the extent of their commitment to such ideals as "the fight for democracy," he does take the ideals themselves seriously. As a "loyal" Japanese American who intends to stay in this country for the rest of his life, he takes his duty seriously despite the fact that "his" country would not even allow him to apply for citizenship. Observing the struggles of a "loyal" Issei, Nozawa, the author, exposes the superficiality of white American's commitment to democratic ideals and portrays the painful realities of patriotic Japanese Americans.

Nozawa published this story in the Tule Lake camp where "pro-Japan" sentiments were strong and bitter factional disputes left little room for individual expression of

---

[228] Ibid, 47.

たとへそれが一時的な慰めでもよかった。優位に立つ人間のみが言ひ得る言葉でもよかった。すくなくとも佐伯にとっては、それが切実な言葉であり、真実なものであるやうに思へた。

ミシガン湖の如く壮大な美しさをもつアメリカの為に、民主主義の擁護の為に、自由の為に、息子達は戦場で闘ってゐるのだ。また人種偏見の撲滅の為に民族の犠牲となって苦闘してゐるんだ。主人達はさう言って慰めてくれた。佐伯はそれに力を得たわけではないが、自分が生涯を送らうと決心してゐるアメリカの為ならば、いま払ってゐる犠牲ぐらひは何でもないと思った。

ambivalence on the issue of Japanese American loyalty. In describing Mr. Sahaku's experience in the camp after his sons decided to enlist, Nozawa depicted the psychological stress of Japanese Americans who occupied the middle ground. If Mr. Sahaku defends his sons because they are fulfilling their duty as US citizens, the pro-Japan factions will criticize Mr. Sahaku for playing up to white America. By highlighting Mr. Sahaku's reservations toward the kind of American patriotism, exemplified by his employer, Nozawa explores the emotional struggles of critically minded "loyal" Japanese Americans.

It is not easy for Mr. Sahaku to keep faith in his sense of obligation of being a "loyal" American. In quick succession, Mr. and Mrs. Sahaku receive the news of their two elder sons' deaths in the battlefields. Facing their children's deaths, Mr. Sahaku begins to question his conviction that America represents the future for his family:

> When I said it was all for the sake of the children's happiness, wasn't I just trying to ease my own conscience? Were my children truly happy in America? Did I bring them up correctly? Mr. Sahaku repeatedly asked himself these questions, which evoked a yearning for his native land.[229]

A letter from Saburō, the only remaining son, again forces Sahaku to question his and his family's relationship to "home." "Saburō writes that he misses the camp when he is out on a campaign, listening to the insects, and looking at the stars. Sahaku can not help but feeling sorry for Saburō whose only 'home' is the camp."[230] The news of

---

[229] Ibid, 50.

子供達の幸福のためにー。結局それも自分の良心を誤魔化す言質にすぎなかったのではないか。又、子供達は本当にアメリカで幸福だったらうか。自分の教育が果して親として真実なものであったらうか。そんな限りない反省が、磯辺の波のやうに引いては返し引いては返し、疲れ切ってゐる佐伯の胸に郷愁の延長となって押し寄せた。

[230] Ibid, 51.

星空を眺めながら露営するときなど、虫の音を聞くとキャンプが懐かしい、と書いてあることもあった。佐伯はそんなところを読むと、故郷でもないキャンプを慕ふ三郎が不憫でならなかった。

Saburō's death is such a blow to Mr. Sahaku that he can no longer hold on to his faith in America as his family's future. Completely gone is his appreciation, however qualified it had been, for his employer's "sympathy." He can not help but contrast his sacrifices to the good life enjoyed by his employer. None of his sons were in the military and did not have to endure the racism that his sons experienced. Why, Sahaku asks, did all my sons, who had so much less privilege, have to die?

Shortly after Mr. and Mrs. Sahaku receive the news of Saburō's death, a local journalist interviews Mr. Sahaku. The article contains his photograph and the following quote: "Three of my sons must be content with happiness in heaven now, since they died for America. When I think of that, I feel happy and honored, rather than sadness."[231] This comment is the façade of a "loyal" Japanese American who endures his sacrifices as a zealous patriot and a good Christian. As Mr. Sahaku sees his own comment in the paper, his long suppressed anger erupts and he tears up and tramples the newspaper his employer handed to him, no longer caring that he is being watched. Two weeks later, Mr. and Mrs. Sahaku leave the employer's house. The reader is not told whether they leave by their own will, or that of their employer.

Nozawa expresses a deep understanding of the emotional struggles endured even by "loyal" Japanese Americans. While WRA photographers portrayed enthusiastic support of masculine Nisei soldiers by demure women and passive Issei men as a part of the Japanese American home front, the climax of "Chichi no Kotoba" presents a powerful critique as Mr. Sahaku stomps on his own patriotic comments in the paper. The scene captures the assertive expression of anger toward American racism, which is all the more powerful coming from a supposedly quiet and withdrawn Issei man. Nozawa's story also

---

[231] Ibid, 53.

「三人の子供達もアメリカの為に戦死したと思へば、今頃は天上で満足に思ってゐるでせう。私もそれを思ふと悲しみよりか、光栄とする喜びの方が大きい。」

provides a glimpse of the hostility expressed toward "loyal" Japanese Americans by the pro-Japan Japanese Americans. Their attack on Mr. Sahaku's "loyal" status amplifies the challenge to Mr. Sahaku's masculinity as a "weak" partriarch who can not control Nisei children. "Loyal" Issei men bore the additional burden of effeminization.

In the sixth volume of *Tessaku*, Nozawa published another short story, titled "Nagasareru mono" (Swept Away).[232] "Nagasareru mono" is a story about a Kibei man who is drafted into the US Army before the war. The man's younger brother, also a Kibei and a "No-No boy" who is about to be transferred to Tule Lake, narrates the story as he witnesses the gradual deterioration of the manliness in his older brother. In this story, too, all female characters remain peripheral, and the question of loyalty is explored through the male relationship between the brothers.

Before the war, the younger brother admires his elder brother who is protective of the younger brother, studious and hard-working. The older brother strives to fulfill his dream of attaining a college education despite all the challenges that he faces in a hostile America. He works as a "schoolboy," a live-in domestic servant, for a white household in order to support himself and his younger brother, and to finance his college education. He graduates from high school, finishes junior college, and he plans to attend an east coast university.

Prior to the military draft, the younger brother first notices his older brother's struggles when he visits his brother at his employer's home and assists him with cleaning and laundry. He witnesses social status changes to a Japanese male identity in America when he endures the daily routine of his elder brother's life; he can not help but feel sorrow for his brother's situation:

---

[232] Nozawa Jyōji, "Nagasareru mono" (Washed away), *Tessaku* vol 6 (January 1945), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6, 102-119.

> When my brother lived in Japan, he was adored by our parents as the oldest son, and he behaved however he liked. I could not hold back my tears when I saw him doing laundry, laundry that included dirty women's underwear, for the sake of his studies.[233]

The younger brother has only recently returned to the US after being raised in Japan. His reaction to his older brother's current life reflects his shock in witnessing his brother's declined social status: in contrast to the protected and privileged position occupied by the oldest son within a typical Japanese household, his brother had become a Japanese American servant, responsible for "feminine" duties, including cleaning, laundry, cooking, etc. The adored son, who had been taken care of by women in the household, was now in the position of taking care of a white family household as a servant.

Despite these gendered challenges, the older brother endures the hardships and the blow to his manliness in pursuit of his dream of attending college. While working two to three jobs to save money for tuition, he is drafted into the army. Once in the army, the younger brother observes that the older brother has changed completely: "Gone was the studious-ness of his student days; he began to live a life of pleasures."[234]

When the story begins, the older brother is starting to date Helen, a seventeen year old Japanese American interned in his younger brother's camp. The older brother's visits to the camp primarily center on his relationship with Helen, rather than with his younger brother; however, the younger brother knows that Helen is not as serious about the

---

[233] Ibid, 107-8.

日本にゐるときは、長男として父母の寵愛を一身に受け、欲しいままのの振舞をしてゐた兄が、アメリカで女の汚れた下着まで洗って、苦学してゐるのかと思ふと堪らなくなつてきた。私は逃げるやうにして兄の傍から離れ、便所に入つて泣いてしまつた。

[234] Ibid, 109.

・・・学生時代のやうな真面目な男ではなく、すっかり享楽的な人間になつてゐたのだつた。

relationship as his brother. The younger brother believes that Helen is too young, and that she is probably interested in his brother only because he is in the US military. Helen's interest is reflected in her obsession with the older brother's rank. The older brother complains to his younger brother that Helen is always pushing him to get promoted: the single stripe of a private first class does not satisfy Helen. Knowing the different levels of commitment to the relationship, the younger brother often wishes his brother would stop visiting the camp.

After the older brother discovers Helen's lack of commitment, he returns to his base and ceases his visits to the camp altogether. He does not even respond to the letters that the young brother sends him. The younger brother later discovers that the reason for the breakdown in communication is not only his older brother's break-up with Helen, but also the consequence of an incident that expresses his brother's accumulated frustration with his new fate as a draftee. One hot summer day, the brother's company is suddenly ordered to go on a long march. Irritated, the older brother joins the march without his weapon and military gear. After a while, the second lieutenant notices the infraction and orders him to march under his direct supervision, shouldering two rifles. The brother temporarily endures loud and repeated rebuking by the officer in the excruciating heat of summer. As the brother stumbles and is berated by the officer, all the suppressed feelings inside him erupt and he throws the weapons at his officer. Seeing other officers rushing toward him, he realizes what he has done. Fearing for his life, he sits in the middle of the street, takes off his shirt, and cries while screaming "Korose, Korose" (Kill me, Kill me) in Japanese.

Not understanding a word of Japanese, the Caucasian officers do not know what to make of the scene. They are bewildered and fearful of the "craziness" displayed by the young man. His fellow Japanese American soldiers, in contrast, enjoy the theatrics. He later reveals to his younger brother the reactions of his Japanese American peers: "My

buddies were happy and I got a round of applause."[235] Here Nozawa captures the resentments felt by many Japanese American soldiers placed in racially segregated units commanded by Caucasian officers. The officers' fear of the supposedly "crazy" older brother exemplifies their anxiety over the collective resentment of Japanese American soldiers under their command.

Back on the base, the older brother is sent to the hospital for psychological examination. Believing that he may be discharged if deemed mentally incapacitated, he temporarily feigns illness. However, fearing long term confinement, he abandons his plan of being discharged and returns to his base, demoted and penalized.

During the holidays, the older brother visits the younger brother, who is now a "No-No boy" and is about to be transferred to Tule Lake camp. Fearing judgment of the younger brother, he asks the brother weakly: "Are you ashamed of having a brother like me?" The younger brother replies: "No, I understand where you are coming from."[236] Earlier in the story, the younger brother is rather critical of his brother who has lost his drive. Now, he shows empathy, and prays for his older brother "who has been brutalized."[237] Instead of being annoyed by his brother's visit, the younger brother resolves to stand by him, saying to himself: "I will be the one who welcomes my brother, a victim of his times."[238]

---

[235] Ibid, 117.

戦友は喜んで拍手喝采だつた。

[236] Ibid, 118.

「君は俺みたいな兄を持つて情けないと思ふか。」
・・・
「いや、俺には君の気持がよく解る」

[237] Ibid, 119.

・・・憎々しいまでに叩きのめされた兄

[238] Ibid, 119.

In the political atmosphere in which labels of loyalty oversimplified the complexities of the lived experiences of Japanese Americans, Nozawa's story reveals the struggles of one "loyal" Japanese American soldier whose reality is far removed from the official image of the patriotic Nisei soldier promoted by the WRA. The superficiality of the patriotic image is reflected in the relationship between the older brother and Helen. As a uniformed American solder, the older brother could attract young women in the camp like Helen, but the relationships remained superficial. The image of the older brother acting "crazy," a moment of emotional breakdown, is also far removed from the image of Nisei soldiers' gung-ho spirit and devotion to the country. The support shown by fellow Japanese American soldiers for the older brother allows us a glimpse into the relationship between Japanese American soldiers and Caucasian officers, who symbolized the racial subordination of Japanese Americans in the US military.

In "Nagasareru mono," it is significant that the story of the "loyal" brother is narrated by a "disloyal" younger brother. Despite the factionalized political atmosphere in Tule Lake, the story ends with the reconciliation of the two brothers who were divided by the labels of "disloyal" and "loyal." The "disloyal" brother observes the gendered challenges to his brother's identity, and the transformation of his "loyal" brother. In the end, he offers consolation to his brother's wounded soul. Through his fiction, Nozawa casts a spotlight on the emotional struggles of "loyal" Japanese American men whose lived experiences are far removed from the stereotype of masculine Nisei soldier.

---

・・・私は時代に流された不幸な兄を心から迎へてやらう。

**Crisis of Masculinity:**

**Tadashi Itō's Writings at Tule Lake**

Tadashi Itō, who began to explore the question of loyalty as a contributor to *Wakoudo* in Gila River, continued to pursue the theme in his writing in Tule Lake camp. He was a prolific writer publishing in both the first and second volumes of *Dotō* and in every volume of *Tessaku* between May 1944 and April 1945. Members of literary circles thought highly of Itō's works. The editor of *Dotō* praised Itō's story "Kono michi wo yuku" (Follow this path) as "thought-provoking for present-day Nisei who were torn between their will and their circumstances."[239] When Itō became the editor of the eighth volume of *Tessaku*, his fellow editors introduced him to the readers as a writer whose work faithfully reflecting Kibei "disloyal" men's feelings toward the dilemma and circumstances that they faced.[240]

Itō's stories written between early 1943 and mid 1945, allow us to examine the trajectory of his response regarding issues of loyalty and identity. Deciding how to answer the loyalty questionnaires was not the end, but rather the beginning of the complex identity politics and struggles endured by Japanese Americans. After he was transferred to Tule Lake, Itō continued to pursue questions of identity, particularly for male Kibei "disloyals," and explore divisions within family and community created by the loyalty questionnaires.

---

[239] *Dotō* vol 1, (July 1944), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 3, 80.

意志と環境の板挟みになつてゐる現下の二世にある種の暗示を与へることであらう。

[240] *Tessaku* vol 8 (April 1945), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6, 96.

伊藤正氏の誠実を迎へて新しい編集長の一人にした。

An emerging theme in Itō's writings at Tule Lake was the crisis of masculinity faced by "disloyal" man. The wartime discourse of loyalty tended to associate courage exclusively with male soldiery. Itō's writings at Tule Lake reflected on the impact that this particular definition of courage had on "disloyal" men's sense of masculinity. In contrast to the earlier writing in Gila River where Itō portrayed both loyal and disloyal characters as courageous, Itō's writings at Tule Lake highlighted struggles among "disloyal" men to recuperate and reaffirm their sense of masculinity.

Itō's unfinished serialized novel published in the first and second volumes of *Dotō* in Tule Lake, "Kono michi o yuku" (Going this way) captures the manner in which doubt slowly erodes the initial confidence of Tōru, the "disloyal" protagonist, in his decision about loyalty.[241] Tōru is a Kibei from Hawaii who served in the US military for six months prior to Japan-US war. When the war begins, Tōru is placed in the reserve. Expecting to be called back to duty, he is torn between his obligations toward Japan and the US. Despite his strong attachment to Japan, Tōru decides to go back to the US military and declares his willingness to return to active duty anytime. His hard-reached determination, however, is betrayed by the military's decision not to accept soldiers of Japanese ancestry.

When Tōru answers the loyalty questionnaires at Gila River camp, like the protagonist in "Chichi no kotoba," he chooses to follow "the only courageous path."[242] His firm sense of conviction is animated by a spirit of protest against the US government and military that earlier refused him. However, it becomes increasingly difficult for Tōru to believe in his self-image as a courageous man. Several months later, Tōru is notified

---

[241] Itō Tadashi, "Kono michi o yuku" (Going this way), *Dotō* vol 1 (July 1944), 52-68; *Dotō* vol 2 (Date unknown), 82-93, in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 3, hereafter cited as "Konomichi o yuku."

[242] Itō Tadashi, "Kono michi o yuku," *Dotō* vol 1, 61.

・・・自己の進むべきたった一つの道を、敢然として選んだ・・・

by the camp administration that the Military Police has summoned him. The news emotionally disturbs him. Tōru remembers the threatening words added into the midst of confusion in the loyalty questionnaires: "Those who answer no to number 27 and 28 will face either or both of the following penalties: fine no more than $10,000, and/or imprisonment no more than two years."[243] As a former US soldier, labeled "disloyal," he is anxious about his unknown fate.

In this anxiety-ridden moment, Tōru feels shaken about his determination to follow the path of "disloyal" courageously.

> I will overcome any persecution. I am determined to live through these difficulties.
>
> Tōru repeated to himself the same words that he had told himself several times in the past. Despite this determination, however, he could not help but feel human loneliness and weakness, creeping into his heart. It caused too much pain to be labeled as 'coward' or 'traitors.'[244]

Tōru's irresoluteness and self doubt must be understood in the context of the public perception of the No-No Boy. Japanese American men who were not willing to volunteer faced the charges of being "cowards" and "traitors," and were considered "weak." In contrast to "Chichi no kotoba," where both loyal and disloyal brothers are

---

[243] Ibid, 61.

質問書第廿七条及び第廿八条に NO と答へたものは、一万弗以下の罰金刑、又は廿年以下の懲役若しくはその両方を並科せられる。

[244] Ibid, 62-63.

そして最後まで自分を生かし切るためには、どのやうな迫害や困難にも、みごとに打ち克つてみせる。きつと生き抜いてみせる。

これまでにも幾度か自分にいひきかせてきた同じ言葉を、徹は今亦心に繰り返してゐた。しかし、その堅い決意のどこかに、　音もなく忍び寄る人間的寂しさと弱さを、彼はどうすることも出来なかつた。意気地なしだとか卑怯者だとか、そのやうな皮相な嘲罵で酬ひられるには、それはあまりにも痛々しい気持だつた。

depicted as courageously facing the circumstances of the time, Tōru's self-confidence collapses when he fails to affirm the hyper masculine identity of the patriotic soldier.

Two of Itō's autobiographical essays, "Hatoba nite" (At the Pier), and "Aizōroku" (Records of Love and Hate), published in the fifth and sixth volume of *Tessaku* depict identical crises of masculinity.[245] In "Aizōroku," Itō discusses his rationale for choosing answers labeling him as "disloyal" following the breakout of war. He describes an increasing sense of feeling Japanese and a sense of solidarity with other Japanese Americans who have endured hardships as "enemy aliens" in the US at the time of forced removal to the concentration camps. On the morning of the evacuation, his Caucasian friend and his wife visit him to say good-by. They are sympathetic and seem to feel guilty about the country's racist treatment of Japanese Americans. Touched by his friends' sympathy and sincerity, Itō speaks honestly about his feelings:

> You feel sorry for me because you imagine my anguish at being sent to the camp. To be completely honest, I am not sad in the least. Instead, I am rather happy about the fact that I am treated as Japanese, like all other Japanese are. You may be confused. Let me explain. It was this New Year when the San Francisco Presidio notified me that I was soon to be called up again. You know about this. How many months do you think have passed since then? Today is April 29th. The reason that I have not heard anything from the Presidio is that they know that I am Japanese. It will be no surprise, then that I will be interned with other Japanese.[246]

---

[245] Itō Tadashi, "Hatobanite" (At the pier) *Tessaku* vol 5 (October 1944), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6, 2-16, hereafter cited as "Hatobanite." Itō Tadashi, "Aizōroku" (Records of love and hate) *Tessaku* vol 6 (January 1945), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6, 34-48, hereafter cited as "Aizōroku."

[246] Itō Tadashi, "Aizoroku," 44.

キャンプへ送られることを僕がよほど悲しんでると、あなたたちは思って、僕に同情して下さるんです。でも白状すると、僕はちっともそれを悲しんではゐないんです。悲しんでゐないばかりか、他のすべての日本人と共に、日本人として取扱はれることが嬉しいんです。かういっただけでは僕の気もちは理解していただけないでせう。はっきりするやうにお話しますが、再召集するからといふ通知をサンフランシスコのプレシデオから僕が受けとったのは今年の正月でした。それはあなたたちも御存知のとほりです。ところであれから何ヶ月たったと思ひますか。今日は四月の二十九日です。あれっきりプレシデオから音も沙汰もないのは、僕が日本人だってことを向ふではちゃんと見抜いてゐるからです。それを見抜かれた僕が、日本人として他の日本人と同様収容されるからって、何の不思議があるでせう。

As an army reservist, Itō expected to be called to active military service, however, he is never called back because of his ancestry. As happened to many other "disloyal" men, the increasingly racist actions of the US government and military amplify his identification with Japan.

However, once transferred in Tule Lake, Itō begins to question his decision and with it, his masculinity. In a conversation with an old Issei man, Itō reflects on anger toward Dillon Myer, National Director of WRA:

> I hate Myer for saying the "Kibei is a coward who is scared of dying." What a terrible thing to say! I was furious, and used to vow, "I will make Myer take that back." But I am not sure if I can completely hate Myer. Those hateful words contain a kernel of truth that Kibei themselves did not notice, or did not want to acknowledge. That realization hit me like a ton of bricks.[247]

Despite initial anger, Itō admits in the essay that he has internalized Myer's criticism of Kibei as being "cowards," and begins to question his own motivation for becoming a "disloyal." Itō no longer sees both loyal and disloyal men acting equally courageously. He begins to feel rather inferior to those in the military. "I don't think I have any right to criticize Nisei volunteers or Kibei who were re-drafted to the US army."[248]

---

[247] Itō Tadashi, "Hatobanite," 12.

・・・帰米は死ぬことを恐れる弱虫だ！ーといったマイヤーが、ぼくは憎いのです。ひどいことをいふ男だ。あの言葉を訂正さしてやるぞ！と憤って見ました。でもぼくには、マイヤーを憎み切ることができないのです。帰米にとって惨酷すぎるとしか思はれないあの言葉の中に、帰米自身にも気づかなかった、ー否、気づいてゐても気づかぬふりをしてゐたかも知れない何かが、かくされてゐるのです。さう思った時、ぼくははっ！としました。

[248] Ibid, 13.

志願した二世や、帰米で再召集されて行った者を、あしざまに罵る資格が自分にあるだらうか、といふ気がします。

The manner in which Itō discusses identity politics in Tule Lake reveals the highly gendered politics of identity in regards to the loyalty of Japanese Americans. As the WRA and the War Department propagated the image of Japanese American soldiers as an epitome of Japanese American patriotism, "disloyal" men who refused to serve in the military had to bear the additional burden of being labeled "coward" which challenged their masculinity. Itō's writings capture the insecurity that "disloyal" men began to feel in the face of this attack.

While Itō depicts the emotional struggles of Japanese American men who refused military service on principle, pro-Japan political groups at Tule Lake camp responded to the challenge by demonstrating a competing image of masculinity: "True Japanese manhood." Their militaristic, regimented and highly ritualized demonstration in the camp can be understood as a theatrical presentation of Japanese masculinity which competed against the American masculinity symbolized by Nisei soldiers.

Despite the threat to his masculinity, Itō remained skeptical of the pro-Japan group, and did not embrace their version of masculinity either. However, when he discussed the question of identity among the Tule Lake internees regarding "Japanese" identity, he only examined the ethno-national aspect, while leaving out the aspect of gender completely. As a result, he only presented an alternative vision to Japanese identity, but could not resolve his uncertainty over his masculinity.

When Itō was transferred to Tule Lake, he was expecting to find a strong sense of ethno-national solidarity among the internees based on their identification as Japanese. What awaited him, instead, were the endless fights among the internees over who was more Japanese:

> "They are not Japanese!!"
> The words spread like wildfire from one person to the next until they were burned into people's heart.
> "You are not Japanese. You are *inu*."
> "No, YOU are *inu*."
> "I AM Japanese."
> "Don't make me laugh. Cowards like you will never be able to go

> back to Japan."
> "You think whatever you want. I will go home first. If you can, come later. I will let people know that you are *inu*, traitor."
> "You, fool. You will never be able to go back to Japan."
> Meaningless fights like this are played out over and over again all over the place.[249]

Judging from the language used in Japanese, the fight was between two men, and the word "coward" was thrown in to insult the other's masculinity. Fights over Japanese identity, which Itō could see everywhere in the camp, could easily shifts into competition of masculinity.

In these fights, however, Itō only saw the ethno-national dimension of identity. Disillusioned with these fruitless politics over Japanese identity, Itō sought for a different definition of "Japanese" identity. An old Issei man tells Itō that he has applied for repatriation to Japan, since he wants to die in Japan, the country which he has not seen in forty years. Although the pro-Japan group members who pushed for the repatriation would praise him as "true" Japanese, the old man does not feel that he deserves such a praise: "I haven't done anything useful for Japan. I have lived, only thinking of myself." In response, Itō suggests that the desire to die in Japan shows his strong affection for Japan, and that he should not feel "less" Japanese. Attempting to encourage the old man, Itō criticizes the identity politics in the camp which have become increasingly extreme by

---

[249] Ibid, 14-15.

「彼奴は日本人じゃない！」といふ言葉が誰の口からともなく、ささやかれるやうになった。そしてそれは次から次へと、枯れ草を這ふ野火のやうに、人々の心を焼払って行った。
「貴様なんか日本人じゃない。イヌだ。」
「さういふ貴様こそイヌだ。」
「俺は日本人だ。」
「笑わすない。そんなへこたれ腰で日本へ帰れるものか。真の日本人は俺だ。」
「勝手にさう思ってるがいい。俺の方が先に帰るのだ。帰れるものなら後から帰ってみろ。此奴はイヌです。裏切者です。といってつき出してやるから。」
「貴様に日本の土が踏めるものか、馬鹿野朗」
「何だと！」
こうした暗闘が、そこでも、ここでも、繰返されて来た。」

recounting a rumor about a business man in Los Angeles who went back to Japan not because he cared for his country, but because he did not want to miss out on business opportunities. Itō tells the old man: "You never know how many others like him have already gone back to Japan. Despite the fact that they are really acting out of self interest like this guy, they are bragging about how truly Japanese they are."[250]

Criticizing the self-destructive competition over who is more "Japanese," Itō calls for ethnic solidarity based on their common experience and fate in opposition to divisive identity politics in the camp:

> Why do we use the cold words: "They are not Japanese?" Why can not we, instead, humbly and compassionately proclaim, "We are all Japanese. All of us share the same blood. Here [Tule Lake] is a pier. We are all lonely travelers who are waiting for the voyage home?"[251]

Itō envisioned an inclusive identity of "Japanese" to unite rather than divide the Tule Lake Japanese Americans. This inclusive sense of Japanese identity was Itō's critique of camp politics of identity. Since Itō did not see the gendered aspect of the dilemma of "disloyal" Japanese American men, he could not go one step further and link his critique to the crisis of masculinity experienced by many Japanese American men who refused military service.

---

[250] Ibid, 10.

他にも、心ではこの男と同じ胸算用をしながら、澄ましこんで、俺は日本人だ、と意張って交換船に乗込んだ男がゐないとは、断言できませんからね。

[251] Ibid, 16.

**Remapping the Politics of Loyalty:**

**Women Writers and Loyalty**

As a form of cultural resistance, literature became one of the central vehicles through which Japanese Americans discussed the question of loyalty. In an environment where the pressure from the WRA as well as factionalized politics within the community made open discussions of the question of loyalty extremely difficult, writers such as Nozawa and Itō were able to engage in more complex and nuanced discussions of the ways loyalty questions impacted the lives of Japanese American men.

The camp literature we have examined also reveals how little Japanese American women's identities were discussed in relation to the question of loyalty. Invariably dealing with men's identity in relation to the loyalty question, camp literature omits or at most confines female characters in peripheral position. In the works of Nozawa and Itō, the question of loyalty is explored exclusively through male relations: father, son, brother or male friend. This tendency is partly due to the fact that most of short stories, essays and editorial comments were written by relatively young, single Kibei males in their twenties and thirties in Tule Lake. A single complaint by an anonymous reader noted this tendency. The reader whose gender is not indicated was generally content, but expressed dissatisfaction that "no women writers are emerging."[252]

As I discussed in the introduction, literary schoar, Susan Schweik suggests the emergence of Nisei women's subculture within the camps, fostered by Nisei Engilish writers such as Toyo Suyemoto, Mine Okubo and Hisaye Yamamoto.[253] Were Japanse

---

[252] *Tessaku* vol 5 (October 1944), in *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6, 72.

唯一つ、女性の作者の現れぬのを寂しく思ひます。

[253] Susan Schweik, "'Pre-Poetics' of Internment."

language female writers able to formulate similar subcultures within the larger male-dominated Japanese language literary culture as it flourished in the camp? I have not yet identified the independent female-centered subculture, but a short story, writte by Fusako Kurushima suggests the possibility of literary space as a groud for exploration as to how the question of loyalty impacted the lives of Japanese Americn women.

Since the obligation of serving in the military is constructed as a "male" duty, the subsequent discourse of loyalty became increasingly gendered. The WRA's images extolled loyal men volunteering for military service as epitomizing masculine Japanese American patriotism. In contrast, Nisei women were not expected to serve the country directly. Rather, they and their Issei parents were expected to show loyalty or disloyalty through their affiliation with Nisei men. For example, "loyal" women and Issei, in the WRA's images expressed their patriotism indirectly through their support of husbands, boyfriends, or male children. Fusako Kurushima's short story, "Nagare" (The tide) explores the disruption in this gendered politics of loyalty when Mitsuko, a Nisei woman protagonist, decided not to follow her fiance's decision to go to Tule Lake as one of the "No-No boys," contrary to his expectation.[254]

"Nagare" starts with Mitsuko riding on the train out of the camp to "relocate" to Chicago. Despite the strong objection from her father, Mitsuko decided to leave the camp to explore a new life working as a commercial fashion artist in Chicago. On the train, Mitsuko recollects the "lonely life" she experienced in the camps for a year and half after Hideki Matsuda, her fiancé, left for Tule Lake. Angered by the treatment of Japaense Americans, Mitsuko recalls, Matsuda became increasingly pro-Japan around the time of the controversy surrounding the loyalty questionnairs. Alghouth Mitsuko understood the reasons for Matsuda's attraction to pro-Japan sentiments, she could not be

[254] Fusako Kurushima, "Nagare" (The tide) in *Posuton Bungei* (March 1945), 73-82.

fully convinced by the images of glorious Japan that Matsuda expressed. In the end, Matsuda left for Tule Lake alone, dissolving their engagement.

Mitsuko thinks, however, that it was not the political positions over the question of loyalty that separated the two:

> What split the two eventually was not ideological after all…
>
> > The engagement with Matsuda came as a natural process, but it was not based on love between the two. Rather, Mitsuko did so, like everbody else she thought, since she condisdered marriage rather lightly and as an obligation to social custom.[255]

The impact of the loyalty questionnaires on Mitsuko is not so much about her status on loyalty as in the case of Nisei men. Rahter, it was Mitsuko's ambivalence in relation to her attitude regarding relationships and marriage that came to the forefront because of the loyalty questionnaires.

Kurushima's "Nagare" suggests the potential for Japanese lagnauge literature to act as a critical space to discuss gendered politics of loyalty. How did Japanese American women respond to the secondary role of patriotism? Did the loyalty questions have as much of an impact on women as they did on men? These are the questions that Konno's story began addressing; however there remains a need for future research into this area of history.

---

[255] Ibid, 77.

二人の間を裂いていったものが決して思想的なもので無いことを光子は今では判然り知ってゐる。・・・
其の婚約が自然の成行であったとは言へ、別に愛情を抱いてゐない秀樹とエンゲージしてしまったといふ事は普通の人達と同じやうに、結婚を社会の慣例に対する軽い一つの義務のやうにしか考へてゐなかった。

# CHAPTER IV

## WHISPERS IN THE "SILENT" ERA: WRITING AS RESISTANCE AGAINST THE FORCE OF AMNESIA

In this chapter, I examine Japanese language Japanese American literature produced after the war between 1945 and 1952 with particular reference to ethnic identity and historical memory of Japanese American communities in the post-internment era. The first two decades following the conclusion of the war were characterized by the emergence of new leadership taken by younger Nisei who emphasized the racial integration of Japanese American into mainstream American culture and the wartime loyalty of Japanese Americans. The older generation of writers in Japanese language did not oppose or explicitly criticize the new leadership: Nevertheless, they affirmed the importance of Japanese language and culture at the time when assimilation to mainstream culture was strongly encouraged. Under the rhetoric of racial integration in which non-white's assimilation to the mainstream was expected, there was growing pressure to present Japanese America to the outside world as loyal and integrated, i.e. assimilated, American citizens. Unlike English language Japanese American writers, Japanese language writers felt less pressure to conform their writings to fit these images because their writings targeted a linguistically limited readership within the Japanese American community, and because publication did not depend on American mainstream publishers. Thus, at the time when Japanese American writers in English language were mostly silent, particularly about their wartime experiences, Japanese language writers were able to carve out a space to express concerns and sympathy to Japan and commemorating their recent memory of wartime incarcerations. Although they did not explicitly criticize the mainstream politics of the community, the ways in which writers commemorated the

wartime experiences differed from Japanese Americans who exclusively celebrated the "loyals" and prominent and seemingly Americanized Issei.

Literary movements that flourished in the camps were put to the test of continuation, as the end of the war accelerated the process of Japanese American relocation from the camps and members scattered. Although members attempted to maintain networks and struggled in their continued writing, it took almost twenty years[256] for the Japanese language literary movement to regain its vibrancy as a collective in terms of organizational activities and publications. Particularly, the first five years or so, after the end of the war, were frustrating times for the writers who cherished the literary movements in various camps. They found little time and opportunity to engage in literary activities, as they faced the adversities of transition from camp life to re-settlement in various locations in the US and sometimes in Japan.

In the process of re-settlement, the WRA made a concerted effort to "disperse" Japanese Americans throughout the US in order to avoid the prewar concentration of a Japanese population on the West Coast. In his recent study, historian Ron Kurashige points out the long-term failure of this WRA attempt. By 1950, sociologist Dorothy Thomas discovered that fewer than one out of six remained in the initial resettlement locations in the Midwest and the East. This declining number corresponded to the increasing population on the West Coast. In the city of Los Angeles alone, Kurashige calculates, by 1950 the Japanese American population quickly reached a level of thirty-seven thousand, equivalent to the prewar population.[257]

---

[256] In 1965, groups of Issei and Kibei writers in the Los Angeles area finally accomplished the long-term goal of publishing the first volume of *Nanka Bungei*, (Southern California literature), the multi-genre and trans-local literary magazine up to par with, or even exceeding the quality of *Shūkaku*, prewar literary journal. The publication of *Nanka Bungei* lasted for the next twenty years, until 1985.

[257] Lon Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict,* 102-105 and 110-111. Return of majority of Japanese American population to the West Coast did not mean the identical restoration of prewar communities. In Los Angeles, for example, Japanese Americans rather quickly reestablished Little Tokyo, which had become "Bronzeville" with newly migrated

Resettlement patterns of the writers roughly corresponded to this general pattern: although writers initially headed to various destinations beyond the West Coast, many returned to the West Coast within ten years. Some writers, such as Masao Yamashiro from Tule Lake and Keizan Yagata from Poston, initially settled in Chicago, an ideal destinations from the perspective of the WRA. Others decided to move back to their former homes on the West Coast after the exclusion order was rescinded in December 1944. Akira Togawa, Issei writer and poet in Poston, was one of those who remained in the camp until the end of the war, and moved back to Los Angeles, hoping to rebuild the grocery business he created before the war. For writers such as Jyōji Nozawa and Akira Fujita in Tule Lake, the procedure of their release from incarceration took a longer and more complicated path. Once they were re-segregated in Tule Lake as "disloyals," Nozawa and Fujita, along with approximately 5,500 others, renounced their US citizenship.[258] They were detained in Tule Lake until the camp was formally closed in March 1946, then continued to be incarcerated in the internment camps operated by the Department of Justice.

---

African American population during the war. However, the Little Tokyo ceased to be the heart of prewar ethnic agricultural economy: before the war, Little Tokyo was the center of refined ethnic networks of agricultural producers and whole sale produce dealers. Corresponding to the demise of ethnic agricultural economy, residential patterns of Japanese Americans within Los Angeles area transformed after the war. While the ethnic population in downtown Little Tokyo area significantly declined, many participated in the postwar exodus to suburbs. Consequently, Japanese American population in Los Angeles area were much more dispersed, and Little Tokyo was no longer the center of their daily lives. For detailed discussion, see Lon Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict*, 126-131.

[258] Donald Collins' study, *Native American Aliens* elaborates complex circumstances and factors beyond one's national allegiance that these renouncers had undergone. Toward the conclusion of the war, a majority of the renouncers regretted their decisions, and formed the Tule Lake Defense Committee in order to find a way to nullify their renunciations and to prevent their deportation to Japan. The Committee hired Wayne W. Collins, an attorney in San Francisco, and brought actions to the courts. The court battle took twenty-two years, upon which time the citizenship was restored to 4,978 out of the 5,409 who wished for the restoration of their citizenship.

Compared to the vibrancy of the literary movement before and during the war, the twenty-year period between 1945 and 1965 can be characterized as the "winter" of Japanese language Japanese American literature. Most Japanese language writers lacked economic resources and spare time for what was considered as leisure activities. Still, they struggled to continue writing, and to maintain informally the literary network which developed through prewar years and throughout the war. The private and unpublished diary of Togawa Akira, Issei poet, reveals the struggles of a writer to sustain his passion for literature as he and his family faced the adversities of postwar reconstruction. Born in July 5, 1903 in Yamanashi prefecture in Japan, Togawa immigrated to the United States at the age of twenty, following his father who had immigrated to the US alone in 1907. A long-term resident of Los Angeles, he was active in numerous literary circles before the war, and financed his own anthology of poetry, *Shishū* (Collections of Poems) in 1932. During the war, he and his family were incarcerated in Poston, Arizona, where he was actively engaged in the publication of *Posuton Bungei* (Poston Literary Journal). Togawa was a copious diarist and kept diaries continuously between 1921 and 1978. He was also an ardent collector of Japanese American literature in Japanese language: his collection included literary journals before, during and after the war, self-financed books as well as published books, and newspaper clippings on Japanese language literature.[259] Considering that many documents and books, particularly in the Japanese language, were destroyed or lost in the process of forced evacuation and incarceration during the war, the survival of Togawa's diaries and book collection was amazing, and in itself, a testament to his passion for literature.

One of the concerns that Togawa frequently expressed in his diary was the fate of a defeated Japan and his family members residing there. In his journal entry of October

[259] His collection of Japanese American literature, along with his own writings and personal papers are archived at the University of California, Los Angeles. See Akira Togawa Papers .

19, 1946, Togawa expressed his agony: "All the way on the other side of the ocean lies the defeated homeland. No matter how I try, I can't stop myself from thinking about it."[260] In addition to information published in ethnic newspapers, mainly reports from Japanese Americans in Japan, the Red Cross assisted Japanese American efforts to re-establish communication with relatives and friends with whom they had lost contact during the war. On June 22, 1946, Togawa noted in his diary that the Red Cross notified him of the deaths of two of his family members: his younger brother, Toshihisa, was a Japanese soldier killed toward the conclusion of the war, while his father died of an unspecified illness earlier, leaving his aging mother alone. Feeling utterly helpless, Togawa moaned: "Oh mother, Oh Toshihisa, forgive me. Compared to your lives, our lives here were too happy…"[261]

Although he felt inadequate to openly share his feelings, in his diary and poems Togawa was able to express feelings toward his family in Japan. Receiving letters from his mother and mother-in-law in Japan, he wrote: "Letters arrived from my mother and my mother-in-law. I feel so sorry for them, but I can not bring myself to write them back. I don't want to cry, I don't have time to cry."[262] After he received the second postcard from his mother, Togawa pulled himself together to compose a response letter. He started the draft of the letter in his diary before departing for work in the morning of

---

[260] Akira Togawa Papers, Box 3, Folder 4.

遠い海の彼方には敗戦の祖国がある。忘れようとしても中々思出さずには居られないのだ。

[261] Ibid.

母よ、俊久よ、許してくれ、お前達に比較したら幸福過ぎる自分達である。

[262] Ibid, 21 March 1947.

日本の母から、義母からも手紙が来た。すまないと思ふ。それでも書きたくないのだ。哭きたくないのだ。泣いては居られないのだ。

April 27, 1947. The emotion-ridden letter expressed Togawa's dreams, his longing and his loneliness for home and family:

> Dearest Mother! I miss you terribly. I have received your postcards and am glad to learn that you are well enough to visit Nagahama for the celebration of Taichi's child. That must mean that you are feeling strong. Please be sure to take good care of yourself - so that you live to be one hundred years old! Then we will surely succeed in seeing one another again someday.
>
> I must beg your pardon for not writing and for having caused you worry. Usually writing presents no problem for me, but now, as soon as I grab a pen to write you a letter I just can't stop myself from crying. I get overwhelmed with longing for you. It is painful to realize that no matter how much I yearn to visit you, I can not do so.
>
> Please try to understand how hard I struggle to keep from thinking about home, and about you. When I think of you and Toshihisa, and Uncle Tamotsu in Chiba… sadness overwhelms me and I lose all motivation to work. I lose motivation to do anything. And if I let myself become too discouraged I won't be able to fulfill my responsibilities. I won't be able to raise five children, or encourage Takuo (Togawa'a younger brother in the U.S.) and his family. Instead of thinking of home and getting depressed, I work hard – everyday from five in the morning til six in the evening, without any days off. If I concentrate on working maybe I can forget and eventually make my wife and children happy, and Takuo's family as well. And then, soon, the day when I can see you will arrive.
>
> Every morning, after I exercise and wash up, I face the Eastern sky and pray to our ancestors. I talk to father and Toshihisa, and I pray for good health. Please do not worry about me. I am going to work twice as hard to make up for Toshihisa's loss. Both Takuo and I are fine. We are working hard to re-establish our business and to make up for what we lost during the war.
>
> I have to go to work , so even though I have much more to say I will stop here. As I put the pen down I pray for your health, and that you live to the ripe old age of one hundred.[263]

---

263 Ibid.

お母さん！！懐かしいあなたからの葉書が二枚とどきました。ほんとうにうれしく思ひます。長浜の太一君の子供のお祝に行って来るほど元気で居られるとの由、こんな喜ばしいことはありません。そして力強く思ひます。

百歳になるまでも生きるつもりで体を大事にしてゐて下さい。何時か必ず再び面会することが出来るでせうから・・・。

Togawa noted in the margins of the diary that he could not hold back his tears and it is not known whether his mother actually received this letter or not. While Japanese Americans struggled to build their own lives in the post-war era, the news of a defeated Japan and the struggles of people there weighed heavily on many people's minds. Togawa's post-war diary captured an aspect of Japanese American anguish over Japan and the people there.

Another sentiment that Togawa strongly and frequently expressed in the diary was his passion for literature as well as his frustration with the daunting amount of work

---

書けばいくらでも書ける私が、手紙を書かずにお心配をかけて申訳ありませんが、許して下さい。ペンを持てば涙が先立って思うやうに書けません。ただ、心だけはあなたのそばに飛んで行きたいのです。今すぐにと矢もタテもたまらなくなってくるのですけれど、行くことも出来ない身の上、それば辛くてならないのです。

忘れてはたまらないあなたのことも、ふるさとのことも、忘れやう、忘れやうとしてゐる私の胸のなかをお察して下さい。

あなたの事を思ひ、俊久の事を思ひ、千葉の保伯父さんのことを考へ、東京の　　のことを偲び、次から次へと悲しいことのみ瞼に浮かんで来る時、仕事をするのにも張り合いでもなく、何にも手につかなくなって来るのです。

然し、私が今、気の弱いことを云って、失望、落胆して、何もせずに居ったら、五人の子供を育てる事も出来ません。卓雄に力をつけて卓雄の親子達を幸福にすることも出来ないのです。だから、毎日毎日朝の五時から夕方の六時まで、休日も無く働いてゐます。何も彼も忘れて働いてゐれば、自分の子供も、妻も、卓雄の一家族も皆幸福にすることが出来、やがてお母さんにも又、親戚や近所の人々にも喜んでいただくことも出来るやうになるだろうと思って、夢中になって働いて居ます。

毎朝起きて顔を洗った後を、裸で体操をして、その後東の空に向って合掌して外川家先祖代々の佛様にお祈りし、父上にも俊久にも心の中で語り、お母さんや、私達が達者でゐるやうにお守り下さいと祈ってゐるのです。そして、俊久の分まで働くつもりでゐるのです。お母さんも安心してゐて下さい。私も卓雄もかうして達者で暇なく働いてゐるのです。そして戦争の為に失ったものを、再び取り戻して、立派な事業をやるつもりで努力してゐます。

色々と書きたいことばかりですけれど、もう仕事に出かけなければなりませんからこれで止めます。

くれぐれもお体を大切に百才までも生きるつもりでゐて下さるやうに祈り、これでペンをおきます。

that stripped him of time to engage in literary activities. Despite the grueling schedule necessary to operate a grocery business, Togawa was full of literary ideas and was driven by his urge to produce. The constant challenge for him was finding time to write. When Shigetomi Hatsue, a fellow writer in Poston, visited him at his home in Los Angeles on October 14, 1945, she reminded him of days at Poston, where they were deeply involved in literary activities. Togawa expressed frustration at his current conditions: "For the moment I am going to have to ignore my literary pursuits, or any other interests for that matter. It is painful, but there is no alternative."[264]

His diary offered a space for him not only to express his feelings of frustration, but also to work on literary writings. Keeping a diary while he made coffee in the morning became such a precious time to Togawa that he noted his excitement: "this particular time in the morning is my favorite moment of the whole day."[265] Togawa's resolution for the new year in 1947 was to make diary entries without missing a day:

> I would like to write this year. At the very least I want to keep a diary without leaving any blank pages. I would be satisfied with that, for then I could select two or three essays or poems to work on. Quality over quantity. If I can write one piece of fine quality, then I will be happy.[266]

---

[264] Akira Togawa Papers, Box 3, Folder 3.

暫くは文芸も他の趣味もすっかり殺して生きて行かなければならないのだ。寂しいが仕方がない。

[265] Akira Togawa Papers, Box 3, Folder, 3, 8 November 1945.

ポコポコポコポコとコーヒーのたぎる音を聞きながら昨日の日誌を書き光明適中を読む。この朝のひとときが自分の最も楽しい一刻なのである。

[266] Akira Togawa Papers, Box 3, Folder 4, 20 January 1947.

今年は俺も書きたいと思ふ。少なくとも此の日記帖は空白な頁のないやうに埋めたいと思ふ。それだけで良いのだ。そしてその中から随筆か、詩を二三、選出したら満足である。量より質、たつた一つでもいいものをまとめたらよいのである。

For Togawa, keeping a diary was his way of sustaining literary writings. He even went through the process of producing drafts of his literary pieces within the pages of his diary. Particularly when time was scarce, writing became the central theme of his diary. Togawa often recorded his desire to write, his frustration with his inability to write, and his ideas regarding the literary work he had yet to produce. The entry on May 7, 1947 revealed his urge to write, coupled with his frustration:

> What shall I write? I would like to write an essay or a poem. But thinking of writing, I just pass the days accomplishing nothing.
>
> I would like to write a poem, titled "Smiling Sun." In the beginning of the camp life, I wrote a poem, "Distorted Sun." Now I have reached the state of mind that nothing matters including who won and who lost, thus the next poem is "Smiling Sun." In the poem, I would like to reveal how I reached this state of mind.[267]

During the early post-war years when fewer new reading materials in the Japanese language were available, Togawa sometimes re-visited his personal library of Japanese American literature. Reading his own poems written in Poston during the war, he concluded once again his desire to produce: "While I was reading what I wrote in Poston," he explained, "I thought I still have what it takes to be a writer. But the problem now is time…"[268]

---

[267] Ibid, 7 May 1947.

何か書きたい。随筆か詩を書きたい。かふ思いながら空しく流れてゆく日々である。

「微笑む太陽」と　題で詩を書きたいと思ふ。「いびつな太陽」からキャンプ生活がスタートして、そして、勝も負もない「微笑む太陽」にまで漕ぎつけた自分の心境を吐露したいのである。

[268] Akira Togawa Papers, Box 3, Folder 5, 21 October 1948.

・・・ポストン在住当時の自分のものを読んでいて、自分には末だ末だ書き得る天分が残ってゐるとも思ふが・・・さてさてタイムのないことよ・・・。

In addition to the diary, correspondence and meetings with other writers assisted Togawa in maintaining his passion for writing and literature. He maintained a personal friendship with Matsubara Nobuo, an editor of the *Posuton Bungei*. Matsubara opened a restaurant in Los Angeles, called *Posuton shokudō*, which became one of the places that hosted informal reunion meetings of *Posuton Bungei*.[269] When Kitamura Toshio, a former *Posuton Bungei* member, visited Los Angeles from Chicago in 1952, eight former *Posuton Bungei* members, including Togawa, gathered for dinner .. Sharing memories and talking about literature, Togawa "enjoyed the conversations with close friends" despite his fatigue from a long busy day at work. [270] Although these were not formally literary group meetings as in prewar years and at Poston, they were important for Togawa and others who struggled to continue producing literature.

Having experienced the publication of literary magazines in the camps, writers such as Masao Yamashiro and Nobuo Matsubara attempted to produce Japanese-language literary journals. Their attempts however did not often materialize, or if they did, the magazines were short-lived.[271] Under the circumstances where independent literary journals hardly survived financially, the ethnic newspapers played a critical role. When such papers as *Rafu* Shimpō and *Kashū Mainichi* were re-published in Los Angeles, their Japanese language sections became an important venue for writers to publish and share their literary works. In the literary section of ethnic papers, most works published were poetry in various forms: formalized styles of Japanese poetry such as tanka, haiku, and senryū as well as free-style poetry. The popularity and visibility of poetry can be attributed to what Audre Lorde conceptualized the "economic" aspect of

---

[269] Akira Togawa Papers, Box 3, Folder 4, 10 February 1947.

[270] Akira Togawa Papers, Box 4, Folder2, 10 May 1952.

[271] One such literary journal published immediately after the war was *Jiryū*. Postwar diaries of Akira Togawa mentioned several unsuccessful attempts by Masao Yamashiro and Nobuo Matsubara to publish literary journals.

the production of literature. As an African American, feminist and lesbian writer, Lorde challenged feminist writers to consider how the multiplicity of oppressions include not only gender, but also race and class, which produce different levels of access and privilege for artists, producing women-centered arts. Lorde considers poetry as one of the most economical forms of literary production, since it "requires the least physical labor, the least material, and the one which can be done between shifts, in the hospital pantry, on the subway, and on scraps of surplus paper." Accordingly she asserts that poetry "has been the major voice of poor, working class, and Colored women" in the United States since the late 1970s. She calls for further scrutiny in terms of class and racial privileges of the earlier feminist demand for "a room of one's own":

> A room of one's own may be a necessity for writing prose, but so are reams of paper, a typewriter, and plenty of time. The actual requirements to produce the visual arts also help determine, along class lines, whose art is whose. In this day of inflated prices for material, who are our sculptors, our painters, our photographers?[272]

In the trying years of resettlement, poetry enabled many Japanese American writers to continue their literary activities. The brevity of poetry also helped ethnic newspapers to publish the literary works. Having been shut down during the wartime, the ethnic newspapers as business enterprises were struggling to re-build. *Kashū Mainichi*, for example, had to downsize the Japanese language sections from eight pages before the war to four pages after the war.

Poetry sections not only provided writers with the opportunity to publish their works, but they also functioned as "bulletin boards" of various poetry societies which were reorganized from poetry societies in the camps. With the dispersal of members

---

[272] Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" in her *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde* (Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1984), 116.

during the postwar, poetry sections became an important means of communication and announcements for the poets. Shasui Takayanagi, renowned Issei poet who helped maintain the poetry society in Heart Mountain camp became one of the central figures who kept the networks of dispersed poets and writers in Los Angeles. As a long-term resident of Los Angeles, he was active in the prewar literary community: he was a member of Naneikai, a poetry society, and his tanka were also recognized by tanka societies in Japan. While he was interned in the Heart Mountain concentration camp in Wyoming during the war, he organized Hokubei Tankakai (North America Tanka Society) and taught classes on tanka.[273] Collected letters addressed to Takayanagi between 1943 and 1945 reveal wide networks of fellow writers, poets, and his students who exchanged information on literary activities in different camps as well as new places of resettlement out of the camps.[274]

After he returned to Los Angeles in 1946, Takayanagi continued to lead Hokubei Tankakai, and he served as a tanka referee for the *Rafu Shimpō's* tanka section. Established as a leading tanka poet within the Japanese American community, Takayanagi was also recognized in Japan in 1947. His poem was selected one of fifteen best tanka out of 13,000 poems mailed to the 1947 Kyūchū Utahajime, New Year's Poetry Contest, annually hosted by Japanese Imperial family. Elated, *Rafu Shinpō* treated the news as a news flash from Tokyo. The article emphasized how Takayanagi's tanka received special recognition even among the fifteen selected tanka by various Japanese mainstream media:

> As the Imperial Court announced the selected poems, *Mainichi Shimbun* only published two tanka [out of fifteen] under the headline, "The Selection Includes Japanese in the US": Mr.

---

[273] Yuji Ichioka and Eiichiro Azuma, *A Buried Past II: A Sequel to the Annotated Bibliography of the Japanese American Research Project Collection* (Los Angeles: Asian American Studies Center, University of California, Los Angeles, 1999), 114.

[274] Shasui Takayanagi Papers, Box 2, Folders 4-7.

> Takayanagi's tanka was one of them. *Asahi Shimbun* published seven, which included Takayanagi's poem. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, too, published his poem along with two others. Furthermore, the Central Tokyo Broadcasting station aired his poem twice on the radio; in the afternoon news of January 23rd, and in the children's hour on the afternoon of the 24th.[275]

When the Los Angeles daily *Kashū Mainichi* resumed publication in August 1, 1947 after a seven-year suspension, Takayanagi's tanka was quoted in the front page editorial and praised for precisely capturing the spirit of reconstruction both for war-torn Japan and Japanese American communities:

> At daybreak,
> placing my feet firmly upon the earth
> I humbly pray
> For my ancestral country
> To rise [276]

The *Kashū Mainichi* offered the Hokubei Tankakai (North America Tanka Society), as Tachibana Ginsha (Tachibana Haiku Society) and Tsubame Ginsha (Sparrow Senryu Society), regular space to publish their poems. Serving as a referee, Takayanagi invited poets to send their tanka to his home address. Selected poems were published monthly in the "Hokubei Tanka" (North American Tanka) section of *Kashū Mainichi*.

Takayanagi and Hokubei Tankakai were also enthusiastic about introducing contemporary Japanese poems to the Japanese American readership. They studied premier Japanese poetry journals such as *Araragi* (Japanese Yew) and *Kokumin Bungaku*

---

[275] *Rafu Shinpō* 31 January 1947, 3.

此の選歌の発表で毎日新聞は「在米邦人も選歌」といふ見出しで僅かに二首を掲載、高柳氏の作がその一つで、朝日新聞は七首を取上げ、同氏の作を掲げてゐる。読売新聞も三首の中に同氏の選歌を加へ、更に東京中央放送局でもラヂオを通じ 23 日午後のニュース時間と、24 日午後の子供の時間に特に高柳氏の選歌を放送した。

[276] *Kashū Mainichi* 1 August 1947, 2.

明け初むる大地しつかと踏みしめて起てよ祖国と乞ひ祈りまつる

(National Literature), and selected the best poems to produce booklets as resources for students of tanka in America, which provided easier access of Japanese poetry to Japanese American readers. In a note to the *Kashū Mainichi* poetry section of September 14, 1948, Takayanagi offered these booklets for free to whomever was interested, asking only for return postage.[277]

Reading poems from Japan helped Japanese Americans to glimpse what people in Japan were going through during and after the war. Japanese Americans, particularly Issei and Kibei, were concerned about the devastated homeland and the whereabouts of relatives and friends. At a time when the flow of information was still limited, the Japanese sections of ethnic newspapers reported almost daily the distressed conditions of postwar Japan. Poetry added sentiment to these journalistic reports.

Japanese American poems published in the newspaper reflected their concern about Japan, and were often composed in response to contemporary poems from Japan. Akino Abe, a member of Hokubei Tankakai, expressed her condolence about the devastated conditions of Japan:

> How heart-rending
> Even the poems from Japan
> Reflect the devastation of war[278]

Another poet, Iryū Chūjō, expressed helplessness in learning of how privation in Japan forced many women and young men to go into prostitution merely to survive:

> Selling your body,
> Surviving the war.
> Imagine the humiliation[279]

---

[277] *Kashū Mainichi,* 14 September 1948, 2.

[278] Ibid, 2.

日本の歌誌のみうたのおほかたは戦禍の世相見せていたまし

[279] Ibid, 2.

Among the distressing news from Japan, one could occasionally find cause for hope, as expressed in Shasui Takayanagi's poem:

> Offering a glimpse of relief
> The letter is filled
> With the spirit of rejuvenation[280]

For many Japanese Americans who were themselves suffering from the devastating impact of wartime incarceration, sending a care package to Japan was one of the few practical ways that Japanese in the US could contribute to Japan's reconstruction. Sei Fujii, an Issei leader and the president of *Kashū Mainichi*, warned Japanese Americans who were thinking about returning to Japan that Japanese Americans in Japan who had returned voluntarily or had been deported back to Japan were facing tremendous difficulties making a living. To help Japan, Fujii advised, people should stay in the US, save money and send as many packages as possible:

> If you were to go back to Japan, not only will you suffer, but you will also make your family and relatives suffer. Instead, why don't you stay in the US, and save money? Your packages to your siblings will be greatly appreciated.[281]

In an article entitled, "A Package to Japan, Appreciated with Tears," published in September 29, 1947 in *Kashū Mainichi,* a Nisei soldier who was serving with the US

---

身を売りて生くる汚辱も戦災にうちひしがれて思ひみぬにか

[280] Ibid, 2.

いささかは心遣らむか再建の意気たのもしき便もありて

[281] Fujii Sei, "Watashi no run" (My column), *Kashū Mainichi,* 26 August 1948, 4.

そんな所へ帰って自分も苦労し、兄弟親戚にも共難儀をさすよりも、暫く米国に留まって、いくらでもお金を儲けて日本の兄弟に品物を送ってあげられたら、どんなに喜ばれるでせうか。

occupation forces reported how much the gift parcels of essentials such as sugar and coffee were appreciated by Japanese who were suffering severe material shortages. At the end of the article, the author encouraged the readers to send packages to Japan, adding practical advice for the package to pass the inspection: "Please be careful when you are to send powdered materials such as coffee, coco, and bread crumbs. You need to wrap them separately in cloth."[282]

Sending a package to Japan became such a common practice during the postwar that among Japanese Americans the English word, "gifuto pāsel," entered the vocabulary of tanka poetry. Daijirō Koikeya read:

> Enclosed in the thank-you note
> For the gift parcel to my niece
> Is a pressed leaf of *hagi*[283] from home[284]

Ryūshū Kishida also read about the family's appreciation for the packet from the US. Kishida's family in Japan treated the packet with the highest respect: the packet was at first offered to the family alter in a common reverential gesture for important gifts and precious items. Kishida's tanka simultaneously expressed mourning over his late father:

> My brother says
> The gift parcel I sent
> Was first offered to the spirit of my father [285]

---

[282] "Namidade kansha sareru Nihon eno kozutsumi" (A Package to Japan, Appreciated with Tears), *Kashū Mainichi,* 29 September 1947, 3.

ただ品物を送る場合、粉類（コーヒー、ココ、パンコ等）は必ず一度きれに包むやう注意がありました。

[283] A Japanese bush clover. One of the seven autumn flowers, and it blossoms in early autumn with crimson or white tiny flowers.

[284] *Kashū Mainichi,* 1 October 1947, 2.

ギフトパーセルの礼の手紙に古里の萩の押花入れたり姪は

[285] *Kashū Mainichi,* 1 October 1947, 2.

送りたるギフトパーセルは先づ父のみ霊に供へしと兄よりの文

Kishida, being in the US, probably had not learned of the death of his father; thus his older brother attempted to relieve the author's regret by reporting that he had spoken to the spirit of the father and let the father know his younger brother was alright.

Hideko Michiie expressed her deep concern about Japan even after sending a gift parcel:

> I think of the ravaged country
> And though I send gift parcels
> My days, still, are restless [286]

## Maintaining Memory and Bicultural Identity through Japanese Language Literature

Japanese language literature such as these tanka written immediately after the war are critical resources for historians during so called silent period of Japanese American history. In his critical study of the politics of memory, remembering, and history, historian David Yoo pointedly characterized the atmosphere of the silence in the postwar: "In trying to secure a future in cold war America, most Nikkei [people of Japanese descent] opted for silence, since they knew too well how disastrous the label of disloyalty could be."[287] As discussed in the introduction, nothing captured the essence of this politics of "silence" better than the fate of the first two English language literary works by Japanese Americans published in the mid 1950s: Monica Sone's best seller, *Nisei Daughter* (1953) and John Okada's *No-No Boy* (1957), which were all but ignored. The

---

[286] *Kashū Mainichi,* 17 November 1947, 2.

ギフトパーセルを送りつげどもくにのさま偲べば思ひ安らぐ日無き

[287] David Yoo, "Captivating Memories," 682.

public reception of *No-No Boy* was a telling example of the unwillingness of Americans – both within and outside Japanese American communities - to engage politically or emotionally with the internment experience. Just as literary critic Jinqi Ling emphasized the significance of Cold War ideologies in shaping the mainstream literary market, historian Lon Kurashige, in his *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival, 1934-1990*, insisted that we understand the politics of the "silent" years in the renewed paradigm of Cold War liberalism which minority leaders engaged in during the postwar.[288]

As Japan's status dramatically transformed from enemy to junior partner in the Cold War, American opinion toward Japanese Americans shifted.[289] Building on the works of African American historians, such as Brenda Gayle Plummer, Mary Dudziak, and Penny Von Eschen, who revealed the intricate connections between the Cold War foreign policy and the formation of the modern civil rights movement,[290] Kurashige asserted that:

---

[288] See particularly Kurashige's discussion in chapter 4, "Defining Integration: The Return of Nisei Week and Remaking of Japanese American Identity" of his *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict*, 119-150.

[289] Alien Land Law in various Western states and Issei's citizenship status were two focal issues that symbolically captured this shift in political atmosphere toward Japanese in the US. In 1946, voters in California voted down the initiative to make the Alien Land Law part of the California's state constitution. Two years later in 1948 in the *Oyama v. State of California* case, the US Supreme Court ruled that part of California's Alien Land Law was unconstitutional, which paved the way to subsequent challenges to the Alien Land Law. In regard to Issei citizenship, the Congress removed the legal barrier for Issei to become naturalized citizens in 1952. For the detailed discussion of legal status of Japanese Americans, see Frank Chuman, *The Bamboo People: The Law and Japanese Americans* (Del Mar, California: Publisher's Inc., 1976).

[290] Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), hereafter cited as *Rising Wind*; Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), hereafter cited as *Cold War Civil Rights*; Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism*, 1937-1957 (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), hereafter cited as *Race against Empire*.

> The threat of a world over-run by communism, or (at its starkest) destroyed by nuclear weapons, pushed American policy makers and cultural producers to beat a speedy retreat from overtly anti-Japanese sentiments.[291]

This shift in the political atmosphere significantly figured in the process of re-development of Japanese American ethnic leadership in postwar Los Angeles. "The language of racial integration" in the context of the Cold War, became the mainstream view among ethnic leaders in the Los Angeles Japanese American community. Kurashige highlighted the major transition from prewar emphasis on cultural pluralism to supposedly mono-cultural Americanization based on racial integration:

> After the war, the question was no longer whether the ethnic community should assimilate into mainstream society; it was how to break down its walls of exclusivity while still retaining ties of ethnic solidarity that for so long had defined it.[292]

The promotion of Americanism was apparent both in Issei and Nisei leadership. When Issei leaders reorganized two of the most powerful prewar immigrant associations in 1946, they adopted English titles: The Rafu Nihonjinkai was renamed the Japanese Chamber of Commerce, and Nanka Shōkō Kaigisho became the Japanese Businessman's Association.[293] The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), a Nisei civic organization from the 1930s, also underwent major reorganization by replacing the wartime leadership whose all too eager collaboration with the WRA and FBI had earned them a notorious reputation in the community, with younger Nisei who came of age during the war as their new leadership. This new JACL leadership promoted

---

[291] Ibid, 126.

[292] Ibid, 116.

[293] Ibid, 114.

Americanism defined by racial integration, transforming the organization's prewar mission to save and protect Little Tokyo as a distinctively ethnic business enclave.[294]

The new orthodoxy of Americanism, defined by racial integration, transformed the ways in which Japanese American leaders projected the image of Japanese America through such public events as the Nisei Festival in Los Angeles. Wartime loyalty became one of the central assets for defining postwar Japanese Americans, as it also became a powerful and successful tool to challenge overtly anti-Japanese sentiments and legislation. The rising status of Nisei veterans as war heroes, along with their active community involvement through newly established veterans' organizations, epitomized Japanese American postwar politics to assert their rightful position in the US as "loyal" Americans.[295]

The meta-language of racial integration, along with other factors, also produced a new image of Issei. Kurashige captured the transformation of the ways in which Issei were represented in the Nisei Festival from prewar to postwar: while Pioneer Night during the Nisei Festival "honored all of the most elderly immigrants" as "survivors of economic and social hardship" during the 1930s, the honor of Pioneer Night in the 1950s was reserved exclusively to those Issei who were the most recognized political leader preferably with fluency in English language skills. This, Kurashige contends, symbolized the new construct of Issei's "social status and respectability," as Japanese America as a whole aspired to achieve such a position through racial integration.[296]

Kurashige's study eloquently illustrates the dynamics of Japanese American community politics where certain voices –be they loyal or respectable- were highlighted, while others were repressed in the renewed context of Cold War America. Situated in the

---

[294] Ibid, 115.

[295] Ibid, 134.

[296] Ibid, 144.

context of the 1950s, the initially cool reception of the novel, *No-No Boy* should come as no surprise, as its central theme of disloyalty would complicate and challenge the narrative of racial integration of "loyal" Japanese Americans into mainstream society. However, *No-No Boy* also points to the important fact that Japanese Americans continued to grapple with issues of ethnic identity even if less publicly and contrary to the image of the so-called silent years. The notion of these silent years, therefore, should not dull historians' ability to hear whispered expressions of dissenting voices within the Japanese American community. While articulating the formation of a new orthodoxy among the postwar Japanese American leaders, Kurashige also painstakingly delineated challenging and contesting voices of women and juvenile delinquents, among others. By doing so, Kurashige highlighted the fluidity of community power dynamics where imposition of a particular view took persistent efforts of surveillance and policing of an internal Other.

Examining Japanese language Japanese American literature produced immediately after the war uncovers another layer of the complex politics of the Japanese American communities. Politically, the older generation of writers in the Japanese language did not explicitly criticize the political mainstream of the Japanese American communities. What they did, however, was to affirm value and vitality to Japanese language and culture at the time when many believed that minority's assimilation to mainstream culture was the only way for successful racial integration into American society. Under the orthodoxy of Americanism, there was a growing pressure to present Japanese America to the outside world as loyal and assimilated American citizens. Japanese language writers felt less pressure to conform their writings to these images because their writings targeted a linguistically limited readership within the Japanese American community, and because their publication did not rely on American mainstream publishers. Thus, at the time when Japanese American writers in the English language were mostly silent, particularly about their wartime experiences, Japanese language writers were able to carve out a space to express concerns and sympathy to

Japan and commemorate their recent memory of wartime incarcerations. Although they did not explicitly criticize the mainstream, the ways in which writers commemorated wartime experiences did not closely follow the mainstream which exclusively celebrated the exploit of "loyal" Nisei and prominent and seemingly Americanized Issei.

## Remembering Incarceration Immediately after the War: "Life Record Keeping" of Sei Fujii, Sasaki Sasabune, and Hisa Aoki

Three prominent Issei leaders, journalists and writers, Fujii Sei, Sasaki Sasabune and Hisa Aoki published their diaries and life-writing during their wartime incarceration between 1946 and 1952. Fujii and Sasaki shared similar backgrounds in regards to their leadership positions in the community. Fujii was one of the prominent male Issei leaders in the prewar Los Angeles ethnic community. His leadership was also enhanced by his fluency in English and educational background in the US. After graduating from Compton High School, he attended and obtained a BA degree from the University of Southern California. He became the president of *Kashū Mainichi*, and served as the president of the Japanese Association as well.[297] Sasaki was an established Issei journalist and writer who worked for *Rafu Shimpō* before and after the war. His publication before the war included *Hariuddo no Kijin: Tanaka Shūrin* (Eccentric in Hollywood: Tanaka Shūrin) (1938), a biography of Tanaka Shūrin, a poet in Southern California, as well as a collection of autobiographical essays and short stories, *Amerika Seikatsu* (Life in America) (1937). Sasaki was a member of Japanese Association in Los Angeles, and served for as secretary.

[297] Ibid, 26.

Hisa Aoki was a prominent female leader in the prewar Los Angeles Japanese American community. Aoki first immigrated to Hawai'i with her husband Tokubun Aoki, a Buddhist minister. After immigrating to the US, Aoki taught Japanese language in Hawai'i and California. Using her pen name, Asako Yamamoto, she frequently published her writings in the Los Angeles based bilingual daily, *Kashū Mainishi* led by Fujii Sei.[298] Within the West coast Japanese American prewar communities, she was well known as a community leader who addressed issues regarding women's rights.

Due to their prominent positions in the prewar ethnic community, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, all three, Fujii, Sasaki and Aoki, became targets of government investigation justified as necessary for national security. Fujii and Sasaki were subsequently imprisoned in the internment camps for enemy aliens operated by the Justice Department.[299] During his incarceration in the Santa Fe internment camp in New Mexico, Fujii became sick and spent most of his incarceration in the prison hospital. After he was released from the camp, Fujii moved back to Los Angeles, and resumed publication of his newspaper, *Kashū Mainishi,* on August 11, 1947.

In postwar Los Angeles, Fujii also played a critical role in challenging California's Alien Land Law, which prohibited Issei from owning land. In 1948, Fujii

---

[298] Like many of her counterparts in Japanese American literary circles, Aoki self-published the collection of her essays, *Kokoro no kage* (Shade of One's Heart). I have not yet been able to locate this book in any libraries or archives.

[299] The various agencies of the US government had conducted extensive surveillance on the Japanese American community for more than a decade prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Based on this intelligent information, the US government arrested several thousand Japanese Americans who were considered "dangerous," and incarcerated them in the Internment Camps run by the Justice Department for enemy aliens. Whereas political affiliation with fascist groups seemed to be important factors in deeming someone "dangerous" in the case of German and Italian enemy aliens, cultural affiliations, regardless of political position, -be it officers in business association, language school instructors, Buddhist priests- factored significantly for Japanese listed as "dangerous." Compared to the experiences in the concentration camps run by War Relocation Authority, Japanese American experiences in the Justice internment camps were less known. Several existing first-person accounts as well as scholarly research in English were primarily produced after 1980.

bought a property in Los Angeles, which he registered under his name. When the state of California attempted to escheat the land under the Alien Land Law, Fujii fought back in court, challenging the legality of the law itself. After the initial defeat, he appealed to the California Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of Fujii and nullified the Alien Land Law on April 17, 1952. *Fujii Sei v. State of California*, along with *Oyama v. State of California* and *Masaoka Haruye v. State of California,* ruled that the Alien Land Law violated the equal protection clause of the fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution, and stripped the power to enforce the law from the state of California.

Fujii's postwar writing, as well as his wartime writing was often published in his own paper, *Kashū Mainichi.* On August 1 and 13, 1947, for example, he published excerpts of his wartime diaries in *Kashū Mainichi*. Also, he had a daily column, titled "Watashi no run," (My Section), where he discussed both current matters particularly of interest to Japanese Americans and his wartime experiences.

Sasabune Sasaki was a prominent leader in the prewar Los Angeles community, and was first incarcerated in the Justice Department camp in Fort Missoula, Montana. He was transferred to the Amache concentration camp in Colorado where he was reunited with his family. In postwar Los Angeles, Sasaki continued to write and publish in *Rafu Shinpō,* which resumed publication on January 1, 1946. He wrote a daily column, "Zakkichō" (Notebook), in which he often wrote about wartime experiences. Although not all of his writings in his column took the form of diary entries, his recollections were often based on his diary writings.[300] In 1950, Sasaki published a book of wartime experience, titled *Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Ki* (Life Records of Incarceration).[301]

---

[300] His column is usually organized topically with such subtitles as "Jyūtakunan" (Housing problem) (1 January 1946) and "Hi ōshū shorui" (Confiscated papers) (16, 17, 18 and 19 January 1946). When he discussed the detailed day-to-day experiences of incarceration, his writing seems to be based on the wartime diary that Sasabune kept. He once explicitly revealed the source of his writing: "Here is what I wrote in my memoir/diary (omoide no ki) on the day when about a hundred of us was transported from Tahanga (name of the place) to Montana." See Sasaki's column in *Rafu Shimpō*, 2 February 1946, 4.

In the preface to the book, Sasaki stressed the importance of his writings not only as a personal narrative, but also as a record of the experiences of his fellow Japanese Americans:

> For six months I shared the experiences of incarceration with my fellow countrymen - from the night of the outbreak of the war between Japan and the United States. This book is a raw record of that experience. I depict the conditions and circumstances around me, and therefore it is both an account of my own personal experience as well as that of the others who were incarcerated there with me.[302]

Preceding the preface, Sasaki inserted nine pages of photographic reproductions of materials produced in the camp, including a sketch of the mess hall drawn by an internee and arts and crafts produced in Fort Missoula, Montana, where Sasaki explained, "neither tools nor materials were available."[303] Perhaps as a strategy to enhance the authenticity of his text, Sasaki also included a photographic reproduction of a page written while he was in the camp, which identified as a "memorandum for this book, surreptitiously sneaked out of the camp with authority's surveillance."[304] As in the case of writers of Japanese language text in concentration camps administered by the WRA, the meaning of keeping diaries was transformed for those such as Fujii and Sasaki who

---

私の思ひ出の記の中に、私達百余名がダハンガからモンタナ送りとなった其の当日の事が、こう書いてある。

301 Sasabune Sasaki, *Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Ki.*.

302 Ibid, 1.

私は、開戦当夜以来六ヶ月他の同胞と共に抑留所生活をした、此の書は、其の期間に於ける私の体験や、周囲の状況をありのままに描いた記録なのである、だから私自身の体験記であると同時に、或程度一緒に抑留された同僚達の体験記でもあるのである。

303 Ibid.

304 Ibid.

厳重な役人の目を盗んで抑留所から持出した本書の覚書き

were incarcerated in the Justice Department camps. Under the intensified regulation of one's expression behind the barbed wires, diaries came to bear renewed meaning in that they kept records of injustices on a day-to-day basis. Keeping a diary in this context was no longer an individual practice, but it bore the important meaning of preserving memory for Japanese Americans.

The contrast in the experiences of male Issei community leaders and writers such as Fujii and Sasaki, and female writers like Aoki, reveal how gendered Japanese Americans' experiences were during the war. Immediately after Peal Harbor, both Aoki and her husband were investigated by FBI agents. On March 13, 1942, Aoki's husband was immediately arrested and sent to the Justice Department internment camp. Although Aoki herself was subject to arrest as a Japanese language school teacher, she was released after about a fifty-minute inquiry by a FBI agent so that she could take care of her two small children.[305] After her husband's arrest, Aoki single-handedly prepared for the family's incarceration in the Santa Anita "Assembly Center." On October 19, 1942, she and her children were relocated to the Gila River concentration camp where they were reunited with her sister's family. In both Santa Anita and Gila River, many of her prewar readers recognized her and asked her to write for the camp newspapers and literary

---

[305] Asako Yamamoto, *Ibara aru shiramichi* (Thorny path) (Tokyo: Shirahashi Insatsujo, 1952), 92-93, hereafter cited as *Ibara*. Historian George Sanchez argues that the politically liberal bureaucrats in the City of Los Angeles did not challenge the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans primarily because of their concern for the plight of the Japanese American community's social welfare as the community lost a significant portion of breadwinners, the heads of households, the business leaders due to the sweeping round-ups of Issei males. The City politicians and bureaucrats were afraid of the projected social service costs to support primarily female and underage Japanese American individuals in the community. Delineating the striking parallel of racial politics between wartime treatment of Japanese Americans and Los Angeles City efforts in deporting Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans during the 1930s, Sanchez provides a chilling answer to why there was no significant protests and/or objections. Even leftist leaning politicians and populations of mainstream American society did little or nothing to object the decision of forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans solely based on their racial identity with no regard to their citizenship status. For more information, see Raul Homero Villa and George Sanchez, *American Quarterly: Los Angeles and the Future of Urban Cultures*, 56:3 (September 2004).

journals. However, she persistently refused the invitation, explaining that she wished to become a farm worker. In the journal entry of November 12, 1942, she wrote: "If I would become popular, some would envy my popularity. The envy may bring danger to us in the end. Considering my current circumstance, safety is my first priority."[306] As an only parent in the camp, she was concerned with her children's safety, and therefore, deliberately avoided involvement in any aspect of camp politics. To work as a farm hand instead of a writer, Aoki believed, provided her family safety and anonymity in the often volatile political environment in the camps. On July 21, 1943, Aoki received an express mail from her husband in a Justice Department camp who informed her that permission had been granted for the entire Aoki family to return to Japan in the next available repatriation ship.[307]

---

306 Ibid, 222.

人気があがれば、そこには人の嫉視があり遂には危険にもさらされることになる。私の今の境涯としては何よりも安全第一でなくてはならない。その点百姓は何よりも目立たず安全地帯に違いないのだ。

307 Ibid, 261-262. The Aokis returned to Japan sometime during the war, and survived the hardship of Japanese Americans who faced hostile reception from Japanese society due to their association with the US, the enemy, and Japanese society's persistent class bias toward Japanese immigrants. When *Kashū Mainichi* was re-published in postwar Los Angeles, Sei Fujii, the president and personal friend of the Aokis, published Aoki's letters to him from Japan in a column series entitled "Gendai Nihon no josei" (Contemporary Japanese women). In the columns, Aoki reported plight of Japanese Americans in Japan, particularly paying attention to women's status in Occupied Japan. Her writing is a rare source for historians to understand Japanese American experiences in Japan during and immediately after the war. For example, in the column of December 13, 1947, she discussed bizarre crime syndrome of "Nise Nisei" (Fake Nisei):

> I understand that this is the typical way of the world, but heart of the human being is so disgraceful… These days, "Fake Nisei" became a rampant phenomenon, which was often related to the petit crime. They were gaudy, and they pretended to speak broken English. I see so many men and women who were pompously proclaiming that they were the Nisei, but we, who actually spent twenty-some years in the Untied States can immediately distinguish fakes from real one. (*Kashū Mainichi,* 13 December 1947.*)*

> 世の常とはいひながら、あさましいのは人の心の急変です。随つて此の頃は、男女ともニセの二世が横行し、様々な犯罪を醸し出している様です。華美な装ひをし、ブロークンも甚だしい英語を操つて我こそは二世よと云はぬ許りに得々としてゐる男女をよく見かけますが、廿余念もアメリカで暮らした私たちには本ものか偽ものか一目でわかります。

In contrast to the political invisibility that Aoki chose for the sake of the safety of her family, Fujii and Sasaki maintained their visible leadership position while incarcerated in Justice Department camps. As leaders of an imprisoned population, Fujii and Sasaki often served as mediators between the prisoners and prison officials. Having taken on the role of mediator within the camps may help to explain their generally mild criticism compared to Aoki's of wartime treatment of Japanese Americans.

In all three cases, humor and satire figure prominently in literary critique of the American racism targeted at Japanese Americans. In her diary of July 9 and 10, 1943, Aoki records everyday resistance that Japanese Americans engaged in during farm labor. Receiving minimum wage for intensive agricultural labor, Japanese American camp workers shared a strong sense of entitlement to the products from the field such as cucumbers, tomatoes, honeydew melons, etc. In a diary entry dated July 9, 1943, Aoki wrote:

> It has been hot all day. We picked tomatoes in the morning and cucumbers in the afternoon. On the way back, we each received nine cucumbers and five honeydew melons. We put them in our sacks and then someone warned us that there were police at the camp and that they would confiscate all of our "gifts." Many workers returned the crops or hid them in the shed, but I was determined to hold onto mine. So what if the police found out and confiscated them…

---

In the columns, December 15, 16, 18 and 19, 1947, Aoki discussed two polarizing phenomena in a postwar Japan in terms of women's status. As a passionate advocate for the advancement of women's status, Aoki expressed excitement in voting for female candidates in the national and local elections, and in witnessing an astounding number of first wave Japanese feminists, including Setsuko Hani, Raichō Hiratsuka, Shizue Katō, Kikue Yamazaki, Michiko Yamakawa, and Sugi Yamamoto, to be elected as Dietwomen and/or to be appointed as cabinet members. In contrast to this historic moment of advancement of women's status in the Japanese political arena, Aoki also witnessed astounding numbers of women "who had fallen into the dark world" as prostitutes. Due to the devastating conditions produced by the war, many women regardless of their backgrounds in terms of age, social status, educational background, and ethnic status became prostitutes primarily but not exclusively for their survival. See Asako Yamamoto, "Gendai Nihon no josei" (Contemporary Japanese women), *Kashū Mainichi* 15, 16, 18 and 19 December 1947.

> At the gate there were three white officers and three Japanese officers waiting to inspect us. One of the Japanese officers rushed up to us and whispered to us, in Japanese, to "Hide them quickly."
>
> By the time the white officers approached we had formed a tight wall with our bodies and were able to conceal our goods.[308]

The next day, inspection by the police officers continued. This time, white officers were more agitated, and were yelling at Japanese American farm crews to turn in the vegetables. Reacting against the order of the white officers, Yamamoto criticizes the attitude of the white police men who shouted:

> "This is the property of the US government, and you are using the tools provided by the US government. The crops have flourished because you used fertilizers and waters that the US government had provided. We will not let you, enemy aliens, steal these vegetables," shouted the white police officer.[309]

---

[308] Asako Yamamoto, *Ibara,* 259-260.

朝からカッと暑い。午前中トマトをもぎ、午後から白瓜と青瓜もぎ、帰りに青瓜十本ハネデュー五個宛いただいた、各々袋に入れて運搬車に乗り込んだ。ところが今日はキャンプの入口に巡査がいて、持っている土産ものは皆とり上げるそうですよーと誰かが云ったので、貰ったものを又持返えして小屋の中へしまい込んだ人も多かったが、私はままよ取上げられたらそれまでだーと度胸を据えてそれを持ち込んで貨物車に乗った。・・・

米人巡査が三人、日本人巡査が三人、日本人巡査の一人はす早く駆けよって小声の日本語で、

「早く、かくしなさい」

と、土産ものを現わに持っていた人達にいってくれた。白人巡査が覗きに来たが、お互いに体をすり寄せて、皆荷物を隠すことにつとめた。

[309] Ibid, 261.

米人巡査等は、

「アメリカ政府の土地に、アメリカ政府の道具を使用して、アメリカ政府の肥料や水を入れて作ったものだから、敵国人のお前たちには勝手にはさせない。」

というのだ。

Yamamoto continues by commenting that the officers did not force them to unload the bundle of burdocks, today's "gift," since they refused to eat them as indigestible or poisonous, whereupon, "All of us farmers busted into laughter, and yelled at them in Japanese. 'You fools!!!' 'We will get back at you.'"[310]

In contrast to the patronizing lecture by the white police officers about the US government's benevolence, Yamamoto defends the sentiments of entitlement felt by Japanese American farmers: The spirit of resistance manifest in Yamamoto's writings is suggestive of what African American historian Robin D. G. Kelley identifies as "new ways to rebel, ways rooted in our own peculiar circumstances" which have been historically dismissed as "manifestations of immaturity, false consciousness, or primitive rebellion."[311]

In his 1950 book, *Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Ki* (Life Records of the Internment Camp), Sasaki analyzes the subversive nature of Japanese language in the context of the Justice Department internment camp. Under the chapter titled, "Chōhō na Nihongo" (Useful Japanese), Sasaki asserted:

> Universally speaking, every underground society consisting of gangs or inmates has elaborate and specialized "secret codes." In prison you need to constantly revise these codes to suit your circumstances because the prison guards are usually pretty familiar with them.
>
> This dynamic, however, does not apply to us. We have our Japanese, our own tongue, which is not a secret code, and which no one inside even the federal prison seems to know. So we are able to use a language that we are very familiar with to say exactly what we want to, and we end up communicating pretty daring thoughts.[312]

---

[310] Ibid, 261.

関所を通り過ぎてから、貨物車の百姓たちは「アハハ・・・・・」と声をあわせて笑い、「馬鹿野朗奴が！」「覚えていろよ」などと勝手に叫んだ。

[311] Robin D. G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 3.

[312] Sasabune Sasaki, *Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Ki*, 106.

Sasaki's column, subtitled "Takuanzuke" (Japanese Pickles) on February 6, 7 and 8 in *Rafu Shimpō* provides a parallel example to Yamamoto's where the subversive element is found in ridiculing the white prison guards ignorance about Japanese culture and language. Once the inmates' family members found out where they were incarcerated, they sent various creature comforts, including clothing, cigarettes, Japanese pickles, and Japanese tea, among other articles. When packages arrived at the prison, the authority carefully inspected the contents, and particularly concentrated on scrutinizing Japanese products. Once an inmate started to complain about unnecessarily stringent inspection, the others joined in the conversation, sharing their own experiences. Comparing the authority's treatment of pipe tobacco and tea, two inmates at the end of the conversation ridiculed the ignorance of prison authorities, saying that "[barbarians] do not understand refined tastes":

> "If they could pass the pipe tobacco in the container, why can't they pass tea with its container? Tea needs to be contained more than tobacco."
>
> "Well, they can't do that since tea is imported from Japan. Also, because it is not sealed, they suspect that our family mixes the secret codes or something in the tea. On top of that, nobody in authority knows about the importance of fragrance for tea. *Gyokuro* (high-quality green tea) for them is like a set of pearls for the pig."[313]

---

どこの国でも同じ事だが、盗賊や囚人達の所謂闇黒社会には、沢山に専門的な隠語がある。然し娑婆は別として、監獄内では、其の時々に応じて新たに作った隠語や、暗号でない限り、自由に使ふ事は仲々出来ない。何故なれば、大抵のものは役人達が凡て知り抜いてゐるからだ。所が我々の場合はさうではない。隠語でもなければ暗号でもないのだが、我々には我々の持つ国語である日本語がある。如何に中央政府の監獄でも其れを知ったものは一人も居ないらしかった。だから、我々は自由に自分の使ひ慣れた言葉を便つて、相当思ひ切った事を言ったり、意見の交換をやったりする事が出来た。

313 Sasaki Sasabune, "Zakkichō" (Notebook), *Rafu Shimpō,* 7 February 1946, 4.

「それだったらお茶だって、いれ物のまま渡してくれたってよさそうなもんだな。タバコ以上いれ物が大切なもんだのに」

「さうは行かないんだよ。茶は日本から来たもんだし、封印が貼ってないし、家族が何か秘密通信の暗号でも書きつけてゐやしないかと疑ふわけなんだよ。其れにお茶

Similarly, inmates were greatly amused by an account of receiving a packet of moxa, a Japanese medicinal plant which is used for cautery, to relieve nerve pain:

> Well, when I went to pick up the package yesterday, somebody before me received package of *senkō* and *moxa*. The inspection officer opened the package, and was completely puzzled. Since he asked what they were, I explained that *senkō* was incense, and *moxa* was used as medicine. The inspector was fine with *senkō*, but he had trouble with *moxa*. Since *moxa* was a medical material, he said he needed to consult with the specialist. So, I said that *moxa* was not a medicine, but was simply used to warm up or stimulate the nerves. I even burned a little portion of *moxa* on the hand of the person who received the package for a demonstration.[314]

Answering the fellow inmate's eagerness to find out the response of the inspector, the man described the stunned and horrified expression of the inspector: "He was so surprised. I suggested that he should try himself. He stepped back, and said 'No, No.' Then the package passed the inspection." The fellow internee replied with a humorous Japanese simile for punishing a child. Burning moxa on children was used for punishment in elementary schools in pre-modern Japan. Based on this custom, the phrase "burning moxa on somebody" can mean punishing or scolding somebody younger or of lower status. The inmate responded to the man's description of the stunned inspector: "You missed a chance didn't you? If he had agreed we could tell everyone that you had 'punished' the inspector."[315]

---

の香なんかの事を知ってゐるものは一人もいやしないからな、あの人達にかかづちゃ玉露も台なしさ。」

「全くだね。野人風流を知らずと云ふ所だね。」

[314] Ibid.

[315] Sasaki Sasabune, "Zakkichō" (Notebook), *Rafu Shimpō,* 8 and 11 February 1946, 4.

「昨日僕が小包を受取に行ったら、僕の前の番に当たった人の所へ線香とモグサが来てゐたんだ。すると検査官が開けて見て不思議がって、此れは何か？と訊いたんだよ。そこで僕は説明してやったんだよ、線香はインセンスで、モグサは病気を治すため

By highlighting camp officials' ignorance of tea and moxa, these inmates transformed the experiences of oppression into a powerful story, ridiculing the prison authority. It was they who were incarcerated in and deprived of essential creature comforts such as tea and moxa, and were subjected daily to the camp authority's interference in every aspect of life. But the story shared among the inmates reversed the power dynamics, if only momentarily, so that Japanese Americans who understood both cultures, entertained themselves by lampooning the ignorance of the camp and prison authority.

Compared to more forceful criticism that Aoki expressed, Fujii and Sasaki's criticism of US racism is very mild. Considering these differences, one needs to carefully examine the socio-political contexts of writers at the time of publication. While Fujii and Sasaki were still in the US and considering the US as their future home, Aoki was in Japan, writing back to a Japanese American audience.[316] Both Fujii and Sasaki avoided

---

に使ふものだた、すると検査官曰くさインセンスは差支へないが、モグサは薬品だから一応専門家の手で分析して見てからでなくては渡す訳には行かないと、其れで僕は薬ではない、神経を温めたり刺激したりするために使ふので、　う云ふ風にやるんだと云って受取人の手首の所へ一つ据えて火をつけてやつて見せたんだよ。」

「何て言ってゐたかね検査官は、モグサを据えたのを見て」

「目を丸くして見ていたよ。其れから僕は一つ小さいのを、試して見ませんかと言ってやったんだ。所がノーノー、ご免だと云って後しざりして了ったよ。そしてそんなら好いだろうと言って渡してくれたよ」

「一つ据えてやりゃよかったな、さうすると移民官にお灸をすえたと云う事になる訳だったがな、惜しい事をしたな。」

316 In 1952 with the passage of the Walter-McCarran Act, Issei who had been deemed "ineligible to citizenship" gained the right to become naturalized citizen of the United States. After the defeat of Japan in World War II, Issei in the US had considered the US as their future home, both for themselves and their family. Considering these important factors regarding immigration status, it is understandable that Fujii and Sasaki are much milder in criticizing US society than Aoki who was able to see her and her family's future in Japan. Even Aoki, however, decided that America provided a better life and opportunity for her children, and sent the children back to the United States.

strongly criticizing the US government regarding the wartime incarceration, reflecting the political climate of the Cold War discussed earlier, and in support of Nisei leadership who emphasized "Americanism." Nevertheless, they were not simply compliant. I argue that it was a strategic and emotional move by both Fujii and Sasaki, who saw the future of the Japanese American community in the United States, and for the most part adhered to the stance of apologists who accepted the US government's "mistake" to incarcerate "loyal" Japanese Americans. They also believed that overall, the government agencies such as the War Relocation Authority overall carried out policy fairly and accorded "sympathetic" treatment to incarcerated Japanese Americans.

In her forward to Allen Eaton's *Beauty Behind Barbed Wire: The Arts of the Japanese in Our War Relocation Camps* (1952), Eleanor Roosevelt articulated the era's apologist vision. Carefully avoiding explicit criticism of her husband who signed the Executive Order 9066, she attributed the cause of the wartime incarceration to the knee-jerk reaction of "some." She also emphasized that the incarceration took place from the government's concern to "protect" Japanese Americans from anti-Japanese violence:

> [Forced evacuation and incarceration of Japanese Americans] was done because our military authorities had felt that this element of our population might provide some individuals dangerous to our national security on the West Coast. Feeling was running so high against the Japanese, with whom we were at war, that some felt that a great many of those within our borders would have to be placed where they were not in physical danger.[317]

Roosevelt, who in 1943 had visited Gila River camp on an inspection trip with Dillon Myer, the director of the War Relocation Authority, also specifically praised the WRA, and the incarcerated Japanese Americans for their ability to co-operate:

> [This book] shows how well the War Relocation Authority did its work, one of the achievements of government administration of which every American citizen can be proud. Finally it tells the

317 Allen Eaton, *Beauty Behind Barbed Wire*, xi.

> story of the remarkable co-operation between the Authority and the residents in the settlements, and how this helped toward their future reabsorption into American life.[318]

Fujii often shared the stories of his incarceration in his column, "Watashi no run" (My Section) that validated the apologist interpretation. He highlighted the cooperation between "well intentioned" white officials and Japanese prisoners. In his column on August 23, 1948, he wrote about an army sergeant, lieutenant-colonel who was in charge of the prison hospital in Roadsburg.[319] According to Fujii, the lieutenant-colonel treated Japanese American inmate patients fairly and with great sympathy. On Christmas day, Fujii reported, the lieutenant-colonel made a speech, emphasizing that "he feels honored to share the holy day with [Japanese American inmates]."[320] He shook hands and handed gifts to everybody. In return, Japanese American inmates organized a lion dance and Japanese folk dances on New Years day, in responding to the lieutenant-colonel's request.

In a column dated August 13, 1947, Fujii narrated his release from the incarceration and highlighted the good intensions of a white official who was sympathetic to Japanese American conditions.[321] Contrary to his concerns about the public hearing to determine his release, Fujii emphasized that his release was carried out smoothly and respectfully. Quoting the judge who talked to him in person, Fujii wrote:

> "Mr. Fuji, I am very sorry that you had to live under such uncomfortable conditions for the past four years. A person such as yourself should never have been sent here in the first place. We

---

[318] Ibid, xi-xii.

[319] Fujii Sei, "Watashi no run" (My Section), *Kashū Mainishi,* 23 August 1948, 4.

[320] Ibid, 4.

・・・諸君と共に、此聖日を共に祝する事を光栄とする。

[321] Fujii Sei, "Watashi no run" (My Section), *Kashū Mainishi,* 13 August 1947, 1.

> will do our utmost to send you back to Los Angeles as soon as possible. Good luck, Mr. Fuji."
>
> The judge shook my hand again. I was so touched at this point that I could not even utter a word.[322]

Not only did he emphasize the good deeds of white officials, but he also framed their actions in terms of Confucian notions of benevolence. Discussing Edward Ennis, government official and attorney who served as the head of Alien Enemy Control during the war, Fujii characterized him as a "benefactor of Japanese"[323]

In the postscript of his book, *Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Ki* (Life Records of the Internment Camp), Sasaki similarly emphasized the benevolence of the US government's treatment of incarcerated Japanese Americans. He asserted:

> The US government -particularly the War Relocation Authority and officers of the internment camps- treated us with the patience of parents who soothed us, the spoilt children… The manners in which they treated us did not run counter to either the US as a Christian country, or the American principle of democracy.[324]

---

[322] Ibid 1.

「ミスター藤井、あなたが四年の長い間此不便な生活を続けた事を　心気の毒に思ひます。あなたのような人は最初からこんな場所へ送ってはならなかった事を吾々は固く信じます。一時も早く羅府へ帰られるよう取計らひたいと思ってゐますグッド、ラック、ミスター藤井」と

更に亦握手して下さいました。其時だけは私も感極まって一言の言葉も出ませんでした。全く私は感激しました。

[323] Fujii Sei, "Watashi no run" (My Section), *Kashū Mainishi,* 8 October 1948, 4.

日本人の恩人

[324] Sasaki Sasabune, *Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Ki,* 523-34.

然も米国政府は、殊に私達沿岸立退者の管理者たるＷＲＡや、収容所の役人達は、ダダッ子の私達を生みの親のやうな寛容な態度でなだめすかし、少数民族中の少数民族で、・・・基督教国の名にそむかぬ、名実共に民主国の教義に添ふ、親身の親も及ばぬ程の愛を以て、私達を遇した。

Here, Sasaki invoked the ideal Confucius relationship between benevolent parent and child, and validated the apologist stance that authority such as the WRA tried their best and did their job finely.

The full-fledged adherence to an apologist interpretation that Fuji and Sasaki expressed here, however, did not prevent them from criticizing instances of wartime treatment of Japanese Americans, and the postwar ideological consensus to praise the "loyal" Japanese Americans while silencing the "disloyals." The expressions of these sentiments were particularly significant in light of the almost complete absence of internment in English language literature at the time.[325] Because writers like Fujii and Sasaki were expressing themselves in Japanese, and their venue of publication did not rely on the mainstream publishing industry, they might have felt less pressure to conform than Nisei writing in English. Moreover, even in his praise of Nisei veterans, Fujii framed his praise not in term of nationalism but filial piety.

> Many of the young Nisei boys from the continent, and from Hawaii, wanted to help their elderly fathers who were interned in some distant camp. Thinking of the distress their fathers suffered made many of the young men literally sick with stress. In order to better the situation of their fathers they volunteered for the U.S. military and participated in the war on the European front without any regrets. I was so impressed with the filial piety of these young men that I could not prevent a few tears from escaping.[326]

Immediately after the war when wartime loyalty was increasingly integrated to the definition of Japanese American community leadership, Issei writers in Japanese

---

[325] See Jinqi Ling's discussion in note 28 of his article, "Race, Power, and Cultural Politics in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," 381.

[326] Fujii Sei, "Watashi no run" (My Section), *Kashū Mainishi,* 30 August 1948, 4.

大陸や布哇における若き二世ボーイズ達が、老いたる父が遠い異郷の空で、インターンされて、思案にくれた結果其多くが病気にかかって、収容所の病院に　（口へんに申）吟してるといふ事をきいて其不幸なる父を救ひ出さんが為に米国軍人を志願して欧州の戦線に喜んで進み出たと云ふ例が多数である事をきかされて其親思ひの孝心に涙禁ずる能はざる事を感ずるものです。

language implicitly challenged such ideological constructs by commemorating stories of seemingly apolitical and everyday actions–be it volunteering for chores or helping others with translation– that made a difference in the welfare of people, and distinguished them as "leaders." This peculiar attention to trivial and ordinary events can also explain why Fujii and Sasaki frequently choose the diary as a specific genre of literature to document their experiences during the war. What literary scholar Rebecca Hogan has termed the paratactic nature of the diary particularly suited for their literary purposes. In her study of women's diaries, Hogan theorized the women's diaries as "parataxis." She asserted:

> Diaries are not so much inclusive because they contain everything from a given day, as they are inclusive in the sense that they do not privilege 'amazing' over 'ordinary' events, in terms of scope, space, or selection. So as well as being paratactic on the level of grammar and syntax, diaries are paratactic on the level of full entries and of content too.[327]

Once placed in the internment camps, leadership roles were transformed. The prison environment had an effect of social leveling, as it stripped markers of social status –be it occupation, material possession– particularly from those who occupied the higher social status in prewar ethnic communities. Shima Akira's senryū[328], accompanied with

---

[327] Rebecca Hogan, "Engendered Autobiographies: The Diary as a Feminine Form," *Prose Studies: Special Issue on Autobiography and Questions of Gender* 14:2 (September 1991), 103, quoted in Susanne Bunkers and Cynthia Huff, "Issues in Studying Women's Diaries: A Theoretical and Critical Introduction" in *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries*, edited by Susanne Bunkers and Cynthia Huff (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 5.

[328] Senryū is a type of Japanese poem, using 5-7-5 syllables. In the introduction to *Light Verse from the Floating World: An Anthology of Pre-modern Japanese Senryu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), Makoto Ueda, compiler and translator defines senryu in pre-modern historical context:

> The raison d'étre of senryu, then, lies in its value as popular literature, literature for mass production and consumption. If it is poetry, it is the kind of poetry specifically intended to entertain the millions. It belongs to the type of 'light verse as defined by W. H. Auden: poetry that has "for its subject matter the everyday social life of its period or the experiences of the poet as an ordinary human being." Such poetry has to be "light" or humorous; otherwise the general public would show no interest in it.

his cartoons, humorously depicted the transition that some Japanese Americans from higher social status groups experienced in their lives of incarceration. Sasaki inserted Shima's works in the opening of his book, *Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Ki*. Immediately following the title, "Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Senryū Manga" (Senryū Comics of Incarcerated Life) were nineteen poems with accompanying cartoons. Many of Shima's works humorously depicted the transition to prison life, in which everybody had to engage in serving food, washing dishes, and cleaning regardless of age and social status. In one of his cartoons, Shima depicted an older man with a kitchen apron, serving other inmates in the prison mess hall. Senryū further explained the background of the waiter:

> In the posture of a waiter
> Even the status of the president
> vanishes[329]

Another cartoon depicted a tottering man carrying a high stack of dishes:

> Carrying a stack of dishes
> Is a dangerous undertaking
> For the back of a seventy-year old[330]

In anther cartoon, a respectable gentleman with his tie and mustache was shown sweeping the floor:

> When serving a shift
> A mustache of a prominent man
> Becomes a nuisance[331]

---

See Makoto Ueda, *Light Verse from the Floating World,* 19-20.

[329] Sasabune Sasaki, *Yokuryūjyo Seikatsu Ki.*

給仕人　姿勢で　社長の　格も　無し

[330] Ibid.

七十の腰にあぶない皿はこび

[331] Ibid.

Although volunteering work for arduous jobs garnered approbation, their will sometimes did not match their experiences. Two cartoons depicted men with grimaces, dragging a garbage can, and mopping the floor:

> Challenging the power
> Of a volunteer –
> The weight of a garbage can [332]

> His eloquence
> Is no match for
> His way with the mop[333]

In this "equalized" environment where prewar social status meant less than performance of everyday tasks, Fujii and Sasaki defined leadership by a persons' willingness and ability to work for the welfare of fellow Japanese Americans. In his column, "Watashi no run" (My Section), on October 16, 1947, Fujii contrasted two types of community leaders and criticized those who revealed their "true nature" by pursuing their own comfort at the cost of others: "There were those whose characters were not at all admirable: they would hoard the good food for themselves while making others do all of the work."[334] Furthermore, Fujii associated the bad leadership with what he

---

当番に名志のひげがぢゃまになり

[332] Ibid.

有志家の　力あぶなし　キャベヂキャン

[333] Ibid.

口ほどに行かぬ有志家のマップかけ

[334] Fujii Sei, "Watashi no run" (My section), *Kashū Mainichi*, 16 October 1947, 4.

ウマイ物は一人でたべて、仕事は他人にやらすと言った様な感心せぬ心掛の人々がないでもなかったが・・・

considered nationalist bombast. He criticized some religious leaders who he thought should have focused on "enhancing harmony between people:"[335]

> When it seemed like Japan was going to win the war even religious leaders were acting haughty and arrorgant. They would pick fights with white officials, accusing them of not complying with international law and demanding that prisoners be treated with more respect. But as soon as parole became a possibility those people changed their tune completely and pleaded for their personal release.[336]

On the other hand, Fujii continued, there were those whose leadership qualities gained luster under incarceration. They were always willing to work on the chores that everybody hated, which earned respect from both fellow Japanese inmates and white guards. Fujii praised their ability to sustain harmony both among Japanese American inmates and between the inmates and the guards, avoiding unnecessary quarrels and arguments. Through this contrast of two kinds of leaders, Fujii defined the most essential tenet of leadership not by political affiliation or national allegiance which he thought brought unnecessary conflict, but by the devotion to work for the welfare of others, and the ability to create and maintain harmony.

Writing in his wartime diary on February 9, 1943, Fujii presented himself as a leader who aspired to serve fellow Japanese. Utilizing his bilingual ability, Fujii composed a petition to the authority which sought for the reunification of his fellow inmate, a 77-year-old Issei, with his wife. His wife was interned in Gila River camp, and Fujii and others saw no point in separating the old couple. As in this case, Fujii

---

[335] Ibid, 4.

人と人との調和を図る

[336] Ibid, 4.

宗教家の中にも戦争に勝った時代には鼻息が荒くて、白人へ喧嘩をふきかける様な人や国際法をかつぎ出して、待遇改善を叫ぶ様な人もあったが、それがパロールにでもなる場合は打って変わって哀訴嘆願の態度になった人々もある。

frequently positioned himself as a mediator to resolve issues as smoothly and peacefully as possible. Commenting on his own effort to help the old man, Fujii wrote: "Even hospitalized as I am there are still ways in which I can be of value to my countrymen. And these tasks that I take on are to my own benefit as well"[337]

Fujii's efforts did not go unnoticed within the Japanese American community. Masahiko Wada, a Baptist minister from Seattle, was interned in Roadsburg hospital with Fujii, and personally knew him. Wada's letter, titled "Shūyōjo Jidai o Kaerimite" (Reflecting on the Era of Internment), praised Fujii for always being willing to assist others in writing letters in English. Due to the censorship of outgoing letters, Japanese American inmates had to write letters in English, a policy that posed a great difficulty for those who were not fluent in written English. Being kind to everybody, Wada asserted, Fujii attained trust and respect even from camp authority as well as other inmates.[338]

In his column, "Zakkichō" (Notebook) on March 7, 8 and 9, 1946, Sasabune Sasaki shared his experience of helping his fellow inmates in Fort Missoula. The column, subtitled "Hitsuji no kegawa no chokki" (Sheepskin Vest), told the story of Mr. O who would never take off his sheepskin vest even when it got warm. When Sasaki was translating the English letter sent to Mr. O from his son, the mystery of Mr. O's obsession with the vest was resolved: the separation of the father and the son due to Mr. O's imprisonment posed a serious communication problem, since neither of them was fluent in the written form of English and Japanese. His son begged his father to write to him more often:

---

[337] Fujii Sei, "Shūyō jyo Tōji no Nikkichō Kara" (Excerpts from incarceration diary), *Kashū Mainichi*, 1 August 1947, 1.

かうしてこの病院に入院中も同胞のためにしてあげる仕事が色々ある。で、私としても甲斐がある。

[338] Wada Masahiko, "Shūyōjo Jidai o Kaerimite" (Reflecting on the era of internment), *Kashū Mainichi*, 20 August 1948, 2.

> Your letters don't need to be long, papa-san, but I want to hear from you more often. Write me about what you do everyday, about your go (Japanese chess), about anything. Whatever relates to you interests me, so please, just write to me. I have missed you so much since you left.
>
> I know that you are asking someone to write your letters for you, but you don't need to do that. I don't care about how poorly written the letters are, or how awkward your English sounds. The letters you write actually make me feel much happier.[339]

Helping Mr. O in translating his son's letter, Sasaki understood the deep attachment of Mr. O felt toward the sheepskin vest, a gift from his son. After that, Sasaki voluntarily became an "interpreter," explaining the situation to other inmates who ridiculed Mr. O for his vest. Although implicit, the story valorizes Sasaki's ability as a leader to resolve the possible ridicule through a careful and sympathetic understanding of individual lives, therefore enhancing the harmony of the inmate relationships.

By focusing on actions that enhanced the welfare of fellow Japanese Americans without reference to camp using humor and satire, Fujii and Sasaki implicitly criticized the exclusive valorization of Japanese Americans' wartime "loyalty" as a prerequisite for leadership in the postwar Japanese American community. In the context of intensified Americanization based on the ideology of racial integration, it is significant that Japanese language writers expressed criticism toward wartime treatment of Japanese Americans

---

339 Sasaki Sasabune "Zakkichō" (Notebook*), Rafu Shimpō,* 9 March 1946, 2. Out of his memory, Sasaki reconstructed Mr. O's son's letter in Japanese. The letter was originally written in English.

長い手紙でなくても好いですから、再々書くやうにして下さい。パパさんの囲碁の事、其所の生活の事、毎日パパさんは何をしてゐるか、パパさんの事なら何でも僕には興味を以て読まれるんです。パパさんが居なくなってからは、僕は寂しくつて仕様がないんです。

パパさんは誰かにてがみを書いて貰ふのでせうが、そんな事はしなくても好いのです。何ぼ下手でも、可笑しな英語でも決して構ひません、パパさん自身で書いて寄越して下さい。僕には其の方が嬉しいのですから・・・・・

through humor and satire whose full meaning could only be understood by those linguistically and culturally fluent in Japanese.

In his column, titled, "Hi ōshū shorui 1" (Confiscated Documents 1), Sasaki satirized the way in which the US government arbitrarily arrested and interrogated Japanese American leaders as "dangerous enemy aliens." On February 1945, Los Angeles police returned a series of his documents to Sasaki that they had confiscated after Sasaki's arrest following the attack on Pearl Harbor. Upon discovering what documents the US officials deemed vital for preserving national security, Sasaki could not help but to laugh:

> All of these documents [including personal letters, New Year greeting card, diary, manuscript of interviews, etc.] do not have any importance, and most of them are not even remotely associated with my profession (journalist) that the officials thought dangerous.[340]

In another column, Sasaki reminded the postwar readership that the label of "dangerous enemy aliens" was placed on Issei leadership regardless of their political affiliations or contribution to the society at the onset of the war. Sasaki posed a question:

> However there are still many who are not yet released from Santa Fe or Crystal City Justice Department camps. But is there any difference between those of us who are already released, and those still in incarceration? I don't think so. The only "crime" they committed is that they have occupied important positions in prewar communities. In reality, those are the people who did more for our country and communities than anyone else.[341]

---

[340] Sasaki Sasabune, "Zakkichō 2," *Rafu Shimpō* 16 January 1946, 4.

[341] Sasaki Sasabune, "Zakkichō," *Rafu Shimpō* 7 January 1946, 2.

然し、或人達は未だにサンタフェ、クリスタルシテー等の収容所に留置されたままでゐる。そんなら、それ等の人達と既に釈放された人達と、どれだけの左があるだろうか。筆者の目から見ると、それは単に同胞社会に於いて重要な地位を占めてゐたといふだけで、其の実質に於いてはより多く米国の社会、同胞の社会のために　　した人達であると云ふに過ぎないのだ。

Fujii Sei's diary of February 13, 1943 captured the spirit of humor shared among Japanese American inmates, ridiculing the absurdity of US government paranoia about them being "dangerous elements":

> All of the beds at this prison hospital were filled with infirm old men who could barely walk. Our alleged "dangerousness" was the reason that we were incarcerated. All of us burst out laughing once when, out of the blue, a paralyzed old man muttered, "We really present more bother than danger, don' we?" [342]

Very few historical sources document how Japanese American readers responded to the writings of World War II by Fuji, Sasaki and Yamaoto. Although I have not yet located the sources which reveal Japanese American responses to the writings of these three, I have encountered a collection of 133 letters addressed to Akira Togawa, copious diary keeper, poet and essayist ten years later in 1962. Togawa self-published 1,000 copies of the anthology of his poetry, *Mitsubachi no uta: Shi to zuihitsush* (Song of the Bee: Poems and Essays).

For Togawa's long-term literary friends, his book often invoked dear memories of recent, and yet distant past. Yoshio Yao in San Francisco wrote: "Even several poems that I read hear and there made me feel the warmth of your writing, to which I had felt affectionate since our days at Poston. Your book made me remember something dear and familiar."[343] Hatsue Shigetomi, a fellow writer in Poston, wrote a thank-you note for the

---

[342] Fujii Sei, "Shūyō jyo Tōji no Nikkichō Kara" (Excerpts from incarceration diary), *Kashū Mainishi* 13 August 1947, 3.

此病院の日本人連は六十歳以上の方々が多数で歩行さへ困難な方が片っ端からである。其老人が収容されて居る理由は危険人物であるからと言ふのだが「ワシ等は危険人物でなく厄介人物ジャノー」・・・と脊髄神経痛で全身不自由の御老人が突拍子もない事を言ひ出して一同大笑ひであった。

[343] Letter from Yao Yoshio to Togawa Akira, 24 November 1962, Akira Togawa Papers, Box 8, Folder 1.

一寸拾い読みさせていただいた集中の二三篇いも、ポストン文芸の頃から親しみを感じておりました貴兄の作品の　　温か味にふれることが出来て、なつかしい思いがいたしました。

book from Kōbe, Japan where she lived at the time: "I read your book as I remembered our days at Poston fondly. So much time has passed since then, hasn't it? I am pleased to know that you are well. I have been teaching at school here for a while now."[344]

Togawa's writing was even intimate and familiar for readers who did not personally know him well. Togawa strongly believed in using "ordinary" daily language in his literary works. His humble attitude in addition to accessible writing invited his readers who had not even met him to write to him. In their writings, it was not rare that people brought up their own experiences of immigration and wartime incarceration as they responded to Togawa's writing. In 1962 and 1963 when addressing their wartime experiences in visible and public form was not yet common, Togawa's book provided an outlet to *remember* what people had opted to forget, or had forgotten, or had hesitated to share with others. These acts, often invisible to the outside, to a small yet significant circle of people within the Japanese American communities, were critical in sustaining painful and unpleasant, and yet important memories of their experiences. Communications encouraged by Togawa's book documented the resilience of the continued humanity of those who faced the vicious racism and displacements.

Yū Fujikawa, a fellow Issei writer and literature enthusiast, wrote to Togawa, sharing his painful memories of wartime as a resident of Terminal Island. Terminal Island in San Pedro Bay is located twenty-five miles south of downtown Los Angeles, and Japanese Americans in Terminal Island experienced one of the earliest and harshest conditions of forced removal and incarceration. Within the mostly white population of the Island, Japanese Americans, who engaged primarily in the fishing industry, created a

---

344 Letter from Shigetomi Hatsue to Togawa Akira, 31 December 1963, Akira Togawa Papers, Box 9, Folder 4.

なつかしくあの頃のポストンを想い出し乍ら読ませて戴きました。もうずいぶん昔の話になりますね。外川さんもお元気で何よりでございます。私はずっと学校を教えてをります。

distinct community, known as East San Pedro. At its peak, the Terminal Island Japanese American community numbered nearly 3,000 people. Immediately after the Pearl Harbor attack, US intelligence designated Terminal Island as a "strategic" location, and rounded up every Issei fishermen who had a commercial fishing license. On February 26, 1942, the US authority notified residents that all Japanese American on the island had to leave the island within forty-eight hours. What Fujikawa remembered as he read Togawa's book was his effort to save Togawa's first book of poetry at the time when he, like everybody else, was destroying anything in the Japanese language which might arouse the authority's suspicion:

> Right after the war started, 200 FBI agents rushed in to Terminal Island where I lived at the time. Since they were interrogating every single material written in Japanese, I burned almost all books in Japanese and throw the ashes away. (Books I destroyed included not only anything related to a particular thought or ideology, but also anthologies of poetry and haiku.) But I kept books I could not destroy in a tiny box, and hid the box underneath the floor. Your anthology of poems was one of those books. When we were ordered to evacuate within forty-eight hours in late February 1942, I even brought this box with me. When I hold your new book now, it vividly reminds me of what we went through at that time.[345]

Under the massive pressure of destruction of everything in Japanese, Fujikawa managed to save several important books of literature. Considering that Japanese language materials, regardless of their contents, were often considered contraband upon entering the camps, and that Japanese Americans were only allowed to bring what they could carry with them, it was not an easy decision for Fujikawa to take these books with

---

[345] Letter from Fujikawa Yū to Togawa Akira, Akira Togawa Papers, Box 8, Folder 3.

大戦勃発当初私の住んでゐたターミナル島では二百人余りのエフ・ビーアイが入り込んで片っ端から日本字の書籍等調べ上げるので急ぎあはてて大半の書物は焼き捨て投げ込みましたが（思想上の本は勿論、歌集も句集も焼きました）小さな箱におし　り残した本の中はあなたの詩集もつめ込み、床下にかくして生いて四十二年二月下旬の四十八時間で立退の命令を　　時も持って立退きました。今　　の本を手に取るとまざまざと当時を思い出します。

him. Several books he managed to carry with him were the symbol of what poet Janice Mirikatni called "indomitable spirit" and "humanity" "in those bundles we hastily packed."[346]

Perhaps, what was so cherishing about Togawa's book – and by extension, writings of Fujii, Sasaki, and Yamamoto – for Japanese American readers was the fact that Togawa chose his writings for the book to reflect on his life experiences as an immigrant and survivor of the internment throughout thirty-seven years without major interruption of substantial periods. As eloquently and painfully reflected in Fujikawa's letter, when West Coast Japanese Americans collectively suffered the loss of memorabilia and materials personally dear to them, Togawa's ability to remember and preserve his past thirty-seven years of writings, and to materialize the publication almost had a redeeming ability for those who shared his experiences and read his book. Although it was written ten years later, Fujikawa' letter helps historians make an educated guess about what Japanese language writings, shared widely within the Japanese American community between 1945 and 1952, meant for readers. It allows us to fathom how an older generation of Japanese speaking Japanese Americans endured the repressive years of silence after the conclusion of the war. Although what was

---

346 As contributing words to the book, *Only What We Could Carry: The Japanese American Internment Experience*, edited by Lawson Fusao Inada (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2000), Japanese American poet Janice Mirikitani wrote:

> Our humanity was carried in those bundles we hastily packed…the meager possessions we were able to keep and carry with us. I was an infant in 1942, and I wondered how my mother carried me, and other necessities, to Rohwer Camp in Arkansas.
>
> > …Blankets, sheets, a tea kettle…
> > Coats to keep warm, cotton shirts to keep cool,
> > Diapers, a deck of cards,
> > The precious hot plate…
>
> Contained in these pages are what we have carried…in these stories are lifted up our humanity, our indomitable spirit and dignity, and implacable quest for justice to redeem the crimes committed against an entire race – indeed, an entire nation." (See back cover).

communicated was rarely shared even within the community with the younger generation of English-speaking Japanese Americans, the so-called silent years were not actually silent, but full of spirits to collectively remember their history. These rather invisible efforts were critical in weaving threads of individual memories into a fabric of collective memories, particularly for future activisms by younger generations to redress the nation's grave injustices during World War II.

# CONCLUSION

In 1953, one year after the publication of Sasabune Sasaki's *Yokuryūjyo seikatsu ki* (Life records of incarceration) and one year after Asako Yamamoto's *Ibara aru shiramichi* (Thorny path), Nisei writer Monica Sone's *Nisei Daughter* was published and quickly became the first commercially successful work written by a Japanese American writer. The popularity of *Nisei Daughter* coincided with a major shift in the relationship between the US and Japan. In 1952, Japan regained sovereignty with the official end of the US occupation of Japan, except for Okinawa which remained under US control until 1972. In the intensifying Cold War tensions between the Communist East and the Capitalist West, Japan, for the US, assumed increased importance as junior partner in the containment of the "red menace" in East Asia. Influenced by such Cold War politics, the US proceeded to conduct major reform in its immigration policy. The immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, also known as the Walter-McCarran Act, although shaped by Cold War politics rather than US interest in eliminating racist policy, nevertheless became a major milestone for Issei: The Act finally allowed Issei, who had been declared "aliens ineligible to citizenship," to become naturalized US citizens. Reflecting these transformations, the evil Asian was now identified with Communist China, and the image of Japan as an enemy had almost completely disappeared in popular American images by 1952.[347] In addition, the emergence of the modern Civil Rights Movement, which was shaped by global politics of the Cold War, played a critical role for the popular acceptance of Sone's *Nisei Daughter,* as it reinforced the emerging myth of Asian Americans as a "model minority" in contrast to other people of color.[348]

---

[347] For the discussion of the transformed images of Japan from war to peace, see chapter 11 of John Dower, *War without Mercy*.

[348] Arguing how the global politics of the Cold War shaped the Civil Rights Movement, Mary Dudziak coins the term "Cold War Civil Rights." See Mary Dudziak, "Cold War Civil

In his study "Race, Power, and Cultural Politics in John Okada's *No-No Boy*," Jinqi Ling attributed the contrasting public reception of Sone's *Nisei Daughter* and Okada's *No-No Boy* during the 1950s to the peculiar expectation that racial politics of the Cold War imposed on Asian American writers.[349] The dominant culture at the time exhibited a peculiar form of US nationalism, "[embracing] a common national character and a 'seamless' America culture" with the celebration of material abundance. Such a culture was unwilling to "acknowledge class divisions in American society and to address grievances about economic or racial injustice, especially those suffered by Japanese Americans during and after the war."[350] Examining the commercially successful Asian American literature at the time such as Sone's *Nisei Daughter* (1953) and Jade Snow Wang's *Fifth Chinese Daughter* (1945), Ling observed that autobiography, not fiction, became "almost the only commercially publishable form available to [Asian American writers]." In contrast to "angry voices" of criticism by African American writers such as Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison, Asian American writers were confined to

---

Rights: The Relationship between Civil Rights and Foreign Affairs in the Truman Administration, Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1992, and *Cold War Civil Rights*. Examining the historical usage of the terms "civil rights" and "civil liberties," historian Brenda Plummer asserts that African American Civil Rights activists insisted on the quest for "civil liberties" which protect people "from the tyranny by the Government" as well as "civil rights" which means the "protection of the people by the Government." These distinctions, Plummer asserts, were critical "in an era of seemingly inexorable federal power," leading to the McCarthy Era. See Plummer, *Rising Wind*. Penny Von Eschen argues that radical anti-colonial civil rights activism during World War II shifted into anti-communist anti-colonialism in the Cold War. US foreign policy under President Truman "proclaimed that American security was involved wherever 'aggression' threatened peace and 'freedom,'" thus, necessitating the US to "support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressure." Walter White, moderate civil rights leader and the NAACP leader at the time, Von Eschen continues, made "strategic" decision to support US foreign policy, since he saw new opportunities to "influence the government on *domestic* civil rights." Price of White's choice was the silencing of far more radical voices within the African American communities, including Paul Robson and W. E. B. DuBois. See Von Eschen, *Race against Empire,* 107-109.

[349] Jinqi Ling, "Race, Power, and Cultural Politics in John Okada's *No-No Boy*", 359-381.

[350] Ibid, 360.

autobiographical writings, as their literary qualities were "[reduced] to making sociological documentation of the immigrants' struggle and their children's accommodation and assimilation."[351] Ling asserted that Asian American writers "*appeared* to confirm the era's reining discourse on Americanization and to avoid denunciations of racial injustice."[352] Foreshadowing the emergence of the "model minority myth" which pitted Asian Americans against African Americans and Latino/a Americans, these writers were expected to present to the mainstream audience "the exotic but non-threatening otherness" of Asian American lives as well as "accounts of successful transition into the main-stream."[353] In the context of emerging Civil Rights Movement and African American literature with elements of strong protest, Sone's *Nisei Daughter,* which ended with the successful integration of a Nisei woman despite wartime incarceration, was a far easier pill to swallow for mainstream readers than Okada's *No-No Boy* (1957), which pointed out the distinctive legacy of internment of Japanese Americans, and more generally, which is a critique of racism in America in <u>all</u> its forms. But *No-No Boy* was all but ignored both by the Japaense American communities and by the larger public.

And yet, the virtual absence of commercially successful writings should not automatically be equated with Japanese American "silence." As I have shown, diverse writings both in Japanese and English were produced in and circulated within Japanese American community, and it is through these less commercialized, linguistically limiting,

---

[351] Ibid, 361.

[352] Ibid, 361, my emphasis. It is not that Ling is arguing that Wong's and Sone's works were simply conformist works to the era's ideological demands per se. Building on the recent literary scholarship on Asian American women's autobiography, Ling acknowledges the complexities of these narratives, which include the nuanced critique of the race relations. What Ling is asserting here is the decades' mainstream *reception* of their works, which seemed to *ignore* the nuanced and complex meaning of these works.

[353] Ibid, 362.

and semi-public writings that we can begin to understand far more complex experiences of Japanese Americans than the muted and conformist myth of the model minority.

As Japanese American scholarship on prewar Japanese American history has indicated, there existed vibrant bicultural spaces sustained by Japanese American communities. Six volumes of *Shūkaku* attested to the cultural vibrancy of Japanese language literary world during the 1930s. Japanese language literature provided a place for predominantly Issei and Kibei writers who were marginalized in the mainstream English language world to express sentiments which were not constrained by political efforts within the Japanese American community to present a united and coherent image and vision to the outside world. Thus, Issei writers such as Tamaki Matsuno and Saburō Katō and Nisei writer Mimi Matsuoka depicted Japanese American house servants' lives who often felt helpless under the direct criticism of Japan by white employers and their children. In fictional accounts, these writers were able to give voices to Japanese American protagonists who, in real life, could not usually express their true feelings and thoughts due to the language limitation and/or power dynamics of the employer and the servants. While Matsuno and Matsuoka display rather chauvinistic Japanese nationalism in their attempt to combat white racism and classism, Katō's story revealed a degree of ambiguity toward wartime Japanese nationalism as the Japanese American protagonist develops a complicated friendship with the fellow Chinese American servant.

*Shūkaku* as a literary movement, based on a strong trans-local network became an important social as well as cultural resource in the years of forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans from the West Coast during World War II. Understanding the social history of *Shūkaku* helps us to understand how and why Japanese Americans throughout the ten concentration camps actively and quickly organized literary circles for writing, socializing, and mimeograph publishing. *Shūkaku* served as an important model to create an outlet for suppressed feelings and expressions,

particularly for Issei and Kibei who found themselves under varying, and much more intensified, "surveillance" of their thoughts and feelings.

Under the conditions of internment of West Coast Japanese Americans, and under new institutional pressures form the WRA, Japanese Americans continued to write, organize, and publish Japanese language literature. Japanese language literature in the camps testifies to the historical continuation of Japanese American struggles to retain their distinct identity from prewar to wartime. Despite the intensified pressure of Americanization by the administration, "Japanese" cultural phenomenon such as the "geta craze" swept through the camps, and literary writers encouraged and celebrated the persistence of biculturalism.

Although historians of wartime Japanese American resistance such as Gary Okihiro and Arthur Hansen have identified the effort to reclaim male Issei authority through culture and religion, closer examination of Japanese language sources reveal contestation to that authority as well. While Japanese language literature functioned as an important medium to retain and strengthen the cultural heritage of Japan under the enormous pressure of Americanization, it also provided a space where members of the community were able to engage in critical discussion of identity and politics, and included at least to a degree, contestation of the traditional male, patriarchal, heterosexual and ethnically Japanese authority of the community. After the initial massive round-up of Issei male leaders, it was often Issei women who handled and prepared for the initial stages of the forced removal and incarceration. Fujio Tanizaki's short story, "Chichi mo hippareta," reveals the active leadership role that an Issei mother played after the arrest of her husband. It was also Issei women's biculturalism that sustained Japanese American cultural traditions under the harshest pressures of Americanization. In Tanizaki's story, Issei mother "invented" a language which sounded like English to the prison guard, as she inserted "and" and "but" in between Japanese sentences. Thus the

mother not only enabled the necessary communication with her imprisoned husband, but also sustained the bilingual tradition under the direct surveillance of the prison authority.

In the context of internment and the trauma of the loyalty questionnaires, Japanese language literature provided a protected space where interned writers could express complex and contradictory sentiments regarding loyalty and military service. This "off-stage" discourse of loyalty, however, did not challenge the gendered construct of wartime nationalisms. Kibei male writers such as Tadashi Itō and Jyōji Nozawa invariably dealt with male identities in relation to the question of loyalty, and female characters, if present at all, remained peripheral. The question of loyalty was explored exclusively through male relations: father, son, brother and male friends. Their writings, while challenging the binary construct of loyalty enforced by the WRA and the pro-Japan nationalists, reinforced the gendered perception of the question of loyalty as an exclusively male matter.

The first two decades following the conclusion of the war were characterized by the emergence of new leadership roles taken on by younger Nisei who emphasized wartime loyalty of Japanese Americans and the racial integration of Japanese Americans into mainstream American culture. The older generation of writers in Japanese language did not oppose or explicitly criticize the new leadership. Nevertheless, they affirmed the importance of the Japanese language and culture at the time when assimilation to mainstream culture was strongly encouraged. Under the rhetoric of racial integration in which non-white's assimilation to the mainstream was expected, there was a growing pressure to present Japanese America to the outside world as loyal and integrated, i.e. assimilated, American citizens. Unlike English language Japanese American writers, Japanese language writers felt less pressure to tailor their writings to fit these images because their writings targeted a linguistically limited readership within the Japanese American community, and because publication did not depend on American mainstream publishers. Thus, at the time when Japanese American writers in the English language

were mostly silent, particularly about their wartime experiences, Japanese language writers were able to carve out a niche to express concerns and sympathy to Japan and commemorating their recent memory of wartime incarcerations. Although they did not explicitly criticize the mainstream politics of the community, the ways in which writers commemorated the wartime experiences differed from Japanese Americans which exclusively celebrated the "loyals" and prominent and seemingly Americanized Issei.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Archives and Personal Papers

Akira Fujita Papers, Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Akira Togawa Papers, Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Japanese [American] Evacuation and Resettlement Study (JERS), Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

Japanese American Research Project (JARP), Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California at Los Angeles.

Shasui Takayanagi Papers, Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angles.

## Newspapers and Journals

*Hāto Mountain Bungei*. Shinoda, Satae and Iwao Yamamoto eds. *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 7. Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997.

*Kashū Mainishi* (Japan-California Daily)

*Rafu Shimpō* (Los Angeles Japanese Daily News)

*Shūkaku* vol 1-6. Shinoda, Satae and Yamamoto Iwao, eds. *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 1. Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997.

*Tessaku* vol 1-6. Shinoda, Satae and Iwao Yamamoto eds. *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 6 and 7. Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997.

*Wakoudo* Vol 1-3. Shinoda, Satae and Iwao Yamamoto eds. *Nikkei America bungaku zasshi shūsei* 2. Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997.

**Other Sources**

Abu-Lughod, Lila. *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1986.

Azuma, Eiichiro. "Interstitial Lives: Race, Community, and History among Japanese Immigrants Caught between Japan and the United States, 1885-1941." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 2000.

Bunkers, Susanne and Cynthia Huff. "Issues in Studying Women's Diaries: A Theoretical and Critical Introduction." In *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries*. Edited by Susanne Bunkers and Cynthia Huff. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996.

Chuman, Frank. *The Bamboo People: The Law and Japanese Americans*. Del Mar, California: Publisher's Inc., 1976.

Collins, Donald. *Native American Aliens: Disloyalty and the Renunciation of Citizenship by Japanese Americans during World War II*. Westport, Connecticut.: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982.

Daniels, Roger. *Concentration Camps USA: Japanese Americans and World War II*. New York, Chicago, and San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972.

de Cristoforo, Violet Kazue, ed. *May Sky There Is Always Tomorrow: An Anthology of Japanese American Concentration Camp Kaiko Haiku*. Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Press, 1997.

Dower, John. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.

Dudziak, Mary L. *Cold War Civil Rights*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Eaton, Allen. *Beauty behind Barbed Wire: The Arts of the Japanese in Our War Relocation Camps*. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1952.

_____. *Handicrafts of the Southern Highland*. New Work: Russell Sage Foundation, 1937.

_____. *Immigrant Gifts to American Life: Some Experiments in Appreciation of the Contributions of Our Foreign Born Citizens to American Culture*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1932.

Fujita, Akira, ed. *Nanka bungei senshū* (Anthology of Southern California Literature). Tokyo: Renga Shobō, 1981.

Hansen, Arthur A. "Cultural Poitics in the Gila River Relocation Center 1942-1943." *Arizona and the West* 27:4 (Winter 1985), 327-362.

Hieda, Kinpei. *Hikkon Okina Kyūin no shōgai* (Writing Spirit: Life of Okina Kyūkin). Tokyo: Katsura Shobō, 1994.

Higa, Karin, ed. *The View From Within: Japanese American Art from the Internment Camps, 1942-1945*. Los Angeles: Japanese American National Museum, UCLA Wight Art Gallery, and UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 1992.

Honmitu, Matsumoto. *Fukkō senjyō ni odoru kikan dōhō* (Prominent returnees in the reconstruction). Los Angels: Tōyō Insatsujyo, 1949.

Ichioka, Yuji. "Japanese Immigrant Nationalism: The Issei and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-41." *California History* 69:3 (1990): 260-75.

_____. "Kengakudan: The Origin of Nisei Study Tours of Japan." *California History* 73:1 (Spring 1994), 32-33.

_____. *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924.* New York: The Free Press, 1988.

Ichioka, Yuji and Eiichiro Azuma. *A Buried Past II: A Sequel to the Annotated Bibliography of the Japanese American Research Project Collection*. Los Angeles: Asian American Studies Center, University of California, Los Angeles, 1999.

Kertzer David. "Generation as a Sociological Problem." *Annual Review of Sociology* 9 (1983): 125-149.

Kimoto, Mary. *Dear Miye: Letters Home from Japan 1939-1946*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

Kiyota, Minoru. *Beyond Loyalty: The Story of a Kibei*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997.

Kurashige, Lon. *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival, 1934-1990*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2002.

_____. "The Problem of Biculturalism: Japanese American Identity and Festival before World War II." *Journal of American History* 86:4 (March 2000): 1632-1654.

Myer, Dillon S. *Uprooted Americans: The Japanese Americans and the War Relocation Authority During World War II*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1971.

Niiya, Brian, ed. *Encyclopedia of Japanese American History: An A-to-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present, Updated Edition*. New York: Checkmark Books, 2001.

Nisei Survey Committee. *The Nisei: A Survey of Their Educational, Vocational, and Social Problems*. Tokyo: Kokusai Shuppan Insatsusha, 1939.

Kelley, Robin D. G. *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics and the Black Working Class*. New York: The Free Press, 1994.

Leighton, Alexander Hamilton. *The Governing of Men: General Principles and Recommendations Based on Experience at a Japanese Relocation Camp*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945.

Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde*. Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1984.

Matsumoto, Valerie. "Desperately Seeking 'Deirdre': Gender Roles, Multicultural Relations, and Nisei Women Writers of the 1930s." *Frontiers* 12:1 (1991): 19-32

_____. "Japanese American Women and the Creation of Urban Nisei Culture in the 1930s." In *Over the Edge: Remapping the American West*. Blake Allmerdinger and Valerie Matsumoto eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999, 291-306.

_____. "Redefining Expectations: Nisei Women in the 1930s." *California History* 73:1 (Spring 1994): 45-53.

Okada, John. *No-No Boy*. Seattle: Combined Asian American Resources Project, 1977.

Okihiro, Gary. *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History*. New York: The Columbia University Press, 2001.

_____. "Japanese American Resistance. " In his *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History*. New York: The Columbia University Press, 2001, 164-174.

_____. "Japanese Resistance in America's Concentration Camps: A Re-evaluation." *Amerasia Journal* 2 (Fall 1973), 20-34.

_____. "Religion and Resistance in America's Concentration Camps." *Phylon* 45:3 (1984): .

_____. "Tule Lake under Martial Law: A Study in Japanese Resistance." *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 5:3 (Fall 1977): 71-85.

Opler, Marvin. "A 'Sumo' Tournament at Tule Lake Center." *American Anthropologist* 47 (1945): 134-139.

_____. "Japanese Folk Beliefs and Practices, Tule Lake, California." *Journal of American Folklore* 63:250 (October-December 1950): 385-397.

Opler, Marvin and F. Obayashi. "Senryu Poetry as Folk and Community Expression." *Journal of American Folklore* 58:227 (January-March 1945): 1-11.

Plummer, Brenda Gayle. *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Sasabune, Sasaki. *Yokuryūjyo seikatsu ki* (Life records of incarceration). Los Angeles: Rafu Shoten, 1950.

Schweik , Susan. *A Gulf So Deeply Cut: American Women Poets and the Second World War*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991.

Scott, James. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1990.

Soga, Keiho, Mori Taisanboku, Sojin Takei, and Muin Ozaki. *Poets behind Barbed Wire*. Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 1983.

Sollors, Werner. "For a Multilingual Turn in American Studies." *American Studies Association Newsletter* (June 1997). <http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/interroads/sollors1.html>.

Sone, Monica. *Nisei Daughter*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1979.

Takahashi, Jare. "Japanese American Responses to Race Relations: The Formation of Nisei Perspectives." *Amerasia Journal* 9:1 (1982): 29-57.

Tamura, Eileen. *Americanization, Acculturation and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawaii*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994.

Thomas, Dorothy and Richard Nishimoto. *The Spoilage: Japanese-American Evacuation and Resettlement during World War II*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1946.

Thomas, Dorothy *The Salvage*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954.

Togawa, Akira. *Mitsubachi no uta: Shi to zuihitsush* (Song of the Bee: Poems and Essays). Tokyo: Aporon sha, 1962.

Tomita, Mary Kimoto. *Dear Miye: Letters Home from Japan, 1939-1946*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

Ueda, Makoto. *Light Verse from the Floating World: An Anthology of Premodern Japanese Senryu*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

U.S. Department of Interior, War Relocation Authority. *Administrative Manuals*. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Villa, Raul Homero and George Sanchez. *American Quarterly: Los Angeles and the Future of Urban Cultures*, 56:3 (September 2004).

Von Eschen, Peeny M. *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism*, 1937-1957. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997.

Yamamoto, Asako. *Ibara aru shiramichi* (Thorny path). Tokyo: Shirahashi Insatsujo, 1952.

Yamashiro, Masao. *Tōi Taigan: Aru Kibei Nisei no kaisō* (Distant Shore: Memories of a Kibei Nisei). Tokyo: Gurobyū Sha, 1984.

_____. *Kibei Nisei: Kaitaishiteiku "Nihonjn"* (Kibei Nisei: Disintegrating "Japanese"). Tokyo: Satsuki Shobō, 1995.

Yoo, David. "Captivating Memories: Museology, Concentration Camps, and Japanese American History." *American Quarterly* 48:4 (December 1996): 680-99.

_____. *Growing up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture among Japanese Americans of California, 1924-49*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.