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FROM PICTURE BRIDES TO WAR BRIDES: RACE, GENDER, AND BELONGING IN THE MAKING OF JAPANESE AMERICA

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To Michiko Ikeda and Louis R. Olivares,

your legacy lives on.

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INTRODUCTION

In June 1869, the first Japanese settlement on the mainland United States was founded in Northern California. The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony was established by 22 former samurai who left Japan for America where they hoped to find fertile land for farming that would eventually lead to wealth. This small group of early immigrants planted mulberry trees, rice, bamboo, and tea plants they brought along with them from Japan.[1] But the land proved too difficult to cultivate. After just two years, the 272-acre settlement was abandoned. One by one they moved on, most returning to Japan. Only three of the original settlers remained: Matsunoke Sakurai continued to eke out an existence on the arid land and later went to work for the Veerkamp family, who eventually took over the settlement after it was abandoned. The other was Masumizu Kuninosuke who went on to marry a mixed-race black and native woman named Carrie Wilson. The last was nineteen-year-old Okei Ito who fell ill and died in 1871. She was buried at the top of a small hill on the Wakamatsu farm where a tombstone erected in her honor still stands. Ito was the first known Japanese native to have died on American soil.[2]

Today the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony is a registered California Historic Landmark and viewed by some as the Plymouth Rock of Japanese America. Moreover, Okei Ito is regarded as the mother of Japanese immigration.[3] Yet Ito was not a mother, but a nursemaid to the Veerkamp family. However, as the "mother" of Japanese immigration, Ito reveals the way notions of gender shaped the Japanese diaspora in the United States. Furthermore, that one of the

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[1] Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, *Gold Hill Wakamatsu Preservation Act*, United States Senate, 111th Congress, 2d session, report 111-308 (2010), 1.
[2] Japanese American Service Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial, 1869-1969,* Ross Harano Papers and Photograph Collection, stacks 2, 7b, box 1, folder 5; For more on the Wakamatsu colonists see John E. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850-1880* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 122-130.
[3] Cecilia Rasmussen, "Hilltop Grave May Become a Shrine," *Los Angeles Times*, June 10, 2007.

first Japanese immigrants to settle in the United States married a mixed-race woman and fathered three children points to the heterogeneous origins of the Japanese in America. Interracial intimacies thus shaped the Japanese experience in America from the very start.

After the tragic end of the Wakamatsu Colony, Japanese immigration to the United States occurred in distinct waves categorized by gender. Among those first to voyage across the Pacific in large numbers were men, primarily students and then laborers between 1880 and the turn of the century. Japanese women followed soon after. The 1908 Gentlemen's Agreement between Japan and the United States facilitated the immigration of Japanese immigrant women as wives to Japanese men already in the United States. These women arrived in the US as picture brides to accompany husbands, who in many instances, they had never laid eyes on. Thus after 1908, Japanese women began to immigrate in large numbers. Many of the Japanese women who immigrated to the United States in the early twentieth century as picture brides were from farming families. Some came from middle-class families. Many were also highly educated and literate. The women were usually in their late teens to early twenties, the years marked by a woman's high fertility. Many immigrated out of desperation, but many also sought adventure and opportunity. Simply put, Japanese picture brides came from a variety of backgrounds, and though their lives in the US shared many similarities, their lived experiences varied.[4]

This dissertation argues that Japanese immigration to the US has historically been shaped by traditional ideas, attitudes, and practices regarding gender and sexuality norms both at the national and local level constituting what I call a *gendered diaspora*.[5] Because the first wave of

[4] Greg Robinson, *The Great Unknown: Japanese American Sketches* (Bolder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2016), 4; Yuji Ichioka, "Amerika Nadeshiko: Japanese Immigrant Women in the United States, 1900-1924" *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 2, (1980).
[5] Pierrette Hondaneu-Sotelo, *Gendered Transitions: Mexican Experiences of Immigration* (California: University of California Press, 1994), 2.

Japanese immigrants to arrive on US shores were primarily young, able-bodied men seeking work, wealth, and adventure, the scholarship on Japanese immigration before World War II is dominated by a discussion of the perceived economic threat of Japanese laboring men and race-based exclusion. The tendency to ignore questions of gender obscures the ways gender—idealized and feared—shaped inclusion and exclusion for Japanese immigrants in America.[6] This project takes an intersectional approach to the study of Japanese immigration, paying special attention to how race *and* gender logic converged to shape immigration patterns for Japanese immigrants in the United States.[7]

Building on the work of immigration scholar Catherine Lee, I seek to understand how "race *making* and gender construction were constitutive of immigration control" in the case of Japanese immigration to the United States.[8] In her comparative analysis of Chinese and Japanese exclusion, Lee argues that a failure to see immigrant exclusion as a "gendered process of racialization [produces] a view of immigration policy as an instrument of racialization alone." Viewing immigration policy through a racial lens alone distorts the historical meanings and practices of Japanese immigration to the United States, for "how and why men and women immigrate, for what purposes, in what familial and/or sexual relations, and under which regulatory control by the state have important consequences for how a perceived ethnoracial

[6] Moreover, the lack of a gendered analysis of early Japanese immigration assumes that men are without gender. See Yen Le Espiritu, *Asian American Women and Men* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997), 16.
[7] For scholarship that uses gender and race as a category of analysis in Japanese immigration, see Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002) and *Issei, Nisei, Warbride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Paul Spickard, *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in 20th-Century America* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).
[8] Catherine Lee, "'Where the Danger Lies': Race, Gender, and Chinese and Japanese Exclusion in the United States, 1870-1924," *Sociological Forum* 25, no. 2 (2010): 251.

collective may settle and affirm or challenge the existing notion of the family writ large—the nation."[9]

Central to this study is the role of marriage. As both a social and political institution, marriage served as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion for Japanese immigrants in the United States. In the case of immigration before World War II, marriage determined who would be allowed to immigrate and who would be included and excluded in Japanese American communities. Japanese women were allowed to immigrate as wives via the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908. Their arrival facilitated settlement and the emergence of the second-generation of Japanese—the Nisei—born in the United States. Japanese women were so critical to Japanese success in the US that the elite Japanese who promoted settlement worked closely with officials in Japan to prepare the women for what lay ahead.[10] In contrast, those Issei men who did not marry and send for wives lived their lives on the margins. After World War II, marriage served primarily as a mode of incorporation, but this time it served as a pathway to immigration, citizenship, and local and national belonging for the thousands of Japanese women who married US servicemen and made homes in America.

As a political institution, this study views marriage as a means of inclusion by recognizing that the institution has the power to shape belonging on a local and national scale for immigrants in America. According to Nancy Cott, on a national scale, state-sanctioned marriage weds the couple to one another and also weds them to the state. In so doing, the married couple gain certain rights and privileges, such as a pathway to citizenship, tax credits, and inheritance of property. But they must also fulfill their obligations to the state, mostly by observing the

[9] Lee, "Where the Danger Lies," 251.
[10] Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 53.

sanctimony of marriage in the form of the husband's financial support of the wife, ensuring neither becomes charges of the state.[11] Thus, marriage legitimizes unions, families, and communities. Marriage is an institution that can also exclude. It has both constructive and destructive power. This power is clearly evident in immigration law and practice. Marital regulations legitimize relationships by recognizing them in the eyes of the law, and these regulations then define who is and is not a member of the family unit, community, and state.

For instance, in 1950, Thomas Radtke, a native of Chicago and member of the US armed services in both Japan and Korea, petitioned Congress to pass special legislation to permit Mitsuko Ito a temporary visa to enter the country. Ito was Radtke's Japanese fiancé. Because Radtke and Ito were not yet married under American law, she was not permitted to enter under the auspices of the War Bride Act. Radtke then called upon his state congressman for assistance. Private Law 614 allowing Ito entry into the US was approved on June 28, 1950. However, the terms were conditional. Mitsuko Ito was given three months to marry Radtke and apply for permanent residence in order to prove her "bona fide intention" to marry into citizenship; otherwise, she would face deportation under the Immigration Act of 1917.[12] In other words, as a Japanese woman, Mitsuko was an alien inadmissible because of race. However, as the wife of an American serviceman, she was permitted entry and permanent residency. Therefore, marriage had the power to legitimize Mistuko's presence in the United States thereby articulating the boundaries of belonging between herself, Radtke, and the state.

The Gentlemen's Agreement and the Japanese Family

Beginning in the 1870s and increasingly throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, young Japanese men immigrated to the United States in unprecedented

[11] Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 4.
[12] "GI and Japanese Wife Arrive to See his Parents," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* Nov 20, 1951.

numbers. Most came to advance their economic standing with the hopes of returning home after a few years of work and accumulated wealth. Many, however, settled in the West and eventually started families. Most of those who settled did so by summoning Japanese wives from across the Pacific. Those Japanese immigrant men in America—referred to as Issei— who found it difficult to return to Japan instead arranged proxy marriages. To do so, they called upon their relatives in Japan to find them a bride who would be a good fit for companionship. In many cases, the bride and groom had only corresponded through letters and photographs. The picture bride marriage practice complemented traditional Japanese marriage customs where marriages were primarily arranged by a local matchmaker. Once the bride arrived in the US, her husband would meet her at the arriving dock where US officials would officiate the marriage.[13]

Picture bride immigration was facilitated by the Gentlemen's Agreement. In 1907 the United States and Japan began negotiating a series of measures designed to halt the immigration of Japanese laborers to the US. In response to anti-Japanese agitation along the West Coast, Japan agreed to stop issuing passports to laborers—men from the lower classes. In return, the US agreed to halt plans to segregate Japanese and white Americans. On the US side, the agreement was meant to exclude the Japanese, specifically skilled and unskilled laborers, while maintaining a harmonious relationship with the rising Japanese Imperial state.

However, the Agreement allowed the immigration of the "parents, wives, and children of Japanese residents in America."[14] In making this compromise, the United States inadvertently encouraged the mass migration of Japanese women who entered the US as wives to Japanese immigrant men. Explicit in the Gentlemen's Agreement, both in name and in process, was what

[13] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), 164.
[14] "Response of Japan to Proposition No. 2," *Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907*.

Eithne Luibheid terms heteropatriarchal standards of immigration control that privileged heterosexual marriages over other kinds of immigration.[15] Accordingly, the agreement "reinforced U.S. patriarchal norms" as it facilitated "a substantial migration of women" while at the same time "mandated that they had to be married."[16] While the Gentlemen's Agreement excluded Japanese male laborers from immigrating, at the same time it allowed Japanese brides to enter, producing a paradox of inclusion and exclusion. Yet lost in much of the discussion on Japanese immigration and the subsequent anti-Japanese movement is the how the Japanese were both included and excluded in the first decades of the twentieth century. More precisely, Japanese women's migration to the US was a process of *differential inclusion*. In Yen Le Espiritu's work on the Filipino/a diaspora she maintains that Filipinos/as in the US were not wholly excluded because as a group they were deemed integral to the nation's economy, culture, identity, and power. But their inclusion was predicated on their subordinated status in a process she terms *differential inclusion*.[17] The inclusion of Japanese women has been possible—and in the post-World War II era desirable—only in terms of their labor. What their racialized bodies could offer the nation.

Margins and Mainstreams

Japanese immigration to the United States began with the Chinese Exclusion Act passed by Congress in 1882. The Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited Chinese laborers from entering the United States. The act was the culmination of a decades-long campaign crafted by white, working-class men and their political allies to rid the American West of the "Yellow Peril." It

[15] Eithne Luibhéid, *Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 56.
[16] Luibhéid, *Entry Denied*, 59.
[17] Yen Le Espiritu, *Homebound: Filipino American Lives Across Cultures, Communities, and Countries* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 47

was the first legislation of its kind that barred immigration to the US solely on the basis of race and class. The act restricted Chinese laborers from entering the country primarily because they were believed to have been a menace to white womanhood and a competitive threat to the working white man. Subsequently, Japanese laborers were recruited to work in the fields, mines, hotels, and homes of America to take the place of the Chinese.

Upon arriving in the US, poor Japanese immigrant men worked a variety of low-paying, back-breaking jobs. They worked on the railroads of Utah and Montana, in the agriculture fields of California's central valley, as cooks in Alaskan mines, and as hotel boys, bartenders, and domestic hands in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle. Some realized their dream and returned to Japan in triumph while others permanently settled in the United States. Kenichi Sakoda, for example, came to America with his older brother around 1902 when he was just a teenager. The Sakoda brothers were from a large, poor farm family from the village of Funakoshi located in Hiroshima. After arriving in Seattle, the two young men worked as laborers and eventually moved on to the railroads of Montana. After some time, they settled in California, attracted by lucrative farming opportunities and warm weather. In California they were joined by a younger brother. Kenichi Sakoda briefly returned to Japan to marry a Japanese woman. Together they had three children. Along with his wife and brothers, Kenichi Sakoda worked as a poultry farmer, alfalfa harvester, dairy operator, hog farmer, and junk collector. Kenichi's two brothers returned to Japan with the money they had saved working in the United States after a barn fire destroyed the Sakoda family's dairy enterprise. In Japan they found success starting a

scrap steel business. In fact, the youngest Sakoda brother would go on to become the mayor of Funakoshi.[18]

The return migration of Kenichi Sakoda's brothers underscores the temporary nature of Japanese immigration to America in the early twentieth century when close to 33 percent of all Japanese returned home after having spent time in the United States. According to Masao Suzuki, most Japanese immigrants did not stay in the US. In fact, Suzuki estimates that the return rate of Japanese immigrants between 1920 and 1930 was more than 85 percent.[19] Although a large number of Japanese did in fact settle in the US, it was always their intention—at least in the early days of their arrival—to return to Japan.[20] In this way, the Sakoda brothers' return to Japan was emblematic of what one hoped to achieve by going abroad to work. Kenichi Sakoda's life in America, on the other hand, illustrates the grand story of Japanese America, albeit only one version within a larger narrative.

After his brothers returned to Japan, Kenichi Sakoda moved his family to Gardena, a working-class suburb of Los Angeles, but the family eventually found their way to the outskirts of Little Tokyo. After many hardships, including pervasive discrimination and wartime incarceration, the Sakoda family went on to live productive, meaningful lives. James Sakoda, Kenichi's second son, sat down with oral historian Arthur Hansen to tell his family's history in 1988, seven years after he retired as professor from the Sociology Department at Brown University. The story of the Sakoda family is ultimately one of triumph. It is one of many that highlight both the injustices experienced by the Japanese in America and their hard-earned

[18] James M. Sakoda, interview by Arthur A. Hansen, August 9-10, 1988, California State University, Fullerton Oral History Program, Japanese American Project.
[19] Masao Suzuki, "Success Story? Japanese Immigrant Economic Achievement and Return Migration, 1920-1930," *The Journal of Economic History* 55, no. 4 (2009): 892.
[20] Sandra Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion: Transpacific Encounters with Race, Caste, and Borders, 1885-1928* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 29 and 213.

success afterwards. Although the Sakoda family suffered at the hands of white racism and were grossly mistreated by the state and common folk alike, their story—and the pervasive retelling of similar stories—obscures the lives of others who were not so fortunate as to achieve postwar success. This dissertation is not about the lives of those like the Sakodas. Instead, it is a history of those at the margins. The pages that follow trace the lives of immigrant women, the unmarried, and those Japanese women who married across the color line in the post-World War II period. It is an intersectional history that examines the ways gender shaped Japanese immigration and settlement in the United States; at the same time, it is an inclusive history that challenges the standard narrative of the Japanese in America.

Many of the Japanese women who immigrated to the United States in the early twentieth century as picture brides were from farming families. Some came from middle-class families. Many were also highly educated and literate. The women were usually in their late teens to twenties, the years marked by a woman's high fertility. Many immigrated out of desperation, but many also sought adventure and opportunity. Simply put, Japanese picture brides came from a variety of backgrounds, and though their lives in the US share many similarities, their lived experiences varied.[21]

Scholarship that aims to explore the lives of historically marginalized communities and individuals must grapple with the problem of *symbolic annihilation*—the absence and under-representation of marginalized peoples in the historical record, as Michelle Caswell has explained.[22] To subvert the hegemonic power of the historical record, this dissertation is attentive to what *is* and *is not* located in the archives, for silences and omissions may be interpreted as

[21] Greg Robinson, *The Great Unknown: Japanese American Sketches* (Bolder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2016), 4.
[22] Michelle Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014).

well. Moreover, this project draws on a diverse archival base that includes immigration case files, personal correspondence, congressional records, independent community archives, and mainstream as well as military and black press outlets, among other sources.

Chapter Outline

Traditionally, the story of Japanese immigration to the United States has been a story about race relations on the West Coast. This dissertation, however, is a national history of the Japanese in America. As such, it is organized thematically, and as a result moves around in place and time. It begins on the West Coast with the arrival of picture brides in 1908 and moves to Chicago in the post-World War II era to examine the lives of Issei men who remained unwed and on the periphery. It then moves to Japan in the postwar era to examine the circumstances from which the second wave of Japanese women's immigration emerged. Finally, it takes on a national scope to examine the experiences and legacy of Japanese war brides in postwar America.

Chapter one, "Gender and the Making of Japanese America," begins with the first wave of Japanese women's immigration to the US in the early twentieth century. It examines the role of gender in the anti-Japanese movement in the early twentieth-century United States. I analyze popular and political discourse of the era to reveal how Japanese exclusion was in large part a reaction to Japanese women's labor power, both reproductive and productive. I begin with a discussion on the perceived threat of Japanese women's reproductive power, and then move to a discussion of labor, teasing out the way Japanese women's work in and out of the home fueled anti-Japanese rhetoric. I argue that fear rooted in Japanese women's ability to work and bear children led to a "gender panic" that fueled the anti-Japanese movement and ultimately led to exclusion. As gender and queer theorists have argued, historically those in power have used moral and sexual panics to rouse fear of the "Other" who threatens the social order. In the case of

the Japanese in the early twentieth century, the media and politicians alike—those in power—staged a "gender panic" that targeted Japanese women at a time when birthrates amongst white American women were declining and immigration from Japan and Eastern Europe was climbing. This panic, like others throughout history, was a means to achieve hegemony in the West at a time when white American settlement was not a foregone conclusion.

In chapter two, "Issei Bachelors: Marriage and Marginality," I analyze the lives of Issei bachelors—single Japanese immigrant men who never married nor had children, and as a result, lived their lives on the margins of society. Specifically, the chapter explores the lives of four Issei bachelors who resettled in Chicago after World War II. I argue that Issei bachelors remained intimately tied to their ancestral homeland because they were never fully incorporated into larger Japanese American communities, let alone mainstream American society. Their status as unmarried, itinerant laborers from mostly rural Japan rendered them a "degenerated class" of "dirt peasants," and thus anathema to the assimilation project crafted by elite Japanese Americans. The lives of Issei bachelors serve as a foil to Japanese brides demonstrating how marriage functioned as a mode of inclusion for women and exclusion for men.

In chapter three, "Interracial Intimacies and Civil Rights in Jim Crow Tokyo," I turn towards the post-World War II migration of Japanese women. I begin by looking at the racial politics of the Allied Occupation of Japan and the interracial encounters that emerged in that period. Finally, I discuss the ways that marriage legitimatized Japanese women's immigration to the US in the postwar period as it had in the early twentieth century by focusing on the active role American servicemen in Japan took to influence immigration reform.

Chapter four, "Making Good Wives, Wise Mothers," focuses on the ways that marriage and domesticity as a state apparatus legitimized national and local belonging of Japanese

immigrant women in the postwar era. It begins by examining American Red Cross Bride Schools in Japan and the United States, demonstrating how the bride schools along with US State Department propaganda and America's Cold War obsession with the East created a milieu in which Japanese war brides became the symbol of ideal postwar domesticity. In doing so, chapter four looks at the ways the postwar image of Japanese war brides reflected the prewar Japanese concept of the "Good Wife, Wise Mother." Next, chapter four examines how Japanese war brides, once in the United States, organized themselves into war bride clubs in an attempt to negotiate their multilayered identities: Japanese woman/American wife and mother, recent enemy/cold war ally, among others. I focus on the Cosmo Club, a Japanese war bride club founded in 1952 Chicago under the auspices of the Chicago Resettlers Committee. Finally, it explores the precarious position of Japanese war brides married to African American servicemen in postwar America. I examine the various ways Japanese women who married black GIs negotiated their racial identity in a racial climate dominated by the black and white binary. Ultimately this project aims to demonstrate how gender—femininity, sexuality, and marriage—facilitated Japanese immigration to America. Japanese women, as migrant brides, have been included through their subordination to men, whereas unwed Japanese men have been excluded because of their un-attachment to the family. Ultimately, "From Picture Brides to War Brides" aims to understand both the racial and gendered experience of immigration and settlement for those Japanese we know less about: Issei women, Issei bachelors, and war brides.

CHAPTER ONE

GENDER AND THE MAKING OF JAPANESE AMERICA

We gave birth during the Year of the Monkey.
We gave birth during the Year of the Rooster.
We gave birth during the Year of the Dog and the Dragon and the Rat.

-Julie Otsuka, *The Buddha in the Attic*

In 1921 John P. Irish, a farmer and president of the Delta Association of California, testified before the Congressional Committee on Immigration and Naturalization in support of Japanese immigration. Throughout his testimony, Irish spoke out against what he saw as the "fury of apprehension, hatred, and rage" amongst leaders of the anti-Japanese movement, particularly Senator James Phelan of California.[23] Irish stood strident in his defense of the Japanese, noting that they were friendly and industrious people. But when he was asked by Judge Raker whether or not he believed the Japanese were assimilable, Irish pushed back asking Raker to define what he meant by assimilation. "I mean a white girl marrying a Japanese young man," Raker replied. The question of Japanese assimilation into mainstream American society was, at its core, a question of interracial intimacy between Japanese men and white women. Irish danced around the question, repeatedly stating "that is on the knees of the gods."[24]

Political and popular discourse on the "problem" of Japanese immigration during the first two decades of the twentieth century reveals the way ideas about race, gender, and sexuality converged to create a paradox of inclusion and exclusion for the Japanese in America. While the

[23] *Japanese Immigration: Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization,* House of Representatives, 66th Cong., Second Session, 40.
[24] *Japanese Immigration: Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization,* House of Representatives, 66th Cong., Second Session, 48.

Gentlemen's Agreement prohibited Japanese men from the laboring classes from entering the US, at the same time it facilitated the migration of Japanese women in an effort to transform bachelor societies into immigrant communities made up of heterosexual nuclear Japanese families. Thus, the agreement encouraged Japanese women to immigrate as wives to abate white fear about the potential race mixing of Japanese men and white women. Yet once in the United States, their reproductive power and labor contributions became a source of tension that further fueled the anti-Japanese movement and ultimately led to Japanese exclusion.

In the first decades of the twentieth century when immigration policymakers argued over the problem of Japanese immigration, marriage proved to be a central issue.[25] At the center of much of the debates was whether Japanese picture bride immigration would resolve or exacerbate the Japanese "problem." Some argued that the immigration of Japanese women to the US would prevent the mixing of Japanese bachelor men with white women. When Irish was further pressed on the question of Japanese assimilation, he answered, "I remember when Abraham Lincoln and the rest of them were advocating the abolition of slavery. All of them were supposed to be answered by the question: 'Do you want your daughter to marry a Negro?'"[26] Irish answered the question of Japanese "assimilation" with a threat disguised as a question. His

[25] In April 1921 the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization published four volumes of Hearings entitled, "Japanese Immigration." In 1,490 pages, the House Committee debated the "Japanese problem." A total of 154 individuals appeared before the Committee as witnesses. According to Sydney Gulick, an outspoken supporter of the Japanese in America, the purpose and scope of the hearings were not clearly defined. He lamented, "Apparently the Committee was ready to hear anything and everything which anybody wanted to say about the Japanese." The lack of a clearly defined agenda "left the door wide open for aimless ramblings and wanderings" that were "quite irrelevant." However, these seemingly random ramblings of the committee and the 154 individuals who served as witnesses reveals the varied contrasting views of the Japanese in the American imagination. Throughout the 1,490 pages, politicians, journalists, community leaders, farmers, businessmen, and other ordinary people debated the problem of Japanese immigration. What is most striking is the way Japanese women's labor and reproductive power were at the center of much of the conversation. Sidney Lewis Gulick, *Should Congress Enact Special Laws Affecting Japanese?: A Critical Examination of the "Hearings Before the Committee On Immigration and Naturalization," Held in California, July 1920* (New York: The National Committee on American Japanese Relations, 1922), 5-6.

[26] Ibid., 48.

answer revealed a fear of racial mixing between Japanese men and white women, even among pro-Japanese Americans like himself—a fear that underlined much of the debate about the Japanese ability to "assimilate." In fact, no question came up more frequently in the hearings than the question of intermarriage between the Japanese and white Americans.[27] Sydney Gulick, a supporter of the Japanese, argued that the question of Japanese assimilation was really racially coded language used by members of the anti-Japanese movement to stoke fear in the populace.[28]

Irish's retort points to the ways Japanese men were both racialized and sexualized in the white American man's imagination. The Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, a leading political pressure group calling for Japanese exclusion in California, warned that just as the South was being "negroized," so too was the West being "Japanized." "Would you like your daughter to marry a Japanese?" one member of the Native Daughters asked readers in a newsletter, for "it is not unusual these days to find, especially among the 'better classes' of Japanese, [men] casting furtive glances at our young women. They would like to marry them."[29] According to Peggy Pascoe, during the last two decades of the nineteenth century and onward, Asian men—both Japanese and Chinese—were being pulled "steadily closer to 'Negroes' in the minds of American white supremacists, until they became standard companions in western miscegenation laws." In other parts of the country during the same period, miscegenation fears focused on white women and black men. In the West, however, that fear was aimed at Asian men

[27] Ibid., 71.
[28] Ibid., 72.
[29] Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977), 85.

and white women. At the core of the perceived threat of Japanese men was the protection of white womanhood.[30]

In addition to being perceived as sexual threats to white women, Japanese immigrant men were accused of strategically replacing white women in service industry jobs. "Brown-skinned Orientals" were a menace to white "female wage-earners," reported the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1905.[31] The article warned that Japanese men were gaining employment in restaurants and domestic service jobs throughout the city because they worked for lower wages than anyone else. Once they dominated these service sector jobs they would turn around and strike for higher wages, spreading the Japanese sphere of influence. Furthermore, the Japanese were depicted as having low hygienic standards, which posed a health threat to the restaurants they worked and the white Americans who patronized such establishments. The article revealed white American anxiety about the economic competition of Japanese male workers but also anxiety about Japan's growing military and economic power. It ended with a call to restrict Japanese immigration in order to protect white women who had very little choice but to seek work outside the home. Thus, supporters of Japanese picture bride marriages argued that the immigration of Japanese women as wives to Japanese men already in the United States would protect white American women from the Japanese men as lovers and economic competition.[32]

Moreover, in drafting the Gentlemen's Agreement, American politicians made deliberate concessions toward Japanese women believing that their presence would transform bachelor communities into striving immigrant families. Japanese women could turn single Japanese men

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[30] Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 85-87.
[31] "Why Brown Men are a Dire Menace," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 10, 1905; "Japanese A Menace to American Women," *San Francisco Chronicle,* March 1, 1905.
[32] Catherine Lee, "'Where the Danger Lies': Race, Gender, and Chinese and Japanese Exclusion in the United States, 1870-1924," *Sociological Forum* 25, no. 2, (2010): 262.

into husbands and fathers. The latter seemed less a threat. Those behind the agreement on both sides of the Pacific understood that state-sanctioned marriage could prove useful to their agenda. The marriage clause in the agreement was not the first or last time American politicians would use marriage as a state apparatus to achieve a political foothold. For the Japanese, the clause made settling in the US a possibility, and with settlement came the birth of the second-generation Nisei. However, scholars have predominantly viewed the agreement as a mechanism of exclusion. While the agreement certainly excluded a large swath of men and some women from entering the US, it ushered in a great wave of female migration not to be overlooked.

"Japanese Laborers in the Guise of Wives"

In his testimony, Irish questioned a number of other claims made against the Japanese. Chief among the charges was that once Japanese women immigrated to the US, they began working in the fields, helping their husbands to cultivate crops and bearing children at a fast rate. Though as picture brides, Japanese women theoretically entered the United States as wives, the underlying assumptions about their labor fueled debate. These women did not enter as laborers per se as their male counterparts did but as brides, ostensibly to provide intimacy and companionship to their husbands, itself a form of labor. But at the core of the argument was the role their labor—reproductive and otherwise—would mean to the Japanese immigrant communities in the United States. As such, each woman underwent an interrogation by immigration officials once she arrived in the United States to determine whether or not she was entering as a bona fide wife to a Japanese man.

In December 1910, twenty-year-old Yoshi Kiyomura arrived at Angel Island in the San Francisco Bay aboard the *Chiyo Maru* along with several other picture brides. Upon her arrival, Kiyomura was questioned by immigration officials about her background in Japan, marriage, and

plans for life in America. Authorities also questioned Kiyomura's waiting husband, Masaki. He told immigration officials that he was a farmer in Gardena, a suburb of Los Angeles, and that he had made all the necessary preparations to receive Kiyomura: "I have a house ready for her," he explained. Amongst the questions asked of all arriving picture brides and their awaiting husbands was the question of labor. "What do you intend to do here if admitted?" the immigration inspector asked Mrs. Kiyomura. "Household work," she answered.[33] "What do you intend to have your wife do if admitted?" the inspector asked Mr. Kiyomura. "Household duties only," he answered. Traditional gender roles and a belief in a sharp division of labor were central to Japanese women's immigration to the United States in the early twentieth century.[34] Permitted to enter the US as wives, distinct from laborers, the women had to be careful not to reveal their plans to "help" in the fields, stores, restaurants, and hotels in which their husbands labored. Likewise, the husbands had to be sure to not overstate their desire to have their wives help them in the fields and in the laundries they owned and worked. Both parties assumed that household duties did not constitute labor. Yet the labor of women like Yoshi Kiyomura was called into question even before they had been admitted into the United States. The anxiety over Japanese women's labor stemmed from white Americans' belief that the Japanese had an unfair advantage over white workers. While the Gentlemen's Agreement was designed to curtail the immigration of Japanese laboring men and allow Japanese women to enter in an effort to settle the Japanese bachelor communities thus preventing them from interacting with white women, to the white exclusionist imagination, it seemed Japanese women as laborers now posed a threat.

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[33] Immigration Arrival Investigation Files, 1884-1944, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, San Francisco District, RG 085, Box 480, Case file # 10443/11-10. National Archives Records and Administration, San Bruno, CA.

[34] Jennifer Gee, "Housewives, Men's Villages, and Sexual Respectability: Gender and the Interrogation of Asian Women at the Angel Island Immigration Station," in *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women,* eds. Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 90.

Fig. 1. Yoshi Kiyomura, ca. 1909. Photo presented by Masaki Kiyomura to immigration officials at Angel Island on Dec. 10, 1910. NARA, San Bruno, CA.

Fig. 2. Masaki Yoshimura, ca. 1909. Photo presented to immigration officials at Angel Island on Dec. 10, 1910. NARA, San Bruno, CA.

Much of the historiography on Japanese exclusion details the perceived labor, economic, and sexual threat of Japanese immigrant men in the early twentieth century.[35] Yet the historical record reveals that anxiety about Japanese women's labor and reproductive power also inflamed anti-Japanese discourse. Women like Yoshi Kiyomura were believed to be doing more than just "household duties." In *The Qualities of a Citizen*, Martha Gardner explains that in 1915, local

[35] For example, see Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977); Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: The Free Press, 1988); Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

politicians in the San Francisco area were alarmed to find that Japanese picture brides were working outside the boundaries of the home in positions that up until that point had been occupied by common laborers. When Japanese wives worked alongside their husbands in the fields and restaurants, they were accused of being "Japanese laborers in the guise of wives."[36] In 1917 California, Congressmen Everis Anson Hayes, a member of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, accused the Japanese of violating the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908 because picture brides were "quite as much laborers as are the men, they go out in the fields and do the same work."[37] The immigration of Japanese women as wives was as much an issue about gender and labor as it was about race, to the extent that the Labor Council of San Francisco took up the issue in a letter addressed to President Woodrow Wilson. In the letter, the Council claimed that the labor of Japanese women outside the home gave the Japanese an unfair advantage that displaced their white competitors.[38]

According to this logic, the Japanese men in America were exploiting a loophole in the Gentlemen's Agreement that explicitly barred the entrance of laborers but allowed the entrance of wives, children, and parents. Because many Japanese picture brides engaged in work outside the home, many argued that the arrival of the women undermined the agreement's efforts to abolish economic competition for white men. In sending for their wives, Japanese men in America were accused of sending for laborers. Much of the early scholarship concludes that Japanese men indeed sent for wives to help in the fields, restaurants, and hotels they ran, as well as for companionship and family formation. Yet in these narratives, women's voices are largely absent. They appear to be mere bystanders to history. In her work on Issei women and labor in

[36] Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 41.
[37] "Japan Violating Gentlemen's Pact Declares Hayes," *San Francisco Chronicle,* Jan 20, 1917.
[38] Gardner, 41; "Governor Asks US Action to Bar Japanese," *San Francisco Chronicle,* Jun 22, 1920.

Hawai'i, Kelli Nakamura explains that many Japanese women "were driven to become picture brides by economic factors and the promise of work." They agreed to arranged picture marriages as a means to "gain entry into the United States and its territories to take advantage of work opportunities."[39] A large portion of the women who entered as brides came from farming families where women's work, both reproductive and productive, was key to sustaining the economic unit of the household. In a study of prewar rural Japan, Okada Masakatsu found that "women in Japanese farm households were deeply involved in farm work as well as in housework, and that the role [they] played, although different from the role played by men, was indispensable to the household." Available data, although wanting, shows that women in prewar rural Japan spent about equal amounts time on farming and household work, although how the two were distinguished is largely unknown. What is known is that surplus sons and daughters left rural Japan to work as domestics or in factories in urban centers while a significant portion left Japan altogether to pursue work in America.[40] Moreover, Midge Ayukawa's study of picture brides in British Columbia, based largely on oral histories, found that with few opportunities in Japan, some women "actively chose the adventure and excitement they hoped to find in 'Amerika,' while others rejected the subservience that would be expected of them by their mothers-in-law if they had remained in Japan."[41] Nakamura's and Ayukawa's accounts reveal the ways Japanese immigrant women negotiated their path within their limited number of choices. Some women undoubtedly had no choice, but it is inaccurate to presume that the women were mere witnesses to their own lives.

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[39] Kelli Y. Nakamura, "Issei Women and Work: Washerwomen, Prostitutes, Midwives, and Barbers," *The Hawaiian Journal of History* 49, (2015): 121.
[40] Ann Waswo and Nishida Yoshiaki, *Farmers and Village Life in Japan* (London: Routledge, 2003), 41-43.
[41] Midge Ayukawa, "Good Wives and Wise Mothers: Japanese Picture Brides in Early Twentieth-Century British Columbia," *BC Studies*, nos 105-106 (Spring/Summer 1995): 118.

Madame Butterfly

While Japanese immigrant women were being scapegoated in anti-Japanese rhetoric on the West Coast, another view of the women proliferated throughout popular and political discourse revealing the way gender both bolstered and circumscribed notions of racial "Otherness." Supporters of the Japanese framed their arguments with an Orientalist view of Japanese women drawn from the image of *Madame Butterfly*. Originally a short story published in the United States in 1887, *Madame Butterfly* was popularized by the 1904 Giacomo Puccini opera by the same name. In the story, a young Japanese woman and an American Navy officer stationed in Nagasaki have an affair. The woman becomes pregnant and is then abandoned by the Navy officer. Still she waits faithfully for his return. However, when the officer finally returns he does so with his white American wife. The couple adopts his half-Japanese child. The Japanese mother and the officer's heartbroken ex-lover, Madame Butterfly, commits suicide.[42]

In his support of the Japanese, Irish noted in his testimony before Congress that the Japanese picture brides were "very, very handsome and motherly women."[43] He continued, "The women are amiable, good wives, mothers, and housekeepers. It is false that they work in the fields." Irish's support went beyond defending Japanese women as respectable wives and mothers. When speaking on the issue of Japanese and white intimate relations, Irish pointed to examples of successful Japanese and white American unions: English poet and novelist Edwin Arnold married a Japanese woman and "it proved to be a happy union." Lafcadio Hearn, also a

[42] Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2003), 146.
[43] "Japanese Women," *Boston Globe Magazine*, Nov. 25, 1917.

writer, married a Japanese woman, and a nephew of John Pierpont Morgan did so as well. "But that is all on the knees of God," Irish concluded.[44]

All of Irish's examples of successful Japanese and white unions were between a white man and a Japanese woman. Irish made no mention of unions between a Japanese man and a white woman. As Peggy Pascoe has shown, many white Americans have been more than willing to turn a blind eye to interracial unions between white men and non-white women, and in the case of Irish, some have even celebrated such unions. However, when it came to Japanese men and white women, Irish had nothing to say. In an analysis of unions between white men and native women, Pascoe describes two basic tenets that converged to support such unions, which prove useful in thinking about white men and Japanese women as well. The first was the belief that "white male citizens had every right to choose their own wives." Moreover, the women in the interracial marriages Irish points to came from reputable families with means. For instance, Hearn's wife, Koizumi Setsu, came from a samurai family. That white western men married to upper-class Japanese women was deemed acceptable refers back to the second tenet Pascoe describes, which is that white men marrying affluent nonwhite women justified the presumption that wealth "should be concentrated in the hands of White men."[45] Unions between white western men and Japanese women were acceptable and even celebrated because they did not threaten white straight male power; rather they bolstered it.

In 1917, the *Boston Globe Magazine* published an essay with the title, "Japanese women—they are very self-sacrificing because they love their husbands." The short essay did not mention the anti-Japanese campaign that was underway on the West Coast of the United

[44] *Japanese Immigration: Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization,* 35.
[45] Pascoe, 103.

States nor did it mention the attacks against Japanese women's perceived labor threat. Instead it explained:

> It is a well-known fact that the Japanese woman makes an ideal housewife…. Nowhere perhaps in the world does one find a more ideal "lady" than among the wives and daughters of "fair Japonica." The Japanese wives as a rule are very modest, dutiful and, above all, perfectly faithful to their husbands.
>
> They are very devoted as well as affectionate, and live up to then [*sic*] sense of duty. When they love the husband, they willingly die for him. This is not because they feel it a duty to sacrifice their lives for their husbands, but because that are so affectionate that they cannot bear to see their husbands suffering.[46]

In dispelling the racial myths of exclusionist rhetoric, Japanese sympathizers relied on gender and racial stereotypes of Japanese women drawn from *Madame Butterfly*. This view of Japanese womanhood had a long history in the West. Nearly fifty years before the Gentlemen's Agreement, American news outlets and cultural productions promoted a vision of Japanese women as "excellent wives and mothers" who were the "equal companion of man."

The favorable view of Japanese women played two important functions. First, the media outlets promoting positive views of Japanese women had an interest in trade with the Pacific. They used the rhetoric of ideal womanhood to draw Japan and the US closer together in the minds of Americans. Ikuko Asaka explains that in the mid-nineteenth century, the status of women was the yardstick by which civilization was measured; the low status of women in parts of the "Orient" marked inferiority while the elevated status of women in the West indicated superiority.[47] Likening the Japanese to Americans in terms of gender relations also allowed politicians and the media to disparage the Chinese, who many saw as a growing threat to the American way of life. As noted earlier in this chapter, both the Chinese and Japanese were

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[46] "Japanese Women." *Boston Daily Globe,* Nov 25, 1917.
[47] Ikuko Asaka, "'Colored Men of the East': African Americans and the Instability of Race in US-Japan Relations," *American Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (December 2014): 977

racialized in different ways over the nineteenth and twentieth century producing a "hierarchy of difference" that favored the Japanese until World War II.

However, much of the idealization of Japanese femininity came from those not on the West Coast. Referring to the post-World War II period, Naoko Shibusawa explains:

> Most Westerners—with the significant exception of those in California decrying the "yellow peril"—chose to frame the Japanese in a romanticized manner, and often stubbornly refused to alter their view even after more accurate and realistic information about a modernizing Japanese became widely available.[48]

That the *Boston Globe Magazine* would depict what they surely believed was a flattering image of Japanese women was not inconsequential. Rather, it reveals how the Japanese were perceived in different parts of the United States. In an analysis of *Japanism*—from the French *Japonism* referring to Westerners' enthusiasm for Japanese art aesthetic—in the art and literary world, Christopher Reed dedicates an entire chapter to elite Bostonians' interest in Japan.[49] He argues that wealthy Bostonian (what he calls Boston Brahmins) men and some women viewed Japan as a place where elite masculinity thrived. The image of the Japanese woman as "modest," "dutiful," "faithful," and "affectionate" was made concrete by her subordination to the masculine power that ruled her country. In other words, the Madame Butterfly motif fit nicely within wealthy Bostonians' racial thinking about the Japanese and because the Japanese population in Boston was slim to nil at the time; fear of the "yellow peril" did not take root as it did on the West Coast. Finally, Bostonian enthusiasm for the Japanese

[48] Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006), 22.
[49] Christopher Reed, *Bachelor Japanists: Japanese Aesthetics and Western Cultures* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2017), fn. 1, 295.

aesthetic was institutionalized and is today reflected in the Museum of Fine Arts' possession of the "pre-eminent public collection of Japanese art in the West."[50]

Furthermore, class status played a prominent role in American views of Japanese women. In 1926, Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto published a memoir titled, "A Daughter of the Samurai," detailing her life in Japan, migration as a picture bride, and life in the United States. The memoir, written in English for an American audience, was first serialized in 1923–24 in a US magazine and was so well received that it was later published in book form. The book was also successful, selling over eighty thousand copies in ten years. It gained in popularity over the years as well with translations in seven European languages.[51] According to Karen Kuo, in writing *Daughter of a Samurai*, "Sugimoto challenged the pervasive aestheticized and Orientalized images of Japanese women as docile, submissive Madame Butterflies and geishas." The book is especially remarkable as it was published just one year after the National Origins Act of 1924 restricted Japanese immigration. Still, Sugimoto came from an elite Samurai family and her class status distinguished her from the great lot of Japanese immigrant women who were targeted by anti-Japanese exclusionists. Furthermore, Kuo explains, many scholars believe, "Sugimoto positioned herself as the 'good' Japanese in the United States, one who was from an educated and elite (samurai) class and distinguished from 'bad' Japanese immigrants," making her an accommodationist and not someone who challenged anti-Japanese discourse.[52]

"Yankee, Why Does A Big Man Like You Fear My Baby?"

The anti-Japanese movement that arose on the West Coast and spread throughout the interior West stemmed from racial hatred and a fear of Japanese women's reproductive power as

[50] Reed, 7.
[51] Karen Kuo, "'Japanese Women Are Like Volcanoes:' Trans-Pacific Feminist Musings in Etsu I. Sugimoto's *A Daughter of a Samurai*," *Frontiers* 36, no. 1 (2015): 59.
[52] Kuo, 62.

their American-born children would become citizens of the United States.[53] In addition, Japanese exclusionists accused the women of working outside the home. Japanese exclusion was therefore rooted in a racialized fear of gender: Japanese women's ability to work and bear children. Japanese immigrant women in the white American imagination were "toylike, delicate little ladies" who had the power to work like men and the reproductive fecundity to give birth "as regularly and as often as [every] springtime." Japanese women were, according to contemporary sources, orchestrating an "inside Japanese invasion of the state."[54] Fear of the Japanese in the US was compounded by Japan's growth as a world power since defeating the Qing Empire in the Sino-Japanese War in 1894–95 and the Russian Empire in the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–05.

Moreover, in the early twentieth century, a declining birthrate among white American women coupled with the influx of new immigrants arriving from southern and eastern parts of Europe and the East Asia led to a fear of a "race suicide" amongst white Americans.[55] In 1912 Myre Iseman published *Race Suicide,* a study of population patterns in the US and beyond. Iseman warned that "if the American republic is to remain Anglo Saxon and stand for the civilization of the West instead of the East, her women, particularly those of the native stock, must become its mothers."[56] *Race Suicide* popularized eugenic logic that claimed the Teuton people were the superior race and called for increased birth rates among "native stock." Iseman blamed industrialization for the declining birthrate as many white women left their homes to work in the mills or factories of industrialized America.[57]

[53] Espiritu, *Asian American Women*, 17.
[54] "Japanese 'Picture Brides' Become Frights in California," *Literary Digest* 62, (August 9, 1919): 53.
[55] "No More babies in 2015," *New York Tribune,* Dec 31, 1910.
[56] Myre St. Wald, *Race Suicide* (New York, NY: The Cosmopolitan Press, 1912), 5.
[57] St. Wald, 135.

On the West Coast, the discourse on race suicide focused heavily on the "Yellow Peril." In his call for Japanese exclusion, James Phelan, San Francisco mayor from 1897–1902 and United States Senator from 1915–21 and a prominent leader of the anti-Japanese movement, consistently pointed to the reproductive power of Japanese women. Phelan and his friends sought to bar all Japanese immigration to the United States—including picture brides—and pushed for legislation to prevent the Japanese from purchasing land. In Senator Phelan's testimony before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, he reported the Japanese population had increased over 111 percent between 1910 and 1919.[58] Phelan's opponent, Sydney Gulick, criticized him for exaggerating statistics on the Japanese population, arguing that Japanese immigrant women were "not as efficient agents of reproduction" as Phelan claimed.[59]

Phelan based much of his argument on Japanese women's "fecundity" from data derived from the Bureau of Vital Statistics of the State Board of Health. In 1920 the Board of Health reported that between 1910 and 1919, the "Japanese birth rate [in California was] far in excess of that of all other nationalities." However, the board also pointed out that an excessive birth rate was common amongst "new" immigrants as newly arriving immigrants tended to be younger in age—i.e., in their childbearing years—while the white residents of California had been there longer and thus had a proportionate number of elderly citizens not of childbearing age.[60] Still, the board found that in relation to white women, Japanese women produced far more children and continued to work as farm laborers.[61] Implicit in the board's findings was the assumption that the arduous work of farming had no bearing on their ability to reproduce and mother. This view of

[58] *Japanese Immigration: Hearings before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization,* 22.
[59] *Japanese Immigration: Hearings before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization,* 209.
[60] *California and the Oriental: Japanese, Chinese, and Hindus,* Report of State Board of Control of California to Gov. WM. D. Stephens, June 19, 1920, 37.
[61] *California and the Oriental,* 40 and 160.

Japanese women contrasts sharply with that of white women portrayed by eugenicists like Iseman who believed white women were producing fewer babies because of the arduous work demanded in the mills and factories.

Phelan and other members of the anti-Japanese movement were accused of committing pogroms against the Japanese, and in previous years, against the Chinese, in their campaign to rid California of the "Yellow Peril" (See Fig. 3). In his defense, Phelan explained that Japanese exclusion did not amount to a pogrom. "It is not persecution; it is preservation," he argued. In other words, the exclusion of Japanese immigrants from California was an effort to preserve the white race—to "Keep California White," as Phelan advertised in his 1920 bid for senator. Phelan and other prominent members of the anti-Japanese movement, such as the owner and editor of the *Sacramento Bee,* were successful in their campaign to exclude the Japanese. In 1920 Japan agreed to stop issuing passports to women wishing to join their husbands across the Pacific, halting picture bride migration. But the defeat did not come without a fight. Throughout the anti-Japanese campaign of the early twentieth century, elite Japanese Americans consistently defended their communities. Moreover, the Japanese state as well as journalists, academics, and government officials voiced their concern regarding the treatment of the Japanese in the United States.

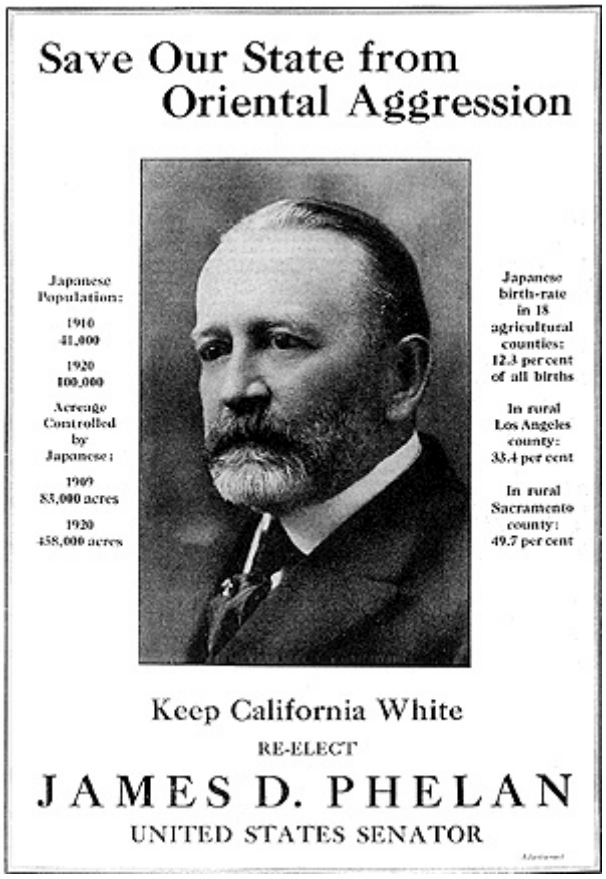

Fig. 3. An ad for Sen. Phelan's second bid for the senatorial seat in 1920.
Sunset, the Pacific Monthly, Vol. 45, Num. 1, July, 1920.

In 1920 the *Literary Digest* published an essay titled, "Japanese Views of California," drawing on translated Japanese newspaper articles. In the center of the essay is an image of a Japanese woman dressed in a kimono wearing her hair in the traditional *marumage* style (See Fig. 4). She is carrying an infant baby. Behind her are rays of sunshine reflecting the Japanese Imperial flag. At her foot is a white man on his knees. His name is Yankee. He is a caricature of

an American politician. Underneath his right hand lays a dagger. His face is fearful, yet the dagger suggests that he is also dangerous. The image captures the pervasive fear of Japanese women's reproductive power among anti-Japanese movement members. Furthermore, as contemporary political and popular discourse demonstrates, the perceived economic threat of the Japanese was profoundly influenced by fear of women's labor.

Fig. 4. "Yankee, Why Does a Big Man Like You Fear My Baby?"
Literary Digest Vol. 67 (1919)

Though the image comes from a Japanese publication, the Japanese woman depicted reflects the American stereotype of Madame Butterfly. But this time she is portrayed as being under the threat of an American man, and not the idealized Asian woman of Puccini's Opera and the many various cultural productions that came after. Her polite query—why do you fear my baby?—is meant to humiliate American politicians for fearing a woman delicately draped in a kimono holding a helpless baby.

Japanese women's labor and reproductive power were not the only concerns on the minds of anti-Japanese proponents. As many scholars have already explained, anti-prostitution campaigns in the American West disproportionately targeted immigrant women of Asian origins—first the Chinese in the late nineteenth century and then the Japanese in the early twentieth century—although their numbers were relatively low.[62] Early scholarship on Japanese prostitution in the US details how Japanese women were exploited at the hands of Japanese men who either worked for procurers "or [were] procurers themselves."[63] In these early narratives, Issei women were mere victims of male exploitation having been deceived and sent to brothels against their will. Yuji Ichioka contends that these women were "innocent country women" duped into prostitution by male exploiters, although he notes that the lack of historical records makes it "impossible to depict the life of the prostitutes fully."[64] However, recent scholarship aims to tell a more nuanced story of the lives of Japanese prostitutes and Japanese women in general.[65] Although some women were indeed the victims of exploitation, others turned to

[62] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei*, 28.
[63] Yuji Ichioka, "Ameyuki-san: Japanese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century America," *Amerasia Journal* 4, no. 1 (1977): 4.
[64] Ichioka, *The Issei*, 34.
[65] Kelli Y. Nakamura's work demonstrates how Issei women in Hawai'i found opportunities for self-determination in the toilsome world of plantation life. See Kelli Y. Nakamura, "Issei Women and Work: Washerwomen, Prostitutes, Midwives, and Barbers," *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, 49 (2015).

prostitution to gain independence from men or as an economic necessity after being widowed or abandoned by husbands.[66]

This new body of scholarship aims to highlight the voices of Japanese immigrant women and investigate small pockets of female agency. For instance, Kazuhiro Oharazeki argues that the boundary between working as a prostitute and working as a barmaid in the turn of the century American West was fluid. Though Japanese women indeed worked as prostitutes both involuntarily and voluntarily, they also worked as barmaids where they sometimes engaged in sex work along with the duties of maintaining the bar. Being a barmaid offered Japanese immigrant women an opportunity to engage in casual sex work to earn extra income without being confined to a brothel. The sexual encounters between Japanese men and women in brothels and bars existed in what Cecelia Tsu describes as "part of a greater nexus of new possibilities between Japanese men and women, many of whom exhibited nonstandard patterns of behavior and interaction with each other upon immigration to California."[67] In other words, Japanese men and women engaged in various kinds of relationships. Within this nexus of contact, Japanese women married, divorced, ran away with, and had casual sexual relationships with Japanese men in addition to paid sex work. While much about these various relationships is highlighted in earlier scholarship, scholars like Oharazeki and Tsu see them as evidence of complex gender relations in early Japanese American history demonstrating that Japanese women were not always victims of male exploitation.

[66] Kazuhiro Oharazeki, "Listening to the Voices of 'Other' Women in Japanese North America: Japanese Prostitutes and Barmaids in the American North West, 1887-1920," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 32, no. 4 (Summer 2013): 26.
[67] Cecilia M. Tsu, "Sex, Lies, and Agriculture: Reconstructing Japanese Immigrant Relations in Rural California, 1900-1913," *Pacific Historical Review* 78, no. 2 (2009): 176.

Determining whether or not the women involved in prostitution had agency, even within the nexus of contact, is a slippery slope. First, Japanese immigrant women's voices—particularly those who engaged in prostitution—is scarce in the archival records. Second, whether or not prostitution offers women choices is still a matter fiercely debated by feminists, scholars, and activists alike. For instance, Catherine MacKinnon argues that paid sex with a biological man will never be an empowering mode of survival for a woman when "the sex is coerced by the need to survive."[68] Activists and former sex workers Vednita Carter and Evelina Giobbe (as well as MacKinnon) also point out that historically, sex work is taken on by poor women with very few options available to them and consequently should not be considered a viable "choice" women make of their own entirely free will.[69] Furthermore, according to MacKinnon, heterosexual sex always privileges male pleasure over women's autonomy. Men set the conditions for sexual encounters in which women participate both in consensual and nonconsensual terms. Thus "sexuality" and "desire" are socially constructed by men in power, which means women—however empowered they may feel—are always without power in heterosexual relationships.[70]

However, using a Mackinnonian lens to analyze prostitution renders women almost completely without agency. To bring women's voices to the fore, scholars have sought to strike a balance. For instance, in examining prostitution in Allied Occupied Japan, Sarah Kovner acknowledges the unbalanced racial, gender, and economic power dynamics that World War II produced while also maintaining that sex work was one option among others for destitute

[68] Catherine MacKinnon, "Trafficking, Prostitution, and Inequality," Speech given in Bihar, India, Jan. 5, 2009.
[69] Vednita Carter and Evelina Giobbe, "Duet: Prostitution, Racism, and Feminist Discourse," *Hastings Women's Law Journal* 1, no. 1, Article 4, *Symposium Issue: Economic Justice for Sex*, (1999).
[70] Catherine A. MacKinnon, "Sexuality, Pornography, and Method: "Pleasure under Patriarchy," *Ethics* 99, no. 2 (Jan. 1989): 317.

Japanese women. She writes, "If one does not consider all forms of heterosexual sex coercive, it becomes important to determine the degree of women's agency. The context for commercial sex is crucial, clearly, but it is no less important to consider whether individual women—and individual men—were able to make different choices."[71] Despite the debate about prostitution and women's autonomy, the fact that Japanese immigrant men and women engaged in a variety of relationships in the early years of the twentieth century reveals some of the complexities of early Japanese America where women played important roles.

Although the number of Japanese prostitutes remained low, anti-Japanese supporters continued to exclaim that Japanese prostitution plagued the American West, arguing that it was evidence of Japanese inherent immorality.[72] The specter of Japanese prostitution led the US Department of Labor to call for an extensive and systematic investigation into the occupation of Japanese women. In December 1915 the US Commissioner-General of the Department of Labor A.W. Parker wrote the Commissioner of Immigration in San Francisco asking him to select several vicinities in California where Japanese picture brides resided and complete an investigation into "what has become of the women and what their occupation has been since entry." Parker's call for an investigation was an attempt to weed out the "evil" that "resulted from the admission of aliens of this kind."[73] In many ways, similar to Phelan's political campaign and the anti-Japanese movement more broadly, the investigation was a project of surveillance that sought to stoke fear in the populace by attacking Japanese women.

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[71] Sarah Kovner, *Occupying Power: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Postwar Japan* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 52.
[72] "Immoral Japanese: Two Girls Who Will Be Sent Home," *San Francisco Chronicle,* March 30, 1890; "Immoral Japanese," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 6, 1893.
[73] Immigration Arrival Case Files, San Bruno, CA, RG 085, Box 910, Fol. 14315/23.4.

Despite their efforts, immigration officials were unable to confirm that Japanese women were engaged in prostitution in large numbers. Inspector C. H. Hannum reported that "Japanese women, while not openly engaged in the practice of prostitution within the confines of this state, travel about in groups from ranch to ranch where Japanese men are employed, for the ostensible purpose of visiting relatives, their real mission being the practice of prostitution. This method of plyn (*sic*) their trade makes a successful investigation very difficult." Reports from the Sacramento Valley confirmed that Japanese women were working in restaurants throughout the valley and not engaged in prostitution as authorities suspected. Still, without evidence, Hunnam continued to believe that it was a "cloak to hide their commercialized immorality."[74] One inspector commented that their efforts "to ascertain the occupations of Japanese women known as 'picture brides' have not as of yet produced definite results" indicating that officials expected to confirm their suspicions one way or another.

The surveillance of Japanese women was not only a concern for those American-born who opposed the Japanese, but it was also a primary concern among leaders within the Japanese community. In *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America,* Eiichiro Azuma details the intra-racial tensions brewing in Japanese American communities across the West. From the early days of Japanese immigration up "until the 1920s, the question of how to control the behavior of 'the poor,' both in a moral and material sense, was among the most important agendas of the Japanese immigrant community."[75] Much of the tension was class-based as elite Japanese community members sought to control common laborers, gamblers, and prostitutes whom they deemed the "undesirable elements" of the lower classes. To be fair, the reform-minded community leaders were acting out of their own sense of

[74] Oharazeki, "Listening to the Voices," 17.
[75] Azuma, *Between Two Empires,* 35.

preservation, worried that the anti-Japanese campaigns would eventually lead to full exclusion as it had in the case of the Chinese.[76] These leaders worked alongside reformers in Japan who were also seeking to reform prostitution across the Pacific in an effort to "protect the positive image of Japan as a 'civilized' country in the international community."[77] Moreover, as Azuma and Ichioka have shown, the anti-prostitution reformers within the Japanese immigrant communities worked with local police and moral reformers to round up, prosecute, and in some cases, expel those who were suspected of immoral practices like prostitution, pimping, and gambling.[78] Aside from the fear of white backlash, community reformers were also concerned with controlling the behavior of Japanese women.[79]

The troubling case of Kiyoe Yamahata demonstrates just how far immigration officials were willing to go to locate and prosecute Japanese prostitutes. Kiyoe Tamura arrived at the San Francisco port in 1915 at the age of twenty-two. Nobutaro Yamahata, age thirty-seven, awaited her arrival. The couple had been wed through proxy marriage; Kiyoe was arriving as Nobutaro's picture bride. Soon after her arrival, things went downhill for Kiyoe. The couple lived and worked on a ranch in Suisun in the Salinas Valley. Just two months after arriving in the US, Kiyoe became the victim of Nobutaro's violent drunken rage. One summer night in 1915, a drunken Yama (as he was called by contemporaries) attacked Kiyoe who was sick in bed. According to the closest witness, the ranch owner named Dennie Chadbourne, Yama slapped, pinched, and bit Kiyoe. Dennie and his wife called on the local constable to quiet Yama down. The constable did just that and took Kiyoe home with him where he and his wife called on

[76] Ichioka, *The Issei*, 179.
[77] Kazuhiro Oharazeki, "Anti-prostitution Campaigns in Japan and the American West, 1890-1920: A Transpacific Comparison," *Pacific Historical Review* 82, no. 2 (2013): 176.
[78] Ichioka, *The Issei*, 179,
[79] Oharazeki, "Listening to the Voices," 17.

Donaldina Cameron of the Woman's Occidental Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, who ran the Cameron House in San Francisco. Cameron was a reputable woman known for her missionary work rescuing Chinese and Japanese women from prostitution.[80] It is unclear why the constable and his wife chose to call on Cameron for assistance; whether or not they believed Kiyoe was involved in prostitution is unclear. Perhaps they knew of no other place to take a battered Japanese wife. Regardless, Cameron took Kiyoe in, and her life started to improve. However, just two months into her stay at the Cameron house, Kiyoe became the target of an anti-prostitution investigation.

Meanwhile, Yama had continued to be a problem tenant for the Chadbournes. In addition, to abusing Kiyoe, he was accused of neglecting the crops, leaving the land he leased in ruins. Mrs. Chadbourne lamented to Cameron:

> I have not been to the city, could not leave the ranch this summer on account of Yama. I haven't had a vacation this summer. His Japs tried to steal my dried fruit so I paid my son, and another young man to watch it at night, 50 cents a night. One slept in the shed and one on dry ground. One Jap man here killed three Japs, and I said it was a shame they did not get a dozen of them.[81]

In the same letter, Chadbourne also expressed empathy towards Kiyoe. "I am so glad his wife is taken care of. I feel sorry when I see her lovely trunk, and clothes with him. He is trying hard to get her back but he is dishonest." Chadbourne's anti-Japanese sentiment was gendered. Yama's bad behavior led officials to question his background, including the steps he took to have Kiyoe admitted. After an investigation proved that Yama had lied to immigration officials about his assets at the time of Kiyoe's arrival, Kiyoe was deemed to have entered the country fraudulently. Authorities took the interpretative leap and suspected her of engaging in prostitution. By their

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[80] Judy Yung, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 73.

[81] Dennie Chadbourne, Letter to Donaldina Cameron. Sept. 20, 1915. Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, San Francisco district. RG 085, Box 910, Folder 14315/23-4.

logic, Yama was a dishonest and immoral man who lied to officials about his financial status. If he was successful in lying to immigration officials about his assets, what else could he be lying about?

In reality he was a destitute farmer. In late 1915, Cameron wrote a letter to immigration officials defending Kiyoe. During the two months that Kiyoe had been at the Mission Home, she was "quiet, gentle and obedient … a respectable innocent girl who was unfortunate enough to become the wife of a thoroughly bad Japanese." Cameron further asserted, "If there is any question of either one being punished or deported, I am sure that the man is the guilty one of the two and an undesirable citizen."[82] It is unclear what happened to Kiyoe or Yama after the 1915 investigation. One hopes she eventually left the Cameron House and started life anew. Twenty years later, however, in 1936, Kiyoe departed for Japan. Her occupation is listed as housewife. She was forty-two years old.

[82] Immigration Arrival Case Files, San Bruno, CA. RG 085, Box 910, Fol. 14315/23.4.

Fig. 5. Kiyoe Tamura-Yamahata, ca 1915. Immigration Arrival Case Files, San Bruno, CA, RG 085, Box 910, Fol. 14315/234

Conclusion

In response to anti-Japanese pressure in the US, Japan stopped issuing passports to picture brides in 1921.[83] Four years later, Congress passed the National Origins Act restricting immigration from all "Asiatic" countries. Examining Japanese women's privileged entry into the United States at a time of Asian exclusion alongside the anti-Japanese movement's attack on women allows us to see more clearly the ways that gender shaped Japanese immigration and settlement. The gendered nature of Japanese exclusion in the early twentieth century is sharply contrasted with the inclusion of Japanese war brides after World War II, demonstrating the malleability of gender and racial logic throughout modern US history.

Additionally, a gendered analysis of Japanese immigration reveals how dynamic gendered constructions have been used to exclude immigrant groups. As Gilbert Herdt explains, historically those in power have used moral and sexual panics to arouse fear of "Others" who threaten the social order. In the case of the Japanese in the early twentieth century, the media and politicians alike—those in power—staged a *gender panic* that targeted Japanese women at a time when birthrates amongst white American women were declining and immigration from Japan and Eastern Europe was climbing. This panic, like other panics throughout history, was a means to achieve political hegemony in the West at a time when white American settlement was not a foregone conclusion.[84]

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[83] Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, Warbride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1986), 50.

[84] For more on moral panics, sex, and gender see Gilbert Herdt, ed., *Moral Panics, Sex Panics: Fear and the Fight Over Sexual Rights*, (NY: New York University Press, 2009); Catherine Lee, ""Where the Danger Lies": Race, Gender, and Chinese and Japanese Exclusion in the United States, 1870-1924," *Sociological Forum* 25, no. 2 (2010).

CHAPTER TWO

ISSEI BACHELORS: MARRIAGE AND MARGINALITY

> *[He] was not an evil man, but only an inadequate one with the most shining intentions, only one man among so many who lived from day to day as best they could, limited, restricted, by the meager gifts Fate or God had doled out to them…*
>
> -Hisaye Yamamoto, "Las Vegas Charley"

At noon on August 30, 1971, Fujio Asaka jumped from his second story window at the All American Nursing Home in Chicago. Two days later, he was laid to rest. Asaka was born in Japan in 1887 and immigrated to the United States in 1909, a year after the United States restricted Japanese laborers—men like himself—from entering the country under the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908. He was just twenty-two years old when he made the long trek across the Pacific. Like thousands before and after him, he came in search of work. Beginning in the 1870s and increasingly throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, young Japanese men came to the US in unprecedented numbers. Most came to advance their economic standing with the hopes of returning home after a few years of work and accumulated wealth. Many settled along the West Coast and eventually started families. Others, like Asaka, never married nor had children in the United States. Instead they traveled from town to town, state-to-state, field to farm, railroad to fishing cannery, in search of greener pastures. After arriving in the US, Asaka worked various menial yet laborious jobs. He first worked as a farm hand in Reedley, California and after several moves along the West ended up on the sugar beet fields of northern Nebraska. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Asaka, along with 120,000 other Japanese—both Japanese and American-born—was rounded up and taken to the

Heart Mountain Relocation center in Wyoming. After the war, Asaka worked as a cook in a Denver, Colorado restaurant before finally resettling in Chicago.[85]

An analysis of marriage and family formation in the making of Japanese America would be incomplete without a discussion of the elder Issei bachelors—men like Asaka who remained unmarried and childless—and died in obscurity. For Japanese women entering the US as wives, marriage was a mode of incorporation—albeit a highly contested one—that facilitated their immigration to the US during a time when Japanese men were excluded. Marriage also facilitated the settlement of Japanese American communities in the West as well as the emergence of the second-generation Nisei. For the women who immigrated under the Gentlemen's Agreement, their legacy lives on in their descendants. Issei bachelors, on the other hand, lived on the margins of society; as such, their history is scarcely known.[86] Issei bachelors were part of a larger social phenomenon that took hold in the US between 1880–1930. Increased male migration and migratory labor patterns created so-called bachelor societies—a homosocial world wherein unattached men lived and worked amongst one another. Howard Chudacoff explains that because "Americans [the Japanese included] have always revered and depended on the family as the chief institution for promoting citizenship and social order" and "have celebrated family life as a basic stabilizing influence in society," those who remained outside the family were viewed as social outcasts. As a result, bachelors have been "excluded from family and social history."[87] Issei bachelors, specifically, have been excluded from Japanese American history.

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[85] Case file for Fujio Asaka. Record Group 8, Series 3, Box 1, Folder 22. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.
[86] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei*, 3.
[87] Howard Chudacoff, *The Age of the Bachelor: Creating an American Subculture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 3-5.

This chapter explores the lives of four elder Issei bachelors who resettled in Chicago after World War II to show how marriage functioned as a mode of exclusion for unmarried Japanese men. To excavate the lives of Issei men who never married, this chapter draws on only the scattered remnants of their lives that remain. What is left has been filed away and likely not seen for years. Because the history of the Japanese in America has been dominated by stories of the family unit, the lives of those outside the sacred institution have been under-represented, misrepresented, or worse, wholly absent. In short, Issei bachelors have been *symbolically annihilated* from Japanese American history. In discussing representation in the mass media in the 1970s, George Gerbner theorized that those individuals or groups consistently portrayed in the mass media came into "social existence" even if their portrayal in the mass media was fictional. Conversely, non-representation or misrepresentation in the mass media leads to *symbolic annihilation*. Simply put, "representation in the fictional world signifies social existence; absence means symbolic annihilation." Applying Gerbner's theory to the archives, Michelle Caswell argues that the social existence of those individuals and groups whose lives and histories have been underrepresented, misrepresented, or absent from the archives has been destroyed, for "representation in the [archives] signifies social existence; absence means symbolic annihilation."[88]

Much of this has to do with the limitations of the traditional archive, which reflects both historical and current biases of who and what constitutes a worthy investment in history. To counter such limitations, this chapter makes use of records held at the Japanese American Service Community (JASC), an independent community-based archive. As Caswell further

[88] George Gerbner and Larry Gross, "Living with Television: The Violence of Profile," *Journal of Communication*, 26, no. 4 (Spring 1976): 182.

explains, "community-based archives are crucial tools for fighting the symbolic annihilation of historically marginalized groups."[89]

In 1946 a small group of concerned citizens founded the Chicago Resettlers Committee (CRC) to aide in the resettlement of nearly 20,000 incarcerated Japanese to the Chicago area. Initially, the CRC helped to resettle the large number of Issei (first-generation) and Nisei (second-generation) who left the camps to start life anew in Chicago. The CRC helped the resettled Japanese with employment, housing, and medical care. But by 1954, the Committee began to shift its focus from resettlement to community service. The changes in the committee's mission reflected the changes in the Japanese American communities. As the postwar resettlement period came to a close, the services the CRC once offered to recently incarcerated Japanese Americans were no longer needed. In 1954 the Chicago Resettlers Committee was renamed the Japanese American Service Committee to reflect its changing role within the community.[90]

By the late 1950s, the JASC began to focus heavily on the elderly Issei population, as their health and well-being became a great concern to local Japanese leaders. To this end, the JASC offered caretaking services as well as social and cultural programs to the Issei, such as home delivery meal service, adult day care, nutrition classes, English language classes, home visitations, healthcare check-ups, employment (mostly part-time jobs to keep them busy and active), arts and music programs, and seasonal festivals. The Issei remained the primary concern of the JASC from the late 50s to early 70s, and it is within this time period that the four case files

[89] Michelle Caswell, "Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation," *The Public Historian* 36, no. 4 (2016): 26.
[90] Deborah Meiko King Burns, "A Brief History of the JASC," (Chicago, IL: The Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, 1989.)

used for this study were completed. Today the JASC is committed to preserving and raising awareness of Japanese American cultural practices and history in Chicago.[91]

Elder Issei bachelors remained intimately tied to their ancestral homeland, for they were never fully incorporated into larger Japanese American communities let alone mainstream American society. Their status as unmarried itinerant laborers from rural Japan rendered them a "degenerated class" of "dirt peasants" and thus anathema to the assimilation project crafted by the elite leading class of Japanese in America.[92] Issei bachelors lived their lives "between two empires," neither wholly loyal to the emperor nor fully invested in America.[93] Their status in the US was indeed predetermined by their origins in Japan and was further enhanced by anti-Japanese sentiment, class bias within Japanese American communities, and most importantly for this study, their unmarried status. Their lives differ from other Japanese immigrant men who are more often the ones memorialized in Japanese American history. In death, just as in life, Issei bachelors remain in the shadows. As unmarried, childless, migrant laborers from predominantly poor farming families of rural Japan, their lives have been difficult to reconstruct, and at times, seemingly unworthy of thoughtful reflection. Moreover, their lived experiences reveal that the traditional narrative—one that favors the experiences of the elite, of families, and of their American-born children—is not the only one to exist. The lives of these men tell us that the Japanese experience in America is far more heterogeneous than we have been led to believe.

[91] Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, "About the JASC," Japanese American Service Committee of Chicago, http://www.jasc-chicago.org/About.html (accessed December 3, 2012).
[92] Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 38.
[93] Azuma, 38.

Issei Bachelors as Marginal Men

The lives of Issei bachelors reveal the crucial role marriage and family played in the formation of Japanese American communities in the United States. As Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez describe, "the family was the key social unit for members of the prewar Japanese American community."[94] Marriage was the price of full membership, for the sacred institution of marriage was a stabilizing force that produced American-born children that tied the Issei to the United States.[95] Those elder Issei men who never married or fathered children then remained outsiders in a society that already marginalized them because of racial difference.

In 1928, famed sociologist Robert E. Park published an article popularizing the theory of the marginal man. According to Park, human migration had produced a class of men who lived their lives between two diverse cultural groups and were never fully embedded into either, producing distinctive personality traits and patterns of behavior.[96] Though Park identified men of mixed race heritage as the "paradigmatic marginal man," the marginal man need not have been of mixed blood.[97] Park describes the marginal man as a stranger who stays but never settles: "He is a potential wanderer … not bound as others are by local proprieties and conventions."[98] Park's analysis rests upon two factors: the migration of people away from their homeland and the physical markers of racial difference. The marginal man existed because he could not culturally assimilate into the dominant American culture, for his "divergent physical traits" marked him as an "Other." Park uses the example of Issei men to demonstrate his point:

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[94] Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez, *Altered Lives, Enduring Community: Japanese Americans Remember Their World War II Incarceration* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 134.
[95] Chudacoff, *The Age of the Bachelor*, 4.
[96] Robert E. Park, "Human Migration and the Marginal Man," *American Journal of Sociology* 33, no. 6 (May, 1928).
[97] Emma Jinhua Teng, *Eurasian: Mixed Identities in the United States, China, and Hong Kong, 1842-1943* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), 143.
[98] Park, "Human Migration," 888.

> The Japanese bears in his features a distinctive racial hallmark that he wears, so to speak, a racial uniform, which classifies him. He cannot become a mere individual, indistinguishable in the cosmopolitan mass of the population, as is true, for example, of the Irish, and, to a lesser extent, of some of the other immigrant races. The Japanese, like the Negro, is condemned to remain among us an abstraction, a symbol—and a symbol not merely of his own race but of the Orient and of that vague, ill-defined menace we sometimes refer to as the "yellow peril."[99]

According to Park, the marginal man suffered from a low quality of life and personality deficiencies caused by his marginality. Park's theory was deeply flawed because it did not offer a critique of American racial prejudice or factor in class bias and social status among many other problems affecting the marginal man's integration into American society. Instead, the onus of marginality rested on the marginalized themselves. Also missing in Park's analysis is the sense of community amongst racial minorities and immigrant groups. The marginal man may have been marginalized from mainstream American society—the "us" in Park's description of the Japanese—but fully embedded in his own ethnic enclave. Still, Issei bachelors were marginal men. They were marginalized from mainstream American society because of race *and* marginalized within Japanese American communities because they did not marry nor produce children. Further, some may have lived their lives on the margins because their social and/or sexual orientation dictated that they remain so.

Interracial Marriage among Issei Men

Though anti-miscegenation laws prohibited Japanese men from marrying white women, marriage between the two did occur in the prewar period. These particular relationships were a source of fascination among scholars like Park who viewed intermarriage between Asian immigrants and white Americans as the "key indicator of the Oriental's assimilation into American society." Park and others hypothesized that "racial intermixing could serve as the

[99] Robert E. Park, "Human Migration and the Marginal Man," *American Journal of Sociology* 33, no. 6 (May, 1928).

ultimate solution to the "Oriental problem."[100] In the Survey of Race Relations undertaken from 1924–26 and directed by Park, researchers gathered material on intermarriage between Asian immigrants and white Americans in an effort to understand if and how racial mixing could improve race relations. In support of these unions, Emma Fong Kuno wrote "My Oriental Husbands," serialized in the *San Francisco Bulletin*. Kuno, a Canadian-born, white woman, married Walter Fong, a Chinese immigrant, in 1897 after the two met as students at Stanford University. The couple had two sons and moved to Hong Kong where Fong took a position at a university. However, not long after Fong died, Kuno returned to the US with her two young sons and soon after married Fong's friend and colleague, Yoshi Kuno, a Japanese man. According to Emma Fong Kuno, Chinese and Japanese men differed as husbands because of their "national inheritances." A Japanese husband was dictatorial and demanding of his wife, while a Chinese husband treated his wife like a queen. Though Kuno's story was meant as a testament to successful marriages between Asian men and white women, she drew distinctions between Chinese and Japanese men that were steeped in cultural stereotypes. Still, progressives like Park and even Kuno herself believed relationships between an "Oriental" and an "Occidental" could work if the two were both part of the educated, upper-middle class.[101]

The problem of interracial marriage, as Jesse Frederick Steiner put it in his 1917 study, *The Japanese Invasion: A Study in the Psychology of Inter-Racial Contacts,* was not necessarily a problem among elite immigrant men who married into good American families; the problem was with the lower classes.[102] Steiner believed the key to maintaining a happy interracial

[100] Teng, *Eurasion*,141.
[101] Emma Fong Kuno, "My Oriental Husbands," Survey of Race Relations records, Box no.25, Fol. 53, Hoover Institution Archives.
[102] Jesse Frederick Steiner, *The Japanese Invasion; A Study in the Psychology of Inter-Racial Contacts* (Chicago, IL: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1917), 167.

marriage was the ability to maintain a high standard of living and "a personality and strength of character that [could] win friends in spite of prejudice and rise above the petty insults and social discrimination [interracial marriages] must face."[103] To illustrate his point, Steiner drew on anecdotal evidence of successful and unsuccessful interracial marriages; almost all of them were between a Japanese man and a white woman. For example,

> A Japanese employed as a butler in the home of an Episcopal clergyman in California succeeded in winning the love of the daughter of the house, a very accomplished and popular girl. As the laws of California would not permit their marriage, they went to Seattle, where the ceremony was performed. A few months later a child was born. The marriage has proved to be very unhappy.[104]

Another story follows:

> A Japanese doctor, a masseur, married an American girl and is now living in a city in the Middle West. He is very successful in his profession and is well liked by the people who know him. Because of his popularity and his ability to support his family comfortably, the marriage has aroused very little unfavorable comment.

Steiner's evidence makes clear that class was a primary factor in how white Americans viewed interracial relationships between Japanese men and white women. For those Issei men who did not come from means or were unable to achieve financial success in the US, the probability of marrying a white woman was low. The probability of maintaining a happy marriage with a white woman was even lower. As Steiner put it, "when these marriages take place on the lower levels of society the parties concerned face a serious handicap which it is hard for them to overcome."[105] According to Steiner and other educated progressives of the era, the problem of Japanese-white marriages was not a problem of race but of class, social standing, and character. These were things, according to middle-class Japanese and white Americans, poor Issei men did not possess. Moreover, relationships with nonwhite women in America were undoubtedly

[103] Steiner, 172.
[104] Steiner, 170.
[105] Steiner, 170-171.

difficult to foster as the men worked long hours, had few resources, and lived on the margins of society. Marriage to other Asian women seemed the likeliest, as in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Machida, a Japanese man who took a Chinese wife. Upon their marriage, Mrs. Mochida lamented that she was "cut off" by the Chinese but was received with the "heartiest welcome" by the Japanese.[106] Still, for the unmarried, the promise of America was likely an elusive dream prompting many to hang on to the hope of returning to Japan one day, though they had spent most of their adult lives in the United States.

Fujio Asaka

Fujio "Frank" Asaka was born the fourth child of nine on December 24, 1887, in Tokyo, Japan, and immigrated to the United States in 1909, a year after the Gentlemen's Agreement. In Japan he was due to marry a neighboring woman in a traditional arranged marriage, but he longed to leave and undoubtedly escape the yoke of tradition, while his bride-to-be wished to remain in Japan. Asaka evaded the arranged marriage and soon after set sail for America. After arriving at the San Francisco port in 1909, he immediately began working as a field hand in Reedley, California, a small agricultural community twenty-two miles outside of Fresno. Yet by the time he resettled in Chicago just after World War II, he had worked in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, and Missouri. He worked as a "hotel boy," store clerk, cook, domestic, and railroad hand. Asaka took great pride in his work. In fact, later in his life when asked about his past, he boasted "that he was a hard worker and wherever he went he was liked by everybody."[107]

[106] Interview with Mrs. C.S. Machida, Survey of Race Relations records, Box no.25, Fol. 73, Hoover Institution Archives.
[107] Case file for Fujio Asaka. Record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 22. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

In his old age, Asaka liked to recall the years past when he was still in contact with his family. He frequently told the story of his sister's early visit in California during the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. With each move, however, Asaka grew further and further away from familial ties. As the years wore on and World War II brought destruction to his homeland, Asaka eventually lost all contact with his loved ones. Unlike Issei men who planted roots in the US by marrying and fathering American-born children, Fujio Asaka had little material investment in America. He had no children to carry his name. He owned no property, was not a citizen, and remained a Buddhist until his death.

In fact, towards the end of his life, Fujio Asaka wished to return to Japan. A year before his death, Asaka contacted the Consulate General of Japan in Chicago and inquired about his possible return. He was met with dissatisfaction when the consulate informed him that they were no longer issuing certificates of nationality, which allowed Japanese nationals to travel to Japan, to those who held permanent residency in America as Asaka did. In the end, he found himself alone with no family and very few friends. Only a few officials from the Japanese American Service Committee and his Buddhist minister attended his funeral.

Hyosaku Furukawa

Like Fujio Asaka, Hyosaku Furukawa arrived in the United States shortly after the Gentlemen's Agreement. In fact, Furukawa arrived in Seattle on May 1, 1908, just months after the agreement was finalized. Furukawa—or Hugo as he was nicknamed in the US—was born in Nagata, Japan, in January 1892. Although the historical record of his life in America is slim, what does remain reveals much about the world he lived in and what mattered to him most at the end of his life. In 1908 Furukawa left the Yokohama port aboard the Japanese cargo vessel *Kaga Maru* en route to Seattle. He was only sixteen years old. While the overall number of Japanese

immigrants arriving in the United States declined in the post-Gentlemen's Agreement era, Japanese laborers continued to arrive on the shores of California and Washington State. This was in large part due to the successful work of labor-contractors in recruiting poor, young, Japanese men to work in the fields, mines, and railroads as the Chinese once did.[108] However, when Furukawa arrived in the United States in 1908, the labor contracting system in the Northwest was in decline, as the Gentlemen's Agreement made it difficult for those of little means to immigrate. Still, Japanese immigrant men continued to trickle in. To evade the restrictions imposed by the Gentlemen's Agreement, Furukawa posed as a traveling student to gain a Japanese passport and secure a spot on the *Kaga Maru* headed for Seattle. He told authorities that he was on his way to London. His name on the official passenger list is stamped with "In Transit." However, Furukawa never made it to London. Instead, he jumped ship and remained in the United States. In so doing, Furukawa bypassed the restrictions imposed on both sides of the Pacific, evading top-down laws and diplomatic agreements. Sometime between his initial arrival date in 1908 and 1916, Furukawa returned to Japan. Perhaps he returned to Japan with money that he had earned while working on the railroads of the Rocky Mountains and agricultural fields of the Pacific Northwest.

No English record of Furukawa's life between 1908 and 1916 exists, but it is not a stretch to imagine that the money he had earned in America was insufficient, for he later returned to the United States. Furukawa arrived in the United States for the second time on Christmas Day of 1916; this time, however, he arrived as a coal loader aboard the *SS Tenshu Maru*. He undoubtedly took the arduous job aboard the steamship to finance his passage back to America as it was officially recorded at the time of arrival that he had no intention of remaining in the

[108] Case file for Hyosaku "lik" Furukawa. Record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 22. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

United States. Furthermore, taking employment with an American-bound vessel meant that he could bypass immigration restrictions and gain access to America's gates once more. Officially, Furukawa was to remain with the *SS Tenshu Maru* and make the return trip back to Kobe where it had originally departed, but instead, he abandoned ship again.[109] In 1917 he was living and working in Seattle.[110]

However, by 1930 Furukawa had moved to Los Angeles where he worked in the kitchen of various Little Tokyo restaurants. In Los Angeles, Furukawa lived as a boarder in a building that housed up to forty Japanese immigrants at once.[111] When World War II broke out, Furukawa was sent to a relocation center at the Santa Anita horse racetrack in Pasadena, California. From there, he was sent to the Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Cody, Wyoming. He was forty-seven years old.[112]

Though the Gentlemen's Agreement ushered in a new era of settlement for many Japanese, many Issei men still remained unmarried and childless. In 1907 the United States Congress commissioned a bipartisan committee known as the Dillingham Commission to study recent immigration patterns. Conducted between 1907 and 1911, the study found that out of 1,058 "Asiatics," more than half were single while 42.1, or 445, were married; 1.1%, or twelve, were widowed. Of the 445 married "Asiatics," six had wives in the US while the other 439 had

[109] Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at Seattle, Washington, 1903-1917. Micropublication M1399. RG085. 15 rolls. National Archives, Washington, DC. The "Alien Crew List" contains a column titled "Evidence of Intention to Remain in the US." Each crew member's name, reads "no" including Furukawa, line 6.
[110] World War I Selective System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918. United States, Selective Service System. M1509, 4, 582 rolls. (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration).
[111] 1930 United States Federal Census, Los Angeles, Calif. Roll 148; Page: 4A; Enumeration District: 408; Image: 293.0; FHL microfilm: 2339883. National Archives, Washington DC.; 1940 United States Federal Census, Los Angeles, California: Roll: T627-378; Page: 3B; Enumeration District: 60-736; National Archives, Washington DC.
[112] Japanese Americans Relocated During World War II. Japanese-American Internee Data File, 1942-1946; Records about Japanese Americans relocated during World War II, 1988-1989; Records of the War Relocation Authority, RG 210; National Archives, College Park, MD.

wives elsewhere.[113] The commission also reported that the Japanese were "for the greater part, not settlers, but migratory laborers. Furthermore, they have immigrated to the United States recently, and the expense of transportation is large compared to their wealth. For this reason they are practically unaccompanied by wives." Although the findings of the commission's report were dubious at best, there does remain some truth in their assessment of unmarried Japanese laborers.[114] By and large, Japanese immigrant men from the lower classes who conducted menial work in the United States remained unmarried for a variety of reasons. Those who sent for a wife or returned to Japan to marry had access to resources that others like Asaka or Furukawa did not.

Unmarriable Men: Burakumin America

In 1969, during the 100th anniversary celebration of the Wakamatsu colony, a pamphlet celebrating the early settlers vividly recreated the immigration experience of the Issei. In the pamphlet, Japanese immigrants are given a collective voice that is both celebratory and melancholy. It reads: "We came to America for many reasons: because life had become intolerable where we were, because there would be no life at all unless we fled … because something beautiful beckoned in the new land … freedom."[115] The passage encapsulates the universality of survival and want inherent in the American immigrant experience at the turn of the century. It could just as easily be read from the point of view of a European peasant or a

[113] US Immigration Commission, Immigrants in Industries, Part 23- 25: Japanese and Other Immigrant races in the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain States (Washington D.C., 1911), 8, 11. Also known as the Dillingham Commission, named after its chairman, the Republican Senator, William Dillingham. The figures above were, in reality, much larger. The numbers listed are from those individuals who reported complete data. In addition, the commission reported that the number of Japanese working on the railroads was "considerably larger than the figures would indicate, however, for three or four railroad companies are employing them in considerable numbers." Another estimate found that the 3,843 Japanese rail hands reported by company managers was too small since the statistics were taken in the off months, when many Japanese had abandoned the railroad for the fields.

[114] The commission was made up of a bi-partisan committee formed under pressure from Nativist anti-immigrant groups to restrict the flow of labor migration into the United States. The report bolstered support for the passage of the National Quota Act of 1924, which thereby restricted the immigration of all nonwhite people signaling the beginning of the era of exclusion in American immigration history.

[115] Japanese American Service Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial, 1869-1969,* Ross Harano Papers and Photograph Collection, stacks 2, 7b, box 1, folder 5.

displaced Mexican farmer. For Japanese immigrants, the passage suggests that there was more at stake than the promise of wealth. Immigration to the US meant freedom, and the only alternative was death. Perhaps this suggests another layer to the story of Issei bachelor marginality that is the plight of people from the status group, burakumin.

Until recently, little has been written about burakumin in the United States. This is largely due to a scarcity of sources and the sensitive nature of the issue. Historically, this status group was those relegated to the very bottom of the hierarchical social structure. In Tokugawa-era Japan, burakumin were believed to be inferior sub-humans who held "dishonorable occupations" deemed dirty and polluting to "ordinary" Japanese. Three years after the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the Tokugawa status system was abolished and people in this status group received emancipation. However, discrimination against former burakumin and their descendants persisted—so much so that scholars of Japanese American studies have "dismissed the possibility that former outcastes emigrated [to the United States] in substantial numbers" as they lacked the resources and wherewithal essential to immigration.[116] This mode of thinking, according to Andrea Geiger, "reflect[s] the prejudice against former outcastes that still exists in some circles," including scholars of Japanese America.[117] Geiger points to the work of Yamato Ichihashi of Stanford University who asserted that the required sum to cover all necessary expenses was 200 yen. While this was an insignificant amount of money at the time, he asserts that "the sum was not possessed by a member of the poorest class, nor was he able to borrow it from anybody." Besides, to travel abroad required ambition and an adventurous streak, which

[116] Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion,* 16-17; George De Vos and Wagatsuma Hiroshi, *Japan's Invisible Race: Caste in Culture and Personality* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 10-20.
[117] Geiger, 44.

according to Ichihashi, those from the lowest classes did not possess.[118] Geiger refutes Ichihashi's statement, claiming that he had conflated character with social status and was himself a perpetuator of class inequality, for he was "deeply flawed by his own deeply entrenched class and caste biases."[119]

As one of the first scholars of Japanese descent in the United States and an early writer of the Japanese experience in America, Ichihashi's work has been relied upon by many historians since, and some current scholars tend to support his claim. For example, Eiichiro Azuma argues that middle-class Japanese were "most inclined to jump at what the system of contract-labor emigration promised" and "rural Japanese of other classes," presumably including burakumin, "were less likely to take the chance even if information on emigration were available." He continues:

> To the most socially deprived, who had been consistently resourceless, the formula looked less realistic. Having lived without hope since the feudal era, they had accepted their socioeconomic standing as a given and had few aspirations beyond daily survival. Further, their chances at being allowed to leave for Hawaii or elsewhere were slim to nil due to prevailing official bias.[120]

Azuma does not consider immigration to be a part of "daily survival," but the passage written in the Wakamatsu colony pamphlet, although fictionalized, reveals how immigration to the United States for some was indeed essential. Japanese scholar Tsuratani Hisashi paints a more accurate

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[118] Yamato Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1932), 82.
[119] Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion,* 44.
[120] Azuma, *Between Two Empires,* 28; Azuma cites Kodama Masaaki, *Nihon Iminshi Kenkyu Josetsu* (Hiroshima: Keisuisha, 1992) a Japanese language publication, as well as Mitziko Sawada, *Tokyo Life, New York Dreams: Urban Japanese Visions of America, 1890-1924* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996). The first citation was not accessible to the author, for it is written in Japanese. The second, *Tokyo Life, New York Dreams: Urban Japanese Visions of America, 1890-1924,* explains that while Japan adopted restrictive emigration policies towards the lower classes, in practice those restrictions were erratically enforced. Further, it would be presumptuous to believe that Burakumin lived with little to no hope. In the American South, by contrast, slaves of African descent deemed the subhuman property of whites continued to seek light in the darkest days of chattel slavery. While their political and social agency was circumscribed by racist legislation and violence, their human agency—that is, the ability to hope and act upon what little opportunities came their way—was, for the most part, embedded in their everyday lives. For more, see Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

portrayal, suggesting that "rather than emigrants, the people who left Japan during the Meiji period can be thought of as people who went abroad in order to earn money for their daily necessities."[121] Moreover, in the same period, poor immigrants from China and eastern and southern Europe believed "coming to the United States was nothing less than a means of survival." Immigration to the land of opportunity, then, was a viable option for thousands of destitute immigrants.[122] Further, although official bias did in fact restrict Japanese laborers and former buraku people from immigrating, official government policy "proved unworkable in the long run."[123] Those even from the lowest status group had options available to them. The passport requirements officiated by the Japanese government to weed out "undesirables" were often evaded through bribery, theft, and forgery.[124]

Moreover, Geiger asserts that Japanese immigrants from burakumin backgrounds very well could have migrated to the United States in large numbers at the turn of the twentieth century for two main reasons. First, the financial status of former burakumin was not always as grim as it has been presented. Although many were hard hit by the economic upheaval after the Meiji Restoration, some families were still able "to accumulate sufficient resources to give them access to alternatives" like emigration abroad. In addition, some were able to pull together their

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[121] Tsurutani Hisashi, *"America-Bound" The Japanese and the Opening of the American West*, trans. Betsey Scheiner and Yamamura Mariko (Tokyo: The Japan Times, 1989), 32. The Japanese government labeled those from more affluent backgrounds seeking travel abroad "Emigrants" and laborers were distinguished as "Non Emigrants."
[122] Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1892-1943* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 2.
[123] Mitziko Sawada, *Tokyo Life, New York Dreams: Urban Japanese Visions of America, 1890-1924* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 44.
[124] In 1896, Japan passed the Emigrant Protection Law in response to wide-spread calls from American officials, the American and Japanese press, and Japanese diplomats in America to curb the arrival of "low class and densely ignorant" Japanese. Misleading in its official name, the ordinance sought to regulate emigration of the lower classes to the United States by vesting the power to issue passports in local agencies. To this end, local Japanese officials divided up would-be immigrants into two categories, himin (nonmigrant) and imin (migrant), and issued passports accordingly. Himin were primarily those from "respected" backgrounds and consisted of students, professionals, merchants, and government bureaucrats. Imin, on the other hand, were laborers and dispossessed farmers from primarily rural Japan. This discretionary power was unstable at best. For more, see Sawada, 41-56; and Hisashi, *America-Bound*, 28-40.

collective resources (perhaps that of a large family or hamlet) to send a young, able-bodied male to work abroad. Second, Geiger contends that the "baseness" of former buraku communities has often by "exaggerated by popular prejudice."[125]

In 1952 an unpublished report written by an anonymous University of California, Los Angeles student revealed that there were former burakumin living in the United States. The student's desire to remain anonymous may reflect his or her own anxieties about being from a former buraku family. The pseudonym used was Hiroshi Ito. Although rumors suggest that the report may have been one of two, no one has been able to locate the other. "Ito" found that collecting material on burakumin in the US was problematic since "there appeared to exist powerful sanctions against publicly identifying outcaste individuals or families." Given that no official data on former buraku people in America existed, Ito sought out informants from non-buraku backgrounds to report on the conditions of the rumored burakumin in their communities. Most of Ito's field work was conducted in Florin, California, a small town located in the Sacramento Valley where it was alleged that a large portion of the town's Japanese residents were from former buraku families.[126] From conversations with Japanese immigrants in both Florin and Los Angeles, Ito derived specific characteristics of the burakumin in the United States. However, Ito admitted that the data collected was "extremely tentative," but as it stands, the report is the only one of its kind.[127] Though the issue of Burakumin in America is contentious even today, acknowledging that possibility allows for a more robust interpretation of Japanese American history.

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[125] Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion,* 45.
[126] In a 1924 Survey of Race Relations directed by Robert E. Park, it was noted that Florin, CA was home to the less desirable Japanese who possessed an "unsavory reputation," opposite of Japanese living in Livingston who were said to be the ideal Japanese because they were "Americanized" Christians who did not compete with the white man. See: Survey of Race Relations records, Box 1, Office File, 1914-1927, Hoover Institution Archives.
[127] Hiroshi Ito, "*Japan's Outcastes in the United States*," in George De Vos and Wagatsuma Hiroshi*, Japan's Invisible Race: Caste in Culture and Personality* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 200-221.

Kaneichi Fujioka

Kaneichi Fujioka was born in rural Japan in the spring of 1893. He was about twenty-six years old when he arrived in Seattle in 1919. In Japan, he married a young woman and fathered one son but was separated from both mother and child when he left for America. Fujioka's birthplace, Ehime prefecture, is located along the southern portion of the inland sea on the island of Shikoku. In 1966 anthropologist George DeVos and Hiroshi Wagatsuma found that historically, "outcaste communities [were] concentrated in the lands surrounding the Inland Sea, the ancient heartland of early Japanese culture."[128] Furthermore, the 1920s Japanese census revealed that Ehime was home to 494 *Buraku* communities—the most out of the forty-two prefectures listed—while Fukuoka and Hiroshima prefectures contained 493 and 406 respectively.[129] That Fujioka came from a prefecture known for its abundant *Buraku* communities is perhaps no coincidence. His status in Japan undoubtedly influenced his decision to leave. Perhaps he sought to escape the burden of his ancestral lineage, for "emigration to the North American West offered a way to avoid caste-based discrimination because in North America, one need only identify oneself as a Japanese subject." Immigration to America, therefore, gave Japanese men from former buraku families the opportunity to shed their lowly status. In America, they were not Burakumin, but Japanese.[130]

When he arrived in the US, Fujioka had plans to work, save money, and return home to buy land. Yet somehow along the way his plans diverged. Some years after his arrival in Seattle, Fujioka found his way to California. In 1930 he was working as an asparagus picker in the small

[128] George De Vos and Wagatsuma Hiroshi, *Japan's Invisible Race: Caste in Culture and Personality* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 113.
[129] DeVos and Hiroshi, 116.
[130] Sandra Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion*, 15.

town of Clarksburg located along the Sacramento River.[131] The latitudinal positions of Clarksburg and Fujioka's homeland, Ehime prefecture, are nearly identical. A straight line could be drawn connecting the two. Whether Fujioka realized the connection between his ancestral homeland and the asparagus fields of northern California remains a mystery. That he chose to leave Seattle and head south speaks to the frequent movement of Issei bachelors. Most traveled throughout the western United States in the years before World War II seeking out the next great lead that would facilitate their return home. Surely Fujioka was lured by the call of the Golden State. He must have found it hard to resist the clear blue skies, year-round sunshine, and abundant employment opportunities for men like him, willing to put in the work.

In California, Fujioka found himself surrounded by other Japanese. He probably worked alongside other men from rural Japan—men accustomed to arduous work in the fields. More than likely he was supervised by a Japanese "Boss" who acted as a middleman between field hands and growers. Or perhaps he worked for a Japanese-owned operation. Besides his fellow countrymen, Fujioka may have worked with men from Mexico and the Philippines as well. In 1930 there were nearly 56,000 Filipinos living on the West Coast comprising "80 percent of the asparagus workforce in the Sacramento River Delta region."[132] Perhaps Fujioka befriended Filipino field workers. Perhaps there was tension between the two groups. But more than likely, there was a little bit of both friendship and conflict in the California asparagus fields.[133]

Charles Kikuchi, a Nisei writer, experienced both tension and friendship working alongside Filipino men in the summer of 1940. Kikuchi explained that the hostility between

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[131] United States of America, Bureau of the Census. Fifteenth Census of the United States, Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930.
[132] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 104.
[133] Case file for Kaneichi Fujioka. Record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 50. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Japanese and Filipino workers was the result of economic competition between the two groups as well as racial stereotypes each group believed about the other. Despite rivalries, Kikuchi managed to befriend a Filipino man named Manuel. One day a fight broke out between two workers, one Japanese and the other Filipino. Kikuchi got caught in the shuffle and received a cut to the nose from the Filipino man who was wielding a knife. Before a full-blown race riot could break out, Manuel stood up and intervened, saving Kikuchi from further harm. Afterwards, Kikuchi was rejected by the other Japanese men who saw his friendship with Manuel as a betrayal to his race. [134]

In California, both Japanese laborers and middlemen often banded together to demand fair pay and better working conditions. They were known to organize and agitate to improve their lot. Indeed the Japanese had a reputation that quickly led to animosity amongst growers. In the early years of the twentieth century, Japanese laborers accounted for about half of the labor force in California vegetable and fruit production.[135] In 1934, to the dismay of growers, asparagus cutters in the Sacramento Valley went on strike, demanding higher wages. The strike, however, ended soon after it began. It was reported in 1938 that the Japanese were "unscrupulous" in their tactics, often waiting until the high season to demand higher wages. The report concluded:

> As was often the case, when conditions were not agreeable, the Japanese would leave their jobs. It was generally conceded that the Jap [*sic*] was merciless when he once had his employer at a disadvantage; that he would work for cheap wages until his competition was eliminated and then strike for higher wages totally disregarding any agreement or contract.[136]

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[134] Matthew M. Briones, *Jim and Jap Crow: A Cultural History of the 1940s Interracial America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 39.
[135] Tomas Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 185.
[136] Raymond P. Barry, *Monographs Prepared for a Documentary History of Migratory Farm Labor, 1938* (Federal Writers' Project, 1938), 7.

Thirty years prior in 1904, Japanese and Mexican laborers and contractors banded together in Oxnard, California, forming the Japanese Mexican Labor Association (JMLA). Like the 1934 strike, the JMLA met with nominal success and was disbanded soon after. Nevertheless, Japanese agricultural workers were amongst those striking.[137] The 1934 asparagus strike took place during a time of racial unrest. Although the Gentlemen's Agreement had certainly curtailed Japanese immigration to the US, mounting resentment towards foreign labor persisted. During the Great Depression, labor disputes intensified as American-born citizens believed their birthright—the right to work freely in the United States—was being undermined by low-wage foreign labor. Perhaps Fujioka was amongst the asparagus strikers.

In any event, he must have at the very least heard about the strike and was conceivably familiar with white aggression and workplace hostility. In 1913, California passed the first Alien Land Law that prohibited those "ineligible for citizenship"—code for all nonwhite, non-European immigrants—from buying land or leasing small farms in the state. In 1920 the law was renewed and further tightened. The "racially discriminatory" Alien Land Laws were designed to restrict upwardly mobile Japanese immigrants from establishing farms and agricultural colonies in California's central and northern valleys. The Alien Land Laws were backed by white Californians angry at the success of some Japanese, believing them to be a threat to their economic livelihood.[138] Though the Alien Land Laws would have meant very little to the poorer classes of Japanese immigrant men who worked—not owned—the fields, the hostile atmosphere in California and the West more broadly colored every Japanese experience.

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[137] Tomas Almaguer, "Racial Domination and Class Conflict in Capitalist Agriculture: The Oxnard Sugar Beet Workers Strike of 1903," *Labor History* 25, no. 3 (Summer 84): 325-350.
[138] Tomas Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 186.

In 1924, five years after Fujioka arrived in the United States, Congress passed the National Origins Act severely limiting the immigration of "racially undesirables." The act notoriously restricted all nonwhite persons from entering the country in an attempt to create an all-white nation descended primarily from northern and western Europe.[139] The Japanese were not only excluded from American shores, but those already residing in the US were also indefinitely barred from gaining full American citizenship. The Japanese in America were doomed to a fate of subordination. The 1924 act ushered in a new era in American immigration, one never before seen in the history of the United States.

Up until 1924, returning to Japan could be seen as one of two options. First, if one returned to Japan, the possibility that they could come back to the US was conceivable. Although the immigration process had become increasingly exclusive, one had the option, as in the case of Furukawa, to evade such restrictions. Therefore, circulatory migration was feasible, if difficult to manage. The other option was, of course, to return to Japan and permanently settle, as many did. However, after the closing of America's gates in 1924, the options available to Japanese laborers in America became extremely limited. Mae Ngai explains, "Japanese immigrants felt thoroughly dejected by the 1924 immigration act, which foredoomed them to permanent disfranchisement and social subordination. Their only hope lay in the Nisei [their American-born children], the second-generation."[140] But those without children would have to look elsewhere. With no children to carry their legacy, Issei bachelors would have to invest their hope into the thought of returning home someday.

By the outbreak of World War II, Kaneichi Fujioka had moved on to Stockton in the San Joaquin Valley about fifty miles from Clarksburg. One imagines that he may have worked for

[139] Ngai, *Impossible Subjects,* 27.
[140] Ngai, 49.

various growers in and around California's Central Valley, as did so many Issei bachelor men. He never re-married nor had more children in the US and remained a faithful Buddhist. He may have felt a sense of home and belonging in the fields amongst others like him, or perhaps he felt alienated by the laborious work and lack of kinship. Regardless, he gave the remainder of his youth to the California fields. In the spring of 1942 when the order went out to all Japanese living on the West Coast to pack their bags and head to the nearest assembly center, Fujioka was forty-nine years old. Later, he was moved to the Minidoka camp in Idaho. In the summer of 1945 at the end of the war, he boarded a train headed for Chicago.

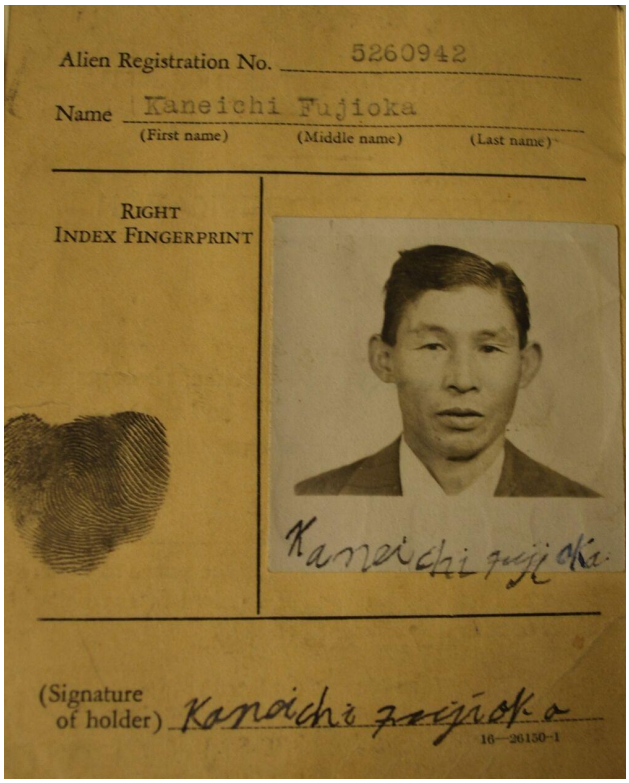

Fig. 6. Alien Registration Card for Kaneichi Fujioka. Record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 50. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Fig. 7. Young Kaneichi Fujioka resting with a cigarette in his mouth. Record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 50. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Fig. 8. Photo of older Kaneichi Fujioka. Record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 50. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Unmarriable Men: Sexuality and the Case of Jiro Onuma and Yone Noguchi

While some Issei men remained bachelors because racial prejudice, class bias, and the demands of low-wage work prevented them from marrying, gay men like Jiro Onuma chose not to marry. These men rejected the heterosexual institution of marriage. As such, their experiences have also been underrepresented or grossly absent from history. However, a small but growing body of research has emerged in recent years aiming to correct this historical wrong. Like the

Issei men who remained unmarried or those from the former outcast society, queer Japanese men were outsiders. In exploring their lives, a more varied image of Japanese America emerges. These alternate histories demonstrate how marriage and family functioned as the primary locus of inclusion and belonging in Japanese American communities. At the same time, it highlights how the lack thereof meant exclusion for many.

Onuma entered the United States in 1923, over a decade after the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908 and just a year before the National Origins Act would restrict all Japanese immigration. Settling in San Francisco and working as a launderer and then a butler, Onuma was one of a very few openly gay Issei men. In "Looking for Jiro Onuma: A Queer Meditation on the Incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II," Tina Takemoto embarks on a journey through Onuma's slim archive held at the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society in San Francisco to imagine what life was like for a gay Japanese man in prewar San Francisco and wartime incarceration.[141] The bulk of Onuma's archive consists of photographs of young Japanese men and other "homoerotic ephemera," mainly a collection of "male physique magazines."[142] In the photographs, the young men (including Onuma) are well dressed and smiling. Women are completely absent except for a few photos of Onuma traveling abroad later in life with friends—a married heterosexual couple. Though little is known about the men in the photographs, the plethora of photos in Onuma's possession, totaling over one hundred, reveals that he had many male companions. That Onuma resided in an area with many bachelor hotels indicates that he was part of a thriving if clandestine gay subculture of Japanese men in prewar San Francisco. In short, Onuma was not alone.

[141] Tina Takemoto, "Looking for Jiro Onuma: A Queer Meditation on the Incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian And Gay Studies* 20, no. 3 (2014).
[142] Takemoto, 241.

Yone Noguchi was born in 1875 and immigrated to the US in 1893 at the age of eighteen. Upon arriving in the US, Noguchi worked a steady stream of low-paid, menial jobs but would eventually go on to become a well-known poet and writer as well as the father of famed Japanese American sculptor Isamu Noguchi. Though Noguchi engaged in heterosexual relationships with women, he also became romantically involved with men. Indeed, Noguchi led a tumultuous love life, finding himself in the middle of a queer-straight love triangle. At one point, Noguchi carried on affairs with two women at the same time: Leonie Gilmour, with whom he fathered a child, and Ethel Armes, both well-educated, white American women. At the same time, he continued a same-sex relationship with Charles Warren Stoddard, a man his senior. In *Queer Compulsions: Race, Nation, and Sexuality in the Affairs of Yone Noguchi*, Amy Sueyoshi details Noguchi's rise in America's literary circles alongside his quest for romantic fulfillment during a time of "extreme sexual depravation and discrimination for Asians."[143] Noguchi's and Onuma's lives and the queer intimacies they sought illustrate the varied histories of Issei men—a history marked by racism, class bias, and in some cases, sexual repression.

Issei Bachelors in Wartime Incarceration Camps

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, racial hysteria swept the country. Soon after, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 ordering all persons of Japanese ancestry living along the Pacific West Coast to evacuate at once and report to an official assembly center. They were allowed to only bring what they could carry. The devastation wrought by World War II was catastrophic for the Japanese in America. For many Japanese laborers who immigrated to America at the turn of the century, it was the beginning of the end. Their best years were behind them, and the idea that they would someday return to

[143] Amy Haruko Sueyoshi, *Queer Compulsions: Race, Nation, and Sexuality in the Affairs of Yone Noguchi* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 1.

Japan in triumph was all but lost. It is unclear what assembly center Fujioka reported to, but there were fourteen in the state of California—one located at the San Joaquin County Fairgrounds in Stockton where Fujioka was living and working.

Many Issei who had carved out a modest yet fulfilling standard of living had to leave behind their homes, cars, furniture, and clothing. Many left behind businesses, friends, lovers, and pets. But Issei bachelors had very little to leave behind. All their worldly possessions could be carried on their back. Although their forced incarceration was undoubtedly disruptive, at the time it may have seemed like just another move in a long life on the road. The experience of incarceration for those Issei bachelors with little to their name was less jarring. World War II incarceration was just one in a sequence of difficulties. Further, much has been written about the Issei and Nisei experience in wartime incarceration camps while little is known about the experiences of Issei bachelors.

In the fall of 1942, Kaneichi Fujioka was relocated from an assembly center, presumably the Stockton Assembly Center at the San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, to the Minidoka Relocation Center located in Jerome County, Idaho. Minidoka was one of the ten incarceration camps. During its three-year operation from September 1942 to October 1945, Minidoka was home to 13,078 people of Japanese descent—Kaneichi Fujioka included.[144]

James Sakoda was also interned at the Minidoka camp. Recall that Kenichi Sakoda, James's father, was an Issei who married, had three children, and settled in the Los Angeles area. As a university student during the war, Sakoda worked as a research assistant in Minidoka on behalf of the Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study (JERS) directed by University of California, Berkeley sociologist Dorothy Swaine Thomas. The purpose of JERS

[144] Amy Lowe Meger, Historic Resource Study: Minidoka Internment National Monument, (Seattle: National Park Service, US Department of the Interior), 1.

was to collect objective data on the "enforced migration" of Japanese Americans, which was to ultimately aid officials in dealing with dislocated populations in postwar Europe.[145] Under the aegis of JERS, Sakoda (along with several other Nisei university students) collected data on their Japanese brethren in the camps and kept a personal diary of their encounters, observations, and thoughts about the war, incarceration, and the status of the Japanese in America more broadly. Sakoda and others had a precarious position as insider and outsider, participant and observer. While JERS and its subsequent publications, *The Spoilage* (1946), *The Salvage* (1952), and *Prejudice, War, and the Constitution* (1954) are not without fault, the data collected imparts some understanding of the differences in the lived experiences of the incarcerated Japanese.[146]

While in Minidoka, James Sakoda observed that the Issei population had self-segregated themselves along class lines. He remarked:

> People who were generally successful held themselves above the so-called immigrant group. They felt that they [the immigrant, non-assimilated group] were not being sophisticated. Sometimes they called them ignorant farmers; they [the successful Issei] had that kind of attitude.[147]

Sakoda further found that those from the lower classes—the "ignorant farmers"—were not loyal to the United States. Since the Issei bachelors had no families, they showed little investment in America. Instead they rooted for Japan to win the war, spread rumors of America's defeat, and balked about having to fill out the "loyalty questionnaire."[148] Sakoda recalled:

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[145] Robert C. Bannister, trans., ed., Dorothy Swaine Thomas: Soziologischer Objectivismus: Der Harte Weg in die Profession (Munich: Fraun in der Soziologie, 1998). Published originally as Claudia Honegger and Teresa Wobbe.
[146] Briones,, 114.
[147] James M. Sakoda, interview by Arthur A. Hansen, August 9-10, 1988, California State University, Fullerton Oral History Program, Japanese American Project, 392.
[148] The War Relocation Authority first administered the "Application for Leave Clearance," infamously known as the Loyalty Questionnaire, in early 1943. The questionnaire "required all adult internees to fill out a lengthy registration form to ascertain their loyalty to the United States." The questionnaire had two immediate objectives: it was used to assess the loyalty of potential volunteer combatants as well as those willing and qualified to resettle in the Midwest or East Coast, away from the western Pacific. Second, the questionnaire was created to "promote Japanese American's citizenship and assimilation." (Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*,181 and 182)

> They were frustrated and they didn't have any property; they didn't have children to worry about so they would say, "Don't register. We're going back to Japan. Japan's winning the war." They circulated a lot of rumors of Japan winning the war. "They're going to reward us with $10,000 and they're going to take us on a tour of the South Sea Islands." That sort of rumor circulated among the Issei men.[149]

The above remark speaks to the level of disenchantment amongst the dispossessed Issei. In theory, nothing was to keep them from staying in the United States. With no wife or children in the US and no hope for a successful or lucrative job to facilitate their return home, there seemed no reason for the property-less, single Issei men to stay or show loyalty to the United States. In reality, however, returning to Japan was less a viable option after the war. The latter half of Sakoda's remark referring to a rumored $10,000 reward and tour of the South Sea Islands either seems some fanciful idea about postwar reconciliation—the United States attempting to wrong a right—or reveals a perceptive sense of humor amongst some of the Issei bachelors in Minidoka. Still, according to Sakoda, the Issei bachelors were a "sorry lot" because they were not able to obtain wives from Japan, "did not have the financial means to enjoy life," and had no "children to provide integration with the American community."[150]

Sakoda's disdain for the Issei bachelors he observed was perhaps influenced by class bias as the Sakoda family had reached a level of success that distanced them from the struggling Issei. But equally important was that Sakoda was a "loyal" Japanese because he answered, "yes-yes" on the loyalty questionnaire. During the war, the War Relocation Authority (WRA) mandated that the interned Japanese take a compulsory loyalty test to prove their allegiance to the US. As Mae Ngai has shown, the loyalty questionnaire was a source of tension amongst the incarcerated Japanese since many were influenced by a sense of dual nationalism—they were loyal to the US

[149] James M. Sakoda, "Reminiscences of a Participant Observer," in *Views from Within: The Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study,* ed. Yuji Ichioka. (Los Angeles, CA: Asian American Studies Center, University of California, Los Angeles, 1989), 393.
[150] Ibid.

but also culturally tied to Japan. Ngai explains, "They held complicated, divided loyalties, a set of allegiances that sustained commitment to life in America alongside affective and cultural ties, even patriotic sympathies, with Japan."[151] By answering yes to the question of loyalty and working as a researcher for JERS, Sakoda had aligned himself with the US while Issei bachelors expressed pro-Japanese views.[152] Sakoda's remarks suggest he was ideologically opposed to their musings about the war. The Issei bachelors, then, were more politically aligned with the "No-No Boys," a group of young Japanese men who answered "no" on the loyalty questionnaire in protest of their forced incarceration. Sakoda was not alone in his disdain for disloyal Issei bachelors. One young Japanese woman who worked for the Army registration called Issei bachelors "nasty" and part of "one of the worst blocks" in camp. "They were crude and uncouth and they made fun of me when I tried to reason with them," she lamented. Of course, by "reason with them," she meant she was trying to persuade them to answer yes on the loyalty questionnaire.[153]

In addition, the WRA had organized the incarcerated by family unit, ensuring that single Issei men would remain separated from the rest of the population. In short, Issei bachelors were doubly marginalized. However, the all-male units created a homosocial world not unlike the camps in the agricultural fields and along the railroads where poor Japanese men labored. Moreover, the camps "afforded unique opportunities for resourceful queer men" to engage in same-sex intimacy. In fact, in Onuma's possession is a photograph taken in camp of himself, his lover Ronald, and another male friend. The photo suggests that same sex intimacy indeed took

[151] Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 200.
[152] Sakoda, "Reminiscences, 228-229.
[153] Dorothy Swaine Thomas, *The Salvage* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1952), 469.

place in the camps.[154] For those Issei men at the margins, camp was not an unnatural state of affairs as it had been for nuclear families. Much has been written about the disruption World War II incarceration had on family life. But for those Issei men who had next to nothing, the stakes were low.

Since Issei bachelors had no economic or familial stake in the US, they were apt to identify with Japan, and some openly expressed their dissatisfaction with the US and looked toward their homeland for redemption. In camp, they tended to be the "disgruntled, dissident group." Yet, little mention of the camps can be found in the JASC records of Kaneichi Fujioka, Hyosaku Furukawa, or Fujio Asaka. Their World War II incarceration is only mentioned in passing and no details are given; of course, the records are limited in scope and depth. However, the war strained their independent sensibility and severed the familial ties that bound them to Japan. The utter devastation of the war meant that contact was lost between the Issei in America and their relatives in war-torn Japan. It would take some nearly two decades to re-establish contact with their loved ones overseas.[155]

The anticlimactic experience of wartime incarceration experienced by single Issei men was also expressed in Japanese American fiction. In Hisaye Yamamoto's short story, "Las Vegas Charley," a lonely widower named Kazuyuki Matsumoto (later known by just Charley) is described as feeling content in camp: "Free food, free housing, friends, flower cards [Charley's favorite pastime]; what more could life offer?" In addition, Charley received free medical treatment for his loss of hearing in one ear. Though fictionalized, the story of Charley illuminates the disappointment and despair that led some Issei bachelors to embrace camp life. When

[154] Tina Takemoto, "Looking for Jiro Onuma," 261; John Howard, *Concentration Camps on the Home Front: Japanese Americans in the House of Jim Crow* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 113-123.
[155] Yuji Ichioka, ed., *Views From Within: The Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1989), 249.

another Issei man curses the US for stealing his farm and causing him suffering, Charley quietly disagreed. Charley had at one point in his life had a farm, a wife, and two sons. But Charley lost his wife after the birth of their second son, and then years later lost his first son in the war, while his second son wished to return to Japan, though ultimately he did not. Still, Charley felt as though he had nothing to lose by remaining in camp.[156]

In 1943 the WRA began to aggressively promote relocation of all Japanese held in the relocation camps to the Midwest and West Coast. Nearly 20,000 incarcerated Japanese relocated to Chicago at the war's end. Kaneichi Fujioka, Hyosaku Furukawa, and Fujio Asaka were part of this mass, forced migration to the Windy City. In Chicago, they found housing difficult to secure. Most Japanese newcomers to the city found that the only options available to them were hostels or boarding houses and tenement-style living located in three main parts of the city. Issei bachelors resettled largely in the North Loop area where "rundown rooming houses, hotels, and a large number of cheap night clubs and bars" could be found.[157] Work was plentiful, although the nature of it had changed; if one was willing to put in the hours and might, there were plenty of low-paying jobs in the service sector of the city's economy.

After spending nearly three years in Minidoka, Kaneichi Fujioka applied for clearance to leave in the summer of 1945. He arrived in Chicago shortly thereafter and began working as a cook in a city restaurant. He took residence in a boarding house just north of the Loop. Later, he recalled that before heading to California he had worked as a cook in the Pacific Northwest. In Chicago, he returned to this familiar work in the kitchen. His days of toil in the warm California sun were over. No longer would he work in the agricultural fields and farms of the West. In

[156] Hisaye Yamamoto, "Las Vegas Charley," in *Seventeen Syllables* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), 80.
[157] United States War Liquidation Agency, "People in Motion: The Postwar Adjustment of Evacuated Japanese Americans," United States Department of the Interior (1947), 168.

Chicago, he eked out a modest existence, but as the days went on and life undoubtedly grew harder to bear, Fujioka turned to drink to quell his sorrows.

Masayuki Dogen

On May 27, 1965, Masayuki Dogen walked into the Japanese American Service Committee smelling of alcohol. He told staff members that he "needed immediate assistance for food and rent." A worker gave him ten dollars. He left and returned six days later asking for further financial assistance. This time, however, the worker explained to Dogen that the committee could not simply hand out cash to those in need as they had on his first visit. Instead, the worker offered him the social services available through the committee, which he accepted. On June 21, Dogen asked the worker to visit him at his apartment on Montrose Avenue in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood. When the worker arrived, Dogen lay ill. He complained of pain in his legs and hip. He asked the worker to phone the doctor, and two days later he was hospitalized.

On August 2, 1965, just two months after he first showed up at the JASC office smelling of liquor and in need of help, Masayuki Dogen passed away. In his possession were a few household items, letters, old clothes, an electric shaver, and a phonograph, which he was still making payments on. All the items were disposed of by a social worker, while his phonograph was returned to the Tri-Par Radio Company. His body was sent to the Matsumoto Funeral Home, one of the only funeral parlors in the city servicing the Japanese community.

Little is known about Dogen's immigration and early days in the United States. He was born on November 24, 1902, in Fukuoka, Japan, and immigrated to the US around 1920. Dogen's life (and others like him) was marked with a tragic sense of disappointment. More than likely he immigrated to the US to work and save. But, like the others, his plans eventually

unraveled. He never married nor had children and found himself in trouble with the law on at least one occasion. On July 1, 1954, Dogen wrote a letter to Kenji Nakane, the director of the JASC, from the Chicago House of Correction thanking Nakane for "taking care of [his] matters." Nakane had interceded on Dogen's behalf, seeing to it that his room and belongings remained intact while he remained at the House of Correction.

A few years before his brush with the law, Dogen established contact with a niece in Japan.[158] The two exchanged letters for some time, but it is unclear if they remained in contact at the time of his death in 1965. In the spring of 1951 Nobuko Dogen wrote:

> With the arrival of the beautiful spring, I received your letter happily. I am Dogen Nobuko, Uncle. It's finally our first time to talk to each other. I am imagining how you are in various ways. I have not seen you, Uncle, and it is my first time that I read your letter, so I don't know anything about you. But my good father and mother always rumored about you. I don't know how you are, but I imagine that you are a kind person. Yes, I believe you are a good person.

Although Masayuki Dogen lived most of his life in the US, he was never forgotten in Japan. His immigration became something of a family legend, his brother keeping his image alive in his absence. Nobuko continued to speak nostalgically of her own father, Masayuki's brother, who had died just three years earlier. She lamented, "If my father were alive, he would be so happy. Only if I received this happy letter sooner, but we can't help [that now]." She went on to praise her uncle for having taken the risk of moving abroad and living out his "strong dream" to live in the United States. She also expressed excitement over Dogen's relationship with a "Spanish" woman named Maria, though no other evidence of this relationship exists. Still, this suggests that Dogen was at some point involved with a non-Japanese woman, presumably someone of

[158] Case file for Masayuki Dogen, record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 38. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Mexican or Puerto Rican descent. She concluded by congratulating Masayuki for his accomplishments:

> You must have gone through difficulties after moving to the US at such a young age. But I heard that you fully explored and lived your life, given by God, and you don't feel any inconveniences now. You completely deserve it. You have received blessings from God.

Nobuko Dogen's letter conveys little awareness of the loneliness and isolation Masayuki must have felt at the end of his life. Instead, it is shrouded in valor. It seems that Nobuko may have been misled about the supposed "inconveniences"—or lack thereof—in her uncle's life. Masayuki Dogen must have wanted it this way.

After resettling in Chicago in 1945, Fujioka worked at various restaurants and hotels, but by 1962 he had "retired" and began working instead at the JASC work center, to keep his mind busy and his days occupied. He can be seen in an August 1965 *Chicago Tribune* article entitled, "A New Way of Life for Elderly Japanese Americans," assembling the handle of a fishing pole in the work center.[159] In his last years, Fujioka, took to excessive drinking. In 1969 a caseworker from the JASC visited him in his room to check on his well-being and discovered that Fujioka had been drinking excessively and crying. She noticed that his face was red, and he appeared to be wiping tears from his eyes. What troubled Fujioka was not made clear in the report, but it is no stretch of the imagination to consider his drinking and crying to be a part of the sorrow he felt towards his imminent death in America.

In October 1962 it was reported that Fujioka arrived at the work center "with his guard up" but eventually appeared more relaxed. A year later, however, he "feigned illness for two months" to get out of work. His coworkers, other elderly Issei, told JASC officials that he had not been ill as he had claimed. Then on June 11, 1963, Fujioka showed up to work "staggering

[159] Olesky, Walter. "A New Way of Life for Elderly Japanese-Americans." *Chicago Tribune,* August 8, 1965.

drunk" and rudely obnoxious: "He went down the line greeting everyone with a wave and a whack on the back missing only the supervisor." He was escorted out of the building at once. A week later he returned "looking very sheepish" but was not dismissed because he was known to be a hard and diligent worker. Over the next few years, Fujioka waxed and waned between "lost weekends" of isolation and binge drinking and working hard while earning praise at the work center. In August 1964 it was reported, "Mr. Fujioka continues to be one of the fastest male workers. His only fault is that every 6 to 8 months he goes on a 'lost weekend' and is out for a week to 10 days and then returns to steady productive work again."

During his turbulent last days, Kaneichi Fujioka re-established contact with his younger sister, Yukie, now living in Matsuyama City, Ehime. In March 1962 she wrote:

> I am so glad to hear that you are doing well. We are also well (so please don't worry about us). I am already old. I have seven healthy children and one who died in the war…. As you probably know already, it's been about 15 years since Mother died.

Kaneichi presumably had little to no contact with his family in Japan since before the war as Yukie made a point to introduce him to her children, noting that the eldest was a son of forty-seven years. She continued by filling Kaneichi in on life in postwar Japan:

> Japan, too, has surely changed after the war. We, farmers, live a cultured life nowadays and we have electric appliances at home—TV, sewing machine, washing machine, electric heater, and rice cooker…. Land situation has also changed. Most of the area I live, the county with many hot springs, was amalgamated into Matsuyama City. Kume Village was merged into Matsuyama city four or five years ago, and Ono Village last year….

Yukie's words speak to the sweeping changes in Japanese life in the aftermath of World War II. Moreover, she conveys a sense of yearning to be reunited with her long lost brother. She recounts the story of Mr. Katsuichi, a young man presumably from their village who immigrated to Peru around the same time Kaneichi left for America. After Mr. Katsuichi died in Peru, his

adult son returned to Japan to settle. Yukie then asks, "Why don't you come back, too, brother, one day? I took a photo of me the other day, but it does not look good, so I will take another one soon and send it to you next time." She ends the letter, "Please send your recent photo if you have one…. Take care of yourself …Yukie."

A few years later Kaneichi Fujioka died of pneumonia exacerbated by severe liver damage. Before his death, Fujioka told his caseworker that he had come to America to earn money and had planned to return to Japan to buy land. In his last days, he was still hopeful that he would return to Japan to live out the remainder of his life.[160] In his possession were several photos of himself in old age and Yukie's letters.

Conclusion

Not every story ended so tragically, however. In 1973 when Hyosaku Furukawa was eighty-one years old, he told a JASC case worker that he wished to return to Japan and asked the committee for assistance. The caseworker agreed but suggested that Furukawa write to his relatives in Japan relating his wishes. Although it is unclear exactly who Furukawa wrote to, it is noted in detail that he did indeed write to a relative asking if his return would be welcomed. He received great news when they wrote back ensuring him that he was welcomed and that he would be taken care when he returned. The following spring Furukawa boarded a plane with a tour group headed to Japan. After spending most of his life in a foreign land, he finally returned home. He had arrived in the US by steam ship in 1908 and again in 1917; when he returned in 1973, sixty-five years after his initial arrival, he did so by plane.[161]

[160] Case file Kaneichi Fujioka, record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 50. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.
[161] Case file for Hyosaku "Hugo" Furukawa, record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 52. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Once he arrived in Japan, Hyosaku Furukawa wrote to his caseworker at the JASC thanking her for her assistance. He wrote, "Japanese people are polite and kind. I haven't seen them for 65 years, but they treat me so nicely as if their sibling came back." After spending a lifetime away, Japan and its people in some ways seemed foreign to him. To his surprise, "They also rebuilt an American style apartment (with parlor, bedroom, kitchen, and bathroom), and I sometimes get confused where I am—in Japan or the US." He continued, "After I arrived in Japan, I visited Tokyo, Kyoto, Nara, Shikoku, Osaka—the 'heart' of Japan, with a group, and arrived finally in my hometown [Arai-shi, Niigata]." Hyosaku had become a tourist in his own country, and after spending decades away, he was re-acquainting himself with Japan. In February of 1974, just months after he returned to Japan, Hyosaku Furukawa passed away. He was eighty-two years old.[162]

When Japanese immigrants began arriving on the shores of the western United States they did so with dreams of financial security. Those from the lower classes—and quite possibly from former burakumin families—planned to work hard, save money, and return to Japan in triumph. But the closing of America's gates, racial discrimination, and inter-ethnic class divisions ensured that the poor, laboring class of Japanese men unable or unwilling to marry continued to live in subordination. When the Japanese Army attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, their fate was sealed. No longer was returning to Japan a viable option. In wartime they had grown old and weary of the world. The utter devastation of Japan during the war severed the ties that once bound many to their homeland in the prewar period. Some were able to re-establish connections with loved ones after the war, but by then they were unknown— strangers in their homeland. With no familial bonds, their appetite for life rapidly declined, and with it, their

[162] Case file for Hyosaku "Hugo" Furukawa, record group 8, series 3, box 1, folder 52. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

health. When Fujio Asaka took his life in 1971 at the age of 84, he certainly had come to a crossroads; unable to return home to Japan and alone in a rapidly changing city, he must have known his death in America was imminent. Rather than live out the painful process, he took matters into his own hands.

CHAPTER THREE

INTERRACIAL INTIMACIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS IN JIM CROW TOKYO

> *The alien spouse of an American citizen by a marriage occurring before thirty days after the enactment of this Act, shall not be considered as inadmissible because of race, if otherwise admissible under this Act.*
>
> -Public Law 271, 80th Congress, July 22, 1947

Setsuko Williams was born in Nagoya, Japan, in July of 1926. She was the oldest of ten children from a middle-class family and lived her early childhood years in comfort. Her father worked for the Japanese Imperial government, making what she called a "pretty good living," while her mother took care of the children and home. However, Setsuko's days of childhood comfort were numbered. In 1937, when she was just eleven years old, total war broke out between Japan and China in the form of the Second Sino-Japanese War. Setsuko's father was conscripted to fight in the Japanese Imperial Army. He returned home after the war alive and well, but for Setsuko, war had become an integral part of her early life.[1]

When Japan entered World War II in 1939, Setsuko was just thirteen years old. During the war she joined her mother in caring for the family. Then, during the height of the war, seventeen-year-old Setsuko married a young Japanese man in a traditional arranged marriage. Three months after their wedding in July 1943, he was sent to serve in the Japanese Imperial Army in the Pacific and never returned. By the time of the Japanese defeat in 1945, Setsuko was

[1] Setsuko Williams (Pseudonym used), interviewed by author, Marin City, CA, July 7, 2010. I confirmed details from Setsuko's interview, whenever possible. For example, she stated that she arrived in the United States in 1951, but the Immigration Passenger and Crew List shows that she arrived on January 3, 1952 to the Port of Seattle, Washington aboard the USS *General E.T. Collins*. Small discrepancies are anticipated when interviewing a person of advanced age; however, Setsuko demonstrated much physical and mental vigor. Her account is otherwise deemed true and viable.

a nineteen-year-old widow. She took a job as a typist for the United States military at Camp Gifu during the Allied Occupation. As a Japanese civilian working for the Allied forces, Setsuko was able to obtain some stability in the midst of economic deprivation.[2] At Camp Gifu, she met her second husband. Eddie Williams was an African American serviceman with the Twenty-Fourth Infantry Regiment. Every day when Setsuko and her co-workers took a break from work, they passed the mess hall where Eddie worked. The two exchanged glances over time, and on one rainy day after work, he offered her a ride and she accepted. Although there was no official ban on "fraternization" between American GIs and Japanese women, unofficial policy strictly prohibited contact between Japanese civilian workers and American servicemen.[3] Setsuko and many Japanese women like her socialized with, courted, and eventually married American servicemen. At Camp Gifu a high proportion of these relationships were between black servicemen and Japanese women.

This chapter explores the racial tensions between white and black Americans in Occupied Japan and the interracial intimacies between American GIs and Japanese women that emerged in the aftermath of World War II. When the war in the Pacific ended on September 2, 1945, the US sent thousands of military troops to Japan to dismantle the armed forces and democratize the Imperial Government in what is formally known as the Allied Occupation of Japan.[4] During the

[2] During the Allied Occupation of Japan from 1945 to 1952, American men and Japanese women worked with one another. After World War II, Japan was left in dire conditions. Its political, economic, and social structures were left in ruins. The US military presence provided some economic stability to Japan's war-torn citizens. Its bases and the immediate surrounding area became the economic livelihood for locals. Young Japanese women in search of work flocked to the cities where the American military was present. These women, from varying educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, sought work with the American military in Japan in order to support their families. For many of the young women, it was the first time they had worked outside the home. See Elfrieda Shukert and Barbara Scibetta, *War Brides of World War II* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988), 187.

[3] "GI Fraternization Allowed in Japan," *New York Times*, July 12, 1946; "Chaplains' Aid Asked to End Fraternizing," *New York Times*, April 3, 1946.

[4] John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 40; Takemae Eiji, *Inside the GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy* (New York, New York: Continuum, 2002), 57.

occupation and the subsequent Korean War, between estimated 450,000 American servicemen and women served in Japan. In my analysis of the occupation, I broaden the chronological scope to include the US military presence in Japan during the Korean conflict since thousands of American military troops were shuffled between Korea and Japan during the Korean War between 1950–53.[5] During this historic moment, American servicemen of all racial and ethnic backgrounds engaged in a range of intimate relationships with Japanese women. The briefest relationships took place in brothels where women referred to as "Panpan" girls engaged in sex work with the servicemen.[6] In some cases, the woman would have only one customer who would come to visit her on a regular basis.[7] In addition, Japanese women and American GIs engaged in courtships that led to marriage. These couples met in dancehalls and restaurants. Others met under more banal circumstances: at work for the occupation forces or through mutual friends. These men and women came together in natural ways in an otherwise unnatural environment shaped by war, military occupation, and American racial politics.[8] Many of these relationships would ultimately lead to a new wave of Japanese immigration to the US.

Borrowing from Beth Bailey and David Farber's analysis of wartime Hawaii, I view Occupied Japan as a liminal space between the US and Japan—enemy and ally, conqueror and conquered. Like Hawaii during the war, Occupied Japan was "a highly charged arena in which

[5] Some argue that the US Occupation of Japan still exists today, primarily on the island of Okinawa. In her work on prostitution during the Allied Occupation, Sarah Kovner argues that the occupation of Japan should be considered within the broader concept of the term "occupation" and the condition of compromised sovereignty resulting from a foreign military presence. According to Kovner, the Allied Occupation of Japan, which officially began in 1945 and ended in 1952, "may be said to have lasted in Japan through the Korean War years and continuing on until 1972, when Okinawa reverted to Japanese control." See Sarah Kovner, *Occupied Power: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Postwar Japan* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 5.
[6] Kovner, 56.
[7] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 134
[8] Stephen Murphy Shigematsu's Japanese mother and American GI father met while working at the US General Headquarters. See Shigematsu, *When Half Is Whole: Multiethnic Asian American Identities* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 7.

the individual dramas of cultural contact played out."[9] At the center of this historic moment of contact were ordinary Japanese and American people whose daily interactions with one another helped to reshape relations between the two recently warring nations. Above all, the intimate relationships between American servicemen of all racial backgrounds and Japanese women helped shape postwar immigration to the United States while contributing to the making of Japanese America.

Three key developments arose in the United States as a result of the interracial relationships between Japanese women and American servicemen in post-World War II Japan. First, the intimacy between American servicemen of all racial backgrounds and Japanese women contributed to the making of a mixed-race post-World War II Japanese America. However, once in America these Japanese women and their families were not integrated into Japanese American communities and have since not been fully included in the historiography of Japanese America.

Second, as several scholars have documented, the interracial intimacies between American GIs and Japanese women abroad shaped postwar immigration legislation.[10] In the early postwar era, Japanese women were barred from entering the US per the National Origins Act of 1924, which set an immigration quota for each sending country favoring northern and western European countries while limiting those from the southern and eastern parts of Europe. The act excluded people from Asian countries altogether. Under the Origins Act, the Japanese were ineligible for citizenship based on a presumption that they, like other Asian nationals, were unable to assimilate into the dominant American culture. Mae Ngai explains, the National

[9] Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1992), 17.
[10] Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 205-284; Philip E. Wolgin, and Irene Bloemraad, "Our Gratitude to Our Soldiers": Military Spouses, Family Re-Unification, and Postwar Immigration Reform." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 41, no. 1 (2010): 27-60.

Origins Act constructed racial hierarchies based on the "desirability" of certain immigrant groups, a "desirability" rooted in the belief that "the United States was, and should remain, a white nation descended from Europe."[11] The act, passed more than twenty years before the first postwar interracial marriages were recorded, created obstacles for Japanese women and American servicemen who wished to marry.

In an attempt to appease white American soldiers stationed throughout Europe who wished to bring their European war brides home to the states, the US passed the GI Brides Act in 1945. The act was created "to expedite the admission to the United States of alien spouses and alien minor children of citizen members of the United States Armed forces."[12] However, the Act explicitly barred alien spouses deemed "racially ineligible" by the 1924 Origins Act. Under the GI Brides Act of 1945 Japanese women were still prohibited from entering the country. Pressured by heartbroken American servicemen and civil rights groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Congress expanded the GI Brides Act of 1945 to include Asian brides of US servicemen. In 1947 the Alien Brides Act was passed permitting "alien spouses," otherwise deemed "racially ineligible," entry into the United States. However, the act stipulated that the couples had to marry and apply for immigration to the US within a thirty-day time frame, and for many this was impossible. Still, some managed to marry even under such restrictive terms. Those who did not meet the deadline would have to wait until August 1950 when the time to marry and apply for immigration was expanded to

[11] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 27.
[12] 79th Congress, 1st Session, Chapters 591 and 592, December 28, 1945.

March 1952, the year that also marked the official end of the National Origins Act.[13] Thus, Japanese women were eventually granted entry. These women were part of a larger trend in US immigration policy that privileged wives in times of racial exclusion.[14]

Those who supported expanding immigration policy to include war brides viewed such legislation as a reward for the men who served the United States military during the war. It was "the least we can do for the men who fought our wars overseas," explained Noah Mason, a US Representative from Illinois.[15] Thus Japanese immigrant women's worth was measured by the sacrifices of their servicemen husbands. Yet the privilege of bringing home wives from abroad applied mostly to white American servicemen. African American servicemen, on the other hand, faced additional obstacles to bring home their brides. In addition to immigration laws designed to exclude the Japanese, black-Japanese couples had to wrestle with acts of sabotage committed by the US military in an effort to curtail Afro-Asian intimacies. Black Americans in Japan saw such acts as the expansions of US racial thinking into the Far East.

Finally, the interracial encounters in Occupied Japan shaped ideas about civil rights in the post-World War II United States. Black servicemen involved with Japanese women expressed solidarity with the Japanese alongside ideas about the linkages between marriage and civil rights. As noted by Alex Lubin, World War II marked a shift in the ways in which black Americans understood the stakes of interracial intimacies in civil rights discourse. This shift was strengthened, I argue, by the intimate encounters between black American GIs in Japan. Furthermore, Lubin explains, in the post-World War II era "black GI interracial intimacy

[13] Sandra Zeiger, *Entangling Alliances: Foreign War Brides and American Soldiers in the Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2010), 181.
[14] Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 15.
[15] Philip E. Wolgin, and Irene Bloemraad, "Our Gratitude," 37.

signified the most public form of black activism centered on interracial intimacy and marriage."[16] This activism was made visible by a "burgeoning black public culture" and as this chapter shows the lobbying of black men, as well. [17] Yet the connection between racial equality and interracial intimacies privileged heterosexual male desire.

Central to my investigation is the ways in which marriage served as mode of inclusion for Japanese immigrant women after World War II just as it did in 1908 with the Gentlemen's Agreement. As in the case of Japanese picture brides in the early twentieth century, Japanese women were once again granted entry as wives only—this time as wives to American men. As Martha Gardner has argued, wives have historically occupied a privileged place in immigration history.[18] Even in times of exclusion, exceptions were made for wives of respectable men. But in the case of Japanese immigrant women, marriage has been the only means of inclusion. During the Allied Occupation of Japan, however, marriage as a means of inclusion was redefined in terms of the American serviceman and civil rights. Japanese women's subordination to men under military rule would not only facilitate their immigration to the US but also their loved experiences once in America.

Furthermore the marriage discourse that emerged around black-Japanese marriages was shaped by Afro-Asian thinking that predated the war. As Gerald Horne has documented, black Americans had expressed pro-Japanese solidarity as early as the turn of the twentieth century. This expression of Afro-Asian solidarity grew as Japan rose as a non-white world power in the

[16] Alex Lubin, *Romance and Rights: The Politics of Interracial Intimacy, 1945-1954* (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2005) 97.
[17] Lubin, 67.
[18] Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

prewar era becoming what many viewed as the "champion of the darker races."[19] The Japanese also expressed solidarity with black Americans in an attempt to gain their support.[20] By the time of the Japanese defeat and the subsequent Allied Occupation, much of the Afro-Asian fervor of the prewar and war years dissipated, only to be taken up in later years during the civil rights era. However, the immediate post-World War II years do not necessarily mark a lull in Afro-Asian activity; instead it found new expressions in the intimate encounters between African American men and Japanese women.[21] This period saw a flourishing of black-Japanese romantic relationships resulting in a number of highly visible marriages.[22]

The *Southernization* of Japan

In the summer of 1950, Katherine Davenport, an African American woman working for the US Army in Japan, wrote to her brother-in-law, Clifford R. Moore, a lawyer in Trenton, New Jersey, describing the "nastiest situation recently encountered" by black GIs serving in the Allied Occupation of Japan. According to Davenport, the occupation forces controlled four swimming pools throughout Tokyo, all of which were open to Allied personnel. The Meiji pool was the finest of all, for it had been built for the 1940 Summer Olympics Games in Tokyo, which never took place. The "Meiji Pool" was also the closest to the depot where Davenport was based. As the director of an army service club in Tokyo, Davenport wanted to treat the servicemen

[19] Gerald Horne, *Facing the Rising Sun: African Americans, Japan, and the Rise of Afro-Asian Solidarity* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2018), 151.
[20] For more on Japanese articulations of Afro-Asian relations, see Yuichiro Onishi, *Transpacific Antiracism: Afro-Asian Solidarity in 20th-Century Black America, Japan, and Okinawa* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2013), especially chapter three.
[21] In fact, Horne explains that Afro-Asian bonds did not perish in the aftermath of World War II, as some scholars have argued, but instead were suggested in the "peculiar intimacies" between black men and Japanese women. See Horne, *Facing the Rising Sun*, 163.
[22] My analysis of the politics of desire in Occupied Japan builds upon the work of Vanita Reddy and Anantha Sudhakar who encourage scholars working in Afro-Asian studies to disinvest in analysis of synchronic time, for it privileges "cross-racial alliances that occur contemporaneously." Instead, the authors urge a "different logic of temporality" in what they name a "politics of deferral" wherein connections to a shared struggle become knowable only afterwards and through queer and feminist analysis. See: Vanita Reddy and Anantha Sudhakar, "Introduction: Feminist and Queer Afro-Asian Formations," in *The Scholar and Feminist* 14, no.3, 2018.

affiliated with her club to a "splash party" at the Meiji Pool. However, when the men arrived they were turned away. The US military had issued a memo declaring the pool off limits to black GIs. "Appalled" and "angry," Davenport wrote to her brother-in-law seeking guidance: "Can't I do something? What course of action would you suggest?" she asked.[23]

Davenport believed the racial tensions in Tokyo were the result of the US military presence in Japan. She blamed the "deep influence" of the US Military's "Southern element" for reproducing Jim Crow in Tokyo. Citing the high number of white Southern men in the US Army, she lamented that "the racial discrimination here is as flagrant as it is in Georgia." The high number of Southern folk serving in the Allied Occupation contributed to the *southernization* of Japan. The fact that the pool was the site of such "flagrant" racial discrimination should have come as no surprise to Davenport and Moore. Just a few years after Davenport penned her letter to the NAACP, the civil rights organization would challenge racial segregation in Baltimore public pools.[24] In fact, historically, public swimming pools were the site of racial tensions since they began popping up throughout urban and suburban communities in the 1920s and 30s. Swimming pools were an especially contested site of racial tension as they were intimate and erotic public spaces that allowed—indeed encouraged—gender integration.[25] What was different about the Meiji incident, however, was that it occurred on foreign land.

In her plea to Moore, Davenport acknowledged the linkages between the discrimination of black Americans in Japan at the hands of Japanese civilians and the spreading of ideas of white supremacy when she wrote, "In many places such as the P.X. and commissary one can

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[23] Katherine Davenport letter to Clifford R. Moore. Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1950. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
Papers: Group II, Box A650; Folder: United States Army, Base Discrimination, 1950.
[24] ""Group may Sue to Open Park." *Afro-American,* Aug 19, 1950.
[25] Jeff Wiltse, *Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools in America* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

notice how the Japanese clerks in so many instances turn without question to wait on a white face first." For Davenport, the denial of swimming privileges at the fine Meiji pool and the favoring of white patrons by Japanese clerks amounted to a "slap in the face" to the men who were bravely serving the United States.[26] However, Davenport did not view the Japanese mistreatment of black Americans in the P.X. exchanges as evidence of Japanese anti-blackness. It was the US military influence on the Japanese that produced their anti-black attitudes and behaviors. From the perspective of black Americans, the Japanese were mere bystanders easily influenced by the US military. Davenport's refusal to hold the Japanese accountable for their display of anti-black prejudice was perhaps influenced by a sense of Afro-Asian unity that gained traction in the black press in the first decades of the twentieth century. Or perhaps in refusing to acknowledge Japanese civilians own anti-blackness Davenport was drawing from Orientalist ideas that viewed the Japanese, and Asian people more broadly, as impotent and non-threatening.[27]

Davenport's brother-in-law, Clifford R. Moore, happened to be a World War I veteran and civil rights lawyer who had recently gained prominence after he, along with Thurgood Marshall and Raymond Pace Alexander, defended the Trenton Six in a post-conviction appeals trial. Considered the northern counterpart to the Scottsboro Boys, the Trenton Six were a group of black men in New Jersey wrongfully accused of murdering a white shopkeeper. The death penalty was eventually dropped for the Trenton Six, and four of the six men were acquitted in

[26] Davenport letter to Moore.
[27] For more on Black Orientalism during the occupation, see Yasuhiro Okada. "'Cold War Black Orientalism": Race, Gender, and African American Representations of Japanese Women during the Early 1950s." *Journal of American & Canadian Studies*, no. 27 (Mar. 2009).

1951.[28] Moore was integral to the overturning of the death penalty for the young men. After the trial, he continued to practice law in New Jersey and was appointed US Commissioner in 1952.[29] As a World War I veteran and civil rights lawyer, Moore was qualified to advise Davenport on matters of racial discrimination in the military.

After receiving Davenport's letter, Moore wrote to Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) relating Davenport's concern. In return, Roy Wilkins wrote to Frank Pace Jr., the Secretary of the Army, detailing the claims laid bare by Davenport and Moore and demanding an "immediate investigation of the matter."[30] Moore's experience in the military also heightened his concern for black GIs in Japan. In his letter to Wilkins, Moore referenced General Edward M. Almond, the commanding officer of the all-black Ninety-second Division, the only all-black unit to see combat during World War I. Almond faced allegations of racial misconduct in his training and commanding of the division and had since become a symbol of racial prejudice in the US military. Moore wrote, "I can readily understand the present situation as it exists, at least in the Tokyo area, if Gen. Almond has anything to do with the command or policy of the Tokyo command." Despite Moore and Davenport's efforts, the Secretary of the Army did not take action. In his response to the NAACP, Pace dismissed allegations of racial discrimination, citing Executive Order 9981 issued in 1948 by President Truman abolishing racial discrimination and segregation in the armed

[28] Cathy D. Knepper, *Jersey Justice: The Story of the Trenton Six* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rivergate Books, 2011), 85.
[29] "Trenton Man Named U.S. Officer," *Baltimore Afro-American,* October 4, 1952.
[30] Roy Wilkins letter to Frank Pace Jr. Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1950. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Papers: Group II, Box A650; Folder: United States Army, Base Discrimination, 1950.

forces. For Pace, the allegations of racial discrimination were mere "generalities" and not indicative of systemic, racial discrimination in the military.[31]

However, racial discrimination in the military did in fact exist. African American troops often occupied the lowest ranks within the military, held the lowest paid jobs, and were often the target of white military violence. In 1946—four years before Davenport penned her letter to Moore—the 1940th Engineer Aviation Utilities Company (EAUC) stationed outside Tokyo wrote an open letter describing the race violence inflicted on African American members of the company. The servicemen described a number of violent incidents where black GIs were beaten, stabbed, and mutilated by white GIs from a neighboring station. These acts of violence, according to the men of 1940th EAUC, showed the Japanese people the true nature of American democracy, one steeped in racial prejudice. The letter ends with the exclamation: "Mr. Bilbo's wildest dream for America has come true here in Japan. We suggest that he move to the Far East, where his paradise has already been made."[32] The servicemen of 1940th EAUC were referring to Theodore G. Bilbo, a Mississippi senator and well-known white supremacist. Senator Bilbo sought to block racial progress at every turn, becoming a symbol of white southern bigotry. In 1947 Bilbo published *Take Your Choice: Separation or Mongrelization* where he argued for African Americans to be deported to Africa in an effort to preserve racial purity for white and black Americans.[33] By ending their open letter with a reference to Bilbo, the men of 1940th

[31] Frank Pace Jr., letter to Roy Wilkins. Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1950. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Papers: Group II, Box A650; Folder: United States Army, Base Discrimination, 1950.
[32] "Reader Tells of Race Violence in Japan," *The Chicago Defender*, July 6, 1946.
[33]Theodore Gilmore Bilbo, *Take Your Choice: Separation or Mongrelization* (Poplarville, Miss.: Dream House Pub. Co., 1947).

EAUC showed how they understood racial violence in Japan to be an extension of the racial attitudes that ruled the American South.[34]

The African American press also took note of the unequal treatment of black GIs in the European Theater of Operations where a pattern of racial discrimination took root in court martial cases involving black GIs and rape. In her analysis of the racialization of rape in wartime France, Mary Louise Roberts demonstrates how African American GIs were scapegoated as rapists out of French fear and anxiety about war, defeat, and the growing power of the US. The black press was key in publicizing how black servicemen in France were disproportionately accused of rape and subsequently denied due process of the law.[35] The unequal treatment of black GIs in France was also viewed as an American Southern import just as it was in Japan.[36]

"But Not in Tokyo"

In 1936, fourteen years before Davenport penned her letter to Moore, W.E.B. Du Bois visited Japan as an invited guest of two leading Japanese daily newspapers. Du Bois painted a flattering picture of the Japanese and their perceived sympathy towards the plight of African Americans in a series of recollections published by the *Pittsburgh Courier*.[37] In his reports Du Bois expressed in detail just how well he was treated in Japan, often comparing his experience with the Japanese people to the hostility of white Americans. In 1937, he wrote:

> On the last day, as I was paying my bill at the Imperial Hotel of Tokyo, a typical loud-mouthed American white women barged in and demanded service. In America the clerk would have immediately turned to her, if not to wait on her at least to apologize or explain. But not in Tokyo. The Clerk did not wink an eye or turn his head; he carefully

[34] See also Yukiko Koshiro. *Transpacific Racisms and the US Occupation of Japan* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1999), 56; J.M. Throckmorton. "What The People Think: GI Reports Japan Doesn't Know Jim Crow," *The Pittsburgh Courier,* Feb 26, 1949.
[35] Mary Louise Roberts. *What Soldiers Do: Sex and the American GI in World War II France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 233.
[36] "Court Martial Trials," *The Chicago Defender*, Oct 14, 1944; Roberts, *What Soldiers Do,* 236-238.
[37] "Forum Fact and Opinion," *The Pittsburgh Courier,* Mar 13, 1937.

> finished waiting on me and took time to bow with Japanese politeness and then turned to America.[38]

Here, Du Bois's characterizes America as the "loud-mouthed American white woman." She stands in stark contrast to the Japanese hotel clerk who treats Du Bois with respect despite her demands. Furthermore, Du Bois reported that his warm welcome in Japan was not meant for him only, but for all black Americans suffering under Jim Crow. As Reginald Kearney has explained, Du Bois's treatment in Japan, according to Du Bois himself, was meant as recognition of a common bond between the Japanese and black Americans. This bond was made under the common suffering both groups experienced under white supremacy and strengthened in a common destiny to thwart off western rule.[39]

As early as 1905, when the Japanese defeated Russia in the Russo Japanese war, Du Bois made public declarations of his pro-Japanese stance by pointing to the interconnectedness of the black freedom struggle in the US and Japan's struggle to abate western encroachment and establish itself as a powerful Asian nation amongst European dominance. Du Bois's pro-Japanese writings were part of larger movement among black Americans across the US in the first decades of the twentieth century who had come to sympathize with the Japanese struggle for autonomy.[40] Gerald Horne has documented in great detail how pro-Japanese sentiment was expressed in the practices and rhetoric of black nationalist groups like the Nation of Islam and Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, as well as works of fiction and the

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[38] "Forum: Fact and Opinion. *"The Pittsburgh Courier,* Mar. 13, 1937.
[39] Reginald Kearney, "The Pro-Japanese Utterances of W.E.B. Du Bois," *Contributions in Black Studies* 13 (1995): 209.
[40] For more on pro-Japanese thinking among black Americans see: Gerald Horne, "Tokyo Bound: African Americans and Japan Confront White Supremacy" *Souls: A Critical Journal in Black Politics, Culture, and Society*, Blacks and Asians: Revisiting Racial Formations 3, no. 3; Marc S. Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japan and China Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895-1945* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Reginald Kearney, "The Pro-Japanese Utterances of W.E.B. Du Bois," *Contributions in Black Studies* 13, Article 7; Yuichiro Onishi, *Transpacific Antiracism : Afro-Asian Solidarity in Twentieth-century Black America, Japan, and Okinawa* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2013).

black press. Black leaders like Booker T. Washington as well as ordinary black folk expressed admiration for Japan and Asian people more broadly.[41] In fact, as World War II wore on and Americans learned of Japanese aggression against other Asian people, black Americans continued to support Japan. Some, including Du Bois, went so far as to justify the atrocities committed by the Japanese.[42] This pro-Japanese stance translated into romantic visions of Afro-Asian solidarity for black men serving in the Allied Occupation. This does not mean that racial tensions between African Americans and the Japanese did not exist; surely they did. I want to suggest, however, that the power of a black-Japanese alliance dating back to the early twentieth century shaped much of the black experience in Occupied Japan. Black GIs in Japan made clear the affinities they saw between themselves and the Japanese.[43]

Interracial Intimacies in Occupied Japan

In January 1947, the all-black Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment arrived at the port of Kobe and soon after made their way to Camp Gifu, located at the center of the main island. Camp Gifu would become home to the Twenty-fourth Regiment for the remainder of the Allied Occupation and during the Korean War. When the men arrived, the locals greeted them with curiosity. Fred Thomas, an enlisted soldier with the Twenty-fourth Regiment, recalled how upon seeing the soldiers for the first time, Japanese children licked their fingers then rubbed the soldier's skin to see if their skin color would rub off. "They called us *chocoleta* soldiers" and asked, "why you no

[41] Gerald Horne*, Race War: White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2004).
[42] Horne, *Race War*, 109-113; Kearney, "The Pro-Japanese Utterances of W.E.B. Du Bois," 203.
[43] Afro-Asian intimacies in Occupied Japan existed beyond heterosexual encounters; this article offers but one view. Still to be explored are the encounters between black women and the Japanese as well as the homosocial bonds between black GIs and Japanese men (mostly family members of Japanese wives and girlfriends) among others. Moreover, I recognize that women's experiences are marginalized within the broader field of Afro-Asian studies. For more on new directions in Afro-Asian studies see Vanita Reddy and Anantha Sudhakar, "Introduction: Feminist and Queer Afro-Asian Formations," in *The Scholar and Feminist* 14.3, 2018.

washa washa," Thomas explained.[44] Charles L. Glittens of Cambridge, Massachusetts, recalled a similar scenario during his stay in Yokohama in 1946: "The Japanese people loved us. We were called the chocolate soldiers. I didn't run into any black soldier who objected to that because that was the Japanese way of saying, 'We love you, chocolate soldiers!'"[45] Other than these awkward encounters that had the potential to be racially charged, real tensions between the Japanese locals and the Twenty-fourth Regiment at Camp Gifu were rare, according to Thomas.[46] In fact, African American servicemen and their families stationed in Japan reportedly made themselves quite at home at Camp Gifu.[47]

After a tour of duty throughout Japan, Cpl. John Paul of Mount Vernon, New York, explained that the Japanese people were "genuine friends of colored people." He recalled, "There is not prejudice against our race among the Japanese. They seem to feel allied to us as people of color and have a deep respect for the colored soldier and value his friendship highly."[48] Sidney Jordan, who arrived in Yokohama in 1949, explained: "Most of the white guys, they were so super critical, you can always hear them abusing the Japanese, calling them gooks and things like that. But the black guys, they didn't do that. So [the Japanese] had a better affinity with the black fellows. We didn't have any problem."[49] Though many African American men and women reported mostly friendly relations with the Japanese, racial tensions did exist. However, the

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[44] William T. Bowers, William M. Hammond, and George L. MacGarrigle, *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (Washington D.C.: Center for Military History), 42.
[45] Maurice A. Butler, *Out from the Shadow: The Story of Charles L. Glittens Who Broke the Color Barrier in the United States Secret Service* (Washington D.C.: Xlibris Publishing, 2012), 23.
[46] Bowers et al., *Black Soldier,* 48.
[47] "Americans Make Themselves at Home in Japan," *Baltimore Afro-American (1893-1988),* April 17, 1948.
[48] Alfred A. Duckett, "Japs Teach Americans Democracy, GI Reports," *Baltimore Afro-American,* April 22, 1950.
[49] Sidney Jordan, "Dancing at Zanzibar" interviewed by Kathryn Tolbert for *Japanese War Brides: An Oral History*. Retrieved from http://www.warbrideproject.com/chance-meetings-in-japan/dancing-at-the-zanzibar/. (accessed May 6 2018)

source of much of the racial tension stemmed largely from their interaction with military personnel and the military more broadly.[50]

During the occupation of Japan, American men and Japanese women formed intimate relationships resulting in a large number of marriages. Between 1947 and 1953, 7,153 Japanese women immigrated to the United States as wives of American citizens.[51] Though the Japanese had had contact with Americans before the war, this new era saw significant interaction between Japanese women and African American servicemen. When Cpl. Paul spoke of the Japanese tendency to value African American friendship, he was speaking from a place of intimate knowledge. In 1948, Paul married Heidako Nakamura, a "fetching, dark-eyed night club singer."[52] As a child, Paul starred in the Broadway musical *Hellzapoppin* and later went on to become a French horn player and tour Japan with the 289th Army Band Unit. Paul's account of friendly relations between African Americans and the Japanese belies the tension that existed in the P.X. exchanges and swimming pools that Davenport speaks of, but it also points to a different kind of encounter during this historical moment. For Paul, the racial discrimination that black GIs experienced both on and off the base was softened by the "vital creolized counter-culture" of the occupation where music and dancing played an important role in facilitating social relations.[53] It is within this flourishing subculture that Paul met Heidako.

Sumiko and Willie Brown met while jitterbugging outside an American USO club in Tokyo that Willie helped to manage. Sumiko and her friends had become enthusiastic jitterbuggers before the war. After the war, Sumiko explained, the only place you could hear jazz

[50] Yasuhiro Okada, "Negotiating Race and Womanhood Across the Pacific: African American Women in Japan under U.S. Military Occupation, 1945-1952." *Black Women, Gender, and Families* 6, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 72.
[51] Bok-Lim C. Kim, "Asian Wives of U.S. Servicemen: Women in Shadows," *Amerasia Journal* 4 no. 1 (1977): 99.
[52] Duckett, "Japs Teach Americans."
[53] Takamae Eiji, *Inside the GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and its Legacy* (New York, New York: Continuum, 2002), 131.

was at the American Servicemen's clubs. In the still segregated US military, African American clubs were the only ones to play jazz. Too shy to go in, Sumiko and her friends danced together underneath an open window. Willie, the club's assistant manager, spotted the women and invited them in.[54] Similarly, in 1948 Sgt. First Class Emanuel Lewis met Etsuko Yonamoto at the opening of a servicemen's club in Yokohama on Lewis's thirty-second birthday. The two danced and dated for two years before marrying in 1950.[55] Despite the anti-black prejudices in Occupied Japan, a thriving subculture surrounded by music and drink emerged. Takamae Eiji explains that within the subculture of Occupied Japan, "many of Japan's leading postwar jazz artists and popular entertainers got their start … undisturbed by convention and the prying eyes of whites." Undoubtedly, many relationships between Japanese women and black GIs flourished within this postwar counter-culture.[56]

According to Cpl. Paul, Japanese women preferred dating black GIs. The Japanese, he declared, had much to teach white American soldiers about "the futility of white supremacy."[57] Cpl. Paul's report echoed earlier declarations of Afro-Asian unity coming from prominent intellectuals like Du Bois. However, Paul's idealized description of black-Japanese interactions was undermined by the black press who in reporting on unions between American men and Japanese women perpetuated negative stereotypes of Japanese women as docile yet sexually promiscuous. The racialized and sexualized representation of Japanese women (owing much to the Madame Butterfly trope) in both the mainstream and black press reaffirmed the unequal power dynamics of the relationship between the conquerors and the conquered revealing a

[54] Lee Hildegard, "A 'Child of Jazz' Bridges Fillmore and Japantown," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 10, 2008.
[55] "3-Year Courtship in Japan: Baltimore GI, Tokyo Bride, Find Love Is All Languages," *Baltimore Afro-American,* April 26, 1952.
[56] Takemae Eiji, *Inside the GHQ*, 131.
[57] Duckett, "Japs Teach Americans."

complicated system of power that privileged American heterosexual men—both black and white. Though black GIs had to contend with racial hostility and violence, low-ranking jobs, and unequal pay, when it came to the Japanese they were still members of the conquering nation. Simply put, despite their circumscribed positions within the United States military, as American victors of war they had access to heterosexual male privilege.[58]

The relationships between black American men and Japanese women occurred at a time when articulations about the nature of a Japan-US Cold War alliance were being played out in the press and elsewhere. After World War II, Americans became interested in East Asia in unprecedented ways. This changing dynamic was influenced by the expansion of US power into Asia as part of the anticommunism efforts of the Truman administration. But before Americans could fully embrace US foreign policy abroad, they had to first be persuaded to do so at home. In *Cold War Intellectualism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination*, Christina Klein teases out the ways in which American middlebrow intellectuals propagandized the threat of a communist Asia to gain support for US containment policies. Japanese war brides married to American GIs were part of the narrative that helped secure widespread support of the Cold War alliance between Japan and the US.[59] In a strategic geo-political move, "Cold War Intellectuals"—writers, journalists, filmmakers, teachers, and government officials—championed the United States as a beacon of racial tolerance and big brother to the downtrodden and defeated Japanese Empire. This narrative told how the US conquered Japan in a bout between good and evil, marched in, occupied, and saved the Japanese from self-ruin. All this as the United States was heading into a

[58] Alex Lubin, *Romance and Rights: The Politics of Interracial Intimacy, 1945-1954* (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2005), 116; Christine Knauer, *Let Us Fight as Free Men: Black Soldiers and Civil Rights* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 153; Yasuhiro Okada. ""Cold War Black Orientalism": Race, Gender, and African American Representations of Japanese Women during the Early 1950s." *Journal of American & Canadian Studies*, no. 27 (Mar. 2009): 46-51; Michael Cullen Green, *Black Yanks in the Pacific: Race in the Making of American Military Empire after World War II* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), 61.
[59] Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 28.

conflict with the communist superpowers in North Korea and the Soviet Union. A timely alliance between the U.S. and Japan was therefore forged and Japanese war brides in the US press came to represent the possibilities of a Japan-U.S. union.

However, as Naoko Shibusawa explains in *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy*, the shift in American attitudes towards the Japanese came at a high cost. The postwar public discourse about the Japanese "assumed two "natural" or universally recognized hierarchical relationships—man over woman and adult over child." This meant that the new image of the Japanese in American eyes was one that was feminized and infantilized, perpetuating a harmful image that rendered the Japanese subordinate and inferior while at the same time the US was positioned as the masculine and superior of the nations, thus justifying the US Occupation of Japan.[60] The relationships between Japanese women and American servicemen were the embodiment of this gendered construction of the two nations.

To add insult to injury, the black press used the image of black-Japanese unions to undermine black womanhood. As noted by Lily Anne Y. Welty Tamai, Japanese women were positioned as model wives to black men for they were perceived as subservient and eager to please. This framing implicitly undermined black women who would otherwise be of romantic interest to the black men involved with Japanese women.[61]

For their part, the women seemed largely motivated to marry American men to escape the yoke of Japanese tradition. Many of the women possessed an adventurous spirit, but they were also enticed by the "American way of life" represented by the consumer goods American GIs

[60] Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally*, 4.
[61] Lily Anne Y. Welty Tamai, "Checking "Other" Twice: Transnational Dual Minorities" in *Red & Yellow, Black & Brown: Decentering Whiteness in Mixed Race Studies,* ed. Joanne L. Rondilla, Rudy P. Guevarra Jr., and Paul Spickard (Newark, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2017), 183-184.

had at their disposal.[62] Chizuko Murata met Clifford Watkins, a black American GI stationed in Yokohama, in 1949. Described as a generous and caring man, Clifford courted Chizuko, often bringing small gifts like chocolate and bottles of Coca-Cola to her and her family. Two years later the two were married, and in 1952 they moved to the US.[63] Women like Chizuko were the predecessors of the generation of Japanese women who would later stake their claim in a foreign land in an attempt to "defect" from their expected life courses in Japan, according to Karen Kelsky. For Japanese women, intimacy with American men meant opportunity. Women like Chizuko engaged in a form of "sexualized agency" that resulted in what Kelsky describes as the "potent conflation of fantasy and opportunity."[64] In war-torn Japan, American men had candy, soda, and jazz, and they were generous. They could also dance. They arrived strong and healthy and eager to make friends with the Japanese—utterly irresistible, according to some Japanese women even more than fifty years later.

Meanwhile, entire generations of young Japanese men had perished in the war, were imprisoned in war camps along the Pacific awaiting repatriation, or were working menial jobs under the command of the Allied forces. Consider how, for example, Crockett, observed a frustrated Japanese man lamenting the unequal treatment of Japanese men and women by the Allied forces. "Why is it … that Americans blame us—the men—for everything, yet seem to think our women are wonderful?" he asked. To him, Japanese men were living ghosts of a recent

[62] Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Issei, Nisei, Warbride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1986), 60-61.
[63] Tolbert, Kathryn. "Japanese War Brides: An Oral History Archive." Retrieved from http://www.warbrideproject.com/.
[64] Karen Kelsky, *Women on the Verge: Japanese Women, Western Dreams* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001) 2-3, 75.

past that many wished to forget. In response, Crockett explained, "Japanese men and women might be two different races entirely."[65]

Despite this new era of contact, interracial coupling between Japanese women and non-Japanese men in modern times was not unprecedented. In the early modern era, the Japanese intermarried with Koreans and Chinese. In the late sixteenth century after the Portuguese established a trade relationship at Nagasaki, a large number of Japanese women who were Catholic converts married Portuguese men and left the country.[66] In 1600, Japanese women began to marry Dutch and Englishmen. These relationships were celebrated by Japanese society, as Gary Leupp explains: "Prior to the 1620s, officials not only tolerated intermarriages, but sometimes facilitated or encouraged them."[67] But in 1636 under the threat of encroaching foreigners and their Bible, officials instituted anti-Christian policies and a ban on interracial marriage. The ban was not created out of concerns about race mixing but rather a concern for Japanese sovereignty free from foreign religion. Yet even during the age of seclusion, Japanese women and foreign men continued to have intimate contact. After Commodore Perry's arrival in 1852, relationships between Japanese and non-Japanese once again flourished. Hence the marriages between American GIs and Japanese women in the post-World War II era were not necessarily exceptional. However, the intimate contact between black American men and Japanese women was unprecedented.

Intimate relationships may not have only occurred between American men and Japanese women; it is a strong possibility that American women and Japanese men had relationships as well in Occupied Japan. Leisa D. Meyer reports that in France, African American soldiers were

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[65] Crockett, *Popcorn on the Ginza,* 131; Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally,* 35.
[66] Gary Leupp, *Interracial Intimacy in Japan: Western Men and Japanese Women, 1543 -1900* (London, UK: Continuum, 2003), 53.
[67] Leupp, 55.

hostile to black servicewomen who socialized with and dated white French civilians.[68] In Japan, black American women had consistent contact with Japanese men who worked in the service industry.

African American women's experience differed from their male counterparts. In fact, in her plea to Moore, Davenport acknowledged that she had never experienced racial discrimination by the Japanese. Sylvia J. Rock, an American Red Cross worker in Japan from 1950–51, commented that her "first impression of Tokyo was a pleasant revelation." Rock was surprised to find that not only did Tokyo feel like a large American city with skyscrapers, automobiles, and organized traffic patterns, but she found herself in "possession of a maid" as well. Though she enjoyed the services bequeathed to her, it also embarrassed her since she felt "perfectly capable of washing her clothes and keeping her room tidy.[69] Rock also noted her surprise to find that educated Japanese men were performing the "lowest tasks" for low wages. In addition to service industry labor, disarmed Japanese soldiers were returning home to work as stevedores on docks, replacing "Tan Yanks as laborers" under the watchful eye of the American military, according to the *Baltimore Afro American* in 1945.[70] Despite being relegated to menial positions such as maids and janitors, Rock noted, Japanese men never lost their sense of humor or dignity.[71]

Like their male counterparts, black women as members of the armed forces stood in a particular place of privilege with respect to the Japanese people.[72] In Occupied Japan the military offered decent salaries and benefits that went further in war-torn Japan then it would have in the US. Ethel Payne, a journalist and the director of the American Red Cross service club in Tokyo,

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[68] Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1996), 135.
[69] Sylvia J. Rock. "Japan Intrigued Jersey Girl," *Baltimore Afro-American,* Oct 13, 1951.
[70] "Jap Soldiers Replacing Tan Yanks as Laborers," *Baltimore Afro American*, Oct. 13, 1945.
[71] Sylvia J. Rock. "Japan Intrigued Jersey Girl."
[72] Yasuhiro Okada, "Negotiating Race," 72.

spent most of her time away from work traveling throughout Japan. As an African American woman in Occupied Japan, Payne had access to goods and services that may have been out of reach to her in the United States. Payne and other women like her reported enjoying such activities as shopping and socializing on their time off. Indeed, Americans—both black and white—in Japan hired servants, shopped, and traveled throughout the country taking in all they could during their stay in Japan.[73]

However, while African American women indeed exercised a certain level of purchasing power in Japan, it did not negate racial discrimination from within the ranks of the military. In the summer of 1949, Lt. Millie Susan Hooks of the Army Nurse Corps was abruptly dismissed from service. Hooks suspected that her dismissal was the result of poor relations between herself and her direct superior—presumably a white man— and not her poor performance, as he had claimed. Once stateside, Hooks sought the legal aid of the NAACP. The NAACP charged the military with discrimination on Hooks's behalf as well as on behalf of another black army nurse who had filed a complaint before Hooks. In addition, the NAACP pointed to the racial segregation of the army hospital where Hooks and the other woman were employed. Ultimately the case went nowhere as the military denied the NAACP access to records pertaining to Hooks and her dismissal. These various, contradicting experiences of black women members of the occupation personnel show how race and gender intersected in different but powerful ways.[74] It also reveals how black Americans' favorable perceptions of the Japanese were influenced by their access to goods and services during the occupation. In this way, Du Bois's experience in Japan in the 1930s is similar to black Americans experience in Occupied Japan.

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[73] James McGrath Morris, *Eye on the Struggle: Ethel Payne, The First Lady of the Black Press* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2015), 62-67.
[74] Okada, "Negotiating Race," 84.

Difference in Japan

The collective accounts of friendly relations between black Americans and the Japanese during the occupation obscures a complex history of racial difference in Japan, albeit one that was not necessarily understood in the exact terms as racial difference in the United States. Because race is a social construct determined by specific historical and national contexts, assuming a global definition of race misinterprets the processes of racialization in Japan. In premodern Japan, notions of racial difference *vis-a-vis* skin color were not necessarily measured on a binary scale as it was in the West. Though whiteness was valued, it did not necessarily mean blackness was inferior. For instance, during the Nara period, 710 AD–793 AD, white skin and black hair were ideal characteristics of feminine beauty. These standards persisted until the mid-nineteenth century when Japan "opened" up to the West. In addition to being associated with idealized femininity, fair skin was also associated with one's status in society. A fair complexion meant that one came from a wealthy, upper-class family, for it was assumed that they did not work outside under the sun.[75] However, as Kristen Roebuck noted, "religious iconography often depicted respected figures from abroad, such as Buddha … as black-skinned."[76] Thus in the premodern period, differences in skin color were perceived through class and beauty constructions while blackness did not equal inferiority, although this began to fade during the Tokugawa era (1600-1868).

Moreover the Japanese had very little contact with people of African descent. Much of the Japanese early views of racial difference were learned from Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish traders. (Recall Du Bois's reflection when he located an African slave in a painting hung in the

[75] Hiroshi Wagatsuma, "The Social Perception of Skin Color," *Daedalus* 96, no. 2, Color and Race (Spring, 1967): 418; Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 209.
[76] Kristen Roebuck, "Orphans by Design: 'Mixed-blood' Children, Child Welfare, and Racial Nationalism in Postwar Japan," *Japanese Studies*, 2016, Vol. 36, No. 2, fn. 9, 192.

National Diet Library).[77] After the Meiji revolution in 1868, Japan's contact with the West increased, and so too did its contact with Western ideas about race. For example, Yasuko Takezawa explains that some of the most popular textbooks in the late Meiji period uncritically embraced European and American racial hierarchies brought to Japan after its "opening."[78]

At the state level, modern conceptions of racial differences in Japan developed in relation to Japanese imperial ambitions and contact with the West. In the early twentieth century, the rising imperial state developed a distinct Japanese ideology to justify imperial expansion into other parts of Asia. Because Japan suffered from what Eiji Oguma calls "an immense inferiority complex" due to the unequal treaties forced upon the small island nation at its "opening" in 1858, it went to great lengths to prove itself a sovereign empire capable of competing with the West.[79] As such, Japanese Imperialist propaganda leading up to World War II promulgated the belief that Japan was the superior of the Asian nations and thus destined to rule all of Asia. At the 1943 Tokyo Conference, Japanese officials promoted a "Pan-Asian idealism" that sought to end white colonial rule in Asia. Pan-Asianism, the Japanese asserted, would stand up to Western encroachment into Asian nations. But the Pan-Asian ideal was decidedly unequal, for the Japanese envisioned themselves as the leaders of the "yellow race" within this self-proclaimed Pan-Asian ideal. However, hopes for a Pan-Asian alliance was quickly dissolved by Japanese aggression in other parts of Asia.

During World War II, as John Dower has shown, Japan and the US drew on graphic and contemptuous racial thinking to justify atrocious crimes and explain away seemingly inherent

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[77] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Forum Facet and Opinion," *Pittsburgh Courier*, Mar. 20, 1937, 10.
[78] Yasuko Takezawa, "Shifting Grounds in Japanese American Studies: Reconsidering "Race" and "Class" in a Trans-Pacific Geopolitical-Historical Context," in *Trans-Pacific Japanese American Studies* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016), 23.
[79] Eiji Oguma and David Askew, *A Genealogy of Japanese Self-images*, trans. (Melbourne, Australia: Transpacific Press), 143.

differences of the "Other" on both sides of the Pacific. The United States drew upon racial stereotypes of the Japanese as cunning and deceptive in an attempt to win the war. Likewise, the Japanese drew on ancient beliefs of the demonic outsider to demonize the United States. The Japanese often referred to Americans as greedy, beastly, and uncivilized as evidenced by their insatiable lust for power and domination and blatant racism towards black Americans. Japan and the US were caught in a "web of contradictions" whereby each nation promulgated a vision of itself that was at odds with its practices. The "web of contradictions" was not lost on the enemy, as each nation pointed out the hypocrisy of the other. The Japanese pointed to the hypocrisy of an American democracy where racial segregation flourished while the US pointed a finger at Japan for promoting Pan-Asian idealism amidst notions of Japanese supremacy and blatant violence against perceived inferior Asians.[80]

Although fear and hatred of the "Other" fueled wartime stereotypes of the enemy, these stereotypes proved easily amenable to accommodate the postwar alliance between Japan and the United States. The vitriolic hatred displayed between the two recently warring nations seemed to dissipate overnight as the two nations allied in a fight to preserve democracy from communist invasion. Despite the quick turnaround from foe to friend, racial tensions continued between Americans and the Japanese during the Allied Occupation. In her analysis of the problem of "mixed-blood" children in postwar Japan, Roebuck shows that anti-black prejudice could be found in novels, political rhetoric, and popular images of black American men.[81]

However, race relations at the grassroots level were far more complicated. While a notable number of Japanese women had intimate relationships with African American men, some leading to marriage and migration, Japanese attitudes towards black Americans during the

[80] Dower, *Embracing Defeat,* 8.
[81] Kristen Roebuck, "Orphans by Design."

occupation were "generally negative," according to Hiroshi Wagatsuma.[82] Yet, at the same time, Japanese women believed white-skinned men were unattractive and inferior. In his 1965 study on social perceptions of skin color in Japan, Wagatsuma found that Japanese women were attracted to "light-brown-skinned men, seeing them as more masculine than pale-skinned men." The women interviewed believed light-skinned men were delicate and effete. To further complicate matters, both men and women in the study discussed a difference of whiteness between Westerners and the Japanese. To them, Japanese whiteness was opaque and wholesome while white Westerners' skin was transparent and riddled with redness, which made them unattractive.[83]

In the end, Wagatsuma found that Japanese views of blackness in the postwar period ranged from curiosity to reverence to unabashed hostility. For some, presumably those in rural areas of Japan, blackness was a novelty—a mystery to understand—while others who were fond of African American musicians and baseball players expressed sympathy for black Americans under Jim Crow. Still others expressed an innate aversion to African Americans. In sum, Japanese race relations were not initially conceived through the black and white binary as it was in the United States, and mapping an American view of race onto to Japan would be inadequate and misleading. Despite these historical contingencies, the Japanese did adopt Western views about race.

Reports of friendly race relations between the Japanese and African Americans during the occupation are not absolute; they come from the point of view of black Americans in Japan who had been exposed to pro-Japanese sentiments in the United States since the 1930s if not sooner. Racial tensions between African Americans and the Japanese undoubtedly existed, but that such

[82] Wagatsuma, "The Social Perception," 427.
[83] Wagatsuma, 420.

tensions were overlooked demonstrates how deeply ingrained the pro-Japanese sentiment was amongst black Americans. Moreover, African American narratives of race relations in Japan points to the way the black experience abroad was deeply connected to the American racial order.

Interracial Marriage and Civil Rights

Despite the affinity between black GIs and Japanese women, those wishing to marry faced fierce resistance from the military. In response, black servicemen publicly and privately opposed such restrictions demanding the equal right to marry and father children. In their struggle for marital equality, African American servicemen in the Pacific looked to the NAACP for aid. Their actions marked a shift in how interracial marriage had been understood in terms of natural versus civil rights. In November 1949, George Brown, an Army corporal serving with the occupation forces in Japan, wrote the legal committee of the NAACP pleading for help. According to Brown, he and other men in his company had met and fell in love with Japanese women they now wished to marry and bring to the United States, but the US military stood in their way. In his letter Brown addressed racial discrimination against Japanese women by the US military. He recognized that his compatriots serving in Europe were marrying and bringing their European brides home to the States and saw the restrictions against Japanese brides as indicative of anti-Asian sentiment pervasive in the military and US immigration policy. Brown wrote:

> As you know, the laws of the Army and of the country make it almost entirely impossible for GIs to marry women of Japanese blood. However, the US Army is granting permission to GIs in the same situation, but are serving in the ETO [European Theater of Operations]…. This is entirely an unfair act, as far as discrimination against the GIs with children of Japanese blood. Surely I am as much in love with my girl and baby as anyone else. [If] legislative laws permit the GIs with German and other European wives and children to marry and enter our country, why should a line be drawn against people of the East? ... We are begging you … to investigate or aid us. If the babies of GIs born to European mothers are thought of by the Army, why can't the babies born to Japanese

> mothers be thought of too? Aren't they all part American? Doesn't our democracy advocate that all peoples, regardless of race creed or color, are equal?[84]

Brown understood that the policies that restricted American men from marrying Japanese women were a reflection of Jim Crow discrimination that now extended to the Japanese. Brown's letter also reveals the hypocrisy of American democracy. While the US claimed to be a beacon of tolerance in light of the racial and religious atrocities of the war, the nation's racial minorities endured acts of racial discrimination and violence both at home and abroad. Implicit in Brown's plea was the notion that US military service should beget basic civil rights including the freedom to marry whom one chooses.[85]

In his letter, Brown charged that the restriction against Japanese brides was a racially discriminatory act wholly at odds with American democracy. He also expressed his unconditional love for his Japanese girlfriend and their child, as if to gain recognition as a legitimate couple. Brown may have been responding to criticism of American Japanese relationships, particularly between black men and Japanese women, from military personnel such as Elizabeth Ryan, an American Civilian employee in Occupied Japan. Ryan, a provost court reporter for the Inspector General in Kobe, Japan from 1947 to 1948, often wrote about the marriages between American servicemen and Japanese women in her letters home. In August 1947, Ryan wrote a letter discrediting African American soldiers and their motives for marrying Japanese women. She claimed that after the War Bride Act of 1947 was passed, American GIs in Japan rushed to marry Japanese women to collect additional rations for their wives, implying that

[84] George Brown letter to the NAACP, November 20, 1949. NAACP Papers: Library of Congress. Group II, Box G15, Folder "Soldier Marriage."
[85] Peggy Pascoe, 247; Zeiger, 169; Michael Cullen Green also cites George D. Brown's letter in his study of Afro-Asian Intimacies in Occupied Japan. However, Green draws a different conclusion. See *Black Yanks in the Pacific: Race in the Making of American Military Empire after World War II* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), 72-73.

necessity—or worse materialism—and not love compelled the soldiers to marry. Furthermore, she claimed that black GIs hastily married Japanese women for sex only.[86] Ryan's words echoed criticism from Americans—both black and white—in Occupied Japan who disapproved of the unions between black GIs and Japanese women. Writing in 1949, four years into the occupation, Corporal Brown was surely aware of American hostility, specifically white military personnel who vehemently disapproved of interracial marriages.

Brown's letter made quite an impact, for just days later on December 1, 1949, Jack Greenberg, Assistant Special Counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, wrote to the Secretary of Defense "concerning the problem of the marriage of American soldiers to Japanese women."[87] In the letter Greenberg asked James C. Evans, Civilian Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, for assistance in aiding African American servicemen who wished to marry Japanese women in Occupied Japan. Greenberg cites Corporal Brown's letter in his bid to Evans. A few weeks later Evans wrote back to Greenberg mirroring Frank Pace's response to Moore and Davenport's accusations of racial discrimination at the Meiji pool. Evans wrote, "[An] investigation revealed that there is no current prohibition regarding the marriage of American soldiers to Japanese nationals, although the granting of permission for such marriage is left to the discretion of the Overseas Commanders."[88] Evans's response shows how the military refused to be the "'sociological laboratory' for social change."[89] Denying that racial discrimination existed in marriage policy and leaving the final decision to commanders meant

[86] Reiji Yoshida, "Letters from Kobe, Young Reckless, Open-Eyed GIs Broke Social Taboos, Found War Brides, Racist Laws, VD," *The Japan Times*, September 9, 2008.
[87] Jack Greenberg, NAACP, letter to James C. Evans, Civilian Assistant, Office of the Secretary of Defense, December 1, 1949. NAACP Papers: Library of Congress. Group II, Box G15, Folder "Soldier Marriage."
[88] James C. Evans, Civilian Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, letter to Jack Greenberg, NAACP, December 23, 1949. NAACP Papers: Library of Congress. Group II, Box G15, Folder "Soldier Marriage."
[89] Phillip McGuire, "Desegregation of the Armed Forces: Black Leadership, Protest, and World War II," *The Journal of Negro History* 68, no. 2 (Spring, 1983): 147.

that the military could absolve itself from accusations of racial discrimination, while at the local level commanders could continue to deny permission to marry. Such barriers led many black soldiers and Japanese women to marry in Shinto ceremonies, a traditional Japanese wedding consisting of ancient and modern elements. However, these Japanese marriages were not legal in the eyes of the US military or Immigration Service.[90] Therefore, husband and wife would eventually have to marry again, this time with the permission of the US military.

James Evans' letter to Jack Greenberg touched on another crucial obstacle faced by the couples when he wrote, "Japanese spouses of American servicemen may encounter difficulty in gaining entrance to the United States due to the current immigration restrictions and quotas, and they are advised of this obstacle."[91] Because Japanese immigration to the United States had been restricted since the passage of the National Origin Act in 1924, Evans could cite immigration law—an area out of his jurisdiction—to deny American GIs and Japanese women the right to marry. In the end, Evans' dismissive letter did nothing to "alleviate the plight" of the soldiers. Greenberg wrote to Brown on December 28, 1949: "I regret that there is nothing further that we can do, but please be assured that you have our best wishes."[92] It is unclear whether Corporal George Brown was able to eventually marry his Japanese girlfriend. One can only hope that he succeeded, as many of his fellow compatriots did, after a series of acts eventually allowed Japanese women to enter the United States as brides to servicemen. [93]

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[90] Yukiko Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1999), 157; Walter Edwards, *Modern Japan Through its Weddings: Gender, Person, and Society in Ritual Portrayal,* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989), 103.
[91] James C. Evans, Civilian Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, to Jack Greenberg, NAACP, December 23, 1949. NAACP Papers: Library of Congress. Group II, Box G15, Folder "Soldier Marriage."
[92] Jack Greenberg, NAACP, to Mr. George D. Brown, December 28, 1949. NAACP Papers: Library of Congress. Group II, Box G15, Folder "Soldier Marriage."
[93] Zeiger, *Entangling Alliances*, 181.

In addition to the legal barriers in place, black servicemen and Japanese women faced acts of sabotage committed by the United States military personnel. In 1952 *The Chicago Defender*, reported that nearly 400 African American servicemen from the all-black Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment stationed at Camp Gifu were being subjected to discriminatory military practices that prevented them from marrying their Japanese girlfriends. War correspondent L. Alex Wilson explained that "some high officials have indicated that steps may be taken to keep the regiment from returning to camp, thus keeping marriage vows unspoken." According to Wilson, many of the men were now "engaged in mopping up activity in North Korea" and were waiting to return to Japan to marry their Japanese sweethearts. However, if the military had its way, the men would be reassigned, or sent back to the states in a deliberate act to sabotage their relationships with Japanese women. Wilson also explained how many of the men had fathered children before being deployed to North Korea, and were anxiously awaiting return to Japan to be with their families.[94] The military sent African American troops to Korea in a malicious act to separate them from their Japanese sweethearts. Since US immigration law had opened in small increments between 1947 and 1952 permitting Japanese women to immigrate as wives of American servicemen, military officials took it upon themselves to disrupt the unions between black GIs and Japanese women. In other words, the US military was reacting to black American servicemen's claims to the right to choose a romantic partner.

In an earlier article entitled, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls" published by the *Chicago Defender*, Wilson explained that if the soldiers of the Twenty-fourth Regiment were sent to North Korea, then demobilized to prevent them from returning to Camp Gifu, a profusion of fatherless black-Japanese babies will be left behind in Japan. The result would be a repetition

[94] L. Alex Wilson, "24th Infantry GI's Lovesick...400 to Wed Tokyo Girls," *The Chicago Defender*, November 4, 1950.

of the "brown baby" situation that occurred in Europe during World War II when African American soldiers engaged in intimate relationships with European women left behind hundreds of illegitimate, mixed-race babies when they returned home to the United States.[95] The possibility of such an outcome in Japan undoubtedly loomed large in the minds of men like George Brown. Moreover, after their removal from Japan, many black GIs never again saw their Japanese sweethearts and, in some cases, never saw their half-Japanese children again.[96]

African American GIs stationed in the European Theater of Operations (ETO) also encountered restrictive marriage policies. Black servicemen in Europe were prevented from marrying their European girlfriends on the grounds that marriage between a white woman and black man was illegal in nearly half of the fifty states. Unlike Japan, restriction in Europe was wholly based on anti-black sentiments in the military. German, French, English and Italian brides who married white American GIs had far more ease in marrying and immigrating to the US than their Japanese counterparts.[97] Robert Bradford, an African American soldier serving in the ETO, addressed his frustration at not being permitted to marry and bring home his European girlfriend in a 1946 letter to the NAACP. Bradford explained that black servicemen were being denied permission to marry their foreign girlfriends, and in many cases the mother of their children. He wrote, "There are many soldiers who would love to make their child and its mother happy, but this American prejudice doesn't allow it."[98] Similarly, in his letter to the NAACP, Brown wrote: "In my outfit alone which consists of less than a hundred men, there are eight soldiers that have children born of Japanese mothers, and each and everyone of them are praying for our country to

[95] Brenda Gayle Plummer, ed. "Brown Babies: Race, Gender and Policy after World War II." *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 67-91.
[96] L. Alex Wilson, "Why Tan Yanks Go For Japanese Girls," *The Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1950.
[97] Zeiger, *Entangling Alliances,* 170.
[98] Letter from Robert Bradford to the NAACP. Dated October 28, 1946. Library of Congress, NAACP Papers, Group II, Box G15.

lift the barrier that is keeping them from being united with their children."[99] By denying men like Bradford and Brown the right to marry, the military was preventing them from entering into a state sanctioned relationship. The rights and privileges extended to married couples—especially those who were members of the armed forces—lay beyond their reach. However, both men were facing different legislative barriers. Bradford was denied permission to marry because the union between an African American man and European women would violate anti-miscegenation laws in the United States. On the other hand, Brown was denied permission to marry because Japanese citizens remained barred from entering the United States.

It was not only the "lovesick" soldiers who understood the racial discrimination embedded in military regulations.[100] In December of 1945, Walter White, head of the NAACP, wrote to the Secretary of the War Department on behalf of soldiers like Bradford and Brown asking that the military take immediate steps to correct the prejudice. White stated that the NAACP had received several requests for assistance from black soldiers abroad wishing to marry their foreign sweethearts. White accused the US military of acting as "partners to bastardry."[101] By preventing African American GIs from marrying their foreign girlfriends and establishing a legitimate, respectable family unit, the United States military was perpetuating what W.E.B. Du Bois called the "red-stain of bastardry," which affected the children of African American blood, in particular.[102]

[99] George Brown letter to NAACP.
[100] Wilson, "24th Infantry GI's Lovesick."
[101] W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York, NY: Avon Books, 1965), 9.
[102] Letter from Walter White to Robert P. Patterson. Secretary of War, The War Department, December 20, 1945. Library of Congress, NAACP Papers, Part II: Veterans Affairs File, 1940-1950, Group II, Box G15.

Conclusion

The NAACP's involvement in black GI marriages marked a shift in the organization's approach towards marriage equality. In the first half of the twentieth century, the NAACP had been reluctant to challenge miscegenation laws in court. When the association did, they did so arguing for the "natural" or "fundamental" right to marry.[103] According to Peter Wallenstein, the NAACP "was slow … to take an aggressive stance toward miscegenation laws already in place. It was a question of priorities…. Desegregation on the marriage front seemed far less pressing a matter than did progress in educational opportunity or voting rights."[104] But in 1962, the organization began to challenge anti-miscegenation laws based on arguments for civil rights and racial integration. The protests of black GIs both in the European theater of operations and the Pacific precluded the organization's shift, putting them at the forefront of marriage equality and civil rights activism. This new articulation of what constituted a civil right was made concrete by the service and sacrifices the GIs made in defending American democracy during the war. Marriage again was key to Japanese women's immigration as well as to the full citizenship of the black men they married.

For the Japanese women involved, the issue of marriage and immigration was part of a longer history of Japanese women's immigration to the United States. Like the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908, the War Bride Acts were devised to allow Japanese women to enter the United States. What was different this time around was that the women came as wives to American servicemen of all racial backgrounds—some Japanese American GIs (Nisei) did in fact marry and bring home Japanese brides. Their arrival in the US was made legitimate by the

[103] Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally,* 247.
[104] Peter Wallenstein, *Tell the Court I Love My Wife: Race, Marriage, and Law—An American History* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 184.

military service of their husbands. For Japanese women, then, immigration to the United States had always been contingent upon their place within a heterosexual and thus patriarchal relationship. For Japanese immigrant women in the US, marriage proved the price of admission.

Furthermore, the intimate relationships between black men and Japanese women were shaped by a perceived affinity between the Japanese and African Americans dating back to the early twentieth century. Though at times these encounters were transactional, they were also embedded in a larger genealogy of Afro-Asian thinking, at least from the perspective of black men in Japan. In this way, racial solidarity between black Americans and the Japanese could be said to have materialized in intimate ways during the Allied Occupation of Japan. Finally, these relationships contributed to new ways of thinking about the connections between interracial intimacy and civil rights in the post-World War II era.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAKING GOOD WIVES, WISE MOTHERS

> *Bear in mind always "Because of my husband and his love for me, I am going to be a loyal American. I will do my part to help in that country any way I can. It is my country now and my children's."*
>
> -Camp Kokura Brides School, American Red Cross, Japan 1956

On a chilly Friday in November 1953, twenty-four-year-old Etsuko Britton—a young Japanese mother of two living in Chicago—wrapped a silk scarf around her young son's neck and strangled the two-year-old to death. She then wrapped a cord around her own neck. Etsuko was the wife of William Britton, an air force sergeant and Chicago native. The two met in Japan just after the end of World War II. Before long they were married and had two children, Charles Jr. and Louise, and made their way to the States where they settled temporarily with Britton's parents on the Northwest Side of Chicago. Soon after their arrival, however, William Britton was called to duty in Korea and left his young bride and two children in the care of his parents. While William was away, Etsuko suffered abuse at the hands of her in-laws. According to Etsuko, her father- and mother-in-law taunted and degraded her with threats and racial slurs. The abuse proved to be too much for Etsuko to bear, and on November 13, 1953, she took her young son's life and attempted to take her own. When interviewed after her arrest, Etsuko lamented, "I am very lonely." She described the "differences" that she and her in-laws encountered: "All the time they tell me, 'This is not your baby. This my son's baby.' They tell me they send me back to Japan. That I no speak English. I say all the time, 'Very sorry, very sorry—please teach me.'"[1]

[1] Ruth Moss, "Mother Slays Baby; Relates Tale of Abuse," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 15, 1953, 43.

In all likelihood Etsuko was attempting *boshi-shinju*, the Japanese practice of mother-child suicide. Tragically for Etsuko and her family, the inability to express herself in English, her husband's departure, and the bullying from her in-laws made her desperate. Etsuko once again tried to commit suicide while in in a holding cell in Cook County jail. During her trial, the press regularly commented on her demeanor and small frame, noting she was 4 foot 10 inches and all of 89 pounds. Yet she remained remorseful and stoic during the whole ordeal.[2] Etsuko's story reveals the many pressures Japanese war brides faced in America. Alessandro Castellini has described how idealized motherhood, masculine dominance, and domesticity in the nuclear family restricted women's lives resulting in acts of filicide. For immigrant women whose very belonging in the US rested on her maternal and domestic abilities, these constraints were all the more severe.[3]

The first recorded Japanese war bride entered the United States in 1947, just two years after the defeat of the Japanese Empire. Between 1947 and 1955, nearly 13,000 Japanese women emigrated to the United States as wives of American citizens, most as wives of American servicemen.[4] Japanese war brides came to America with their white, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Japanese, Chinese, and African American husbands. In fact, one in every four unions was between a Japanese woman and a Nisei or African American GI.[5] But before Japanese war brides could enter the US, they first had to be taught how to be an American housewife, for domesticity

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[2] "Japan War Wife Gets Mind Test for Child Killing," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, January 2, 1954; "War Bride's Suicide Try Fails," *Pacific Starts and Stripes*, February 21, 1954; "Jap War Bride Charged With Slaying Son," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, Nov 17. 1953

[3] Alessandro Castellini, "Silent Voices: Mothers Who Kill Their Children and the Women's Liberation Movement in 1970s Japan," *Feminist Review*, No.106 (2014).

[4] Bok-Lim C. Kim, "Asian Wives of US Servicemen: Women in Shadows," *Amerasia* 4, no.1 (1977): 99.

[5] Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006), 49; To learn more about the racial diversity of war bride husbands see, Romanzo Adams Social Research Laboratory (RASRL), War Brides Interview Project, University of Hawai'i, Manoa Libraries. Box 1, Folders 14-22. Group 2: Wife, Japanese; Husband, non-Japanese/1-67, 1953-1955.

was key to their integration. But not all women were successful students of the "American way of life;" some, like Etsuko, were isolated and vulnerable in the US. After being convicted of manslaughter, Etsuko was sent back to Japan, leaving her young daughter behind to be raised by her paternal grandparents, the very ones who had caused Etsuko so much distress. [6]

How to be an American Housewife

In 1951, the American Red Cross in Japan began offering "schools for brides" with the purpose of preparing the women for successful entry into the United States.[7] The Red Cross bride schools were organized at the request of the State Department after receiving complaints from American GIs that their Japanese wives did not make good American housewives. Over the course of several months, the women were taught American government and history, English, homemaking, child rearing, and "charm." The schools were sites of incorporation where Japanese women were introduced to the "American way of life" even before they set foot on American soil. Bride schools measured Japanese women's ability to be good wives and mothers because their immigration to the US depended on their labor within the home as well as their reproductive value in the family. Whereas Japanese picture brides' reproductive and labor power were a source of fear and anxiety in the early decades of the twentieth century as chapter one shows, during the postwar years, the reproductive and labor power of Japanese war brides emerged as an ideal in the Cold War state. As the Cold War escalated and ideas of American domesticity gained traction in high politics and popular culture, Japanese immigrant women's potential contribution to the nuclear American family became increasingly important.

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[6] Moss, *Mother Slays Baby*.

[7] Larry Sakamoto, "GIs' Japanese Wives Offered Schooling," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, March 10, 1951. The American Red Cross also opened up bride schools in Korea during the Korean conflict when American servicemen and Korean women married in record numbers. See "Bride School at Yongsan," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, June 8, 1964.

While the Great Depression and World War II brought "widespread challenges to traditional gender roles that could have led to a restructured home," the nuclear threat posed by Cold War antagonisms soon after led to a "reaffirmation of domesticity that rested on distinct roles for women and men."[8] This reaffirmation of domesticity was further intensified for immigrant women because their entrance into the United States rested on their family status. At America's gates, immigrant women underwent a process of interrogation in an effort to weed out legitimate wives from those who were one part of "suspect marriages." For Japanese war brides, this system of interrogation began in their homeland under the occupation.[9]

What began as a small enterprise run by a few American Red Cross (ARC) workers in 1951 developed into a large-scale effort to groom Japanese women to become American wives and mothers. By 1956 the bride schools had developed a robust curriculum that combined lessons on history and geography with childcare and homemaking. But the bride schools were not simply home economics taken abroad. Instead, they were part of a deliberate effort to increase American authority overseas. Specifically, the American Red Cross bride schools were part of what Stephen R. Porter describes as a network of humanitarian aid organizations that collaborated with the state to extend and strengthen the reach of the United States in the aftermath of World War II.[10] By relying on the work of independent humanitarian organizations like the Red Cross, the United States "produced a massive hybrid welfare state" abroad, which was "a critical part of America's rise to a position of global superpower."[11] Preparing Japanese

[8] Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1988), 5-6.
[9] Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen Woman*, 13.
[10] Stephen R. Porter, *Benevolent Empire: U.S. Power, Humanitarianism, and the World's Dispossessed* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 78.
[11] Porter, 9.

women to be American housewives was one way that the US exercised soft power abroad in the postwar year.

An analysis of the course curriculum reveals three overlapping themes that shaped the ways the women were introduced and incorporated into the United States. First, an emphasis on women's reading and intellect runs throughout the course. In order to be an American housewife, a woman had to possess the proper skills to efficiently manage an American home as well as the intellectual prowess to engage with her husband and influence her children. Equally important, she must be a good companion to her husband. She must take great interest in her husband's work "but never make the mistake of telling him how it should be done." After all, her primary role in life [was] being [her] husband's helpmate." In her downtime, when she was not caring for her children or attending to her chores, she should "read good books and belong to a women's club of which there are many kinds, to try to further her own education so that she may keep up with her children." Second to her husband, the American housewife must be a devoted mother. She must be intellectually curious. The bride school curriculum emphasized the women's "contribution to America." As a Japanese immigrant woman entering the US, she had to prove herself worthy of the American people represented by the bride school instructors. To do this, she had to demonstrate strong, moral character as wife and mother.

Finally, in addition to being sites of incorporation, the war bride schools were also sites where Japanese women became the "Other" in the American imagination. Elena Tajima Creef recalls the time when as a young undergraduate student skimming through old *Saturday Evening Post* issues in the basement of the University of California, Riverside library she came upon an

article titled, "They're Bringing Home Japanese Wives" published in 1952.[12] Creef was excited, disturbed, and embarrassed to see her mother on the pages before her. Creef's mother, Chiyohi, stands erect, well-groomed, and seemingly eager to learn Western-style democracy, which was, as Creef points out, "synonymous with an American style of domesticity."[13] Chiyohi is one of three brides standing around a kitchen table participating in a baking lesson led by an American Red Cross worker. The women appear to be baking an apple pie: one woman standing besides Chiyohi is rolling dough with a rolling pin, with red apples and a pie dish resting on top of a table in the foreground. The *Saturday Evening Post* article does not include any of the Japanese women's voices; instead, white American Red Cross workers speak for the women, thereby silencing and "Othering" them at once. The representation of a cheerful Chiyohi in the pages of the *Post* belies the frustration she felt when she finally saw the article herself. "More I read the *Post*, more makes me mad at their writing concerning Japanese brides," she lamented.[14] Chiyohi's words reveal a desire to be recognized as an autonomous Japanese woman; instead, the *Post* article stereotyped Chiyohi and other women like her.

To a great degree, the American Red Cross bride schools were a continuation of the prewar Japanese state's campaign for respectable womanhood. "Good wife, wise mother" (*ryōsai kenbo*) was the phrase used by the rising nationalist state in the prewar years to shape women's role within the family and nation state. The "good wife, wise mother" ideology "defined women's contribution to the good of the nation to be their labor as 'good wives' and

[12] Janet Wentworth Smith and William L. Worden, "They're Bringing Home Japanese Wives," *Saturday Evening Post,* January 19, 1952.
[13] Elena Tajima Creef. "Discovering My Mother as the Other in *The Saturday Evening* Post." *Qualitative Inquiry* 6, no. 4 (December 2000): 452.
[14] Creef, 449.

'wise mothers' in the private world of the home."[15] Though scholarship examining "good wives, wise mothers" ideology tends to view it as a relic of the past, a closer look from a comparative standpoint reveals that the prewar Japanese vision of women's role within the family—both the family unit and nation—has much in common with the Cold War United States.[16] Women like Chiyohi and the others featured in the *Post* article undoubtedly had encountered notions of "good wife, wise mother." In the case of the ARC bride schools, the "good wife, wise mother" was transformed into the "model minority bride," a hybrid of the immigrant woman of Asian descent and foreign bride who, in the American imagination, represented the possibility of ideal domesticity in the postwar years.[17]

The bride schools promoting the "American way of life" were a nascent part of the anti-communist campaign of the Cold War. The photo of Chiyohi and others in the *Post* predates the infamous "kitchen debate" between vice president Richard Nixon and Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev in 1959. In defending American freedom, Nixon extolled the American way of life as the means of fulfillment. Standing in the model American kitchen at the exhibit in Moscow, he referred to the suburban home equipped with modern appliances and distinct gender roles for men and women as the ideal that would bolster American democracy. In both the "kitchen debate" of 1959 and the *Post* article on the bride schools in 1952, the American kitchen is the site where domesticity is played out, serving an important function in both the making of

[15] Kathleen S. Uno, "The Death of 'Good Wife, Wise Mother'?" in *Postwar Japan as History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 297.
[16] Koyama Shizuko, *Ryōsai Kenbo: The Educational Ideal of 'Good Wife, Wise Mother' in Modern Japan* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), 7.
[17] Masako Nakamura, "Families Precede Nation and Race?: Marriage, Migration, and Integration of Japanese War Brides After World War II" PhD Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2010, 77. See also discussion of the "model-minority wife" in "Checking 'Other' Twice: Transnational Dual Minorities," in *Red and Yellow, Black and Brown: Decentering Whiteness in Mixed Race Studies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2017), 184.

Japanese war brides as good wives and wise mothers as well as the larger ideological struggles of the Cold War.[18]

Additionally, the bride schools were established and expanded in the United States, bringing together brides from Korea and parts of Europe—Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Poland, and Scotland—as well. In 1953 the American National Red Cross reported that the first bride school in the United States was organized at Fort Dix, New Jersey. According to the Red Cross, the class was a success, having graduated "forty-one foreign born wives" of military personnel. Just as in Japan, the women were taught the American way of life in an effort to prepare them for the work of a modern American housewife.[19] According to organizers, the classes were such a success that they were to be replicated on other military bases across the country. The bride schools, both in Japan and the US, were part of a larger narrative that sought to mold the image of Japanese women as ideal wives and mothers into acceptable racial Others. Caroline Chung Simpson has argued that popular American discourse on Japanese war brides mitigated postwar white anxiety about racial desegregation and Japanese internment during the war. Americans could cast their gaze towards the Japanese women and laud their successful assimilation into the American family while ignoring the momentous events occurring across the country that proved Americans had a long way to go towards full racial inclusion.[20] Taken together, the bride schools along with US State department propaganda and America's Cold War obsession with the East created a milieu in which Japanese war brides became the symbol of

[18] May, 19.
[19] The American Red Cross. "Introduction to the American Way of Life." A Course for Brides, Foreign Born Wives of American Servicemen. 688.4, National Archives Record and Administration, College Park, Maryland.
[20] Caroline Chung Simpson, *An Absent Presence: Japanese Americans in Postwar American Culture, 1945-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of Carolina Press, 2011), 183.

ideal postwar domesticity. Thus Japanese immigrant woman's symbolic value served an important ideological function in the Cold War state.

Japanese War Brides in Literature and Film

As described in chapter three, after World War II, Americans became interested in East Asia in unprecedented ways.[21] This interest flourished toward obsession in the Cold War era. Much of it stemmed from the US expansion into Asia as part of the anticommunism efforts of the Truman administration. As Christina Klein explains, "[The] Cold War was as much of a domestic endeavor as a foreign one."[22] However, before Americans could fully embrace US foreign policy in Asia, they had to first be persuaded to do so at home. Accordingly, American middlebrow intellectuals propagandized the threat of a communist Asia to gain support for US containment policies. Thus Japanese war brides married to American GIs were part of a larger narrative that sought to secure widespread support of the Cold War alliance between Japan and the US because their relationship was "the most intimate manifestation of 'international relations.'"[23] Acting strategically "Cold War Intellectuals"—writers, journalists, filmmakers, teachers, and government officials—championed the United States as a beacon of racial tolerance and big brother to the downtrodden and defeated Japanese Empire. From their perspective, the US conquered Japan in a bout between good and evil and marched in, occupied, and saved the Japanese from self-ruin. As the United States was heading into a conflict with the communist superpowers in North Korea and the Soviet Union, a timely alliance between the US

[21] Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 5.
[22] Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 28.
[23] John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York, NY: W.W.Norton & Co./The New Press, 1999), 133.

and Japan was therefore forged, and Japanese war brides in the US came to represent the possibilities of a Japan-US union.

Yet Americans' shift in attitude towards the Japanese came at a high cost. Naoko Shibusawa argues that postwar public discourse about the Japanese and Japanese Americans "assumed two 'natural' or universally recognized hierarchical relationships—man over woman and adult over child."[24] This meant that the new image of the Japanese in American eyes was one that was both feminized and infantilized, perpetuating a harmful image that rendered the Japanese subordinate and inferior. Japanese women were at the center of much of this ideological construction, particularly the interracial relationships between Japanese women and American men that emerged from the ashes of the war.

In 1953 the novel *Sayonara* was published to wide acclaim. In the novel, writer and Pulitzer Prize winner James Michener tells the love story of Major Lloyd "Ace" Gruver—an American air force pilot—and Hana-Ogi—a Japanese woman—who fall in love in Japan during the Korean conflict.[25] Four years later in 1957, the book was adapted into a film by the same name. Like the novel, the film opened to great acclaim. Director Joshua Logan cast heartthrob Marlon Brando, a "Hollywood icon of American masculinity," and Miiko Taka—a Japanese American Nisei—as the lovesick Major "Ace" Gruver and Hana-Ogi.[26]

Sayonara is a tale of both tragedy and triumph. Set in 1951 Japan, *Sayonara* tells the story of Major Gruver's transformation through his love affair with a Japanese woman. Initially Gruver is opposed to the interracial mingling of American servicemen and Japanese women.

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[24] Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimaging the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 4.
[25] Shibusawa offers a more detailed analysis of *Sayonara* and other films in the genre. See *America's Geisha Ally: Reimaging the Japanese Enemy*, chapter seven, "Hollywood's Japan."
[26] Maria Isabel Seguro, "Redeeming American Democracy in Sayonara," *Coolabah*, No.5, 2011, *Observatori: Centre d'Estudis Australians, Austrialan Studies centre, Universitat de Barcelona*, 216.

When his friend and comrade Sergeant Kelly announces that he is in love with Katsumi, a Japanese woman, Gruver tries to dissuade him. Despite his initial opposition Gruver agrees to act as a witness to Kelly and Katsumi's marriage ceremony. The two wed under fierce opposition from Kelly's commanding officer, who begrudgingly officiates the marriage.

Major Gruver's opposition begins to wane, however, when he encounters the beautiful Hana-Ogi. Major Gruver is smitten and asks Katsumi (Sergeant Kelly's Japanese wife) to introduce him to Hana-Ogi, but Hana-Ogi refuses to meet him because both her father and brother were killed by the Americans during the war. Eventually, Major Gruver and Hana-Ogi meet and sparks fly. Gruver, who was once uneasy about the cultural differences between the Japanese and Americans, begins to learn Japanese and expresses a new interest in Japanese culture. (At one point in the film, he even wears a kimono.) The two begin a clandestine affair but are eventually found out. Major Gruver's commanding officer threatens to send him back to the States. A series of dramatic events take place soon after, and it seems as though Major Gruver and Hana-Ogi's relationship will not survive.

Meanwhile, Sargent Kelly receives orders to return to the States, but he is restricted from bringing a now-expecting Katsumi to America because of US immigration law. Kelly knows that this is an act of sabotage intended to tear him away from Katsumi. He appeals to his commanding officer but is denied. The forlorn lovers—Sargent Kelly and Katsumi—decide to take their own lives rather than be torn apart.

The tragic ending of Kelly and Katsumi's life serves as a foil to that of Major Gruver and Hana-Ogi. Though both couples face resistance from the United States military, the former is unable to escape the opposition. Soon after Kelly and Katsumi's suicide, special legislation is passed allowing the Japanese wives of American servicemen to immigrate to the United States.

Upon hearing this, Gruver rushes to Hana-Ogi and asks for her hand in marriage. The film ends when the two announce their engagement to the military press. A reporter then tells Gruver that the military and the Japanese are not going to like it and asks: "Have you got anything to say to them, sir?" Gruver replies, "Tell them we said, sayonara."

By using the story of interracial intimacy between a Japanese woman and American serviceman, films like *Sayonara* reflect American anxiety about race relations and the future of American democracy at home and abroad.[27] In the US, the civil rights movement was calling into question the hypocrisy of racial inequality in a democratic society. The film *Sayonara* was released just three years after *Brown v. Board of Education* abolished racial segregation in the South, yet what racial integration would look like remained to be seen. Gina Marchetti explains that Hollywood "sensationalized domestic racial tensions by transposing them onto the less threatening sphere of white-Asian rather than white-African American relations, and [in doing so] showed itself to be a champion of American 'freedom.'"[28]

As Simpson has shown, the legacy of Japanese wartime internment still loomed large in many American minds. Americans could cast their gaze towards Japanese women and laud their successful assimilation into the American family while ignoring the momentous events occurring across the country that proved Americans had a long way to go towards full racial inclusion.[29] Furthermore, *Sayonara* reflected anxiety about gender roles as postwar America struggled to revert to prewar standards of gender relations. Heterosexual patriarchy loomed over the image of the Japanese war bride in film and the like, positioning the women in traditional gender roles.

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[27] Maria Isabel Seguro, 215.
[28] Gina Marchetti, *Romance and the Yellow Peril: Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 158.
[29] Caroline Chung Simpson, *An Absent Presence: Japanese Americans in Postwar American Culture, 1945-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of Carolina Press, 2011), 183.

In the same year that *Sayonora* was released, another film depicting interracial Japanese and American intimacy hit theaters. *Japanese War Bride*, directed by King Vidor, opened with much "punch and pathos," according to one contemporary reviewer.[30] The film takes place almost entirely in the United States, when US Army Lieutenant Jim Sterling (played by Don Taylor) and his Japanese war bride, Tae Shumizu (played by Shirley Yamaguchi), arrive in Jim's hometown of Salinas, California. Upon arriving in the US, the couple are met with ambiguity: some are friendly and helpful, while others remain hostile.

Throughout the film, Jim's sister-in-law, Fran, who has romantic feelings for him, causes trouble for Tae. Fran's hostility comes to a climax when she writes an anonymous letter accusing Tae of having an affair with the Nisei neighbor, Shiro Hasagawa. Upon hearing the news, Jim lashes out. Devastated by the false rumors, Tae runs off with their newborn baby to the Hasagawas. Soon after, Fran's actions are revealed and Jim takes off to find Tae. He finds her at the Hasagawas's cousin's home in the coastal town of Monterrey. When Jim finds Tae sitting along the edge of a cliff, she runs away. For a moment it seems Tae will escape the burdens of domesticity wrapped up in the prescribed gender role she embodies.

Tae runs along a seaside cliff to escape Jim. A dramatic pursuit ensues. He gives chase and begs for her to stop. Finally, Tae comes upon a narrow cliff. She has nowhere else to run. She looks down at the sea and for a brief moment contemplates jumping. However, she does not and instead is swept up into Jim's arms. Though the threat of suicide haunts their relationship, in the end the lovers are reunited in a triumphant turn of events. According to Marchetti, "The myth of the subservient Japanese woman [in Hollywood romance dramas] attempted to shore up a

[30] Mae Tinee, "Japanese War Bride Film has Punch, Pathos." *Chicago Daily Tribune,* February 4, 1952.

threatened masculinity in light of American women's growing independence during World War II."[31] *Japanese War Bride* thus ends with the reaffirmation of Tae's domesticity.

Until 1952 immigration restriction laws barred the Japanese from immigrating to the US because they were deemed racially inferior and unable to assimilate. Yet as Martha Gardner has previously shown, "wives maintained [a] privileged position in [immigration] law" even in times of restriction and exclusion. While immigration restrictions barred the Japanese—and all Asians—from entering the country, exceptions were made for the wives of US military personnel in the postwar period. These were a series of War Bride Acts passed in 1945 and 1947, respectively. The Cold War era reaffirmed domesticity for women that was further intensified for immigrant women—particularly Japanese women—specifically because their entrance into the United States was contingent on their status as wives and mothers.[32] As the Cold War escalated and ideas of American domesticity gained traction in high politics and popular culture, Japanese war brides' potential contribution to the idea of the American family became increasingly important. Indeed, for Japanese immigrant women after World War II, "domesticity was the price of admission."[33]

Filmic representations created within the milieu of what Christina Klein calls "Cold War Orientalism" offer a meditation on the tragedy and triumph of interracial relationships, where abandonment and death are the only alternatives to an otherwise harmonious domestic life. The lesson learned from *Sayonara* and *Japanese War Bride* is that interracial relationships between a Japanese woman and American servicemen must be strong enough to face resistance or succumb

[31] Marchetti, *Romance and the Yellow Peril*, 158.
[32] Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 13.
[33] Gardner, 225.

to death, not unlike the notions behind *Madame Butterfly*.[34] The future of race and gender relations in America was expressed as either a tragedy or triumph with no place for the in-between.

Portrayals of marriages between American servicemen and Japanese women were not only part of fictional Hollywood representations; the US government also had their hand in producing and circulating real life stories of American men and Japanese women. In 1952 the Voice of America (VOA) produced a short film titled, "Japanese Bride in America," telling the story of Miyako, a Japanese woman who marries Walter, an American serviceman, and struggles to adjust to her new life in Cleveland, Ohio. The VOA was established during World War II as the official broadcasting service of the US government. Originally a radio broadcasting network under the division of the Office of War Information, the VOA broadcasted news and propaganda in support of the American war effort. After the war, the VOA used radio and film to present information about the culture and history of the United States to populations abroad. In the emerging Cold War era, "Japanese Bride in America" was created to further solidify the alliance between the US and Japan while at the same time promoting a racially tolerant America.

However, there are no actors in "Japanese Bride in America." Instead, the film used real people to depict their personal story on camera. The film, like the fictional films of Hollywood, portrayed the initial hardships faced by Miyako and Walter. Yet over time, the wrinkles in Miyako's adjustment (such as a language barrier and shyness) are ironed out. As in the fictional accounts, the audience is led to believe that Miyako eventually adjusted to the "American way of life" and lived "happily ever after" with Walter in Ohio.

[34] Marchetti, *Romance and the Yellow Peril,* 78.

Japanese War Brides as Goodwill Ambassadors

Although we are led to believe the interracial couples in *Sayonara*, *Japanese War Bride*, and *Japanese Bride in America* live happily ever after, off screen the lives of Japanese war brides tells a more complicated story. Initially, some Americans were hostile to the young wives. Etsuko Britton's in-laws are a case in point. However, unlike the senior Mr. and Mrs. Britton, many Americans quickly learned to tolerate the presence of the young women, if not wholeheartedly welcome them into American life. The presence of Japanese war brides in American homes and in mainstream publications symbolized the connections being made overseas between the once warring nations.[35]

Japanese war brides' Cold War imagery is notably observed in the iconic portrait of Sachiko Pfeiffer in a 1955 *LIFE* magazine feature.[36] The story of Japanese war bride Sachiko Pfeiffer and her marriage to a white American GI and Chicago native, Frank Pfeiffer, has stood as the emblematic representation of Cold War Orientalism. The feature entitled "Pursuit of Happiness by a GI and a Japanese," written by James Michener, author of *Sayonara* the novel, portrays the Pfeiffers as a unique but happily married couple who had overcome great obstacles in the name of love. Michener details the discrimination Sachiko experienced when first arriving to Chicago in December 1948 where she experienced hostility at the hands of her mother-in-law and neighbors. He then moves to Sachiko's transformation from foreign bride to American housewife while highlighting the decreasing prejudices of her mother-in-law and neighbors, ending with an American tale of tolerance and triumph.

Upon their arrival to Chicago, the Pfeiffers moved in with Frank's mother, Esther, but soon left after she grew hostile towards Sachiko. The couple moved into their very own

[35] Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally*; Klein, *Cold War Orientalism.*
[36] James A. Michener, "Pursuit of Happiness by a GI and a Japanese." *LIFE,* February 21, 1955, 132.

apartment in the city, but once again Sachiko faced discrimination, this time from her neighbors. Finally the couple moved to suburban Chicago where despite the initial hesitation of some white neighbors, they were overwhelmingly welcomed. While Michener highlights the discrimination Sachiko experienced in her first years in the US, more importantly, he focuses on Sachiko's American transformation. It is only when Sachiko is finally able to accept the kindness of her white neighbors that she becomes a full American.

After giving birth to her second child, Sachiko's new neighbors host a surprise baby shower for her replete with enough gifts to clothe her infant son for an entire year. Although her new neighbors in suburban Chicago had bestowed other acts of kindness upon Sachiko, the surprise baby shower was the turning point in her transformation from Japanese bride to American housewife. Michener wrote, "But it was only after the baby was born that the little Japanese girl fully comprehended the love in which her neighbors held her. It was then, one might say, that she became an American." In his portrayal Michener painted an idyllic portrait of the Japanese American union between Sachiko and Frank Pfeiffer, one where the Japanese bride of the American serviceman overcomes adversity and becomes the quintessential postwar housewife.[37] Further, her presence is further validated once she gives birth to a second American born child.

Scene, a Japanese American magazine with a short run in the postwar era, also produced pieces that portrayed a mostly romanticized view of the unions between Japanese war brides and mostly white American servicemen. In fact, many of the *Scene* articles featuring Japanese war brides as model American housewives predated those in the popular press. In May 1950, *Scene* featured a small piece under its *SceneFlash* section titled "Lobbying for Love." The story

[37] Michener, 135; Simpson, *An Absent Presence,* 180.

introduces Mr. Carrol Klotzbach, an American serviceman, and his Japanese war bride wife, Mitsue Shigeno. Later the Klotzbachs would become familiar faces in *Scene's* collection of war bride stories. Husband and wife would write their very own stories documenting their union.[38]

In the meantime, "Lobbying for Love" briefly acquainted readers with the Klotzbachs's tale of love and legislation. While Mr. Klotzbach was stationed in Tokyo, he met the "pretty, Mitsue Shigeno, a 24-year-old, Tokyo-born girl" twenty-five years his junior. The two fell in love and before long were engaged to be married. However, despite the Alien Brides Act of 1947, Mitsue was considered ineligible for citizenship under US immigration law and was thus restricted from immigrating to the US. She belonged to the group of racially undesirables outlined in the 1924 National Origins Act. But that didn't stop the love-stricken and determined Carrol. As a man of valor (or so the article posits), he lobbied Congress on behalf of Mitsue and, on Valentine's Day 1950, was granted permission to bring her to the United States. The couple married in Washington, DC soon afterwards. A photo appears alongside their story, Mitsue wearing a traditional Japanese kimono per her husband's request.

A year later the newlyweds were featured in *Scene* magazine again. This time in a July 1951 article titled, "My Japanese Wife." Mitsue Shigeno, now known as Mrs. Klotzbach, graced the cover with a large and friendly smile. Written by Mr. Klotzbach, the article describes Mitsue's adjustment to life in America. His words are striking. First, he equates his wife to a rare Japanese import procured "not by cash or a want ad" but rather by his very own legislative efforts. He writes:

> Someone has said that an ideal existence—a heaven on Earth—would be living in an American house, having a Chinese cook and being married to a Japanese Girl. Anyone can manage the house given sufficient cash, and a want ad would procure a Chinese cook. The Japanese wife, however, is unobtainable by either means. It has required

[38] "Lobbying For Love," *Scene*, May, 1950. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

> special laws and dispensations even after some lovely Plum Blossom has agreed it would be a nice idea. By a Japanese wife is meant the variety indigenous to the home islands of Japan and available only by import.[39]

As the bride of an American serviceman, Mitsue has become the prized possession of Klotzbach, his wartime souvenir. Klotzbach effectively reduced Mitsue to a cultural commodity—personal property he received for his service in the military. Moreover, the article serves to educate and inform the magazine's readership of the possibilities of a white and "yellow" union. Klotzbach assures readers that Mitsue is faring well in the US. In fact, he notes, she outperforms American-born housewives in many of her domestic duties. Marriage and domesticity legitimized Mitsue's place in the United States. Though the institution of marriage operated as a state apparatus to include Mitsue, providing a pathway to citizenship and all the rights and responsibilities said citizenship entails, her ability to be a good American housewife is what makes her worthy of full inclusion. In Klotzbach's telling, Mitsue is charming and eager, making her both an acceptable and likeable figure. In other words, Mitsue is a model citizen wife.

Furthermore, Carrol and Mitsue's marriage, as depicted in the magazine, serves another purpose. The Chicago-based publication employs the image of the Klotzbachs' wedded bliss and Mitsue's smooth assimilation into mainstream American life to encourage American acceptance of the Japanese during the resettlement years. When Klotzbach reports that many view Mitsue as "Japan's best Goodwill Ambassador," he pointedly articulated the role she—and by extension, other Japanese war brides featured in the magazine—had come to occupy in the imaginations of white and Japanese Americans alike. *Scene* magazine is in concert with the mainstream popular press in presenting the Japanese war bride as a symbol of US racial tolerance. But for the

[39] Carrol Klotzbach, "My Japanese Wife," *Scene,* July 1951, 22. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Japanese American readership of *Scene* who were incarcerated during the war, more was at stake in the representations of Japanese war brides. As Simpson argues, if "popular representation of Japanese war brides in relations with exclusively white men became screens for the imaging of a successful racial integration in postwar life," then the images of the Japanese war brides on the pages of *Scene* became screens for the imaging of a successful Japanese integration into mainstream American life.[40]

A month after "My Japanese Wife" appeared on the pages of *Scene*, a Mrs. James Durwin of Chicago wrote in to express her gratitude towards the magazine for printing the "heartwarming" story. She praises the magazine for telling a story that does not revel in the "shortcomings" of the American people. She writes, "I have just returned from a trip abroad in areas where our shortcomings, as a people who profess democratic beliefs, are loudly dinned into the ears of millions. I wish that the story of the Klotzbachs … could be told to the people of Southwest Asia—and everywhere for that matter." The Klotzbachs, as portrayed in "My Japanese Wife," had reached the hearts of *Scene* readers by positively portraying what could be of interracial—American and Japanese—unions.[41]

While media representations of Japanese war brides stood for the hopeful possibilities of US race relations both at home and abroad, their presence in postwar America served to bridge the gap between the post-incarcerated Issei and Nisei. Although the women were in a vulnerable position with very little autonomy away from the home—as we saw with Etsuko Britton—their imaginative presence shined a positive light on their unions to American men and, in doing so, shined a positive light on Americans of Japanese ancestry in the postwar era.

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[40] Caroline Chung Simpson, ""Out of an Obscure Place": Japanese War Brides and Cultural Pluralism in the 1950s," *Differences: A Journal of feminist Cultural Studies* 10, no. 3 (1998): 70.

[41] Mrs. James Durwin, "Story Was Heartwarming," under "Letters to Editor," *Scene,* August 1951, 22. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Fig. 9. "My Japanese Wife," *Scene,* July 1951.

The Cosmo Club

Once in the United States, Japanese war brides organized themselves into clubs in an attempt to negotiate their multilayered identities: Japanese woman/American wife and mother, recent enemy/Cold War ally. In many ways the war bride clubs were an expression of what Vicki Ruiz calls "women's border journeys," the idea that immigrant women and their children travel along many borders "not solely in terms of travel but of internal migration—creating, accommodating, resisting, and transforming, the physical and psychological environs of their

'new' lives in the United States."[42] Like the many immigrant women before them, Japanese war brides traversed many borders, both tangible and abstract.

Further, the clubs were reminiscent of the Nisei women's clubs organized in places along the West. Nisei organizations—particularly those organized and led by urban Nisei women—"provided a key venue in which young urban women could claim modern femininity, an American identity, and public space."[43] The Nisei women's club "served as a bulwark against racial discrimination, offering a bridge between the immigrant community's expectations of young women and the lure of popular culture." The same is true for the war bride clubs of the postwar era. Except in the late forties and early fifties, the clubs were a space for Japanese war brides to carve out a hybrid American identity based on their role as American wives and mothers and their quintessential Japaneseness—which was flaunted everywhere in the early Cold War era. Like Valerie Matsumoto's Nisei (and other immigrant women for that matter) In City Girls*: The Nisei Social World in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* , Japanese immigrant women organized as a means to "adjust" to American life by creating a space to assert their Japanese American womanhood.

The Cosmo Club was founded in the summer of 1952 under the auspices of the Chicago Resettlers Committee. The purpose of the club was to educate Japanese women on all things American and provide a safe space for the women to socialize in their native tongue with fellow countrymen and women. The club held socials, family outings, and fundraising projects to assist the less fortunate brides who experienced nothing but hardship once arriving in the US. Sachiko Pfeiffer, from the 1955 *LIFE* article, sat as one of the first co-chairwomen of the club. Believed

[42] Vicki Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America* (Oxford University Press, 2008), xiii.
[43] Valerie J. Matsumoto, *City Girls: The Nisei Social World in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2.

to be one of the firsts of its kind, the club inspired the founding of many other Japanese war bride clubs around the country, most notably the Fujiyama Society of New York City. There was also the Cherry Blossom Society in Long Beach, California,[44] a Japanese War Bride club in Albuquerque, New Mexico,[45] and the Fuji Club in Cleveland, Ohio with twelve members in 1957.[46] Then there was the "ambitious" plan of Hisako Nagashima Stevens to organize the "Japanese war brides club of America" from her Mansfield, Ohio home.[47]

At its inception, the Cosmo Club had twenty members. Two years later, club officials boasted about having forty members, more than any other club of its kind.[48] Under the auspices of the Resettlers Committee, the club functioned as a site for cultural construction. It was a place where the war brides were able to reconstruct a new identity for themselves based on negotiations between their Japanese heritage and their new American life. In 1952 the women participated in the annual Christmas festival sponsored by the Museum of Science and Industry. The war brides were responsible for decorating the festival's "Japanese Christmas Tree."[49] Here the women were undoubtedly cast as representatives of the Japanese community. Indeed the festival presented an opportunity for the women to publicly display their Japanese *otherness* while embracing Christian American cultural practices. Like marginalized women before them, Japanese war brides became nonpolitical diplomats to the larger white community of Chicago.[50]

Along with their benefactors at the Resettlers Committee, the clubwomen saw it fit to change the club's name as they grew in members and prestige. A year after its founding, the club

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[44] "L. B. Japanese War Brides Form Club," *Independent Press Telegram,* April 15, 1956.
[45] "Japanese War Brides Give Shower for Baby," *Albuquerque Tribune,* February 21, 1956.
[46] "Japan Brides Club Studies U.S. Ways," *Pacific Stars and Stripes,* August 28, 1957.
[47] "Japanese War Bride Plans Club," *Mansfield News Journal,* September 7, 1952.
[48] "Chicago War Brides," *Scene*, July 1953. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.
[49] Chicago Resettlers Committee, Board Meeting Report, October 4, 1952. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.
[50] Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 148.

put out an open call to the community eliciting suggestions for a new name. Executive Director of the Committee Kenji Nakane stated that the clubwomen were searching for a new name that was more appropriate—assuming "War Bride Club" was not—than the current one that would "emphasize the club's cosmopolitan feel." The club offered four prizes to those who could come up with the best names, and by the end of 1953, the Japanese War Brides Club of Chicago had become The Cosmo Club.[51]

The Cosmo Club, as Nakane and others put it, was a more attractive name that showed the women to be true "cosmopolites." After all, they were the lucky ones, for "the men they married in Japan called Chicago home."[52] Indeed, the women of the club were by and large the lucky ones. Unlike Etsuko Britton and other brides who experienced tremendous hardship when they arrived in the United States, the "cosmopolites" were probably the most well-adjusted. These women found support and fellowship within the club, which also gave them a sense of belonging and camaraderie. They were closely tied to the Resettlers Committee, which meant that they were surrounded by people of Japanese ancestry with whom they shared a common racial and cultural heritage. Moreover, the "cosmopolites" found themselves in a place of influence as their marriages to white men—and in some cases Nisei servicemen—allowed them a degree of respect and admiration as the wives of the Greatest Generation.

Soon after adopting the title of Cosmo Club and transforming themselves from war brides (a name that frequently had negative connotations) to the more sophisticated "cosmopolite," the women began an earnest campaign to aid their downtrodden sisters. The clubwomen worked tirelessly to make small handcrafts—presumably Japanese handcrafts—to be sold at a local

[51] Gabe Faviona, "Club Helps Japanese War Brides Adjust," *Chicago Sun Times*, December 22, 1957; "War Brides' Club Seeks New Name," *Chicago Shimpo*, August 15, 1953.
[52] "Chicago War Brides," *Scene*, July, 1953, 39. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.

Chicago Bazaar. Most of the proceeds were to help other war brides who fared less well. In addition, they held two talent shows to raise money for their less fortunate countrywomen. The shows were a success. The "bustling clubwomen" also built up a well-used library, hosted dances, poetry sessions, and potlucks where "the cold buffet was Japanese. The hot food was Chinese. The whiskey was American and Scotch."[53] All in all Chicago war brides in the Cosmo Club seemed to be adjusting well to their new environment. Serving as local cultural ambassadors, committee members often boasted of the hard work and success of the club, especially their work in aiding war brides who found themselves in dire straits.

However, in their work as ambassadors, Cosmo Club members made little issue of their racial status. They often displayed their *Japaneseness* for the benefit of others but made little to no reference of the discrimination many endured. Indeed, *Scene* ran an article entitled "Are War Brides Happy?" in 1954 in an effort to address widespread concern that the brides were experiencing hard times in the US. One bride told *Scene* that "[she] was most happy and America [had] presented no "racial problems" to [her]."[54] The article answered the question with a loud and firm, yes. While women like Etsuko suffered, their "lucky" sisters downplayed the racial hostilities of the day.[55]

In order to fulfill their role as "Good Will Ambassadors," war brides had to put on a face that showed others they were doing just fine in the US, lest they reveal the ambivalent and delicate circumstances of the Japanese in postwar America. In "Are War Brides Happy?" the

[53] Gabe Faviona, "Club Helps Japanese War Brides Adjust," *Chicago Sun Times*, December, 22, 1957.
[54] "Are War Brides Happy?" *Scene*, November 1954, 22. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.
[55] Tragic stories about Japanese war brides can be viewed in newspapers across the country. See Lynette Shifman, "Deserted War Bride Plight," *Los Angeles Times*, July 18, 1971, k2; "Abandons Japanese War Bride," Daily Defender, October 6, 1958, A2; "War Bride Tries to Kill Children, Self," *The Washington Post*, May, 19, 1957, A14.

Scene writer explicitly de-emphasized this potential problem, writing "the matter of 'race' is in many instances exaggerated. 'Language' has place, but, like 'race,' it has been elevated to a rank that outstrips the true facts."[56] The true facts, according to the article, were that Japanese-American unions were far from unique. In fact, they were like any other young marriage in America and faced a similar set of challenges. Race and language were exaggerations that obscured the very ordinariness of the war bride marriages. By downplaying the racial otherness of Japanese war brides and the unique quality of their marriage, war brides and *Scene* writers alike tried to cast off the foreign tinge associated with the Japanese women and instead highlight the ways that they were just like other Americans.

In addition, some Japanese women looked to the war bride clubs as an opportunity to "sell democracy" to both Americans and the Japanese. Hisako Nagashima Stevens, the bride who planned to organize the "Japanese war brides club of America," told reporters in 1952 that she wanted to organize a national club of Japanese war brides to "sell democracy to the people of Japan."[57] Stevens believed that as the wife of an American man she had a lot to teach her brothers and sisters in Japan. Indeed selling democracy became a task for Kyoko Batchelor, the wife of Corporal Claude Batchelor. After being captured by Korean forces and held in a prisoner of war camp in 1952, Claude Batchelor defected and joined the Communist struggle. After the Korean War ended, Batchelor refused to return to the United States. According to Steven L. Davis, Batchelor sympathized with the North Koreans who pointed out the hypocrisy of the United States—a nation of abundance who "neglected its poor people…especially its Negro

[56] "Are War Brides Happy?" *Scene*, November 1954, 22. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, IL.
[57] "Japanese War Bride Seeks to Form Clubs To Aide East, West," *Corpus Christi Caller Times*, August 3, 1952.

people."[58] Batchelor's young Japanese wife, Kyoko, wrote him regularly pleading for his return. After some time, Batchelor was convinced and sought repatriation. Upon his return to Tokyo, Batchelor was reunited with Kyoko, expressing regret for having disgraced his country. He vowed to fight communism for the rest of his life.[59] However, after a trial Batchelor was given a sentence of twenty years hard labor but eventually served only one-and-a-half years.[60]

Lost in much of the contemporary media coverage and literature is the role Kyoko played in Batchelor's return. Though Kyoko resided in Tokyo during Batchelor's defection and was therefore not a member of a war bride club, as a Japanese bride she played a significant role in Claude's return to democratic ideals. In 1954 Batchelor explained to the press that it was Kyoko's undying love that finally persuaded him to come back—so much so that Batchelor asked Kyoko to write his comrades and fellow defectors still in North Korea in an effort to persuade them as well.[61] Yet most of the images from the period show Claude with his mother. Batchelor's story captivated the nation during the early years of the Cold War as a modern turncoat-turned-patriot, yet it was Kyoko, Batchelor's Japanese wife, who sold American-style democracy to Claude, ultimately persuading him to leave the North Korean camp and return home.[62]

In post-World War II United States, popular discourse in film and the media as well as US state propaganda created a world wherein Japanese women as brides to American servicemen was not only tolerated but championed as a symbol of US-Japan relations in the geopolitical climate of the Cold War. In addition, these interracial unions also embodied what racial tolerance

[58] Steven L. Davis, *Texas Literary Outlaws: Six Writers in the Sixties, and Beyond* (Fort Worth, TX: TCU Press, 2004), 29.
[59] "Repatriated Texan Speaks," *Sweetwater Reporter* (Sweetwater, Tex.) January 5, 1954.
[60] Paul M. Edwards, *The Korean War: A Historical Dictionary* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 77.
[61] "Reconverted GI Cries at Reunion with Wife." *Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File),* January 4, 1954.
[62] "Texas G.I. Quits Red Camp," *Daily Boston Globe,* 1954.

in the United States in the emerging civil rights movement could look like. As Sandra Zeiger explains, portraits of interracial couples like the Pfeifers and Klotzbachs as well as the fictional unions seen in film reveal more about the creators than the subjects, and "[w]hether they liked it or not, the personal became the political for interracial couples in 1950s America."[63] But before Japanese women could become symbols of Cold War domesticity, they first had to be groomed into ideal American housewives. This process started before they arrived in the US. Once in the US, Japanese war brides organized themselves in an effort to negotiate their new status as American wives and mothers. But the representational value assigned to Japanese women only extended to those women who married white servicemen. Likewise, the cherry blossom clubs that emerged in the fifties often restricted membership to women who had married white men. The Japanese women who married African American servicemen were less likely to be the model minority brides so valued during the Cold War era.

[63] Sandra Zeiger, *Entangling Alliances,* 197-202.

Fig. 10. The Cosmo Club, Chicago ca. 1950. From left to right: Kenji Nakane, Naoko Taketani, Emiko Takada, Kiyoko Castellanoz, Fusako Johnson, Sayo Kirkland, Tsuyuko Rosengren, Corky Kawasaki, Toshiko Selby. Japanese American Service Committee Collection, Record Group 10.

"The Loneliest Brides in America"

In January 1953, *Ebony* magazine featured an article titled, "the Loneliest Brides in America" explaining how the Japanese women who married black men had not been fully accepted into African American communities. It went on to describe how white Americans and Japanese Americans shunned the women as well. Furthermore, the women interviewed explained how they found it difficult to maintain friendships with other Japanese war brides who married white American Soldiers.

Particularly, Japanese women married to black servicemen were the subject of criticism from African American women. A year earlier *Ebony* reported that "some U.S. Negro women accuse the Japanese brides of 'spoiling our men' and are hostile to them."[64] Ms. Ethel Jones from Vallejo, California, wrote in response to an earlier *Ebony* editorial entitled, "The Truth about Japanese War Brides" that "there are some of us that are more kind and considerate than those Japanese girls … I'm sure that there are a lot of American girls that could make good wives to servicemen, but you'll only know by giving them a chance. I'd appreciate it if once in a while you'd write a story on 'The Truth About American War Brides.'"[65] While Teruko Shimzu, wife of James Miller, was well received by her in-laws, she found "few colored women as friends."[66] Indeed, to some African American women, the presence of Japanese war brides in their community posed a romantic threat. Much of black women's animosity was fueled by the black press who bolstered Japanese women as model wives, while at the same time undermining black womanhood.

Despite initial hostility expressed by some black women, many indeed befriended the Japanese brides. For instance, Anna Jane Atkins wrote to the editor of *Ebony* after the January 1953 publication of "The Loneliest Brides in America" asking; "In what way could I be of aid to these girls who have left their homes to come here, expecting happiness, and finding snobbery?" Jenkins ended her short query with an offer to corresponded with the women. Jenkins was not alone; several other readers—both men and women—wrote to express their sympathy and

[64] "The Loneliest Brides in America," *Ebony*, December, 1953.
[65] "The Truth About Japanese War Brides," *Ebony*, January, 1952.
[66] "The Loneliest Brides," 18.

willingness to extend friendship with the Japanese women.[67] As Lily Anne Y. Wely Tamai has shown, black women were central Japanese women's adjustment to life in postwar America.[68]

Eiko Washayama befriended Kathereen Palmer, a black neighbor. The women began their friendship during a "back-fence conversation" and eventually began visiting each other at their homes. Both women are pictured in the *Ebony* article, standing in what appears to be Eiko's kitchen. The description reads, "Friendly neighbor Kathereen Palmer shows Eiko Washayam Wigglesworth how to use a gas stove … and how to prepare her husband's meals."[69] Despite the hostility of some black women, Japanese war brides were ultimately accepted by their husband's family, and some like Eiko found friendship with black neighbors. Many of the couples did not initially find a community of welcoming arms once in the US and instead created communities of their own making what *Ebony* called "tiny settlements of Negro-Japanese couples scattered across the US."[70] These "settlements" were typically located in black urban areas or within close proximity to a military base. Teruko and James Miller found their refuge from the suspicious and hostile world in a neighborhood made up of similar couples located at "the center of Indianapolis' Negro area."[71] Takiko met her husband during the Allied Occupation when he was serving in the United States Army. They settled in her husband's hometown of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and had one daughter. When Takiko passed away in 2005, she was laid to rest in Pittsburgh.[72] While in 1953 Japanese war brides had yet to be "freely accepted into Negro

[67] "Letters to Editors," *Ebony*, March, 1953; "Letters to Editors," *Ebony*, April 1953.
[68] Lily Anne Y. Welty Tamai, "Checking 'Other' Twice: Transnational Dual Minorities," in *Red and Yellow, Black and Brown: Decentering Whiteness in Mixed Race Studies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2017), 184.
[69] "The Loneliest Brides" 23.
[70] Ibid, 17.
[71] Ibid, 18.
[72] Takiko's grandson, Jerome White Jr., better known to his fans as Jero, is a famous Black Japanese enka singer (enka is Japanese music born in the aftermath of World War II and has been likened to American country music in its content and blues in its sound) who speaks highly of his grandmother and her influence in his life. Born and

communities" and had "received half-hearted welcomes from in-laws," their settlement patterns reveal an underlying tie to black communities. When Japanese women married American men, they married into the community in which he belonged. For those who married black servicemen, as mothers of black children and wives of black men, Japanese war brides carved out a place for themselves within the larger black community.

Japanese Women Contest The Black/White Binary

When Setsuko arrived in Dallas, Texas, in 1952 with her husband Eddie, she encountered an unfamiliar world. Eddie's family welcomed her into their home and community. Initially she felt safe, welcomed, and generally at ease, until a series of events forced her to consider her status within the United States' racial hierarchy. One day Setsuko and her sister-in-law went downtown to watch a film at the local black movie theater. To her dismay the theater refused to sell Setsuko a ticket. Classifying her as white, the theater did not sell her a ticket in fear of reprisals for breaking segregation laws. Setsuko was confused because she had never before considered herself white. On another occasion, while shopping and running errands alone, Setsuko wandered into a theater designated for Mexicans and was pleasantly surprised at being admitted. Later, she also found refuge in the local Mexican bingo parlor. However, when Setsuko's mother-in-law found out that she had been visiting establishments designated for Mexicans she scolded her. If Setsuko was to remain a member of the family and community, she had to abide by the strict rules of racial conduct. This meant she was not to mingle with those

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raised in his grandfather's hometown, White credits his grandmother Takiko for his successful career as an enka singer because it was she who first introduced him to enka, the music of her generation, when he was just a child, See: Blaine Hardin, "A Far Cry From Home," *The Washington Post*, May 28, 2008; Michael E Ruane, "Festival Feature: A Japanese Idol From Pittsburgh," *The Washington Post,* March 28, 2009; Chris Yeager, "Jero: Japan's First African–American Enka Singer," *Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia, Konnichiwa Philadelphia*, July 2, 2008.

outside the black community. For Setsuko this was a hard lesson to learn, but a crucial one in Jim Crow Texas.

During her stay in Dallas, Setsuko experienced the realities of the segregated South. After hearing about several acts of violence committed by whites against both blacks and Mexicans, Setsuko became alarmed and wondered, "What kind of cowboy do that?"[73] The Western films imported into Japan had largely influenced her perception of white Americans. She had visions of heroic cowboys like John Wayne fighting against evil and was disappointed to find that characters like him were merely fictional. The racial violence that plagued the country and, in particular Dallas, Texas, where she and Eddie had temporarily settled, troubled her. Up until then she had never been homesick, but soon she wished to return to Japan.[74]

Japanese war brides who married black GIs from Southern states encountered a complex and hostile racial environment. Since most Southerners saw racial differences primarily through a black and white paradigm, they oftentimes tried to fit the Japanese women into this model.[75] Setsuko's experience in Dallas reveals how the Japanese women who married African American servicemen tried to negotiate their racialized existence. She had never before considered herself white and found that by being racially classified as such limited her mobility in the black community. This troubled Setsuko because the black community was where she and Eddie called home. Moreover, she had never interacted with Mexican people and was surprised to find, in Jim Crow Texas, that her race had not deterred them from allowing her to patronize their establishments as had the black theater. The reaction of Setsuko's mother-in-law shows how

[73] Setsuko Williams (Pseudonym used), interviewed by author, Marin City, CA, July 7, 2010.
[74] When Setsuko talked about the racial violence in Dallas, she specifically recalled a black church bombing by hostile whites. However, I was unable to locate any sound evidence that a church bombing had occurred in Dallas in the few years Setsuko was living there.
[75] Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally*, 50.

rigid racial boundaries were not to be taken lightly, especially in the segregated South. By patronizing Mexican establishments, Setsuko unknowingly stepped outside those boundaries.

In addition, some women found it difficult to cultivate friendships with other Japanese Americans. Japanese war brides who married white American GIs also distanced themselves from the war brides who married men of color. This was in large part a decision made on behalf of their white husbands who harbored prejudices against black Americans. After arriving in the United States, Sumi and Willie Brown and their infant son Michael settled into their new home in the Presidio of San Francisco where Willie had been stationed. Willie remembered the pain Sumi felt when the Japanese community in San Francisco Japantown shunned her. Willie explained how happy Sumi was when she learned of Japantown, a place where she could buy Japanese groceries and household items. However after her first visit to the community, Sumi returned home upset. Willie explained:

> She said that everywhere she went in Japanesetown [as it was called then] that she was made to feel bad, she was greeted with a scowl and treated with scorn. She could not figure out what caused her own country folk to treat her like a hated enemy…. They regard folks straight from Japan as if they were the enemy, because most Americans thought of them that way and they were seen as a threat, even to the Japanese folks who were born here. That's because they wanted so much to be looked at as loyal citizens, and they distanced themselves from those folks who couldn't speak English well or acted "too Japanesey."[76]

Sumi's status as a newly arrived immigrant woman made her the subject of criticism in the Japanese American community of Japantown, San Francisco. When the first Japanese war brides began arriving in the United States in 1947, Japanese Americans were still coming to grips with wartime incarceration. Before Japanese Americans' release from incarceration camps, they were required to take a loyalty questionnaire administered by the War Relocation Authority (WRA). The questionnaires purportedly tested and measured the loyalty of the Japanese and thus

[76] Anthony Brown, "Sumi's Story," from the Brown family personal collection, unpublished, in author's possession.

determined if the individual in question deserved to be admitted back into American society. The WRA was primarily concerned with the cultural practices of the Japanese—engaging in Japanese culture and custom was un-American and thus a disloyal act, according to the WRA. Naturally many of the incarcerated Japanese made a strident effort to appear as loyal Americans. The "forced cultural assimilation" wrought by the WRA and their loyalty questionnaires prompted many Japanese Americans to shun, or at least downplay, their Japanese heritage.[77] In turn, many sought to distance themselves from the newly arrived war brides. According to Velina Hasu Houston, "Japanese war brides have suffered a great deal of discrimination from Japanese Americans."[78]

In 1962 the International Institute of San Francisco, a social service agency committed to assisting immigrant groups in the United States, prepared a report on Japanese war brides and their families "in order to discover their needs and relate community services to the needs expressed." The report noted some of the difficulties the women encountered in adjusting to life in America. It specifically noted the antagonisms between the established Japanese American community and the war brides. After interviewing one hundred Japanese war brides in the San Francisco area, the report explained that many of the interviewees had "experienced rejection in one form or another by the Issei and Nisei of the Japanese community."[79] As they struggled to rebuild their lives after the devastation of incarceration, Japanese Americans wished to be seen as Americans first and foremost and made a significant effort to "assimilate" into American society. In doing so, they consciously eschewed the newly arrived Japanese war brides.

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[77] Ngai, *Impossible Subjects,* 175.
[78] Susan Skolnick, "'War Brides' Relate their Shared Trauma," *Asian Week* 6, no. 32, (April 5, 1988):18.
[79] Chizuko Tsutsumi, in the "File for those who work with the Japanese wives of American citizens and their families," A Rosenberg Foundation Project of the International Institute of San Francisco, 1962. Part of a personal collection owned by an affiliate of the Institute, Ms. Kazuko Tsuchiya. For this study the Institute interviewed one hundred Japanese war brides in the San Francisco Bay area.

Furthermore, the Japanese American community was further averse to associating with Japanese war brides who married African American men. After Sumi Brown's incident in Japantown, Mac, a family friend and also an African American man married to a Japanese woman asked Willie if Sumi had taken along their young son on her visit to Japantown. Mac laughed when Willie answered yes. Mac explained the racial prejudices that many Japanese Americans harbored towards black Americans.[80] In 1957, the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit reported in a conference paper ("Baby-San Becoming Mrs. American") that the "Issei and Nisei, scarcely recovered from their injuries and insults of the war years in relocation camps, express reluctance, for a number of reasons, to associate with Japanese wives, particularly if they have Negro husbands."[81] As newly arrived immigrant women married to African American men, Japanese war brides were a double insult to the Japanese American community. They faced several layers of discrimination stemming not only from their own racial status in the United States, but also from that of their husbands.

In their exhaustive 1962 study, the International Institute of San Francisco reported:

> A common complaint among newly arrived women is that the early-arrived women are not helpful at all. Newcomers often come to the United States with the expectation that they can easily find friendship and support among the early arrivals. They are very disappointed to find that the "old-timers" among the Japanese wives of Americans in many cases no longer think of themselves as Japanese but Americans and act

[80] Anthony Brown, "Sumi's Story," From the Brown family personal collection, unpublished. In Sumi's story, Mac goes on to explain to Willie Brown about the racial hostilities particular to Japantown. Brown writes, "Mac said that after Japanesetown was evacuated [referring to Japanese Internment], it was a ghost town. The Government tried to sell the property but no white folks wanted to move in. So they rented it out to all the colored folks who were recruited out of the ports and docks in Gulf States like Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, to come work in the shipyards here for the war. So when the Japanese folks got out of the camps and came back to Japanesetown, many were greeted at the door of their old homes by colored faces."

[81] Helen M. Day, "Baby-San Becoming Mrs. American," International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit Collection Records, 1919-1981, Wayne State University, Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, Box 19-15, "Japanese War Brides, 1955-1957."

> accordingly. This is especially true among those who have acquired American citizenship.[82]

Referring to the first Japanese war brides to arrive in the United States as "old-timers," the study found that after entering the country, these women believed themselves to be fully incorporated into American society. Further, after receiving citizenship status, the Japanese war brides, or "old timers" who had arrived earlier, drew a line between themselves and the newly arrived brides. This friction between the "old" and "new" immigrant women reveals some of the internal conflicts that plagued the small, war bride communities across the country.

Moreover, Japanese war bride clubs that sprang up around the United States during the first years of the arrival of Japanese war brides (such as the Cosmo Club) excluded war brides who married African American GIs. Despite the good intentions of such clubs, many Japanese war brides who married black men found that they were not welcome into the clubs. Between 1955 and 1956, the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit undertook an extensive study on Japanese war brides in the Detroit area, interviewing ninety women, sixty-one of whom were married to white Americans and twenty-seven of whom were married to black Americans. The study found that the racial prejudices of the white husbands deeply influenced their wives' interaction with women married to black men. According to Marian Mizuno, a Japanese-born social worker who worked with the Institute while studying in the US:

> It seems that Japanese brides married to Negroes have an additional emotional burden, because of the prejudices prevailing in the community… These Negro-Japanese couples have met some rejection from the Caucasian Japanese couples, who are in one way or another sensitive to the Negro prejudice and refuse to associate with Negroes. It was

[82] Chizuko Tsutsumi, "File for those who work with the Japanese wives of American citizens and their families," *A Rosenberg Foundation Project of the International Institute of San Francisco,* 1962, 5.

> found that in general the Caucasian husbands did not want their Japanese wives to visit or relate to those Japanese women married to Negroes.[83]

One bride told *Ebony*, "It seems that the Japanese girls who married white soldiers got very high hat when they came to America and drew a color line on us and our husbands."[84] In 1954, another bride married to a white serviceman told researchers in Hawaii that amongst her good war bride friends, two were married to black men, but seldom spoke of their husbands. She explained, "When they came [over] they never talked about their husbands. My husband has no prejudices against Negroes but some of the white husbands of the Japanese war brides forbade their wives to associate with the Japanese war brides of Negro men."[85] Once again, Japanese women who married African American servicemen were forced to confront American racial prejudices. Even within the small war bride communities and the more formal war bride clubs, Japanese war brides married to black men found little support. Elena Creef, the daughter of a Japanese war bride and white GI discussed earlier in the chapter, notes that the Japanese war bride community of the Pacific Northwest, the largest and strongest community of its kind, is intensely complicated and "painfully splintered along multiple axes of long-term friendships and alliances held together by race and class affiliation."[86]

Setsuko found an enduring friendship with Michiko, another Japanese war bride married to an African American GI. Like Setsuko, Michiko was left to raise her two children alone when her marriage ended in divorce. The two women remained inseparable for years, and when

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[83] Marian Mizuno, "Report on the Japanese War Bride Survey," December, 1956, International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit Collection Records, 1919-1981, Wayne State University, Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, Box 19-15 "Japanese War Brides, 1955-1957," chapter 4, page 16.
[84] "The Loneliest Brides in America," *Ebony*, January, 1953, 17.
[85] Interview with Japanese War Bride A-18, January 27, 1954, Romanzo Adams Social Research Laboratory (RASRL): War Brides Interview Project, University of Hawai'i, Manoa Libraries. Box 1, Folders 14-22, "Group 2: Wife, Japanese; Husband, non-Japanese/1-67, 1953-1955."
[86] Creef, "Discovering My Mother", 446; Japanese war brides also tended to excluded women who married servicemen of low rank.

Michiko passed away, leaving behind two small children, Setsuko took it upon herself to raise them as if they were her own. Setsuko's voice began to crack and lose its vigor when she spoke of her dear friend Michiko. This friendship is only one of two that Setsuko spoke of; the other is with a childhood friend who married a white servicemen. Although the two women have not seen each other since their early days in the United States, they still remain in contact via telephone conversations and the occasional holiday or birthday card. One cannot help but wonder if their distant friendship is the result of Setsuko's ties to the African American community.

Setsuko eventually left Dallas and moved around the country with her husband Eddie and their two daughters, Lorraine and Mary, eventually settling in Marin City, California.[87] Marin City, an unincorporated community in the North San Francisco Bay area, was and remains today predominantly black. The Great Migration of World War II brought thousands of African Americans from the South to Marin City where temporary housing was set up for shipyard workers. When the wartime industry declined, so too did the living conditions of Marin City. Today, the city is "marred by poverty and crime," and the shipyard workers housing has been replaced with low-income public housing.[88] Setsuko eventually divorced Eddie after his gambling and womanizing habits took an emotional toll on her. After the divorce Setsuko raised her daughters as a single mom in Marin City as well as the children of her friend, Michiko; she easily found work in San Francisco Japantown restaurants, or in the domestic service industry. Even after her children grew up and moved away, Setsuko remained in Marin City where the

[87] Like the Issei and Nisei, Japanese war brides gave their children "American" names. This was a strident effort to distract others of their mixed-Japanese backgrounds. Sumi Brown's son, Anthony, told me in conversation that his parent's gave him and his brothers non-Japanese names in an attempt to downplay their Japanese heritage so the boys would get along better in life.
[88] Dana Perrigan, "Marin City Looks to Better days," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, March 15, 2009, N-4.

vast majority of her neighbors were African American. Setsuko passed away in the summer of 2015.

Japanese war brides and African American servicemen faced a series of obstacles. Although some relationships ended in heartache, others like Sumi and Willie Brown endured for decades to come. After traveling across the world with her career military husband, Command Sergeant Major Willie Lee Brown, and raising four sons, Sumi and Willie settled near Savannah, Georgia, when he retired after thirty-five years of active service. When he passed away in 1997, Sumi returned to Japantown, San Francisco. This time she returned as a resident and stayed until her death in June 2010.[89]

Conclusion

Japanese women's immigration after World War II was made possible by the sacrifices made by American men serving abroad. As James Sparrow demonstrates, during the war the US encouraged civilian worship of the combat soldier, which ultimately led to GI entitlements in the postwar recovery period.[90] The freedom to marry non-American women was "the least we can do for the men who fought our wars overseas…."[91] Yet, for those American men who wished to marry Japanese women excluded by immigration legislation, the freedom to marry would have to bypass racial exclusion. Thus a series of War Bride Acts made Japanese immigration possible once again. In this way, Japanese women "influenced the course of postwar immigration policymaking."[92]

The second wave of Japanese women's immigration occurred decades after the first

[89] Obituary for "Brown, Sumi" *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 10, 2010.
[90] James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), Chapter 6.
[91] Philip E. Wolgin and Irene Bloemraad. "'Our Gratitude to Our Soldiers': Military Spouses, Family Re-Unification, and Postwar Immigration Reform," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 37.
[92] Wolgin and Bloemraad, 27.

picture brides entered the US. They arrived in a world shaped by war following the defeat of the Japanese imperial state while the US military abroad was growing. However, the channels by which both streams of women arrived remained the same. Japanese war brides arrived as wives just like their predecessors who arrived after the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908. Their presence in the United States was both allowed and legitimated by ideas of female—particularly Japanese—domesticity. As such, the making of Japanese America was made possible by a *gendered diaspora* that at times privileged women immigrants as wives to Japanese men, and in the postwar era, American men. This gendered experience of immigration and settlement profoundly shaped the making of Japanese America.

EPILOGUE

World War II marked a turning point in United States immigration law at the same time it set the stage for a new phase in race and gender relations in America. Racial liberalism took hold in the war years when Americans were confronted with the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany. As many scholars have shown, the 1940s were exceptional.[1] The war industry and the subsequent mass movement of people—from the south to the north and west; from rural farms and suburbs to industrialized cities; and from childhood homes to small towns in Europe and islands in the Pacific—created new opportunities for America's racial minorities and women. It also facilitated encounters between distinct racial groups who had never before interacted on such scale. At the same time that World War II and the 1940s more broadly created opportunities, it also revealed a web of contradictions in US policy and practices. While official wartime rhetoric claimed America was fighting for democracy abroad, the practices of racial segregation in the military and the South and the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans made clear that the US had a long way to go to achieve the values it espoused.

The era also witnessed an "opening" of immigration law. As stated throughout this thesis, the National Origins Act of 1924 brought immigration to a halt when xenophobic immigration policymakers excluded many would-be immigrants because they believed in the superiority of the white race. In 1947, just two years after the end of the war, Japanese women were the first formally excluded group to be permitted to enter the US since 1924. This exception was made not in service of the women, but as an act of good will towards the US servicemen they married in Occupied Japan. The McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 lifted the bar on Asian exclusion providing unencumbered entry for Asian women who were the wives of US military personnel

[1] Briones, *Jim and Jap Crow*, 5

and a pathway to citizenship. However, the Act continued to adhere to most of the quotas outlined in the National Origins Act of 1924. In 1965, the Hart-Celler Act finally abolished the National Origins Act of 1924. Lost in much of the conversation on postwar immigration legislation is the way in which women's bodies, particularly Japanese women, served the nation. These women entered as subordinated subjects whose presence fulfilled explicit political agendas. The persistent and stubborn view of Japanese women as Madame Butterflies continued to shape how Americans imagined Japanese femininity. But in Cold War America, Madame Butterfly became the "model minority wife"—the racialized immigrant bride of Asian descent and superior moral character. Some women contributed to this way of thinking by performing Japanese femininity for American audiences. Perhaps they realized that their citizenship was made legitimate through their role as Good Wife, Wise Mother.

Despite the historical circumstances that permitted Japanese women to enter after the war, their immigration via domesticity was in fact part of a longer history. At the turn of the twentieth century, Japanese women were permitted entry as brides in an era of racial exclusion. But soon after, the same gendered ideals that permitted their entry were used to attack the women and solidify the anti-Japanese agenda of West Coast politicians. Yet, these two streams of female migration are rarely studied together. While marriage provided a means to include Japanese women, it also was a means to exclude the Japanese men who remained unwed. "From Picture Brides to War Brides" fills this analytical gap and in doing so reveals the how gender—broadly conceived to include masculinity, femininity, sexuality, marriage, and domesticity—fundamentally shaped the Japanese experience in the United States.

Immigrant Women and the Commodification of Intimacy

Since World War II women have dominated migration flows into the United States. This trend started with the thousands of Japanese war brides who came to America in the immediate postwar years. This is not a phenomenon particular to the US. Across the globe women have been leaving their home country in search of better opportunities. As Nicole Constable describes, many of the opportunities available to women—especially women from developing nations—reflect "the real and imagined commodification of intimate relations, particularly those involving marriage, sex, and reproductive work."[2] Though the lives of these modern migrant women reflect recent economic and political changes across the globe, "From Picture Brides to War Brides" shows that women's migration has long rested on intimate encounters and the commodified gains such encounters beget. Commodification does not denote monetary value only. Instead it suggests the many tangible opportunities one stands to gain. Various relationships, both sexual and nonsexual, are "commodified in terms of material expectations." "Commodification may be hidden, disguised, mystified, denied, or reinterpreted as a gift or experienced as liberating and modern."

This fact does not negate both the tangible and intangible meanings of love and authenticity within these relationships. A Constable explains, "The conflation of intimate social relations with monetary value is criticized by those who imagine a more altruistic or authentic precapitalist past or who view the domestic sphere as a proper shelter from harsh and impersonal world of market capitalism." Indeed romantic love, arguably the most sacred expression of human bonding, is a social construct. How it takes shape and is expressed varies by context, place, and time. This analysis is not a judgment of the many Japanese women who came to the

[2] Nicole Constable, "The Commodification of Intimacy: Marriage, Sex, and Reproductive Labor," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 38 (2009): 50.

US as wives. Instead, it aims to take seriously the very real motivating factors that compel one to leave their country of birth and seek life anew. Future studies of war brides would do well to position the early migration of women as brides within a longer history of the commodification of intimacy and women's migration.

Legacies

The women who left Japan for America in the post-World War II era gave birth to a new generation of Japanese Americans—one that was decidedly mixed-race. The children of war brides and American servicemen experienced racial discrimination growing up in the postwar years. Their lives and experiences warrant further research. Both Setsuko and Sumi's adult children reported some of the daily struggles they encountered, and the nuances of growing up black Japanese. Setsuko's daughter vividly remembered being teased and taunted in school because of her Japanese heritage. Sumi's son, Anthony Brown, a successful jazz musician in the San Francisco Bay area, described a typical meal in the Brown family home: a mixture of both Southern cooking and Japanese cuisine. For Sumi and Setsuko's children, growing up mixed-race was a constant process of negotiation. In much the same way as the women of the Cherry Blossom Club, they learned to negotiate their racial status in a world that viewed racial experiences through a black and white lens. Despite their struggles, these families endured, giving rise to new ways of thinking about race-making since World War II.

Indeed a recent body of scholarship termed critical mixed-race studies has emerged, exploring the experiences of mixed-race Americans. In fact, Paul Spickard, Rudy Guevarra Jr., and Joanne Rondilla recently noted that "the study of multiracial people is the fastest growing segment of ethnic studies."[3] This disciplinary field was born out of the multiracial movement that

[3] Tamai, "Checking 'Other' Twice," 4.

coalesced around the 1990s campaign to have "multiracial" added to the available racial categories in the 2000 census. Critics of the 1990s census movement have argued that the motives of many of those involved (white mothers of biracial children) were attempting to "flee Blackness and to claim a measure of whiteness."[4] Indeed, the 1990s census movement and its critics were focused on the black and white binary, but Kim M. Williams argues that beyond this marred history, the struggle actually dates back to the civil rights era.[5] Moreover, Mark Brilliant has demonstrated that the civil rights movement itself begun as a multiracial movement made up of various racialized groups beyond the scope of black and white. In his analysis of the long civil rights movement, Brilliant argues that the predominant understanding that the problem of race was synonymous with the "Negro problem" obscures the history of multiracial alliances and civil rights agitation that took place on the American "racial frontier" of California.[6]

For mixed-Japanese Americans born in the postwar period, the question of racial identity is further complicated because these individuals are not necessarily haunted by the wartime incarceration of their families. Narratives of the war and trauma undoubtedly influence familial dynamics and the experiences of racialization for postwar mixed-Japanese Americans and their descendants, but how these narratives are rendered different is a question of concern for scholars of Japanese America. Moreover, the children of black men and Japanese women—what scholars term dual-minority Americans—have much to teach us about the differential processes of racialization. For example, one wonders how race and power operate in the lives of mixed-race Japanese Americans who are not white. Or how the process of racial identity formation is

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Joanne L. Rondilla et al, *Red & Yellow, Black & Brown*, 7.

[5] Kim M. Williams, "Linking the Civil Rights and Multiracial Movements," in *The Politics of Multiracialism: Challenging Racial Thinking*, Heather M. Dalmage, ed. (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004).

[6] Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010).

informed by dual-minority racial status. These lines of inquiry fall within a subfield of critical mixed-race studies that seeks to de-center whiteness.

Jero, born Jerome Charles White Jr., is the first American-born enka singer to achieve success in Japan. Enka has been likened to country music in its content and blues in its sound and is a popular genre of ballad-driven music that emerged in postwar Japan. White is the grandson of Takiko, a Japanese war bride who married a black serviceman and settled in the United States in the 1950s. Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, White credits his grandmother for his successful career as an enka singer because it was she who first introduced him to the music of her generation when he was just a child.[7] In interviews, White frequently describes how his Japanese grandmother, who cared for him throughout his childhood, would have her favorite enka records on frequent rotation. Enka was the soundtrack to White's early years, and he began to sing enka ballads to his grandmother when he was just five years old.

Much has been made of White's crossover appeal because of his African American racial heritage and Japan's historically fraught relationship with blackness. Yet, according to Yuya Kiucha, White's success has much to do with the way he expresses his blackness. White uses his Japanese cultural heritage passed down from his maternal grandmother, Takiko, to give his Japanese audience an "alternative image of African Americans." In short, White embodies and expresses both his Japanese and black American ancestry in his music and performance, making him a "cross-generational bridge" between the US and Japan.[8] White's crossover success is part of a small but growing visibility of mixed-race Japanese Americans in the entertainment

[7] Blaine Hardin, "A Far Cry From Home," *The Washington Post*, May 28, 2008; Michael E Ruane, "Festival Feature: A Japanese Idol From Pittsburgh," *The Washington Post*, March 28, 2009; Chris Yeager, "Jero: Japan's First African–American Enka Singer," Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia, *Konnichiwa Philadelphia*, July 2, 2008.

[8] Yuya Kiuchi, "An Alternative African-America Image in Japan: Jero as a Cross-generational Bridge between Japan and the United States," *Journal of Popular Culture* 42, no. 3 (2009). Jero's popularity might also be suggestive of modern Japan's fetishization of blackness.

industry.[9] These individuals challenge racial categories in numerous ways revealing the very tenuous nature of such categories.

The presence of mixed-Japanese Americans also speaks to the growth of the US military presence abroad since World War II. Scholars have recently begun to take seriously the historical fact that many mixed-race Americans—particularly those of Asian descent—have intimate ties to the United States military. With a few notable exceptions,[10] scholars are only just beginning to understand the role of the military in the making of mixed-race America.[11] For the many children of war brides from Japan and other parts of Asia and Europe, life was born out of the chaos of war, and military occupation created a legacy of militarism within the private sphere of the family. It is this history that has shamed many women and kept them silent for far too long. However, it is their children and grandchildren, far removed from the experience of war and military occupation, who have taken up the task of history.

With this in mind, I turn towards the story of Michiko.

Michiko Ikeda was 16 years old when she left her parents' home in Amagasaki City, Japan, a sprawling suburb just outside Osaka, and headed to Nara in 1948. In Nara she sang the blues to the likes of Futaba Akiko, the famous Japanese songstress of the prewar years. Nara, once the ancient city of the imperial family, was now a bustling military town. While in Nara, Michiko met Louis Olivares, a Mexican American serviceman from Texas. They fell in love,

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[9] Jhene Aiko, a popular singer and songwriter, is of Japanese and black descent, and Preston Oshita, a Chicago-based rapper that goes by the name "Towkio," is of Japanese and Mexican descent.

[10] For more on military, intimacy, and multiracialism, see Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1992); *Racial Beachhead: Diversity and Democracy in a Military Town: Seaside, California*. (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012). For more on intimacy, military, and immigration, see Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2002).

[11] *In Racial Beachhead: Diversity and Democracy in a Military Town,* Carol Lynn McKibben argues that in the town of Seaside, a small community created to house and serve the neighboring US military base of Fort Ord, the multiracial population has successfully created a racially inclusive community and thus serves as a model for inclusion. See McKibben, *Racial Beachhead*.

married, and had one daughter. In 1954 they left Japan and arrived in the United States where Michiko gave birth to four more girls: one in Washington state, one in Kentucky, and two in Texas. With each move, a daughter was born. Finally they settled in the Highland Park neighborhood of East Los Angeles. Michiko was my maternal grandmother and Louis, my grandfather. This project is both an analysis of those like them—of their generation—and an homage to the legacy they left. As Naoko Shibusawa poignantly recalls, "all historians … are looking for their past." My search for history began in 2009 when I was as an undergraduate student at the University of California, Berkeley writing a family immigration history. As I dove deeper into the archive, the literature, and my own memories, I realized that my family's story was extraordinary and common at the same time.

Yet, this history is not mine only. Nor did it begin when my grandparents met, married, or entered the US. The story of the Japanese in America—specifically of Japanese women in America—stretches back to the thousands of Japanese women who immigrated to the US to join their husbands in the early decades of the twentieth century. By expanding the chronological scope of analysis to include both pre- and postwar flows of migration, "From Picture Brides to War Brides" asserts that long-term historical studies are essential to understanding the multiple pasts that make up our present.[12] In doing so, this project contributes to scholarship concerned with offering new ways of thinking about the Japanese in America.

First, by using gender as category of analysis of Japanese immigration and settlement in the United States, we learn that amidst racial exclusion, pockets of inclusion allowed women to enter as a means to an end. Indeed, since World War II women immigrants entering the US have outnumbered men, and yet much of our current discussion on immigration neglects this historical

[12] Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

shift.[13] Second, as an inclusive history, this project aims to challenge the standard narrative of the Japanese in America by incorporating the stories of the women who married across the color line after World War II. Finally, by examining such pockets of inclusion that gender produced, this project demonstrates the importance of examining small windows of inclusion in an otherwise exclusionist immigration narrative. As Catherine Lee has exclaimed, understanding how, why, and under what circumstance some immigrants have been allowed to immigrate to the US is equally important to understanding why other groups were excluded.[14] There is as much to learn in inclusion as there is to learn in exclusion.

[13] Marion F. Houstoun, Riger G. Kramer, and Joan Mackin Barrett, "Female Predominance in Immigration to the United States Since 1930s: A First Look," *The International Migration Review* 18, no. 4 (1984).
[14] Catherine Lee. "Where the Danger Lies": Race, Gender, and Chinese and Japanese Exclusion in the United States, 1870-1924" *Sociological Forum* 25, no. 2 (June 2010).

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