

Sojourners, Spies and Citizens:
The Interned Latin American Japanese Civilians during World War II

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ABSTRACT

More than two thousand Japanese Latin Americans, seized abroad, shipped to the United States, and interned without charge, moved through a vast prison system that also held nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. Fear and racism produced internment policies that conflated enemy nation with enemy race, making proof of guilt or innocence irrelevant. However, race-based imprisonment also intensified feelings of Japanese nationalism, strengthened ethnic identity and influenced resistance behavior among the detained. This study examines prisoner memoirs, interviews, government documents, and published reports to support these positions.

Little is known about the individual experiences of the Japanese Latin American prisoners. Yoshitaro Amano's memoir, *Waga Toraware No Ki (The Journal of My Incarceration)*, published in Japan in 1943 but never before translated to English, adds to a very limited literature from the Japanese alien detainee perspective that is accessible to western scholars. Amano, captured in Panama at the on December 7, 1941, chronicled his experiences of capture, internment, and repatriation along with opinions about the war and the differences between Americans and the Japanese. Peruvian immigrant Seiichi Higashide's memoir, *Adios To Tears*, published in 1993 and an interview of Peruvian citizen Art Shibayama contained in a 2003 documentary expose Peru's role in capturing ethnic Japanese and its subsequent denial of repatriation. Together, the experiences of these men, a suspected spy, a sojourner merchant and a second generation citizen of Peru offer eyewitness accounts of this relatively obscure segment of Japanese internees.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My mother once mentioned that her father had been in a concentration camp during World War II. It seemed odd, since he had never been a soldier and had lived in Latin America since the 1920s. However, he had passed away many years ago and the conversation shifted to other matters. The subject, nearly forgotten, did not come up again until my first class as a graduate student with Dr. Martha Pallante. For a research project, I decided to find out if other Japanese civilians living in Latin America had been interned with ethnic Japanese residing in the United States. Days combing through references turned up very few primary sources. After expressing frustration more than once during weekly phone calls home to California, my mother casually announced that her father had written a book about his experiences and asked, “would that help?” It certainly would, though she could have mentioned this fact a lot sooner.

I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my Jean Hamako Amano Schneider and Harry Schneider, a U.S. Army veteran trained by the Military Intelligence Language Schools, who translated *Waga Toraware No Ki* by Yoshitaro Amano. They worked many hours at their kitchen table, pen, paper and a timeworn dictionary at hand, to make an obscure, sixty-year-old book accessible to western scholars investigating a little known aspect of Japanese internment in the United States.

I also want to thank my professors for their support beginning with Dr. David Simonelli who suggest I apply to graduate school rather than continue on the random path to post-baccalaureate education that I had started. My advisor, Dr. Donna DeBlasio helped me navigate through the department requirements while my thesis committee, including Dr. Pallante, Dr. Mehra Gerardo and Dr. Helene Sinnreich provided expert guidance, time consuming commentary and thoughtful encouragement. These professors along with Dr. William Jenkins, Dr. Anne York, and Dr. Diane Barnes taught interesting and interactive courses that challenged students to tackle wide ranging, sometimes unconventional topics. I also learned a lot from my fellow graduate students, through classroom, club and extra-curricular activities, including how to enjoy the Youngstown State University experience.

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Introduction

More than two thousand Japanese Latin Americans, seized abroad, shipped to the United States and interned without charge, became mired in a vast prison system organized primarily to accommodate nearly 120,000 relocated Japanese Americans during World War II.¹ While a small number of suspected foreign operatives warranted legitimate concern for national security, racism produced internment policies that conflated enemy nation with enemy race, making evidence of espionage or sabotage irrelevant. Guilty or innocent, race-based imprisonment intensified feelings of Japanese nationalism, strengthened ethnic identity and influenced resistance behavior among the detained.

Prior to the Second World War, a consensus of opinion developed throughout the Americas that presumed ethnic Japanese were loyal to Japan regardless of citizenship or residency and therefore, a threat. From Canada to Chile, politicians enacted laws to stem the flow of Asian immigration and block the path to citizenship in the immigrants' host countries. Much of the anti-immigration legislation specifically targeted the Japanese. These national policies advocated "whitening" western societies while discouraging the stain of "yellowing." Newspaper publishers that sensationalized or fabricated stories of espionage to increase sales hyped the supposedly subversive and sly nature of the Japanese people. Nativists, looking for scapegoats during times of economic hardship, fanned sparks of suspected fifth column activity that subsequently ignited with Japan's

¹ Many historians cited in this bibliography use the terms 'Latin American Japanese' and 'Japanese Latin Americans' interchangeably and without established convention to denote citizenship. 'Japanese Americans' encompasses foreign-born legal residents, naturalized citizens and American born citizens living in the United States. For consistency, 'Japanese Latin Americans' and 'Japanese Americans' will be used. 'Americans' will specify residents of the United States while 'the Americas' will refer to the Western Hemisphere. When known and relevant, citizenship, and generation residing in the Americas (*issei* – first generation immigrant, *nisei* – second generation, *sansei* – third generation) will be noted.

bombing of Pearl Harbor. These various sources helped establish entrenched ideas that associated race with national allegiance and drove racist doctrine. In the United States, government policy towards enemy aliens during World War II obliterated constitutional protections, blurred the distinction between race and nation, and tested the boundaries of the nation-state.² Ultimately, unequally applied internment policies helped define what it meant to be an American.

American foreign policy, congruent with a national identity predicated on exceptionalism, presumed dominance over Latin America. Countries that complied with American objectives to secure the hemisphere during World War II captured Japanese civilians without consideration of citizenship, and without specific charges of fifth-column activities. Instead, these internees represented a commodity. The United States held the Japanese as hostages, suitable to trade for American civilians detained in Axis controlled regions of Asia. Although cooperative Latin American countries received U.S. aid for their prisoners, expelling the Japanese also won popular support for their political leaders who sought to reduce civil unrest caused by racial strife.

Few Japanese Latin Americans documented their internment experiences, effectively silencing the voices of a nearly forgotten contingent of foreign prisoners. However, this research brings attention to these people, perceived to be alien enemies, through a newly translated memoir, *Waga Toraware No Ki (The Journal of My*

² The descriptors, alien enemy and enemy aliens, conform to U.S. Department of Justice terminology that categorized all ethnic Japanese as belligerents, regardless of citizenship or nationality. I chose to use the terms *alien* and *enemy* to reflect governmental policies and attitudes towards Japanese immigrants in contrast with *prisoner*, which is how the interned Japanese Latin Americans described themselves.

Incarceration), written by Yoshitaro Amano.³ A Japanese civilian residing in Panama at the time of his capture on December 7, 1941, Amano owned department stores in Panama City in addition to fishing, food processing, ranching and lumber enterprises throughout Central and South America. His journal, published in Japan in 1943 and later reprinted but never in English, documents the experience of a group of Japanese Panamanian prisoners from their three days in Panama City's Chorrios Jail, imprisonment near Balboa, Panama through March 1942, internment in Arkansas and Louisiana from April through July, and repatriation to Japan in August, 1942. Distributed in Japan prior to the end of the war, the book served as a propaganda piece to encourage ethnic pride and patriotism. Through *Waga Toraware No Ki*, Amano also discredited espionage charges leveled against him by Costa Rica, Panama and the United States while admitting suspect behavior. Amano neither directly denied nor divulged that he was a Japanese operative but his memoir revealed much about the differences between American and Japanese culture.⁴ Spy or merchant, Amano nonetheless contributed an eyewitness account of the experiences of a relatively obscure segment of interned enemy aliens.

The translation of *Waga Toraware No Ki* by Amano's daughter, my mother Jean Hamako Schneider, undoubtedly contains a measure of family bias despite her determination to produce an accurate interpretation. She received assistance from her

³ Dr. Shiho Sakanishi, in 1930 named the first Area Specialist on Japan for the United States Library of Congress, wrote the foreword for *Waga Toraware No Ki*. Interned separately but repatriated on the same exchange boat as Amano, she persuaded Amano to write this book because, "the Japanese government appealed for the nation to engage in uplifting morale, challenging the intellect and in lifestyle innovation this year of 1943, the second year of World War II." Yoshitaro Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki* (Tokyo: 1943) 5. Note: all page numbers for this reference correspond to the 147 double-spaced pages of an unpublished manuscript translated from the original document.

⁴ Gustavo Corni, *Hitler's Ghettos: Voices from a Beleaguered Society, 1939-1944* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2002). Corni devoted his first chapter to the factors historians should consider when examining diaries and memoirs such as the writer's level of education, motive, perspective, credibility and number of intervening years between the event and the writing.

husband, my father Harry Schneider, a former U.S. Army intelligence officer trained at the Military Intelligence Language Schools at Camp Savage, Minnesota and University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Stationed in Japan during the Occupation, he translated and censored documents for two years at Radio Tokyo.⁵ Attempts to find additional accounts from Panamanian Japanese captives to impartially corroborate details in Amano's memoir yielded only one novel, written in Spanish. Ezequiel Dawson's *Confinados*, a fictionalized account of Panama's Japanese prisoners during World War II, is left for future study.

This research is limited to Japanese immigrants in Panama and Peru for two reasons. First, Thomas Connell's *America's Japanese Hostages: The World War II Plan for a Japanese Free Latin America*, an important reference for this study, concentrated on Panama, whose small Japanese population lived within a few miles of the strategically important Canal Zone, and on Peru, home to more than 20,000 Japanese immigrants. Connell cited Panama's precedent setting internment of German enemy aliens during World War I as the foundation of Japanese internment during World War II. He also argued that Peru was a leading proponent of ethnic cleansing through the expulsion of an unwanted minority, native born or not. Various rationales, such as diplomatic precedent, economic incentives, racism, and a political public relations campaign, diluted both nations' legitimate concerns for national security. The internment of Japanese Latin American immigrants exposed hidden political agendas of their adopted countries.

⁵ Despite fluency in both languages, these translators struggled with the vastly different syntax of English and Japanese. For example, a seemingly straightforward choice between "I" and "We" is difficult because Japanese pronouns are often implied, as is tense. Japanese nouns are the same in singular and plural forms: word order generally places object and verb before subject. Indirect references and passive voice sentence structure indicates both the deferential manners and the emphasis on group conformity valued by traditional Japanese culture. The translators, ages 82 and 91, had a clear advantage over younger native Japanese speakers. Two young Japanese college students who reviewed the text found Amano's Meiji-era idioms difficult to translate.

Purportedly to protect the region from Japanese subterfuge, Panama and Peru seized upon American directives as an opportunity to expel an undesirable minority for profit.

Secondly, a search for published personal histories of Latin American prisoners uncovered not only Amano's account of the Panamanian internees, but also the memoir of Seiichi Higashide, a first generation Japanese immigrant to Peru, and a documentary featuring an interview of Arturo Shibayama, a Peruvian *sansei* (third generation) who later became a U.S. citizen. Amano wrote and published his memoir within a year of his release from Camp Livingston, Louisiana. Nearly forty years after the end of World War II, Higashide was living in Hawaii when he wrote his autobiography, *Namida no Adios* in 1981 in Japanese. His children guided the publication of an English translation, *Adios to Tears: The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps* in 1993. Interned as a child, Shibayama, known now as Art, granted a filmed interview to documentary maker Casey Peek for *Hidden Internment: The Art Shibayama Story* in 2000. A cautious analysis of these sources must take into account how the passage of time affects memory and perspective.

Seiichi Higashide, captured in 1944, provides a first-hand account of the economic reasons for Japanese immigration, cultural conflicts between immigrants and native Peruvians, government oppression of the Japanese in Peru, and his detainment by the United States in Panama and in Texas. Higashide's post-war problems of repatriation and the reestablishment of citizenship illustrate the special difficulties faced by the foreign prisoners compared to the relocated Japanese Americans. After the war, many Latin American prisoners who had entered the United States stripped of their passports remained unwanted in their native country, in Japan and in America.

Art Shibayama's interview offers a different perspective on the consequences of Peru's oppressive policies. Mr. Shibayama, a native Peruvian, presents the injustices endured by Peruvian citizens of Japanese ancestry as he recounts his family's experiences in Lima and their imprisonment in the United States. Comments from fellow Japanese Peruvians, including Tomas Hayashi and Alice Nishimoto, enrich Shibayama's recollections. The documentary also contains images of the civil conflicts that pitted the Peruvian government against the Japanese immigrants. Together, the experiences of a suspected spy, a sojourner plantation worker and an expelled Peruvian citizen illuminate the special problems faced by the Japanese Latin American prisoners and the strategies they employed to survive. In addition, introducing a newly translated account of these events contributes to the very limited literature from the Japanese perspective that is accessible to western scholars

Although circumstances varied for the Latin American hostages and the North American Japanese "evacuees" relocated from the West Coast, Japanese immigrants on both continents faced similar barriers to assimilation. An extensive exploration of the genesis of racism, religious persecution, or class-based discrimination is beyond the scope of this research but several texts offered perspective on the climate of racial intolerance in the Americas. *White over Black* by Winthrop D. Jordan delineated the regional differences in racial attitudes arising from the particular mix of indigenous people and colonizing forces throughout the western hemisphere long before the arrival of significant numbers of Asian immigrants in the nineteenth century. *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century* by David Bushnell and Neill Macaulay presented a comprehensive interpretive history of the colonial heritage of emerging

nations following independence from Spain that established a backdrop for the arrival of Japanese immigrants. *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America* edited by Nancy Applebaum, et al., explored regionalized racial constructs and national identity formation that included essays specific to Panama and Peru.

While this paper rests more on the opinions and observations of individual Japanese Latin American prisoners than a lengthy exploration of the legality or morality of Japanese internment, several U.S. government documents help place the memoirs in perspective. Legal foundations for Japanese internment include the Alien Registration Act of 1940, and Executive Order 9066. These documents established the United States' rationale for the internment of Japanese civilians, without regard to their citizenship, residency or nationality. A summary of the internment process is found in the *Final Report of Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942*, by the U.S. Department of War. Also relevant are memos and letters between the military personnel and government officials who interpreted and carried out executive orders to establish the internment system.

That the United States established a vast prison system to detain American civilians without charge was alarming enough, but the collection of foreign citizens captured abroad extended the impact of this controversial policy. Historian Arnold Krammer believed that “the arrest of thousands of noncitizens on mere suspicion of potential danger caused a crack in the Constitution that allowed McCarthyism and the communist witch hunts of the late 1940s and early 1950s.”⁶ American paranoia about Axis subterfuge resulted in the scrutiny of a large population of immigrant Germans and

⁶ Arnold Krammer. *Undue Process: The Untold Story of America's German Alien Internees* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 1997), 173.

Italians along with smaller numbers of Japanese. Yet the Japanese Latin Americans made up the vast majority of foreigners caught in the United States internment system.

Thomas Connell and other historians, including C. Harvey Gardiner, allege that the United States skirted international law to bring foreign hostages, including Japanese, German and Italian residents of Latin American countries, under its jurisdiction. The U.S government could then trade “banked” hostages for Americans held by belligerent nations. Two oral histories offer particular insight into the rift between the military and the Department of Justice regarding the legality of holding civilian Japanese prisoners. Interviews of Edward J. Ennis, general counsel for the Immigration and Naturalization Service in 1941, and James Rowe, who was an assistant to the Attorney General in the Department of Justice during the war, capture the governmental conflicts and ethical dilemmas created by America’s policies towards enemy aliens. Both interviews are part of the Earl Warren Oral History Project in University of California, Berkeley’s online archive.

Newspaper reports on the collection of Japanese Latin Americans for internment in the United States were limited to a few brief mentions. Several short articles appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, eclipsed by the extensive coverage of Japanese American internees. A survey of articles in the *New York Times* in July 1941, prior to Pearl Harbor but after a published black list of Latin American businesses suspected of subversive activity, indicated widespread acceptance for deportation or detention of foreigners with questionable loyalties. An entire publishing industry based on rumors of espionage thrived in the 1930s and 1940s. Representative of the genre, author Alan Hynd mixed history, hearsay and bigotry to produce propaganda pieces justifying widespread

fears of fifth-column activity. In *Betrayal from the East: The Inside Story of Japanese Spies in America*, published in 1943, Hynd asserted the presence of fishing boats crewed by “yellow Aryan friends” confirmed Japan’s spy activity.⁷ This book included an account of the seizure of Amano’s fishing boat by Costa Rica. Amano also figured prominently in a chapter of *Secret Agents Against America* by Richard Wilmer Rowan and in a section of *Secret Armies: The New Technique of Nazi Warfare* by John L. Spivak, both published in 1939.

Prevailing attitudes in the historiography of this subject have shifted post war. A large portion of the considerable body of recent Japanese internment literature presents the plight of Japanese Americans denied their constitutional rights as U.S. citizens. Most sources follow historian Roger Daniels lead in depicting the Japanese Americans as helpless pawns. Tetsuden Kashima also emphasizes that aspect in *Judgment Without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II*.⁸ However, Kashima’s thorough examination of the overall organization of American internment contains valuable accounts of foreign prisoners and alleged human rights violations in chapters devoted to Latin American and prisoner protests. One of the few historians who downplayed victimization, Brian Masaru Hayashi emphasized the agency of Japanese Americans in *Democratizing the Enemy: The Japanese American Internment*. Especially in light of recent declassification of security agency documents that exposed evidence of

⁷ Alan Hynd. *Betrayal from the East: The Inside Story of Japanese Spies in America*. (New York: Robert M. McBride & Co., 1943) 139.

⁸ Kashima also grappled with terminology in order to categorize different types of prisons and prisoners. He used “internment camp” for Department of Justice and Immigration and Naturalization Service administered camps holding foreign nationals. These prisoners, also referred to as internees, included the Japanese Latin Americans in addition to Japanese, German and Italian nationals. American citizens of Japanese decent fell under the jurisdiction of the War Relocation Authority that managed “relocation camps.” However labeled, the camps were fenced, patrolled by armed guards and located in remote and desolate areas of the United States, defining all camp residents as prisoners.

Japanese espionage, he warned of the pitfalls in the comparison of interned Japanese and Jewish victims of genocide.

To gain further perspective on the Japanese Latin Americans, research from the area of Holocaust studies supplies valuable material on topics relevant to human captivity including race, nationality, fear, prejudice, internment and resistance. Social scientists have also addressed racism against immigrant populations and the affects on its victims. These studies accept injustice due to racism as a given. More complicated are the debates within various political entities regarding the treatment of these hostages that brought issues of race, nationality and identity to the forefront. The experiences of internment also prompted personal reflections on national identity and loyalty among the imprisoned.

Prejudice and paranoia directed at multiple ethnicities thrived during World War II yet the designation of enemy alien status to all Japanese immigrants and their American born descendants was unique. Americans generally approved of the imprisonment of any Japanese living in the Western Hemisphere because of racial animosity towards Japanese immigrants that began long before America declared of war on Japan. Generalized anti-Asian sentiment developed in the Americas soon after Chinese immigrants arrived during the California Gold Rush. By the time the Japanese began to emigrate, white Americans had grouped the two ethnicities into one inscrutable and sneaky race. Only later did it become necessary to discern between Chinese allies and Japanese enemies.

A depressed economy in Japan coupled with an expanding economy in the West produced a migration of 137,000 Japanese to the western hemisphere from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. However, the immigrants resisted assimilation, forming a “nation within a nation” that attracted suspicion in their adopted countries. Some of the very

qualities that helped Japanese immigrants succeed, such as a vigorous work ethic, also fueled resentment.⁹ Overt racism and paranoia along with security concerns throughout the Americas led to the wartime detention and arrest of Japanese immigrants without credible evidence of subversive activity.

Initiated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration in the late 1930s, the United States constructed a hemispheric defense initiative to meet the threat of Axis espionage, sabotage and military operations. Roosevelt, in his Good Neighbor policy defined the good neighbor as one who "respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors" and initially intended to protect American economic interests. The diplomatic unity resulting from that policy positioned the United States as the leader to protect the hemisphere's citizens.¹⁰ The Eighth International Conference of American States in Lima in 1938 produced the Declaration of Lima calling for joint action to defend the region from outside attack.¹¹ Although some Latin American nations remained neutral during the war, twelve countries, including Panama and Peru, supported the United States by capturing Japanese immigrants for internment in America.

Panama's strategic location and its Canal Zone were critical to the United States' security plans for the Western Hemisphere. Once the United States declared war on Japan, the U.S. Navy readied for a two-ocean war with a one-ocean fleet. The Panama Canal was the Navy's "Achilles heel."¹² American diplomats sought to extend and

⁹ Daniel M. Masterson, *The Japanese in Latin America*, (Urbana and Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2004) xii, 9, 12.

¹⁰ Ruhl J. Bartlett, ed., *The Record of American Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 1952) 551-552.

¹¹ Masterson, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 114.

¹² Thomas Connell, *America's Japanese Hostages: The World War II Plan for a Japanese Free Latin America* (Westport, Connecticut, London: Praeger, 2002) 6.

strengthen United States influence in Panama. An agreement between the two countries charged Panama with the task of arresting Japanese residents and interning them at Balboa, nine miles from the canal. Within hours of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Panamanian police set up roadblocks and arrested more than 100 Japanese.¹³ These people became part of the first Latin American shipment of “exchangeable” prisoners, sent first to American internment camps before repatriation in Japan.

On December 9, 1941, American officials in Peru promoted a government sponsored boycott of Japanese businesses in Peru. The Peruvians required little inducement because of longstanding friction between the Japanese and non-Japanese residents. Simmering problems between immigrant Japanese and native Peruvians developed soon after the first Japanese agricultural laborers arrived at Peru’s invitation in 1899. Initially, the industriousness of the close-knit Japanese communities attracted antagonism. As the Japanese gradually left agricultural jobs in the countryside to establish businesses in cities, their business acumen brought success and further resentment from the non-Asian Peruvians. Peruvians believed the Japanese immigrants took away “steps from the ladder of success” for non-Asians. The Great Depression weakened Peru’s economy, exacerbating racial tensions. Those conditions culminated in a 1940 riot against the Japanese with a subsequent boycott of Japanese businesses. The Peruvian government, led by President Manuel Prado, concluded “the deportation and internment in the United States of as many of the nation’s Japanese as possible was both politically popular and expedient.”¹⁴ By 1942, Peru captured and sent more Japanese

¹³ C. Harvey Gardiner, *The Latin-American Japanese and World War II*. Reprinted in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, edited by Roger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor and Harry H.L. Kitano. (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press) Part V, 142-145.

¹⁴ Masterson, *The Japanese In Latin America*, 49, 156, 159.

prisoners to the United States than any other Latin American country.¹⁵ Peru hoped to rid itself of an undesirable minority while securing political support and economic aid from the United States.

Once the Japanese Latin American prisoners arrived in the United States, the Department of Justice and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) assumed responsibility for their confinement. The INS detained approximately two thousand Japanese Latin American separately from the 110,000 Japanese American internees who fell under the jurisdiction of the War Relocation Authority.¹⁶ The United States intended to deport Japanese Latin Americans to Japan in exchange for Americans trapped in Axis countries. However, many issues of citizenship and residency for the Japanese Latin Americans remained unresolved for decades after the end of World War II.

Panama, Peru, and the United States argued that imprisoning Japanese civilians would increase hemispheric security against Japanese military aggression during World War II. The United States interned different groups of prisoners, including American citizens, resident aliens, and Japanese nationals from Panama and Peru, for different purposes. Panama and Peru had their own political and economic reasons to cooperate with the United States.

Yet, an undercurrent of difficulty with the issues of identity and loyalty continued to trouble the Americas where beliefs that culture cannot overcome race persisted. The divide between “true Japanese” and “real Americans” split along ethnic lines favoring prejudice over policy and identity over ideology. Internment practices predicated on racist attitudes in the West and in Japan pushed the limits of humanitarian principles and

¹⁵ C. Harvey Gardiner, *Pawns in a Triangle of Hate: The Peruvian Japanese and the United States* (Seattle Washington and London: University of Washington Press, 1981) 23.

¹⁶ Various sources place the number of Japanese Latin American prisoners between 2050 and 2264.

international law while serving only to widen the racial divide. The interned Japanese Latin Americans profiled in this research developed an increased identity with Japan. Expulsion from Latin America fostered resentment for their country of residence while imprisonment in U.S. concentration camps eroded their stated belief in the preeminence of American ideals of equality and freedom. If Americans predicted that ethnic Japanese would have allegiance to Japan, then incarceration only made that assertion more plausible.

Chapter 1 – Sojourners: Japanese Migration, Assimilation Denied

“A Jap is a Jap”
General John L. DeWitt

The people that crossed the Atlantic Ocean, willingly or unwillingly, to colonize the New World produced complex societies consisting of European whites, African blacks, indigenous browns and every conceivable mixture of those three colors. Conquests and colonization by Northern European Protestants and Spanish Catholics resulted in a remarkable variety of political constructs and social mores that teetered between progress and tradition, reason and faith, free enterprise and government regulation, and ultimately, equality against entrenched privilege. However, Africans, Europeans and the indigenous did not come together on neutral terms.¹ Color mattered. Admittedly, white colonists fought against white European oppressors to gain independence while religious intolerance fed bitter clashes among people of similar skin tones. Yet complexion color provided the fuel for some of the most violent and protracted conflicts. Over time, European colonists, African slaves, indigenous Americans and their descendents settled into a social hierarchy that, with limited exceptions, arranged status according to skin color.² Light skinned people maintained wealth and held power over the dark skinned while those of intermediate shades maneuvered for position between the extremes.

¹ John Chasteen, *Born in Blood & Fire* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006) 20.

² North American social hierarchy consisted primarily of white over black with indigenous peoples exterminated, banished or marginalized. The Spanish in Latin America dealt with the indigenous population differently, producing more mixed race descendants that included *mestizos* (mix of Spanish and Indian), *zambos* (mixture of Indian and black) and mulattos, along with a stratified class system. One hierarchy offered by Hubert Herring lists the strata: 1) Spaniards or *peninsulares*; 2) creoles of pure Spanish blood, born in America; 3) *mestizos*; 4) “tamed” or Christianized Indians; 5) “wild” Indians of the frontier; 6) Negroes. Hubert Herring, *A History of Latin America: From the Beginnings to the Present* (New York, 1957) 187.

By the late nineteenth century, the Americas had passed through stages of colonial separation and slavery emancipation to enter a period of export-driven growth that encouraged continued immigration.³ Opportunity initially attracted a flow of light skinned immigrants from Europe but when growth outpaced the labor supply, a variety of immigrant groups arrived who were considered less desirable. The newcomers included yellow skinned laborers that muddied the hemisphere's already murky race relations among the white, brown and black. Following a wave of Chinese immigrant laborers drawn by California Gold Rush, Japanese laborers arrived in the Americas to work under contract for owners of farms and plantations. However, racism and cultural misunderstandings between the Asian immigrants and the countries they settled in placed Japanese immigrants in an especially precarious position as war with Japan approached.

The Meiji Restoration of 1868, marking the transition from the Tokugawa Shogunate to the ascension of Emperor Meiji, set Japan on an imperialistic path of increasing military might. However, Japan's climb to military power "was borne by those least able to afford it", creating economic conditions that fueled emigration to countries that would later become belligerents.⁴ To fund the restoration of "paramount status" to the emperor, a new system of land taxes financed industrialization. Large numbers of farmers lost their land to the taxes and became tenant farmers. In the process of building a modern economy, Japan offered little opportunity to these rural laborers. Concurrently, labor shortages throughout the Americas prompted businesses to import Japanese workers as a way around Chinese exclusion laws, producing a migration of

³ Nancy P. Appelbaum, ed. et al, *Race & Nation in Modern Latin America* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 2003) x.

⁴ Sucheng Chan, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1991) 9.

137,000 Japanese to the western hemisphere from the late 1800s to the early 1900s.⁵ Longing for home, the early immigrants clung to Japanese values derived from Confucianism that revered “loyalty over self, national goals before individual ones, and personal improvement through learning.”⁶ Furthermore, they came from an isolated and ethnically homogeneous nation, contemptuous of *gaijin*, or foreigners. Japanese in the Americas resisted assimilation, forming a “nation within a nation” that attracted suspicion in their adopted countries.⁷ The self-sufficiency esteemed in traditional Japanese village life evolved into isolation within hostile western societies. Racism, in turn, reinforced the isolation. The immigrants considered themselves as sojourners who planned to return to Japan after an economically productive stay in the West. Many later discarded the sojourner mentality despite their unwelcome status because they were unable to afford passage back to Japan.

Viewed through the lens of racism, Japanese industriousness and competitiveness metamorphosed from an admirable work ethic into sinister ambitions to compete unfairly and dominate western economies. Following on the heels of the Emergency Quota Act of 1921 that curtailed immigration of non-northern Europeans, the United States Supreme Court sanctioned anti-Japanese sentiment in a 1922 ruling specifically denying citizenship to Japanese resident aliens.⁸ In this era of rampant xenophobia, Panama and Peru passed similar exclusionary measures aimed at Japanese immigrants.⁹ Anti-

⁵ Daniel M. Masterson, *The Japanese in Latin America* (Urbana and Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 9.

⁶ Valerie J. Matsumoto, *Farming the Home Place* (Ithaca: 1993) 72.

⁷ Masterson, *The Japanese in Latin America*, xii.

⁸ Tetsuden Kashima, *Judgment Without Trial: Japanese American Imprisonment during World War II* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 2003), 14.

⁹ Connell, *America's Japanese Hostages*, 118.

miscegenation laws such as the Cable Act of 1922 specifically targeted Asians.¹⁰

Anxiety over Japan's increasing militarism in the 1930s only intensified the overt racism and paranoia already directed at Japanese immigrants throughout the western hemisphere. Japan's developing military dominance in Asia fostered fierce pride among the immigrant communities, further antagonizing non-Asians in the United States and Latin America.¹¹ Accompanying legitimate concern for national security throughout the Americas, racial hysteria created conditions that led to the wartime detention and arrest of Japanese immigrants without credible evidence of subversive activity.

Codified by legislation, racial bias became an acceptable "habit of heart and mind" among Euroamericans.¹² However, hostility towards the Japanese was particularly virulent in Peru. In 1899, plantation owners who arranged for the arrival of Peru's first Japanese immigrants refused to honor the original salary contract, provoking widespread discontent. Although the wages paid to Japanese contract laborers were less than promised, the immigrants earned more than the native Peruvian laborers. The wage disparity contributed to the climate of resentment and "provided fertile ground for the creation of distorted images of Japanese immigrants" in the minds of non-Asian Peruvians.¹³ Many Japanese laborers, victims of physical attacks and destructive rumors, left the plantations but were unable to return to Japan because few could afford the passage. Meanwhile, Peruvian plantation owners persisted in encouraging immigration, convinced that Japanese labor was necessary.

¹⁰ Also called the Married Women's Independent Nationality Act, the Cable Act authorized the retraction of U.S. citizenship for American women married to a foreigner deemed ineligible for citizenship. When the law was enacted, only Asians were specified as permanently ineligible. Henry Yu, *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact and Exoticism in Modern America* (New York, 2001) 55.

¹¹ Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 52.

¹² Chan, *Asian Americans*, 45.

¹³ Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 37.

Peru along with many of the nations in the Western Hemisphere had passed anti-Asian immigration laws in reaction to two determinants: social Darwinism and the Great Depression. According to sociologist Benedict Anderson, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gave rise to “virulent scientific racism and, paradoxically, the explosive growth of export economies that demanded immigration of workers from racially suspect stocks.”¹⁴ While economies crashed during the Depression, eugenicists supported the concept of biological incompatibility. Coupling cultural differences with biological incompatibility, nativists agitated for limits on Asian immigration and assimilation. Subsequently, Peru passed legislation that required at least eighty percent of jobs in all professions had to be filled by native Peruvians, specifically non-Asian.

Japanese continued to arrive in Peru throughout the Great Depression and by 1940, a population of eight million Peruvians included nearly 30,000 Japanese. Many immigrants leaving agricultural jobs resettled in Lima and Callao to compete in private enterprise. In large numbers, the Japanese opened barbershops, groceries and dry goods stores. Soon, they dominated retail trade and small industry, exacerbating long-standing hostilities. Historian Thomas Connell claimed the industriousness of the Japanese immigrant community “won them hostility and deep-seated dislike as they out produced and outsold those less energetic, but native Peruvians.”¹⁵ Either unaware of the difficult conditions immigrants faced or undismayed because of bleak prospects at home, Seiichi Higashide joined the extant flow of Japanese seeking their fortunes in Peru.

¹⁴ Appelbaum, *Race & Nation in Modern Latin America*, x.

¹⁵ Connell, *America's Japanese Hostages*, 15. Mariano Picón-Salas offered a theory that South Americans had a particular disdain of manual labor, having developed an economy based on large agrarian estates dependent on slave and Indian labor compared to North America's prevailing small farm economy sustained by family members. This does not explain the similar proscriptions against Japanese immigrants on both continents. Mariano Picón-Salas, *A Cultural History of Spanish America: From Conquest to Independence* (Berkeley: 1963) 70.



18-year-old Seiichi Higashide seated, second from left¹⁶

Seiichi Higashide, born in 1909 in Northern Japan, grew up in impoverished conditions. Following a series of poor harvests, his family nearly starved during the particularly harsh winter of 1922. He could not afford an education beyond elementary school but had read accounts of self-made men. “Like the characters in those Horatio Alger stories, I wanted to pursue my studies no matter what hardships I faced.”¹⁷ Higashide looked for work and worried about his prospects especially after witnessing the mistreatment of laborers on an irrigation project in his village. Eventually, he concluded that he could better his future only by leaving Japan. Higashide managed to secure passage to Peru but, “contrary to my dreams and visions of a larger, more exciting

¹⁶ Seiichi Higashide, *Adios to Tears: The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps* (Hawaii: E&E Kudo, 1993), 43.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 24.

world of opportunities, I found myself in the year 1930, embedded in the small, closed world of Japanese immigrants in South America. Their world was even more narrow than the society I had left!”¹⁸ Higashide chose to immigrate to Peru because of the country’s large Japanese community but his timing was unfortunate. Peru’s president, Augusto B. Leguia, in power since 1919, headed a pro-Japan faction until a military junta led by General Sanches Cerro in 1930 ushered in a dangerous era for the Japanese.

Although Higashide benefited from a close-knit society that included many successful Japanese businessmen, he also suffered from the hostility of the native Peruvians. Higashide managed to work his way from farm laborer to prosperous merchant in the small town of Ica but he remembered, “whenever one stepped out of the Japanese community, insulting epithets would be hurled at our faces... even young children would casually shout at us ‘*chino macaco*’ (Chinese slave).”¹⁹ Although the phrase was a crude term used mainly by uneducated Peruvians, Higashide believed it indicated widespread acceptance of racism.

Racial intolerance, however, was not one-sided in Peru. Considering marriage, Higashide observed,

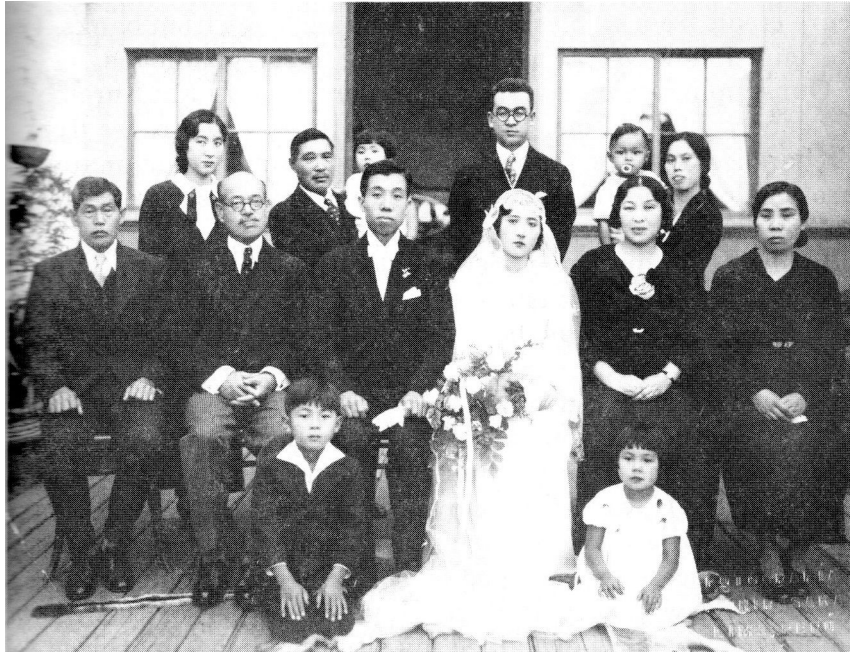
First the Japanese community in Peru was self-contained and tightly closed, so young Japanese of marriageable age had almost no opportunities to get acquainted with Peruvians. Also, first-generation immigrants harbored a strong sense of discrimination. Their attitude was, “How can talented Japanese marry people of a third rate country?” If their children considered marrying Peruvians, it meant they would have completely cut themselves off from the Japanese community.²⁰

¹⁸ Higashide, *Adios To Tears*, 7.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 76.

Higashide believed the anti-Japanese movement in Peru was directly related to the racist beliefs held by the Japanese immigrants.



Seiichi Higashide and his Peruvian born bride, Angelica²¹

Higashide's memories of his attitudes about race may not have been consistent with his deeds. Nevertheless, he gradually discarded the sojourner mentality. Higashide struggled to learn Spanish but believed he had not yet assimilated enough to find a non-Japanese wife. In addition, he could not afford to return to Japan to find a suitable partner. He believed his only hope was to meet a second generation Japanese Peruvian or a recent émigré. By this time, Peru had almost completely blocked immigration from Japan, further limiting his chances. Years later he remembered,

I did not feel that Japanese were superior, nor that Peruvians should be looked down upon as inferior. After I married and had children, I came to see that I could not direct their marriage choices, but in my early days in Peru I felt that since my children were to be born in Peru and would live

²¹ Higashide, *Adios To Tears*, 87.

there I wanted them to fully enter Peruvian society. If any of them chose to marry a Peruvian, I would not have opposed it simply on the notion of race or nationality.²²

Yet Higashide betrayed a resentment of Peruvians who complained that the clannish behavior in the Japanese business community excluded all others from financial success. He believed that poor non-Asian Peruvians did not work hard enough and, rather than compete, simply blamed the Japanese for their poverty.

Growing anti-Japanese attitudes in Peru culminated in a 1940 riot against the Japanese followed by a boycott of Japanese businesses. Higashide, by this time a successful business owner, recalled that the riot started with middle school students in Lima who marched through the city holding placards with anti-Japanese slogans.

After onlookers started joining the student marchers, some began to throw stones at Japanese-owned shops. This soon escalated to full-scale violence. While shouting anti-Japanese slogans, the mob broke into shops, looted their merchandise and utterly vandalized facilities. Although the looting continued in broad daylight, the police made no move to make arrests or even restrain the mob.²³

Higashide concluded that the violence ended only when the destruction was so complete that no Japanese shops remained intact.

Tomas Hayashi, a native Peruvian and former internee who was interviewed in 2003 about his experiences during the 1940s, remembered the event slightly differently. He recalled that non-Asian Peruvians employed by his father helped protect their store from attack. Hayashi said, “thank God my father’s business was not damaged.”²⁴ Hayashi described a brief pause in anti-Japanese hysteria following a strong earthquake

²³ Higashide, *Adios to Tears*, 108.

²⁴ Tomas Hayashi, interviewed by Casey Peek, *Hidden Internment: The Art Shibayama Story*, prod. and dir. Casey Peek, 26 min., Progressive Films, 2003, videocassette.

that struck Peru eleven days after the riots began. He recounted, “then the earthquake comes, the earthquake comes. The Peruvians who looted the Japanese shops ask for forgiveness from the Japanese because they believed the earthquake was a punishment from God.”²⁵ Signs of repentance among devout Roman Catholic rioters disappeared quickly as deeply entrenched racism reemerged.

In addition to worrying about xenophobic vigilantism, the Japanese in Peru also had reason to be wary of Japanese government officials. Higashide, alternately a committed sojourner and assimilated émigré, conceded, “We had all been indoctrinated to absolute submission to the Chrysanthemum Insignia.”²⁶ The universal military conscription that powered Japan’s expanding militarism certainly influenced some Japanese to emigrate. Higashide admitted to concern about serving in the military although he cited a desire for adventure as his primary reason to leave Japan. When the Japanese Consulate General in Peru charged Higashide with the crime of “evading military service by absconding overseas,” he believed his military obligation “had crossed on the waves over thousands of miles of open sea to follow me to Peru.”²⁷ Higashide became a “non-citizen” and a felon in his native land, more completely dependant than before on benefactors from the cohesive Japanese immigrant community.

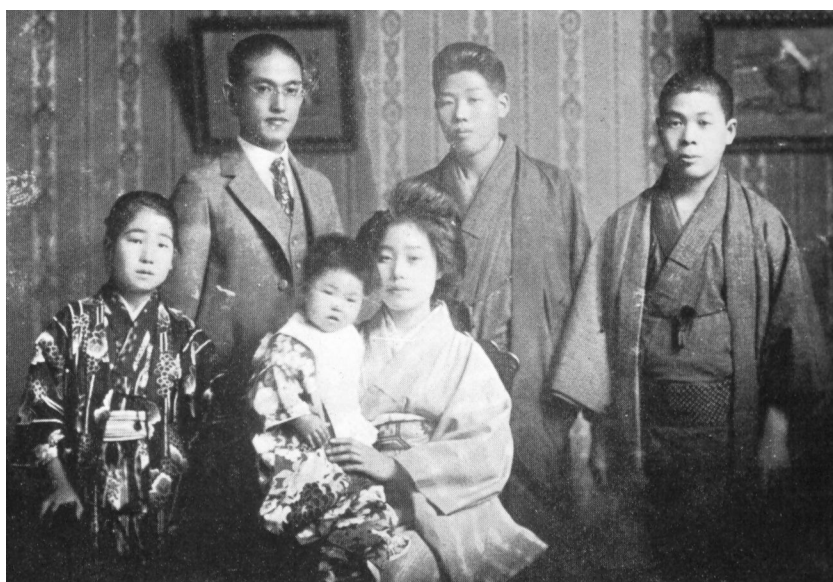
Japanese immigrants had a variety of motives for migration beyond evading the draft. After the initial wave of displaced farmers seeking to escape poverty, some newcomers, like Higashide, had emigrated to escape tradition-bound Japan. Many hoped to find a more open society in the Americas. Some sought adventure in a remote and unfamiliar territory. Still others sensed tremendous business opportunities in the

²⁵ Tomas Hayashi, *Hidden Internment*.

²⁶ Higashide, *Adios To Tears*, 62.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 63.

natural resource rich Western Hemisphere and joined a second surge in migration, mirroring increasing Japanese trade with Latin America that peaked in 1937.²⁸ Most of the immigrants fell into these groupings, although as the specter of a second world war approached, some immigrants were likely agents of or informants to the Japanese government. Except for the category of impoverished farmer, Yoshitaro Amano could have belonged to any or all of the other emigrant groups. Even if he did not migrate for the purpose of conducting espionage, his resumé made him an appealing prospect to Japan's intelligence agency recruiters.



Yoshitaro Amano, second from left, and wife Suzue, seated with daughter Hamako

Yoshitaro Amano was born in the thirty-first year of the Meiji Restoration, on July 2, 1898 in Ojika Akita, Japan. He graduated from Akita Industrial High School, division of mechanics, and attended Kurumae College of Industry leaving shortly before graduation. Amano worked as a ship engineer while honing the entrepreneurial skills that

²⁸ Connell, *America's Japanese Hostages*, 10.

would finance his Latin American business ventures. After the Kanto earthquake of 1923 destroyed his family's lumber business, Amano started a foundry, manufactured a pneumatic pump of his own invention, and formed a company to market the device. Amano married Suzue Arai and had two daughters, Hamako and Ryoko. He also owned several successful pastry shops where he became acquainted with a wealthy customer, Chuzo Fujii, the owner of Suetomi Shokai Trading Company in Peru. Tokyo Imperial University professor Yoshiro Masuda, in an afterword written for the fourth edition of Amano's memoir, *Waga Toraware No Ki (The Journal of My Incarceration)*, surmised that this connection was only one of several motivations for Amano's overseas ventures. Masuda quoted an unattributed newspaper article that characterized Amano as "the pastry shop owner who dared to have big dreams of success in South America."²⁹ The thinly disguised contempt exhibited for Amano's ambitions abroad showed the conflicting attitudes of a once isolated nation coming to terms with international trade and increasing global power.

According to Masuda, racial attitudes also figured prominently in Amano's journeys. Stifled by tradition-bound limitations, Amano left a racially homogenous society behind in 1928, bound for Singapore, Mozambique and South Africa.³⁰ Masuda claimed that Amano became disillusioned with the South African government's discriminatory practices and so continued his journey across the Atlantic. After passing through Brazil, Amano declared Uruguay "like Argentina, was settled by whites but there was no racial discrimination like in South Africa. Because of this, (he) fell in love with

²⁹ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 142.

³⁰ Personal reasons, perhaps not known by Masuda, may have been more significant. In 1928, Amano's wife deserted the family, leaving a toddler and infant behind. Newly divorced, Amano separated his daughters and left them in the care of family and friends in distant cities. He either escaped heartbreak or scandal in a deeply conservative society.

the country.”³¹ Amano returned to Japan briefly upon the death of his father in 1928. He arranged for the construction of a massive mausoleum to hold his father’s remains before heading back to the Americas.

Passing through the Panama Canal to the Caribbean and Colombia, Amano had by this time changed his mind about Uruguay. He was intent on settling in Venezuela until a request from his former business partner, Yoshi Ikawa, prompted yet another change in plans. Ikawa hired Amano to sell a shipload of merchandise intended for Peru but unloaded in Panama. Following a successful transaction, Amano stayed on to establish the Amano Trading Company, an import/export venture located in Panama City. He also helped organize the Ikawa Trading Company based in Japan expressly for the shipment of manufactured goods to Panama and Peru.

By 1930, Amano traveled regularly between Panama and Peru where he reestablished ties with his former customer, Chuzo Fujii. Soon, Amano solidified the business relationship by marrying Fujii’s daughter, Teresa Shizuko. Because Fujii had violated Japanese custom by marrying a native Peruvian, Shizuko’s mixed race would have tragic consequences for the family after they returned to Japan.³² Amano’s businesses flourished and he built a small empire that included a ranch in Chile, lumber businesses in Bolivia, a quinine farm in Ecuador and two department stores called *Casa Japonesa* in Panama. He also established the Pacific Fishing Company based in Puente Arenas, Costa Rica and became a supplier to Van de Camp Company. His children, Hamako and Ryoko, came to Panama to christen his tuna clipper, the *Amano Maru*,

³¹ Ibid., 143.

³² Amano had two children with Shizuko, a son, Naoto and a daughter, Marye. In 1952, Marye committed suicide in Japan rather than face rejection from her boyfriend’s family because her blood was tainted by her Peruvian grandmother. Ethnic purity is revered to this day in Japan.

commissioned from a shipbuilder in Shizuoka Shimizu, Japan in 1933. Amano had become a conspicuously wealthy man.

Humility, modesty and group conformity were as valued in traditional Japanese society as ethnic purity. Amano did not live within those constraints, apparently drawing scrutiny from the Japanese government. As an explanation for why Amano appeared to have avoided doing business in Brazil, home to the largest number of Japanese immigrants, Masuda included an extended quote from a report on Amano by Kotaro Kanaka, an official for the Japanese State Department Division of American Affairs:

It appears that he chose Panama due to the fact that there were comparatively few Japanese living there. I heard that among the heavy populations of immigrants, competition was so severe that whenever one of them appeared to become successful, he was immediately pushed down. This was not good. That is why Amano competed mainly with the English and Chinese and he won fairly. Another reason was because of his choice of regions with stable economies, or so it seems.³³

Amano relied on connections with the Japanese immigrant community yet did not entirely subscribe to the communal values that helped tenacious immigrants prosper in hostile conditions.

If Amano intended to build a prosperous life away from Japan, his Asian features branded him a permanent outsider throughout the Western Hemisphere. Ineligible for citizenship in the Americas, he could never be anything but Japanese because “ a close link between appearance, cultural identity and geographic origin was always assumed.”³⁴ People of Asian ancestry born in Latin America or in North America fared no better than their immigrant parents. Historian Henry Yu quoted California native Kazuo Kawai’s

³³ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 145.

³⁴ Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 178. Although Yu was referring to cultural attitudes in the United States, Latin American anti-Asian immigration law derived from similar assumptions.

lament that, “Once I was American but America made a foreigner out of me – Not a Japanese, but a foreigner – a foreigner to any country, for I am just as much a foreigner to Japan as to America.”³⁵ Linking Asian features with “foreignness” paved the way for European immigrants to more easily become “real Americans.” Unlike the irremovable mask of an Asian visage, immigrants of European extraction could circumvent discrimination by shrugging off their traditional costumes after “selective displays of ethnicity.”³⁶ Taking part in cultural events that strengthened ethnic pride and forged supportive community ties only temporarily hindered immersion within the American majority culture.

European origins, however, did not exempt immigrants from religious persecution. For Jews, a successful selective display of ethnicity was fleeting at best. Certainly there were parallel experiences of persecution and the vilification of cultural values within the Jewish and Japanese Diasporas. However, the boundary between racism and systematic extermination breached by the Nazis strains the comparison. Still, the same constellation of American laws regulating immigration effectively barred both Jews and the Japanese from entry to the United States. Similar barriers existed in Latin America where nationally sanctioned Catholicism contested Jewish doctrine. Yet religion was seldom cited as the chief obstacle to Japanese assimilation, elevating a belief in biological incompatibility over cultural differences, especially in Latin America. The odds for religious conversion beat those for race transformation. Color still mattered.

In an environment of growing racial tensions in the Americas and apprehension about the impending war, the United States constructed a hemispheric defense plan to

³⁵ Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 99

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 202

meet the threats of Japanese espionage, sabotage and military operations. Initiated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration in the late 1930s, the Good Neighbor policy promised mutually beneficial partnerships while also protecting American economic interests. The diplomatic accord resulting from that policy positioned the United States to lead the region's defense.³⁷ Unity prevailed at the Eighth International Conference of American States in Lima in 1938, producing the Declaration of Lima that called for joint action to defend the region from outside attack. Exceptions included Chile, which remained neutral during the war and Argentina, which had pro-Axis sympathies.³⁸ Panama and Peru were among the countries that endorsed the United States plan to capture Japanese immigrants for internment in America.

Shortly after the Declaration of Lima, the United States Congress passed the Smith Act, or Alien Registration Act of 1940. In addition to its anti-sedition provisions, the act required all non-citizen adult residents to register with the government. Within four months, nearly five million aliens had registered under the Act's provisions including 314,715 Germans, 695,363 Italians and 91,858 Japanese.³⁹ The U.S. government used the list of registered aliens to target organizations and identify individuals who constituted a potential threat while formulating internment plans.

Retired Supreme Court Justice Tom C. Clark, a Department of Justice (DOJ) officer in the Western Defense Command in 1941, recalled that his division, "reviewed German and Italian residents on a prosecutive basis, singling out those who were potential troublemakers and we thought that possibly we could do the same with the

³⁷ Ruhl J. Bartlett, ed., *The Record of American Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 1952), 551-552.

³⁸ Masterson, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 114.

³⁹ Roger Daniels, "Incarceration of the Japanese Americans: A Sixty-Year Perspective", *The History Teacher*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (May 2002), 300.

Japanese.” However, Clark recognized, “well, there was also another problem – of color. People were able to single out the Japanese while the other nationalities were not so easily discernible.”⁴⁰ The inability or unwillingness of some members of President Roosevelt’s administration to differentiate among Japanese nationals, Japanese American citizens, and Japanese citizens of Latin American countries became the basis of controversy over the American internment program.

Japanese internment literature frequently contains the charge that American governments scrutinized people of German and Italian ancestry as individuals to determine their loyalty while judging the Japanese as a group. Tetsuden Kashima along with a majority of recent scholars concluded that only expediency and racism contributed to the declaration that all people of Japanese descent were dangerous. He placed the rationale for internment policies not on the prevention of espionage and sabotage but on public relations. Kashima and others believed West Coast politicians intent on pacifying their white constituency and a government eager to demonstrate quick, decisive action convinced most Americans that internment of an entire ethnic group was quite rational and indeed an absolute necessity.

Non-Japanese, however, have argued that the Japanese did not have a monopoly on ethnic oppression. The German American Internee Coalition made up of World War II internees and their families charged that too many American officials acted on the assumption that ethnicity alone decided loyalty. According to this organization’s website,

⁴⁰ Tom C. Clark, interviewed by Miriam Feingold, August 12, 1972, Earl Warren Oral History Project, University of California, Berkeley, 2005 (Accessed October 17, 2005).
<<http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/ROHO/projects/ewge/>>

“once that assumption was in place, all Germans became the enemy.”⁴¹ Internment statistics enumerating German, Italian and Japanese ethnicities do not support this assertion. Of the three groups, Japanese were over represented in the prison population relative to their populations in Latin America.⁴² In the United States, the percentages of detained residents tagged “alien enemies” by ethnicity amounted to twelve percent of alien Japanese but only six-tenths of one percent of alien Germans and less than one-one hundredth of one percent of alien Italians.⁴³ The disparity was far greater for the Americans because exclusion zones forcing the relocation and imprisonment of an entire ethnicity applied only to the Japanese.

⁴¹ German American Internee Coalition, Latin American Program, <http://www.gaic.info/latin_american_history.html> (accessed February 2, 2008).

⁴² Ibid.; Kashima, *Judgment Without Trial*, 234-235, 265.

⁴³ Daniels, “Incarceration of the Japanese Americans,” *The History Teacher*, 300.

Chapter 2 – Spies: Hemispheric Security, Intelligence and Innuendo

“This was all about the Panama Canal.”
Yoshitaro Amano

Racism alone did not drive American internment policy for the Japanese. Injustice unquestionably swept up thousands of innocents but the importance of securing the vital Panama Canal justified a closer look at a few suspicious individuals including Yoshitaro Amano. Intelligence reports indicated at least some level of Nazi activity in Latin America making suspicion of Japanese subversion reasonable. Debates on the relative dangers of Teutonic and Japanese immigrants aside, the scope of enemy alien internment to counter subversive activity abroad preoccupied various United States government agencies. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) had a longstanding disagreement over constitutional authority and jurisdiction. In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson, claiming authority granted by the controversial Alien Enemies Act of 1798, delegated the organization of World War I internment plans to a young, ambitious lawyer, J. Edgar Hoover. By the time Hoover became director of the FBI in 1924, he felt comfortable applying, “extraconstitutional action authorized by the president” to enemy alien control.¹ Unconstrained by legalities, Hoover later used operatives within the United States and abroad to gather intelligence on suspected Japanese espionage.

Edward Ennis, director of the Alien Enemy Control Unit of the DOJ, disputed the FBI’s authority to operate beyond American borders. Ennis cautioned Attorney General Francis Biddle that Hoover was “conducting our foreign relations or our arrangements outside the country.” Ennis recalled, “often, there were arguments as to just where his

¹ Krammer, *Undue Process*, 14.

(Hoover's) authority ended and the authority of other officials in the Department of Justice began."² The DOJ clashes with the FBI did little to rein in Director Hoover or his agents. A proponent of product over process, Hoover believed he did not need to provide justification for his actions to the DOJ.

In another dispute, the DOJ argued with the War Department over internment policy for American citizens and foreign nationals of Japanese decent. On this subject, Hoover's position more closely aligned with the DOJ than that of Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, commander of the Western Defense Command. DeWitt led the appeal to President Roosevelt to intern all West Coast Japanese in addition to other Axis aliens. Opinions within the DOJ diverged over DeWitt's assessment of the Japanese threat.

Ennis said of DeWitt:

“(he) was honestly, though mistakenly as it turned out, concerned that the Japanese fleet which had been so successful at Pearl Harbor might break loose a task force and attack the Panama Canal or the West Coast of the United States. After we won the war and got a hold of the Japanese records, it appeared that this was not contemplated by the Japanese navy.”³

DeWitt believed that Japan had “deployed” their emigrants to the West Coast.⁴ However, the DOJ did not reach consensus on DeWitt's assessment of the Japanese.

James Rowe, who was an assistant to the Attorney General, maintained that the internment should be restricted to aliens because the Constitution protected Japanese American citizens from imprisonment without charge. The DOJ retreated from that

² Edward J. Ennis interviewed by Miriam Feingold, December 20, 1972, Earl Warren Oral History Project, University of California, Berkeley, 2005 (October 17, 2005).

<<http://Bancroft.Berkeley.edu/ROHO/projects/ewge/>>.

³ Ennis, interview.

⁴ United States War Department. *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation From the West Coast 1942*. (Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1943), 9.

argument, too, because of DeWitt's claim of military necessity. A frustrated Rowe said, "only the military could make the judgment of what 'military necessity' was. I looked at these oafs who were telling me it was 'military necessity;' they had less knowledge of whether it was than I did, which infuriated me." Rowe recalled several meetings, attended by numerous DOJ officials and military officers that grappled with the issues of internment. He conceded that the DOJ acquiesced to the military for a very good reason. "Hell, the whole world might have come crashing down. And the first requirement of the government was order. Law comes *after* order."⁵ Establishment of military control took precedence over constitutional law or international law.

Rowe regretted that his former position as White House legal counsel did not improve his ability to influence the president. Despite Rowe's advice to the contrary, President Roosevelt allowed internment plans to proceed. Speaking in a 1971 interview, Rowe put the debates over internment policy into perspective:

I don't think Roosevelt paid much attention to this thing at all. I think somebody got over there at the White House and he said well, it's war, and after all you had a couple of British ships just sunk at Singapore. The entire atmosphere was one of tension, of crisis and Roosevelt was concentrating on the war in these gloomy months.⁶

Since Roosevelt had such overwhelming responsibilities during the war, different government agencies proceeded independently to establish internment procedures.

Hoover worked with numerous agencies to develop lists of suspected alien enemies, concentrating in California and Panama. Ennis, assigned to plan for the detention of alien enemies, had little time to work out the details because "beginning on

⁵ James H. Rowe. Interviewed by Amelia Fry and Miriam Feingold Stein, March 1, 1971, Earl Warren Oral History Project, University of California, Berkeley, 2005 (October 17, 2005).
<<http://Bancroft.Berkeley.edu/ROHO/projects/ewge/>>.

⁶ Ibid.

December 7, within twenty-four or forty-eight hours, several thousand persons were apprehended by the Federal Bureau of Investigation” in California.⁷ Simultaneously, Panamanian police, presumed to have access to FBI lists, took Japanese civilians into custody.

Panama’s location and the Canal Zone, a United States territory at the time, were critical to America’s security plans for the Western Hemisphere. The United States financed the construction of the Panama Canal, the American military secured it and the nation intended to keep it that way. American diplomats reminded the Panamanian government of their previous involvement with enemy alien control intended to counter the German U-boat threat during World War I. Acknowledging dependence on the United States, Panama’s President Ramon Valdez expelled German diplomats and cooperated with directives from President Woodrow Wilson to capture and ship Germans to the United States in 1918. Later, a series of discussions between the two countries prior to Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor produced an agreement, though never part of a written document, that charged Panama with the task of arresting Japanese residents and interning them on Taboga Island, nine miles from the canal “as before.”⁸ Panamanian authorities and American officials developed a list of potentially subversive aliens that included Yoshitaro Amano who wrote, “On America’s blacklist, I was at the top. Maybe just alphabetical, but Amano was at the top of the list.”⁹ In 1941, The U.S. government banned trade with approximately 1800 individuals and businesses on the Proclaimed List

⁷ Ennis, interview.

⁸ C. Harvey Gardiner, “The Latin-American Japanese and World War II” in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, edited by Roger Daniels, Sandra C. Taylor and Harry H.L. Kitano (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press), 142-145.

⁹ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 9; Costa Rica’s *Lista Negra*, originally published on June 28, 1942 in *Diario Costa Rica*, <<http://www.foitimes.com/internment/blackli.htm>> accessed January 24, 2008.

of Certain Blocked Nationals, compiled from a dozen Latin American countries that were suspected of providing aid to Axis countries.¹⁰ Amano's name and that of his fishing company appeared on a Costa Rican list.

Amano's thirteen years as a Japanese national conducting import/export business in Panama was enough to warrant suspicion but Amano admitted,

I had lots of reasons to give them concern. For instance, I like a good view. I built a house outside the city on a mountainside, with a view of the entire canal all the way to the entrance. I could see every ship come and go. Naturally, the Americans knew all about that... Also, nearby in Costa Rica's Puntarenas Harbor, I owned the Pacific Fishery Company. That sounded like a big company, but it was just a \$12,000 company. One of my fishing boats was named the *Amano Maru*, with only a 250 horsepower engine. I had it built in Japan and sailed across the Pacific. It held a crew of 16 Japanese fishermen, catching tuna only 200 miles from Panama. Of course, America thought it was a spy ship.¹¹

Amano went on to list his ranch in Concepcion, Chile with a view of Talcahuano Military Harbor and his frequent business travel as further cause for concern. But there was more. Amano enjoyed photography. He boasted,

By the canal there was a Balboa photography club. The members were all Americans and I was the only Japanese. I won the most prizes – 25 times for best in show. If you're a spy, photography is an important requirement and I had that ability.¹²

¹⁰ "Trade 'Blacklist' Covers Axis Links in Latin America", *The New York Times* Section 1, page 1, column 4, July 12, 1941; "President Orders Trading Blacklist For Latin America," *The New York Times*, Section 1, page 1, column 1, July 18, 1941; "Latin Suspect List Worries Traders," *The New York Times*, Section 3, page 1, column 2. Amano's name was not found on a reprinted blacklist published in *The New York Times*, July 17, 1941. However, a follow-up article in business section of *The New York Times* on July 20, 1941 claimed the existence of a secret, far more extensive list of up to 2500 companies and individuals that "bear watching."

¹¹ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 8.

¹² *Ibid.*, 9.

In addition, Amano authored several books and “all my American acquaintances knew that I had the ability to transmit reports.”¹³ But it was Amano’s ship that attracted the most suspicion and provided rich material for authors of popular spy tales.

Richard Wilmer Rowan, characterized by his archivists as a legitimate investigative reporter and a muckraking journalist, published *Secret Agents Against America* in 1939.¹⁴ In a chapter entitled “How Safe is the Canal Zone?” Rowan charged, that Amano was a secret agent, “whose real profession seems to be a secret to no one.” According to Rowan, Amano was arrested in Columbia and imprisoned in Nicaragua following an espionage charge by an unspecified country but he “was enough of a Chilean millionaire to talk his way out of a Nicaraguan jail. This Japanese adventurer’s private boat the *Amano Maru*, which he describes as a ‘tuna clipper,’ is the kind of fishing craft that serves caviar at meals.”¹⁵ Rowan offered the following sketch of the vessel. The caption, with the qualifier “might”, exposes the purely speculative nature of the illustration.

¹³ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 9.

¹⁴ John L. Spivak Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University
<http://library.syr.edu/digital/guides/s/spivak_jl.htm> (accessed January 28, 2008)

¹⁵ Richard Wilmer Rowan, *Secret Agents Against America* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Col, 1939) 230.

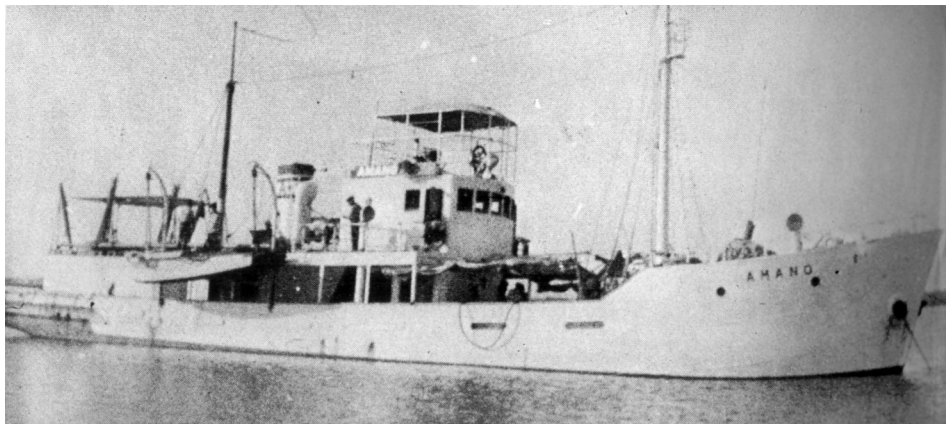
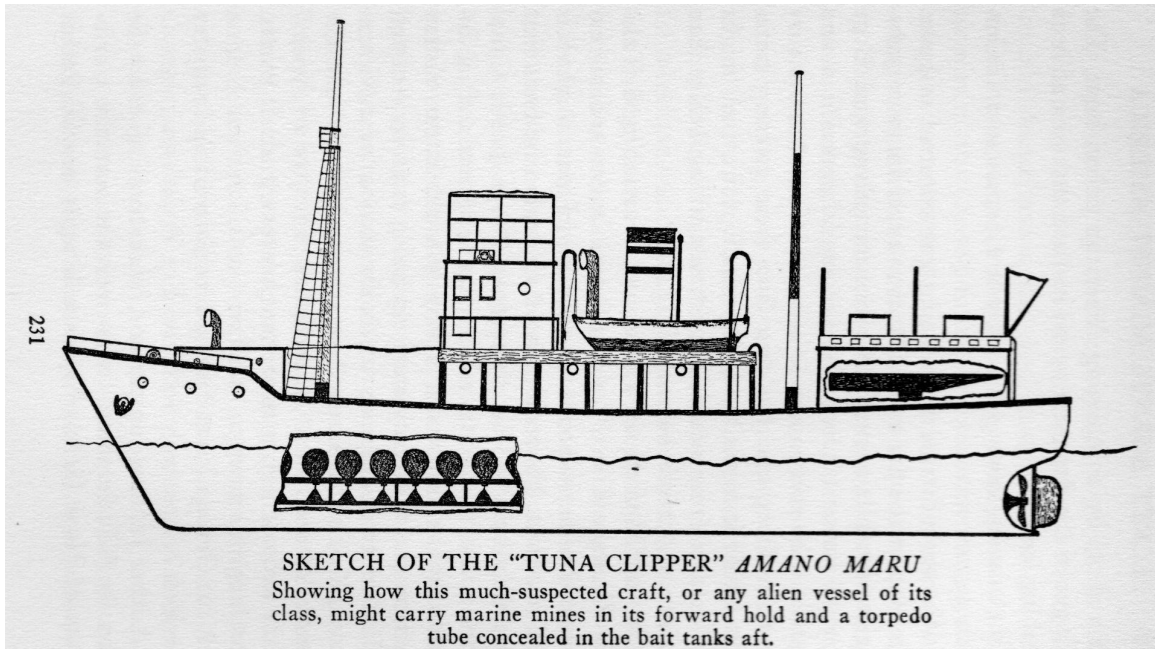


Photo of Amano Maru, circa 1935

Another 1939 publication, Richard Spivey's *Secret Armies: The New Technique of Nazi Warfare*, described the *Amano Maru*'s luxurious appointments. "With a purring diesel engine, it has the longest cruising range of any fishing vessel afloat, a powerful sending and receiving radio with a permanent operator on board and

an extremely secret Japanese invention enabling it to detect and locate mines.¹⁶

Spivey also mentioned the cancelled ship registry, its new location in Puntarenas Harbor, Costa Rica and Amano's predilection for expensive cameras.

The allegations against Amano persist. In 2004, an anonymous spy hobbyist using an online name, Dr. One Spy, constructed an extensive website on Angelfire.com, a web hosting company, entitled "The History of Espionage." The site provided links to hundreds of "Spies and Spymasters of Espionage", dozens of "spy agencies," and numerous references and appendixes. This website embellished the allegations made by Rowan and Spivey against Amano:

One of the crewmembers had been recruited by U.S. intelligence and he quickly supplied photos of the ship's interior, which included sophisticated monitoring devices and an elaborate radio room equipped with powerful, long-distance radio equipment. The vessel also had a special code room where top secret messages transmitted between Japan and the ship were encrypted and deciphered by Japanese cryptographers. In another room, Japanese mapmakers were kept busy drafting charts of Panamanian landfalls suitable to invasion craft and nearby waters that would afford hiding places for Japanese submarines.¹⁷

Reiterating Spivey and Rowan's comments, the website entry criticized Amano for lavish spending, calling the *Amano Maru*, "the most luxurious fishing vessel afloat anywhere." This posting closed with the wholly inaccurate pronouncement that "the spy sailed for Tokyo where he utterly disappeared. It was believed that (Amano) was imprisoned, perhaps even shot, on orders of his spymasters because of his inept spying, or, more likely, because of his wild spending habits."¹⁸ Spivey alleged that "the Japanese millionaire appeared at Managua with his expensive camera...(by) 8:00 A.M.

¹⁶ Richard Spivey, *Secret Armies: The New Technique of Nazi Warfare* (New York: Modern Age Books, 1939) 38.

¹⁷ Dr. One Spy, "The History of Espionage." accessed January 28, 2008 on
< <http://web.archive.org/web/20040912233353/http://www.angelfire.com/oz/1spy/Amana.html>>

¹⁸ Ibid.

of October 7, 1937, he was in a Nicaraguan jail charged with suspected espionage and with taking pictures in prohibited areas.”¹⁹ Despite inclusion of some factual material, these authors display the sensationalist style of tabloid journalism often applied to espionage reports.

A more restrained and reliable write-up of Amano’s ship appeared in a 1942 article by Gordon Ireland in *The American Journal of International Law*. Gordon reported, “On May 29, 1938, Yoshitaro Amano, owner of a tuna fishing vessel, formed the Amano Fishing Company in San José and asked Costa Rica for national registration for his ship, which had formerly been based on Panama.”²⁰ Missing were charges of lavish spending, top-secret cryptography and release from a Nicaraguan jail.

The FBI and the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), working under diplomatic cover to find evidence of espionage, relied on information that turned out to be uneven at best and completely false at worst. These organizations paid Panamanians for information. However, their method of compensation rewarded quantity over quality, resulting in unreliable intelligence from the informants.²¹ Ireland revealed yet another motivation for the questionable intelligence. He disclosed, “following charges that the Japanese fishing fleet had been carrying naval officers, and by native fishermen that the Japanese were destroying fish by the use of dynamite, Panama from February 1, 1938, reserved all fishing in jurisdictional waters of the Republic for Panamanian

¹⁹ My mother and Amano’s widow, Hamako and Rosa Miyoko, do not know if he was ever jailed.

²⁰ Gordon Ireland, “The North Pacific Fisheries,” *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol 36, No. 3 (July 1942) 416.

²¹ Masterson, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 118.

nationals.”²² Nativist sentiment may have seized on accusations of sabotage to eliminate economic competition.

In a July 1941 meeting, DOJ and Department of War representatives formalized injunctions that barred enemy aliens from restricted areas such as the Canal Zone, and forbade possession of firearms, ammunition, cameras, short wave radio receivers, and signaling devices.²³ Fishing boats frequently contained these items, raising suspicions that the fishermen could assist Japanese submarines. The United States’ House Committee on Un-American Activities claimed that federal investigators possessed a map, allegedly distributed among Japanese aliens, which contained vital military information on the Panama Canal, justifying fears of a “fishing boat menace.”²⁴ The map and the confiscation of restricted devices confirmed for the Americans that the Japanese were engaged in Fifth Column activities.

Yet even Amano would concede that his presence in the Canal Zone looked fishy.²⁵ Sometime before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, he had sent his wife and children to Japan and could have attended to business elsewhere in Latin America but, “Just my luck, I was in Panama when the war started. When I thought about it later, I knew I was never going to be treated like a regular prisoner.”²⁶ On December 7, 1941, Panamanian police arrested more than 100 Japanese men along with other Axis

²² Ireland, *The American Journal of International Law*, 416.

²³ Krammer, *Undue Process*, 28.

²⁴ Hynd, Alan. *Betrayal from the East*, 240.

²⁵ Panamanian documentary maker, Maximo Ochy and several Japanese researchers interviewed Amano’s widow, his third wife, Rosa Miyoko Watanabe in 2007 to confirm or disprove Amano’s spy career. Costa Rica seized the *Amano Maru* in 1941 but paid reparations. For more than twenty years, my mother received and deposited monthly checks issued by the government of Costa Rica in an account for Amano’s family in Peru.

²⁶ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 9.

nationals.²⁷ Several secondary sources noted that, out of the fewer than 500 Japanese living in Panama, Panamanian police apprehended only fishermen and merchants targeted by the FBI as credible threats while the remaining Japanese, primarily women and children, were left alone.

Amano recalled the events differently. December 7 dawned sunny and mild despite Latin American superstition that held, “if the seventh day of the month is on a Sunday, it’s a very bad sign, *Sieté Domingo*.”²⁸ Amano had been out for an afternoon drive when fifteen armed policemen burst into one of his properties that served as a dormitory for the department store employees. Only two of the several dozen workers were women, the manager’s wife and a governess/housekeeper. The police loaded everyone, some wearing only their underwear, into paddy wagons and thoroughly searched the house for Amano. The women were allowed to hold onto their handbags but the men could bring nothing with them.

Amano remembered driving past a newspaper vendor holding up a fresh edition with the headline, “*Guerra Con El Japan*” before entering a checkpoint manned by four or five police officers, culling out the Japanese. He managed to drive through the roadblock but, anticipating arrest, went home to pack a small bag. Preferring the dignity of cooperation over capture, Amano turned himself in at to Police Headquarters. He recalled that the police chief pulled out a chair for him and quickly telephoned a colleague to call off the search for Amano. The chief walked with him to Chorrios jail, one block away. Amano found “all Japanese in Panama were there.

²⁷ Gardiner, “The Latin-American Japanese and World War II,” 143; United States Government, “Records Relating to Japanese Civilian Internees during World War II, 1942-1946.” Records of the Office of the Provost Marshall General, RG389, National Archives. Basic Personnel Record, Alien Enemy, Prisoner of War.

²⁸ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 10.

Mostly barbers.”²⁹ He reported that the women and children had also been detained, held separately from the men. After three days,

We stepped out of a dark jail into the blinding sun and almost got dizzy. The American soldiers, at both ends of our group, stood at attention. We marched through them, between bayonets. They loaded ten prisoners to each truck with two American soldiers pointing guns at us. The Panamanians saw and started to come around and watch, like we were performing a strange show. The trucks moved and as we headed off, someone in the crowd of Panamanians said “*viva el Japon.*” We didn’t expect that kind of remark. We were very emotional and the shout gave us a bright uplifted feeling as we were sent to the Canal Zone.³⁰

The approximately one hundred male prisoners still did not know the fate of their families as the trucks rolled towards Balboa Harbor. These men would not know the detention location for the women and children until April, 1942.

Although a majority of sources placed the Japanese internment facility at Taboga Island, Amano drew a distinction between that location and the military camp at Balboa. He described Taboga Island also known as Isla De Flora, as a beautiful seaside resort of swaying palm and tamarind trees outlined by a white sand beach. Amano hoped that his group could swim and enjoy the island just as the German internees during the first World War had been allowed to do. The road leading away from jail forked with one route to the island and the other to a concentration camp. “Alas, the truck turned left. My Taboga dream was gone.”³¹ Amano described a makeshift camp of unassembled tents, boxes of canned goods piled in an open field, and no latrines. Barbed wire surrounded the area and soldiers patrolled with machine guns. American soldiers commanded the prisoners to set up twenty tents and place eight cots in each tent. The group had not eaten

²⁹ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 15.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

³¹ *Ibid.*.

in three days so the first camp meal of potatoes, beans, bread and half a cup of cold coffee seemed extraordinarily delicious. The fine meal did not predict future conditions as months of harsh labor and frightening uncertainty followed.

Within a few days, Italian and German prisoners arrived and with them, the first indications of divergent treatment for prisoners of different Axis nationalities. Amano recalled,

the Germans were on the other side of a double fence. In secret, we tried to get news about the war from the Italians. We never communicated with the Germans but always worked with the Italians. Our confidence was boosted. We started to get assigned easier jobs. We acted like we were superior to the Italians and we were feeling overconfident.³²

The arrival of wounded soldiers from Pearl Harbor to Gorgas Hospital in Panama triggered a change of attitude among the Americans. Amano reasoned, “When they soldiers saw their own buddies wounded and in terrible shape, their morale or their desire to fight increased. Then their reaction was, “I hate the Japs” and that came down on our heads. We got punished for Pearl Harbor then and there.”³³ Amano suggested that the U.S. sent wounded soldiers to Panama in order to reduce the anxiety and fear of the American public that could lead to chaos after the surprise attack.

Amano also noticed a difference in attitudes between a newly arrived group of draftees and the former group of enlisted soldiers. He attributed the increased brutality of the draftees as coming from resentment for missing their sweethearts and the easy life of an American civilian. He concluded,

Not only did they resent the Japanese, but also they saw the wounded soldiers and were ready to explode. We took the brunt of their anger. We noticed immediately that the new group of soldiers was different. They stared at us with hate in their eyes. All the bad jobs were assigned to us, much worse than those

³² Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 22.

³³ *Ibid.*, 23

assigned to the Italian group. The Italians looked at us with pity because we had to work much harder.³⁴

Amano reported months of physically demanding manual labor, digging latrines, picking up rocks, and instances when soldiers hit and kicked them. Many of the Panamanian Japanese were middle-aged and the harsh conditions took their toll on the weakest.

Amano also described the perverse enjoyment some soldiers took in issuing orders. He described one incident that required ten prisoners to dig a hole measuring six by nine by four feet deep. Informed that the results were off by two inches, the prisoners had to refill the hole, tamp down the soil and start again. “They just wanted to make us tired.”³⁵ Forty-three years old at the time of his capture and accustomed to giving orders, Amano learned to accept orders.



Prisoner # 203, Yoshitaro Amano³⁶

Yet Amano also confirmed that military personnel did more than mistreat prisoners for entertainment; they gathered intelligence in concert with the FBI. Amano revealed in his statements the highly suspect activities and defiant attitude that made him

³⁴ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 23.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁶ The National Archives, Record Group No. 389: Records of the Office of the Provost Marshal General, Series: Records Relating to Japanese Civilian Internees During World War II, 1942-1946, File: Amano, Yoshitaro.

a target. While captive, the Americans identified Amano only by the number on his prison-issued clothes. “My number was 203, a bad omen. Everyone knew about 203, a fort Japan fought for in Russia.” The significance of number 203 derived from The Battle of 203-meter Hill and the Siege of Port Arthur in 1904 during the Russo-Japanese War. The battle was noteworthy both for the large number of Japanese casualties and for the tenacity and bravery exhibited by the Japanese soldiers.³⁷ The guards called him by number as Amano expected the worst:

I thought of a spy movie, where the guy gets shot. I thought of that and shuddered. My former employees came around and started asking if I was going to be executed (hand gesture). It was a terrible suggestion. Furthermore, they asked if I wanted to leave any word to the others. I expected to die. The soldiers walked quickly. So I looked back at my life – kind of a selfish life. I never took orders from anyone and I did everything I wanted to do. That life was over now. When it’s my time to die, it’s my time.³⁸

Two soldiers escorted Amano to a tent for questioning. He described the interrogators as an MP named “Cibure” (Sibbly) who seemed to be in charge, a sergeant and a *nisei* translator.³⁹ After Sibbly asked a number of general questions, guards escorted Amano back to his quarters, much to the relief of his employees.

Another interrogation took place a few days later. Amano paraphrased Sibbly’s questions and his answers:

‘You must have known when the war was going to start. What was your position in Japan?’ ‘Why should I know? I didn’t know anything about it. I was just a merchant.’ ‘We have evidence. Why did you go to the bank the day before to withdraw money?’ That’s true. Friday morning, I went to

³⁷ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 27; Stanley Washburn, “What Makes Morale,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1941, 521.

³⁸ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 27.

³⁹ *Ibid.*; “Cibure” written in *katakana*, Japanese phonetic characters, is closest to the name Sibbly, but may also have been Shively, or a number of other possibilities which will require future archival research for resolution.

Panama's National City Bank and saw the manager. I asked the manager to give me my money in cash. I wrapped the money in paper. I told the manager I was going to leave the money in a safe deposit box. I rented the box for one year and I put money in it. But that night, I was thinking, that was still an American bank. If something happened, the money wasn't safe for me. I made a paper wrapper and the next day, I went back to the bank and switched fake money for the real cash. I'm sure they were surprised when the war started and they opened the box and discovered the money was fake. Sibbly kept asking, 'Where was the money? How did you spend it? Why did you take it out?' I divided it among creditors. I paid the bills. Another question. 'We started searching your house. We couldn't find anything suspicious.' It was so stupid.⁴⁰

Amano claimed the FBI questioned him only once, describing the agent as young, refined and polite. He asked about Amano's family and questioned whether they could subsist without funds regularly wired to Japan. The military inquiries, however, continued.

Amano described an angry Sibbly presiding over a sixth interrogation session:

'A month before the war started, you hid six airplanes at your ranch in Chile. We have evidence from a military harbor report. They sent six planes to your ranch. We know everything so you better start saying what you know.' I was just so shocked to hear that kind of question. By the same token, I was disdainful of the American military intelligence department. I was disappointed with it because I'd respected it before. So I was trying to joke and make Sibbly laugh so he'd be easy on me. I said, 'Mr. Sibbly, don't you think six planes is overdoing it? I only know of one.' 'Alright, if you know about one plane, you better describe what type of plane is on your ranch and explain its purpose.' He was excited and his voice got louder. I was determined to try to make him laugh. 'That plane is about two meters long and cost \$1.25. My son was there and I brought the plane to him. I don't remember bringing any other planes to him.' Instead, Sibbly's face got red and he started shaking and shouted, 'Shut up!' He thought I was insulting him. After that, all the enemy's hatred was focused on me.⁴¹

Except for Amano, prisoners received mail and occasional visitors. Amano described especially difficult or dirty work assignments reserved for him, denial of medical treatment and special orders issued to a sentry to shoot if he came within ten feet of the

⁴⁰ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 29.

⁴¹ Ibid.

gate. Because “they thought all of us looked alike,” soldiers photographed him many times. “I’m sure they’d use this image in the movie theater with the caption, ‘this is the spy we caught in Panama.’” I thought it was a great honor!”⁴² Amano did not mention if other prisoners were subjected to interrogation.

In the next few chapters of *Waga Toraware No Ki*, Amano ridiculed roll call and convoluted mess hall procedures as prisoners schemed to get extra meals. He also detailed efforts to smuggle newspapers, assisted by black Panamanian camp workers, and evenings passed following the progress of the war along with hours playing board games using hand-carved game pieces. After several months, Amano recalled, “an incident gave us a jolt – all the Italians were freed. At the next camp, 230 Italians were held but in March, the Americans started releasing them. Ten one day, fifteen the next. Some people were so excited that they were walking on air.”⁴³ All the Japanese remained in camp joined by more recent arrivals of Japanese prisoners from elsewhere in Latin America.

While the Japanese Latin Americans endured Balboa, several events took place in the United States that indirectly determined the fate of these people. James Rowe described a meeting on February 17, 1942 attended by Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Attorney General Frances Biddle, and Edward Ennis in which Ennis argued strenuously against the mass relocation of Japanese Americans. He recalled that Stimson, “looked down his nose and said, ‘Mr. Ennis, we’ve just got to assume in this room that we’re all men of goodwill.’”⁴⁴ Outranked and intimidated, Ennis backed down from his position. Hoover also opposed the mass relocation of all West Coast Japanese, but for a different

⁴² Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 32.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁴⁴ Rowe, interview.

reason than Ennis' concerns about constitutionality. Hoover believed that the FBI already knew who the troublemakers were and that the mass evacuation compromised the agency's intelligence gathering capability.

Meanwhile, Roosevelt weighed Hoover's advice against two groups that wanted to proceed with mass internment: California politicians intent on pleasing their constituency; and the military who believed that the presence of any Japanese in the West Coast exclusion zone was a threat to national security. On February 19, 1942, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 that approved the internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans.⁴⁵ The United States government began to contemplate trading these people for American prisoners held in Axis nations.

Within weeks of E.O. 9066, FBI and ONI agents broke into the Japanese consulate in Los Angeles, uncovering the names of more than 450 Japanese agents. President Roosevelt and J. Edgar Hoover received copies of the break in report that revealed Japan's disdain for the Japanese American citizens, believing they were cultural traitors.⁴⁶ That discovery destroyed any plans to trade the Japanese Americans for American citizens or prisoners of war held by the Japanese. The United States then turned to the Japanese nationals from Latin America to provide a pool of "exchangeable" prisoners. An internal government memo approved holding the Latin Americans hostage for trade stating, "inherently harmless Axis nationals may be used to the greatest possible extent. We could repatriate them, we could intern them, or we could hold them in escrow

⁴⁵ United States War Department. *Final Report*, 26.

⁴⁶ Krammer, *Undue Process*, 31.

for bargaining purposes.”⁴⁷ Concerned about the capacity of Panama’s interment facilities, military officials suggested that the enemy aliens be sent to America.

The United States paid Panama for the costs of internment and shipment of Japanese Latin American prisoners.⁴⁸ The Panamanian prisoners became part of the first shipment of hostages sent first to American internment camps before repatriation in Japan. These captives and other Axis prisoners, primarily from Peru, arrived in New Orleans on April 8, 1942.⁴⁹ Amano claimed he had expected transfer to the United States. “I’d already heard that news in mid-January from the Spanish consulate. He came four or five times to camp but I never got a chance to see him even once.”⁵⁰ Still, rumors spread quickly among the inmates who anticipated better conditions in American prisons.

Amano described the dramatic events that preceded the transfer. On March 29, 1942, soldiers strip-searched the inmates and inspected their tents, slashing pillows, ripping duffle bags apart and checking tent poles. “Some even cut bars of soap in half. We lost our diaries – anything with words was destroyed,” Amano recalled.⁵¹ Awakened at 5:00 a.m. on April 2, soldiers marched the prisoners to a train waiting at a nearby station. He noticed that German and Italian prisoners were already on board but worried about not seeing the Japanese women and children. However, Amano was later relieved to learn they had been quartered at a yacht club near an immigration building. In addition to the two hundred Japanese, the facility held forty-five or six German women and

⁴⁷ Memo : “Regarding the Activities of the United States Government in Removing from other American republics Dangerous Subversive Aliens,” 3 Nov 1942, RG 59, Subject Files, Box 180, Records of the Special War Problems Division, NA.

⁴⁸ Gardiner, “The Latin-American Japanese and World War II,” 145.

⁴⁹ “Axis Aides Ready to Sail,” April 9, 1942, *New York Times*, sec. A, page 6, col.2

⁵⁰ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 53.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

children. Amano, usually careful to note precise numbers, did not mention a specific number of imprisoned German or Italian adult males.

The prisoners speculated that, once aboard a ship, a Pacific route offered hope for rescue by a Japanese vessel but worried about German submarines patrolling the Atlantic Ocean. Amano described boarding the *Florida*, a ship on which he had once been a paying passenger. Again, he noticed that the Germans and Italians were already on board. After a number of prisoners fell ill from a carbon monoxide filled hold, they were allowed on deck to revive under the surveillance of soldiers with bayonets stationed at ten-foot intervals.

The ship headed out of Cristóbal Harbor to Limón Bay where “we picked up another fifty Germans, all caught by the Costa Rican government. I remembered so many of their faces from San José and (we) nodded at each other in recognition, smiling sadly.”⁵² The ship took a zig-zag route to evade a torpedo attack. Three days into the trip, worries about submarines were justified. Someone spotted a periscope which was quickly followed by the sound of gunfire. Amano reported that the ship evaded two more attacks before entering Puerto Barrios, Guatemala’s harbor, to pick up up twenty Germans captured by the Guatemalan government. According to Amano, the *Florida* headed for the gulf on April 6 and passed through the Mississippi delta on April 8. Nine hours later, the ship dropped anchor in New Orleans. Two military motorboats circled the ship all night.

In contrast with Panama’s swift action detaining enemy aliens, the bombing of Pearl Harbor prompted a much slower response in Peru. Fueled by Peru’s racist press, anti-Japanese sentiments simmered without immediate apprehension of Japanese immigrants.

⁵² Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 59.

Two major Peruvian newspapers “published a *lista negra* (blacklist) of approximately thirty dangerous Axis nationals residing in Peru on December 24, 1941. Of the thirty, approximately ten names on the list were Japanese.”⁵³ Seiichi Higashide, by this time a married, thirty-two-year old merchant who had arrived in Peru eleven years before, wondered, “why was my name on the list? What I had accomplished was quite insignificant.”⁵⁴ Newspapers later published additional lists that contained Axis nationals associated with successful businesses. Higashide concluded,

Comparing the subsequent lists with the first, it could be seen that the initial list was different in nature. When I consider it now, it seems clear that rather than being influential persons or leaders within their respective communities, those on the first list were Axis nationals who had involved themselves deeply with the local Peruvian establishment.⁵⁵

Higashide believed that his position as a merchant and an active civic participant in his small town of Ica attracted attention from United States agents working with the Peruvian government.

Peru’s President Manuel Prado, severed ties with Japan on January 24, 1942. Prado concluded, “the deportation and internment in the United States of as many of the nation’s Japanese as possible was both politically popular and expedient.”⁵⁶ Prado’s government stood to profit as announced in a 1942 American newsreel, “the U.S. lends Peru \$25 million and signs a reciprocal trade agreement. Peru will receive American arms under a Lend Lease agreement.”⁵⁷ Prado hoped to rid Peru of unwanted immigrants while securing political support and economic aid from the United States.

⁵³ Higashide, *Adios to Tears*, 114.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Masterson, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 49, 156, 159.

⁵⁷ Newsreel clip, *Hidden Internment: The Art Shibayama Story*, videocassette.

Art Shibayama, a native Peruvian, did not see himself as an unwanted immigrant. He described an idyllic childhood in Lima with summer vacations spent at his grandparents' seaside home in Callao. However, the Shibayama family's deep roots in Peru did not save them from a country intent on evicting as many Japanese as possible. Art Shibayama remembered:

Every time a US transport came into the port of Callao, people, the head of families, went into hiding, my father included. The police came to our house several times and not finding him, they put my mother in jail. My sister went with her because she didn't want my mother to be by herself. When my father found out about it, he came out, he gave himself up.⁵⁸

Peru sent Shibayama's entire family, including six children, to the United States.

The round-up of Japanese families continued for years, catching up with Seiichi Higashide's family in 1944. Peruvian police arrested Higashide and shipped him, along with other Axis nationals and Japanese Peruvian citizens, to a Panamanian prison under American military control. According to Higashide, Japanese deportee groups contained "substitutes or persons with mistaken identities" instead of blacklisted individuals.⁵⁹ Months later, Higashide's wife and children volunteered for deportation to the United States to reunite the family. By 1944, Peru captured and sent more Japanese prisoners to the United States than any other Latin American country.⁶⁰ Only a few of these prisoners were believed to be a threat to Peruvian security, while many more were volunteers, simply hoping join their loved ones.

Higashide described a scene reminiscent of Amano's experience aboard the *Florida*. "Surrounded by American soldiers carrying rifles with fixed bayonets, we were

⁵⁸ Newsreel clip, *Hidden Internment: The Art Shibayama Story*, videocassette.

⁵⁹ Higashide. *Adios to Tears*, 144.

⁶⁰ C. Harvey Gardiner, *Pawns in a Triangle of Hate: The Peruvian Japanese and the United States*. (Seattle Washington: University of Washington Press, 1981), 23.

lined up four abreast and marched over to the gangway to board. M.P.'s were on all sides of us and it was clear that elaborate precautions had been taken. It was then that I truly came to understand that I was a prisoner of war."⁶¹ The ship transporting Higashide, a freighter retrofitted with armaments, carried "a number of people of German ancestry. There were a total of twenty-nine Japanese; of these five or six were naturalized Peruvians and one or two were nisei who had been born in Peru."⁶² Higashide claimed his group comprised a number of older, high value Japanese community leaders. He disembarked at an unnamed military installation in Panama and endured similarly harsh conditions to those experienced by Amano's group two years earlier. On March 6, 1944, Japanese, German and Italian detainees boarded the *U.S.S. Cuba*, weaving towards New Orleans.

The United States backed Peru's efforts to deport these prisoners and volunteers. Peru had assurances from U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull that his department would be pleased "to explore possible methods of assisting the Peruvian government" in expelling their unwanted Japanese. John K. Emmerson, third secretary of the American embassy in Lima, helped determine which of the Peruvian Japanese were dangerous and warranted deportations to the United States.⁶³ Emmerson noted that Peru lacked evidence that its Japanese community ever contemplated acts of sabotage or espionage. Furthermore, he could not determine Peru's criteria for deporting Japanese. After the steamer, *Etolin*, left Peru with Japanese prisoners aboard, Peruvian authorities and the American embassy in Lima were inundated with persons volunteering for repatriation

⁶¹ Higashide, *Adios to Tears*, 142.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 144.

⁶³ P. Scott Corbett, *Quiet Passages: The Exchange of Civilians between the United States and Japan during the Second World War*, (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1987) 143.

because they feared another riot.⁶⁴ Peru continued to send Japanese volunteers to America for the duration of the war.

Fears about Axis incursions into the United States mainland were not baseless although paid informants and anonymous tipsters produced unreliable intelligence that overestimated the menace. An informal survey of *New York Times* articles for the month of July in 1941 that reported military or police action taken against potential fifth columnists in the Americas does not seem to exempt any specific Axis nationality. The time interval selected for this review coincided with release of the blacklist of individuals and businesses “deemed detrimental to the interests of national defense.”⁶⁵ Of the approximately 2000 individuals and businesses on the initial list, a cursory review suggests a distribution of ethnicities roughly in proportion to the immigrant populations. While the official literature, i.e. edited news reports and released government documents, seemed to carefully sidestep the appearance of racism, action belied evenhandedness. Military enforced exclusion zones and mass relocation of Japanese Americans exposed the veneer of judicious and proportionate response to the danger of Axis incursions into the American mainland.

Statistical analyses of deportation and internment figures compared to population distribution by nationality are outside the scope of this thesis but the need to conduct prisoner exchanges with Germany, Italy and Japan necessitated holding enemy aliens from all three ethnicities. Yet it is telling that longstanding barriers to immigration and naturalized citizenship throughout the Americas applied chiefly to the Japanese. Amano offered anecdotal evidence indicating that German and Italian nationals had more

⁶⁴ Corbett. *Quiet Passages*, 144.

⁶⁵ The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, < <http://www.ushmm.org>> (accessed February 13, 2008).

privileges while detained and shorter periods of incarceration, perhaps explained by the potential for “Americanization” of the Europeans that had been denied to the Asians. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor rendered questions of disproportionate or unjustifiable detainment moot.

Chapter 3 – Citizens: Divided Loyalties, United by Internment

“They thought all of us looked alike.”
Yoshitaro Amano

The presumption that Japanese features signaled loyalty to Japan, pervasive throughout the Americas, simplified decision making for government and military personnel implementing internment policies. If the possession of U.S., Peruvian, Panamanian or Japanese citizenship did not matter, neither did proof of sabotage or espionage. In the United States, installations referred to by various word combinations of internment, relocation, assembly, detention, isolation, camp, facility or center (just choose one from column A and one from column B!) concentrated ethnic Japanese from different countries and circumstances behind barbed wire. However, internment elicited resistance behaviors that united the prisoners under their commonly shared Japanese heritage.

Although several organizations devoted to the Japanese Latin American internees are still active, the bulk of published research on Japanese internment concentrated on people relocated from the west coast of the United States.¹ Approximately 120,000 legal residents, either second generation American born citizens (*nisei*), or first generation immigrants barred from applying for citizenship (*issei*) followed military orders to enter hastily organized facilities located on isolated, inhospitable inland terrain. Historians characterized their resigned acceptance with the Japanese phrase, “*shikata ga nai*,” meaning “it can’t be helped.” This phrase

¹ The National Japanese American Historical Society located in San Francisco, California and the Campaign for Justice in El Cerrito, California continue to support efforts to win redress for Japanese Latin American internees.

perpetuates the “helpless pawn” image of the Japanese internees, fusing *issei* and *nisei*, U. S. citizens and foreign born, into one passive population.

However, the injustice of race-based internment embittered the *nisei* more than the *issei*. Of the detainees repatriated to Japan – or more accurately, expatriated, since many had never set foot in Japan – a majority were U.S. citizens, outraged at the loss of their legal rights at the hands of their own government. By 1945, 7000 foreign born Japanese and 13,000 American born of Japanese heritage applied for repatriation.² But the Japanese Latin American prisoners were betrayed three times over: expelled from their country of residence, held hostage in a foreign land and unwanted in the land of their ancestors. Of the three men profiled in this paper, only Yoshitaro Amano was repatriated. Seiichi Higashide and Art Shibayama entered into a prolonged battle to avoid deportation to Japan and either reestablish citizenship in Peru or remain in the United States. Their memoirs reveal how internment affected their identities, reshaped their loyalties and altered their view of the United States.

Amano, well traveled and educated, seemed completely comfortable with western culture. As a successful entrepreneur, he could identify with aggressive capitalists more easily than with farmers working for the communal good in traditional villages in Japan. By the time he turned himself in to Panamanian police on December 7, 1941, he had spent more than thirteen years in the Americas. Several passages in *Waga Toraware No Ki* suggest that he identified closely with Panama. He disagreed with the prevailing view in the United States that the attack on Pearl Harbor signaled the start of war with Japan. In his opinion,

² Chan, *Asian Americans*, 131.

Considering America and Japan's conflict, most people would place the war's start at November 26, the day America delivered an ultimatum to Japan's ambassador. Central Americans didn't look at it that way. Four and a half months before, on July 10, America ordered all Japanese ships barred from the canal. The Panama Canal was supposed to be open to the world. What was the reason? No advance warning was given before the order. When I think about it now, America was already planning war with Japan."³

While Amano linked himself to other Central Americans, he also empathized with Japan and cast the United States as the aggressor. On the evening of December 7, 1941, Amano recalled ordering his two Panamanian maids to bring whiskey and three glasses. He poured for the three of them and offered a toast to Japan's victory and a toast to his love of Panama. On impulse, he grabbed the Japanese board game, *Go* before taking a last look at the home that held happy memories of his family, and drove to the police station.

Amano then reversed his earlier position, naming Japan as the aggressor and revealed his conflicted emotions:

At last, Japan started the war. Do you think Japan would win? I had a cold doubt stab at my heart. I was sure Japan would win. Japan had to win. I had to tell myself that. But, I knew America is a big country. Very sharp. Latest technology. Modern country. Not like Japan. Now, Japan is so tired and run down from war with China. On the other hand, the Japanese people always are prepared. Strong military. Not like the "chocolate soldiers" of America. Millions of soldiers will unite against America. However, I can't believe Japan will win. I'm optimistic and pessimistic by waves. Like ornamental fish circling in a lantern. If the Great God can see the future and if he said Japan would win, I'd give my life right this moment and not regret it one bit. ⁴

³ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 11. "Chocolate soldier" has several possible meanings including a soldier who is unwilling to fight, one serving in a peacetime army, a conscript limited to a prescribed area or a soldier used for ceremonial occasions only.

Amano's high opinion of the United States gradually eroded over his eight months in American custody.

At first, the life of a Balboa inmate was filled with exhausting physical labor and stingy rations that forced the hungry prisoners to devise ways to cheat the system for second helpings. Amano believed that reports of American prisoners being well treated in Japan prompted the U.S. military to improve conditions at Balboa. With reduced physical demands and more generous food rations, the prisoners began to look for ways to entertain themselves in the evening. A lecturer by vocation and disposition, Amano acquainted the prisoners with astronomy and the histories of ancient Greece, England and France. He recited stories from *A Tale of Two Cities* and *The Man in the Iron Mask* although audience favorites were usually the tales of heroes from ancient Japan. Amano realized, however, that what the prisoners truly craved was real news and he set out to procure it.

The improvement in working conditions meant some prisoners were assigned to cleaning duties at a nearby military hospital. Those jobs offered occasional contact with local Panamanian laborers. Amano developed a relationship with the locals, helping out as an interpreter and distributing a few tips, a practice he did not describe as offering a bribe. After a few days, he called in a favor by asking for issues of the *Panama American* and the *Estrella*, the local English language and Spanish language newspapers. One of the workers, identified only as a black man named "E," smuggled papers to Amano.

Amano read the newspapers and formally delivered a synopsis to the other prisoners in Japanese from a makeshift stage.⁵ The guards could not understand him and demanded to know what he was telling the audience. Amano replied that he was preaching religion but the soldiers became suspicious after picking out words like “Manila” and “Singapore.” Later, Amano heard rumors that Sibly would “not tolerate” the troublemaker. Drawing his own conclusion about Sibly’s intentions, Amano “wondered if someone could be killed over such a trivial reason. Killing should be reserved for a more serious crime. I decided to continue. People wanted the news so badly. At the time, the decision was easy but looking back, it was foolhardy.”⁶ The nightly news roundup became a highly anticipated event and the prisoners began betting on the distance of the Japanese army’s daily advance. Amano sifted through reports from the American perspective for any favorable messages, skeptical that Allied losses would be admitted. If the papers mentioned a high number of Japanese army casualties, he concluded that the Americans must have suffered a defeat. A carefully phrased report that the U.S. military “chose” to retreat because a position was not worth holding must have concealed a Japanese victory. According to Amano, one had to read between the lines.

Using the information gleaned from western news sources, Amano wrote at length in *Waga Toraware No Ki* about the bravery, cunning and superiority of the Japanese in the battles of Bataan, Coregidor and Surabaya. Germany, England and the United States were all fair game for criticism. Regarding the sinking of the British

⁵ The formal presentations may have satisfied Amano’s desire to remain “in charge,” or because he wanted to maintain the accuracy of the reports, or simply out of Japanese custom that valued group submission to an authority figure.

⁶ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 38.

battleships *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales*, he bragged, “for Germany, it took two years to bomb England, but Japan accomplished this destruction in 80 minutes.” Furthermore, England’s war planners relied on “military academy textbook” strategies while the American forces failed to anticipate attacks from Japanese soldiers who “came down from the jungles like a strong wind.”⁷ The “overnight” popularity of General MacArthur confirmed how biased reporting easily swayed the American public. Amano contrasted the deficiencies of westerners with numerous examples of Japanese resourcefulness and sacrifice.

Sometimes the enemy commanded grudging respect. Amano admired British Royal Navy Admiral Thomas Phillips for waving off aid and going down with his flagship, the *Prince of Wales*. He surmised, “a Japanese ship came alongside during the attempted rescue but did not try to shoot the sailors in the water because they believed in the “*samurai*” way – “*bushido*.”⁸ Amano also commended the bravery of the British soldiers and wondered why U.S. reports were so critical of their ally.

Following the evening news summary, the prisoners organized another diversion that especially nourished Japanese identity. The men constructed a sumo ring for wrestling matches, complete with announcers, referees, east and west teams and weight divisions. Competitors chose stage names and wore makeshift *keshiomangaushi*, the traditional sumo garb. When the American soldiers took an interest in the matches and began to place bets, the prisoners quit, unwilling to provide entertainment for their

⁷ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 42.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 41,42; Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, Springfield, Massachusetts: G & C Merriam Company, 1967) 113. *Bushido* means “way of the warrior,” and represents a code of chivalry that values honor above life.

captors. The soldiers requested judo matches but the prisoners ended the demonstrations after a few sessions for the same reason.

Resistance took many forms in the Balboa prison: privately held thoughts, passive resistance (pretending not to understand English), angry denunciations, overt demonstrations. As the weeks dragged on, Amano had ample opportunity to size up the enemy:

I thought Americans were better than us but I corrected that notion very quickly. I used to associate with high quality, educated American gentlemen. But since coming to this camp, my only exposure was to soldiers. I saw, through the soldiers, the real America. They are not as neat and sharp as I'd thought. Every time we heard about Japanese victories, we all thought about the Americans the same way. Some people started to use Japanese instead of English to communicate with the soldiers, failing to make an effort anymore. Soon, we lost respect for the American soldiers.⁹

Amano criticized the bumbling military method of counting off by fours that resulted in a different prisoner count almost every day. He wondered how soldiers equipped with the highest quality tools could turn out such shabbily constructed tent foundations. Worst of all, the Americans used their bayonets to scrape mud from their boots, “the ultimate sign of disrespect.”¹⁰ Guards napped next to their machine guns, juggled bayonets, chased iguanas for fun and moved searchlights intended to secure the camp in order to illuminate their poker games. The quiet resistance of internally ridiculing the incompetence of American soldiers compared to their superior Japanese counterparts raised prisoner morale.

Spirits spiked and plummeted throughout the next several months that included the anxiety-ridden voyage aboard the *Florida* from Panama to New Orleans followed by

⁹ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 49.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

long hours on a train through desolate territory to an unknown destination. A high point for the prisoners occurred on the train. An American soldier, fooling around by balancing his weapon on his palm, dropped the gun and watched it fall through a gap under a door. The prisoners expected to see harsh punishment doled out but no recrimination beyond an extra shift of K.P. duty fell to the clumsy soldier. The train continued, leaving the gun on the tracks, while the Japanese puzzled over the lax American attitude towards valuable weapons.

The train carrying the one hundred Panamanian Japanese prisoners passed through Texas and arrived at Fort Sill in Oklahoma.¹¹ Amano described the facility as 192 tents and 13 barracks, “lined up like *Go* game pieces” on barren land, surrounded by a double layer of barbed wire fencing, nine-foot high, and a guard tower with machine guns, “loaded and uncovered and ready to shoot us anytime.”¹² A group of 169 Japanese prisoners from Hawaii greeted the new arrivals. From this point in *Waga Toraware No Ki*, Amano almost always referred to the prisoners by group, reflecting the value placed on the concept of group in Japan, i.e. the Panama group and the Hawaii group. Conditions at Ft. Sill were a step up from Balboa, with good food, served on porcelain dishes. Amano “felt proud to be promoted from animal to human.”¹³ He was surprised that camp officials permitted the prisoner to use knives, forks and spoons.

Soon, another group from Fort Missoula, Montana, arrived. Originally from California, the 352 prisoners making up the Missoula group, had been considered dangerous and according to Amano, “the worst of the worst.” The Panama group, dressed

¹¹ Amano counted 105 men originally incarcerated with him at Panama’s Chorrios Jail. They had been joined in Balboa by additional prisoners from Costa Rica, bringing the total to 185. Once at Fort Sill, he placed the number of prisoners in his group at 180.

¹² Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 68.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 70.

“like beggars,” formed a welcome party but it turned out that the new arrivals were extremely well dressed, carrying unscuffed suitcases, golf bags and portable radios. Amano wondered, “who was trying to comfort whom? We needed it more.”¹⁴ This was the first exposure the Japanese Latin American prisoners had to Japanese Americans. Amano did not comment further on the apparent disparities in privileges.

The three groups of prisoners banded together by celebrating their shared cultural heritage. Because the officers at Fort Sill did not demand the long hours of hard labor ordered by the staff at Balboa, the prisoners had time for many leisure pursuits. Amano especially enjoyed the talent shows that featured traditional Japanese acts: *nani wa bushi* (singing), *shigin* (poetry), *biwa* (an ancient stringed instrument), *rakugo* (stand-up comedy), *haota* (ancient songs), *koiwiro* (impersonators), *dojosukui* (a comical dance), and *shakuhaji* (traditional flute). Some of the Japanese American prisoners had been professional musicians. INS officials had allowed the musicians to keep their instruments in camp along with supplies of *yokan* (rice candy) and tea that they shared with the destitute Latin Americans.

The standing-room-only shows provided a brief respite from fear and worry but reality soon intruded with three deaths in camp. The first prisoner to die, Ochi Yakuji, had been ill in Panama. Taken by medics to Ancon Hospital, he returned five days later, diagnosed with untreatable cancer of the tongue.¹⁵ Amano claimed the U.S. Army denied Ochi’s request for a last visit from his wife and child and forced him to join the rest of the Panamanian prisoners to Fort Sill. Amano recalled that Ochi “begged many

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Maximo Ochy, Ochi’s grandson and a documentary filmmaker from Panama City, Panama, believes his grandfather did not have cancer but suffered from the effects of torture. Amano described Ochi as a businessman from Darien, Panama but Ochy suspects that his grandfather was a Japanese operative.

times for the soldiers to kill him.”¹⁶ He also charged the Fort Sill physicians with only coming to Ochi’s tent to determine if he was dead or alive. Amano described his final day:

April 30. Ochi was taken to the hospital. We all lined up to give him a send-off. He waved weakly from the stretcher. He looked like a mummy swinging his arm in the air. That’s the last time we saw him alive. He died on May 1. We all knew tongue cancer killed him but so did American indifference. When he died, he was alone. Such a lonely, sad way to die. His body was buried in an Oklahoma field. I’m sure his marker would soon rot and the weeds would take over. Surely, even if peace ever came to this world, his wife and family would not be able to find him. That evening was cold and rainy. Where would his soul travel?¹⁷

The next casualty, Oshima Ken Saburo occurred ten days later.

Historian Tetsuden Kashima, in *Judgment Without Trial*, counted the death of Kanesaburo Oshima as one of seven internee homicides committed by U.S. military personnel.¹⁸ Kashima dated the incident on May 13, 1942, one day later than Amano, and provided some background information for Oshima’s erratic behavior. Other details of the event at Fort Sill are largely in agreement. Amano’s version read:

May 12, 8:00 a.m. Oshima Ken Saburo, what was he thinking? He tried to climb over the gate. It happened so suddenly. The guard and the watchtower soldier were surprised but in a second, a terrible thing happened. The guard pulled a pistol on Oshima as he ran between the barbed wire fences and threw himself halfway up the outer gate but the overhanging barbed wire stopped him. Even if no one did a thing to stop him, Oshima wouldn’t have succeeded. We shouted, “don’t shoot. He’s crazy!” The watchtower guard lowered his gun but the other guard shot him from three meters away. Oshima’s body dropped to the ground. The medics later said a second shot went through his head. The Fort Sill weeds absorbed Japanese blood then but bad things always happen in threes.¹⁹

¹⁶ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 73.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁸ Kashima, *Judgment Without Trial*, 191. Japanese custom places the family name, or last name first. The two versions of the given name or first name, Ken Saburo and Kanesaburo, are artifacts of translation.

¹⁹ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 74.

Amano listed Shimoda Itsuji, the third camp death, as a witness to Oshima's death.

Numerous sources ascribe Oshima's personal history and death to Shimoda, confusing the two men and counting their separate deaths as one. However, Kashima's research corroborates the account in *Waga Toraware No Ki*. Amano believed that Shimoda died under suspicious circumstances after suffering a nervous breakdown in a military hospital five days after witnessing Oshima's murder. Military officers refused prisoner requests to see the body. However, some camp administrators delivered flowers and condolences to the prisoner, derided by Amano as too little, too late. "We needed kindness while we were alive. If they had showed any compassion first there would be no need to bury bodies out here."²⁰ The military granted permission for prisoner-conducted funerals.

The funerals galvanized the prisoners' fear and anger into a renewed connection with their Japanese ancestors. Amano described the rituals:

Before the casket was sent to the cemetery, it was brought to a tent. All the prisoners solemnly viewed the pallbearers. About sixty ministers and priests of all denominations, mostly from Hawaii, followed the casket. About two-thirds of the way down the path, the casket was placed on a table covered by a white cloth. At both sides, flowers were placed. Small wooden plaques with the departed's name, as in shrines, were placed near the casket. Then, the priests started to chant but not of the usual kind for funerals. More than sympathy for the dead, the chanting communicated anger at the Americans. The suffering of all prisoners came through in the chants. Many people were crying. Yamada read the eulogy. Incense and prayers followed. The incense smoke swirled and rose like a soul approaching the May sky. We returned the way we arrived, handing the casket back to the army soldiers, offering a last prayer. After the hearse cleared the gate, we still stood there for a long time and mourned.²¹

The eulogies provided a platform to express resentment and outrage. One prisoner, identified only as "A," delivered a eulogy that, at length, denounced and repudiated the United States'

²⁰ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 75.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 75-76.

claim to moral superiority. He insisted Japan did not kill without a motive compared to an American soldier casually gunning down a mentally ill inmate. “A” rallied the prisoners with a call for the Imperial Japanese Army to defeat the Americans.²² These statements, delivered in Japanese, went unnoticed by the guards.

Few prisoners spoke directly to the enemy in protest but some were willing to speak up when ordered to do so. According to Amano, the military conducted a court martial of the soldier accused of shooting Oshima, calling ten Japanese as witnesses. One courageous witness, Shindo Tamezo, testified that the soldier said, “I don’t care, he’s just a Jap” after firing at Oshima. After the accused soldier denied hearing requests to hold fire, Tamezo angrily called him a liar, noting that the sentry in the watchtower heard the request. Amano claimed an officer then yanked the soldier’s stripes from his uniform.

These incidents empowered the prisoners to outwardly resist. Overt demonstrations of Japanese pride replaced the silent protests and whispered insults. Amano related an amusing story of coercing an American officer, identified as Lieutenant Baxter, to show respect by attaching the suffix, *san*, to his name. Calling out Amano-*san*, or “honorable Amano,” would invite the polite response of *hai*, a respectful form of “yes” in Japanese. The following day, Lt. Baxter took roll by solemnly calling out every prisoner’s name, adding *san* to each one. Some of the prisoners could not refrain from giggling.

Laughter was an important coping mechanism for these men. Amano recalled the first laugh, months before on the night of his arrest, when his employees greeted him with words of welcome. He replied, “what do you mean, welcome? This is jail!” Everyone laughed with relief. Historian Steven Lipman, exploring the role of humor for Jews living in Nazi

²² Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 77.

Germany, observed that where jokes are permitted, “it seems like a free country, even if it’s not.”²³ Nonetheless, the prisoners understood that smiles required courage.

The prisoners grew bolder. The Panama group invited the Hawaii group and the Missoula group of Californians to join in a celebration of the emperor’s birthday, *Tencho-setsu* (April 29). Many required instruction in the meaning and customs of the holiday. Ultimately, only the Hawaiians joined the Panamanians in marching to an open area in the middle of camp, bowing in the direction of the emperor and shouting *banzai*. Amano described the scene:

We had all been trained in elementary school to accept orders and marched along, no practice required. All the soldiers wondered what was going on. The tower guard turned the machine gun towards us. I was at the end of the line and I worried. I regretted our decision already but the others continued to march along. The groups stopped at Road #3. Everyone turned towards the emperor. Suddenly, I could picture green pines, the Nijubashi Bridge to the Emperor’s palace and a solemn scene unfolded in my imagination. We bowed deeply, like rice plants just before harvest. Just then, the soldiers broke into applause. We felt safer then, overjoyed, and sang the Japanese anthem. We shouted *banzai!* three times.²⁴

This defiant act united the prisoners holding Japanese, Panamanian, Costa Rican and American citizenship under the umbrella of their shared Japanese cultural heritage. The groups left Fort Sill a month after *Tencho-setsu*.

On May 28, orders arrived to transfer the Missoula, Hawaii, and Panama groups, a total of 700 prisoners, to Camp Livingston, Louisiana. The camp, a U.S. Army internment facility near Alexandria, Louisiana, already held a number of German and Italian nationals in

²³ Steven Lipman *Laughter in Hell: The Use of Humor during the Holocaust* (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 1991) 28.

²⁴ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 80.

addition to *issei* recommended by INS hearing boards for permanent interment.²⁵ During the twelve-hour journey by train, a Costa Rican prisoner, identified as “N,” covertly resisted his captors by passing along secret information to Amano. “N” whispered to Amano that the American military attempted to destroy the *Amano Maru* on December 7, 1941. “N,” at the time a fisherman aboard the *Arletta*, claimed two bombers misidentified his boat for Amano’s, bombing and strafing the deck with bullets. Sailors aboard the *U.S.S. Erie* detained the *Arletta*’s crew of seven Japanese men. As “N” spoke, he unwrapped a small copper shell, saved from the incident, but the conversation ended as the train stopped.

The groups marched together towards barracks spread out along Paradise Avenue, a name the prisoners found infuriating. They had hoped to remain united but were divided into two sections. Conditions at Camp Livingston were dramatically different than Fort Sill. To the relief of the prisoners, guards at the camp watchtowers did not have machine guns. While the food was of lower quality, the barracks proved to be far more comfortable than Fort Sill’s leaky tents. Amano could see the pine forest from his room. “After it rained, fog would form. In the fog, the pines took on various shades of gray, dark to light like a Chinese watercolor in black and white.”²⁶ Some prisoners filled their days with games of *Go* and *mahjong*, while others created displays of collected rocks and hand-polished pine burls. Amano admitted that life in prison was, at times, almost pleasant.

The most significant improvement for the prisoners at Camp Livingston was “open access to newspapers – the *New York Times*, local papers and Japanese American papers, the *Nichibei Shinbun*. No more starving for news.”²⁷ The prisoners formed a news group of translators who daily produced three handwritten copies of an edited digest for distribution to

²⁵ Kashima, *Judgment Without Trial*, 109.

²⁶ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 88.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 90.

the Panama, Hawaii and Missoula groups. The prisoners could finally follow the battles in detail but they also gained perspective on the United States. Amano defiantly concluded,

If I were to describe in one word the attitude of the American public towards the Japanese, it would be “disrespect.” Of course, there were exceptions such as Senators Wheeler, Nye, and La Follette. Even before them, William Randolph Hearst and Charles Lindberg warned that the Japanese would not be an easy adversary. However, like those unaware that a tidal wave is about to engulf their tiny island, the American people disregarded warnings.²⁸

He believed that the Japanese had greater resources than the Americans realized and that the American public had good reason to be frightened.

Amano described the battles in the Pacific theater in great detail, critiqued the statements by military officers and argued about the accuracy of reporting. The cartoons, in particular, bothered him. He remarked,

Naturally, the daily newspapers never forgot to print caricatures poking fun at Japan. For example, one cartoon depicted a little man with a worried look, supposedly Japan, with his feet mired in the mud that represented China. He was facing huge storm clouds representing the United States, England and Australia. This caricature showed that Americans thought that the Japanese were weakened by four years of fighting in China. Therefore, they would not be difficult to defeat. Another sketch depicted a little mean looking man with slanted eyes and two faces. One faced Thailand and Indonesia, and the other, with a humbled expression, faced America. This showed how America looked at and thought about Japan.²⁹

Yet Amano noted that the newspapers presented the Japanese as a formidable adversary. He also believed that the Latin Americans were secretly delighted by setbacks suffered by the United States.

Amano used every opportunity in his book to uplift Japanese morale. He trumpeted the rationing of fuel and the shortage of raw materials in the United States. A diagram published in *Life* magazine that illustrated troop movements in the war used arrows that

²⁸ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 92.

²⁹ Ibid.

“appeared to be like rays of the rising sun.” Although he also worried that, “America will never give up its hopes for victory. For every single airplane Japan produces, America will produce ten. For one Japanese tank, America will make twenty.”³⁰ Still, Amano exhorted his fellow Japanese to challenge these statistics in order to undermine American hopes for victory.

As the number of overt displays of resistance decreased at Camp Livingston, the prisoners could not help becoming pessimistic. Since many of the internees were older, they did not believe they would be set free in their lifetimes. The permanent construction of the barracks rather than temporary tents confirmed their worries. Rumors began to circulate about a prisoner exchange boat, the *Gripsholm*, and the possibilities of repatriation. The ship was scheduled to leave on June 12, 1942.

On June 4, camp officers called thirteen names listed for repatriation. Amano described them as mostly employees of big companies, primarily from the Missoula group, with one employee of NYK (Nihon Yusen Kaisha, a shipping company) from Hawaii and one barber from Panama. “At 4:30 p.m., twelve of the thirteen people selected loaded onto a truck with a military escort and departed. From those of us who remained, surrounded with barbed wire, came a sad and mournful “banzai.”³¹ Amano praised the actions of the thirteenth person on the list who signed a waiver allowing his former employer with a young family to take his place on the exchange boat, calling him a “man among men” and the embodiment of a “true Japanese.”³² The employee was not allowed to take the place of his boss so neither boarded the truck.

After a second group departed, those left behind began to construct little shrines out of scraps of wood and sticks and pray for a third list that would contain their names. To the

³⁰ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 98, 103.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 105.

³² *Ibid.*, 110.

prisoners' surprise, military officials released a third list on June 12. Amano recalled, "at the time, I was taking part in a hotly contested game of *Go*." Told he was on the list, "I continued to make another move without taking my eyes off the board. I wasn't going to be fooled by a trick like that."³³ Indeed, Amano and three of his former employees were on the list of five names. Two days later, Amano made a farewell speech that began "Someday, let us all meet on the pier at Yokohama. That day is closer than you think. Do not lose faith. Stay well and persevere!"³⁴ The train to New York and the *Gripsholm* departed on June 14, 1942.

Amano and the others stepped off the train at Pennsylvania Station on June 16. Guards escorted the group across the street to the Pennsylvania Hotel, onto a freight elevator and up to the fourth floor. They joined "about thirty other people quartered in rooms close to us. Most of them looked like they had been living in New York. Among them were four or five Japanese ladies and, considering the circumstances, it was a very pleasant surprise to see them."³⁵ The pleasantries ended abruptly with a body and possession search:

This time, the F.B.I. was involved along with police in the search. When they checked my duffle bag that contained all of my possessions, they discovered a small sheet of paper among them. The police inquired, 'What is this?' 'This is a list of the family addresses of my fellow prisoners,' I replied. Without a word, he moved to confiscate it. I protested loudly. 'Give it back to me! I need it. It contains no harmful or secret information.' That was my answer. He glared at me and said, 'anything written down must be confiscated,' and with that, he snatched the paper and left. However, I had suspected that something like this would happen so I had made a duplicate copy. The day before leaving camp, even though very busy, I took the time to copy all the addresses on an inside lining of a cigarette pack. I had practiced how to write minute *kanji* (Chinese characters) so that they would appear as a single line. I wrote about 2900 *kanji* on a piece of paper that was small enough to fit in the palm of my hand. The policeman must have thought that he had done a good job finding that list of addresses so he checked no further. Because of his

³³ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 112.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 114.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 116.

negligence, I was able to retain a list of the Panama and Hawaii groups' family addresses in Japan.³⁶

Amano was not done resisting. He boarded *the Gripsholm* on June 18, angrily tearing off his badge #203. The ship carried, by Amano's count, a total of 1065 civilians, including Japanese ambassadors Kichisaburo Nomura and Saburo Kurusu, consulate employees, diplomats from the United States, Canada and Latin America, and exchange students from Thailand. The ship stopped in Rio de Janeiro on July 2, 1942 to pick up 383 Japanese nationals from Brazil and Paraguay.

The passengers resumed some normal activities, attending Spanish lessons and evening lectures on a variety of subjects. Again, the most popular events were the talent shows that brought the Japanese Latin American prisoners together. Groups detained at different locations, such as Camp Missoula, Camp Upton and Camp Kenedy performed songs sung to the tune of traditional Japanese folk songs. The songs helped lift prisoners' spirits with lyrics that were playful, "when you open an umbrella shop, try Upton, the tents leak there;" angry, "The River Styx in hell is a child's playground, picking up stones in Missoula is men's hell;" or philosophical, "pretense is worthless, here, it's a man's world, meditation is a must, earthly things, let go."³⁷

As the *Gripsholm* neared Lourenzo Marques (now Maputo), Mozambique, site of the first prisoner exchange with Americans on board the *Asama Maru* and the *Conte Verde*, a powerful sense of nationalism replaced resistance. Amano described the scene on July 22, 1942:

³⁶ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 117-118. The complete lyrics, in Japanese and translated to English, for five of these songs of resistance are reprinted in Appendix A.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 125-129.

On the morning of the 22nd, all of us anxiously awaited the arrival of our *Asama Maru* and *Conte Verde* and a chance to see them proudly sail into the bay. It was a magnificent sight. The *Hinomaru* (Japanese flag) and a white cross were painted on the sides of the ships. High on the masts fluttered the *Hinomaru* and the sight of it against the tropical blue sky nearly blinded me. We breathlessly watched in anticipation. When the two ships drew alongside the *Gripsholm*, there arose a loud “banzai!” At that moment, the power of Imperial Japan seemed overwhelming.³⁸

For Amano, the exchange underlined the cultural gap between the Japanese and the Americans. He compared the orderly behavior of the Japanese while boarding the *Conte Verde* to the self-centered Americans that had no sense of obligation to the group as they rushed to secure the best cabins for themselves.

Amano’s arrival in Singapore, renamed Shonan under Japanese occupation, signaled the end of his ordeal. Finished with resistance against the enemy, Amano began to write only of the glorious sights of Japanese territory and the superiority of his homeland. The *Asama Maru* and *Conte Verde* “plowed through the tropical blue ocean like two young stallions galloping ahead and leaving a beautiful double wake behind” as they entered Shonan Harbor.³⁹ Amano claimed he did not see any signs of damage from the war, only ships lined up on the west side of the harbor. Furthermore, he claimed that Japan treated civilian prisoners far more humanely than the Americans treated the Japanese.

I always thought that magnanimity was not part of the creed of our military leaders. Now I must rethink my opinion. Since the beginning of history, there never has been an example of such treatment for 100,000

³⁸ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 131; Greg Leck, *Captives of Empire: The Japanese Internment of Allied Civilians in China 1941-1945* (Philadelphia: Shandy Press, 2006) excerpted on the Svenska Amerika Linean website <http://www.salship.se/leck/captives_of_empire.asp> (accessed February 21, 2008)

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 132.

prisoners left to move freely about in a city. Japan should be very proud of the way in which those 100,000 prisoners are being treated.⁴⁰

A Japanese officer explained to Amano that the city was still safe enough for anyone to walk at night without fear.

After a brief tour of the city and a good meal, Amano concluded that,

Shonan was exactly in the same condition as the new country of Manchuria after five years of Japanese occupation. Under Japan, the country became secure and peaceful... Previously, England maintained that the country that controlled Singapore would control the world. Now with the name changed to Shonan and under the fluttering flag of Japan, it shows the promise of a brighter future. When I thought about the more than one hundred and eighty days enduring the hardships and boredom in the concentration camps, it all seemed to disappear like bubbles floating away in the wind.⁴¹

The second and final exchange took place on September 2, 1943 when the *Gripsholm* set sail with 737 Japanese Latin Americans in the custody of the United States out of a total of 1340 Japanese aboard. Most of those aboard the *Gripsholm* were diplomats, bankers and businessmen.⁴² Following this exchange, diplomatic negotiations broke down between Japan and the United States, halting the prisoner exchange program. Deportations of Japanese Peruvians to the United States, including Seiichi Higashide's family, continued after the last exchange.

Seiichi Higashide's attitudes about prisoner resistance differed from Yoshitaro Amano's for several reasons. By the time Peruvian police captured Seiichi Higashide on January 6, 1944, he had anticipated his arrest for two years, spending months in hiding. After his arrest, his wife and children voluntarily boarded a freighter to escape from Peru's virulent racial persecution of the Japanese. Higashide was angry at the

⁴⁰ Amano, *Waga Toraware No Ki*, 138.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁴² Corbett, *Quiet Passages*, 93.

racist attitudes in Peru but he was also angry that the Peruvian government “had given in to American pressure even to the point of deporting naturalized citizens and Peruvian citizens who had been born there.”⁴³ He now agreed with the Japanese immigrants who had called Peru an uncivilized, third-rate country.

Higashide, though, felt especially betrayed by the United States. Surprisingly, he did not look to Japan for rescue. He wrote,

From the time I was a child I had read many books about America. I had felt that America was an ideal country that should be taken as a model for the whole world. Why, then, had that country moved to take such unacceptable measures? Where was the spirit of individual rights and justice that had filled the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution? ...Even if under emergency wartime conditions, was America not in violation of individual rights? This was not, I felt only a matter of international law, it was a broader issue of human rights. Of course, undeniably, the Axis nations perpetuated similar outrages. Yet, I felt, could I not hope that America alone would not do so?⁴⁴

While Higashide and Amano shared positive views of the United States prior to the war, this statement, written in 1981, reflects Higashide’s nearly forty years as a U.S. resident.

Higashide and his family were separated for six months. He ended up at Camp Kenedy, Texas for single men, while his family was held in nearby Crystal City Family Internment Camp, 120 miles southwest of San Antonio. Most of the internees arriving in 1944 were Peruvians hoping for eventual return to Peru, not expatriation to Japan. These camps, along with Santa Fe Internment Camp and Fort Stanton Segregation Camp, had been organized by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to house the thousands of internees arriving from Latin America. The INS run camps, according to Higashide, were “completely unregimented. Here, we were not under the jurisdiction of

⁴³ Higashide, *Adios To Tears*, 142.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 143.

the U.S. military and there were no strict rules or procedures to follow and we were not made to carry out exhausting work assignments.”⁴⁵ With all basic need met, boredom became the major challenge.

Unlike Amano’s older Panama group, Higashide described the men at Camp Kenedy as primarily young native Peruvians, single and high-spirited. Their resistance behaviors, in stark contrast to the Panamanians, did not draw on Japanese traditions because it was not part of their experience. Higashide recalled,

I do not know who conceived it, but at one point it became popular among a group of internees to break chinaware. Calling it a ‘war of attrition,’ they would deliberately drop dishes and cups on the floor to shatter them after meals. Their absurd reasoning was that by such actions they would decrease the enemy’s material resources and would eventually affect America’s ability to carry on the war... I grew irritated by such foolishness and warned them to stop. I ‘sermonized’ to them that, as Japanese, they were representatives of a great civilization and were obligated to behave in a higher, more civilized manner.⁴⁶

Higashide, a thirty-five-year old family man, now deemed pro-American, became unpopular with the younger men.

On July 2, 1944, the INS transferred Higashide to Crystal City where he was finally reunited with his family. Crystal City offered a reasonably normal life for its residents, estimated by Higashide at 3,000 Japanese and German nationals from Latin America, “mainland” Japanese Americans and Hawaiians. Children attended one of three school systems, English, German or Japanese. Adults participated in a Self-governing Association, with an elected general director and administrative officers. Interest groups formed for traditional Japanese activities such as tea ceremony, flower arranging and judo. Families planted vegetable gardens. Higashide marveled at the

⁴⁵ Higashide, *Adios to Tears*, 158.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 159.

wealth and resources of the United States who could provide such conditions to prisoners of war.

The internees had access, as Amano's group did, to news and by 1945, Higashide believed, "anyone with clear eyes could see Japan's impending defeat."⁴⁷ Yet a faction at camp persisted in resistance against the Americans. This group discredited all news reports as propaganda, confident in the invincibility of Japan. Higashide and his family were still in the camp on August 15, 1945 when they learned of Japan's defeat. He reported the pro-Japan faction shouted "we won, we won" and that many,

gladly went back to Japan on exchange ships in November and December of 1945. They had received a thorough indoctrination in militaristic ideology in Japan and had been confined to a closed-off Japanese community in Peru. I could not bring myself to accuse them of foolishness. They rejected advice from parents and words of persuasion from their children and simply returned to Japan. There were a number of cases where parents and children were separated by differing beliefs. They, more than others, became true victims of the war.⁴⁸

Art Shibayama's family managed to remain together through deportation but they were forcibly expelled from the only home they had ever known.

Art Shibayama's grandfather, a naturalized citizen of Peru, had been one of the first Japanese deported to the United States and subsequently repatriated to Japan as part of a civilian prisoner exchange. His family never saw him again. On March 1, 1944, Peruvian officials confiscated their passports and forced the Shibayama family, including the six *sansei* Peruvian children, onto the same U.S. transport, the *Cuba*, that

⁴⁷ Higashide, *Adios To Tears*, 172.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 173.

held Seiichi Higashide.⁴⁹ The Shibayama family, like the Higashide's, spent nearly two years behind barbed wire Crystal City's converted farm labor camp.

Shibayama was only thirteen years old in 1944. Because camp parents tried to keep children's lives as normal as possible, Art mentioned nothing about protest or resistance. He only remembered that his parents rarely mentioned camp life after their release, saying "there's nothing you can do about it...it's just one of those things."⁵⁰ The Shibayamas remained at Crystal City until 1946.

The United States still held Japanese Peruvians after the war ended but unlike the Japanese American internees or the repatriated Panamanian Japanese, the Peruvians were not permitted to return home. Seiichi Higashide believed there were a number of reasons why the deported Japanese were denied reentry to Peru. He asserted that,

The major reason was that before the war the Peruvian government had decided it did not want any further increase to the almost 10,000 Japanese already in Peru. The government had enacted laws prohibiting almost all entry of Japanese immigrants. Using that exclusionary law, the Peruvian government refused to allow the return of those deported during the Pacific War. On the other hand, the United States continued even in the post-war period to handle us as illegal immigrants.⁵¹

The Peruvian prisoners were stripped of their passports by Peru at the request of the United States in order to preserve their status as "undocumented illegal aliens." The United States believed that designation would justify the deportation of these prisoners at any time.⁵² After the war ended, the Japanese Peruvians remained unwanted in their native country, in Japan and in America.

⁴⁹ Higashide, *Adios to Tears*, 155; Brumer, "Stealing Home," 2; Higashide remembered the date of departure from Balboa, Panama as March 6, 1944. This might have been the same sailing as Shibayama's.

⁵⁰ Brumer, "Stealing Home," 4.

⁵¹ Higashide, *Adios to Tears*, 163. Daniel M. Masterson contradicts Higashide's Japanese population estimate placing the number closer to 20,000 in Masterson, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 70.

⁵² Connell, *America's Japanese Hostages*, 106.

When Peru refused to allow the return of its Japanese citizens after the end of the war, the United States attempted to repatriate the remaining Peruvian Japanese to Japan, even though some of these people had never resided there. The Americans deported Alice Nishimoto, born and raised in Peru, to Hiroshima shortly after an atom bomb had leveled the city. Nishimoto recalled,

We got off the train and walked and walked and walked. We didn't see any buildings. Some people were still wounded. They all looked so poor. So this is where we're going to live? One of my cousins was a doctor. Everyone had to help because all the hospitals were destroyed. He passed away a few years later from radiation poisoning.⁵³

The United States wanted to end the internment program quickly by ridding itself of the last Peruvian Japanese prisoners by any means, just as Peru had wanted to expel these same people.

The Higashide and Shibayama families fought deportation to Japan with the assistance of attorney Wayne M. Collins. Collins prevailed in federal court, and secured an agreement to allow the stranded Peruvian Japanese prisoners to leave camp and remain in the United States if guaranteed employment could be secured for all adult prisoners. Most of those finally freed, including the Higashides and Shibayamas, went to Seabrook Farms, a vegetable processing plant in New Jersey, where they worked twelve hour shifts for less than \$3.00 a day. Seiichi Higashide, previously a successful merchant, had great difficulty supporting his family of eight on the low wages agricultural workers earned. He wondered, "how did the U.S. government intend to compensate us for our incalculable spiritual and material losses? How did it intend to

⁵³ Alice Nishimoto interviewed by Casey Peek, *Hidden Internment: The Art Shibayama Story*, videocassette.

make clear its responsibility for taking such unjust and unreasonable actions?”⁵⁴ Art Shibayama, drafted in 1952 into the U.S. Army while the country denied his application for American citizenship, continues to fight for redress through the U.S. Judiciary and the United Nations.

The imprisonment of ethnic Japanese during World War II did not rest upon their status as sojourners, spies or citizens. It was enough that they looked like the enemy and accordingly, were treated like the enemy. In protest, the Japanese Latin Americans found courage and gained strength from becoming even more Japanese than they had initially expressed. After the war ended, the prisoners’ lives diverged, depending on their country of residence at the time of capture. The Peruvian Japanese struggled to rebuild their lives long after the Panamanian Japanese, the Japanese Americans, and for that matter, the Germans and the Italians, were released from American internment camps.

⁵⁴ Higashide, *Adios to Tears*, 179.

Conclusion

Representing barely two percent of the 120,000 ethnic Japanese interned in the United States during World War II, the ordeal of the Japanese Latin American prisoners is easily ignored. The memoirs of these people, essentially kidnapped abroad and held in reserve for diplomatic leverage, disclose salient observations that warrant analysis and preservation. Busy with the task of rebuilding shattered lives after the end of the war, few former prisoners documented their experiences and even fewer published their memoirs. Yoshitaro Amano, Seiichi Higashide and Arturo Shibayama are among the limited number of former Japanese Latin American prisoners who chronicled their histories. This small sample represents a remarkably wide array of prisoner characteristics: a suspected spy captured in the Canal Zone on December 7, 1941; a disillusioned sojourner blacklisted seemingly at random by Peru in 1943; and a thirteen year old *sansei* Peruvian citizen expelled with his entire family in 1944.

In the custody of the United States, these three men became entangled in a vast network of facilities organized to accommodate ethnic Japanese relocated from the West Coast. The Japanese American internees included legal resident aliens blocked from attaining U.S. citizenship and their American-born descendants who were, by law, U.S. citizens. Regardless of citizenship, all of the ethnic Japanese had black hair, narrow eyes and olive skin suggesting that like features invited like treatment on American soil. Indiscriminate persecution increased identification with Japanese culture among the immigrants, producing what social scientist Takeyuki Tsuda termed “situationalized nationalism.” In an article about Japanese immigrants in Brazil, he asserted that, “the greater the discrimination the migrant group feels, the more it will maintain a strong

counteridentity as a form of resistance and active opposition.”¹ Applied to the Japanese Latin American prisoners, their prolonged internment in the United States intensified a Japanese counteridentity that became the basis of their resistance.

German and Italian immigrants were by no means immune to racist persecution or charges of being Axis sympathizers or operatives. However, militarily enforced exclusion zones and the mass relocation orders that applied only to Japanese Americans cracked the veneer of judicious and proportionate response to the danger of Axis incursions into the American mainland. Many Americans fused enemy nation and enemy race into a single entity. A Darwinist argument for biological incompatibility, underscored by fear and deep cultural differences, permitted the excesses that led to mass internment of Japanese Americans and the acquisition of Japanese Latin American hostages. Spinning the complex tangle of political, military, diplomatic and economic agendas that stripped ethnic Japanese of their freedom into the single thread of racist overreaction to the bombing of Pearl Harbor is also problematic. Arguing for a single causation for internment is no more tenable than the notion that all Japanese look alike.

Panama, Peru, and the United States claimed that imprisoning Japanese civilians increased hemispheric security against Japanese military aggression during World War II. Although racism and concerns about hemispheric security were certainly the prime determinants, other motives underpinned the development of the United States internment policy. The United States interned different groups of prisoners, including American citizens, resident aliens, and Japanese nationals from Panama and Peru with differing intent and divergent outcomes.

¹ Takeyuki Tsuda, “Transnational Migration and the Nationalization of Ethnic Identity among Japanese Brazilian Return Migrants,” *Ethos*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (June 1999), 158.

The United States government codified policies for the detention of enemy aliens more than 100 years before Japanese internment plans began to take shape in the 1930s. However, longstanding legal precedent did not easily apply to this developing wartime situation. Department of Justice attorneys argued that it was not possible to classify American citizens, regardless of ethnicity, as enemy aliens. In addition, many Japanese, denied the opportunity to apply for citizenship, were still law-abiding registered American residents. Certainly influenced by racial hysteria and paranoia, the FBI identified enemy aliens based on suspicious activity or other evidence of espionage. The military rejected dealing individually with Japanese suspects, and instead argued for the mass evacuation of the entire West Coast Japanese population out of “military necessity.” California politicians, siding with white constituents who clashed with Japanese immigrants over dominance in certain agricultural sectors, supported the evacuation option. They hoped to gain reelection by removing an unpopular minority. White farmers who stood to profit by confiscating Japanese-owned land also shaped political and military opinion.

After the declaration of war against Japan, the military assessment prevailed, and they launched a massive effort to construct relocation camps for West Coast Japanese and internment camps for foreign nationals. Initially, the camps held Japanese American citizens and Japanese nationals residing in the United States. Only after the Americans discovered that the relocated Japanese were of little value to Japan in prisoner exchanges, did the notion of “buying” Japanese civilians from Latin America develop.

Economics played a central role in forming Japanese internment policy. Panama’s government was previously inclined to enact anti-Japanese legislation because

of nativist accusations that these immigrants engaged in unfair economic practices as suggested by Gordon Ireland's report. However, the immigrant population was quite small. Economic incentives to ensure Panama cooperated to protect the Canal Zone were more persuasive. Before the war, President Roosevelt had proposed the Good Neighbor policy, lauded as mutually beneficial. Panama also expected to benefit from the Lend Lease program that gave Roosevelt the authority to aid any nation whose defense was vital to the United States and to accept repayment "in kind or property."² While the December 7, 1941 arrests of Japanese men near the strategically important Canal Zone legitimately helped secure the region, Panama's subsequent shipment of these prisoners, held without charge, to the United States reflected a desire to obtain economic reward through cooperation. Panama received American aid, and under the terms of Lend Lease, repaid the Americans with Japanese prisoners.

Peru also intended to benefit from Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy. In a show of hemispheric unity to combat the threat of Japanese aggression, Peruvian newspapers published blacklists, compiled with the help of FBI agents, of suspected Japanese collaborators. Intent on countering possible fifth column activity, J. Edgar Hoover had his own agenda and ignored the possibility that Peru's intentions were duplicitous.³ Decades of Peruvian hostility towards its Japanese immigrants erupted in race riots during 1940. Similar to the California politicians seeking voter approval through persecution of a minority, Peru's president Manuel Prado counted on retaining power by

² Public Laws. Part 1 of *United States Statutes at Large Containing the Laws and Concurrent Resolutions Enacted During the First Session of the Seventy-Seventh Congress of the United States of America, 1941-1942, and Treaties, International Agreements Other than Treaties, and Proclamations*, Vol. 55 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), 31-33.

³ Connell, *America's Japanese Hostages*, 24.

expelling as many Japanese as possible, even if they were Peruvian citizens. The arrests did not coincide with the terror of December 7, 1941 but took place months later, continuing through 1944. In addition, those arrested did not necessarily appear on targeted lists of suspicious individuals. Peru sent more Japanese to the United States than every other Latin American country combined and received millions of dollars in return. Peruvian hostility towards its Japanese immigrants continued past the end of World War II when the country defied the United States by barring the return of Peruvian Japanese released from American internment camps. This policy suggested that Peru's racial animosity towards the Japanese outweighed a desire to maintain Good Neighbor solidarity.

Captors of Japanese Latin Americans during World War II did not assess each prisoner's guilt or innocence. Instead, these internees collectively represented a commodity to Panama, Peru and the United States. The United States held the Latin Americans as hostages suitable for human trade. Panama exchanged their prisoners with the United States for military protection and economic support. Although America paid Peru for its prisoners, the Peruvian government expelled the Japanese to buy votes and stifle civil unrest. Taking a broader perspective, many historians claimed that the Japanese prisoners, accepted their fate with the phrase, *shikata ga nai* - it cannot be helped – an assessment particularly applicable to Japanese Latin Americans stranded in the United States. However, the memoirs of Amano and Higashide along with Shibayama's interview chronicle resistance rather than resignation, starting with the very act of documenting their experiences.

Instead of passive resignation, these men described the active opposition to injustice displayed by their communities. Yoshitaro Amano did not blame race-based persecution for his incarceration. He had been a successful businessman who socialized with westerners. Furthermore, he knew his presence in Latin America looked suspicious. His extensive travel, multinational business enterprises and wide-ranging scholarly interests suggested that he viewed himself as more of a world citizen, versed in western and eastern cultures. Although his memoir reveals an independence of character that casts doubt on a successful career as a Japanese government operative, Amano nonetheless was a proud Japanese. His memoir firmly established his loyalties and intent to inspire patriotism among his fellow Japanese and, although it was propaganda, it contained a wealth of factual material and valuable observations. *Waga Toraware No Ki* depicted a progression of behavior expressed by the Japanese Latin Americans from fear and shock upon arrest to increasingly nationalistic and overt resistance to their captors. Amano's resistance, however, ended with Japan's defeat. After repatriation, he left Japan in 1951 and spent the next thirty years in Peru as an archeologist, establishing a museum and a foundation that is still in operation today.

Seiichi Higashide suffered from years of persecution carried out by native Peruvians against Peru's Japanese immigrant community before the war. With few personal resources and with his wife and children also imprisoned, he was less inclined to participate in resistance activities than Amano. Once a sojourner planning to return home and yet not a citizen in Peru, Higashide embodied the stateless status of so many Japanese immigrants. Blocked from returning to Peru, unwilling to return to a war-torn Japan, and declared an undocumented alien in the United States, Higashide's struggle for justice

began when the war ended. Reunited with his family, he eventually found employment in the United States and retired in Hawaii. At the urging of his children, he wrote his autobiography forty years after his release from Crystal City Family Internment Camp. The intervening years, making the best of his situation to provide for his family, delayed but did not deter his resistance and his efforts to seek redress.

Also from Peru, Art Shibayama had been interned as a child and did not participate in overt demonstrations of resistance in the camps. His family, like others, tried to preserve a sense of normalcy for their children and consequently was less likely to protest. As an adult, Shibayama resisted more vigorously than Amano or Higashide, with good reason. Shibayama was a third generation Peruvian who knew no other home. Despite those deep roots, Peru purged his entire family. He had no personal ties to Japan beyond ancestry and, thanks to youth, could have begun anew in the United States. Instead, all three countries denied him justice. After the war, Shibayama struggled to acquire U.S. citizenship. He received a draft notice in 1952 even as bureaucrats denied his application for citizenship because they considered him an “illegal” alien. He finally cut through INS red tape, attaining permanent residency in 1956 and later, U.S. citizenship. Although the U.S. Congress passed a Civil Liberties Act in 1988 providing \$20,000 in redress to Japanese Americans interned during World War II, Shibayama did not qualify. He joined a class action lawsuit of Japanese Latin Americans in 1996 requesting redress equal to that awarded to the Japanese Americans. The Department of Justice offered \$5,000, contingent on available money in the Civil Liberties Act fund after final claim settlement.⁴ Shibayama refused the offer and took his case to the Human

⁴ Brumer, “Stealing Home,” 6-7.

Rights Commission at the United Nations. His resistance, sustained over five decades, has neither ended nor achieved justice for the Japanese Latin Americans.

Many volumes on the crowded shelves of internment literature assign blame for the imprisoned Japanese on racism, casting the immigrants as victims and western governments as xenophobic. While true for the thousands of victims, the motives behind internment were complicated. Historian Brian Hayashi cited potential pitfalls for those who drew parallels between the racism that forced Japanese Americans into internment camps and the anti-Semitism that produced Nazi death camps. He believed that “rapid dismissal of security issues, real or imagined, as a mere fig leaf for racism, left (historians and reparations activists) vulnerable to new questions raised by the declassification of security agency documents decades later,” which “point to espionage.”⁵ The reliance on racism dismisses the internment of Germans and Italians, albeit in smaller percentages than the Japanese, who were never offered reparations. Furthermore, economic necessity rather than racism better explains the internment of only a small percentage of ethnic Japanese in Hawaii.

Racism is a constant undercurrent in society that erupts most strongly during times of economic hardship, making it difficult to isolate the determinants for Japanese civilian internment in the Americas. Identifying differences based on external features is more expedient and entrenched than focusing on differences of religion, language, or any number of defining but concealable features. During World War II, conflating enemy nation and enemy race seemed prudent. This was true not only in western nations but also in Japan, a country that promoted the fusion of race and culture, along with advocacy of superiority, to increase loyalty.

⁵ Hayashi, *Democratizing the Enemy*, 7, 217.

Racism did not surprise Amano, Higashide and Shibayama but the abandonment of the rule of law, especially by the United States, troubled them. They expressed profound disappointment and disillusionment with the United States that had once symbolized to each of them the promise of fair treatment and democratic ideals. Amano, keenly aware of the standards set by the Geneva Conventions on the treatment of prisoners of war, believed conditions improved for the Panamanian group of prisoners because of Japan's ostensibly fair treatment of their prisoners of war. He also expressed repeated amazement that the American military did not uphold the high standards he imagined for such a powerful country. Higashide also expected that the United States would protect human rights more consistently than other nations. He felt betrayed by the U.S. Constitution. Of his battle for justice, Shibayama described a Department of Justice offer of \$5,000 in reparations "a slap in the face."⁶

The treatment of these prisoners and American policies of wartime internment continues to have significance decades later. Recently, dissenters of America's "war on terror" alleged that the United States government eliminated vital Constitutional protections for its citizens, ignored the Geneva Conventions and violated international law. Policies that allowed racial stereotyping, foreign detainees held indefinitely without charge, secret prisoner renditions, and allegations of prisoner abuse, illustrated the continued relevance of James Rowe's reflection on Japanese internment. In times of war, Rowe admitted that the government's primary function was to preserve order first and law second. True then as now, *shikata ga nai* – it cannot be helped - but neither can the events be left unexamined.

⁶ Brumer, "Stealing Home," 7.

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Appendix A

BASIC PERSONNEL RECORD

(Alien Enemy or Prisoner of War)

ISN-(RP)J-203-CI
(Internment serial number)
 Amano, Yoshitaro
(Name of internee)

F. P. C.* 19 M 27 W I 000 2
M 12 W III
 Reference *

Male
(Sex)

Height 5 ft. 5½ in.

Weight 121½


Eyes Brown

Skin Tan

Hair Black

Age 43

Distinguishing marks or characteristics:
 Scar right axillary anterior line



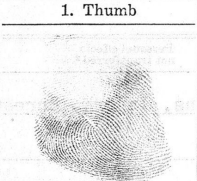

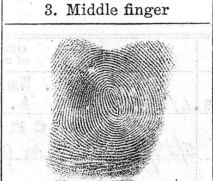







INVENTORY OF PERSONAL EFFECTS TAKEN FROM INTERNEE

1. Cedula
2. Bank Draft # 5,000
3. Bill fold
4. misc. cards
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

The above is correct:

[Signature]
(Signature of internee)

(Date and place where processed (Army enclosure, naval station, or other place))

Right Hand				
1. Thumb	2. Index finger	3. Middle finger	4. Ring finger	5. Little finger
				
Left Hand				
6. Thumb	7. Index finger	8. Middle finger	9. Ring finger	10. Little finger
				

W. D., P. M. G. Form No. 2
 December 9, 1941

Note amputations in proper space

* Do not fill in.

1. _____
(Grade and arm or service)
2. _____
(Hostile unit or vessel)
3. July 2, 1898 Japan
(Hostile serial number)
4. Pablo Arosemena Ave., #10, Pan. City
(Date and country of birth)
5. Son: Tomas Nanto Amano
(Place of permanent residence)
6. Yokohama
(Name, relationship of nearest relative¹)
7. None
(Address of above)
8. _____
(Number of dependents and relationship)
9. _____
(Address of above)
10. December 7, 1941
(Date of capture or arrest)
11. Pan. City
(Place of capture or arrest)
12. Pan. Police
(Unit or vessel making capture or arresting agency)
13. Merchant X-04
(Occupation)
14. 18 yrs
(Education)
15. Japanese, English, Spanish
(Knowledge of languages)
16. _____
(Physical condition at time of capture or arrest)
17. Married
(Married or single)
18. None
(Religious preference)

ADDITIONAL DATA:

Transferred from	Date depart	Transferred to	Date received	Official signature of receiving officer	Personal effects not transferred ²
New Orleans		Ft. Sill, Okla. CAMP Livingston, LA.	4/28/42 5/27/42	Capt. Wm. Cherry, Adj. A. G. D. Alien Enemy I.M.P. B.U.R.	(Aliens. Inform. Bureau)

REMARKS:

¹If no relative, name person to be notified in case of emergency.
²If personal effects taken from individual are not transferred, note exceptions and place of storage or depot.

Appendix B

Song of Upton – Sung to the tune of *Kusatsu Bushi*, a Japanese Folk Song

Ellis deru tokyo genki de detaga
Busu niya Kanshino
korya mega hikaru yo
Choina Choina

When I got to Ellis, I was healthy
but when I got on the bus
They kept watching us
Choina Choina

Mado o nagamete horori to namida
shaba no nioki ga – natsuka shiyo

Look out the window, tears come running
I miss ordinary life

East river ya matenrou kendo
mirunowa itsujara yo

East river skyscrapers
what will I see next

Upton tsukamade hanauta majiri
kekoi teppo de aona shio yo

Until Upton, I was humming
inside the barbed wire, I wilted

Captain Dean wa onigori kowai
nigeriya duck ni suru to yuta

Captain Dean, worse than the devil
I'll make you a dead duck if you run away

Chikazuku maizoya barbed wire
Miharu yaguranya kikanju

Don't go near the barbed wire
Machine guns are watching

Wire nya suzumemo yranu
juchaku inai de tamaga kuruyo

A sparrow won't go near the wire
Bullets will come at you from less than 10'

KP atareba Ellis ga koishii
asamo hayo kara sara araiyo

KP work, I miss Ellis
From early morning, must wash dishes

Kami ya tako nara yaitem kuoga
kani no gunso nya haga tatanuyo

Crab and octopus, I can eat
Crabby sergeant, I can't eat

Kasaya surunara Upton de nasare
tent no nakanimo amega furuyo

When you open an umbrella shop, try Upton
tents leak there

German jin wa kawaii monoyo
tabaco hitotsu de isu tsukuroyo

Germans are clever
From a cigarette, they can make a chair

Pearl Harbor no kataki wa tsurai
namachi torarete remember yo

Harsh revenge remains
Remember Pearl Harbor

Omoumaizoya Upton Camp
Omoide kazukazu shaku no taneyo

Think not about Upton Camp
For it makes me mad

Camp Missoula Song sung to the tune of *Yosakoi bushi*

*Hitotsu deta warina yosakoi yosakoi
hitozato hanarita Missoula ni te hoi
Otoko bakari no wabe zumai hoi hoi*

One *yosakoi yosakoi*
Remote Missoula, only men are there
A lonely life

*Fukaki goen ni tsunagarete
oshi mo osarenu kata bakari*

In camp lives the great and small
A blessing to meet the great one

*Mi eh ya teisai nukini shite
otoko do o shi no migaki ai*

Pretense is worthless
Here, it's a man's world

*Yono nariyuki o yosoni shite
choki shuyo moshiro ya*

Meditation is a must
Earthly things, let go

*Itsumo kokoro wa hogarakani
mohan camp ni itashima sho*

Let's be happy
Make the camp number one

*Muri o nasaruma otoshiyori
shibai no oozume minya naranu*

Don't strain yourself, old man
Don't you want to see the climax of the
shibai (a Japanese stage show)?

*Naitemo waratemo onajikoto
tataikai sumumade emyanarame*

You can laugh or you can cry
You are here until the war ends

*Yake o okosuma wakai kata
imano kuro ga mi no kusuri*

Don't despair, young one
Today's suffering is medicine for your
future

*Kodomo mo tsumano mane na
yoni kami ya hotoke ni nenjima sho*

Let's pray to God for
the safety of our children and wives

*Totowa yurushi no derumadewa
minas an nakayoku kurashimasho*

Till we leave here
Let's be of good cheer

Missoula Dekansho Song sung to the tune of *Dekansho*

*Dekansho Dekansho de natoshi
kurasu orewa Missoula de
ishi hiroi yoi yoi dekansho*

Hurrah, hurrah, I lived six months of
dekansho (untranslatable)
I survived six months picking up stones in
Missoula

*Sai no kawara wa kodomo no jigoku
ishi no Missoula wa oya jigoku*

The River Styx in hell is a child's
playground
Picking up stones in Missoula is men's hell

*Nakuna ishi hore oira no hone wa
washi no ejikiniya nariwa senu*

Don't cry while cutting stone
My bones will not coax the eagles

*Tsurai Missoula mo hito ame
fureba rubies ya manoo ga hikari dasu*

After the rain rubies
Agate will shine through the hardships of
Missoula

*Ishi de katameta Missoula no
chigiri nokoru nakama ga kinikakoru*

Strong as stone we pledge to think about
our friends we left behind in Missoula

Kenedy Camp Song sung to the tune of *Shucho no Musume* (The Chief's Daughter)

*Watashi no irutoko Texas Kenedy
non no inugaka tetsuiyomo no
harimegusareta Camp sikatsu
ori no nakadake teku teku aruku
aruke aruke arukanu
toki wa hiru no oimo ga konarenuzo*

I am in Camp Kenedy, Texas
How did I ever end up here?
It's just like being in a cage
I walk back and forth in a cage of barbed
wire
If I don't keep walking, my potato lunch
won't digest

*Netewa ikitewa okitewa netewa
tanomi no tunawa Gripsholm
semete soremade dantai gurashi
eyana omoimo kamikorashita wa
heyano haki huki shokuji toban
benjo no araeba kusa mo karo*

Whether asleep or not
We hope we are on the Gripsholm
Until then, we are together
come what may, we'll ignore anything bad
We sweep and dust our rooms
We do K.P., clean the toilet and cut the
weeds

*Konna sugatawa hito maenuyadasenu
nasakenaizoe meshi
kuutoki no gyoretsu tsukutte
junban matte gatsu gatsu kutte
gabu gabu nonde sara wo nagashite
kuso shini toned Radio taiso de shiborareru*

For camp prisoners only
How sad it looks standing in line to eat
Gobbling food, guzzling water
Carry dirty dishes
Fly to the toilet, have your B.M.
Then do calisthenics to the radio

*Hiru wa shakunetsu yoruwa nomi
shirami kusuri ni shitakumo fuzei wa naiga
tamani kakimade America msusume
kikanju nado me ni irabakoso shimeta to
baku tsudotta mononi Hawaii no uramika*

Daytime is scorching hot,
Nights are filled with fleas and lice
An American girl comes near the wire
We all rush to have a look, ignoring
machine guns

sanruidan

*Shoto jikan wa gogo juji han
Yooyaku netakoro doka doka futari
kaichu dento de teritsuke yagaru
shaku na yatsudato netafurio suru
uma de poka poka kaetta atowa
doonimo koonimo nerareyasenu*

We get sprayed with tear gas
Remember Pearl Harbor. Revenge.

10:30 pm is 'lights out'
just as sleep comes, two MPs flash lights
on me
Angry, I feign sleep and they gallop away
No more sleep for me.

Gi Mido Moving Song sung to the tune of *Ah Sorenanoni*

*Niwa mo dekitashi kimo ueta
sdomeshi kotoshi no natsugoro wa
hana mo sakuyo to omootani 'Ah
sorenanoni sorenanoni ne e
hiki utsurato wa hiki utsuruto wa
anmari hidoide shō*

We make a garden
We plant a tree
We thought flowers would bloom this
summer
But we had to move away
How awful, how awful

*Kyo wa asakara ame moyoo
kino K.P. no hone yasumi
hirune shiyooto omoetani
Ah sorenanoni sorenanoni
hard labor wa hard labor wa
anmari hidoide shō*

It looked like rain this morning
Yesterday, had a break from K.P.
I tried to take a nap but ended up with hard
labor
How awful, how awful

*Kabe ni haritaru bejinsan
kokoku nanzo to omowazuni
asa yute nagamete kurashitani
ah sorenanoni sorenanoni nee
mushiri torutowa mushiritorutowa
anmari hidoide shō*

On the wall, I pasted a pretty girl's picture
I ignored the fact that it was an
advertisement
But someone ripped it down
How awful, how awful

*Niwa ni saitaru tampopo ni
susuga kakareba harai noke
kasa made tatete sodatetani
Ah sorenanoni sorenanoni ne e
fuminijirutowa
anmari hidoide shō*

We dusted the dandelions in the garden
Even made shade to protect them
Instead, someone stepped on them
How awful, how awful

*Kinō tabetawa name soup
choito arukeba me ga mawaru
ugokazu iyoto omoutani*

After the bean soup we had yesterday
My footsteps weakened
I tried not to move

Ah sorenanoni sorenanoni ne e
bed hakobi wa
anmari hidoide shō

Kondo yukutoko shintenmaku
aoikusaki hanazakari
koike mo aruka to omoutani
Ah sorenanoni sorenanoni ne e
sabaku to wa sabaku to wa
anmari hidoide shō

Okani shigerishi ringo no ki
miki wa maitaru wakai tsuru
Budo mo kueru to omoutani
Ah sorenanoni sorenanoni ne e
poison ivy wa poison ivy wa
anmari hidoide shō

Saka o ogareba michi ga aru
wakai bijinga yukiki suru
dekakete mitaito omoutani
Ah sorenanoni sorenanoni ne e
barbed wire wa barbed wire wa
anmari hidoide shō

Wash room wa okano ue
choito hashireba sunabokori
ikimade kirashite tsuitanoni
Ah sorenanoni sorenanoni ne e
kamiga naito wa kamiga naito wa
anmari de shō

But had beds to carry
How awful, how awful

We thought our next move would be to a
camp with new tents, green trees,
flowers and a little pond
instead, it was a desert
How awful, how awful

On the hill was an apple tree
A vine encircled its trunk
We thought we could eat the vine's grapes
It was only poison ivy
How awful, how awful

If you climb the hill
You will find a road where a pretty young
girls walk by
I wish to see them but the barbed wire
holds me back
How awful, how awful

The washroom was on top of the hill
When rushing up there, just a few steps
caused the dust to fly
After reaching it, there's no toilet paper
How awful, how awful