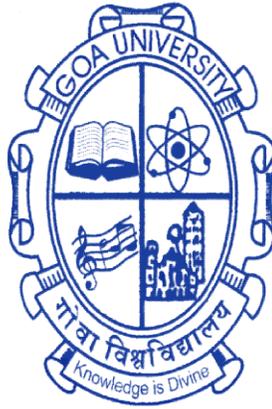


# Literary Expressions of Japanese North American Internment

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN SHENOI GOEMBAB SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE  
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## **DECLARATION**

I, Ambika Vishnu Kamat hereby declare that this thesis represents work which has been carried out by me and that it has not been submitted, either in part or full, to any other University or Institution for the award of any research degree.

Place: Taleigao Plateau, Goa

Date :

Ambika Vishnu Kamat

## **CERTIFICATE**

I hereby certify that the work was carried out under my supervision and may be placed for evaluation.

Prof. André Rafael Fernandes  
(Research Guide)  
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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION: CONTEXTUALIZING**

### **THE JAPANESE NORTH AMERICAN**

### **INTERNMENT**

The internment of Japanese Americans and Canadians during the Second World War was a culmination of prolonged racial discrimination. The immense impact of this historical event can be understood through a detailed study of select literary expressions. In order to fathom the deep-rooted racial prejudice at the core of the internment, it is essential that the study begins with a historical overview of immigration and settlement of Japanese immigrants in North America.

#### **1.1 Japanese Immigration, Settlement and Internment in the U.S.**

The earliest recorded immigration began in 1860s via Hawaii. Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston notes that the first wave of Issei (first generation) immigrated to the U.S. mainland from 1890 to 1915. The Gentlemen's agreement of 1907 and immigration act of 1924 impacted the immigration process thereafter and brought it to a standstill (Houston and Houston xv). Regulations pertaining to naturalization of citizens passed in 1870 and 1911 did not incorporate the so called Oriental races including people of Japanese origin. Thus, Issei were unable to apply for naturalization. Alien Land Bill of 1913 prohibited Japanese aliens from owning land in California. A similar bill was passed in Washington, which further denied Japanese

aliens from leasing land as well. The Ozawa case pertaining to naturalization of Japanese aliens in 1922 clarifies the stance of the U.S. on this matter. The Supreme Court ruling denied the Issei the opportunity to be naturalized citizens. The Immigration Act of 1924 prohibited any new immigrants from entering the U.S.

Issei were primarily limited to jobs entailing intense physical labour. Gradually, they moved on to farming and sharecropping, where they leased land. In urban areas, they opened hotels and stores. However, they were limited to locations predominantly inhabited by their own community given the prevalent racial discrimination.

Considering their socializing background and the Meiji values as much as the discriminatory practices they were compelled to face in the mainstream society, Issei were comfortable forming social and economic connections within their community. They supported each other with available resources in the moments of crisis as well as enabled fellow community members to create opportunities of earning livelihood. Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez note that “for Japanese Americans before World War II, parallel communities existed; one was ethnic and dominated by Issei organizations and leaders, and the other was a frequently impenetrable yet, in many ways, beckoning larger white world” (Fugita and Fernandez 10).

Fugita and Fernandez, through Densho<sup>1</sup> survey aimed at interviewing and collecting substantial data from Nisei (second generation) about the community, trace the development of the community in Seattle and King Country. However, the time frames employed here are representative of the growth of the community elsewhere on the mainland U.S. The Japanese immigration and the gradual increase in the same

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<sup>1</sup> Densho is a Japanese American nonprofit organization founded in 1996. In Japanese, the word means to pass on to the next generation or to leave a legacy

in the last two decades of the nineteenth century is classified as frontier period. It is primarily characterized by Issei single men intending to spend about five years in the U.S. for better economic opportunities, mostly as labourers since few had college education. These Issei men were employed in sectors such as logging, sawmills and railroad construction. Aspiring to earn more, many moved into the farming sector, particularly, labour intensive small-scale farming. The commercial aspects were handled through community networking. “This economic success in agriculture, again similar to other areas of the West Coast, particularly California, drew the ire of competing groups” (Fugita and Fernandez 18).

With greater enforcements through the Alien Land Law, Issei resorted to verbal agreements to enable them to cultivate land, wherein the ownership of the land in question was still with the whites or, at times, they bought land in name of their Nisei children. Evasion did not ensure stability. Eventually, an amendment to the law in 1923 brought an end to this provision. Meanwhile, the Gentlemen’s agreement of 1907 had brought into existence a unique phenomenon known as picture brides, which took advantage of the permission given to spouses of Issei men to migrate to the U.S. Matches were arranged through photographs and proxies and fares were paid to get Japanese wives to the mainland through sea. This settling period marked the shift of the community to family based and entrepreneurial set up (Fugita and Fernandez 19). Additional family labour provided opportunity to take up labour intensive occupations.

Fugita and Fernandez observe that the re-gradation of steep Jackson Street, prompted the Japanese Americans to move to Jackson Yesler street, which was also known as skid road. Due to this movement of a considerable number of Issei, it turned into Japantown, also known as Nihonmachi with high point of brilliance in the 1920s

“Nihonmachi was the heart of Japanese American life in the Pacific Northwest until the uprooting of the community soon after Pearl Harbor” (Fugita and Fernandez 19). Nihonmachi had bustling enterprises that fulfilled virtually all requirements of supplies and leisure activities as well as services for the Issei.

Many Issei embraced Christianity as a step towards desired assimilation in the mainstream society. Churches served as platforms for providing employment as well as English language skills. Fugita and Fernandez note, “Issei who converted to Protestantism, even though they usually attended segregated churches, were likely to become somewhat more assimilated than Buddhists” (22). Churches provided greater opportunities of socializing with non-Japanese and brought in festivities such as Christmas and Easter in line with mainstream cultural practices. The Buddhist temples served as custodians of preserving Japanese culture and language. The Nisei attended Japanese language classes after school on insistence of their Issei parents, who saw it as a way of keeping them connected to their ethnic culture. There were social institutions such as *ken* or prefectural connections, which facilitated learning and transferring skills as well as hiring employees for Issei in businessmen or tradesmen. *Tanomoshi* was another resourceful financial mechanism for credit and raising funds embedded within the Japanese social system, where “a group of trusted individuals made systematic contributions to a common ‘pot’<sup>2</sup> that became available for one person to use” (23).

In terms of sociopolitical organization, virtually every Issei settlement had a Japanese Association, which aided new immigrants, conducted social and educational initiatives, served as bridge between immigrants and the Japanese government for maintaining birth and death records and intervened in cases of Anti-Japanese

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<sup>2</sup> Many cultures have similar mechanisms of pooling financial resources together. For instance, the cofre system in Goa.

measures. Fugita and Fernandez observe, “when identifiable anti-Japanese pressures arose, the constant bickering factions tended to put aside their differences. For example, in the drive to obtain naturalization rights, not only did the local groups unite, but the Japanese Associations in Washington, Oregon, California and even British Columbia came together” (24-25). Strong social ties enabled the community to counter efforts to target them in certain businesses. There was resultant social pressure and restraint, particularly, in the case of picture bride mechanisms. Many times, immigrant women from Japan would face a dilemma, when they would realize the exaggerations and false impressions provided by their husbands. At times, men would claim higher professional status or send a photo with better appearance than the reality. If a woman left her husband, the interconnected associations would make it a point to trace her and ostracize her. The social norms of supporting newcomers in the community and immense sense of social responsibility would create financial issues within the community. For instance, loans were not treated “as arms-length commercial transactions....because of these within-group, quasi-kin attitudes, the Japanese frequently repaid their debts to outsiders before they did so to their fellow countrymen” (Fugita and Fernandez 26).

Though the Issei were aware of the multiple hurdles, including racial discrimination, present on the path of assimilating in the American society, they were hopeful about the prospects of their children. The relationship of Issei and Nisei was characterized by generation and communication gap. There were practical hindrances such as not being fluent in the same language, given that Issei preferred Japanese, while Nisei had adopted English as their primary language of communication. Secondly, their modes of expressions differed given that the Issei had an indirect and restrained approach, whereas, the Nisei were direct in communicating their feelings

and concerns. The cultural hierarchy and formalities cherished by the Issei were frowned upon by their children. Additionally, the American outlook of Nisei regarding lifestyle and relationships also created conflicts in their relationships with their parents. There were societal norms and conceptions of family honour through which community control was established and maintained. Issei ensured their children would not lose touch with their culture by enrolling them in Japanese language schools, which the Nisei attended in the evening along with the usual American courses in the public schools in the morning. Fugita and Fernandez note that “Issei parents felt that they [Nisei] should not only learn the Issei's native tongue but also Japanese etiquette and moral values... the majority of Nisei ended up with a rather rudimentary grasp of the intricacies of the Japanese language even after eight years of instruction” (29).

Within the Nisei, there were Kibei, that is, the second generation Japanese Americans who had been sent to Japan for their education. They returned to the U.S. with contradictory socio-political and cultural views to those prevalent among their counterparts in the U.S. With the escalating conflict between Imperial Japan and the U.S., the Nisei were deliberately detaching themselves from Japanese aspects of their identity. In this context, the Kibei faced dejection within their community for overtly exhibiting Japanese cultural traits and worldviews.

Monica Sone and Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston record the unique characteristics of Nisei in their memoirs as witnessed through their interactions with their generation and their community. They include reticence in white social spaces, accommodative spirit, empathy, “broad social orientation”, “lowered spontaneity”, “group solidarity” and conversing through the garb of humour, which was a precautionary measure to sound least offensive (Fugita and Fernandez 31-32). Though the Nisei aspired for

employment beyond the community businesses, racial discrimination prevented the realization of their dreams. Most of the times, they were compelled to work for the Issei. From an alternate perspective, we find that the Nisei reaped the fruits of the “economically viable ethnic economy” created by their parents through their small-scale family businesses (Fugita and Fernandez 45). The Nisei definitely had a richer social life compared to their parents. However, there were instances of conflict between the two generations considering that “the Nisei were becoming, in many ways, highly acculturated because of their experiences in the public schools and the "Anglo conformity" ideology that was dominant in the larger society at the time” (Fugita and Fernandez 46).

In terms of social organizations, JACL, that is, Japanese American Citizens League, that brought under its ambit various regional organizations, emerges as a significant collective. JACL worked on the foundations laid by Nisei organizations such as Seattle Progressive Citizens League, which primarily had older Nisei guided by the Issei and worked to counter anti-Japanese legislations such as the Alien Land Law. James Sakamoto established the League with an aim to provide opposing factions a platform to reach a consensus and bring together the multiple anti-discrimination groups. He conducted a national convention of the league in 1930.

During the years prior to the Second World War, Japanese language newspapers procured their material from Japanese wire services, thus, there was immense influence of the Japanese wartime propaganda. In 1937, during the Sino-Japanese War, the Isseis, Fugita and Fernandez note, supported Japan. They gathered money for war relief and sent packages to Japanese soldiers in China. The older Nisei assertively contradicted the Issei stance. In the years preceding the war,

to counteract the American public's inability to differentiate between the Issei and even the Nisei and the Japanese military, the JACL...began to advocate a form of hyper patriotism. In Southern California, some JACL leaders provided information to naval intelligence, the FBI, and other agencies about Issei, Kibei, and Nisei who were suspected of being disloyal. (Fugita and Fernandez 34)

Uprooting in wake of the Second World War severed the socio-economic networks of the community. However, areawise evacuation to camps helped keep some personal and filial ties. The trauma, fear of discrimination and legal prohibition prevented Issei and Nisei from returning to their pre-war homes on the West Coast after the closure of camps. Fugita and Fernandez note that they at times even preferred relocating to a completely new place on the East coast or in the Midwest. It was only after January 1945 that they were legally allowed, if they wished to, to move back to the Pacific Coast. Fugita and Fernandez further add "the resultant diaspora was consistent with the WRA's [War Relocation Authority's] assimilationist orientation to dealing with "the Japanese problem". The government actively encouraged the former incarcerated to disperse and not reestablish the tight ethnic communities they lived in before the war" (Fugita and Fernandez 10).

The Nisei had the responsibility of reconstructing the community ties after the war and the internment. The function that the community played in the lives of Nisei was quite different from that of the Issei. Unlike their parents, Nisei were better equipped to navigate into the mainstream society, which was opening up to them. Hence, the family businesses were no longer the focal points. Among the Nisei, scholars trace specific patterns of salaried occupations. Perhaps, acculturation and efforts of assimilation made Nisei distinct from their preceding generation.

Imperial Japan bombed Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941. This resulted in the then US President Franklin Roosevelt signing the Executive Order 9066 on 19 February 1942. This order empowered the Secretary of War and select military commanders to exclude people of Japanese descent, irrespective of being aliens or citizens, from the demarcated areas on the West Coast to prohibit sabotage, espionage and fifth column activity. About 110,000 to 120,000 individuals of Japanese ancestry, with around two third of them being Nisei American citizens, were forcefully removed from the West Coast and incarcerated in interior camps.

The summary of *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians*, a commission established by the U.S. Congress in 1980 to review the circumstances and the impact of Executive Order 9066, documents that though initially the exclusion and relocation was supposed to be on voluntary basis, eventually, the Japanese American community was systematically uprooted from their homes and sent to assembly centers followed by internment camps fenced by barbed wire and guarded by police. War Relocation Authority was entrusted the responsibility of operating these centers. The report further observes that this exclusion was carried out without any evidences of sabotage or espionage and without any distinguishing criteria on individual level. It was only in December 1944 that the prohibition of returning to the West Coast was lifted. Prior to that, release from camps was subjected to loyalty review and only either for recruitment in the army or for employment whenever permissible. However, a majority of the incarcerated spent long periods in confinement. The report delineates the deep-rooted racial prejudice while evaluating the decision of exclusion of Japanese Americans from the coast and underscores “a long and ugly history of west coast anti-Japanese agitation and legislation. Antipathy and hostility toward the ethnic Japanese was a

major factor of the public life of the west coast states for more than forty years before Pearl Harbor” (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 4). The anti-Japanese attitude was reflected in the land laws of the coastal states as well as in the insecurities of the white lobbies given the economic competition posed by the Japanese farmers and fishermen. Embedded within the popular psyche were the “racial stereotypes and fears: the "yellow peril" of an unknown Asian culture achieving substantial influence on the Pacific coast” (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 4). Cultural aspects of the Japanese American community including religious organizations, linguistic institutions and the Japanese provision of dual citizenship were harped upon to shape a narrative highlighting the inassimilable nature of the racial minority. The bombing of Pearl Harbour was utilized to strengthen the anti-Japanese rhetoric. The report notes,

contrary to the facts, there was a widespread belief, supported by a statement by Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy, that the Pearl Harbor attack had been aided by sabotage and fifth column activity by ethnic Japanese in Hawaii. Shortly after Pearl Harbor the government knew that this was not true, but took no effective measures to disabuse public belief. (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 5)

Lieutenant General John L. Dewitt, Commanding General of the Western Defense Command recommended exclusion of Japanese immigrants and their descendants from the West Coast to Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson on 14 February 1942 under the pretext of wartime military necessity. This stance is made clear not only in General Dewitt's *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast*, but also in Government's defence of the Executive Order *Hirabayashi v. United States* suit. Some factors General Dewitt emphasized to defend exclusion included:

signaling from shore to enemy submarines; arms and contraband found by the FBI during raids on ethnic Japanese homes and businesses; dangers to the ethnic Japanese from vigilantes; concentration of ethnic Japanese around or near militarily sensitive areas; the number of Japanese ethnic organizations on the coast which might shelter pro-Japanese attitudes or activities such as Emperor-worshipping Shinto; and the presence of the Kibei, who had spent some time in Japan. (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 7)

*Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians* scrutinized every reason cited by General Dewitt. It notes that Federal Communications Commission did not find any instances of shore-to-ship signaling. Though FBI found arms with some Japanese immigrants, they were of such nature as those possessed by any law-abiding civilian and could not be deemed as threats to national security. Further, the report underscored that there had not been any cases of violence which required military interventions. Those that had been reported could be resolved on civilian level and could not be rational justifications for protective incarceration of Japanese American community. Concentration of Japanese on the West Coast and presence of their socio-cultural organizations including Kibei, the report argues, comprise of social judgment and do not hold any relevance in terms of military measures. It further concludes that General Dewitt's personal racial prejudice and the significance he accorded to the opinions of politicians interfered with his abilities to rationally analyze the issue. He did not take into account the observations of FBI, Naval Intelligence and Army General Staff, which recommended scrutiny of suspicions and loyalty on individual level and highlighted that there was no possibility of Japanese attack on West Coast. Neither did President Roosevelt

eliminate rumours of sabotage around the racial minority, nor did Attorney General Francis Biddle draw attention of the President to the fact that inability to provide factual evidences in defence of exclusion as a military necessity would render the same unconstitutional. Neither was the issue of exclusion discussed in the cabinet, nor did individuals and bodies working in the interest of civil liberties raise any objections. The silence of the press was conspicuous.

Milton Eisenhower, the Director of the War Relocation Authority, based his strategies, ironically, “on the premise that the vast majority of evacuees were law-abiding and loyal, and that, once off the west coast, they should be returned quickly to conditions approximating normal life” (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 10). Eisenhower had to face vehement opposition from the governors of the interior states. Thus, the original plan of rehabilitation under normal circumstances had to be abandoned as the politicians in the interior states sought assurances about prohibition of Japanese from owning land in their states as well as the removal of evacuees post war. Thus, it was decided to keep the evacuees in guarded facilities, which took shape of internment camps.

The Issei and Nisei were initially moved to Civilian Assembly Centers. Some of them mentioned in the texts, studied for this research, include Marysville, Fresno, Sacramento and Pinedale in California; Portland in Oregon and Puyallup in Washington. These were temporary in nature and were located in erstwhile horse stables and race tracks. The inhabitants were later sent to War Relocation Centers, also known as the internment camps. There were ten major internment camps namely, Poston and Gila River in Arizona; Jerome and Rohwer in Arkansas; Amache in Colorado; Tule Lake and Manzanar in California; Minidoka in Idaho; Topaz in Utah and Heart Mountain in Wyoming. Considering the dates of arrival of evacuees to

these camps, firstly evacuees arrived at Manzanar on 21 March 1942, followed by Minidoka, Idaho on 10 August 1942, Heart Mountain, Wyoming on 12 August 1942, Granada, or Amache, Colorado on 27 August 1942, Central Utah, or Topaz on 11 September 1942 and Rohwer, Arkansas on 18 September 1942. Additionally, Tule Lake was turned into a camp for dissenters in September 1943.

Monica Sone, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and Yoshiko Uchida have written extensively about their lives in internment camps. Julie Otsuka has attempted to recreate the experience of her grandparents and parents in the internment camps through her fiction. Additionally, there were Justice Department detention centers where Issei men were detained under the suspicion of spying and sabotage. Some detention centers mentioned by Nisei authors with reference to the arrests of their fathers include Fort Lincoln and Santa Fe. Typical camp accommodation consisted of “tar-papered barrack rooms of no more than 20 by 24 feet. Each room housed a family, regardless of family size. Construction was often shoddy. Privacy was practically impossible and furnishings were minimal. Eating and bathing were in mass facilities” (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 11).

The experience of Hawaii Japanese Americans is distinct to that of their counterparts on the mainland U.S. Gary Okihiro notes, in *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History*, that from 1900 to 1940 the Japanese were, statistically, one of the largest racial groups in Hawaii. Additionally, they were also “the most prominent pool of labor, especially in the sugar industry, which dominated the economic life of the islands” (121). When Pearl Harbour was bombed, around 158,000 people of Japanese ancestry lived in Hawaii. It constituted 35 percent of the total population. Even if it is assumed that the Issei and Nisei posed a threat to the national security as advocated by Anti-Japanese lobbies, there should have been

stringent measures in place in Hawaii. However, only around 2,000 ethnic Japanese had been taken in custody. *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians* delineates some factors that could have resulted in a different internment experience for the Hawaii Japanese Americans. Firstly, Hawaii had a multi-racial population for a long period of time and, thus, emerged more tolerant towards racial differences. The territory had not relatively seen a prolonged “virulent antagonism” against the Japanese like the mainland. Attempting to implement exclusionary policies in Hawaii would “disrupt a local economy and tear a social fabric by locking up more than one third of a territory's people. And in Hawaii the half-measure of exclusion from military areas would have been meaningless” (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 16). In addition to that, the military had greater powers in Hawaii with imposition of martial law since December 1941 than in the coastal areas of the mainland. Delos Emmons, the commanding general in Hawaii, had a rational perspective about the issue. He “restrained plans to take radical measures, raising practical problems of labor shortages and transportation until the pressure to evacuate the Hawaiian Islands subsided. General Emmons does not appear to have been a man of dogmatic racial views; he appears to have argued quietly but consistently for treating the ethnic Japanese as loyal to the United States” (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 17). The greater rates of recruitment in army in Hawaii must also be noted as a factor that played a crucial role in ascertaining the loyalty of Japanese Hawaii Americans.

## **1.2 Japanese Immigration, Settlement and Internment in Canada**

The first wave of Japanese immigration to Canada was from 1870s till late 1920s. Around 3,650 Japanese had been given Canadian nationality prior to imposing

stringent restrictions on the process in 1923 (The Issei). The impact of American policies towards Japanese immigrants and their descendants had consequences for Japanese Canadian community as Ann Gomer Sunahara observes in her book *The Politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War* (2000) “Canada and the United States had previously agreed to follow parallel policies with respect to their Japanese minorities” (30). Following in the footsteps of American policymakers and military office, the Provost Marshall General, Maj. Gen. Allan Gullion and General Dewitt, Liberal and Conservative Members of Parliament from British Columbia began insisting on removal of male Nisei and naturalized Japanese Canadians from protected areas along the Pacific Coast. An order similar to Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066 was passed by Canadian Prime Minister King in form of Order-in-Council P.C. 1486 on 24 February 1942. This order resulted in exclusion, relocation and internment of over 20,000 to 22,000 Japanese Canadians during the Second World War (Sunahara, *Japanese Canadians*); (Robinson). Sunahara, in *The Politics of Racism*, notes that, like their counterparts in the U.S., Japanese Canadian community also comprised of Issei, Nisei and Kibei. Sixty five percent of them had been born in Canada (Robinson). Japanese Canadian Issei, on an average, had been active in fishing and agriculture for about thirty years at the time of their internment. Sunahara records “in 1941, only 5,000 of the 13,600 Canadian-born Japanese were over twenty years of age” (6).

The British Columbia Security Commission was established on 4 March 1942 and was entrusted with the responsibility of evacuating Japanese Canadian community from the coast. It consisted of Austin C. Taylor, an industrialist; Frederick J. Mead, Assistant Commissioner, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and John Shirras, the Assistant Commissioner of the B.C. Provincial Police. It also acted

as an advisory body with regards to policies pertaining to Japanese Canadian community. However, Cabinet Committee on Japanese Questions and the Departments of Labour and Justice in Ottawa were the ultimate decision makers.

By 9 March 1942, all adult male Japanese aliens were supposed to report to the RCMP and there were plans of sending them to road camps. By 16 March 1942, Japanese Canadian families from the Pacific Coast were sent to the Livestock Building at Hastings Park in Vancouver. Originally an animal shelter, there were crude bunks, straw mattresses and open troughs turned into toilets, which were made available as rudimentary accommodation facilities. Animal stench and maggots made hygienic living next to impossible. Sunahara documents “faced with separation from their families, family heads scrambled to volunteer for work duties in the Park. Composed of camp workers and dormitory representatives, the Hastings Park Japanese Committee in time secured improvements” in basic living conditions (49). A majority of Japanese Canadians were exiled to the Slocan Valley and were kept in, what were known as, interior housing centers, primarily located in abandoned mining towns or ghost towns such as New Denver, Kaslo, Greenwood, Sandon, Lemon Creek, Popoff and Bay Farm. Tashme Internment camp was the largest in British Columbia. Another important site was the East Lilloet Internment camp located on the east side of Fraser River. In addition to this, farming families from Fraser valley with significant number of working members in comparison to non-workers were sent to the sugar beet fields of Alberta and Manitoba.

Japanese aliens could not be provided private employment after relocation. Hence, the government came up with road camp program. Etsuji Morii, an influential, yet controversial, Issei figure from Powell Street ghetto in Vancouver was called upon by RCMP to produce volunteers from the community for the program, who would be

willing to move out of West Coast prior to the official deadline. Morii resorted to persuasion as well as force to accomplish the task. Nisei such as Kunio Shimizu, secretary of the Japanese Canadian Citizens' League and Thomas Shoyama, English-language editor of the *New Canadian*, a Japanese Canadian daily registered their protests against considering Morii as the sole representative of the community. They frowned upon Morii's overemphasis on Japanese values and considered that not so Canadian. When it was clear that Nisei as well as naturalized citizens would be compelled to evacuate, the Nisei leaders called upon greater participation of their generation in the affairs of the community. Shimizu and Shoyama joined their forces with naturalized Issei to form Naturalized Japanese Canadian Association, which became a strong anti-Morii front. Japanese Canadian Citizens' League collaborated with numerous Nisei groups to form Japanese Canadian Citizens' Council and provide aid in relocation process.

As per the Geneva Convention, only aliens could be interned. Hence, Sunahara observes Nisei, who had Canadian nationality, "their legal status was equivalent to that of a criminal under psychiatric care. None of them, however, were aware of their unusual legal status. Nor were any aware that legally they had thirty days in which to appeal their detention" (57). Erroneously, the agitated Nisei, the government, the press and the public seem to have considered their detention as internment. Nisei Mass Evacuation Group was formed to protest and refused to abide by the orders, which sent them to the road camps, contrary to the evacuation policies comprising of relocation as per family units in the U.S. By mid-July 1942, the government considered keeping families unified and Japanese Canadians were sent to ghost towns and camps.

Some of the road camps the Issei and Nisei men were sent to were Hope-Princeton highway or the Trans-Canada Highway west of Revelstoke, B.C; the Yellowhead highway primarily for aliens, and road camp at Schreiber. Some were also sent to the internment camps at Petawawa and Angler along with German prisoners-of-war. Families of men working along the Hope-Princeton highway struggled to relocate at camp at Hope. Many tried to ensure that they would be sent to the same camp as their family members. Sunahara documents “aware that the sixteen-by-twenty-four-foot shacks were to house a minimum of eight people, Japanese Canadians awaiting shipment did their best to arrange that they would share with friends or relatives wherever possible” (64). From 20,881 Japanese Canadians, who were kept at Hastings Park, Sunahara reports, around 12,000 were sent to internment camps and ghost towns by November 1942. In addition to that 4,000 were driven to granaries and chicken coops in the Prairies. Those left either were accommodated in self-support communities in B.C. or had to move to Toronto and Montreal. The living conditions in camps as well as ghost towns were rudimentary. The structures were not insulated. Those working on farms had to drink alkaline water and engage in backbreaking work. The camps lacked privacy. Gradually, the conditions improved when the Security Commission allowed the formation of legal Japanese committees in the camps, which could appeal for improvisation in infrastructure. Those living as farm labour participated in Victory Bond drives, which helped them connect to the local white communities in the region.

### **1.3 Justification and Scope of the Study**

There have been limited critical studies about Japanese North American internment. The present study focuses on the internment of Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians as a watershed moment in the process of identity formation of the

members of the community. This study plans to investigate multiple implications of this historical event as a collective traumatic experience and analyze its significant literary expressions across generations. Primarily, singular texts have been studied in isolated manner. The study is crucial in providing a comprehensive overview of representative literary works from mainland U.S., Hawaii and Canada. This study underscores how these expressions have literary value due to their potential of articulating trauma, preserving memories and shedding light in racial discourse prevalent prior to and during the Second World War. This research meticulously highlights differences in racialization of Japanese in Hawaii and on the mainland. It also examines the plantation mentality and role of Hawaiian pidgin in stratifying the Japanese immigrants and their descendants in Hawaii, which in turn imparted uniqueness to their experiences there.

## **1.4 Aims, Objectives and Hypothesis of the Study**

This study **aims** at unravelling, through literary expressions, the impact of immigration and internment on the community of Japanese immigrants and their descendants living in the U.S. and Canada. Further, the study endeavours to critically analyze select memoirs and novels with an aim to examine internment as a crucial collective trauma as well as a vital memory of the community. Additionally, the study investigates, through relevant theoretical frameworks, racial discourse rampant with prejudice and discrimination against the Japanese immigrants and their descendants and its reflection in the literary expressions.

The **objectives** of this thesis are

- Firstly, examining the history of Japanese immigration to North America

- Secondly, critically analyzing literary expressions of the internment to understand phenomena of identity formation; protective silence as a response to the internment; process of racialization; intergenerational differences of perception; internment as individual and collective trauma, and multiple phases of constructing internment as a central memory of the community
- Thirdly, probing into concepts unique to the community's experience such as picture brides, loyalty questionnaire, No-No boys, recruitment in military service and draft resisters through textual engagement
- Lastly, comprehending phenomena peculiar to Hawaii Japanese Americans such as the plantation mentality and role of Hawaiian pidgin in social stratification, and understanding their consequences for the community through literary expressions.

The **hypothesis** of the study is as follows:

Internment was a significant event in the history of Japanese North Americans. It was a source of deep, personal and collective trauma. The literary expressions of the internment help in unraveling the myriad facets of this central memory and its intergenerational impact on the community. This calls for close examination of select literary expressions of the internment to comprehend how the community coped with this traumatic experience. A thorough reading of these expressions would also shed light on the discriminatory racial discourse, which brought about the internment of the community.

## **1.5 Primary texts**

Primarily, representative texts depicting internment of Japanese North Americans were selected across three geographical territories, namely, the mainland

U.S., Hawaii and Canada. It was also ensured that experiences of the first, the second and the third generations, that is, Issei, Nisei and Sansei, are encapsulated in the memoirs and fiction studied for this research. The primary texts chosen for the study have been enlisted below:

- i. Nisei Daughter* (1953) is memoir by Monica Sone (1919-2011) delineating her experiences as a second generation Japanese American during the Second World War.
- ii. No-No Boy* (1957) is one of the earliest works of fiction commenting on the issue of No-No boys written by John Okada (1923-71).
- iii. Journey to Topaz* (1971) is a novel by Yoshiko Uchida (1921-92), which sheds light on life in an internment camp.
- iv. Farewell to Manzanar* (1973) is a memoir that Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston (1934) wrote along with her husband, James D. Houston (1933-2009), to preserve the memories of the internment for the future generations.
- v. When the Emperor was Divine* (2002) by Julie Otsuka (1962) is about the Japanese American internment.
- vi. The Buddha in the Attic* (2011) by Julie Otsuka attempts to recreate the memories of Issei picture brides.
- vii. All I Asking for Is My Body* (1988) written by Milton Murayama (1923) centers around Kiyoshi Oyama, an obedient and caring Nisei son of the Oyama family, who struggles to exercise his own will in making decisions about his life, while battling with immense parental pressure.

- viii. *Five Years on a Rock* (1994) by Milton Murayama focuses on the experiences of Sawa Oyama, Kiyoshi's mother and an Issei.
- ix. *Plantation Boy* (1998) by Milton Murayama portrays the saga of Oyama family from the perspective of Toshio Oyama, the first born, rebellious Nisei son of the family, who aspires to be an architect and challenges the familial status quo at every juncture of his life.
- x. *Dying in a Strange Land* (2008), the last novel in the Oyama series ties the loose ends of the family saga and depicts the growth of Oyama children, many of them have become successful in their desired professions. Overall, the Oyama series traces immigration of the Japanese family to Hawaii and their distinct experiences while living within the plantation system as well as their unique expressions through the Hawaiian pidgin.
- xi. *Volcano: A Memoir of Hawaii* (1995) by Garret Hongo (1951) sheds light on various issues about identity and expression.
- xii. *Obasan* (1981) by Joy Kogawa (1935) depicts Naomi Nakane's struggle to come to terms with her mother's disappearance and death
- xiii. *Itsuka* (1992) by Joy Kogawa is a sequel of the former depicting the vocal Nisei Emily Kato as she encourages her niece to discover her identity as a Japanese Canadian
- xiv. *Chorus of Mushrooms* (1994) by Hiromi Goto (1966) is a novel presenting a story of three generations attempting to integrate Japanese and Canadian aspects of their identities

## 1.6 Literature Survey

This section enlists the texts, which are vital to this study, as secondary sources about history of Japanese community in North America, including immigration, racial discrimination, internment and rehabilitation, as well as works providing crucial insights into the socio-cultural and economic facets of the community. This survey also provides an overview of major works that have imparted useful theoretical perspectives to look at the internment experiences.

Ann Gomer Sunahara's *The Politics of Racism : The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War* (2000), Gary Okihira's *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (2001) and, Stephen S Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez's *Altered Lives, Enduring Community: Japanese Americans Remember their World War II Incarceration* (2004) provide a comprehensive historical overview of the struggles of the community on the socio-cultural and economic fronts right from immigration to the West to prolonged racial discrimination by the mainstream society till the internment during the Second World War. They also record the legislative measures enacted by Canada and the U.S. particularly targeting the Japanese immigrants and their descendants in North America.

In her book, Sunahara takes a close look at the conditions prior to the war and highlights the economic interests of White Anti-Japanese lobbies in the expulsion of Japanese Canadians from the coast and their influence on shaping the rhetoric of the politicians particularly of British Columbia. It is an elaborate account of the suffering of Japanese Canadians from November 1941 to 1950 when hopes for redress were bleak. The afterword takes an overview of the developments after the publication of the first edition of the book in 1981. It underscores the importance of the redress

movement of 1980s which not only demanded justice and compensation for Japanese Canadians but also constitutional protection for human rights in the country by revoking War Measures Act. The analysis has been substantiated by figures and interviews.

Gary Okihiro's works are indispensable to holistic understanding of the Japanese American history including the immigration to Hawaii. Okihiro examines various theories that were propounded by scholars to analyze the causes of the internment. He traces the development of anti-Japanese rhetoric and shaping of popular opinion over the course of time. He comments on the impact of racial discrimination on the community through policy decisions and personal prejudice of government representatives.

Stephen S Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez's book *Altered Lives, Enduring Community: Japanese Americans Remember their World War II Incarceration* not only provides significant data about internment of Japanese Americans, but it also closely examines the long term psychological consequences of internment on the internees. Further, the book documents the salient contribution of the all Nisei 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team to the war. Fugita and Fernandez also provide an account of the fate of the draft resisters. Susan Yatabe and Ewan Craig's article *Japanese Canadian Participation in World War I and World War II* highlights the contribution of Japanese Canadians in the wars. During the Second World War, many Japanese Canadians worked as interpreters and translators for the military.

Sunahara's article titled "Japanese Canadians" published in the *The Canadian Encyclopedia* traces the history of immigration of the Japanese Canadians. It delineates the racial discrimination they faced, their expulsion from the coast, the

detention of men, dispossessing them of their assets, the threats of deportaton and the challenge of dispersal of the community. She also provides a record of the postwar community development, the political activism, the historical sites, the community associations and the culture along with the prominent personalities from the Japanese Canadian community.

Another useful article in *The Canadian Encyclopedia* is "Internment of Japanese Canadians" written by Greg Robinson. Robinson sheds light on the history of Anti-Asian Discrimination in Canada starting from 1902, when Asians in British Columbia, irrespective of citizenship, were prohibited from voting due to their race. He further documents the mass confinement and internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War and the resultant dispersal of the community. He also provides an account of the campaign for redress at the end of the article.

Two research articles co-authored by Donna Nagata titled "Processing Cultural Trauma: Intergenerational Effects of the Japanese American Incarceration" and "The Japanese American Wartime Incarceration: Examining the Scope of Racial Trauma" published in 2015 and 2019 presented vital possibilities of looking at internment as point of immense trauma in personal as well as collective history of Japanese American community. It certainly was traumatic on multiple levels including socio-cultural and racial planes with tumultuous consequences for the future identities of the community members. She also looks at the inter-generational impact of the internment through the concept of carrier groups of trauma.

*Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (2004) by Jeffrey Alexander et al. and *Unclaimed Experience : Trauma, Narrative and History* by Cathy Caruth (1996) supply salient theoretical framework related to trauma studies to interpret

psychological impact of internment on multiple generations of Japanese North Americans. This framework facilitates analyses of dreams, flashbacks, repetitive patterns, belated recollections, defence mechanisms, transgenerational trauma, protective silence and other psychological facets depicted in literary expressions of the internment. Karen Suyemoto through her article “Ethnic and Racial Identity in Multiracial Sansei: Intergenerational Effects of the World War II Mass Incarceration of Japanese Americans” published in 2018 discusses at length the multifarious repercussions of internment for subsequent generations.

Roger Luckhurst’s book *The Trauma Question* (2008) explores the myriad possibilities and techniques utilized to narrate traumatic events through fiction and memoirs. *A Stranger’s Journey : Race, Identity and Narrative Craft in Writing* (2018) by David Mura embarks upon a quest of unraveling the intersections of race, identity and self-expression through memoirs and fiction. In order to analyze internment memoirs, Mura provides instruments such as reflective voice, distinctions between past self and present self, reflective power, narrative structure, flashbacks, reenvisioning and recontextualization, that authors consciously or unconsciously employ while narrating their life stories.

Another significant article that comments on the constant tension that exists at crossroads of history and memory and role of reenactment in reconstructing memory is “Absent Images of Memory: Remembering and Reenacting the Japanese Internment” by Marita Sturken published in *Perilous Memories : The Asia-Pacific War(s)* (2001).

Certain works have informed the perception of internment as a personal as well as collective memory through its reflections in the literary expressions. They

include *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates* (2010) written by Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz, which sheds light on intersection of memory, trauma and history. Pamela Sugiman's research article "Memories of Internment: Narrating Japanese Canadian Women's Life Stories" published in 2004 presents in a microcosm the tendency of the Issei and Nisei to embrace protective silence in the face of traumatic memories. Her distinction between pre-internment memories, memories of the internment and post-internment memories has proven foundational for this research, particularly, while analyzing their depictions through literary expressions. Her extension of the concept of memory households to the innumerable Japanese objects destroyed prior to moving to internment camps is also insightful in understanding the consequences of uprooting on the community. Sugiman also explores the rare association of nostalgia and internment. Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory as propounded in her book *The Generation of Postmemory : Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (2012) is central to understanding the perspective of Sansei about internment.

Racial discrimination was at the core of policies and attitudes, which culminated into the internment. Hence, it was necessary to look closely at the racialized discourse prevalent prior to and during the Second World War. Major works consulted to comprehend the process of racialization include David Goldberg's book *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* (1993), which analyses imagery, metaphors and stereotypes employed in the descriptions of various racial communities and the distinctions in perceptions as well as hypothetical premises and models to chart out racial hierarchies in society. Jane Yamashiro's research article titled "A Triple Parallax : Japanese as a Heterogenous Global Ethnic Group" investigates into the role of local realities into the racialization process of Japanese in

various national contexts. It traces fluctuating perceptions about Japanese as a race and as an ethnic group over the course of time and also looks at the peculiar case of Hawaii Japanese Americans. Michael Omi and Howard Winant in their book *Racial Formation in the United States* (2015) assess the intersections of race, socio-cultural structures. It dives into the complex web of immigration, racial projects and impact of personal and collective racial identities on the dynamics of American society. Claire J. Kim in her research article titled “The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans” propounds that racial positions are marked across two axes, namely, the superior/inferior axis and the insider/foreigner axis, which in turn imply two overlapping processes, namely, relative valorization and civic ostracism and bring about racial triangulation of Asian Americans, in general, and Japanese Americans, in particular. Further, Kim elucidates how relative valorization of Japanese Americans led to the development of model minority myth.

Joan Chang’s research article titled “Social Stratification and Plantation Mentality: Reading Milton Murayama” is an indispensable source for comprehending the concepts central to knowing the social stratification including symbolic capital, deeply-rooted hierarchies and the plantation mentality. Donald G. Ellis’s book *Crafting Society : Ethnicity, Class, and Communication Theory* (1999) delineates the distinctions between social differentiation and social stratification. Interweaving of lenses supplied by Chang and Ellis aid in decoding varied stratifications based on symbolic powers of language, gender, generation, race and bureaucracy as seen in Milton Murayama’s novels.

Lastly, *Densho.org* and *Discovernikkei.org* are digital repositories of resources about history and experiences of Japanese immigrants and their descendants, which have proven valuable for this research.

## 1.7 Chapterization

**Chapter One** provides a historical overview of Japanese immigration to and settlement in the U.S. and Canada. It also traces the events leading to the internment and records details of the camps in terms of nature and locations. The chapter enlists the primary texts and secondary sources integral to this study through a detailed survey. It also states the aim, objectives, methodology and delimitations of the present study.

**Chapter Two** analyzes internment as a form of personal and collective trauma for the Japanese North American community. Firstly, it delineates various definitions and forms of trauma. The chapter provides insights into possibilities of narration of trauma and the role of literary imagination in enabling representation of trauma through literary expressions. Further, this chapter locates trauma, in general, and internment trauma, in particular, within the framework of personal and socio-cultural context. It also looks at various defense mechanisms utilized to deal with trauma. The chapter also attempts to comprehend intergenerational impact of internment trauma through select texts.

**Chapter Three** utilizes detailed textual illustrations, to show how select writers have resurrected the internment as a personal and collective memory by processing their personal and collective trauma through their memoirs and fiction. The reflections of internment in the literary works could be divided into three phases, namely, pre-internment memories, memories of the internment and post-internment memories. Additionally, phenomena such as protective silence, postmemory, memory households and nostalgia have been taken into account while analyzing internment memories.

**Chapter Four** charts out the process of racialization of Japanese in varied local contexts in North America, particularly, the mainland U.S., Canada and Hawaii. With the help of critical conceptions such as racial formation, heterogeneous ethnic group and racial triangulation, this chapter elucidates the racial hierarchy prevalent in the predominantly white society, which the Japanese North Americans operated in. Through apt textual examples, this chapter examines deep-rooted racial stereotypes, regulations pertaining to enemy aliens, phenomenon of picture brides, legal construction of race, loyalty questionnaire, racism within military service, draft resistance and model minority myth, which are central to drawing a comprehensive picture of racial discrimination faced by Japanese North Americans.

**Chapter Five** analyzes Milton Murayama's Oyama series to seek insights into the unique case of Hawaii Japanese Americans and the multiple factors that brought about differential racial construction. The chapter studies the plantation system, the plantation mentality, social stratification, sources of symbolic capitals and role of Hawaiian pidgin in shaping this exceptional local reality thereby leading to differential racialization.

**Chapter Six**, titled "Conclusion: A Glimpse of Post Internment World" looks briefly at the challenges confronting the Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians after internment and the resultant movements such as the redress movement. Apart from providing concluding remarks on the study, this chapter also refers to the social media presence and prominent campaigns of the community organizations, who consider it to be their moral responsibility to raise their voices against all forms of injustices in North America.

## **1.8 Methodology**

- Survey and selection of most representative Japanese American and Japanese Canadian novels and memoirs written by the second and third generation writers
- Consulting historical sources, research articles and books to understand history of Japanese immigration and settlement in North America
- In-depth reading and analysis of the primary texts to fulfill aforesaid objectives of the present study
- Surveying, selecting and applying a variety of theoretical frameworks to the texts pertaining to trauma, memory and race in context of the internment
- Complementing the analysis with insights from the secondary texts for historical, political and socio-cultural context
- Examining the literary facets of the select primary texts
- Comprehending phenomena unique to the experiences of the Japanese North American community such as intersection of Japanese and American/Canadian cultural values, bilingual vocabulary and cultural conceptions, picture brides, No-No Boys, plantation mentality, role of Hawaiian pidgin in literary expressions

## **1.9 Delimitations**

The present study limits itself to fiction and memoirs of second and third generation Japanese American and Japanese Canadian writers primarily focusing on experiences during the internment. The texts had to be shortlisted based on availability in India via online portals. However, the study has attempted to select most representative texts to fulfill the aforesaid objectives of analysis. The main

theoretical focus has been to comprehend internment as a crucial historical event and traumatic experience for the community.

# CHAPTER TWO

## ARTICULATING THE INARTICULABLE: INTERNMENT AS TRAUMA

This chapter aims at analyzing internment as a significant collective trauma for the Japanese North American community. Firstly, it explores various definitions and forms of trauma. Secondly, it attempts to gain insights into possibilities of narration of trauma and the role of literary imagination in enabling representation of trauma through literary expressions. Further, this chapter locates trauma, in general, and internment trauma, in particular, within the framework of personal and socio-cultural context. It also delineates defense mechanisms utilized to deal with trauma. It attempts to understand intergenerational impact of internment trauma through select texts.

### 2.1 Internment as Trauma

Donna Nagata in a series of research articles examines the impact of internment as a source of racial and cultural trauma. She borrows definitions of individual trauma and cultural trauma from Caruth and Alexander respectively. According to Cathy Caruth trauma is “an event that shatters one’s assumptive world, sense of self, and well-being”. According to Jeffrey Alexander cultural trauma “occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a traumatic event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking memories forever and changing their future identity” (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 1); (Nagata, Kim and Nguyen 359). Nagata further adds “members of a collectivity (Japanese Americans) experienced a traumatic upheaval (physically and emotionally)

that changed their future identity” particularly in the prevailing context of institutionalized racism and exclusion during the wartime. She further observes that the cultural trauma suffered during the internment was not processed on a collective level by the community. The consequences were constricted to the individual level seen through a range of negative emotions experienced by Niseis in particular. The Nisei were either in their adolescent phase of life or in their early twenties and studies show that they experienced emotions such as depression, uncertainty, humiliation, self-blame and shame (Nagata, Kim and Nguyen 362-363).

Inouye employs the term “experiences of haunting” to articulate the aftermath of the internment and most importantly to describe “the lingering feelings of disturbance that can persist across generations and eventually propel collective actions, as with the redress movement” (Nagata, Kim and Wu 46).

### **2.1.1 Forms of Trauma**

Nagata et al. associate four forms of trauma namely, individual, race-based, historical, and cultural trauma with the internment. “Individual and race-based traumas occurred at the time of incarceration, while the historical and cultural traumas emerged after the war ended at an intergenerational level”. Interrogating their loyalty, abrupt uprooting by the government and uncertainty “shattered Japanese Americans’ assumptive world, sense of self, and well-being” on an individual level. Anti-Asian racial stereotypes, prejudice and racial discrimination as “unassimilable foreigners” led to immense racial trauma particularly after the culmination of racial hatred into state policies about immigration and citizenship (Nagata, Kim and Wu 38). Bombing of Pearl Harbour was the ultimate justification that the groups supporting white economic and political interests awaited to call for stringent measures against the Japanese Americans.

Luminita Dragulescu emphasizes that race trauma comprises of “the psychological, somatic, and cultural effects that individuals and groups suffer as a consequence of being racialized,” growing out of the reality that “[e]ither as a result of an official racially oppressive system or as an outcome of residual racist discourses and practices, certain categories of people are still victimized solely on the basis of their association with a certain race” (Dragulescu 4).

Nagata et al. observe that the effects of historical trauma and cultural trauma emerged after the internment ended and were seen in the subsequent generations. They draw attention to the definition given by Mohatt et al. “Historical trauma has been defined as a trauma that is shared by a group of people and has impacts that span across multiple generations”. Further Nagata et al. observe that “Cultural trauma can be seen as a more specific manifestation of historical trauma. While historical trauma concerns intergenerational impacts broadly, cultural trauma focuses on the way in which a shared traumatic event impacts group consciousness and identity (Nagata, Kim and Wu 38).

In the context of cultural and collective trauma, according to Dragulescu, the collective identity centering around “ethnicity, gender, or religion is considered as the primary unit that experiences trauma” (Kurtz 274). Studying collective trauma requires synchronic as well as diachronic perspectives, that is, an understanding of how trauma affects members of the community belonging to the same temporal and spatial frames as well as how it is passed down across generations respectively.

Susan Brison delineates how individual traumatic memory is also an integral part of the cultural memory. The cultural context influences the experiential facets of trauma as well as remembrance given that the latter is subjected to perception, reception and engagement by other members of the society. Since trauma can threaten

the basic cohesive fabric of identity of individual members of a community, as much as the collectivity, that a community comprises of, the process of memorialization begins with the community providing credence to the inherently destructive traumatic events endured by the community (Kurtz 274).

According to Erikson collective trauma is “the result of damaged attachment patterns that sustained a community, the gradual realization that the community no longer exists as an effective source of support and that an important part of the self has disappeared”. Further, Erikson highlights that trauma has dual tendencies “it draws one away from the center of group space while at the same time drawing one back”. Erikson, like Halbwachs, emphasizes the power of trauma to be the foundation of a community. For Erikson, trauma is “a transitional reexperiencing that is driven toward an obtainable goal of narrativization through collective dialogue” (Kurtz 146).

Cathy Caruth in her book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (1996) notes that trauma, originally a medical term, has been extended to describe the wound of the mind. According to her, trauma is “the breach in the mind’s experience of time, self, and the world... an event that is experienced too soon, too unexpectedly, to be fully known and is therefore not available to consciousness until it imposes itself again, repeatedly, in the nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor” (4). The core aspects of trauma include no direct access to the event on the level of conscious memory particularly due to the unexpected and abrupt manner of its occurrence. There is no complete assimilation of the experience. Belatedness and involuntary, irrational, traumatic repetitions through psychological phenomena such as dreams, flashbacks and hallucinations are some of the other aspects of trauma. Caruth observes that the first step to embracing the experience of trauma is through its inherent forgetting. The deferred nature of its temporal structure can be attributed to

the inherent latency of the traumatic event, that is, the pushing of the event into the unconscious (17). Caruth emphasizes on “the complex permutations that unconscious emotions impose on traumatic reactions” to the event. Caruth’s approach to trauma places the traumatic event at the center of the study and scrutinizes the reactions to the same through various frameworks. Reaching out to the unavailable truth through traumatic symptoms is one of her prime concerns (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 6-7).

## **2.2 Narrating Trauma**

Bessel A. Van der Kolk and Onno Van der Hart opine that narrative memory is made up of “mental constructs” which are utilized to interpret experience. However, trauma proves to be one of the overwhelming scenarios where conventional systems of meaning fail in aiding incorporation of terrifying experiences. Individuals may not be able to locate and narrate their own history. With no conscious memory of trauma for reference, individuals may feel uncertain about their own memory. Hence, facilitating conscious narration of trauma, integrating trauma into conscious memory and transforming into narrative language become crucial stages on the path to recovery. According to Anna Hunter “the individual act of self-narrative also carries the potential to become a public act, speaking to a collective memory that also struggles to situate its response to the event” (Kurtz 67-68). This holds true for Japanese North American internment as for a prolonged period of time the community struggled to formulate their response to this traumatic event. Internment was an overwhelming event which was not consciously processed by the Issei and remained as an unnarrativized fragment primarily because of failure of conscious witnessing by the community itself as well as by the mainstream white society. This resulted in inability to incorporate the event in collective and social memory of the community as

well as of the respective nations. Japanese North Americans embraced silence for a long time. However, memoirs and fiction written by Nisei and the subsequent generations proved to be self-narratives that facilitated articulation of this collective traumatic memory.

The absence of trauma in conscious memory disrupts the process of narration as roles of narrator, receiver and witness are not well defined. In fact, the process of bearing witness to trauma begins by testifying to the absence. Brison opines that a significant step in identity formation is narrating one's own memories to oneself. Trauma impacts construction of the self as it disrupts the narrative due to its un-narratability and impossibility of integrating it with the past (Kurtz 68-69). Trauma is characterized by arbitrary repetitions that cannot be classified and included in the past and in conscious memory.

Trauma theory "constitutes the paradoxical relationship between the elision of memory and the precision of recall". Trauma can take form of loss of memories, "intense, affective memories" to "misremembered registration" characterized by displacement, repression or disguise and without being accessible to the conscious mind. Caruth perceives trauma as "an excess of reality [which] defies comprehension". Impossibility of individual witnessing, mental processing and development of a memory about the event culminate in dissociation between the event and the affect as well as a sense of haunting (Kurtz 144). At times, the phenomenon of witnessing and formation of memory may be passed on to the next generation. The secondary witnessing can sometimes be a cure or a hurdle in the process of confronting trauma for that generation.

Narrating trauma, according to Dori Laub, involves "revisiting" rather than "recounting" the traumatic memory as it is essentially a process of "reexperiencing"

the same rather than a mere “conscious retelling”. Hence, conventional understanding of the notion of historical truth and factual accuracy cannot be applied to narration of trauma. Charlotte Delbo, a holocaust survivor, highlights that “the rift between personal truth and historical truth as being governed and negotiated by the inconsistency of traumatic memory”. For better understanding of this phenomenon, Delbo considers two dimensions of memory namely deep memory and common memory. Deep memory is associated with senses and preservation of sensations and physical imprints. Common memory constitutes of external, intellectual memory related to thinking processes (Kurtz 70).

Laub observes “traumatic testimony is a dialogic process”. Hence, the role of the listener has a special significance particularly in enabling the narration as a participant in the process. Traumatic events such as the holocaust, Caruth notes, expose “the crisis within language” that proves to be a perpetual wound or a hurdle that is almost impossible for the survivor to overcome during the process of narration. Such events are characterized by extreme dehumanization which simultaneously demand as well as defy any form of witnessing. Perpetual reexperiencing of trauma, crisis of narrative and crisis of language make locating traumatic events in “collective narrative of cultural memory” a problematic process (Kurtz 71 - 73).

Alexander et al. note that there are two approaches in Lay Trauma Theory namely the enlightenment approach and the psychoanalytic approach. The theory proposes that when human needs of love, order, connection and security are undermined and when there is an adverse impact on the overall sense of wellbeing of an individual, there is a resultant trauma that manifests itself in myriad forms. The enlightenment approach looks at trauma “as a kind of rational response to abrupt change” that eventually enables problem solving. However, the psychoanalytic

approach, more acceptable than the former, particularly in current academic discussions, considers the unconscious emotional fears and cognitively distorting mechanisms of psychological defense between the external shattering event and the actor's internal traumatic response. Repression, displacement and distortion particularly in imagination and in memory take the center stage in the formulation of a response to trauma. This approach explores the complexities associated with the inability of conscious perception of the traumatic event by the individual. Recovery of the truth about the traumatic event, registering it in conscious memory, battling the anxiety of repression, psychological introspection (term used by Saul Friedlander, a Holocaust historian) and restoration of the individual's agency are some crucial, complex aspects involved in the approach. The psychoanalytic approach highlights the importance of studying the memory residues of traumatic event and considering the role of collective memory in coping up with trauma. Literature and literary interpretation with its hermeneutic approach to symbolic patterns help in bringing about a better understanding of memory residues in the academic context. (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 2-6).

Alexander et al. discuss the conventional ways of supporting victims of trauma employed by various nations in their attempts to deal with traumatic aspects of their histories by encouraging the process of overcoming repression and expressing emotions through public commemoration, cultural representation and construction of memorials as material symbols with specific "political, collective, public meaning" (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 7-8).

### **2.2.1 Role of Imagination in Processing and Representing Trauma**

Alexander et al. emphasize on the role of imagination in creation of an experience particularly through processes such as association, condensation, and

aesthetic creation which are an integral part of representation. Imagination is crucial in construction of trauma as well. Alexander et al. investigate the epistemological concerns of trauma. Rather than the real, disruptive power of an event, it is the perception or the belief about the effects of the event on the collective identity that has greater impact on a traumatized, social group. Individual sense of security is subjected to “structures of emotional and cultural expectations” which are in turn dependent on the collectivity’s sense of stable identity. The traumatic event triggers abrupt dislodging of the stable patterns of meaning of a collectivity. The destabilization is a result of socio-cultural process rather than the event per se. Human agency, power structures and “new system of cultural classification” are a part of the socio-cultural process that destabilizes the previous patterns of meaning after a traumatic event. There is emergence of collective trauma when social crises become cultural crises. Trauma is a culmination of the members of the collectivity comprehending and concluding that “social pain” has got transformed into an ultimate peril that has the potential of jeopardizing the essence of the collectivity’s identity. Trauma process begins with a “claim to some fundamental injury, an exclamation of the terrifying profanation of some sacred value, a narrative about a horribly destructive social process, and a demand for emotional, institutional, and symbolic reparation and reconstitution”. Carrier groups are the drivers of the trauma process. They can be generational, national or institutional groups signifying certain perspectives about an event (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 9-11).

Alexander et al. note that four crucial questions need to be considered while constructing a cultural representation of collective trauma and a master narrative after the traumatic event. Firstly, the carrier group, in other words, the group of narrators of trauma must consider the nature of the pain, particularly the impact on the

collectivity. Secondly, the nature of victims, whether it constitutes of singular or multiple groups. must be recorded. Thirdly, relation of the trauma victim to the wider audience, specifically, in terms of the audience identifying with the victimized group should be looked at. Unless represented with the help of qualities that are considered significant by the larger society, the audience fails to connect with and symbolically experience the trauma. Lastly, attribution of responsibility, that is, identifying the perpetrators or the antagonists, is vital (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 12 - 15).

### **2.2.2. Representing and Narrating Internment as Trauma in Literary Expressions**

In the case of the Japanese North Americans, internment as a traumatic event destabilized the patterns of meaning that promised a sense of security to individuals, for example, the belief in the values of democracy and the notion of citizenship. Forced dislocation and incarceration disrupted their stable identity in the continent and culminated into long term social agony that was passed down to the subsequent generations and impacted their process of identity construction as well. Internment was a destructive process that created a metaphorical wound difficult to heal. The victims, while constructing the cultural representation of internment, comprised of a collectivity of, largely, citizens segregated on racial lines jeopardizing their positions as citizens in the U.S. and Canada and by extension confining these innocent people to internment camps and subjecting them to racial discrimination, legal charges and surveillance. Majority of the members of the mainstream white society had failed in identifying with the Japanese North Americans as fellow citizens uprooted from their homes and confined in camps. The literary expressions of the internment contributed to the construction of a strong narrative and facilitated awareness about the trauma experienced by the Japanese North American community. Entities within the

governments of the U.S. and Canada during the Second World War were later identified as perpetrators of trauma by official reports after investigation. Official apologies and state acknowledgements of racial injustice marked the process of attribution of responsibility.

Alexander et al. enlist some institutional arenas within which the master narrative of trauma may unfold. These arenas include religious, aesthetic, legal, scientific arenas, mass media and state bureaucracy. In the context of Japanese North American internment, trauma narrative was constructed in aesthetic, legal, mass medial and bureaucratic arenas at various points in the course of more than seventy years since the internment.

In the aesthetic arena various genres and narratives are utilized to “produce imaginative identification and emotional catharsis”. The legal arena involves a call for issuing judgements reflecting responsibilities of parties involved, giving punishments and paying symbolic reparations irrespective of whether the perpetrators could be held accountable successfully and the audience could identify with the traumatic experiences or not. The arena of mass media provides opportunities as well as imposes restrictions on the process of articulating trauma. Mass media can create dramatized expressions of trauma and impart tremendous power to interpretations while also subjecting these interpretations to journalistic constraints such as precision, neutrality and overall equilibrium of points of view. The state bureaucracy can empower the process of representation of trauma by providing aid through establishments of investigative committees and other mechanisms of the executive and shape the interpretive process provided it aims to encourage solidarity with the cause. At times, state bureaucracy could also be misused to silence the trauma process by groups with contradictory interests (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 15-19).

## **2.3 Locating Trauma within Personal and Socio-cultural**

### **Context**

According to Neil Smelser, trauma is dependent on sociocultural context, hence afflicted societies are more prone to trauma particularly those that have faced wars, economic issues and do not have a culture of strong social solidarity. He further adds that in the case of cultural trauma, the event must be remembered as one that destroyed a value or outlook vital to the unified nature and inherent existence of the traumatized group or society and the “memory must be associated with a strong negative affect, usually disgust, shame, or guilt” (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 36).

Smelser defines social trauma as an event or a catastrophe or a dislocation that disrupts social structures on a tremendous scale. A social system constitutes of organization of social relations based on economic, legal, medical, educational and family institutions definitely not devoid of stratification along class, race, ethnicity, gender and other factors. Smelser observes that culture is also a system comprising of “a grouping of elements—values, norms, outlooks, beliefs, ideologies, knowledge, and empirical assertions (not always verified), linked with one another to some degree as a meaning-system” (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 37).

Studying cultural trauma with regards to national cultures can present unique challenges in terms of cultural unity, coherence and contestations by various political groups with regards to the nature of the events that have been qualified as trauma. Smelser defines cultural trauma as “an invasive and overwhelming event that is believed to undermine or overwhelm one or several essential ingredients of a culture or the culture as a whole”. The social agents and contending groups are responsible for according and upholding the status of national trauma assigned to a historical

memory (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 38). Psychological trauma, on the other hand, involves “the intrapsychic dynamics of defense, adaptation, coping, and working through”. It is characterised by its ineradicable presence in the personality of the traumatized (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 39).

In the case of individuals, stages such as catharsis and grief work help in the process of healing. However, when it comes to cultural traumas, this process can be visualized as persistent oscillations between phases of calmness spent in discovering methods to deal with trauma and escalations fueled by the urges of new social agents to reinterpret the traumatic memories. Just like traumatized individuals who adopt denial as a strategy to escape confronting trauma again, with regards to collective memory and collective trauma, the individuals constituting the collectivity embrace collective denial or forgetting. This collective trauma would definitely have implications for the collective identity of the group of these individuals. Further, Smelser highlights “a meaningful cultural membership implies a name or category of membership, and the social-psychological representation of that category produces a sense of psychological identity with varying degrees of salience, articulation, and elaboration” (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 42-43).

Smelser defines cultural trauma as “a memory accepted and publicly given credence by a relevant membership group and evoking an event or situation which is a) laden with negative affect, b) represented as indelible, and c) regarded as threatening a society’s existence or violating one or more of its fundamental cultural presuppositions” (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 44).

### **2.3.1 Defense Mechanisms against Trauma at Individual and Collective Levels**

The necessity to come to terms with this trauma at individual as well as collective level makes the group employ psychological mechanisms of defence. Initially, Smelser discusses the defense mechanisms with reference to Freudian framework of instincts, primarily considering them as defenses against an internal threat. Additionally, while confronting trauma, individuals utilize multiple mechanisms in a phenomenon known as layering. He later sheds light on the possibilities before individuals of using these defense mechanisms to combat external threats at personal level as well as of deploying them at a collective level. Smelser classifies defense mechanisms into four basic modes and four stages considering the process of gratification of desires.

The four modes include blocking the threatening intrusion, perhaps, by denial; secondly, reversing the threatening intrusion into its opposite, for instance, by converting contempt into awe; thirdly, shifting the reference of the threatening intrusion, perhaps, by projection; lastly, insulating the threatening intrusion from its associative connections, for instance, by depersonalization. Considering the gratification of desires, the four mechanisms of defence take form of repression, suppression of affect, displacement and inhibition (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 45-46).

Mass or collective coping with reference to cultural trauma involves a perspective of generality and shareability particularly in process of representations and reactions. Smelser utilizes examples from American history such as bombing of Pearl Harbour, the internment of Japanese Americans and dropping of atomic bombs

on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and looks at them as events of cultural trauma that Americans were required to come to terms with. For many, he adds, this process involved phases of anxiety, denial and depersonalization. Smelser emphasizes “we call this aggregation of individual responses a mass phenomenon because it involved many people having the same reactions and assigning the same meaning” (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 47-48).

Mass or collective coping comprises of collective memory work. It constitutes of an emphasis on a response that is perceived as affecting all members of a given collectivity. Secondly, collective coping is a result of elaborate process of negotiation and contestation over historical meaning, appropriate affective stance, responsibility and commemorative mechanism. Thirdly, ascertaining collective response involves vehement disputes for an extended period of time without any certainty of arriving at a consensus over factors of contestation precisely because collective trauma can be embedded with multiple and contradictory voices symbolizing varied ways of remembering a traumatic event. Every approach of remembrance has an associated agenda of advancing a particular group’s economic, political and social concerns. Lastly, while considering the struggles over meaning and stance, there is a need to pay attention to the intergenerational aspects as well (Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 48-50).

## **2.4 Internment Literary Expressions and Trauma**

Literature can imagine, anticipate and envision trauma. As an imaginative medium it can provide access to trauma by “offering a reading of a process or period or by giving at least plausible ‘feel’ for experience and emotion which may be difficult to arrive at through restricted documentary methods” opines LaCapra (Kurtz

99). “The non-referential quality of words and wounds” make them similar and enable the former to communicate the later.

Joshua Pederson observes “[i]n so far as trauma is at least initially unavailable to the consciousness, efforts to articulate it often result in silence and textual space” (Kurtz 101). Trauma is manifested by voids in memory, narrative, consciousness and representation. He further adds “[a]t other times, narrative flows around trauma like a river past a hillock. In other words, a trauma narrative might be only indirectly related to the event itself” (Kurtz 102). In order to examine the indirect relationship between literature and trauma, Hartman employs the term “authorial coldness” which according to him enables an author to filter trauma and utilize metaphor to shield oneself from the same. LaCapra highlights creation of a unique genre featuring such works which he calls “traumatic realism” where it is difficult to precisely indicate the “aboutness” and uncover the relationship between a literary work and the trauma that it tries to conceal (Kurtz 103). Compulsive repetition and return through dreams and flashbacks is another strategy that is used to depict trauma in literature. Pederson notes “[t]raumatic repetition has narrative ramifications. Victims do not merely relive or reexperience their traumas; they retell them, too”. Repetitions can lead to catharsis, however, they also signify “unresolved shock” (Kurtz 104). Gabriele Schwab analyses the passing down of traumatic memory across generations through her transgenerational trauma model. She underscores that “an individual or a generation can unwittingly speak the unconscious of a previous individual or generation in a cryptic speech marked by an unspeakable secret”. Further, “unresolved conflicts” or “unintegrated traumas” are transmitted to the next generation and are resonated through language such that “language itself becomes haunted, and haunted language uses a gap inside speech to point to silenced history. Haunted language refers to what

is unspeakable through ellipsis, indirection and detour, or fragmentation and deformation” (Kurtz 104). As much as individual trauma, transgenerational trauma also inflicts narrative with “silence, disruption, and indirection”. Ilka Saal proposes a concept called “trauma transfer” which implies “cognitive and narrative linking” of traumas such that articulating one trauma might encourage the victims of other trauma to narrativize their experiences thus aiding therapy (Kurtz 106).

Nicolas Abraham’s and Maria Torok’s notion of transgenerational haunting refers to the influence of concealed aspects of family history on psyche of the individual. In this case, silence is a result of overlapping factors such as violence, guilt, and shame. It is also characterised by traumatic belatedness (Kurtz 145).

Trauma, quite often, shatters standard dimensions of perception, representation, transmission, temporal and chronological sequences, verbal articulations and causal connections. Expression of trauma at times, however not always, requires experimental aesthetics and modernist strategies that employ imagination to transform trauma and empower the traumatized with emotional and cognitive resilience. Such expressions are characterized by repetition, indirection, elliptic omissions, gaps, distortions, uncontrollable images, fragmented and cyclical sequences, silences, disremembering, disruptions and fractured narratives (Kurtz 141).

Stef Craps presents a distinct perspective on silence. He looks at silence as a “coping mechanism” and a “conscious choice” rather than a symptom of escaping traumatic pain. He opines that “silence might indicate not an inability to describe, remember, or integrate but rather an intentional decision to gather one’s strength and memorialize loss” (Kurtz 107). He challenges the necessity of fragmented narratives to depict trauma and proposes a different perception through his analysis of texts

which have been instances of literary realism and have effectively attempted to communicate individual and collective trauma. In employing literary realism to convey trauma, these works do not “derive their haunting power from the conversion of unspeakable suffering into a broken, traumatized speech, but rather from its acknowledgement of the existence of vast silence spaces of unknown, ongoing suffering in the face of which narrative therapy – to the extent that it is on offer – is an inadequate response”. While enlisting characteristics of such realist texts expressing trauma, Craps identifies that, “in such texts, narrative is neither disrupted by trauma nor forced to circumnavigate it. Rather, in such realistic texts, the trauma narrative passes straight through the landscape of pain, describing the difficult sights along the way” (Kurtz 107).

The analogy of a camera capturing a photograph is often employed to discuss the working of the unconscious where the somatic memories are considered to be like a negative. It is not always possible to develop a negative, similarly, not all somatic memories are translated into conscious, semantic memories. Belatedness and repetitive reproduction hold true as characteristics of trauma as well as photography. However, the delayed representation does not indicate ambiguity, but is considered as a marker of truth of the exclusive moment captured by the camera just like trauma which cannot be placed in a meaningful narrative and chronology (Kurtz 150).

While considering the ethical predicament of witnessing trauma prior to recovery, LaCapra discusses the notion of empathic unsettlement which refers to a position that “faces up to personal connection and emotional involvement while imposing a self-reflexive distance when faced with the unrepresented or unrepresentable trauma of others”. In spite of stipulating a need for distance between past and present as well as experience and memory, LaCapra suggests “a social and

dialogic process culminating in a relational and countertransferential encounter” wherein there is a possibility of coming to terms with trauma by lamenting the historical losses (Kurtz 151).

Greg Forster draws attention to “structural” or “insidious” trauma such as racism and patriarchal oppression. The multiple sources of structural trauma deeply buried in the social fabric need to be traced by investigating the personal pasts and histories of individuals involved in a traumatic event. In literary works, Forster insists that “if an author is to engage in structural trauma in text, he or she must provide deeper, more complex back stories for his characters that give insight into the ways these individuals are imbricated in a social network colored by insidious trauma”. According to Forster, the second narrative effect of structural trauma is “retrodetermination” that is understanding the fact that “the causes of such trauma often lie deep beneath the visible surface, individuals might be harmed by them without knowing the source of that harm”. This notion indicates a process of unraveling the sources of trauma retrospectively (Kurtz 108).

Silke Arnold-de Simone, along Freudian lines, highlights the “transformational therapeutic result” that a fictional narrative can produce provided it successfully addresses the trauma. At times, remembering as a process may contest the distinctions or binaries of “fact and fiction, truth and imagination” (Kurtz 147).

### **2.4.1 Trauma and Narration**

Though trauma contests the capabilities of narration, it also produces “retrospective narratives that seek to explicate the trauma”. Literature has the potential of incorporating eccentric time patterns of trauma including the complexities to which the narrative time is subjected to, in addition to belatedness there are features

such as “disrupting linearity, suspending logical causation, running out of temporal sequence, working backwards towards the inaugurating traumatic event, or playing with belated revelations that retrospectively rewrite narrative significance”. These constitute the aesthetic markers of trauma narratives. Experimentation and fragmentation are inherently embedded in such narratives. John McLeod and Susan Brison emphasize “the therapeutic narration of trauma” in life narratives wherein narrative memory performs the function of a speech act moulding the memory of the traumatic event and providing it certain temporal order as well as empowering the survivor with agency to regulate the process of recollection. The process, in the larger sense, has an implication of, literally, reconstructing identity (Luckhurst 79-82; Brison 40). Hiromi Goto’s *Chorus of Mushrooms* is a fine example of a trauma narrative. Murasaki, the Sansei narrator of the novel, is narrating a story to her lover primarily featuring her bond with Naoe, her Issei grandmother. Listening to her grandmother narrate stories in Japanese, a language Murasaki could not comprehend, and see her talk about, consume and share Japanese food quite unfamiliar to her are some of the most intimate and nostalgic moments of Murasaki’s childhood. The enigmatic presence of Naoe in Murasaki’s life even after her physical disappearance and their strong telepathic connection requires suspension of disbelief on the part of the readers. It is an expression of deep-seated trauma and identity crisis. Naoe is a strong force who shapes Murasaki’s identity and connects her to her Japanese roots. She presents a disruption in the silent and linear lives of Murasaki’s Nisei parents, who have embraced amnesia after the internment. The eccentricities, complexities, juxtapositions of multiple narratives and frame story structural constructions present the implicit and explicit expressions of internment trauma and protective silence on identity construction of Sansei characters.

Luckhurst discusses how Peter Brooks integrates Freudian model of trauma with Boris Tomashevsky's formalist perspectives on narrative to arrive at "the view that trauma does not halt narrative but might be regarded as the motor that drives its manifold forms". In Boris Tomashevsky's essay 'Thematics', he differentiates between story, which is "the causal and chronological sequence of events" and plot, which is "the actual order in which events are presented in a narrative". In the case of a narrative, there is "anachronic disjointedness", that is, the time of the narrative and the time when it is narrated are never the same. Plots are organized together as readers are involved in arranging and rearranging narrative units into meaningful, chronological stories. Brooks considers Freudian idea of how trauma overpowers the mechanisms of the psyche to expose it to unlimited excitations such that it is bound to repeatedly experience and express trauma while also desperately trying to return to the state of calm. Brooks, further, relates this idea to Tomashevsky's perspective on plot wherein he perceives narrative as originating from stasis due to a propelling force that fuels plot such that there is restoration of stasis at the end. In other words, "narrative [is] foundationally a working through of traumatic disruption". Plot is a result of stimulation of calm leading to a possibility of narratability with an objective of returning to the state of non-narratability. In the process of working through the disruption, there is production of plot through repetitive narrative units. The desire of the readers to reach the end helps them to incorporate "the anachronic trauma of plot" and to comprehend the story (Luckhurst 83-84).

Luckhurst, in order to understand the impact of narrative on human experience, looks at the philosophical and phenomenological perspective on narrative. Paul Ricoeur opines that a perfect philosophical explanation of temporal experience has not been devised in the western context as time is often perceived as discordance

and narrative as an instrument to recalibrate human understanding of the world. In other words, narrative is seen as concordance. It has the potential to arrange myriad events into coherent story by integrating contradictions and complexities. In fact, humans are conditioned to comprehending time or temporal experience through narratives. Ricoeur uses the term “emplotment”, that is, the process of arranging historical events in a sequence to form a narrative with plot, to describe the possibility of creating a discordant concordance. Further, he adds “traumatic discordance is the constant spur to innovations in narrative concordance”. Luckhurst does not look at narrative as a mere “textual configuration”, but as a structure that has the potential to redefine the “temporal dimension” of the world such that it creates “historical consciousness” (Luckhurst 84-85). Joy Kogawa’s novels are ideal examples of creating narrative concordance by arranging historical events around the internment till the redress movement into a narrative whole. Kogawa utilizes diary entries and dated narrative sections of chapters to navigate through the timeline and jump between the past, showcasing events in the 1940s and the present in the 1970s. The sequel also covers the events in the 1980s. The dates provide an overt sense of linearity. However, Naomi, the Sansei narrator of these novels, punctuates her matter-of-fact narrations and documentation of daily life and exchanges with intense and vivid descriptions of dreams. These dreams tap into the sensorial details of tactile, olfactory and visual imagery to narrate the non-narratable, covert, collective and personal trauma. The language describing the same succumbs to the deep, traumatic, psychological wounds and transcends rational meaning making process. The narrative unfolds through association, condensation and evocative and painful imagery. Naomi sees these dreams in Hawai’i after concluding her trip to Japan and visiting her

mother's grave. Closure of personal trauma is attained through spatial presence in the places that remind Naomi of her mother.

Trauma narratives do not limit the expression of trauma only to characters and themes, but they demonstrate the uncertainties at a structural level. Belatedness as a characteristic of trauma makes Novel an apt form for trauma narratives where “the past is open to retrospective reinterpretation” and the plots are subjected to belated realignment. At times, formal disruptions stem from political positions. Instability in terms of chronological time, evading straightforward reader-oriented techniques, resonating abrupt nature of trauma impacting the narrative and challenging closure are some characteristics of trauma narratives that Robert Eaglestone states with reference to Holocaust testimony. Luckhurst concludes that emphasis was laid on aesthetic experimentation with aim of resisting “the habituation of trauma into numbing and domesticating cultural conventions” (88-89). Fiction of Goto, Kogawa and Otsuka experiments with chronological dimensions of narrative to employ unfamiliar mechanisms of unravelling trauma. At times, dreams disturb the overtly linear narrative. At other times, ghostlike or revelatory encounters with ancestors present an enigma bringing to surface deep childhood trauma. Otsuka does not anchor the identities of her characters by naming them and giving them specific, individualistic attributes. She prefers to construct them as unnamed representatives. Perhaps, these are political decisions that enable these writers to create a haunting awareness of injustice, racial discrimination and painful uprooting of Japanese Americans and Canadians, which deeply traumatized generations of the community. Their experimental techniques ensure that depiction of trauma is not diluted by familiar fictional devices, rather, the estrangement of readers intensifies the reconstruction of trauma.

Luckhurst delineates some characteristics of trauma fiction while analysing Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987). Firstly he notes Morrison's approach of producing creative discordance to encourage participation of readers in unravelling the narrative, which in words of LaCapra, would mean "empathetic unsettlement". Non-linear narrative, creation of supernatural entities such as ghosts, transgenerational transmission of trauma and ongoing efforts by the community to come to terms with traumatic history are some other characteristics highlighted in the discussion. The central traumatic event of the protagonist's violent escape as a slave from the farm hovers over the narrative as an atemporal occurrence. Avoidance, delay, evasion, anxious verbal and body language are some mechanisms utilized to articulate the heart-wrenching event. Belatedness in depicting the traumatic events, deploying codified language without definite grammatical structures, composing episodes of narration without causal relationships are some additional features of trauma fiction enlisted by Luckhurst. Codified language and non-causal sequences of episodes comprise of a phenomenon that Luckhurst calls "encryption". For instance, encryption may be utilized to bring to fore the interconnectedness of some characters including those that have died in the course of action. This is almost a defence mechanism to make room for the presence of the dead people or imaginary entities to facilitate process of articulation of trauma. Encryption is often threatened by decoding, however, it is necessitated by the nature of trauma narratives. At times, authors such as Morrison might follow a pattern of early exposure to trauma markers and defamiliarization of objects followed by delayed decoding. Consequentially, the readers are required to create a provisional order of events in order to generate meaning from the narrative. Multiple narrators or points of view could also be used to aid the non-chronological unfolding of events (Luckhurst 90-92).

A large corpus of literary texts about internment was published in 1970s perhaps as a result of the continuous struggle of acceptance of their ethnic identity in a “repressive and homogenized” white society (Mura 293) particularly by certain Nisei and prominently the Sansei. At the root of the delay in articulation of the experiences and memories was the deeply ingrained fear of reaction of the mainstream white society and repetition of the traumatic history. The racial status quo and its institutionalized repercussions such as internment had been vividly recorded in the collective psyche of the community. Protective silence encouraging assimilation seemed to be a safe strategy instead of resistance. There was a difference in the way Issei, Nisei and Sansei reacted to the trauma of internment. The Issei chose protective silence. A majority of Nisei advocated assimilation. However, the Sansei set out to seek justice and were active in voicing out their opinions. Marita Sturken in her article “Absent Images of Memory: Remembering and Reenacting the Japanese Internment” notes “The remembering of the internment camps and the demand for reparations have come primarily through the interventions of Sansei, the children of the Nisei who were imprisoned. Unlike their parents, they are a generation that grew up outside of the camps, with a conviction of their rights to redress and memory” (Fujitani, White and Yoneyama 42). From the authors chosen for this study, Julie Otsuka is a Sansei narrating the story of her maternal family. By writing a novel titled *When the Emperor was Divine*, Otsuka broke the silence around her familial history. Her maternal grandfather was arrested and detained as ‘enemy alien’ after the attack on Pearl Harbour. She had experienced the silent presence of the internment camp as a reference point in the conversations with the mother. However, as most of the Nisei, her mother too had chosen to be silent about this period given the shame and the guilt that these traumatic memories evoked. The fact that Otsuka is a Sansei allows her

greater objectivity to look back at the events and also provides her the necessary modern modes of expressions and literary techniques to present an evolved representation of the internment.

Otsuka uses lively symbols and images that evoke vibrant emotions in the minds of the readers. Some of the symbols she uses are: tulip bulb; tortoise; egg-like blue stone; house key; tender plants and magical door. The allusions from the American popular culture of the 1940s also function as symbols. They add an intertextual aspect to her book. She makes innovative use of typography to intersperse the scenes of interactions between, and interrogation of Japanese Americans by the Americans, Memories, fears, suspicions and opinions of the Japanese Americans are placed in italicized font. These italicized passages and symbolic metaphors could be looked at as glimpses of trauma that the characters have undergone.

The novel is narrated by four members of the family, namely, the mother, the girl (daughter), the boy (son) and the father, who narrates the last chapter in first person. Otsuka uses sophisticated narrative techniques to articulate, through a fictional narrative, the racial trauma of her maternal family, which takes form of familial trauma for Otsuka due to the silence around it. Otsuka uses literary minimalism and invites the reader to produce meaning out of the prose work. She is reluctant to disclose complete information about the characters and the events.

Often she lets us see an effect before its cause, an outcome before its preceding expectation. And she is reticent about her characters' feelings, refusing to name them and instead compelling us to infer them through the things her characters notice, remember, and fantasize about (Teacher's Guide : When The Emperor Was Divine)

Otsuka's *When the Emperor was Divine* leaves the readers with a feeling of traumatic haunting. When analyzed from the lens of trauma fiction, we do see characteristics enlisted by Luckhurst such as creative discordance or, in words of LaCapra, "empathetic unsettlement" wherein the readers are compelled to arrange the narrative as per their understanding to generate personal meaning for themselves. Otsuka's novel is replete with instances of flashbacks, fragmented dream sequences, non-linear narrative, avoidance, delay, evasion and anxious use of codified language. The mother, the girl (daughter) and the boy (son) evade confronting the reality of internment by thinking about the peaceful days of the past. They hold on to certain objects as markers of those days. Otsuka presents significant events in the lives of these characters through flashbacks and dreams. Yet, there are narrations that remain hauntingly atemporal such as the confession given by the father. It can be both, a real life occurrence or an anticipatory expression of the father in the face of racial trauma.

From the perspective of a writer, as Mura emphasizes, Otsuka's novel is an attempt to explore the subjective feelings of the people who underwent the historical ordeal of internment.

Luckhurst opines that trauma fiction exposes the conventional understanding of reader response to fiction propounded by scholars such as Wolfgang Iser to severe extremities. Iser visualized that readers aim at creating personal configurative meaning or pattern from the numerous possibilities of generating meaning present in the text. Even if they are compelled to modify the pattern persistently in the face of new discoveries as they read the text, readers are empowered to take cognizance of facets that had evaded their perceptions previously with help of these configurative patterns. However, in the case of trauma fiction, Luckhurst points out that discordance prevails over concordance and even if the latter is possible in some way, the process

of arranging the disjointed fragments does not resemble any form of unity. Trauma fiction emphasizes on confrontation with disrupting recollections existing outside collective memory rather than any mode of achieving closure. Authors might create entities such as ghosts as metaphorical devices to serve multiple purposes. Firstly, to depict the traumatic past haunting the present in context of personal stories as well as a community's history. Secondly, to indicate deprivation of testimony to the characters who have witnessed the traumatic events (Luckhurst 93-94).

Luckhurst refers to two psychic topographies, namely, melancholia and mourning “a melancholia that perpetuates encryption or a mourning that eventually decrypts occluded violent history” (Luckhurst 96). These topographies have been put forth by psychoanalysts Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok to explicate the process of inter-generational transmission of traumatic history, primarily characterized by haunting. According to Abraham and Torok, transgenerational haunting originates in the gaps created by secrets that have been kept hidden throughout the lifetimes of parents and other such figures and eventually remain shrouded with their deaths. Abraham and Torok use the image of a crypt to symbolize this gap. Luckhurst notes that for trauma fiction “to convey the lived experience of traumatized subjectivity and its transgenerational consequences: this experience requires fantastical tropes, exploded time schemes and impossible causations” (Luckhurst 97).

Luckhurst quotes L. Terr to delineate the intergenerational transfer of traumatic anxiety which is an integral part of Post-traumatic experience “Traumatic anxiety *is* a ghost! It moves through the generations with the stealth and cunning of a most skilled spectre” (98). Post-traumatic experience may sometimes be expressed through gothic tropes including telepathic transfer.

### 2.4.1.1 Articulating Personal Truth and Collective Trauma

Mura asserts that an important duty of a writer is to challenge the established or accepted view of the world, particularly, the outlook of the social unit to which she or he belongs. There are multiple social units that operate around individuals such as family, community, organization, religion or ethnic group. Each of them, provide their members with an “idealized portrait” of the present and the past. This is true of the official version of history of a nation, where alternate versions or lived experiences of the marginalized may not find a place. Thus, it is necessary that the writer seeks knowledge and participates in discourse to dismantle repression, literally, to get facts and experiences out of the closet, particularly, in the context of lies, secrets, crimes, blemishes, wounds, aberrations, blasphemies, idiosyncrasies and complications that the community or the nation wishes to silence and erase (Mura 17). Along with challenging the reservations of a community, writers simultaneously deal with their personal sense of shame and embarrassment as well as personal fears and internal silencing as a member of a social unit while embarking upon their journeys. The writers narrating stories of the internment are not only challenging the silence of their community, but they are also confronting the idealized depiction of the American or the Canadian identity where narratives of those with Asian ethnicity have seldom found a place.

Mura also cautions about the repercussions of posing such a challenge of excavating through the dark chapters of a community “When a writer breaches the family rules, certainly fear is involved, though obviously not the same fear as when a writer strikes out against societal forces. Still the threat of reprisal, of being banished from the group for exposing secrets and revealing misdeeds is always present” (19). The work of John Okada, the author of *No-No Boy*, a pioneer in breaking the silence

around internment and the consequences that Niseis, who refused to join the army faced, was not accepted by his community during his lifetime. However, he received critical acclaim posthumously.

Mura's views, while explicating the role of a writer in formulating a language for expression of personal truth, hold true for those who set out on a long struggle to create verbal expressions to convey their traumatic experiences to the world

[w]riting comes from rift between what we have experienced and know about the world and the language we've been given to express it. We write to bridge this divide, to find words adequate to our own sense of reality. We also write to find the language for what we know unconsciously. Only by unearthing that language can we make such knowledge conscious (19)

Mura highlights that his memoirs were not just about seeking his personal truth, but also about reinstating the confidence in Asian Americans to explore their personal sense of reality.

Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms* also falls under the category of autobiographical fiction. The dedication and the acknowledgements given prior to the text clearly state that the novel has primarily been inspired from the stories Goto's grandmother, Kiyokawa Naoe, told her. Goto asserts

In the process of re-telling personal myth, I have taken tremendous liberties with my grandmother's history. This novel is a departure from historical "fact" into the realms of contemporary folk legend. And should (almost) always be considered a work of fiction. Thank you to Kiyokawa Naoe for the stories.

(Goto)

In light of Mura's propositions on the role of a writer of memoir or fiction in constructing a suitable language and narrative techniques to convey personal truth, Goto's conscious use of "almost" in context of considering her work as fiction is peculiar. Readers can broadly decipher that Naoe, the grandmother in the novel, has been modelled on Goto's grandmother and, perhaps, Goto, who immigrated to Canada at the age of three, inspires Murasaki, the Sansei granddaughter. Goto chooses fiction as it facilitates depiction of trauma and the interplay of silence and voice with greater autonomy and impact as a narrative, unlike a memoir, which is always limited by factual boundaries and conventional conceptions of truth. Goto conveys her sense of personal reality through her character's words, partly challenging what is socially accepted as truth, when Naoe observes "It's funny how you can sit your memories, braid them with other stories. Come up with a single strand and call it truth" (93).

#### **2.4.2 Memoirs and Trauma Narration**

Memoir emerged as a significant genre in the post-traumatic culture primarily for its potential to profoundly respond to "the pressure of the real" in comparison to fiction which was still bound by narrative conventions. It was considered that memoir presented a relatively reliable picture of life in terms of ethical concerns and pre-critical authenticity. Luckhurst (118-122) records the apparent "focus on '*the real as a thing of trauma*', something that burst through representation and appeared to be its ruination". Traditionally, autobiography has been perceived as a coherent and unified depiction of life, whereas, memoir has been considered as "an incomplete and fragmentary slice of a life, a hybrid of history and personal narrative, uncertainly locating experience between self and others". Trauma memoir is even more remote to autobiography due to its focus on escaping "self-apprehension", on recovering belatedly what has not been registered or forgotten due to the traumatic nature of a

certain experience, in other words, “analeptic revision”. Taking a conventional approach would make one think autobiography as synonymous to concordance and “the trauma memoir [as a genre which] recounts a discordance, a circling around a shattering event, from which self-knowledge arrives late, if at all, and with an uncomfortable awareness of the frangibility of the self”, particularly based on the observations made by Caruth, Felman and Laub. However, with the identity politics of the 1970s in the U.S. and increasing popularity of memoir, Luckhurst notes, an alternative approach took stronghold which emphasized on the fact that the process of going through trauma does not destabilize subjectivity, but, provides an assurance of subjective expression to those entities who have not had the privilege of articulating their identities in conventional terms “One perspective would be to read sequences of catastrophe, survival, and supersession as trajectories that recompense the felt depredations to identity; that these works help to narratively reconvene the self”. Autobiography, in this context, came to be thought as an act of self-fashioning rather than self-revelation, while, memoir was looked up to as a genre with the potential to challenge the existing hierarchies of class, race and gender in the society. Multiple terms were employed to distinguish the new form of writing from the traditional and narrow purview of autobiography, namely biomythography, autoethnography, autofiction, autopathography, thanatography, testimonio. Ultimately, an umbrella term, that is, life writing gained currency to denote the promise of providing innovative forms of articulation of a transformed self. Though truth was an important concern of memoir as a genre, Luckhurst asserts that gradually life writing projects evolved into “those bodies of work in which trauma induce[d] a continual working and reworking of the event in different registers, mixing truth and fiction in various forms of autofiction”. In the context of the twentieth century autobiographies, there

was inclusion of “diary forms, essayistic memoirs and textual fragments” into the genre of autobiography considering that the incomplete nature of these forms complemented the articulation of feminist experience. Luckhurst discusses Suzette Henke’s term ‘scriptotherapy’ employed by her to denote the emergence of repressed trauma and psychological fragmentation through the act of writing involving efforts to articulate traumatic experience (Luckhurst 118-122). He draws home the fact that these developments in the genre of feminist autobiography enriched and altered not just the conventional definitions of autobiography, but made it more comprehensive to include memoirs and other relatively fragmentary forms. This revision on definitions culminated in imparting of political agency to the authors and significance to individualized experience. From the perspective of trauma theory, preceding and succeeding sections of a literary work written by the author such as prefaces, epilogues or afterword contribute to gain greater insights into the process of unravelling and articulating trauma.

In the context of women, racial minorities and other marginalized groups, who have survived trauma at individual and collective levels, Ralph Savarese observes that memoirs may constitute of recovered memory previously repressed due to the social hierarchies. The functions of revelation and therapy are crucial to the genre itself. At times, some claims might sound self-cancelling to what the authors have written before, yet the revisions become integral to the identity politics and struggle for justice in the future and essentially to mustering up the courage to retrospectively restate their experiences to support the struggle. Questioning the revisions in the memoirs of the marginalized people is synonymous to choosing to be accomplice of the social forces that worked to silence them for long in the first place and adding to societal denial. In order to prevent any forms of assumptive judgements regarding the

authenticity of the revisions in trauma memoirs, Luckhurst cautions “[f]or memoirs centred around trauma, judgements of truth or falsity bristle with substantive political import”. Memoir has been inextricably linked with the assertion of identity for various marginalized groups primarily because [m]emoir acquires its contemporary significance from being a vehicle for testimony, a witness that Felman and Laub declare ‘has become a crucial mode of our relation to events of our times ... composed of bits and pieces of a memory that has been overwhelmed by occurrences that have not settled into understanding or remembrance’” (122-124).

Another subgenre that emerged in the 1990s and was linked to trauma memoir, according to Luckhurst, was the parental death memoir. He quotes Nancy Miller’s view on this subgenre wherein she perceives parental death memoir as “an account of an undoing, an unbecoming” (124) in contrast to the conventional consideration of autobiography as a narrative of becoming. Luckhurst links this subgenre with trauma memoir given that it depicts the traumatizing impact of losing a parent with emphasis on the “failing other”. He attributes the exponential increase in the number of memoirs and pathographies published post 1960s to the cultural revolutions of the time and a strong urge and consistent efforts of the representative generation to break the silence and challenge repression that their parental generation had suffered through. This is true of the Nisei and the subsequent generations who in a quest of presenting before the people of the U.S. and Canada the dark chapters of internments in their respective national histories either on individual level through memoirs and fiction or on a collective level through various organizations advocating the cause.

While thinking about the confessional facet of memoirs, Luckhurst refers to Foucault’s idea of confession as a mandatory speech act under the eye of some form

of authority such that there is failure of prudence and there is a compulsive acknowledgement. Hence, confessional nature of memoir is less voluntary and more a specialized form of subjectivity that requires individualized search for truth as a culmination of stimulation. Linda Alcoff and Laura Gray opine that the power dynamics between the speaker and those addressed must also be taken into account while looking at confession as a form. Foucault's idea of confession is based on notion of self-disciplining in the sense that there is a hierarchy of memories formed based on differential values assigned to them under the influence of others which perhaps makes him rethink the notion of agency in memoir.

Leigh Gilmore delineates that when memoir as a genre involves testifying unbearable personal pain and expressing it in the public domain, the author may face new challenges such as she or he may lose the command over their interpretation of the events and may have to undergo public trial of assessing the truth and value of the written piece. In spite of deciding to embark on the path of recovery and awareness, the author might find herself or himself being retraumatized given the public persecution. In addition to that when an author wishes to locate her or his work as a representation of traumatized community they might be subjected to hostile response. Hence, Gilmore opines that some memoirists intentionally choose a territory between autobiography and fiction to situate their work such that they could save themselves from harassment from the audience. These are conscious efforts of demarcating "an alternative jurisdiction for narratives in which self-representation and the representation of trauma coincide". This can mean drastic repercussions for memoirs considering that conventionally it has been assumed that memoir ought to contain some form of autobiographical truth with clarity about identity of author, narrator and characters. However, advent of trauma memoir has compelled scholars to rethink

about such parameters given that trauma essentially is characterized by unnarratability, belatedness, revision and definitely beyond the purview of stability and narrow frameworks of evidence. The forms of trauma memoir and autofiction then present possibilities of transgressions of conventional boundaries of genres to attempt integration of trauma in literary expressions (136-137).

### **2.4.3 Memoirs as Literary Expressions of Internment Trauma and Racial Identity**

The texts chosen for this study include three memoirs namely Monica Sone's *Nisei Daughter*, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston's *Farewell to Manzanar*, and Garret Hongo's *Volcano*. Hence it is essential that crucial features of memoir as a genre, particularly, in relation to memory, trauma and race are discussed in this section.

#### **2.4.3.1 Memoir as a Form: Classifications, Features and Crafting**

Sally Cline and Carole Angier broadly classify memoirs into family or childhood memoir, misery memoir and illness memoir. They opine that an enriching method of writing memoir is looking back at past as it is narrated, which provides scope to take care of the temporal unity of the memoir in terms of chronology and narrative structure as well as the present adult voice accords greater reliability and potential for reflection. They also note that in the case of traumatic memories which have the potential of haunting through flashback, ideally a blend of child and adult narration. Writing a memoir is maintaining a fine balance between empathy and detachment to the subject of the story, that is, the author or the memoirist himself or herself. Additionally, it is a herculean task to maintain equilibrium between factual accuracy and elegance of writing style. Certain elements and techniques common to memoir and fiction, exercised in a restrained fashion so as to maintain the veracity

factor in the former, include description to create atmosphere and background and help readers visualize people in the story through their attributes and idiosyncracies. Secondly, incorporating short conversations verbatim based on memory also is a viable option, while longer exchanges ideally must be corroborated with help of evidences such as diary entries, letters and journals. However, Angier and Cline underscore the exception of traumatic experiences which are engraved on the minds of individuals. Thus, verbal exchanges involved in such contexts could be recalled as they were spoken. Suspense, particularly, around dreaded aspects of the past or the personality can fuel the story in a memoir. Conflict, primarily in three forms, interpersonal conflict, conflict with society or the environment and internal conflict within the memoirist build momentum in a memoir. In a memoir, Angier and Cline explicate that, though the individuals are real-life subjects, still as part of the narrative requirement they should be diligently characterized through physical and mental description, actions, dialogues, reported thoughts, comments of other characters including authorial comment and their association with objects and their environment. Recurring motifs and images through characters, places and themes can add to the literary nature of a memoir. Unlike fiction, in a memoir, they are matter of keen observation rather than invention.

Beth Kephart opines that vulnerability, softening the stance and lessening the distance are key factors while looking back on events to be incorporated in the memoir. There should not be any form of justification of actions, moods and reactions. Moreover, the quest of self-discovery must be underscored throughout the process. Conflictual past provides fecund ground for memoirists to examine their lives and bring their truth to the fore. Kephart highlights that research is the essential shield from failure of recollection and misremembering of events. At the same time,

researching personal details requires resilience to accept the truth and step out of comforting narratives about the past. Research validates and confirms the events the memoirist wishes to incorporate in his writing.

One way of beginning recollection is to identify first memories that have remained with the memoirist. Primarily, first memories are not mundane in nature. They constitute of events and people who have alarmed the memoirist in childhood. The emotions might have been unfathomable at that point in time. Gradually, what has remained with the memoirist also determines the course he or she might take in processing those early memories and reevaluate their significance in making them what they are in the present moment. While shedding light on the role of emotional truth through literary expressions in a memoir, Kephart emphasizes that elementary facts and recollections need to be “leavened with some poetry in order to make [them] psychically true” (Kephart 129).

Judith Barrington delineates evolution of memoir from personal essay and harps on the conversational tone of memoir which indicates this evolutionary relationship. In a memoir, the author’s voice and truth of the story are foundational to the literary endeavour. Like a personal essay, a memoir is written with an inclination to formulate intricate opinions, both positive and negative, about one’s life as self-revelation with analysis and willingness to share the intellectual, emotional and spiritual quest of discovering self on part of the memoirist is essential to shape his or her voice. Reordering of events or approximating dialogue for narrative felicity is done within the confinement of factual truth. Truth arises from keeping the honesty of the story as well as honouring the perspective of memoirist as he or she remembers them. Secondly, choice of subject matter distinguishes a memoir from an autobiography. Memoir is characterized by a steady and trustworthy narrator who

refuses to fictionalize any part of the story. As narration is central to a memoir as much as a piece of fiction, imagination does play a role in the process. However, a memoirist's imagination works within the well-defined limits of reliability and experientiality of events "the application of it in memoir is *circumscribed by the facts*, while in fiction it is *circumscribed by what the reader will believe*" (Barrington 27).

#### **2.4.3.2 Memoir as an Interplay of the Past Self and the Present Self in Wakatsuki Houston, Hongo and Sone**

Memoir as a genre focuses on one aspect of life as crucially significant facet in comparison to the entire journey. This aspect may comprise of an important, life-changing event, a traumatic event or a vital portion of life which changed or decided the course of the entirety. At times, a memoir may speak of immediate past or still-corruptible present with acute, narrow and singular focus such that it is "revealing and reflective, textured and telling, exclusive and sharp" (Larson 19). A memoir feeds on recent, subjective emotional memory and thus, is a version or a take on the actual event or phase. Since memoir is revelatory in nature, such deliberation and expression requires immense courage on part of the author. The primary aim of a memoir is to construct a "relative self" such that the person writing in the present and the person who lived through the events of the past are deeply interconnected and even indistinguishable at certain points. In depth explorations of the relational facets of the self and the temporal layers of the narrative are the defining factors of a memoir. In words of Virginia Woolf, there is continual crossing between *I-then* and *I-now*. Memoir as a form provides fecund ground to authors to investigate through faultlines of their personalities including their familial and inter-generational traumas, aspirations and anxieties. The flow of a memoir is propelled by the constant exchange between narration and analysis. In Thomas Larson's words, a memoir unfolds along

two trajectories, namely, ‘the self and the core’ and ‘the self and the world’. This unraveling happens on a larger canvas of identity, culture, ideas, politics, gender, race, religion and history. The memoirist works through the stable realization of the fact that the present self does not resemble the past self, yet it is not completely free from the latter. Hence, it is the responsibility of the memoir to “connect the past self to—and *within*—the present writer as the means of getting at the truth of his identity”

(24). Internment memoirs are a result of confrontation with and processing of haunting, numbed, belated and traumatic internment memories. The past self is trauma-ridden and it is essential for the present self to process the trauma and break the silence around traumatic past. The dual battles that Nisei and Sansei memoirists had to fight included their private confrontation with their personal and familial trauma as well as the war at a larger scale to break the collective silence in a society ridden with systemic racism.

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, a Nisei, co-authored *Farewell to Manzanar* (1973) with her husband James Houston. This memoir was published in 1973. In this memoir, she recollects, in great detail, the story of her family which had been interned in the camp in Manzanar, California in 1942. She was the youngest of the ten children of Ko and Riku Wakatsuki. She was born in Inglewood, California in 1934. She was inspired to break the silence about internment at the age of thirty seven, by the questions that her nephew, a Sansei asked her about her identity. The memoir highlights the trials and suffering that internment entailed for the family. It looks at the impact of issues such as imprisonment of the Issei men, the questioning of loyalty of Nisei in face of the war, the internal politics in the camp and the attempts of the community towards reintegration post internment on the author in her childhood and adolescence. Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston employs reflective voice to emphasize the

consequences the internment had with regards to her identity formation. Her present self is the adult self visiting Manzanar in 1972 and her past self is her childhood self of 1942 and her evolution into a teenager, who soon attempts to reintegrate in the mainstream American society. Discovering her true identity, for Wakatsuki Houston, is a journey of shedding layers of superficial attempts of assimilation and seeking acceptance in the white society and realizing the shallowness of such an endeavour.

In Wakatsuki Houston's *Farewell to Manzanar*, her imaginative recreation of conversations in italicized sections primarily when she reconstructs her father's trial scene in Fort Lincoln and her brother's posting to a town near Hiroshima and his meeting with their paternal side of the family in Japan.

In the last section of her memoir, Wakatsuki Houston speaks about the silence that the Japanese Americans maintained about the internment. She was one of the first community members to finish college and marry an Anglo-American. She reflects that her decision to marry outside the community was an attempt to seamlessly integrate in the White American society. However, as she approached her middle age, she could no longer repress her experiences and the trauma she went through during the internment.

One of the challenges that memoir writers face, according to Mura, is confronting their past when they can no longer resort to repression of traumatic experiences. Wakatsuki Houston went through a similar process which was triggered by her meeting with a Caucasian photographer of the internment and the photographer's validation of the event. The photographer's acknowledgement of having witnessed the internment paves way for Wakatsuki Houston to confront her own intense emotions she had benumbed around the internment. It takes her around

six years after this conversation to physically visit the site of trauma that is Manzanar with her children.

However, her realization that it was indispensable that the Japanese American community and its members like herself articulated their traumatic experiences, sustain her resolve of opening about her experiences. She visits Manzanar after more than thirty years and sees that the township had been reduced to ruins. One of the few things that remained was the rock gardens, which Wakatsuki Houston considers as symbols of Japanese American endurance.

When Wakatsuki Houston wrote her memoir in 1970s, there was, she notes, a rising Anti-Japanese sentiment in the U.S. as the Japanese goods were capturing the American market due to the industrial boom there. This reminded her of the situation in 1940s. From the perspective of trauma theory, forewords, afterwords and epilogues enable us to gain better insights into the process of articulation of trauma. In the afterword to the 2006 edition of the memoir, Houston describes the process of writing the text which included recording her experiences on a tape recorder for her immediate relatives. However, the memoir which was produced as a result of this process has remained relevant for a considerable time through diverse feedback it has received. Wakatsuki Houston notes that some people still look at the internment as a wartime necessity. For the subsequent generations of the Japanese Americans, this work is a first time exposure to the history of their community. It empowers them and others to get a glimpse of impact of racial discrimination and subsequent transgenerational trauma that is passed down through silence.

Wakatsuki Houston contextualizes the book against the backdrop of 9/11 Terror attacks and the following ‘Global War on Terror’ initiated by the Bush

administration which made the popular American opinion about those with Middle-Eastern roots prejudiced. In spite of the progressive change of considering the internment with maturity, Houston's major concern is that Americans still exhibit the "readiness to overreact along ethnic lines" (208).

In Garrett Hongo's *Volcano: A Memoir of Hawai'i*, the present self is the memoirist returning to his hometown, which he had to leave behind when his parents decided to relocate to Los Angeles when he was six. The present self simultaneously reflects on his memories and the silence, that he encountered about his native culture within his immediate family, as well as he excavates the details of the lives of his ancestors such as his grandfather, who owned a store in Volcano. As Hongo confronts this question, 'What does Volcano mean to him?' he has to read through and process the layers of conditioning he was exposed to while living in Los Angeles, which had made him alienated from his truest self and embrace the dictates of the mainstream society. His struggle to find his creative voice is juxtaposed with his battle to come to terms with his personal and familial history. Having restored his connection with and reclaimed Volcano as his land, that he is able to free his engaged creative self.

In Monica Sone's *Nisei Daughter*, the present self writes in 1953 and looks back at the events that unfolded over a decade since forced removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast and relocation to the internment camps. Sone foregrounds her personal and familial experiences during the internment and the phase of reintegration. Sone's present self becomes a co-creator of these experiences with the past self, who suffered the humiliation, the anxiety and the racial discrimination first-hand. The narration of events of daily life in a Japanese American neighbourhood, the celebration of Japanese days of national importance and the family's trip to Japan till the Pearl Harbour attack is punctuated by developing sense

of being different from the mainstream society. As the political climate deteriorates, the intensification of racial prejudice and episodes of discrimination are supplemented with analysis of Japanese American identity and challenges faced by Nisei to blend the dual dimensions of their identities into one wholesome character. The experiences during the brief stay in camp Harmony and final relocation to Minidoka, Idaho are analyzed to bring to the fore the profound dilemma of the Nisei, who in spite of having felt betrayed and having endured pain of living behind barbed wire, had consciously opted to stay in the U.S. with their resilient hope in the ideals of justice and democracy.

#### **2.4.3.3 Prioritizing Personal and Emotional Truth through Memoirs:**

##### **Illustrations from Wakatsuki Houston, Hongo and Sone**

Though, parallels are drawn between fiction and memoir given that narration is at the core of both the forms, a strong distinguishing factor is seeking truth. The ultimate goal of a memoir is self-knowledge. A memoirist may not completely rely on personal memory, he or she may substantiate their viewpoints through records such as journals, diaries, letters, family records and memories recollected by others.

The perspective of the rememberer takes centerstage in the memoir. There is an ongoing tussle between the exceptional moments of being of the past and intense moments of the present. Moments operate on the principle of self-selection. The past and the present influence each other. They are perpetually interconnected such that an empowering present may motivate a writer to narrate traumatic past or past achievements or suffering may prompt a writer to express and reflect on them in the present. Thus, writing a memoir is an exercise in monitoring the interplay between the occurrences or events of the past and the recollection of them in the present. Larson

brings in Barrett J. Mandel's term 'presentification' of memory which denotes the dynamic involvement with apparently secured memory of the past as it is remembered in the present. Presentification refers to the mode of access to the past rather than any misrepresentation of the past. Writing in the present is supported by a complex process of alteration, recollection and reevaluation. Thus, a memoir flourishes in the realm of layered simultaneity as the 'remembering self' or the present self or *I-now* interacts with the 'remembered self' or the past self or *I-then*. A memoirist must consider the structural conflict between these dual voices revising each other and explore the possibilities of seamless chronological transitions between the two voices to manifest the "aesthetic and experiential potency of remembrance" through his or her writing (Larson 42).

In the memoirs that endeavour to process trauma through expression, there is a possibility of the voices of the past self and the present self becoming co-enactors of the story in a mutually compassionate way. The underlying paradox in such a dynamics is that the "true self [of the memoirist] is a never-ending release from and return to what her child self was forced to endure". Thus, it is advisable that a memoirist must embody "multimed and many-voiced narrative self" (44). Memoirs about childhood, adolescence or coming-of-age provide fundamentally are results of processing of the past such that when the story is unraveled it is comprehensive in terms of the temporal, spatial and generational dimensions.

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston employs the voice of the child narrator as her past self while talking about the days leading upto to the relocation to the camp. She describes the distant and indifferent attitude of her new white teacher in school "I was confused by all the moving and was having trouble with the classwork, but she would never help me out. She would have nothing to do with me" (Houston and Houston 16). At crucial points the adult voice of the present self successfully reflects on the

narration of the former self “Looking back it is easy enough to explain. Public attitudes toward the Japanese in California were shifting rapidly...Tolerance had turned to distrust and irrational fear. The hundred-year-old tradition of anti-Orientalism on the west coast soon resurfaced” (16-17). The incomprehension that confronted the past childhood self and the unconscious trauma it had collected due to racial discrimination is gradually processed and a coherent narrative is formed out of pain and hurt as the present adult self has the capabilities of piecing the puzzle together and drawing logical conclusions about the treatment that was meter out then. Elsewhere, while describing the boarding of trains and reaching the camps, the present self employs humour to cope up with the internement trauma “It seems comical, looking back; we were a band of Charlie Chaplins marooned in the California desert. But at the time, it was pure chaos. That’s the only way to describe it” (30). There is a sense of inadequacy of language in describing the deeper anguish that the child must have felt in the past and the pain that the adult is facing in the present as the narrative is being shaped.

The memoirs about childhood are often associated with the body as the first location of memory. Mental and spiritual realms are advanced stages. In such a memoir, the memoirist might choose unadulterated child voice with least interference from the adult narrator. At times, events dominate the consciousness of the child, who had been on the receiving end of things when life was happening to him or her. The adult, addressing consciousness plays a role in coming to terms with the trauma and the chaos of the childhood to orient itself to identify the underlying patterns in these childhood experiences having sat through the unsettling emotions that cropped up. Narrating childhood has two aspects. Firstly, the events as they occurred and secondly, the underlying thematic constructs that remain with the writers as their

childhood experiences throughout their life. The narration may be shaped by the inputs of either the child remembering the events of the childhood or “the adult remembering *inside of and for* the partially formed consciousness of the child” (Larson 56). The adult consciousness does not experience childhood firsthand, yet parts of the feelings associated with the events are reexperienced periodically. In such situations, the relevant approach is to be honest towards the experiences rather than tainting them with expectations. Thus, narrating childhood calls for an interplay between innocence, intervention and orientation.

In *Nisei Daughter* as Sone revisits her time during the relocation and in the camp, she comments “Up to that moment, we had hoped against the hope that something or someone would intervene for us. Now there was no time for moaning” (166). This reexperiencing of the mental states while preparing to move to the camp presents the endurance and resilience of the community in the face of a political catastrophe. A deep appreciation of the values that guided the community during the ordeal is the contribution of the reflection and the tracing of the thematic patterns that the adult self is capable of doing as it filters through the chaotic and numbing emotions the child self has held on to. Further, Sone notes “I remembered the wire fence encircling us, and a knot of anger tightened in my breast. What was I doing behind a fence like a criminal?...The wire fence was real. I no longer had the right to walk out of it. It was because I had Japanese ancestors” (177). The recollection aggravates affects of anger, betrayal and strong bodily sensations like tightening of the chest. Body is the first site of experiencing trauma in the childhood and reconstruction while narration invariably subjects the adult consciousness to undergo some of those emotions again. The adult self has an additional responsibility of striving for coherence of expression as it navigates through the traumatic past.

In John Kotre's words, the memorist switches between the roles of archivist and personal myth-maker. Kotre presents at least four distinctions rooted in how the present self remembers the past. Firstly, instrumental remembering which is focused on accomplishments. Secondly, transmissive remembering, where the goal is to share cultural and personal wisdom. Thirdly, self-defining memory concentrating on search apt metaphors to describe the past and finally, life-review, wherein the prime concern is to comprehend core thematic patterns of the past (Larson 59-60).

Garrett Hongo's *Volcano* is a mix of transmissive remembering, self-defining memory and a life-review. Hongo explores his roots in Volcano, where his paternal grandfather had established a store. Hongo, a Sansei, had been taken to Los Angeles at a young age limiting the sources to dig into his family history. Hongo is overcome with a deep sense of belonging to a place, where he has roots, and he makes multiple trips to Volcano composing his memoir exploring his family history and significance of Volcano in the same. Local people and local stores, landmarks, flora and fauna become windows into Hongo's childhood and metaphors to narrate his memories. He weaves personal myth through stories of his paternal grandfather, a poor Samurai from Kumamoto, who migrated to Hawai'i under the Gentlemen's Agreement and his maternal grandfather, a Kibei, a person of Japanese ancestry who returns to Japan for education. He juxtaposes his personal loss of connection with Volcano, his writer's block and his grappling with his Sansei identity side by side to show interconnections and thematic patterns. Unravelling knowledge about his family's past helps him to come to terms with his racial identity and unblocks his creativity. Hongo enriches his memoir with imagery from the local landscape when he describes his oneness with the spirit of his grandfather, whose traces he had set out to search for in first place

“His ghost rose within me, from out of the cold, from the fens of the rain forest, from the glimmer of gray light in the hazes over the crater” (141).

#### **2.4.3.4 Unravelling Truth and Constructing Identity through Memoirs: David Mura’s Insights to Analyze Japanese American Internment Memoirs**

Mura conceptualizes the process of articulating this quest in a series of questions that revolve around the protagonist’s goal, his or her actions to achieve the goal, facing irreconcilable conflicts, struggle to resolve those conflicts, which sometimes involves self-deception about the irreconcilability of the conflict, resultant difficulties and punishment. Along with the micro perspective of working on individual passages of the work, Mura highlights that the macro perspective involving overall story structure and basic premises and conflicts is an integral part of writing a memoir. Mura enlists two forms of organizing a memoir namely the temporal order and the thematic order. The former is useful in the case of dramatic events embedded with conflicts between individuals or generations. The latter is characterized by “depth of perception and analysis” (Mura 170-171). Mura further elaborates on the nature of the narrative and the choice of the form. When the story takes a backseat and paves way to reflection and analysis, the voice of the present narrating self has a crucial role in such memoirs. Introspection on the evolution of the past self into the present narrating self as well as the interaction between the two identities becomes the foundation of such works “[t]he movement is toward greater honesty, clarity, analysis, understanding a more complicated and/or a truer picture of both selves” (184-185).

Mura explicates that he followed a three-act structure. Firstly, protagonist’s initial refusal to take up the call to the hero’s journey. In Mura’s case this was seen in his reluctance to travel to Japan, learn about Japanese culture and engage in issues of

identity. For him, the second act comprised of marital crisis and the third act led towards resolution wherein Mura decided to think about his identity through family's lens. His visits to his parental home and to his grandparents in order to overcome previous differences provide impetus to his quest of seeking personal truth. His final goal as a protagonist in his memoir is achieved when he visits his hometown in Japan (Mura 174). In the other memoir, Mura organizes his experiences starting from the year he spent in Japan, followed by his challenging relationship with his parents and concludes the memoir with imagining and recreating the experiences family members must have gone through during the internment.

Questions of truth and fiction in narration require certain consideration.

Larson underscores that novel and memoir have similarities given that narration is the soul of both the genres. However, a defining difference is that a novel seeks emotional truth of a character, a persona created by the author, while memoir concerns itself with seeking the truth of the memoirist himself or herself. Memoir prioritizes personal emotional truth, while fiction functions on the logice of make-believe and mythmaking pertaining to the persona. Larson emphasizes that the unique nature of memoir as a genre should not be compromised by denying it creative freedom and autonomy by expressing concerns about its commonalities with fiction owing to the narrative predominance. Understanding the diverse focus of fiction and memoir clarifies the necessity on the part of the memoirist to resist falsification and temptations that he or she might encounter in the course of using narrative adornments. Memoir gives primary importance to excavating the contestations of past that lie within the consciousness of the memoirist and within the collectives such as family and community such that multiple, equally valid versions of the past are possible. In the terms of veracity, memoir comprises of factual truth and emotional

truth. The first form of truth is the medium of arriving at the latter. This form encourages and empowers the memoirist to write personal truth without being limited by the impositions of what others feel about the memoirist.

In the journey of writing a memoir, at times, a memoirist might find himself or herself in a dilemma of revealing personal truths of the other members of the family or community, which might subject them to unpleasant consequences. In such cases, Barrington opines that choices in terms of concealing identities of people or aspects and events about them, whose lives might be affected by the destabilizing revelations about abuse and trauma with the family or otherwise, should be guided by life enhancing principles. However, embracing vocal recovery of agency over passive and silent reception of abuse, trauma and injustice is preferred as a writer has social responsibility extending beyond the immediate, personal circle. Contributions of a writer in terms of reflecting on personal, emotional truth play integral role in comprehending humanity and culture at large.

In terms of temporal movement, Barrington observes that there is a crucial need to have a well-anchored sense of present moment or 'now'. The temporal leaps into the past may be taken from this point. This anchor works to maintain the logical coherence of the memoir. Even in the cases when the memoirists consciously choose to narrate events in the past in the present tense to create a sense of immediacy, the readers are able to make the necessary temporal distinctions when the present is well-established.

Memoir can be an effective medium of articulating identity and trauma for those marginalized along the lines of race, gender and class. David Mura's insights

can help in exploring the challenges faced by writers standing at crossroads of trauma, memory, race and identity.

In the introduction to his book *A Stranger's Journey: Race, Identity and Narrative Craft in Writing*, David Mura reflects upon interpretation of personal memory as vital to identity “a writer’s journey often requires investigating one’s past and present selves to create a truer and more complex articulation of the self, it involves acknowledging one’s current limitations – whether of knowledge, skill, experience, or psychic honesty – and fighting to overcome them” (4). Textual interventions into memory pose a different set of challenges which Mura delineates in his book “writing is an exploration of who one is and one’s place in the world; how such exploration entails challenges to familial, cultural, social or political norms and to one’s own psychic defenses and blind spots. Though the question of identity is obviously a consideration, that a memoirist must often grapple with, writing fiction can also entail a process through which the writer examines her or his identity” (4). As a creative writer struggling with these issues, Mura finds some interesting similarities between fiction and memoir, though they have been conventionally differentiated with stringent literary regulations. He particularly emphasizes on the relationship between autobiographical novels and memoirs and the vantage points of looking at the process of narration in both the genres that studying the interrelations has to offer. This study aims at examining the depiction of collective trauma of internment and intergenerational transmission of the same in memoirs as well as autobiographical fiction.

Mura notes that he was not equipped with the knowledge of theoretical precepts and nuances essential to embrace his identity and articulate his experience as a member of a racial minority in the U.S. He indicates the limitations that writers like

him might face due to their respective locations in the predominantly white society. Certain encounters, questions, labels and discriminatory attitudes could be traumatic in themselves or might even trigger collective trauma. Mura asserts

“[t]he concepts and language for such an excavation were not available either in the literature I was taught or in the culture around me...In this situation of silencing, I was not alone. For most Asian Americans, American culture provides two unsatisfactory identities: The first is that we are perpetually foreign, “strangers from a distant shore.” True, some of us may have come here only last year, but even if our families arrived 150 years ago, we are still considered aliens. People still ask us, “Where do you come from?” and may assume English is not our native language. (11)

Mura delineates the process of discovering personal truths through memoirs “sometimes that knowledge is deeply buried in our psyches and resides in the unconscious, that is, clouded over by a variety of factors, by fear, denial, and resistance, In those instances, we must work to look deep into the abyss of ourselves, see ourselves for who we are, and recognize the truths of our past” (164). Writing a memoir involves unraveling the past which frequently involves confronting trauma. Psychological mechanisms such as repression, silence and denial might be employed by an individual to come to terms with the overwhelming nature of trauma as a child. This holds particularly true for Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and Monica Sone considering that they were children when their families were being dislocated to the internment camps. Monica Sone begins her memoir *Nisei Daughter* by revealing the astonishment that accompanied the discovery of her Japanese roots in her childhood. This sets the stage for Sone’s present self’s struggle with her past self’s denial, repression and resistance to her personal truth rooted in her hybrid identity.

Wakatsuki Houston finds her better equipped to reflect on her childhood and her life in the camp after having mustered up the courage to engage with this traumatic experience from the past. Validation offered by people on personal and community level as well as the danger of losing this crucial period in the familial history, unless she documents it for the future generations, propel her to embark upon this journey of writing her memoir. One instance of processing trauma is when Wakatsuki Houston reflects with rage on the fact that her community should have allowed the racialized treatment that they were meted out. She detects dual inclinations in her pre-teen, past self after having come back from the camp, firstly total disappearance or invisibility, and secondly, desperation for acceptance.

Mura emphasizes that “what allowed the younger self to survive that trauma is psychological repression or denial. Without such repression, the terror and constant reminder of that trauma, the child’s knowledge that she does not have control of what is happening to her, would have been too much for the child to endure (164).

As adults, Wakatsuki Houston and Sone look back at their lives to form a coherent narrative of survival and endurance through their respective works. They shape their personal identities in the process of articulating trauma as much as they provide insights to the readers into the dark chapter of internment. Mura notes that it is the adult self that “possesses the resources, maturity, strength, and freedom to access the truth of the past and survive.” The search for truth is synonymous to the constant struggle within the present self between resisting the confrontation with the truth of the past and the strong urge to reveal and holistically express the reality of the past. The process of narration is marked by failures, breakdowns and psychological problems (Mura 164).

According to Mura, search and creation of a language to express this personal truth is crucial in the process of writing a memoir “The voice of the present self struggles to journey from denial to the truth, from incomprehension or repression to expressions and understanding” (165). For Mura his personal truth is symbolized by the step of overcoming the internalized racism and searching for a language to articulate what he has consciously avoided doing, that is, investigating into his ethnic identity as a Sansei, third generation Japanese American. Memoirs and fiction written by Sansei have been significant quests of finding representative voices for the community at large. Garrett Hongo also embarks upon a similar journey as he detects the ambivalence of his past self to the complexities of his identity, when he begins writing his memoir *Volcano*. His mother’s attempt to teach him mainland English after having relocated to Los Angeles from Hawai’i is one such moment of acute awareness of the unique Hawaii Japanese American identity, which he had been encouraged to suppress, by giving up on speaking the Hawaiian pidgin. Similarly, his experience with racial violence for dating a girl from a different racial group as well as his creative blocks and escapisms in writing classes in an attempt to avoid confronting the complexities of his identity accentuates his journey towards discovering his authentic voice to articulate the nuances of his identity.

Memoirs are a mix of relating and reflecting on the life story. The past self and the present self are inextricably linked given that “[t]o understand the story of the past self, the reader needs to know the fate of that past self, which can only come from a portrait of the present self” (Mura 165). Mura observes that in the initial stages of the memoir “the voice remains a bit too anchored in the earlier consciousness, the earlier self. The writer has not quite developed a voice that delineates things that the earlier self does not see or understand, particularly the lies the earlier self is telling himself,

the gaps in his consciousness” (165). The word “lies” could also imply personal narrative embedded with defense mechanisms that struggle to evade confrontation with trauma. The writer might outgrow the previous narrative after undergoing a transforming journey of realizing the nature of trauma marked by repetitive reexperiencing. Thus, writing memoir signifies embarking upon a quest to discover “the voice of the present narrating self” and metaphorically, perhaps in the context of a trauma memoir, of unraveling a language suitable to create a semblance of psychological disruptions that are inherent to post traumatic self through varied forms of expressions.

While stating the similarities between the creative process while writing memoir and fiction Mura opines “[i]f both fiction and memoirs tell stories, the difference between the two is that in fiction, the writer creates the story, in memoir, the writer discovers the story (165). The memoirist is empowered with a temporal perspective of the narrative as he can unfold the narrative structure in form of a beginning, a middle and an end even when it is an autobiographical story as “in that case the writer is looking at himself as a character from the point of view of the timeless, of one who knows what happened and the fate of the protagonist or main character” (166). Most of the times, in a memoir, the past self is given the role of the protagonist. Mura’s first rule for memoirs states that the present self, as the author, must identify a goal or a desire for the past self for narrative coherence. Further, Mura notes that the events in the memoir are more than literal events, they are “metaphors for the journey of the psyche”. Memoir as a narrative exhibits the element of conflict through “[t]he call and initial refusal of the goal by the protagonist”. The past self, who is the protagonist, dedicating herself or himself to quest of achieving the goal marks “the transition from the old world into the new world” (Mura 167).

The last lines of Sone's *Nisei Daughter* talk about Sone's return to the mainstream American culture with a profound sense of her hybrid identity. She looks at her identity not as a contradiction anymore, but with a new found outlook of her identity being an amalgamation, which makes the best of both the worlds possible. A crucial theme in Sone's memoir is grappling with her hybrid identity. Her book starts on a note of shock and denial of the Japanese bits of her culture. Her understanding of Japanese culture and her racial identity is broadened through a family trip to her ancestral land and the eventual discriminatory experience after Pearl Harbour attack and the internment. Having seen worst prejudices and the resultant reflection on cultural hybridity, she finds herself better equipped to rejoin the mainstream society through a church programme by relocating to the East of the U.S., as a way of moving out of the camp. Wakatsuki Houston clearly states in the foreword and the afterword to her memoir that her work should be treated as a solid attempt to break the silence around internment and as a mechanism to articulate her personal and familial history. She starts by handholding her overwhelmed childhood self and enabling her to make sense of the irrational events, which changed the course of her life. She supplements her recollections with analysis in the voice of the present self to separate the layers of personal emotions attached to the events. She extends her personal and familial reactions to the events around internment such as denial, withdrawal, silence and eventual rage and juxtaposes them with the general attitude of the community towards the same. Through deep reflection and engagement with the past self, Wakatsuki Houston gleans the lessons that the American society needs to learn, when it comes to prevention of racial discrimination, the impact of the biased policy decisions and the resultant trauma that ethnic communities suffer. While Garret Hongo's central goal in writing *Volcano* is to reconnect to his cultural roots through the spatial moorings of

his hometown. His sense of belongingness is directly linked to discovering of his authentic identity, which is in turn the perennial source of his creativity.

#### **2.4.3.5 Unearthing the Core: Memoir as a Journey of Selfactualization for Hongo, Sone and Wakatsuki Houston**

Going back to the two trajectories Larson provides namely ‘the self and the core’ and ‘the self and the world’, one realizes that a memoir is a perpetual struggle between societal expectations and impositions of categories and divisions along the lines of class, race, gender, family, culture and generation, and the continuous, connected, unified whole, who has endured the past and the present experiences and risen above them. Unearthing the core self or, in Jungian terms, the ‘undiscovered self’ buried under the societal expectations and conditioning through an emancipatory rebellion is a fundamental objective of memoir as a genre. This brings to the fore the question of authenticity. Understanding the difference between the public projection of self, in other words, a persona or the mythic self, which meets all the expectations and fulfills the roles assigned to it by the society and the truer self hidden beneath this surface is crucial to knowing the generic difference between an autobiography and a memoir. The former relays the chronological tale of a public persona, while the latter is occupied with unmasking the persona and providing a holistic picture of faultlines that run deeper into the authentic self. Presenting the authentic also entails exposing and shedding the inauthentic. Thus, the emancipatory revelation involves “the mythic unmasking and mythic remaking of the self” such that certain awareness about authentic self is achieved in the process. In other words, a memoir can become a “vocalized recovery” from numbing trauma (Larson 130).

Memoir is a form facilitating ‘self-location’ in the present as the subtle nature of inauthenticities, as they are lived, make it impossible to detect them in the past. The only option available is the “reanimation of, and a relational bout with, one’s authenticity” (135) in the present. Such an engagement with the past transforms the memoirist into a writer-hero who is more authentic than the past self. To complement authenticity and veracity in a memoir, a memoirist may intersperse his or her narration with nonfictional bits of fact, history, reportage, analysis, essay, reflection and assessment. Overall, the major focus is on disclosure of the true self of the memoirist over events, dramatization, action or storyline. In a memoir, individualization, selfactualization and reflection are prioritized over narrative presentation.

Journey of Hongo’s selfactualization is accelerated through his stints with creative writing with workshops, courses, literary pieces, imitative and original alike. Some crucial junctures Hongo documents in his memoir are his first hand experience of spending time in Japan learning the Japanese genres of poetry, his homecoming to Volcano and immersing himself into the familial lore and the multiple rejections by his mentors, whenever he penned down content which was inauthentic to his personal voice.

Sone’s memoir provides a glimpse her selfactualization through her myriad experiences of being in denial of the Japanese aspects of her identity, visiting Japan in person for a closer look and newfound connection with her Japanese elders and the turbulent experiences of racial discrimination and the internment. The ultimate result of undergoing crisis and confronting trauma is her acceptance of the complexities of her hybrid identity and fostering courage and resilience to negotiate a place in the mainstream society.

Wakatsuki Houston's selfactualization involves revisiting her traumatic past memories around the internment and reshaping the narrative around the same. It requires confronting the conventional attitudes of shame, repression and withdrawal and incorporating and feeling agony and rage, emotions which had been numbed to prioritize survival. In acknowledging and validating the suffering of her childhood self, Wakatsuki Houston rediscovers her authentic self.

#### **2.4.3.6 Reflective Voice as a Technique in Memoirs of Hongo, Wakatsuki**

##### **Houston and Sone**

The role of the reflective voice is crucial in the process of writing a memoir. Mura defines the reflective voice as "the voice of the present interpreting and contextualizing the past". Reflective voice enables an author to establish distance between the past self and the present narrating self. It is necessary that the difference between these two selves is emphasized upon or else it may give rise to ambiguity. At times, the present narrating self needs to be critical of the past self to indicate conflict and evolution.

Mura asserts that, through his memoirs, he has attempted to portray his understanding of the past as a child and has juxtaposed it with his gradual improvised understanding of that past "in a greater cultural, historical, and political context through the writing" (Mura 178-179). An integral part of Mura's reflection is his consistent effort to comprehend the collective history of the community in order to interpret his personal experience, particularly realizing the influence on his parents' personalities of their Japanese parents and of the internment. With his reflective voice, Mura examines the conjunction of race and history to arrive at an understanding of his father's psychology. Mura unravels the multiple factors that were responsible for his

father opposing Mura's participation in the counterculture in the 1960s. Firstly, his father's apprehension as a Nisei father who had witnessed the internment during his adolescence, a traumatic past which was completely different from that of a white middle class father. As an adult, his family and community had been compelled to assimilate in the mainstream society, in Mura's words, his father had to prove that he is "200% American" throughout his life.

While discussing "interpretation of experience" as a vital function of the reflective voice, Mura reiterates

Sometimes this interpretation comes with time, maturity, perspective.

Sometimes it derives from knowing what happened afterward. At other times, the author acquires tools of analysis and interpretation that he didn't possess previously – therapy, issues of identity, medical models, political theories, historical perspectives, critical theory, cultural and gender studies, and various other ideas and methods of contextualization. (179)

The primary purpose of writing memoirs for writers of colour is exploration and discovery of an entry point into the complexities of history and consciousness with the fundamental aim of articulating the experiences that have been "denied and devalued by the dominant culture". It is a process of working against societal silence as well as personal silence. The description of this challenging aspect that Mura provides in his book is indicative of his efforts to come to terms with personal and collective trauma. He highlights that the writers themselves

as individuals participate in their own silencing, where they are afraid to explore or investigate, where there are truths that they don't want to express

because of the pain such truths uncover and the shame they recall and the wounds these writers don't want to remember and confront. (185)

According to Mura, the origin of this silencing or wounding, many times, can be traced back to the family. Silence can be a culmination of the kind of society the writer lives in. However, writers need to not only confront the forces of repression, but also develop an understanding of how the ethnic and racial categories, that their audiences may reduce them to, hinder their progress as a writer. Mura opines that “[t]he choice is not between being a member of a group and being an individual; instead one must understand how one is both, how contradictions and complexities arise from and within the dialectic” (188).

The hindrances in the quest for personal truth may comprise of blind spots such as psychological blocks as well historical, cultural and social mindsets or delimitations. Reenvisioning the past self is an important component of a memoir for Mura. Truth in memoir does not mean simple narration of the events, but also the author's interpretation, contextualization, evaluation and analysis of those events which provide greater insights into the struggles and growth of the author.

In fiction, the first-person narrator is a creation of the author, whereas in memoir the first-person narrator is considered to be the author herself or himself such that their perspectives towards the events are taken to be the same. Critical analysis of the past self is central to creating a reliable narrator. Crucial steps in establishing reliability involve the narrator acknowledging the delimitations of their viewpoint considering the awareness of the numerous points that the narrator may not be able to articulate, however, that does not signify their absence. The narrator's successful speculation of perspectives of others involved in the events, perhaps, by getting in

their shoes can work to mark her or his reliability. Mura opines “to be reliable, the narrator must possess and make clear her awareness of her own subjectivity. This involves first an understanding of her own motives and inclinations – willingness to be critical of one’s unconscious motives, blind spots and the past self” (190).

Personally, Mura puts forth his delimitations at the beginning of his memoirs. He treats his Nisei parents, who had different perspectives on the events in his life, and his past self as characters when it comes to providing them adequate voice. He clarifies that he is approaching his life from a subjective point of view and would ensure that he does not conceal his personal faults and misdeeds. He is also frank in considering the shortcomings he encountered on his quest of examining his personal racial and ethnic identity. Mura asserts that he is “seeing [himself]... not just through the lens of individuality but also through that of [his]... membership in a group – Japanese Americans, particularly third-generation Japanese Americans” (191). Mura understands the need to search for a language to contextualize one’s membership of various groups that one is a part of. The overlapping memberships create a multilayered identity.

Mura demonstrates the various elements of memoir with help of illustrations from Garret Hongo’s memoir titled *Volcano*. Mura identifies the goal and the irreconcilability that Hongo encounters on his path of achieving the goal. Hongo’s goal, as Mura, points out is to succeed in the eyes of his teacher C.K. Williams during MFA workshop “At the same time, he lies to himself about his irreconcilable conflict : his instructor is demanding more from him than is reasonable.” Mura notes that Hongo’s younger self understands that he is lying to himself as he withholds his complete potential of writing poetry. “He knows poetry requires vulnerable honesty, but he can’t bring himself to be vulnerable before this imposing white teacher and the

mostly white workshop participants. Note how the younger Hongo uses his awareness of his racial Otherness to excuse himself from what is required to achieve his goal” Mura highlights that the actual reason behind withholding his poetic potential is not his racial isolation in the workshop. Moreover “he wants to keep his own past, its pain and complexity at a distance” (198).

Hongo uses flashback to his adolescence as a literary technique to reveal the foundation of his complicated encounter with racial power dynamics. In a section titled “Fraternity” of the chapter titled “Self-Portrait”, he discusses his relationship with Regina, a Portuguese American girl and how it challenged the prevalent racial status quo in their school. Being compelled to attend Chicano dances instead of those organized by Japanese Americans or whites is an evidence of the same. Hongo describes how he was punished by physical violence by a group of Japanese American boys while on the way to visit Regina who had been bullied by a white boy. Mura emphasizes “Here the present narrating self provides an intricate historical, political, and psychological reading of this incident that the younger past self did not yet understand” (199).

Mura cites how Hongo employs the reflective voice in a paragraph that follows the above encounter “A kid from Hawai’i, I’d undergone no real initiation in shame or social victimization yet and maintained an arrogant season out of bounds, imagining I was exempt. It was humiliating to have been sent to Camp” (Hongo 220). Hongo interprets the significance of the physical violence was to make Hongo realize that the members of his community were supposed to accept subdued positions in the racial dynamics and not set out to transgress racial boundaries by forming relationships with women of a different race. The group tried to instill in Hongo a sense of shame and remind him of the public disgrace that the Japanese American

community had suffered due to the internment as much as the prohibitions that the dominant society laid upon them. Hongo adds while reflecting on the incident “I was acting outside of the history. I could cross boundaries, I thought. But I was not yet initiated into the knowledge that we Japanese were not like anyone else, that we lived in a community of violent shame” (221).

This incident can in turn be interpreted as an example of racial trauma that casts a lurking shadow on Hongo’s personal life and his relationships. It is particularly devastating for Hongo as the perpetrators of trauma comprised of the members of his own community. These perpetrators are, in fact, victims of the collective racial trauma that internment proved to be for generations of their community. Hongo’s reflective voice does shed light on the collective trauma even during moments of personal crisis.

Mura indicates how Hongo uses narrative structure of three attempts to build up narrative tension. Finally, Hongo’s poem about a white woman being consoled by a black man is called “the real thing” by his mentor. This poem becomes a metaphor for Hongo’s interracial relationship with tragic end. The violence he experiences is not a result of his actions but his ignorance about the stringent community rules, that Mura calls “unspoken rules of the ethnic community”. Mura further adds “he [Hongo] did not know the severity of the taboo he was breaking or the racial and historical origins of that taboo. The narrative about the workshop provides an arena where the younger Hongo takes definite actions to determine his fate, where he acts more like a protagonist” (201) Hence, Hongo utilizes the framework of the workshop experience to present the narrative of his interracial relationship. The poem can be read as a metaphorical expression of trauma and the workshop as a conscious intervention into trauma considering that the traumatic event had been either deeply buried into the unconscious of Hongo or had been haunting him and eluding any kind of linguistic

expression. This elusion, in fact, had manifested in terms of mental writing block in Hongo. The poem is synonymous to testimony with certain distortions given that Hongo has changed the racial identities of the lovers. From the perspective of Hongo's memoir as a trauma narrative, there is a complex play of avoidance, delay and encryption in the creative process of writing the poem as well as in placing it alongside the workshop experience.

In Hongo's case, older present narrating self knows the fate of the younger self of successfully completing the quest of becoming a poet and how he learned the lesson given by his mentor to be honest about his personal experiences and, metaphorically, of intervening into his racial trauma through creative expressions while being "in the racially charged environment of Los Angeles". Mura quotes Hongo to explicate "From me, he held out for a truth – that there is a world of feeling and specificities among the vast and monolithine Other of race in America" (202).

Mura speaks about "history of "feeling" wherein, writers should not succumb to generalizations, but understand the intricacies of "feeling" which is "experiential and particular... both to an individual and to a particular time and place" (202). For a writer, history does not solely comprise of significant events and the political angles of looking at them, but it consists of being attentive to feelings. Feelings could also function as windows to comprehending trauma at different levels.

Mura notes that his parents maintained protective silence about internment and their childhood. While his visit to Japan helped him to understand the personas of his parents, grandparents and other relatives well to enable him to create fairly accurate depictions in his memoirs, he also had to resort to his imaginative power as a writer to

fill the gaps that silences had left in his quest of comprehending lives of his family members. Mura turned to imaginative re-creation to deal with these voids.

In memoir and autobiographical fiction, Mura emphasizes that writer works against psychological repression. In the face of severe trauma, repression is a survival mechanism for a child. It enables the child to continue life without reconnecting to fear, pain, grief, and rage engendered by such negative experiences as much as to guard its sanity given the intense impact of trauma. At a point in adulthood, the repressive psychological forces are challenged by new realizations on part of the individual. Firstly, the individual becomes aware of the incomplete and fractured nature of the narrative she or he has been living by leading to a dishonest perception about self. Secondly, the individual begins to feel the increasing strain of keeping traumatic experiences and emotions repressed. This stress is reflected through depression and other psychiatric symptoms. The repression is connected to various beliefs and behaviours that somehow emulate or reenact those negative experiences; these then result in breakdowns and failures in various aspects of the adult's life, particularly in her closest relationships or in her career. In order to recover from these symptoms, there is a need to formulate a new narrative founded on reconnection with the past self or the traumatized child, that has struggled to conceal the traumatic events and emotions for a long period of time. This process of recontextualization may require professional help. Nonetheless, the return of the repressed occurs in writing through indirect means such as gaps or silences, metaphors and methods of constructing sentences or paragraphs. Mura reads this reappearance of repressed in the text as a signal to the writer to take the call of confronting the past. However, some may live in denial as he explains by his own example, in such cases it is essential that writers decide to let go of their previous self-image to accomplish change. Bringing

about internal changes involves shadow work, that is, attempts to connect with areas of the psyche that the writer has avoided or neglected. Through investigations into the neglected areas, writers can incorporate complexity and energy in their work and bring about psychological transformation that further proves to be a solution to certain technical problems that they might encounter in their journey.

This psychological transformation is possible in fictional narratives through the protagonists that the writers might have identified with. Some protagonists may fear familial restrictions or psychic restrictions. Facing personal fears of losing control may enable writers to gain freedom that is crucial to unravel the narrative. According to Mura, exploration of personal psyche, provides depth to characters. When the writer allows the unexpected into the narrative, she or he imparts new energy to the narrative. It is through changing the relationships with the forces that withhold the growth of a writer that a writer can, sometimes, overcome delimitations like Garret Hongo.

Monica Sone makes effective use of reflective voice in her memoir titled *Nisei Daughter*. There is juxtaposition of the narrative voice of the child and that of the present self that looks back on those memories. In Hongo's case, the narrative voice of the present self is dominant as he sets unraveling his family history on the island of Volcano in Hawaii as the prime objective of his memoir.

Sone utilizes reflective voice to recount her visit to Japan during her childhood to see her paternal grandfather. It is as an adult that she comprehends his limitations when she insisted that he accompanies them to the U.S.

Many years later I learned why he could not come with us. In 1924 my country had passed an Immigration Law which kept all Orientals from

migrating to America since that year. Those who had come in before that time could stay, but there would be no more new ones. That was why Father had taken us to Japan, so Grandfather could see us and say farewell to his son who had decided to make his home across the sea. The children who had been born in America belonged there and there he and Mother would stay. (Sone 107)

Sone notes that even when she was a child, her trip to Japan brings about new realizations about her identity especially when she realizes that the visit to Japan is much more than the souvenirs “I felt that Japan was all this and much more, but how could I explain it to my friends? A few things I could describe, but the rest, I could feel” (108).

Searching for a new house in Alki, which is quite different from their previous place of residence in Skidrow, reveals the racial status quo to Sone as a child and she reflects upon it as an adult when she states “I knew that Father and Mother were not Americans, as we were, because they were not born here, and that there was a law which said that they could not become naturalized American citizens because they were Orientals. But being Oriental had never been an urgent problem to us, living in Skidrow (113). She remembers the rude refusals to rent apartments to people of Japanese origins as an embodied memory "The woman blinked nervously...She said dryly, "I'm sorry, but we don't want Japs around here", and closed the door. My face stiffened. It was like a sharp stinging slap. Blunt as it was, I had wanted to hear the truth to wipe out the doubt in my mind (114).

Sone questions the internment with a series of rhetorical questions and exposes the irony of the situation where Nisei, who were American citizens, had been stripped of their rights and put behind fences like criminals. By employing reflective

voice, Sone also tries to confront racial trauma that she experienced during the internment

I remembered the wire fence encircling us, and a knot of anger tightened in my breast. What was I doing behind a fence like a criminal? If there were accusations to be made then why hadn't I been given a fair trial? Maybe I wasn't considered an American anymore. My citizenship wasn't real, after all. Then what was I was certainly not a citizen of Japan as my parents were. On second thought, even Father and Mother were more alien residents of the United States than Japanese nationals for they had little tie with their mother country. In their twenty five years in America, they had worked and paid their taxes to their adopted government as any other citizen. Of one thing I was sure. The wire fence was real. I no longer had the right to walk out of it. It was because I had Japanese ancestors. It was because some people had little faith in the ideas and ideals of democracy. They said that after all these were but words and could not possibly insure loyalty. New laws and camps were surer devices". (178)

Another author chosen for this study is Yoshiko Uchida, who was born in 1921 in Alameda, California. She was a Nisei born to Japanese immigrants in the U.S. Uchida's father had migrated to the U.S. in 1903 and worked for a Japanese company based in San Francisco. After the attack on Pearl Harbour, her family was initially relocated to Tanforan assembly center and later interned in Topaz, Utah. Uchida was in her senior year in the University of California, Berkeley when they were relocated. In 1943, she secured admission in Smith College, Massachusetts and was allowed to leave the camp for studies.

Uchida's *Journey to Topaz* is an example of autobiographical fiction. Yuki, the protagonist, is constructed to closely resemble Uchida as a child. Yuki's parents, studying in the same Japanese college and mother being a devout Christian remind us of Uchida's family background

Dwight Uchida immigrated to the United States in 1903 where he became a prominent member of the community and an active member in the Sycamore Congregational Church in El Cerrito, California. Dwight and Iku Uchida had graduated from Doshisha University, a Christian university, in Japan before immigrating to the United States. (Yoshiko Uchida Papers)

Secondly, the evacuation details such as the places Tanforan and Topaz; and the block numbers, barrack number 16 and apartment 40, are, perhaps, the actual details of Uchida family's accommodation in the camp.

## **2.5 Responding to Trauma through Literary Fiction**

### **2.5.1 Trauma, Emotions and Affects**

Affect theory provides an alternative lens of looking at trauma and coping beyond the cognitive realm. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth describe Affects as instinctive forces distinguished from conscious knowing and those which are capable of propelling us towards thoughts, movements and extensions. Similarly, these instinctive forces can act in neutral or negative manner to either freeze or overwhelm us in an indifferent or rigid world. Affect constitutes of intense in-between-ness, embodied or circulating, while relating to humans, non-humans or the world. It is the state with immense potential of acting or being acted upon. It also has the tendency of accumulating in the background. It is "a gradient of bodily capacity, a

supple incrementalism of ever-modulating force-relations” (Gregg and Seigworth 2) fluctuating within the body and impacted by and impacting on factors beyond the body such as transient moments, environments and events. Essentially, affect is best resonated through potential of both affecting others and of being affected by others. Cognition cannot be completely severed from affect as there exists a porous area between the conscious and the non-conscious mind. The enigmatic nature of body further complicates or enriches the concept of affect. Affect brings down the conventional delimitations imposed on a body by flesh and skin. Body seems to internalize the external world and externalize the internal sensations to bring under focus the complex force-relations, which govern the capacities of a body. There emerge no clear binary oppositions to theorize affect. Unmediated relatedness is the most efficient way of articulating an affect.

Gregg and Seigworth trace two major trajectories of studying affect headed by Silvan Tomkins and Gilles Deleuze respectively. The former visualizes affect as emerging from the inside of the body and working on and through social relations and the external world. The latter trajectory sees affect as inhabiting within an arena of varied possibilities of encounters between body and the world, primarily located outside of the body and influencing the workings within the body. Affect has been explored in relation to various disciplines such as the scientific discourse; study of emotions; non-linguistic explorations through basic senses; political realm with associations of external power and collectivity; psychoanalytic understanding through desire; nonhumanist angle; life and modern technology interface; and archaic methods defining interactions between humans and physical nature. Gregg and Seigworth are interested in exploring the affective attributes of the intangible bloom-space, which

can be seen as a perpetual process or a crossroad or a potential or an accumulating point.

Importing from work of Roland Barthes, affect can be looked at as neutrality. Neutral affective state is a non-polar, highly malleable state, which can swiftly change to a glimmer. It comprises of in-between interludes between two moments of body-world interactivity wherein there is a blooming space moving towards intensification of all kinds. While looking at affect from a critical lens, what can be recorded is an inventory of states and changes which accumulate to eventually become affectivity or sentiments. The changes unfold in the temporal interval. Effectively, it is a “passion for differences as continuous, shimmering gradations of intensities” (Gregg and Seigworth 11). Central to existence of a body is to be affected by things and the world. Cultivating the body’s capability of sensing infinite variations and differences through affects. A bloom-space offers a neutral and interactive avenue for the body and the world to work upon each other such that the expressions of the world translate into sensings and eventual passion for difference. Promising and threatening potentials of the world may accordingly lead to expansion or contraction of affectability of a body.

There is an emphasis on the “messiness of the experiential”. The present moment has a certain orientation or an angle that shapes the atmosphere and decides the manner of interaction between the body and the world. Affecting is essentially a rhythmic, non-conscious unfolding with ethico-aesthetic considerations of “a body’s capacity for becoming sensitive to the ‘manner’ of a world”. Blooming spaces unravel “coordinating rhythms that precipitate newness or change while also holding close to the often shimmering (twinkling/fading, vibrant/dull) continuities that pass in

the slim interval between “*how to affect*” and “*how to be affected*” (Gregg and Seigworth 14-15).

Affect theory places the body at the centre while delineating the experiential facets of trauma through somatic sensations, visceral and physiological responses, sensory rhythms and intense embodiments. While looking at internment fiction through the affective lens, not only do the descriptions of bodily sensations and responses of characters become important, but also, the stylistic choices of structuring prose, figures of speech, imagery, literary, aesthetic, rhythmic aspects become crucial in the analysis. Firstly, writers such as Joy Kogawa impart their prose with poetic and dream-like qualities while articulating internment trauma through fiction. Secondly, Kogawa and Hiromi Goto present intensive emotional passages articulating bodily sensations experienced by the characters. Mental, emotional and collective trauma is given physical correlatives through dreams and haunting experiences. Active and engaging imagery rooted in nature and in the human body intersperses accounts of racial injustice and experiences and memories of the internment across generations. Emotional rhythms of the characters affect the literary rhythms of the texts on aesthetic, structural and stylistic levels.

Brian Massumi discusses the relationship between threat and affect from perspective of political situations and resultant actions. Though threat has an anticipatory and impending angle to be realized in the future, it exists in the present through fear and foreshadowing. This actual reality has affective implications. Essentially, “fear is the anticipatory reality in the present of a threatening future” (Gregg and Seigworth 54). The non-conscious bodily responses felt in the present related to the nonexistent and anticipatory threat constitutes the affectual basis of shaping the reality. Threat does not move in linear, chronological frame of time. In

fact, it percolates from the present perpetually onto the future. At the same time, in spite of attaching itself to the future, a threat remains active to shape the present along the way. The affect of fear justifies any preemptive action to intercede the threat even without factual basis in the present. The logical rift between the justification of preemptive action and the present facts creates a disconnection through which “the reality of threat slips to rejoin its deferral to the future” (Gregg and Seigworth 55). When affects are dependent on indexical signs of threat and there is indistinction between the activity and passivity of the body and the environment, it becomes necessary to read into “the reality of appearance”, that is, “the surplus of reality of what has not happened, paradoxically as an event” (Gregg and Seigworth 66). In the case of the internment, the political and discursive construct of ‘yellow peril’, an epitome of prolonged anti-Asian sentiment, insecurities and racial prejudice in the popular psyche becomes the symbol of threat. The Pearl Harbour attack serves as an immediate confirmation of this longstanding fear and aggravates irrational preemptive action targeting the immigrants and citizens of Japanese descent in the U.S. and Canada. The preemptive action involves legal measures and physical restrictions on Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians including immediate arrests of Issei men working as heads of religious, cultural and social organizations and those working in the fishing sector under the charge of espionage. These irrational measures are justified as steps to counter an anticipated political and wartime threat during the Second World War.

Elsbeth Probyn delves in to the mechanics of shame and writing through affective lens. The act of writing is closely associated with the awareness of bodies and their proximity in the world. The kinetic and dynamic relations of bodies impact acts of thinking, writing and reading and, in turn, abilities of bodies of affecting and being

affected. The colliding mind and body relationship impacts the feeling of and feeling shame for the body. In situations of atrocities, the mind may become a critical and judgemental entity dissociated from the body to influence of the working of shame. The body and the language, by implication, experience and expression are related and at times bring about discovery of new subjectivities of expressing shame. Probyn underscores “shame is subjective in the strong sense of bringing into being an entity or an idea through the specific explosion of mind, body, place, and history” (Gregg and Seigworth 81).

Dominick LaCapra warns against unchecked overidentification due to over-proximity with the survivors and encourages critical dialogue with survivors of trauma and those struggling with shame around traumatic experience. Probyn delineates shades of shame through Deleuze’s work. There is shame of the perpetrators and their cruel atrocities. There is numbing of feelings associated with shame due to lack of scope for reflexivity while undergoing a traumatic experience. There is an ongoing struggle with the shame while attempting to articulate it. There is also guilt while reading about traumatic events and reexperiencing shame. Shame changes the body and the dynamics with the past and with the self through deep affective impact. Some writers narrating the traumatic events associated with Holocaust describe a pathological impulse to narrate as an act of communication for survival and tussling with the embodied trauma. At the same time, there is acute awareness of the ineffable quality of language. However, it is important to recognize that writing is “deeply embedded in contexts, politics, and bodies...the body of the writer becomes the battleground where ideas and experiences collide, sometimes to produce new visions of life” (Gregg and Seigworth 89) in the quest of unraveling affects associated with shame.

Internment trauma and fiction shed light on the deep shame that Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians were made to feel for having physical features, which were conjured up into the features resembling ‘the enemy’ through all pervasive racial stereotypes in circulation in the mainstream society. The internment intensified the internal struggles of various writers, wherein their minds questioned this measure on part of their governments as discrimination and an acute violation of their rights, while their bodies suffered under the weight of shame. True of particularly child protagonists in fictional narratives and child voices of past selves in memoir, writers adopt dissociation of mind and body, silence and invisibility as defence mechanisms while articulating and reliving the internment trauma.

Joy Kogawa creates Naomi, a Sansei, as the protagonist of her novels *Obasan* and *Itsuka*. In Mura’s terms, every protagonist needs to be given a goal to achieve by the end of the memoir or fiction, particularly, when the narrative is dramatic in nature. There are irreconcilable conflicts that the protagonist needs to struggle through while on this journey. Naomi comes to terms with her childhood trauma of being separated from her mother. Throughout the narrative, facts are gradually revealed to her. Aunt Emily proves to be her ally in her journey. She empowers Naomi to break the protective silence dictated by societal rules of ‘for the sake of children’. Naomi’s efforts of confronting personal trauma lead her to unravelling the collective trauma of internment that her community endured.

When Naomi pays visit to Obasan after her husband, Uncle Isamu’s death, she finds Obasan searching through Uncle Isamu’s belongings. The devastating impact of Uncle Isamu’s death on Obasan’s life is conveyed through a tactile image of a “potent and pervasive... prairie dust storm”. Reminiscent of the desert landscapes of the internment camps, the heart wrenching memories are further imagined to “seep and

mingle through cracks, settling on furniture and into upholstery”. The passage of time and turning of grief into a profound melancholy on an affective level is shown through physical objects, reminders of Uncle Isamu, being placed in the attic “ a man’s memories end up in some attic or in a Salvation Army bin. His name becomes a fleeting statistic and his face is lost in fading photographs, the clothing quaint, the anecdotes gone... Our attics and living rooms encroach on each other, deep into their invisible places (Kogawa, *Obasan* 30). The merging of temporal frames of past and the present are represented through material and spatial planes of the attics and the living rooms. The affective baggage of the past and the dead seamlessly transports itself into the present of the living.

Through Naomi, the protagonist and the narrator, Kogawa comments on the complex process of articulating racial and collective trauma confronted by the community. *Obasan*’s and Uncle Isamu’s memories become representative of the memories of internment of innumerable Japanese Canadians that are on the verge of fading away with their generation due to their conscious decision of maintaining protective silence about them. Fictional interventions into the memories of internment like Kogawa’s novels are, in fact, attempts of saving them from erasure, and, perhaps, of recreating those that are no longer available in the collective consciousness of the community for posterity.

#### **2.5.1.1 Analyzing Goto’s *Chorus of Mushrooms* through Affective Lens**

In Hiromi Goto’s *Chorus of Mushrooms*, Murasaki, a Sansei and one of the protagonists of the novel, employs the metaphor of a closet to describe Keiko, her mother, who, perhaps, had stories and expressions that she never allowed her daughter to access. In the image of the closet, the material and affective world collide and

complement each other importing their essence into the aesthetic realm of literary fiction.

Naoe, the grandmother, is set in sharp contrast to the reticent mother. Naoe is the one who tells and teaches Murasaki to narrate stories. The process of telling stories is akin to that of creating trauma narratives and writing trauma fiction where words do not come easily to the author. This can be seen in the following quotations from Goto's text.

Murasaki : Obachan, everyone wants to hear stories. And I can't finish them. They scatter like sheep. Like dust

Naoe : No need to tie them up. There is always room for beginnings (Goto 63)

I can't tell where Obachan ends and I begin or if I made the whole thing up or if it was all Obachan... Mom never told any stories. No compound sentences for that woman, she thrived on subject verb object. But I guess I can't complain. She made my life easy and easy to assimilate if your grandmother is skinny enough to be stuffed in a closet. Not that she ever did and not that Obachan would ever allow it. But in Mom's mind, the closet door never opened. Too bad, I say. (Goto 68)

The above conversation has a metafictional quality for the whole text. A novel articulating trauma of a community and personal, familial, almost mythic, stories are juxtaposed against each other to unravel the ramifications of narratives for personal, communal and racial identities.

In Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*, the prose is characterized by strong, emotional and affective intensity. The rhythm of prose and flow oscillates between triggered outpourings fluctuating between the past, present and future temporalities

and relaxed intimacies of deep knowing as if there exists an innate, organic bond between the grandmother and the granddaughter transcending the limits of their minds and bodies.

We find a complex thematic interweaving of silence, voice and discovering language. Murasaki, the Sansei granddaughter of Naoe discovers her voice by learning Japanese, a language her grandmother was fluent in. Murasaki reflects “Ob-achan, I learned to speak Japanese after you left. Because I wanted to. It’s a good reason....I’m glad I learned Japanese because now I can juggle two languages and when there isn’t one word in English, it will be there in Japanese and there’s something lacking in your tongue, I’ll reach for it in English” (54). The language becomes a metaphor for their telepathic connection. Learning a new language associated with her roots does not only facilitate Murasaki to access her culture in a profound manner, but metaphorically opens up the storehouse of her grandmother’s stories. This metaphorical storehouse is juxtaposed with the inaccessible closet of the maternal heart for Murasaki. On an affective level, there is eagerness, curiosity and intensity to communicate and share in this Sansei protagonist.

Naoe, the Issei protagonist of Goto’s novel, also indulges in similar contemplation about stories, silence and language. Goto employs a powerful metaphor of ‘cutting of the tongue’ to depict the voluntary silence of the Issei embrace and ‘growing of a new tongue’ to depict reclaiming of lost voice perhaps through a different language like English, a contradictory stance that Naoe, an Issei, takes in the novel or in the imaginative world of her Sansei granddaughter, when she speaks to her telepathically. This description also has affective urgency on part of Naoe of embracing change and new forms of articulating trauma and identity:

Funny thing, Murasaki, how these stories keep changing...Can't expect the words to come out the same each time my tongue moves to speak. If my tongue were cut from my face, I would surely grow another. No, it is the nature of matter to change, and I feel the change coming from deep within my bones. Time ripens like a fruit and I must hurry, hurry. ... There are ages of silence and ages of roaring, but one more thing remains. When the words have run their course there comes a time of change. (73)

This passage, with Naoe as the narrator, can be read as an instance of creative discordance while conveying the traumatic silence of the Issei. At multiple junctures in her novel, Goto utilizes non-linear narrative and narration without explicit causal relationship, perhaps just like Mura, to imaginatively capture the world of the Issei. It is up to the readers to accept such passages either as Naoe's imagination or her attempt to symbolically break the silence of the Issei as physically she is limited to a wheelchair or to perceive Murasaki as Naoe's imagined transgenerational alter ego as Goto informs the readers through the voice of Murasaki that her real name is Muriel and that the former was given to her by Naoe, her grandmother.

Further, Naoe uses the metaphor of sleeping and waking to convey how, at times, the story teller might be eager to narrate the personal truth, but the listener may not be in the right frame of mind to comprehend the story. Trauma theory looks at the role of witness in listening to the testimony. Through the act of listening to the testimony or the story, the witness or the audience agrees to be a part of the narrative. Goto conveys this sense through Naoe, her protagonist who says to Murasaki, her granddaughter "You are asleep. You were tired and couldn't stay awake. But the stories, true or not, are waiting to be told. I cannot hold them until you are ready to

hear them, so I keep on saying the words out loud and you nod, your eyelids flicker in sleep. Trust me” (87).

In the novel, Murasaki craves to know more about her roots and the Japanese aspects of her identity. Naoe becomes a reliable source of reconnecting to Japanese culture. While articulating her dilemma about finding right words for speaking her personal truth, given that she is surrounded by silence of her parents about their identities and their lives in Canada, Murasaki notes

Mom is a whole different story and one I can't even begin to comprehend. Me sitting here and Mom sitting there and Obachan out and about but hovering around my ears. Obachan away when my words are born so I'm responsible for the things I utter. Better than being utterless. I learn slowly.... (98)

The affects of anguish, pain, loss and suffocation ring through Murasaki's reflexive, internalized speech as she interweaves issues of identity, articulation, expression, trauma, language, truth and fiction together. The aspirational affective feelings of freedom, rebellion and animated expression alternate with the subdued and heavy emotions holding her down as she grapples with her history. She contrasts the reticent parents with the vociferous grandmother. Murasaki locates her own fascination with language and articulation as reaction to her silent Nisei parents:

I was always hungry for words, even when I was very little. Dad, the man without an opinion, and Mom hiding behind an adopted language. It was no wonder I was so confused, language a strange companion. I never knew what I should do. If I should tie it up then ignore it, or if I should mould and shape. Manipulate language like everyone else around me. I never understood the words she [Naoe, the grandmother] said, but I watched and learned (Goto 99)

Naoe becomes Murasaki's source of encountering language in its complete animated affective form. Naoe's language, though incomprehensible due to Murasaki's lack of knowledge of the idiom, is full of life-like qualities. The animated aspect and equivalent affective states allow Naoe's stories to reach Murasaki's heart and inspire her to learn Japanese to find out their meaning and to also to feel supported in her journey of discovering her own voice. Murasaki underscores "Obachan took another route, something more harmonious. Showed me that words take form and live and breathe among us. Language a living beast" (Goto 99). The metaphor of the beast further accentuates the affects of fear and awe. Revering the articulatory ability of words, yet acknowledging the merciless edgy quality of traumatizing or destabilizing the articulator from the comfort of silence.

*Chorus of Mushrooms* has ample examples of Naoe and Murasaki resorting to imaginative recreation of their interactions with each other. Murasaki laments disappearance of Naoe. She misses her power of articulation "[a]fter all those years of Obachan's voice. Her language of memory, pain, desire. The silence in our home was so complete our ears rang with the sudden loss of sound. I turned my thoughts inward, and inward yet again (Goto 129). Naoe's disappearance creates a void in Murasaki's life. It also emerges as a roadblock in her personal journey of articulating trauma and she is forced to look inwards to uncover more resources to support her journey. The affective baggage of withdrawal eventually compels her to break free.

Murasaki, as an active listener of Naoe's story and a person who bears witness to her symbolic testimony, expresses her concern on the nonlinearity of the narrative. Naoe explicates

There isn't a time line. It's not a linear equation. You start in the middle and unfold outward from there. It's not a flat surface that you walk back and forth on. It's like being inside a ball that isn't exactly a ball, but is really made up of thousands and thousands of small panels. And on each panel, there is a mirror, but each mirror reflects something different... you can see something new, something old, or something you've forgotten. (132)

Goto uses a strong visual image of spherical reflecting surface for the storyteller's psyche and the structure of the narrative alike. This image definitely has an affective sensation of 'being stuck', of 'non-linearity and non-progression', of re-doing, perpetual, cyclical revisiting or going in circles, characteristic of trauma narratives. Images employed by Naoe in describing her process of narration certainly indicate an overt lack of causal relationship, yet they are manifestations of traumatic disruptions. Naoe, symbolically, tries to start by comprehending the source of her stories which almost erupt from a center and spread outward. Perhaps, at the center lies the repressive silence, which these eruptive stories attempt to break. Literally, every story verbalizes an element that had been guarded by silence for long. Mirrors signify the multiple versions of traumatic experiences marked by replication or repetition which characterizes narration of trauma. Yet, these stories have incremental additions or perspectives that unravel new as much as old, forgotten memories. Naoe calls Murasaki to forge a partnership with her through the acts of telling and listening stories "[w]e have only come part way in the telling and the listening. We must both be able to tell. We must both be able to listen. If the positions become static, there can never be stories. Stories grow out of stories... Listening becomes telling, telling listening" (172).

## **2.6 Dreams and Trauma Processing through Affects in the Fiction of Joy Kogawa and Julie Otsuka**

While considering the internment as a significant collective trauma and its expression through various literary works, it is crucial that we look at depictions of dreams, particularly, in fiction of Kogawa and Otsuka, who diligently employ them to create a sense of haunting, repetition and belated processing of unassimilated traumatic experiences in their works. Dreams trigger certain affects of fear, shame and disgust concretized through feelings of anxiety, guilt and gloom in the minds and the bodies of characters in these texts. Texts of Kogawa and Otsuka are replete with illustrations of trauma processing through affects. Intense and emotional language, sensory descriptions, feelings translating into bodily sensations and physiological or visceral responses make these texts ideal to be explored through the lens of affect theory.

In the psychoanalytic framework, analysis of dreams is valuable as they are considered to be the windows that provide insights into the psyche. As discussed previously in this chapter, particularly with reference to the observations made by Kennedy in this regard, dreams may reflect fears, insecurities, anxieties, traumas and desires of a person. Considering the literary works of Kogawa and Otsuka, the dreams of various characters not only shed light on how they process internment as trauma, but also their personal losses and deaths, disappearances and absences in the families.

As noted previously in the chapter, Pederson looks at dreams as both a means of achieving catharsis as well as instruments to convey unresolved shock. As a larger repercussion, unresolved traumas can also get transmitted to the next generation and may get reflected in their dreams. In the literary context, there is reexperiencing as well as retelling of traumatic experiences through representations of dreams.

In Otsuka's *When the Emperor was Divine*, the girl makes a candid comment about her father after being away from him for so long "Do you know what bothers me most? I can't remember his face sometimes" (Otsuka 72). In this novel, two young children tackle devastating non-conscious affective states. The intensity of emotional upsurge is flabbergasting. Body becomes the site of battling anxieties and insecurities in the face of sudden developments during the internment. The feeling of failure at recollecting father's face is a sign of insecurity. Failure of memory soon turns into an affective sign of loss. Since it is difficult to determine when their father would be released, it is quite natural for children and even other family members to feel that they have lost their loved one for an indefinite duration.

The boy frequently dreams of a small "beautiful wooden door" with the size of a pillow or an encyclopedia. This door has another door inside which concealed a picture of the Emperor, which is ideally not seen out of reverence "For the Emperor was holy and divine. A god. You could not look him in the eye" (73). The affect of fear and awe triggered by this cultural prohibition transforms itself into anxiety for having attempted to access the forbidden. In the dream the book-like door becomes an enactive sign. The falling of the doorknob with the ringing of the camp bell conveys denial of access to the Japanese identity. The inaccessibility has a figurative relevance. It signifies the American surveillance on the citizens of Japanese origin, apparently for reasons of national security. The 'bell' of American suspicion prevents the Japanese Americans especially the Nisei the 'access' to their Japanese ethnicity, which is in turn an integral part of their complex identity. The Japanese Emperor stands for everything Japanese, including some regressive hierarchies and attitudes that they left behind while settling in America. This reference to the bell could also be juxtaposed with the Liberty Bell, a symbol of independence with the inscription

“Proclaim Liberty Throughout All the Land Unto All the Inhabitants thereof” to expose the irony of the situation.

In Kogawa’s *Obasan* and *Itsuka*, Naomi Nakane sees varied dreams particularly indicating the deep personal trauma of being separated from her mother at a tender age. It is by aiming to recover from personal trauma that Naomi is able to connect and comprehend the collective trauma of her community.

In *Obasan*, Joy Kogawa eloquently uses the literary device of dreams of the protagonist to showcase her personal and collective trauma. Naomi describes multiple mother related dreams. When the war ended in early autumn in 1945, Naomi remembers dreaming of a Maypole woman

Something has touched me but I do not know what it is. Something not human, not animal, that masquerades the way a tree in the night takes on the contours of hair and fingers and arms...She is here. She is not here. She is reaching out to me with a touch deceptive as down, with hands and fingers that wave like grass around my feet, and her hair falls...from her head like streamers of paper rain. (198)

The image of the maypole woman is rich in colours, textures, tactile sensations and dreamy, almost uncanny imagery. Hair, fingers, grass and paper have unique tactile and visual qualities. Fingers and arms resonate the bodily functions of extension into the world. Naomi’s dreams externalize her emotional world which is full of affect of anguish through loss, pain and hurt. However, the symbol of maypole and traditional association with pagan rituals of fertility open up a vista of hope, recovery and resilience. Affect of joy associated with recuperation, motherly care and love emerge as the imagery shifts to showing a child’s dependence on the caregiver. Naomi’s

subconscious mind utilizes imagination to fill the void of a mother figure with which she has been struggling with for a major part of her life without any possibility of a closure

She [mother] is a maypole woman to whose apron-string streamers I cling and around whose skirts I dance. She is a ship leaving the harbor, tied to me by colored paper streamers that break and fall into a swirling wake. The wake is a thin pencil line that deepens and widens and fills with a grayness that reaches out with tentacles to embrace me. I leap and wake. (198-99)

The extension of body is further seen in the image of the tentacles that reach out to hold and embrace Naomi, yet there is an eerie feeling around this dreamy encounter with the mother figure.

Another dream in the spatial setting of a cemetery in presence of the dead family members and her mother at the center provides greater insight into the psyche of Naomi. Kogawa employs imagery of downward spiralling stairs evoking the affect of mystery and enigma, yet shattering the privacy with a sight of a public trial featuring Naomi's mother and an inquisitor. Astonishingly, mother's silence is visualized as a knotted string that she struggles to pull at with her mouth as at the end of the string is a red rose symbolizing heart and love. The urgency of Naomi reaching out to the silent mother is juxtaposed as against a heavy downpour. The public trial like ceremony is, in fact, subconscious, visual representation of Naomi's guilt of forcing into and accusing her mother of guarding her privacy and silence around her disappearance and death. The inquisitor is a figure born out of displacement and condensation to represent Naomi's guilt-ridden desire of forcing mother to speak. The

skilful untangling of knots stands for mother's culture appropriate behaviour of adopting silence after understanding the delicacy of the situation.

Naomi uses linguistic symbols to explicate the delicate treading of silence and speech in Japanese culture when she refers to two ideographs in Japanese language, which represent the idea of love through three root words, that is, heart, hand and action. Thus, from the perspective of Japanese culture love can be defined as "hands and heart in action together". While describing the dream, Naomi adds "The dance ceremony of the dead was a slow courtly telling, the heart declaring a long thread knotted to Obasan's twine, knotted to Aunt Emily's package. Why, I wonder as she danced her love, should I find myself unable to breathe?" (272-273). Mother's opening up, brings up the affect of distress for Naomi.

Naomi perceives the Grand Inquisitor as a "carnivorous accuser". The ferocity Kogawa accords to this figure in the dream is directly proportionate to the intensity of Naomi's realization of her fault in behaving like an inquisitor to her mother. Naomi's shame and guilt is projected onto this figure in the dream. She finds herself vulnerable when she realizes her own lack of knowledge of the cultural nuances and refinement around the delicate interweaving of silence and speech. The inquisitor's judgement, refusal to maintain silence and listen keenly are the very qualities Naomi had embodied while interacting with the memories of her mother. Recognition that Naomi's rigour of investigating into the past of her mother was equivalent to the intensity of the symbolic assault of the inquisitor leaves Naomi with the affective weight of shame, guilt and trauma. Naomi observes

Only when he [the inquisitor] enters her [mother's] abandonment will he be released from his own. How the Grand Inquisitor gnaws at my bones. At the

age of questioning my mother disappeared. Why, I have asked ever since, did she not write? Why, I ask now, must I know? Did I doubt her love? Am I her accuser? (274)

Naomi feels immense guilt for having expressed suspicion about her mother's love and having questioned her silence. As Naomi comes to terms with her mother's silence through an elaborate process she contemplates "My mother hid her love, but hidden in life does she speak through dream?...Her tale is a rose with tangled stem. All this questioning, this clawing at her grave, is an unseemly thing" (274). She decides to put her questions to rest and embrace peace following her Uncle's death. Kogawa consistently utilizes rhetorical questions in Naomi's internalized speech and imagined conversations with her mother.

In embracing her new realizations about her mother and her mother's silence, Naomi initiates a conversation with her. This conversation symbolizes the process of confronting the transgenerational trauma

Mother, in my dreams you are a maypole. I dance around you with a long paper streamer in my hand. But the words of the May Day song are words of distress. The unknown is a hook that pierces the bone... Silence attends the long sun dance... (290)

Silence is associated with affects of pain and anguish. Naomi's memories of her mother are dominated by lack of knowledge of her mother's past and the community's history. This lack haunts her such that a song which was supposed to celebrate fertility and abundance turns into a dirge. A dead tree and a stone at the root of it become symbols of a dead and heavy connection with the mother, whose weight needs to be borne by Naomi "Your leg is a tree trunk and I am branch...I am joined to

your limbs by right of birth...The tree is a dead tree in the middle of the praires. I sit on its roots still as a stone” (291). Conventional affects of joy, care and solace evoked by fertile, life giving, vital, nurturing ‘mother-nature’ figure are contrasted with the contradictory connection Naomi has experienced with her mother into the mother’s lifetime and through memories and trauma after her disappearance. The juxtaposition of contrasting traits contributes to the emotional intensity of Naomi’s trauma. Emotional trauma appears as a physical wound in Naomi’s dream. Images of flowing blood, bleeding wound and inability to contain the blood flow convey affects of pain very effectively. The intense description brings to mind a life-threatening wound, tragically and ironically, caused by the sudden disappearance of a life-giving force, the mother:

In my dreams, a small child sits with a wound on her knee. The wound on her knee is on the back of her skull, large and moist. A double wound. The child is forever unable to speak. The child forever fears to tell. I apply thick bandage but nothing can soak up the seepage. I beg that the woundedness may be healed and that the limbs may learn to dance. (291)

The pleas of healing and guidance fall on deaf ears as all that Naomi’s inner child has is a non-living, frozen picture of the mother, memorabilia that cannot fill the void in her life. Affects of anxiety, loss and uneasiness prevail in wakeful as well as dream life “But you stay in a black-and-white photograph, smiling your yasahi smile...Gentle Mother, we were lost together in our silences. Our wordlessness was our mutual destruction” (290-291). Towards the end of the dreamy conversational sequence, however, there is a note of mutual identification and suffering, a shared vulnerability in the face of silence and societal norms as well as communal norms around articulating trauma.

The foundation of Naomi's reconciliation with her mother is her effort to process her childhood trauma as an adult. Her grievances of being deprived of truth and persecution of her mother for her silence are substituted by acknowledgement and eagerness for spiritual connection rooted in maturity and forgiveness having transcended her personal suffering. Affects associated with forgiveness, compassion, empathy and mercy bring about expansion of Naomi's worldview which enables her to hold space for herself as well as her mother:

I am thinking that for a child there is no presence without flesh. But perhaps it is because I am no longer a child I can know your presence though you are not here. The letters tonight are skeletons. Bones only. But the earth still stirs with dormant blooms. Love flows through the roots of the trees by our graves.

(292)

Joy Kogawa imports the unravelling of mother-daughter relationship through Naomi's dreams from *Obasan* into *Itsuka*. The organic metaphors of trees, soil, dead and living and spiritual connection is seen in *Itsuka* as well when Naomi kneels next to the maple tree at her mother's grave and contemplates "We're, all of us, dead and alive. We the dead and we the living are here among the trees...within this one hour at Mama's grave, I meet the one I need to meet". She remembers consolatory words of Nakayama Sensei which have a spiritual significance for her quest to comprehend her mother's silence "We will all hear what must be heard" "You will be told what you are made ready to hear" (Kogawa, *Itsuka* 100). Nakayama Sensei seems to emphasize on patience, forgiveness, maturity and tranquility while on a quest of understanding those who have departed.

Kogawa utilizes aquatic imagery to explore Naomi's subconscious mind through her dream in Hawai'i. A complex combination of visual and tactile images and affective signs such as "sinking", "sliding", "plummeting", "stream", "infinitesimal", "stillness" "dark light", "seamless" weave an experience of flow of consciousness and innate, instinctive knowing. This intense description creates a wholesome, abundant, potent, inter-connected web of consciousness quite beyond the bodily realm, yet full of deep sensations. Another interpretation could be the dream is Naomi's subconscious, imaginative quest of experiencing a deeper sense of relief and security lacking in her conscious mind through an imagery equivalent of the pre-birth consciousness of an unborn child resting in the maternal womb, a secured, safe and aquatic space conducive for growth.

I know it's happening... There's nothing left to see or touch, yet I find myself plummeting... Somewhere in this no longer physical, no longer visible world is the moment of discovery. What I know is that I am without a body, but... I am not without consciousness. There's a quality of knowing that is completely unchanged as I slide down the stream of deeper disappearing (102)

Kogawa creates a realm at the crossroad of sound and thought, of innate knowing, creative expression and conscious thinking or awareness. The affective in-betweenness of bodily and worldly interactions is conveyed beautifully in this emotive description. The dream becomes a process of signification of the body's attempts to opening up its varied capacities to embrace the world. Physical, mental, spiritual, intuitive sensings bring in all forms of knowledge of the world and explorations of the past. A sense of musicality aids the literary expression of this complex trauma processing as Naomi imagines the process of becoming new, healed self through a song, an apt vehicle of intense non-conscious emotions, affects and knowing. Only

form of receiving this wholesome knowledge about her selfhood and identity is surrendering and allowing it through flow through her entire being, of permitting the world to affect her, of being vulnerable to reception:

at the very heart of the listening, in that one moment as I attend fully the mind's singing in the speed and stillness of dark light, I become, and I am, the song. I am Song itself... in a seamless shift... waft of thought and I know that I, the thought and the person, am one, indivisibly, consciously, utterly myself  
(103)

Naomi's affective trance-like state integrates into a state of brief conscious awareness as she wakes up for a few seconds from the dream with an increased pulse rate, a feeling of slight pressure in her heart and increased blood pumping into the body as well as rise in her body temperature. These physical changes brought about by complex psychological trauma processing allow Naomi to cope up with the wound of mother's disappearance as she discovers that worldly disappearance is not spiritual death. She feels her mother's living presence in her consciousness as a source of instinctive knowing and a powerful unconscious force shaping her identity:

I suffused with heat and heart-pounding certainty. There is no death...  
Annihilation is not possible. Individual consciousness cannot be extinguished.  
So that's what death is. "...Mama..." I whisper and feel the shock of speech,  
the jolt back to the body, the cumbersome tongue. (104)

Gradually, Naomi drifts back into the dream to feel tangible presence of her relatives alongside her mother. Through Naomi's dreams, Naomi's trauma, pain, alienation and deep sense of loss and lack pave way to possibilities of a journey of healing,

reconnection, knowing, self-sufficiency, fulfilment and even happiness. Her somatic sensations and affects change from anxiety and anguish to safety and protection.

From the perspective of affect theory, Sarah Ahmed notes that experiencing happiness involves orienting the body to be affected, rather turning toward an object, which may lead to desired affect. Secondly, placing or having the aforesaid object within reachable limits or near sphere. Preferences govern the bodily horizon and proximity of objects may reveal a lot about people's preferences, likes and dislikes. Orientation or direction towards and contact with the object shape the affective attributes. Location, timing of appearance and background or surroundings or conditions of the arrival of the object may also contribute in a sensational experience or affective quality of the object. Objects are not only limited to material things but they may be extended to incorporate "values, practice, and styles, as well as aspirations" (Gregg and Seigworth 41). Naomi's mother and her imagined presence in her life becomes the object governing her happiness. Changes in Naomi's orientation towards her mother's death and her past, initially as repulsion for self-preservation to reluctant curiosity triggered by resources shared by Aunt Emily and gradual vulnerable opening through dreams pave way for Naomi's healing and happiness. Naomi's mother, her letters and her belongings turn into, what Sarah Ahmed calls a "feeling-cause" such that the originating of a particular feeling is attributed to that object. Anticipation of affects is also plausible wherein "objects might acquire the value of proximities that are not derived from our own experience" (Gregg and Seigworth 40). The warmth and affection which could not be experienced due to her mother's disappearance are re-lived on an emotional and affective plane through dreams about the mother:

I see Mother's face, her eyes gently oblique, and know...that she is present, a conscious being as real and palpably alive as I am. Father is alive, and Uncle and Obasan. They live not just as memory, but as thought itself, within every fragmentary wave of remembering. I can touch them and hold them as surely as I feel the pink-flowery pillow hugging my cheek. (104)

From an affective angle, at times, happiness is an end in itself. Hence, pursuing objects may signify pursuit of happiness. In Naomi's case, pursuing knowledge about her mother's life becomes her object of desire. Naomi is compelled to unlearn her traumatic orientation and re-learn a new orientation to rise above the stored negative affects of internment passed down by the elders in her family including guilt, shame and helplessness. Learning happy orientations towards objects is a matter of habit. Collectivities may also decide orientations of individuals towards certain objects. If arriving of individuals in a space at a given time is conditioned by moods, then reception or leaning into a given state is also a form of acting and affecting the world, consciously through mental processing or through somatic bearings. A complex blend of conscious thought and unconscious dreams translated into active, emotional and affective states help Naomi realize the need for love and affection she craved for in her life. For Naomi, the completion of her quest of knowing her mother is in acknowledging her immense need for love from her mother. Her knowing is put into practice when she reorients 'her heart', the emotional centre of cognition to celebrate choices that would bring her happiness instead of carrying the affects of grief and loss:

the dream was the final signpost in my steadfast journey toward Mother. All my waiting life I kept my heart turned toward her and away from the tiny choices of love offered in the inch-high rooms of possibilities....I sought her

in dream beyond the grave, in the stream that circles forever and in the song that does not vanish. Love, it seems to me, must be at the end of the journey without end (104-105)

Naomi's recollection of a seven year old dream certainly signifies the deep affective impact it has had on her and the embodied "bone-deep knowing" it facilitated for her.

Kogawa ends *Itsuka* on a note of subtle celebration of innate knowing. A knowing constituting conscious thought and unconscious revelations. Through dreams, Naomi is set on a path of recovery. Naomi's recovery starts by acknowledging the gaps and embracing the fragments of memory of her childhood. It demands continual investment in terms of time to confront the trauma of the past including a profound struggle with affects of pain, loss, guilt, shame, helplessness and silence. Kogawa employs the consistent metaphors of stream and knowledge, water and emotional replenishment, memory and dream, sound, song and thought to express Naomi's recovery:

We have come to the hour when the telling leaps over the barricades and the dream enters day...I can hear the waves from childhood rippling outward to touch other children who wait for their lives. I can hear the voices... It's the sound of underground stream. It speaks through memory, through dream, through our hands, our words, our arms, our trusting. I can hear the sound of the voice that frees, a light, steady, endless breath. I can hear the breath of life.  
(331)

John Okada's *No-No Boy* foregrounds the struggle of a Nisei named Ichiro, who has exhibited the courage of providing negative responses to the ill-famed 'loyalty questionnaire' where Japanese American men were asked to pledge

unconditional allegiance to the U.S. and opt to join the armed forces to contribute to the war effort. This proposal was advocated as an opportunity to embrace personal freedom by leaving the internment camps. Okada also constructs a towering maternal figure, who is the ultimate decision maker in the family. The mother's opinions overpower Ichiro's personal decision-making mechanisms and he embraces his confinement.

Affects of disgust and humiliation as a result of cowardice, blame, stigma and ostracism wreak havoc on Ichiro's identity, self-esteem and self-image. After serving the term when Ichiro returns, he is in an embittered state. He is incapable of self-compassion and connection with his peers and his community. When mother expects Ichiro to exhibit courage, altruism, self-sacrifice, loyalty to the Japanese identity, he is thrown in an abyss of meaninglessness, helplessness, instability, anxiety and incompleteness. Japanese aspects of his identity become 'feeling-cause' of negative affects including extreme anger, self-loathing, anxiety, alienation, helplessness and stigmatized existence. Okada uses verbs such as 'disrupte', 'destruct', 'liquidate', 'uproot' and 'dislocate' to show the internal turmoil in Ichiro's mind.

Through the novel, Okada unravels the emotions that fuelled the resistance on part of Nisei, who refused to get enlisted in the army. Hurt, humiliation, betrayal and fear were still dominant emotions given that youth were expected to join the war effort, when their families would have continued to live behind the barbed wire. The proposal seemed superficial and conspiratorial to them rather than a genuine promise of freedom, as it was projected to be, by the American government. Logical fallout was to resist and respond negatively as an act of self-preservation and survival. However, the irrevocable consequences of stigma associated with No-No boys were felt by them only after their release from confinement. The stigma and ostracism

associated with No-No boys by their own community and the white society alike intensified affects of shame, betrayal and self-loathing even further. No-No Boys like Ichiro were forced to question their choices and bear the consequences of the historical rupture of their communal and familial world due to the internment by symbolically hoping for redemption in an unjust world. The stigma played a role in shaping the decisions of inclusion and exclusion in society. Through Ichiro, Okada narrates the perpetual dilemma of Nisei No-No boys and their inability to take a stand against their Issei parents, who had their affiliations with Japan. This inability also stemmed, perhaps, from their own lack of understanding or insecurity about the complexities and delicacies of their identity. Ichiro's internalized speech is a testimony of the same:

you were still half my mother and I was thereby still half Japanese and when the war came and they told me to fight for America, I was not strong enough to fight you and I was not strong enough to fight the bitterness which made half of me which was you bigger than the half of me which was America and really the whole of me that I could not see or feel. (Okada 16)

Community and familial orientations governed the affective reactions of Nisei to internment and the prevalent injustices. Rage, criticism and bitterness had to be limited to individual level as such reactions were frowned upon in a culture conditioned to valorize endurance, obedience, familistic communitarianism, conflict-avoidance, restraint, patience, resignation, prioritizing needs of others and minimizing inconvenience. This contributed to the alienation of the Nisei from the community. Community values emerge as objects and feeling-causes of affects of silence, shame and suffocation in internment narratives. On an affective level, alienation is the

difference between the experiences the individuals have with objects and the attributed orientation that the individuals are expected to have towards the object. The narratives to explicate such gaps decide the varied range of affects that individuals might encounter while coming in contact with the object. Romantic and familial relationships provide shared horizons of common orientations towards select objects. Nisei characters with alternative forms of reactions to the internment such as Aunt Emily from *Obasan* and *Itsuka* and Ichiro from *No-No Boy* find themselves on the receiving end of community sanctions. Aunt Emily's efforts of challenging and questioning the internment and breaking through the silence of the community are frowned upon. However, she continues her endeavours on the path of activism. Ichiro leads an alienated life divided between obeying his mother and charting out a new course of life for himself.

Milton Murayama's Oyama novels present a strong-willed mother and issues of obedience and defiance. Sawa Oyama's exploitation by her husband's family, both in domestic space as well as through physical labour in the plantation, her alienation and uprooting to a foreign and unfamiliar land like Hawai'i as an Issei picture bride and, finally, her role as an agent of the exploitative plantation mentality in the lives and subjugation of her children make her a complex character. In *All I Asking for is my Body*, the physical body becomes a site of asserting one's freedom, identity and aspirations. The physical drudgery amounts to enslavement as young boys are made to pay off the exuberant loans of their families at the cost of their future and education. Affects of humiliation, anguish and terror concretized in feelings of hurt, gloom, helplessness, being trapped and stuck are conveyed through somatic sensations. Physically intensive sports such as boxing are seen as means of resistance by a defiant son like Toshio determined to escape the drudgery. Physical might is also

a mechanism of self-preservation and claiming agency in family space. Affects of anguish and humiliation are experienced by women and men alike given that they are subjected to long hours of back breaking work. Fate becomes a plausible explanation of leading this life of eternal exploitation. Affects of uncertainty, disease, death and loss loom large as families struggle to keep up with the happy façade they wish to portray in their native land. Obedience versus defiance of familial and communitarian values fuel the plot of the four novels in Oyama series. Murayama creates an obedient and fortunate Kiyoshi for a defiant and discontented Toshio.

The question of pledging loyalty and deciding correct orientation towards a dark historical event like the internment is also tackled by Yoshiko Uchida in *Journey to Topaz*. Uchida notes in the preface that this novel is semi-autobiographical in nature. She shows the father of Yuki, the child protagonist, having a word with Mr. Toda, an Issei man out of prison on parole and living with his family in the same camp as Yuki Sakane's family on the issue of young Nisei boys choosing to join the armed forces. Mr. Sakane supports joining the armed forces, even though as an Issei, like Mr. Toda, he too had been persecuted for being an enemy alien. Mr. Toda expresses his apprehensions. There is a difference in the orientations that Mr. Sakane and Mr. Toda exhibit towards the issue of loyalty and joining the forces. Mr. Toda holds on to the negative affects of hurt, betrayal and resistance as the way forward. Mr. Sakane, on the other hand, prioritizes the future of his children and understands the impact of his actions and expressions of loyalty on their positions in the country. Mr. and Ms. Sakane choose forgiveness, generosity and loyalty to the U.S. as an antidote to the fear, anxiety and hysteria of the war years. Ms. Sakane, elsewhere, echoes similar sentiment while talking to Mr. Kurihara "Fear has made this country do something she will one day regret, Mr. Kurihara, but we cannot let this terrible

mistake poison our hearts. If we do, then we will be the ones to destroy ourselves and our children as well” (Uchida 90). Fear as an affect makes individuals and collectivities act quite irrationally. One way of countering negative affects is reorienting oneself into looking upto the positive ones from a rational angle.

However, it does not mean that affect theory formulates a hierarchy amidst various affects. Positive as well as negative affects are valid reactions to complex situations. Sarah Ahmed points out that some bodies might be perceived as causes of threatening happiness or bringing in bad feelings. For instance, in the camps, there were lobbies operating from fear, anxiety and resistance by pledging loyalties to Japan and chose violence against fellow community members, who were suspected of having loyalty to the U.S. and were seen as allies of the white administration. Uchida conveys the sentiments the common inhabitants of the camps had towards such lobbies through Yuki’s voice:

For several weeks now the entire camp had been upset by a small group of bitter, frustrated, and fanatical men who seemed to hate everybody, especially those residents who worked with the Caucasian administrative staff. They were trouble makers who roamed the camp at night, beating up the people who worked hardest as leaders of Topaz...Fear and hatred put us into the desert camp and now we are breeding more fear and hatred among ourselves. Why must human beings be so stupid? (Uchida 144-145 )

The varied possibilities of affects make for a holistic reading of the internment narratives. Affects ranging from hurt, betrayal, silence, shame, alientation to acceptance, love and loyalty present diverse states that individuals can traverse through while recollecting the same historical event. Ahmed proposes that looking at

good feelings as forward moving and future-oriented and bad feelings as regressive and oriented towards the past is a limiting stance in the study of the affect. In fact, holding on to bad feelings is rather a return to imagine an alternative version of what must be considered good, particularly in histories entailing injustice and hurt for communities and individuals. Hence, it is necessary that choices are made “to reread melancholic subjects, the ones who refuse to let go of suffering, who are even prepared to kill some forms of joy, as an alternative model of the social good” (Gregg and Seigworth 50). In light of this, it is not a surprise that works such as *No-No Boy*, not received in good light at the time of their publication, are being re-interpreted as authentic expressions of dilemmas of hybrid identity.

## **2.7 Intergenerational effects of Internment as Trauma**

Kogawa and Otsuka fill the abyss within the interpersonal communication between the Sansei children and their parents through imaginative dream-like encounters in their literary expressions. These expressions pave way to understanding the dynamics of silence and voice in Japanese North American families considering internment as a major roadblock. According to Nagata long term intergenerational effects of trauma are almost passed down as family legacy particularly through parental interactions and the silence about internment as much as through compromised physical and mental health, premature deaths and poor financial conditions due to loss of assets.

The surveys of Sansei undertaken by Nagata conclude that conversations about the camp between Nisei parents and Sansei children were extremely brief. Hence “the overall absence of discussion created an acute Sansei awareness of an ominous gap in their family history” (44). Sudden, unexplained harsh responses to negative memory triggers such as food items and silence made perceptions about

familial distance quite strong in Sansei. According to Nagata sadness and anger were predominant emotions seen in Sansei about the unjust internment of their family. Those Sansei who had learnt about internment through their parents exhibited greater emotional distress as feared by the community.

While considering the identitarian issues of the families of the previous generation typically comprising of Issei parents and Nisei children, Nagata observes “The Nisei thus moved back and forth between their Japaneseness and Canadianness. They negotiated identities, as they travelled from public school to home, and from public school to Japanese school. It was difficult for some to navigate these two worlds, though at times, one offered an escape from the other” (368). When the Nisei started their families, they emphasized on assimilation and Americanization. This also implied disassociating from Japanese heritage. Nagata notes that the Sansei inherited a drive to become “super American” (44). Positive psychological aspects seen in Sansei, which have been associated with family history involving internment, are immense pride in the resilience of their respective families, greater satisfaction in pursuing and fulfilling their parents’ dreams and greater sensitivity to injustice.

Yonsei, that is, the fourth generation, exhibit confrontational coping strategies which involve educating themselves about their Japanese culture and heritage through books and interaction, deeper engagement in revival of these dimensions of their identity and the wartime issues and they seem open to sharing these aspects of their identity with their future generations.

### **2.7.1 Carrier Groups for Internment Trauma**

In the texts that have been analyzed for this research, the Sansei authors have exhibited such an attitude of breaking the silence with greater engagement with the past through their fictional and autobiographical narratives. Sansei and the subsequent

generations have taken up the role of carrier groups in the context of narrating the hardships during the internment as referred to previously in the chapter. Carrier groups are

the collective agents of the trauma process. Carrier groups have both ideal and material interests, they are situated in particular places in the social structure, and they have particular discursive talents for articulating their claims—for what might be called “meaning making”—in the public sphere. Carrier groups may be elites, but they may also be denigrated and marginalized classes.

(Alexander, Eyerman and Giesen 11)

Alexander adds further that a carrier group can be generational, national or institutional depending upon their specific location in the social order. The carrier group primarily addresses its own community in first place to awaken them to the traumatizing nature of a certain event “the carrier group makes use of the particularities of the historical situation, the symbolic resources at hand, and the constraints and opportunities provided by institutional structures” (12). After creating awareness in its own community, the carrier group expands the audience to the entire society.

Nagata uses the term “carrier group” for the subsequent generations that play a pivotal role in processing of the cultural trauma and “that brings to public attention the significance of the trauma as situated in the larger social structure” (46). Nagata underscores that the Sansei became the carrier group for the Japanese American community. They had been empowered with the necessary power of expression due to their American acculturation, backdrop of civil movements and conscious engagement with and keen interest in community history as well as through academic pursuits such as ethnic studies that allowed them to comprehend internment as a form

of racial oppression (Nagata, Kim and Wu 46; Nagata, Kim and Nguyen 369). Additionally, it was easier for them to attempt to articulate the stories of their parents and grandparents as they did not perceive internment through the lens of intense personal trauma. Moreover, they approached the event as cultural and collective trauma. The Sansei through redress initiated the process of, as Fugita and Fernandez describe it “individual and collective catharsis” (Nagata, Kim and Nguyen 371). Nagata traces the progression of Sansei and subsequent generations as the carrier group for the community “While the silence within Japanese American families represented an attempt to repress the incarceration trauma for more than three decades, the movement toward a social representation of what occurred required a new master narrative among Japanese Americans, one that publicly claimed the significance of the event” (369). Sansei encouraged the previous generations to break their silence not only on a personal level but also facilitated the processing of the cultural trauma at a collective level which finally culminated in a redress movement calling on for action by the government.

Marianne Hirsch discusses memory as a form of counter-history which opens up the possibilities of securing justice through advocacy and activism. Memory shifts our attention to vulnerable individuals caught up in vast narratives of history. This process plays a crucial role in redress of historical wrongs. For the Japanese North Americans, the process of reclaiming the memory of the internment and creating institutionalized narratives of their own as well as countering the existing misconceptions was a complex process. Acknowledging it as a dark experience in the national history of their respective nations was a long journey that entailed official acknowledgement, apology and reparations as much as it demanded a change in the approach towards race and identity.

Sturken distinguishes between history and memory as history “connotes a fully narrativized, developmental story with a given closure and unity” and memory “intimates a fragmentary, less self-evident, repressed dimension of knowledge about the past” (Fujitani, White and Yoneyama 18). Sturken opines “The tension between memory and history is an active process that moves both ways: from memory to history as well as from history to memory. Thus, whereas the memories of survivors can become part of the texts of history, historical narratives can often reshape personal memories” (34). In this fluid relationship, members of a community such as the Japanese North Americans, actively participate in recuperative efforts of narrativizing personal memory and contributing to the history of the larger community.

In the introduction to *Perilous Memories :The Asia-Pacific War(s)* (2001) edited by T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White and Lisa Yoneyama, the editors opine “Our knowledge about the past is always already mediated through narratives such as historical writings, memoirs, and textbooks, through dreams, through images on film, photographs, and paintings, through material objects such as memorial icons, and through ritual practices such as commemorative ceremonies and memorial services. Sometimes memory is negotiated through its very absence” (16). Textual and visual media play significant role in making collective remembering possible.

Articulation and representation play important role in turning past into memory and associating historical and cultural meaning to it. A crevice between the actual experience of the internment and the act of remembering creates a fecund territory of literary expression for writers and artists.

Sturken delineates deliberate reconstruction and reenactment of memories and reinterpretation as a method of reclaiming memories. She sheds light on the necessity of textual and visual intervention into memory and history to provide a sense of order and closure to the personal experience as much as to the collective memory. Sturken highlights “cultural memory is always being rescripted, just as personal memories are constantly recrafted and rethought. Renarrativization is essential to memory” (45).

Many scholars argue that literary narrative, in particular, might possess a privileged, if not unique, value for communicating our deepest psychic pains. Geoffrey Hartman writes most succinctly on this theme, arguing that literature can help us “read the wound” of trauma and proposing the possibility of, perhaps, trauma “can only be reclaimed by literary knowledge”. Caruth opines that in comparison to the direct representation in objective, historical, archival language, literary language has a unique ability of communicating trauma (Kurtz 97). Hartman asserts that considering non-literary language as a tool to represent trauma with accuracy, that is, as “a successful verbal fixative of the real” is a disturbing trap. He highlights that literary forms such as story and poetry in their use of figurative language and their imaginative quality have the potential to hint at the inarticulate loss and trauma.

Memoirs such as Monica Sone’s *Nisei Daughter*, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston’s *Farewell to Manzanar* and Garret Hongo’s *Volcano* precisely are attempts of intervention into memories of immigration and internment and an effort to reclaim them. These attempts that began as personal journeys, in turn emerged as records of memory that had the potential to alter national and historical narratives about the community.

In conclusion, this chapter analyzed internment as a significant collective trauma for the Japanese North American community. It looked at the various definitions and forms of trauma and explored the dynamics of narrating trauma with the help of literary imagination considering that literature provides an apt instrument to incorporate belated processing of events and disruptions caused by trauma through its myriad conventions. This chapter situated trauma, particularly internment trauma, within the framework of personal and socio-cultural context. It shed light on various defense mechanisms to deal with trauma. Through engagement with fiction and memoirs selected for study, this chapter elucidated how internment trauma finds an expression in the texts through thematic patterns and structural as well as stylistic modifications. Internment memoirs employed interplay of the past self and the present self to systematically unravel the impact of internment on lives of Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians. The journey of unearthing the core identity for writers such as Wakatsuki Houston, Hongo and Sone was deeply linked with prioritizing personal and emotional truth, reflection, selfactualization and healing trauma. Affect theory was employed to comprehend the deep impact of internment trauma as portrayed in the fiction of Hiromi Goto, Joy Kogawa and Julie Otsuka. Poetic and dream-like prose passages describing emotional states, intensive subjectivities, bodily sensations and haunting experiences of characters and prudent stylistic and figurative choices enhanced the narration of trauma in these works. Further, the chapter also examined intergenerational effects of internment trauma, particularly by looking at the Sansei as a carrier group for the same.

# CHAPTER THREE

## PERSEVERING IN SILENCE, SAFEGUARDING THROUGH VOICE: INTERMENT AS PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY

With help of elaborate textual illustrations, this chapter comments on how select writers have resurrected the internment as a personal and collective memory by processing their personal and collective trauma through their memoirs and fiction. The reflections of internment in the literary works could be divided into three phases, namely, pre-internment memories, memories of the internment and post-internment memories. Concerns such as protective silence, postmemory, memory households and nostalgia have been useful in analyzing internment memories.

### 3.1 Mechanisms of Memory

The literary works about Japanese North American internment selected for this study present an intersection of memory, trauma and history which necessitates a comprehensive understanding of study of memory. In the introduction to *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates* (2010) the editors Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz delineate social amnesia and politicization of memory as characteristics of contemporary times. Memory plays a central role in politics of culture “of everyday life, of sexuality, of ethnicity, of the self, and so on—draw in part on notions of memory in order to signal the means by which transactions between public and

private, external and internal, occur” (3). Memory has relevance in personal as well as collective realms given that “the medium of memory has seemed to offer the possibility not only that an element of selfhood can be reconstituted, but also that a public, political language can be fashioned in which these experiences, and others like them, can be communicated to others (4). Memory enables reshaping of the past in order to make it relevant to the present concerns and interests.

Roger Kennedy opines “there is probably a complex interweaving of both fantasy and reality in the processes of memory. Though this interweaving process may complicate judgments about the reality of past events, it also provides for the richness and complexity of the psychoanalytic task” (179). A psychoanalytic or a historical inquiry is necessary in order to provide the recollected and recorded events of the past the shape of history “These remembrances are then woven into an elaborate narrative account. The past remains fixed until it is rethought and redescribed at a later date as history...Historical inquiry is a way of freeing the past from its mere pastness” (181).

In the clinical practice, the intervention is done by a psychoanalyst. However, the act of writing itself can be a useful instrument for such an intervention into memory and past and to construct a narrative either fictional or autobiographical based on the inclination of the writer. The Japanese North American texts are multiple interventions into the collective past of the community particularly the internment and its impact on the lives of the community members.

Psychoanalysis as a discipline is interested in “multi-layered fragments of memory” consisting of dreams, absences, discontinuities, questions and traumas. Kennedy underscores “the psychoanalytic past is a complicated world, made up of

both what can be recalled and, more significantly, what has *not* been understood, felt, or transformed by the subject—that which evades or eludes the subject”. Kennedy further adds “psychoanalytic history as a *history of layers*. It is full of shifting strata, fragments of living reality, absences more than presences, a mutilated yet still living past, involving the elusive presence of the unconscious”. Some layers have chronological sequence, some elements might merge in the process, while others could remain as isolated entities (181).

The texts, like the psychoanalytical sessions, bring out “fragments of memories in dreams, ideas produced by free association in which we can discover allusions to the repressed experiences and derivatives of the suppressed emotions, and hints of repetitions of the affects belonging to the repressed material found in actions...[also] the return of the emotional connections between past and present” (183). The constant rearrangement of memories in light of post event understanding and reflection are crucial processes involved in creation of personal and collective history.

Kennedy notes that past comprises of “fragile, enigmatic traces left by the human subject” which includes documents, oral testimonies, transient memories and parts of physical structures (187). The past must confront hindrances of erasure, yet history and its representation exist in form traces. Writing enables people to construct “partial and provisional” continuity from historical material (189).

Richard Terdiman observes that Freud, through psychoanalysis, attempted to trace the paradox of memory. Memory promises to heal trauma, however, it also provides trauma the power to disrupt daily existence. Terdiman further adds “Memory names the mechanism by which our present is indentured to the past” Freud hoped to

determine the source of tremendous power of the absent past over the present and to work to overrule it (93).

According to Freud, forgetting is a mechanism devised to meet a psychological need. This phenomenon occurs without the knowledge of the person involved and might require psychoanalytical intervention if the memories in question are inaccessible recollections. Forgetting involves replacing unwanted recollections with purposeful blockages which further become “memory substitutes”. In the process of unravelling the story behind forgetting as a resultant phenomenon, Freud introduced the concepts of unconscious and repression respectively. Terdiman delineates “these new entities functioned to withdraw from the ego’s possession important facts about its perceptions, recollections, and behavior”. Freud paradoxically viewed unconscious as “an irreducible presence as well as an infinite distance”. Things are entities that are external to the subjective psyche. Things create resistance to thought. Freud considered that psychic phenomena from memory traces to fantasies can signify as well as deny the external world based on the situation confronting the psyche (Radstone and Schwarz 95-97).

### **3.1.1 Forms of Memory**

Jan Assmann in his book *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization : Writing, Remembrance and Political Imagination* (2011) classifies memory into four types namely mimetic memory which involves imitation of actions to form behaviour patterns, secondly, “memory of things” which has objects that reflect upon people’s past to the core of it, thirdly communicative memory which constitutes formation of memory with help of abilities of communication and interaction with others through language and lastly “cultural memory.” This refers to the handing down of meaning. This is an area in which the other three aspects merge almost seamlessly (32).

According to him communicative memory is ““biographical" and "factual," and is located within a generation of contemporaries who witness an event as adults and who can pass on their bodily and affective connection to that event to their descendants” (Assmann 32). This memory gets transmitted across almost four generations. In the case of the Japanese North Americans the Issei constitute one such group that has communicative memory of immigration to North America and also of the internment along with Nisei who were primarily in their childhood then. This communicative memory has got transmitted till the fourth generation, that is, the Yonsei as many writers have gone back to reinterpret it and narrativize it in their personal and filial contexts and in turn contributed to the larger expressions of internment by the community.

Jan Assmann observes that “At the same time, as its [communicative memory’s] direct bearers enter old age, they increasingly wish to institutionalize memory, whether in traditional archives or books, or through ritual, commemoration, or performance” he terms this institutionalized archival memory as cultural memory (Hirsch 32). There are museums and initiatives that have institutionalized the memory of internment on a national level with government support for instance the Japanese American National Museum that opened in 1992. However, the struggle that led to increasing awareness about internment and formal institutionalization had at the core of it the tremendous community efforts through textual and visual interventions and reinterpretation of memory and history. Community organizations carried out Memorial Pilgrimages to internment sites that continue till today to re-embodiment and re-enact the internment experience for the third generation and beyond.

While charting out the crucial role that writing as a form has played in memory formation of various civilizations, Jan Assmann notes that writing enables

memory “to extend the message or meaning beyond the limitations of its original time and its original mode of communication, just as the individual memory can extend beyond the range of present consciousness” (8). Cultural memory comprises of “tradition forming, past reference, and political identity or imagination”. “It is “cultural” because it can only be realized institutionally and artificially, and it is “memory” because in relation to social communication it functions in exactly the same way as individual memory does in relation to consciousness” (8).

Assmann points out at the difference between how an individual deals with his/her personal memory and how community engages in preserving memory of its predecessors “There is a difference between the autobiographical memory of the individual looking back from a certain vantage point over his own life, and the posthumous commemoration of him by posterity... In reality, though, this is an act of resuscitation performed by the desire of the group not to allow the dead to disappear but, with the aid of memory, to keep them as members of their community and to take them with them into their progressive present”. Deep emotional ties are important to the process of remembrance in cultural memory where there is a “conscious reference to the past that overcomes the rupture between life and death” (19-20).

Besides cultural memory which is an institutionalized form of memory, Assmann also employs another term, that is, collective memory which emphasizes on the “social frame of reference” that determines value and provides significance to individual memory. It also provides a mechanism of organization and remembrance. Memory is created collectively in the sense that “Even the most personal recollections only come about through communication and social interaction. We recall not only what we have learned and heard from others, but also how others respond to what we consider to be significant” (22).

### **3.1.2 Constructing Traumatic Internment as a Collective Memory**

Since individual memory, collective memory and cultural memory are inextricably linked, events that lead to destruction of modes of processing individual memory in the context of collective social units, can hinder procedure of memory creation. For Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians, internment was such a traumatic event that brought the conventional channels of processing memory to a standstill.

In the context of the Japanese Canadian Internment, Pamela Sugiman in her research paper titled “Memories of Internment: Narrating Japanese Canadian Women’s Life Stories” highlights how, in 1944, the policies of the government headed by the Prime Minister Mackenzie King such as dispersal of the community across Canada post internment or deportation to Japan were motivated by racial prejudice and increasing concerns about their visibility as a racial community, rather than national security, which had been cited as a reason for internment. These policies aimed at “the deliberate destruction of a community” and culminated into “an erosion of human dignity, and a dramatic disruption of personal lives and family relationships. The latter is especially significant as the family had been the primary vehicle for the acquisition of an ethnic identity and for the transmission of Japanese cultural symbols in Canada”. Roy Miki and Audrey Kobayashi describe this process of systematic destruction of the community’s culture as "cultural genocide" (Sugiman 361).

The community responded to this cultural trauma with a prolonged period of silence. The Nisei was the generation that had been confronted with this Herculean task of choosing silence over articulation or expression of their suffering and anxieties. They “attempted to filter the painful memories of their internment - by not literacizing their stories, by not putting reminiscence to paper, nor verbally

articulating their experiences as part of a public discourse” (361). As parents, the Nisei perceived silence as a protective shield to safeguard their children from the racially hostile mainstream society. They “promoted the cultural assimilation of their own children, the Sansei. Assimilation involved shedding the cultural markers of their Japaneseness: the Japanese language, contact with Japanese Canadian peers, and an appreciation of traditional Japanese art forms” (361).

Sugiman discusses oral testimonies of thirty Nisei women living in Ontario and British Columbia and looks at how they relate to their internment experiences with prime focus on their silence in the past and the gradual process of renouncing it. Their personal testimonies become instances of “deliberate and active telling of untold stories” (363), which along with the collective and public narrative played crucial role in the redress movement and settlement.

Memory has been considered as a “social act” given its mediated and revised nature particularly when it comes to representing it in the present times. Memory “reflects personal and historical transformations, ideological shifts, changing relations of power, strategy and struggle” (364). Memory is perceived as a political project given that it is subjected to social rules of what to remember, what is safe to remember, how to remember, how to narrate the past, also to the response of the audience and the perspective of the researcher studying it. Borrowing the terms of Hirsch and Smith, Sugiman views the testimonies of the Nisei women as an “intermingling of past and present lives, the creation of a complex dynamic between the individual and collective, recall and forgetting, trauma and nostalgia” (365).

Sugiman attempts to juxtapose the personal experiences and recollection of the Nisei women with “an "objective" or "external" historical chronology”. However, such a mode of recollection hindered the ability of the interviewees to remember the

specific temporal details, particularly, as many were not accustomed to recollecting memories for “public consumption” or in a narrativized pattern for perusal of the audience (366). Sugiman further adds that perceiving the lives of her interviewees through the lens of historical time seemed paradoxical as time seemed to have unusually slowed down and they spent more time in routine activities during the period of internment. She notes “feelings of stasis were no doubt made stronger in the absence of a foreseeable future, and the irretrievability of their past” (366). For many interviewees, the spatial dimensions such as the change in geographical location or place of residence proved to be useful markers in the process of recollection of internment memories, particularly, when there was no causal relationship in the occurrence of events. The participants of the study enabled Sugiman to classify their memories in five “broad segments of time: the pre-war years, uprooting and dislocation, resettlement, the Redress Movement, the present” (367).

In the course of their narration the interviewees construct a temporal dichotomy to divide their lives into pre-war years when they apparently led idealized, ordinary lives devoid of social and filial conflicts characterized by geographic and cultural boundaries which validated the normalization of racial discrimination by the white society. However, the bombing of Pearl Harbour and the events that followed proved to be a severe disruption which Sugiman describes as the “most dramatic manifestation of racial hostility”. Sugiman notes that these Nisei women had a sense of Japaneseness seen in the food they consumed, the language their parents and they spoke at home. Thus, making them live in two different worlds and making their daily lives signifiers of their negotiated identities (366-368). After the bombing of Pearl Harbour, the interviewees recollect the internalization of “externally-imposed

racialized identity” one rooted in “the physical body, in the idea that loyalties and political sentiments were determined by phenotypical racial qualities” (369).

The Nisei women provided vivid accounts of uprooting and dislocation they endured during the internment by interweaving their personal experiences and the official, publicized narrative. They verbalized intimate memories which had “emotional aura” and their description had image like qualities particularly while narrating the RCMP officers entering their homes and interrogating them and memories of leaving their pets and precious belongings behind (370). While the official redress narrative emphasized loss of property and assets, juxtaposing personal narratives with the official narrative provides deeper insights into the impact of internment on individuals in the community.

Speakers, while giving testimonies, tend to describe what they feel could be the memories of others at a given point of time. Marianne Debouzy remarks that "each individual memory takes its place in a group memory that does not exist by itself but lives through the whole made up of these memories that are at the same time unique and interdependent" (Sugiman 372). This dynamic interaction of memories leads to creation of shared group memory or, in other words, collective memory. Mona Oikawa uses the term “re-membering” to examine this phenomenon of relational construction of memory by Nisei mothers and Sansei daughters. Sugiman notes that the interviewees she interacted with,

presented their stories in relation to members of larger families, families who had been moved to a different geographic location, or to smaller living quarters, mothers who had newborn or very young children. Some women minimized their pain in comparison to that of men, many of whom faced physical hardship and economic exploitation in road camps, as Prisoners of

War. The tendency to construct memory relationally is promoted by the official and collective narrative of the internment. Informed by this narrative, the women have a broader knowledge of the heterogeneity of experiences within the community. (373)

Bringing in others proved to be, in words of Sugiman, an “emotional breather” and allowed temporary withdrawal from traumatic memories. Further, Sugiman observes that the domestic spaces had been feminized in absence of fathers, who had been sent to different camps or sometimes to labour camps. Hence, the Nisei women construct their memories in relation to their mothers. Sugiman highlights “just as their own Sansei children wished that their aging parents had told them more complete stories of the past, Nisei daughters regret the lack of shared remembrances with their own parents” (Sugiman 374). Sugiman refers to an emotional void that many Nisei daughters reiterated in context of their Issei parents, particularly, their mothers due to their lack of expression of emotions. The Nisei interviewees also accept the responsibility of the perpetual silence as they feel they could have initiated conversations about the lives of their parents in Japan and in their adopted homelands. The Nisei daughters have complex emotions linked with their mothers. They register a sense of sadness and guilt in recognition of the vulnerable positions of their mothers and for not having eased their burdens. However, many celebrate them for their maternal strength and resilience in the face of internment.

### **3.1.3 Internment and Nostalgia**

Sugiman is astonished by the fact that certain interviewees recall, not just their lives before the internment, but also, their lives during the internment as part of their nostalgic memories. It is interesting to see that certain respondents could integrate

positive lessons from the internment as part of their nostalgic memories. As a collective memory, internment is definitely perceived as traumatic in nature, yet, on individual level, witnessing resilience of their respective families and the community at large, the interviewees do mention positive facets and opportunities of growth after braving the ordeal.

Sugiman looks at the views of Maurice Halbwachs, Susan Vromen, Fred Davis and Leo Spitzer to develop a better understanding of individualized efforts of integrating positive elements from collective traumatic events. Halbwachs emphasizes nostalgia's potential of offering "transcendence of the irreversibility of time". Vromen considers how nostalgia can present alternative perspective on the past by freeing memories from negative emotions and social as well as contemporary tribulations. Nostalgia allows specific focus on positive aspects of an experience and has repercussions for individual as well as collective identity construction. Fred Davis asserts that nostalgia as "recuperative value" and the positive facets, it sheds light on, can work out as plausible models for emulation in future. Leo Spitzer, through his concept of critical nostalgia, discerns that focus on positive aspects should not be mistaken for a lack of awareness of complexities of the past. In fact, critical nostalgia can "function as a means of defiance against efforts to erase or deny the past" (Sugiman 376). Nostalgia as idealized past can amount to escapism, however, at the same time, nostalgia can play a crucial role in transporting one to the secured, private, domestic environment, that provides a sense of belongingness, which in turn functions to console individuals in the face of personal losses.

### **3.1.4 Narrating Memories through Objects and Spaces: Affective and Material Engagement with the Memory of the Internment through Fiction**

Material Engagement Theory and Affect Theory provide crucial theoretical frameworks to investigate into role of material objects and physical spaces in narrating traumatic memory of the internment through fiction. This section will provide brief overview of key arguments in Material Engagement Theory and associated affective aspects, which could be useful in analyzing texts selected for study.

Material Engagement Theory perceives human brain as “dynamic product of a co-evolutionary process that is still ongoing” (Malafouris 42), rather than a fully biologically evolved and fixed entity. Human brain is seen as an adaptable entity open to activity dependent change when influenced by the external environment. Primary concern of material engagement theory is the synergetic, plastic and adaptive workings of human brain facilitating association and interaction between human cognition and material culture, particularly, objects playing key role in the process. The impact of things on human cognition calls for a meticulous study of potential of and perception towards things. Material Engagement Theory proposes that “the cognitive life of things also embodies a crucial enactive and constitutive role” (44). Body as well as objects or material artifacts become complementary extensions of human brain when the mutual complementarity is established. Enactivism looks at thinking as an action-oriented process happening through the body and its interaction with the environment. In turn, cognition is a relationship between brains, bodies and things.

Three key concepts at the core of Material Engagement Theory are extended mind, enactive signification and material agency. Extended mind considers the formative interlinking of human cognition and material culture. Enactive signification refers to the blending of the material sign with the meaning making process itself, rather than being a mere representation. It is an acknowledgement of the key role that things play in bringing the world to human mind and enabling humans to make sense of the same. Lastly, material agency does not accord the power to act only to the human agent, but it looks at agency emerging in a particular, temporal situation through interaction between humans and things.

Going beyond the conventional understanding of mind and body relationship, the concept of extended mind goes beyond the limitations of internal or mental and external or bodily roles to investigate into how the body shapes the human mind. From the perspective of embodied mind, in higher-level cognitive processing, where pre-conceptual bodily experiential structure are non-existent, metaphoric and integrative conceptual mappings are imported to make sense of the world and even during the formation of thoughts about a natural or universal phenomenon. For instance, humans expressing time-related concepts through metaphors about motion in the realm of space, is an example of cognitive cross-domain mapping seen across cultures and languages. While perceiving events in chronological time, people often think of events as “in front” of or “behind” them based on their occurrence in the future or in the past. This shows that human mind needs “bodily orientation to make sense of time” and it underscores the “primacy of bodily experience in the structuring of human conceptual processes” (64). Human conceptual processes occur within the context of material culture. By virtue of their bodies, humans are “spatially located creatures” where the material reality dictates functioning in terms of choices,

perceptions and problem solving methods. The extended mind hypothesis incorporated insights from active externalism, that is, recognizing the dependence of human cognition on the external environment. It indicates “externalization of cognitive states and processes” (74). Thus, thinking is redefined not as internal, mental processes, but as “contextualized processes that take place "between" brains, bodies, and things” (78).

The next step in establishing the extended mind hypothesis is delving into the constitutive intertwining of cognition with material culture. Inscriptions on clay tablets in ancient civilizations, for instance, present a new ecology of memory as the phenomenon cannot be explained by looking at the properties of human mind or material things separately. It calls for an understanding of cognitive extension and communication as well as feedback linkages between the mind and the objects. Objects become not only “intellectual anchors”, but also “emotional companions” for human beings. Emotions and feelings associated with daily objects advance to form “an ecology of relationships and expectations about the self and others”. Since emotions are associated with objects, they evoke a “strong affective response” (86-87). Our cognitive processes are coloured by sensual, experiential and aesthetic properties of things. Things have a say in our inter-personal, collective, social and emotional relationships.

A material sign is an enactive sign. It functions as a signifier as well as a signified in itself. It stimulates, triggers or motivates the meaning making process and, at the same time, “constitutes the technology for meaning or communication” (117). Unlike Saussurean, psychological, linguistic sign governed by convention and arbitrariness a material sign is a physical sign. Rather than looking at signs only on the level of representation, material semiosis emphasizes the "conceptual integration

between material and conceptual domains” (90). The physical properties of material signs have an impact on the meaning making process given that material culture derives its strength from unconscious affective medium.

It is possible to interact with the physical, material sign in real time within a particular spatial reality. These signs are non linguistic and discursive, yet, acts of preservation and destruction can open up wider implications on socio-cultural level. In the meaning making process, a material sign presents itself as a tangible illustration of the concept, rather than a symbolic entity. It expresses and makes a concept known; hence it shapes and constitutes the understanding of a particular concept through participation in the semiotic process as against a psychological, linguistic sign, which can remain separate indicating only symbolic equivalence on linguistic terms. Thus, “the material sign instantiates rather than symbolizes... Material signs are the actual physical forces that shape the social and cognitive universe” (97).

To visualize the cognition and material culture interface, it is crucial to look at the process of metaphoric projection, which employs conceptual associations from one domain to explicate concepts from another domain, primarily, concrete formations from material reality are projected upon with abstract notions to make meaning or sense of them through human cognition. In other words, “the crucial function of metaphoric mappings is to project and not represent the structure (spatial, perceptual, or other) of a concrete and directly meaningful domain of experience... upon a meaningless abstract conceptual one” (102). An integral precept to be remembered while discussing the meaning making process of a material sign is that the foundation of this process is enacting, performing or using the material sign. Meaning comes forth through use as a material sign indicates possibility of meaning

rather than containing it. It is a medium of generating and modifying reality in real time and space.

Agency and intentionality are not the prerogatives of humans alone. They are, in fact, attributes of material engagement. In social contexts, human and material agency becomes almost inseparable given that objects are utilized and employed in daily plans and transactions.

Lambros Malafouris proposes that methodological fetishism is crucial to gaining insights into “the cognitive and social lives of things” (133). It explicates the configuration of mutual agency between people and things. Transcending the conventional outlook towards fetishism as a primal mental condition birthing an obsessive and excessive attachment to enchanting objects is necessary. In fact, fetishism is a foundational characteristic of human interaction with the material world. Malafouris looks at four cognitive processes enlisted by Roy Ellen, which operate with the logic of fetishism, namely, fetishism involves concretization and objectification of an abstract entity or phenomenon. Additionally, cultural elements may also catalyze this objectification. Secondly, fetishism brings about personification or bestowing animate qualities such that the encounters between a fetish and a human are equivalent to that between two people. In other words, fetishism is all about anthropomorphization of objects. Thirdly, conflation of signifier and signified such that the signified idea or phenomenon is embodied by the signifier or the object. Objects, in turn, become independent, contributory forces. Lastly, fetishism comprises of ambiguous conceptualization of power such that the lines between perception of power of people and objects and their acting upon each other begin to blur.

Malafouris opines fetishes are considered to be enactive signs and as products of conceptual integration such that the familiar properties of fetishes are used to explore the idea of material agency in the unfamiliar domain of material culture. A known phenomenon that can help enhance understanding of a material agent is a fetish.

Importing the idea of intention-in-action, Malafouris, builds upon it to establish the concept of material agency. He wishes to draw attention to the indistinguishable state in which internal, mental, intentional state and external, acting, bodily or artifactual movement become one and conveys it through through the intention-in-action. Apart from mental or prior intentions and intention-in-action wherein action accompanies intent, there are non-representational mental capacities or know-how which constitutes the Background of intentions. Eventually, Malafouris replaces prior intention with R- intentionality to indicate mediation through representations and intention-in-action with G-intentionality foregrounding the gestalt or prioritizing the organized whole, in this context, non-deliberate intentional state pertaining to agency. Looking at the Background in relation to G-intentionality, brings forth simultaneous mental and physical properties. The Background becomes extended intentional state such that objects and material elements constituting it project on the human agent as much as the human agent projects on them (142). Hence, it can be concluded that agency is not an exclusive property neither of a human being nor of a thing, but it is a highly contextualized product emerging within a particular time frame as a result of a constant struggle between human and material components in a given situation. In other words

in the dynamic tension that characterizes the processes of material engagement, sometimes it is the thing that becomes the extension of the

person. At other times, it is the person that becomes the extension of the material agent. There are no fixed agentive roles in this game (147)

Hence, human beings build a specialized sense of agency with objects, tools or instruments when they work with them in real time instead of imposing any predecided plans. The attributes of the material artifact also play a role in executing an action.

Malafouris classifies effects of things on human cognitive life in three categories, namely, mediational, temporal, and plastic. On the mediational level, things enable active engagement of humans with their environment providing opportunities to reconfigure their relationships with fellow humans and with their environment. Things not only impact by optimizing utility and problem-solving, but they also set their own evolutionary dynamics, “consciousness, and temporality on our bio-cultural evolutionary continuum. Things affect the flow of time, our emotions, and the boundaries of our cognitive systems” (246). On the temporal level, things enable humans to move across and between various time scales such as neural, bodily, cultural, and evolutionary and work like anchors to this whole process. Secondly, they allow for a better grasp on time through their long-term presence and participation in cultural processes and practices. Unlike humans, things can transcend conventional temporal delimitations. In short, “things act as dynamic attractors, operating in feedback circles that bind the different scales of time together”. (247).

Finally, from the perspective of plasticity, things facilitate reorganization or rewiring of brain not only in terms of functions within the brain or modification in the steps associated with a task, but also, “an outward expansion of the cognitive system in order to forge extra-neural connections objectified through material culture, bodily action, and learning”. (247).

Sherry Turkle sheds light on the varied and dynamic roles objects play in human lives by blending thoughts and emotions through the way we relate to them. Human experiences with objects have their own inherent complexity. At times, objects are seen as extensions of the self or possessions by self. Their evoking power is determined by the spatio-temporal reality in which objects entered a person's life, for instance, childhood or in moments of major life transitions. At times, objects may evoke uncanny feelings in people given the simultaneous attraction and repulsion felt around them. Essentially, objects play a prime role in shaping the self or the subject with characteristic intensity. Objects can actively work on how humans perceive things and relate to the world around us. They may also shift, on macro-levels, the course of civilizations by altering attitudes towards fundamental concepts such as time. Objects may get naturalized over time and present mechanisms of state, industrial or economic control in a given society. Such objects may reflect social discipline and expectations from subjects. Contexts may animate objects such as gifts. Desires, aspirations, inequalities, social status and power dynamics are embedded in objects, specialized or mundane, alike. Further, there are transitional objects from childhood such as dolls, blankets and pillows which shape how humans move on from their attachment to the mother and come to inhabit their independent sense of identity. Turkle underscores "transitional objects, with their joint allegiance to self and other, demonstrate to the child that objects in the external world can be loved" (Turkle 314). Such objects have healing potential by reestablishing lost connections through the familiar. At times, they may have dark side of evoking the grotesque through the familiar, particularly, while revisiting traumatic events.

The memories of internment and the associated trauma lived through the material reality surrounding the historical event. The members of the community, who

experienced the uprooting and living conditions of the camps first hand, and those who bore witness to the traumatic memories passed down or concealed by their loved ones preserved, held on to, discarded or destroyed objects with certain personal and communal intentions. Significance accorded to the objects in the memory making and re-living process in real life has also been incorporated in autobiographical and fictional accounts of the internment. In fiction, characters interact with objects on a regular basis and objects become an integral part of their pre-internment and camp lives. Objects accompany the characters in their journey to the camp and in their transitional phases including during their re-integration into the mainstream society. Objects evoke memories of ancestors and set them on quests to unravel their lives. Objects dictate life decisions by reminding or healing internment trauma.

According to Sugiman, the loss of intimate, personal belongings had a greater impact on the identities of the members of the community. She views this loss with reference to Iwona Irwin-Zarecka's concept of memory households. Memory households consist of “both autobiographical reminders and elements of the much more distant past (great- grandparents' chest, for example), with a special place often reserved for objects evoking people dear to us who are no longer here” (371). Further, Irwin-Zarecka describes them as “highly individualized, symbolic nests represent extensions of our self. Being deprived of them, even if only temporarily, can result in a deep sense of loss” (371). Though a memory household does not make its presence felt on the conscious plane of day-to-day existence, nonetheless, it is crucial in providing a sense of continuity to one’s identity. The internment meant dramatic interventions and destruction of multiple objects from such memory households for the internees. The community endured “forfeiture of memory” and “disruption of

experience” (371). The dislocation from their homes and loss of memory objects culminated in a deep sense of grief and lamentation.

Some examples of material objects closely associated with preservation and destruction of memories shaping the identity of characters include precious items in Otsuka’s *When the Emperor Was Divine*. Affects of joy, care and affection are associated with gifts given by the mother to the unnamed protagonist of the novel. These gifts were from her Japanese hometown and as an Issei she cherished them for almost two decades before having to destroy them while leaving for the camp. The gifts comprised of chinaware and ivory chopsticks from Kagoshima given on her wedding day. Secondly, photographs of dead family members signifying their presence in the house had to be destroyed after father’s arrest as a framed photo featured a brother-in-law, who had been a general in the Emperor’s army. Photographs, letters written in Japanese and received from hometown, three silk kimonos, records of Japanese opera, the Japanese flag with the rising sun, tea set, *Imari* (style of porcelain shipped from a place with the same name) dishes and abacus were other objects of affective significance, which the protagonist had to let go of, before heading to the camp. As a woman, her close connection with cooking, extending hospitality to guests and nurturing her family is concretized in sophisticated cookware she possessed. On a cultural level, *Imari* dishes, abacus, kimonos also signify cultural and aesthetic sophistication of the Japanese civilization. These heirlooms are material signs of personal and communal identity for the woman. The cultural meaning promotes these material objects to the status of artefacts worth preserving for posterity. Pride and abundance are evoked in the possessor as well as her descendants. These objects are enactive signs of happy memories of prosperity. Being forced to destroy them as a safety measure, not only brings up affects of terror

experienced through feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, but the physical act of destruction severs the favourable orientation and bond shared with those objects. The objects, which were a source of pride are now transformed into carriers of shame, helplessness, lack of agency and susceptibility to persecution.

Pre-internment anxiety and war hysteria calls for profound change in these characters lead their lives. It involves leaving old and comfortable habits of calculating, studying and eating such as abacus and rice balls, cultural signifiers become markers of ethnicity and identity which must be left behind or forgotten. The emotional weight of this devastating change was immense for adults and children alike. Imperial flag was the concretized symbol of the Japanese national identity as well as a sign of the presence of the enemy for the Americans. In the performance of the Japanese American identity, these material signs played a crucial role. Sense of belongingness and communal connection were fostered by these very signs which alienated and traumatized them during the internment.

In *When the Emperor was Divine*, Otsuka shows the woman or the mother wearing the key of the house on a silver chain throughout their stay in the camp such that “the key had become a part of her” (107). From the perspective of material agency, the key dictates the mother’s perception towards the camp. The key is a material reminder of what had to be left behind, a carrier of affects of fear and shame realized through emotions such as hurt and betrayal as well as of a sense of safety and unrealistic hope, that some day there would be a possibility of return. The mother’s daily, ritualized behaviour of touching it before sleeping and after waking up allows her to have some form of control on her life in highly uncertain times.

The girl, another major character in Otsuka’s *When the Emperor was Divine*, wore her father’s gold French watch, which had stopped working the moment they got

off the train. The watch becomes the girl's emotional companion as it signifies the presence of her father. The possession of the watch enables the girl to make sense of her life on a temporal scale. The watch carries the hope of return of the father and of awaiting long-term relief beyond the conventional signification of passage of time. The stopping of the watch is directly related to the loss of ability to make sense of life on a temporal scale and the looming monotony of impersonalized camp life. There is no urgency of repairing the watch as psychological trauma seems to have made time imperceptible and amplified the feeling of being stuck.

The deep receptivity of the unnamed boy, the brother of the unnamed girl, is seen in his perception towards the material objects the father had left behind after his arrest. The sudden disappearance of the father makes the boy hypervigilant to all his traces including the impressions of his feet on his father's Oxford shoes and his smell "The week before they had still smelled of his father but tonight the smell of his father was gone" (67). Like the watch, the shoes also become emotional companion for this young boy and a concretized representation of his father during his absence. Thus, holding on to material objects, personal and ancestral, convey a deep sense of need for preservation of memories of loved ones. However, when humans are compelled to destroy objects, the emotional repercussions of the physical act of annihilation remain as somatic imprints of trauma.

The title of Otsuka's *The Buddha in the Attic* represents a fetishized object associated with the Oriental identity. The picture bride system functions of photos, which become objects of manipulation. Japanese men living in the West notoriously sent pictures of their younger selves or even of a brother or a cousin to win a bride through mail. Affects of interest and excitement though feelings of trust, desire, curiosity and promising future would soon turn into betrayal, hurt and embarrassment,

when these brides would meet their husbands in person after a turbulent voyage. Additionally, objects such as heirlooms, books, kimonos, precious cutlery were carried to the West as emotional companions, nostalgic reminders of the homeland and markers of cultural sophistication by the brides.

Hiromi Goto's interesting attempt of mixing the Japanese and the Canadian aspects of identity are resonated in her novel *Chorus of Mushrooms*. This mixing gives birth to intertwining of material objects in an imagined, mythic scenario of Naoe, the grandmother participating in a cowboy bullride as a mysterious rider. Murasaki, the granddaughter and the narrator of the novel imagines that the grandmother could evade security if she wrapped her cowboy equipment in a *furoshiki*, a bag made out of Japanese cloth wrapping technique. Another instance of a material object, this time a food item, serving as a marker of identity or, perhaps, an ideal, and relatively harmless, capsule of their Japanese identity in a Western country is *Tonkatsu*. Murasaki's Nisei parents coincidentally remember only one Japanese word which is a name of a hybrid food item Tonkatsu, pork-cutlet, and decide to utilize it as their surname for lack of a better word. The father confesses that, in their attempt of embracing silence after internment, Murasaki's parents were suffering from a temporary memory erasure. Food items, mushroom growing and win brewing seem to be integral material engagements that provide a sense of control, identity and freedom to various Japanese American and Japanese Canadian characters of various fictional works. This is true particularly of fathers and grandparents belonging to the Issei generation. Naoe is no exception. She prepares *Sekihan*, a sweet rice preparation like a fertility ritual to celebrate a granddaughter's coming of age. Growing mushrooms, inclusive of the strong smell and moist and humid conditions, are integral part of Shinji's, Murasaki's father's identity and life. He voluntarily dedicates his life

to this work. Japanese tools of parent-child intimacy such as an ear-wax removing tool that Keiko, Murasaki's mother, uses while spending time with her daughter provides a perfect illustration of material agency. This material signifier indicates the opening up and healing of the mother-daughter relationship. A grocery list that Naoe gives Murasaki enlisting authentic Japanese ingredients is also a material marker of identity in the text. Naoe's habit of hoarding seaweed as if in an act of clinging on to her Japanese identity, while living in a seemingly alien country as a non-English speaking individual in Canada, also speaks volumes in terms of identity formation. Naoe's immense influence on Murasaki and she seeking to unravel various facets of her Japanese identity with an intention to reconnecting to them sheds light on Sansei identity formation. For Murasaki, Japanese food items, household items, delicacies and cultural practices including dance and flower arrangement are material markers in concretization and consolidation of her identity. Attributes such as colour, texture and smell of these physical objects trigger varied affects in these fictional characters. For Naoe and Shinji, there are affects of nostalgia and security. For Keiko, who decides to abandon the Japanese aspects of her identity, these daily reminders in material form trigger shame and embarrassment as she associates these cultural artifacts with internment trauma. As a Sansei, for Murasaki, affects of interest and excitement through feelings of curiosity, exploration, affection and connection are activated as she bonds with her grandmother over these cultural artifacts and these artifacts outlive her grandmother to eventually become symbols of her.

The role objects played in the lives of Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians during the transitional phase of commuting and relocating to the camp sites and ghost towns has been examined through works of Joy Kogawa. Emily Kato, the Nisei aunt of Naomi Nakane, the Sansei protagonist of *Obasan* sends a diary with

letters addressed to Naomi's mother and her elder sister to Naomi. The detailed description and analogies Kogawa employs to talk about the diary proves the intimate connection Naomi felt with the object. The diary written in epistolary style sheds light on the silence Naomi's mother her maintained around internment. The diary becomes an enactive sign which performs and modifies the trauma Naomi had experienced while discussing her relationship with her mother. The diary evokes trust and connection. The contents of the diary are equivalent to intimate conversations Naomi could have had with her mother if she was alive.

In the course of her letters to her sister, Aunt Emily provides details of the paperwork, permits and preparations after the sudden development of relocation. Japanese food supplies are in the list of essentials along with beddings and crucial personal belongings. In Naomi's narration, which follows the diary entries, and is attributed to her memory narrated in present tense, she describes the train smelling of oil, soot and orange peels. The train and commute bring in affects of terror as well as excitement through feelings of uncertainty and curiosity respectively.

Works such as *Obasan* describe the Issei elderly and Nisei middle aged men maintaining flower and vegetable gardens, rock gardens and chicken coops. Physical and maintenance work gives them some sense of control, purpose and solace in highly uncertain times.

Having relocated to Slocan, a Canadian industrial ghost town, Naomi remembers reading children's books and playing board games based on war titled "Yellow Peril". The imagery in these physical tools of education and entertainment haunt Naomi in her dreams as an adult. The game becomes a fetish exploited to evoke imagery of racial discrimination and lies deeply buried in Naomi's unconscious to

resurface in her dreams. Stephen, Naomi's brother has a flair for music and his instruments such as violin and piano are extensions of his personality. His violin, which is broken as a child in an incident of racial violence shatters his self-esteem. His accomplishments playing the piano become his support his ambition of becoming an acclaimed musician and leaving behind his traumatic past in Canada.

Jeanne's father's boats in *Farewell to Manzanar*, Mark's boat in *Obasan* are material signs of their dreams, livelihood, identity and pride. In her memoir, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston discusses the emotions that the camp inmates experience when they were given the army mess kits and the surplus clothes donated during the war. The locomotives used for transporting, the barracks and sheds used for accommodation and the daily objects such as utensils and clothes provided by the administration become the material signifiers of the traumatic internment. Vivid memories of these objects are recollected with haunting intensities by writers of memoirs and fiction. A major material object and the greatest signifier of confinement, which had a profound impact on the collective psyche of the community were the barbed wires demarcating the camp areas.

Another set of objects triggering trauma were radios, flashlights, kitchen knives, cameras, lanterns, toy swords, which were classified as 'evidences' against Issei men to facilitate their arrests during war hysteria. These daily objects bring in negative affects as FBI officials suspect and arrest Japanese American possessors of such objects as spies and saboteurs.

Old round wooden tables, chopsticks, rice bowls were material extensions of signifiers of home and comfort in contrast to the metallic mess kits and food suited to the Western palate served in camps.

Jeanne talks about her father's rock garden and him painting mountains in watercolour in her memoir. Mountains become healing objects and embodiments of inspiration, endurance and acceptance. They signify powerful and inevitable forces of nature and fate alike. Jeanne's father also loves to do mechanical work and builds driftwood furniture from wood collected during his recreational walks. Rocks and furniture alter the physical reality to create a sense of home while living in the camp. The material reality, in turn, contributes to performance and embodiment of positive as well as negative affects. Jeanne's father oscillates between endurance and withdrawal. He also starts brewing alcohol in an attempt become oblivious to the undignified living in the camps and to drown his frustration and helplessness.

Lastly, Woody, Jeanne's brother is deputed to Japan after the war as part of the American forces, when he visits his Japanese relatives. The porcelain cups, prewar sake, Aunt Toyo's kimono, silk bedding and tatami mats are material signifiers of cultural performance so integral to the Japanese aspects of Woody's identity. This visit comes after his camp experience and his decision to serve in the army. The perceptions of people in Japan about him and his interactions with his blood relatives transform his outlook towards his hybrid identity.

In John Okada's *No-No Boy* the military uniform is an enactive sign of loyalty. Bobbie Kumasaka, a Nisei who died in an accident while serving in the army, is the first foil constructed to illuminate Ichiro Yamada's, the protagonist's, dilemma of being a No-No boy. Ichiro pays a courtesy visit to Kumasakas with his mother. He also finds Jun, Bobbie's friend from Los Angeles serving in the army, paying visit to his friend's parents for a couple of days.

Letters received from Japanese relatives requesting for money, sugar, clothes, rice and tobacco by Ichiro's mother work as amplifiers of affects of terror. Though these are genuine letters seeking help, Ichiro's mother is in complete denial of the fact that Japan has lost the war. She labels these letters as deceptive attempts by the American lobbies to demoralize Japanese Americans. Hence, these letters become signifiers of threat.

Brian Massumi discusses the relationship between threat and affect from perspective of political situations and resultant actions. Though threat has an anticipatory and impending angle to be realized in the future, it exists in the present through fear and foreshadowing. This actual reality has affective implications. Essentially, Massumi opines that "fear is the anticipatory reality in the present of a threatening future" (Gregg and Seigworth 54). The non-conscious bodily responses felt in the present related to the nonexistent and anticipatory threat constitutes the affectual basis of shaping the reality. Threat does not move in linear, chronological frame of time. In fact, it percolates from the present perpetually onto the future. At the same time, in spite of attaching itself to the future, a threat remains active to shape the present along the way. The affect of fear justifies any preemptive action to intercede the threat even without factual basis in the present. The logical rift between the justification of preemptive action and the present facts creates a disconnection through which "the reality of threat slips to rejoin its deferral to the future" (Gregg and Seigworth 55). When affects are dependent on indexical signs of threat and there is indistinction between the activity and passivity of the body and the environment, it becomes necessary to read into "the reality of appearance", that is, "the surplus of reality of what has not happened, paradoxically as an event" (Gregg and Seigworth 66). The racial categorization or construct of 'yellow peril' through political

narratives, which further percolated in decisions of policy making such as the internment, is a ramification of the affect of fear on a collective level. The white supremacist lobbies consider the internment to be justified as a preemptive action to intercede the threat of being attacked and defeated by the enemy following the Pearl Harbour attack. The pretext of war hysteria is underscored when the illogical justifications are exposed and challenged in other systems such as the judiciary.

In the Oyama tetralogy, material objects such as the work clothes, including denim attire and the straw hat to protect against the sun, signify the exploitative plantation system. The spatial demarcation of housing facilities for plantation workers along racial lines shape mindsets of the exploited. This composite of outlook, self-image and familial obligation is termed as plantation mentality. The intense physical labour for unfair wages is naturalized. The colonized outlook, self-deprecatory attitude and normalization of being subjected to rigid, contractual arrangements of intensive labour shape the mind of individuals such that obligations overpower positive self-interest.

### **3.1.5 Fictional Narratives of the Internment: Elements and Crafting**

Characters are integral part of any fictional work. Orson Card observes that characters provide a dynamic opportunity to present myriad of human possibilities in fiction. Actions, decisions, motivations and a complex past provide characters with depth. Fiction also operates on mechanisms of categorization of characters. Readers might find it convenient to categorize characters into stereotypes such that attributes of a group are extended to the character, who is identified with the group, including assumptions and fears. Such identification may create a certain sense of familiarity and control over the literary world of fiction that the reader is consuming. At times, it

may give him or her a predictable comfort, while other times, the reader may revel suspense around unpredictable characters violating the stereotypical image. Habits, patterns, talents, abilities, tastes and preferences enable a writer to add dimensions to his or her characters. Believability in fiction is dependent on the sense of plausibility of the events rather than concrete facts. Fiction goes beyond facts to reveal a deeper truth, which readers cannot seek in their real-life experiences.

Card sheds light on the role of memory in shaping fiction. He underscores that memory of family, friends, social circles and of the past events fuels the writing of fictional narratives. Distortion of memory over time and due to change in perspective is a natural process. However, in entering the inner world of characters, a writer unravels a lot about himself or herself quite unconsciously as “you [the writer] are the only person you will ever know from the inside, and so, inevitably, when your fiction shows other characters from the inside, you will reveal yourself” (Card 32).

The four aspects that work in fiction to determine the course of the story are milieu, idea, character, and event. Milieu constitutes of both internal and external environments, including physical, psychological and physical spaces. The idea includes the overall thought, theme, vision or outlook that the readers would take home having read the narrative. Character comprises of intentions and motivations of the people in the story and extends to a generalized perception about humanity. The events are the sequential occurrences in the story. These four elements may work in synchronicity in bring forth the narrative.

Narratives could be categorized based on the dominance of any one element such as pure milieu stories wherein the surroundings have prime importance. The characters are constructed based on the writer and those known to him such that the

readers would explore the physical and socio-cultural milieu based on the perspectives of the period that the writer and the reader share. In idea dominant stories, characters stand for ideas and help fulfill the pre-devised plan of the writer. In character stories, however, the outlook, desires and experiences of the characters take a centerstage. They may not be coinciding with those of the writer. A character might be independently operating in the given milieu. The readers experience the milieu through the perceptions of the character. A strong desire for change is usually the motivation of the character. This quest may either provide a character with a new role to embody or the character might return to the old role without moving away from it and bring about subtle change in how he or she led life so far. Event centric stories follow the pattern of characters trying to restore balance or seek justice and showcase the results of such an engagement, either success or failure. Internment narratives are a blend of milieu and event stories such that a historical event forms the core of the story and defines the future course of the characters. However, there is considerable development of protagonists too such that many Sansei characters desire a foundational change around engagements with the past, particularly, the internment.

Various mechanisms of making characters memorable include the life-altering choices they make, the sympathy they can generate in the hearts of the audience, frequency of appearance and hierarchy also help solidify the position of characters in a story. The agency bestowed upon a character and the narrative importance such as the story being narrated from the perspective of a said character can also enhance their significance. Sacrifice, suffering, jeopardy, tension or conflict between characters and the anguish of the readers of having to choose between two characters are some of the ways to increase the emotional intensity of the story. The character's attitude, courage, fairplay, expectations, justifications, transformation, recollections

through flashback, plans, life purpose, hunger and dreams definitely add complex facets to him or her. Growth, breakdown, crisis and quest to discover true self can bring about change in characters. In fact, Card opines that an essential quality that draws people to fiction, is the deep desire to understand unfathomable change that occurs in life and in human relationships. Reading fiction can enable people to sense and come to terms with changes in real life. Fictional narratives may also have character whose nature does not change or even if it does it is likely a homecoming to one's true nature which had been concealed by worldly pretensions. Oakley Hall enlists some character development techniques such as point of view, exposition, description, action, gestures and mannerisms, setting, taste and interests, opinions of other characters dialogues, thoughts, interiorization and shading, that is revealing characters through contradictions. In certain narratives, characters and personal qualities drive the plot.

A crucial decision about the voice in the narrative is made based on whether the character narrating the story was present during the events or not. If the character has shared and experienced the event, it is likely that the author chooses first person narration from the viewpoint of that character. However, if a narrator has not been part of the events and is relating the story or the author does not want to make the narrator the part of the action, he or she might choose third person narration.

Additionally, Oakley Hall proposes that first person narrator relates events which have already taken place, while the third person narrator unfolds the events before the eyes of the readers. This is also a crucial difference between these two types of narrations. Some authors also use third person plural without individuation of characters such as Julie Otsuka, who narrates *The Buddha in the Attic* from the collective perspective of a group of Issei picture brides.

While distinguishing between representational and presentational stories, Card explicates,

but the first story is meant to be received as an actual journal scribbled by a prisoner on scraps of paper, chronicling his life in a concentration camp, while the second one is meant to be received as a work of fiction, constantly making the reader aware of the author's not-so-hidden agenda (Card 137)

Internment narratives examined in this research are representational stories that aim at re-creating the exact atmosphere, hysteria and prejudice that existed during the Second World War to create awareness about the injustice and trauma faced by the community.

Oakley Hall identifies three factors that contribute to enhance readers' experience of immersing themselves in fiction namely utilizing personalized sensory impressions through characters to dramatize the narrative, secondly, using apt dialogues and, finally, creating an authority within the work regulating the course of the text. At times, even revolving team of narrators or point-of-view characters are used to make the narrative more engrossing as each of them provide a variation of the main story.

First-person narration allows strong affinity with and immersion in the story. It provides an opportunity to present immediacy and vibrancy in narration and thus establishing consequential authority of and trust in this character within the narrative. An additional advantage is personalized deliverance of occurrences. However, provisions need to be made through complex mechanisms of providing takes of other characters on the point-of-view character as the author might risk allowing this

character escape scrutiny. First person narration imposes delimitations on conveying holistic details of the story as the point of view conditions what is made available.

Third person narration compromises on intensity yet allows greater flexibility and variety than the first person narration. Writers also utilize the possibility of shifting third person narrations section-wise in larger works of fiction. Lastly, the omniscient point of view allows all-encompassing liberty to explore and unravel the story to its final detail. Elizabeth George explicates that omniscient narrator has the freedom to provide a peek into the past in terms of the timeline of the fictional piece. This narrator can also delve into the personalities of the characters to facilitate unraveling of psychological and emotional insights into their lives. Essentially, temporal and spatial delimitations applicable to other narrators do not apply to the omniscient narrator.

*Chorus of Mushrooms* presents an ideal example of non-chronological unfolding of narrative. Goto employs two narrators from two different generations with a telepathic connection, which is subtly hinted through their exchanges, to destabilize many fictional conventions. The novel starts with Murasaki being the first person narrator deciding to narrate a story about her Japanese grandmother. Thereafter, sections are named by the narrator. Naoe, the grandmother narrates the story and punctuates it with her interiorization to provide a glimpse of her individuality and dilemma as an Issei in Canada. The viewpoint alternates between Naoe and Murasaki, the first and the third generation of a Japanese Canadian family. Certain exchanges are also given in dialogue form almost resembling scenes in a play. News clippings are cleverly employed to show the disappearance of the grandmother. However, through magical realism, Naoe is resurrected and shown participating in a horse race and she continues to communicate with her granddaughter through cryptic

dramatic dialogues. Murasaki also authors an article exploring her multiracial identity. Naoe sends a postcard to her granddaughter. These devices create interrelations between the fictional world of the text and the real world whose historical details are reconstructed in this fictional representation. The happy immigrant story, a narrative within the larger piece of fiction, which Murasaki pens down, is literally lived by Naoe towards the end of the novel, when she wins the horse race. This experience, intertwining boundaries between real and imaginary, probable and improbable, is narrated by Naoe in first person.

*No-No Boy* has an omniscient narrator who can see through the minds of everybody, establishes the setting and also provides detailed picture of the action as it is unfolding. Overall, Okada employs linear narrative in this piece of fiction. The readers also witness intensive reflection about identity and articulation of grief, self-loathing, shame and anxiety through Ichiro's interiorization.

Naomi Nakane, a Sansei, is the narrator of Joy Kogawa's novel *Obasan*. The novel is narrated in first person narration. Her access to the first-hand information about the events around the internment, apart from her personal traumatic childhood memories, is through Aunt Emily's journal with letters addressed to Naomi's mother. The second source is Aunt Emily's correspondence with the official authorities to seek permission on behalf of her sister. These documents provide an intimate look at the representative reality of the internment in the work alongside Naomi's interaction with her family members who were affected by the same. The fictional present is Naomi's break from work and that is the temporal rooting of the story. Precisely, the first two chapters of the novel are dated in August and September, 1972. Aunt Emily's diary entries start on Christmas Day in December 1941 and continue till May 1942, when Naomi, her brother and Obasan relocate to Slocan, an abandoned mining

town. The entire timeline spanning from Naomi's childhood to the internment, relocation to the ghost town and the return is unravelled through flashback, narratorial recollection and commentary. Memorandums and newspaper clippings also juxtapose historical sources against the fictional narrative taking shape in the novel. In Kogawa's *Itsuka*, a sequel to *Obasan*, the narrator remains the same. Naomi narrates the novel in first person. It is a detailed account political events leading up to the redress. Yet, it intertwines personal with political. The fictionalized account of Naomi and her family, with Aunt Emily being an integral part of the political movement, is interspersed with historical dates, figures and lobbies that advocated for reparations. In fact, Naomi's narrations through various chapters in *Itsuka* are also dated covering a period of September 1983 to fall of 1987. Vivid descriptions of Naomi's dreams provide an intimate glimpse into the transgenerational psychological impact of the internment in a representative form.

Yoshiko Uchida's *Journey to Topaz* employs omniscient narrator to unravel the life of a Japanese American child in the internment camp. The narrative unfolds along a linear timeline and utilizes the predicament of the Japanese American community in the face of sudden ordeal of relocating to camps and arrests of men of the family to develop the plot.

In Julie Otsuka's *When the Emperor Was Divine*, the three unnamed protagonists of the novel, belonging to the same family, namely, the woman, the girl and the boy alternate as first person narrators of chapters, except the last two chapters, which are narrated in the first person plural as a family showcasing the return from camps and by father of the girl and the boy as the first narrator relating the interrogation scene respectively. Overall, the timeline is linear with occasional flashbacks and nostalgic passages about the past. Otsuka's second novel selected for

analysis *The Buddha in the Attic* is entirely narrated in the first person plural by a collective of Issei women embarking on a voyage to the U.S. as picture brides. Further, the back breaking work and hardships endured by these women in fields and farms are related in their collective voice. This also includes their complicated relationship with their Nisei children due to American acculturation. The novel ends with relocation of the Japanese Americans to the camps and whites occupying their houses after their departure.

In Milton Murayama's Oyama tetralogy, *Five Years on a Rock*, *All I Asking for Is My Body* and *Plantation Boy* are narrated in first person by Sawa, Kiyoshi and Toshio Oyama respectively. *Dying in a Strange Land* is narrated by all the three alternating between chapters as first person narrators. The starting point of the timeline of the tetralogy is Sawa's coming to Hawai'i as a picture bride in 1910s and the end of the series in temporal terms is in 1970s. Though there are specified, overt, chronological and historical timelines juxtaposing lives of these fictional characters with real political and historical events impacting the fate of Hawaii Japanese Americans, there are deeply personal and psychical timelines that govern how these characters look at their past, present and future in the apparently strange land of Hawaii. Racial trauma and plantation mentality rupture these psychic timelines and the characters are left to fend for themselves along the progressive historical timeline of events.

The second crucial element of fiction is plot. Plot is the elementary framework which governs the building and resolution of conflicts. It is a sequence of events depicted in the fictional piece which ultimately drives home fulfilment for readers. Hall divides plot into two major categories namely plot of action and plot of character. In the former, there is an eventual change in the situation of the character.

The latter brings about a change in the character himself or herself. The plot of character is further divided into the maturing plot wherein the character finds a certain direction in life. Secondly, the reformation plot which showcases change in character for overall improvement of life. The test plot requires the character to undergo a life transforming test. Finally, the degeneration plot brings about systematic deterioration of the protagonist. Ultimately, an ideal plot may blend the plot of character and action seamlessly to present an enhanced literary possibility. Some enriching plot devices include having an object of a quest, a silent or concealed character who is revealed at an opportune moment, foreshadowing through objects, which would complement the action later, drawing definite boundaries of relations between characters, plot progression through internal or external conflicts, presenting time constraints, and recognitions and revelations which facilitate resolution of the story.

The internment fiction of Kogawa, Otsuka, Goto, Uchida and Murayama selected for analysis has a blend of both, plot of action and plot of character. These narratives predominantly showcase either a child protagonist or a nuclear family coming to terms with the sudden disruption encountered in their lives due to a larger historical and national event in form of the internment. We see the same in Uchida and Otsuka wherein their novels relate the quest of a family typically starting from pre-internment, relatively, peaceful life followed by government orders and relocation to to camps, living in the camps and finally stepping out of the camps with new challenges of facing prejudice and discrimination while leading their daily lives in the mainstream society.

Elizabeth George discusses the huge impact that setting of a fictional piece has on character development, plot and themes of a work. It also influences the emotional response elicited from readers. The telling details, which are capsules of information,

used to establish a certain setting such that the readers judiciously complete the unsaid aspects having recognized the spatial location. George extends the idea of landscape from the holistic spatial dimension of the text to individual makeup, both external and internal aspects of characters. The assembly centers and the camps emerge as the most influential settings in the works of Uchida and Otsuka. In Murayama's novels, the Hawaiian plantation towns shape the thinking and behavioural patterns of characters. In Goto and Kogawa, the ghost towns where Japanese Canadians had to relocate during the internment predominantly impact the psyche of Nisei and Sansei characters, who are haunted by the anguish of being separated from family members even after more than twenty years after internment.

### **3.2 Reflection of Internment as a Memory in Literary Texts:**

#### **Three Phases**

Memories and responses to trauma presented in various literary expressions selected for analysis can be divided into three phases, namely, pre-internment memories including nostalgia; memories of the internment including dislocation and protective silence, and post-internment memories respectively. Deeper insights could be sought into these phases by analyzing the dreams of the characters about their family members during and after the internment. Concepts such as Marianne Hirsch's "postmemorial work" and Alexander's "carrier groups" are useful in this regard.

#### **3.2.1 Sansei Seeing the Internment through the Lens of Postmemory**

In *The Generation of Post Memory : Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (2012) Marianne Hirsch discusses the concept of postmemory.

It is distinguished from memory by generational distance and from history by deep personal connection. Postmemory is a powerful . . . form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation. . . .

Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated. (5)

The Nisei grew being dominated by personal narratives of nostalgia of their Issei parents particularly their childhood in Japan and fragments about their migration and adulthood in North America. This is usually set in sharp contrast with the phase of internment in their lives which was the forbidden territory of memory. Those Nisei like Monica Sone and Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston who had vivid memories of their lives in the camps attempted to articulate them to fill this glaring gap in personal, filial history as much as in the history of the community.

Wakatsuki Houston devotes a chapter of her memoir to provide a picture of her father's Samurai ancestry. This is contrasted with how, in the U.S., the Issei are prohibited from owning any land and assets as they are not recognized as citizens.

Otsuka, as a Sansei, has utilized autobiographical elements to recreate or reimagine the lives of her Nisei and Issei relatives via fictional mode. In her novel *When the Emperor Was Divine*, the readers can note that the Mother would smile while recollecting nostalgically the life she led in Japan as a small child. She remembered the warm nights, fishing with a bamboo pole "there were rice paper windows and sliding wooden doors and tatami mats" (95) on the floor. In a state of

distress people tend to recount their happy childhood memories. This was true of the mother too. In a country, so different from Japan, she craved for roots through memory. Nostalgia, as discussed earlier, provides a sense of belongingness to people. Before heading to Tanforan assembly center, she burying the precious family silver utensils under the statue of the laughing Buddha, can be read symbolically as a gesture indicating her longing for a peaceful, warm and safe domestic space as well as a step to preserve her family history, perhaps in a concealed manner, for posterity. It also signifies her hope that she would return from the center soon. The mother also remembers her courting days when she would miss her husband even when away for a short duration. She regrets not offering father water before the arrest. The apprehension that he might never return makes her think “*Now he’ll always be thirsty*” (96).

Hirsch observes that postmemorial work “strives to *reactivate* and *re-embody* more distant political and cultural memorial structures by reinvesting them with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation and aesthetic expression. In these ways, less directly affected participants can become engaged in the generation of postmemory that can persist even after all participants and even their familial descendants are gone” (22). Further, Hirsch points out that “postmemory is *not* an *identity* position but a *generational* structure of transmission embedded in multiple forms of mediation” (35). According to her, even the most intimate filial moments are a part of the collective imaginary of community. The stories and images that become part of archive are available for individual and familial remembrance.

In Kogawa’s *Obasan*, Naomi is guarded from painful memory of her mother’s death due to the atomic bomb. In spite of the protective silence, towards the end of the novel, we see Naomi comes to terms with this traumatic memory through

postmemorial work. It is by overhearing her relatives discussing the letters sent by her mother and grandparents about their time in Japan and reading diaries given by Aunt Emily that she is able to comprehend her mother's silence and sudden disappearance. It is by entering her mother's shoes that Naomi is able to overcome the sense of betrayal and abandonment she had felt for a long time. Naomi embraces her mother's silent memory with empathy and affection

Mother, I am listening. Assist me to hear you. Silent Mother, you do not speak or write. You do not reach through the night to enter morning, but remain in the voicelessness. From the extremity of much dying, the only sound that reaches me now is the sigh of your remembered breath, a wordless word. How shall I attend that speech, Mother, how shall I trace that wave? (288)

Naomi laments that her mother's initial requests of returning to Canada fell on deaf ears "By the time this country opened its pale arms to you, it was too late. First, you could not, then you chose not to come" (290). A missionary, who is requested to trace the whereabouts of Naomi's mother in Japan, informs that she has found a memorial stone without a photo or date. In fact, a Canadian maple tree grows in the place of the grave. Naomi inheriting and embracing the intergenerational memory of trauma of her mother's death is seen in the following lines

Martyr Mother, you pilot your powerful voicelessness over the ocean and across the mountain... You wish to protect us with lies, but the camouflage does not hide your cries. Beneath the hiding I am there with you. Silent Mother, lost in the abandoning, you do not share the horror. At first, stumbling and unaware of pain, you open your eyes in the red mist and sheltering a dead

child, you flee through the flames. Young Mother at Nagasaki, am I not also there? (290)

### **3.2.2 Destruction of Memory Objects and Strategic Forgetting**

Sturken emphasizes that internment memories involved strategic forgetting. Other than the memories of the survivors, the processes such as creation and destruction of memory objects and the “absent presence” of these memories and objects left a long lasting impression on the lives of the descendants (Fujitani, White and Yoneyama 37). Invariably, in the texts that have been analyzed for this thesis, we find references to parents burning evidences of their Japanese heritage before going to the internment camps. For instance, in Sone’s memoir, arrests of community members prompt the family members to burn Japanese books, dolls, destroy dining sets, lacquer boxes and kimonos. Sone reflects on the act of destroying memory objects when she says “Wearily we closed our eyes, filled with an indescribable sense of guilt for having destroyed the things we loved. This night of ravage was to haunt us for years. As I lay struggling to fall asleep, I realised that we hadn’t freed ourselves at all from fear. We still lay stiff in our beds, waiting” (156).

Wakatsuki Houston devotes a chapter of her memoir to her brother’s visit to Hiroshima after the war as part of the U.S. military. He traces his father’s relatives and visits them. It is a form of postmemorial work of embracing the Japanese aspects of the identity which, prior to and throughout the war, had been narrativized to be at loggerheads with the American aspects of the identity.

Another significant collective memory of the Nisei that paved way to reintegration of Japanese Americans into the mainstream society after the internment was the men joining 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat team which became an exclusive Nisei

unit that had many accolades to its credit. Sone and Wakatsuki Houston record the dilemma of Nisei youth about joining the same in their memoirs. Their brothers volunteer for the Nisei unit. Today these familial memories have got transformed into a cultural memory for the community given that the achievements of Nisei veterans have been institutionalized and are an important part of memorial events.

Garret Hongo, a Sansei, speaks of how his mother concealed major part of his family history from him till he was about thirty

Until I was past thirty, I was allowed nothing of simple family knowledge. And for over thirty years, little curiosity had risen within me. But after the funeral, after I had buried my father who had come from such a faint and unknown beginnings, I felt the deepest shame that would not be buried with his ashes. After my father's death, family secrets, evasions and my own ignorance fed an anger and a desire to know that would not abate (31)

Hongo's memoir is a reflection on his family history and personal memory. It is also a work of postmemory. He is a Sansei who re-enacts his family history by visiting Hongo store in Volcano which was set up by his Issei grandfather and unravels crucial family stories. His journey begins with a family photo clicked before the store and when he personally visits the same he recounts the experience "I looked up above the broad entrance door and saw the sign, its paint flecked and its surface decorated with blossoms of rust, still with our name on it. I felt a rush of feeling and I almost bowed as I crossed the threshold, recalling the gesture for gasho, a simple hands together genuflection I learned when I lived in the temple back in Japan" (Hongo 54). It describes the sense of going back in time. By physically being present in the space inhabited by his grandfather, Hongo can visualize the life of his grandfather, Torau,

who belonged to a Samurai family but immigrated to Hawaii. Hongo comes to terms with his complex family history including the three marriages of his grandfather. Hongo's father is the eldest child from Torau's second marriage with Yukiko, who aspired to be a Geisha.

### **3.2.3 Pre-internment Memories and Nostalgia**

An integral part of nostalgic, pre-internment, collective memories are family dinners. Images of family suppers around a round wooden table symbolic of the unity of the family are presented by Wakatsuki Houston. These memories signify sense of belongingness and home for her. They are contrasted with the disintegrated family in the camp after they evacuate.

In Otsuka's *When the Emperor Was Divine*, "six o'clock" is an important temporal marker in the nostalgic pre-internment memories of children. It functions as an emotional trigger for the boy. Six o'clock in the evening stands for happy dinnertime in America. The boy recounts the life outside the camp with "boys throwing balls in backyards, girls playing hopscotch, mothers with pink quilted mitts sliding hot casseroles out of the ovens, fathers with shiny black briefcases bursting through the front doors, shouting, "Honey, I'm home!" (66).

The "happy time" symbolizes the urge to go back to the pre-internment life. It is a notion typical to the dominant white society, particularly to the middle and upper classes and a distant reality for the immigrants of Japanese ancestry with a few exceptions. It was difficult for the Japanese Americans to find decent and profitable jobs due to the racial bias prevalent in the U.S.

In *When the Emperor Was Divine*, we also see the boy recollecting pre-internment life, particularly, the time spent at home. He would visualize his home

with father “plucking the caterpillars...off the snow pea plants with his long wooden chopsticks.... Stone lantern covered with moss in the garden, and the statue of the fat round Buddha with its head thrust back, laughing up at the sky” (68). The nostalgic image of his home has many characteristically Japanese elements in it. The Japanese farmers developed new farming techniques in the U.S. by adopting the traditional methods of their homeland and using them on the western crops. The method that the father uses is one of them.

Stone lanterns are an integral part of a Japanese household. In ancient times, oil lamps were lit and kept in these lanterns at night. There are rituals surrounding this piece of architecture. One of them is washing it with water in the morning. The moss that grows on the lantern, as a result of this ritual, is seen as a symbol of endurance. It has moral significance in Japanese culture.

In Wakatsuki Houston’s *Farewell to Manzanar*, the silver wedding anniversary of Papa and Mama in 1940 is the climax of family life for Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston. Ko is fond of fashion and spends lavishly while preparing for the event. Among Ko’s friends and acquaintances there is a mention of Portuguese Goosey and Italian Blackie who are his fishing and drinking friends. Though like Ko, they too are migrants in the U.S., being Caucasians, they face relatively less discrimination in face of the war. Jeanne’s impression of her father is as a man of grace and style.

That’s how I remember him before he disappeared. He was not a great man. He wasn’t even a very successful man. He was a poser, a braggart and a tyrant. But he had held onto his self-respect, he dreamed grand dreams, and he could work well at any task he turned his hand to: he could raise vegetables, sail a

boat, plead a case in small claims court, sing Japanese poems, make false teeth, carve a pig. (Houston and Houston 59)

Families begin to disintegrate as each member prefers to have their meals with their friends. Except the meal time, there is no scope for having happy interactions of a considerable period of time. Jeanne's nostalgia brings to the fore key observations about the changing family dynamics in face of the internment. In her mind, there are pre-internment images of family meals on "old round wooden table" (Houston and Houston 35) which is a symbol of family unity. They used to enjoy rice, homegrown vegetables and fish caught by father for meals. There is an indication of self sufficiency at the level of the family and also in the larger context of the community.

This is contrasted with the disintegration of the family during the internment by Wakatsuki Houston, when her elder siblings are seen going out with friends to eat in the mess halls of other blocks in pursuit of better food. The members of the family face isolation and alienation. Grandmother due to old age is too feeble to walk thrice to the mess hall. Younger siblings like Ray challenged themselves to see how many mess halls they could hit in one meal period. They would take three helpings at three different places. Jeanne and Kiyoko are too small to follow them. The units that the government has provided are too small for cooking. They cannot replace the warmth and space that is available in a home. The absence of 'home' in spatial and emotional levels aggravates the disintegration of this symbolic family.

Descriptions of family dinners, Japanese school picnics, celebrations of Japanese days of national significance such as the birthday of the Emperor in her childhood are some of the collective memories that shape the Japanese aspects of Monica Sone's identity as a Nisei. An articulation of her struggle to define herself

during her childhood is seen in the lines “I didn't see how I could be a Yankee and Japanese at the same time. It was like being born with two heads. It sounded freakish and a lot of trouble” (18).

The compulsion to learn Japanese dance and etiquettes, particularly in the case of women, become instances of mimetic memory through which the Issei hope to hand down Japanese cultural values such as restraint and dignity to Nisei daughters. They signify performance of Japanese culture itself. Similar instances of memory are seen in the memoirs of Sone and Wakatsuki Houston where they also narrate the resistance their adolescent selves attempted to pose by choosing Western forms of dance and sports instead of the Japanese ones.

### **3.2.4 Memories of the Internment: Dislocation and Protective Silence**

Internment becomes the greatest collective memory in Monica Sone's memoir, like in the other texts chosen for study, which includes news of bombing of Pearl harbour, arrest of prominent male community members, uprooting and relocation of the family to the assembly centre and further to the camp itself. Sone recollects her reaction to the bombing vividly in the memoir “I felt as if a fist had smashed my pleasant existence, breaking it into jigsaw puzzle pieces. An old wound opened up again, and I found myself shrinking inwardly from my Japanese blood, the blood of an enemy. I knew instinctively that the fact that I was an American by birthright was not going to help me escape the consequences of this unhappy war” (145). Sone recollects her conversation with her mother about the bombing "What do you know about it? Right or wrong, the Japanese have been chafing with resentment for years. It was bound to happen, one time or another. You're young Ka-chan, you know very little about the ways of the nations. It's not as simple as you think" (147).

Sone recounts internment as the greatest collective memory, including being compelled to evacuate from Seattle to Camp Harmony. Her family is reduced to a numerical identification “10710” amidst the numerous families of Japanese Americans who had been uprooted in wake of the war. She recollects the gathering of families before they boarded buses for the assembly centre “This area was ordinarily lonely and deserted but now it was gradually filling up with silent, labeled Japanese, standing self-consciously among their seabags and suitcases” (169).

Sone describes the journey of her family to the centre by bus “We tried to sleep to escape from the restless anxiety which kept bobbing up to surface of our minds. I awoke with a start when the bus filled with excited buzzing. A small group of straw-hatted Japanese farmers stood by the highway, waving at us. I felt a sudden warmth toward them, then a twinge of pity. They would be joining us soon (172).

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston recollects the evacuation of her family to Manzanar camp in poignant terms. She also reconstructs the scene of interrogation of her father as a transgenerational memory. Her father had been charged of delivering oil to Japanese submarines off the coast of California on the basis of a photograph which showed fifty gallon drums on the deck of his boat, ten miles from shore. In reality the drums carried fish guts and ground up fish heads, which were used as baits while fishing mackerel.

Evacuation and a feeling of dislocation also feature as prominent internment memory in Otsuka’s novel *When the Emperor Was Divine*. The mother is shown to have been overwhelmed by multiple emotions on the night before leaving the house. She feels nostalgic as she sees every object in the house and in the garden. Her eyes rest on a maple sapling Papa had planted four summers ago. This reminds her of his

current detainment in Fort Sam Houston. The woman releases the pet bird from the cage. The mother, in her anxiety, drinks plum wine she had made in the fall, last year. She laughs in hysteria and tears roll down her cheeks, a visible sign of trauma. After drinking, mother hides the bottle in “old rusted furnace where no one would ever find it” (21). This gesture can be read as an attempt of preserving their privacy and dignity in the uncertain circumstances. It proves to be a bitter and ironical foreshadowing as the family is forced to live in lack of privacy in the internment camp.

In *When the Emperor Was Divine*, the omniscient narrator narrates the memory of the episode of father’s arrest with reference to the Nisei son. Three FBI agents come formally dressed to take his father. They allow him to carry only his toothbrush with him. It is the Christmas season (December 1941). “The boy had watched as they led his father out across the lawn in his bathrobe and slippers to the black car that was parked at the curb” (74).

The boy also remembers his father looking straight ahead and not turning even once to see if his son was there. This could be a reaction to the mental shock he received due to his arrest. The gesture could also reflect his stoic attitude towards life. Possibly, he preferred confronting the problems rather than crying over them. It could be the son’s insecurity, in face of this arrest, that made him register and remember this gesture quite clearly.

The boy had seen the people next door watching his father being taken away. It was very humiliating for the boy to see his father reduced to a prisoner before the eyes of his friends.

When the boy comes to know about the arrests of his friends’ fathers, thinking about the fact that none of them had been taken into custody with their slippers on

seems disgracing to him. An essential part of honourable existence, in Japanese culture, is following appropriate dress code for specific occasions. Having internalized values such as preferring silent suffering over open expression of sorrow, the boy, perhaps, displaces his traumatic reaction to his father's arrest with thinking about the dress code.

After father's arrest, the family fails to contact him for four days as the telephone wires are cut by the FBI. Their bank accounts are frozen. The mother places the key under the potted chrysanthemum on the front porch for father to open the house in case he comes home late night. On the fifth day a short note is sent from the immigration detention center in San Francisco by mail in which father informs the family about the uncertainty of his loyalty trial and that eighty three Issei had already been sent to prison. He also requests a meeting before he is transported to the prison in the interior of the country.

Till the note arrived, mother used to set a table for four in spite of their father's absence as she was hopeful about his return. Father instructs mother to keep the blue striped suit he wore on his last Sunday at home for the sake of his children without giving it for cleaning. By keeping the worn clothes untouched, the father wanted the last happy memory before his arrest to be preserved. In this way, the children could feel his presence through his clothes. In the face of sudden disappearance, the suit and other items of the father work as a temporary memory household for the children who are struggling to come to terms with the internment.

Next morning, the girl roamed the whole house searching for the place where her father had sat for the last time before his arrest. It was the edge of her mother's bed. She pressed her face to it and also sniffed it. It was the girl's last attempt to

capture her father's fading presence in form of his fragrance. She wished to feel the sense of warmth and her father's affection his last, lingering trace produced around her.

The boy, on the other hand, had found some strands of his father's hair. He had put them in an envelope and placed them securely below a loose floorboard under his bed. He believed that till the strands were there in their place his father would be safe. After coming to the internment camp, the boy begins to worry about the FBI or the new people staying in their house misplacing the envelope. He is also anxious about his father turning bald. These gestures of the girl and the boy definitely signify the trauma they suffered after their father's arrest.

In Otsuka's *When The Emperor Was Divine*, she depicts the life in Tanforan assembly center. Throughout the summer, it had been very monotonous and constricting. They lived in the old horse stalls in the stables with tin troughs for wash basins and straw mattresses. The smell of horses lingered in their living space. After a siren, there was head count twice a day. They stood in queues for meals in the mess.

In Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston's *Farewell to Manzanar*, the narration begins with Imperial Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour. Jeanne is seven years old at the time of the attack in 1941. Jeanne's father, Ko is a fisherman who lived in Santa Monica and went to San Pedro Harbour for fishing before his arrest by the FBI under the pretext of espionage. He had bought the *Nereid*, a large boat on loan from a cannery. He also owned the *Waka*, which was a smaller boat.

Jeanne's family members include Woody, her 21 year old, eldest brother. His wife is Chizu. Bill is another brother married to Tomi. Jeanne's other siblings are Lilian, 14; Ray, 13; May, 11 and Kiyō, 10. Their grandmother also lives with them.

Wakatsuki Houston has also depicted the repercussions of the attack on her family, including the arrest of her father. The news of the attack on Pearl Harbour came as a shock to the community of Japanese Americans in Santa Monica. Ko immediately burnt a Japanese flag he had along with some documents that could connect them to Imperial Japan in any way. However, his status as an ‘alien’ (first generation Japanese immigrant, not a naturalized citizen of the U.S. due to his ancestry) with a commercial fishing license made him vulnerable to arrest by the FBI, who feared that such men were capable of being in contact with the enemy ships.

After father’s arrest the Wakatsuki family moves to Woody’s place on Terminal Island with a settlement of 500 working class Japanese families. Unlike Ocean Park, the predominantly American upper middle class locality, where Wakatsuki family lived before; Terminal Island seems to be more crude and aggressive to Jeanne in its way of life.

On 25 February 1942 the inhabitants of Japanese ancestry were asked to evacuate Terminal Island within 48 hours given its proximity to Long Beach Naval Station and the risk it posed to the security strategy of the U.S. Wakatsukis were forced to sell off their possessions of 200 dollars for mere 75 dollars.

The American Friends Service help the evacuees find houses in Boyle Heights which is a minority ghetto in Los Angeles. President Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066 defines military areas in the Western states and bestows the War Department with the power to exclude any person who might be a threat to the war effort.

Ko is detained in Fort Lincoln in an “all-male camp for enemy aliens” (Houston and Houston 15) In Boyle Heights mother and Woody work as celery packers. Incidents of outright hostility towards people of Japanese origin and anti-oriental

sentiments are on a rise. Wakatsukis are finally evacuated to Manzanar, which is the officially designated internment camp for that region.

During the transportation, mother's prime concern was to keep the entire family together in the same vehicle so that they are allotted the same block. The camp at Manzanar consisted of a half constructed building with tents erected around it. The premises was surrounded by barbed wire fence. Every interned family is assigned an identification number which would be used for future operations. They are also given the number of units in the barracks according to the size of the family. Wakatsukis are sent to Block 16 which comprises of 15 barracks. Every barrack is divided into six units. Two units were assigned to Jeanne's family which comprised of 16 members. Every unit had a size of 320 sq. ft. (16\*20 feet) or 29.72 sq. mts. Every unit had a bare bulb and an oil stove.

Dislocation and evacuation to the camp have also been depicted in Uchida's *Journey to Topaz*. The novel has autobiographical elements integrated in it. The novel is the story of Yuki Sakane, a eleven-year-old girl and her family who, like the author's, were initially relocated to Tanforan to live in a horse stable as the place was previously a race course. They were later interned in Topaz, Utah. "Although the characters are fictional, the events are based on actual fact, and most of what happened to the Sakane family also happened to my own" (Uchida viii).

After the attack on Pearl Harbour, Yuki's father was detained by the FBI in a prison away from the family as he was an Issei employee of a Japanese firm. There were some policemen positioned in the house too. They kept a close eye on the family members. Yuki's mother and her brother, Kiyoo, who was eighteen, then, were there with Yuki before evacuation. Yuki's mother was a courageous woman who had

travelled all alone to the U.S. to marry Yuki's father twenty years ago after a brief acquaintance and recommendations from their professors in Japan. She negotiated with the policemen in the house and tried to gain information about her husband's release through her strategic, pleasant hospitality.

#### **3.2.4.1 Protective Silence as Response**

For decades, internment was remembered within the social frame of protective silence. However, it is equally true that the collective act of silence provoked the Nisei and Sansei to reclaim the memory. Reclaiming the memory of immigration and internment was a collective effort. Literary expressions played a vital role in this act of personal and collective remembrance.

Nagata et al., while exploring the psychological factors that ensured obedience in the face of historical injustice such as the internment, note that "Fear, a gap in leadership after Issei leaders were arrested, and a cultural value of obedience and respect for authority resulted in broad compliance with the government's incarceration orders" (4). In the Issei, the immense sense of shame, humiliation and uncertainty was the root cause of trauma. The charges of disloyalty and espionage as well as the confinement were demoralizing. Those sent to camps suffered dual dislocations, firstly when they were sent to assembly centers, which were abandoned horse barracks and secondly, after being sent to the interior parts primarily to deserts and other places with harsh living conditions. Breach of privacy and major impact on traditional family structures and gender roles proved to be additional physical and psychosocial stressors. The Issei men lost their positions as sole breadwinners in their families as women also began to take up low paying jobs available in the camps like them. Simultaneously, the Issei men had to forgo their positions as the community

leaders. With the camps, there emerged a need for bilingual competency and Nisei proved to be more suitable for such administrative tasks. This added to the widening rift between the generations (Nagata, Kim and Wu 4-5). The Nisei preferred spending time with peers over their families.

The loyalty questionnaire circulated in the camps divided the inmates into those who advocated compliance, draft resisters, veterans, and those who replied “no-no” to the two questions demanding unconditional allegiance to the U.S. and renouncing loyalty to the Emperor. Those who responded with “No-No” were sent to other camps with stringent rules and some of them also chose the second option of returning to Japan. Answering the loyalty questionnaire presented a moral dilemma wherein a negative reply would be taken as confirmation of charges levied against them and a positive reply would mean betraying themselves as there was a greater question if they owed any loyalty to a country that interned them in first place. Some opined resistance till constitutionally being released from the camps was the apt response to uphold democratic values that the US apparently stood for.

Japanese cultural values laid the foundation of endurance in the face of the internment. Collective values such as “interdependence and social harmony encouraged adaptation and flexibility.. while an emphasis on *gaman* (perseverance through hardship) and *shikata ga nai* (fatalistic acceptance) encouraged remaining focused on each day, rather than looking to the past or worrying about the future” (Nagata, Kim and Wu 5).

The Nisei who were permitted to leave the camps for work were not allowed to socialize with other community members. Hostility, verbal abuse, rejection and discrimination became a part of daily existence after the internment. Loss of livelihood, age and dependence on children made the Issei particularly vulnerable. In

spite of numerous hurdles, the Nisei achieved academic success and economic prosperity with incessant hard work. They came to be portrayed as model minority, however, the “conspiracy of silence” and symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder such as avoidance and detachment went unrecognized in the larger narrative. Absence of internment from public discourse contributed to turning the silence of the community into a kind of social amnesia. Though silence is a coping mechanism it does not signify healing “silence can influence identity constriction, attitude formation, decision-making, and action at both the individual and collective levels” (6-7).

In Karen Suyemoto’s research paper titled “Ethnic and Racial Identity in Multiracial Sansei: Intergenerational Effects of the World War II Mass Incarceration of Japanese Americans”, she observes that silence constituted a vital form of response of the Japanese North American community to the internment. Some reasons that she enlists that prompted this response include strong urge to protect their children from racial prejudice and deep, personal agony. Secondly, facilitation of integration of their children into the mainstream society was their priority after internment. They feared that revealing their suffering to their children would hinder this process and in turn make them vulnerable to discrimination and ostracism. Thirdly, the Nisei parents, who were in their teenage during the internment, did not want to project an emotional and helpless disposition before their Sansei children given their cultural conditioning. Cultural values did play a crucial role in shaping the response of the Nisei. Belonging to a culture that condemned complaining and valued endurance, expressing rage and agony while discussing the internment experiences would go against their cultural values particularly in the context of parent-child relationship. Finally, a deep sense of shame prompted the Nisei to embrace silence about the internment. The public

discourse also worked to reinforce this response. The impact of silence on identity construction of the members of the community would be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

A.V. Kamat and A.R. Fernandes in their research paper titled “Racial Subalternity of the Issei in Select Japanese North American Fiction” discuss how the protective silence of the parents, particularly, the Issei is a salient thematic concern in two novels, namely, Joy Kogawa’s *Obasan* and Julie Otsuka’s *When the Emperor was Divine*. Naomi Nakane, the protagonist of *Obasan* “is quick to highlight that the adults were resolved not to reveal details of the terrible period of internment to the next generation. In Naomi’s case the occasional discussions were limited to her parents, Emily, Isamu and Ayako. For the Sansei like her, the memories of internment are “drowned in a whirlpool of protective silence. Everywhere I could hear the adults whispering “Kodomo no tame. For the sake of the children... Calmness was maintained” (200).

The photograph of Isamu and Mark standing in front of Mark’s boat aids Naomi’s postmemorial work of comprehending the silence around sudden disappearance of the male family members, when she was a child. It also helps her understand the protective silence maintained by the Issei about the internment. She is able to join the scattered references to the arrests and internment by Ayako and Emily into a comprehensible piece of memory and, eventually, process and embrace it by the end of the text.

The disappearance and death of Naomi’s mother is also shrouded in protective silence. Kamat and Fernandes observe “It is only when Nakayama Sensei, a local minister, reads from the letter exchanged by the Katos, Naomi’s maternal grandparents, that the protective silence maintained for the sake of the children is

breached” (200). Naomi’s mother and Grandmother Kato are unable to return to Canada due to the war after paying a visit to Grandma Kato’s mother in Tokyo. They head to Nagasaki to help Grandma’s niece, Setsuko, with her second delivery. Grandma Kato, Naomi’s mother and Chieko, the second child of Setsuko, survive the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki on 9 August 1945. However, they confront grief and witness immense suffering. They sustain grave injuries which make their return impossible. In 1949, Setsuko suffers from leukemia. Naomi laments the fact that she was kept in the dark in order to protect her from suffering “The letters take months to reach Grandfather. They take years to reach me. Grandfather gives the letters to Aunt Emily. Aunt Emily sends letters to the Government. The Government makes paper airplanes out of our lives and flies us out of the windows” (291). Kamat and Fernandes observe that “[t]he letters of the Katos function both as instruments of concealing vital information from the Sansei, employed primarily by the Issei and Nisei to spare the next generation from the tremendous pain that would accompany the revelation of the truth, as much as silent documents of personal history (201).

#### **3.2.4.2 Japanese values and Protective Silence**

The Japanese, Issei in particular, were culturally conditioned to embrace silence in the face of adversities. Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez enlist the core values of the Issei. They grew in a social system that emphasized the significance of the family as a foundational unit of society “loyalty and filial piety were emphasized to counter “self-conscious individualism”” (Fugita and Fernandez 15). Forging community ties in villages, cities and neighbourhoods was considered to be an extension of filial ties. In Japanese culture, ““familistic communitarianism” was inculcated on the basis of observing customs, obeying authority, and preserving

interpersonal harmony was idealized over decisions made by a rational and autonomous self” (16).

Many Issei, born during the Meiji era, perceived immigration as a temporary economic opportunity and planned to return to Japan after making a fortune. Two significant principles dictating the social attitudes of the Issei were *Wa*, which is better translated as “conflict-avoidance”, by Miyamoto, Fugita and Kashima, and “*Giri-Ninjō*” that is "obligation and duty" (*giri*) and "responsiveness to the deeper feelings of others" (*ninjō*) (17). Kamat and Fernandes note

the uniquely Japanese social attitudes and responses get reflected in Kogawa’s *Obasan*...the literary scene of the novel is dominated by Isseis. The cultural foundations of Issei of prioritizing norms and preferences of the family and community over individual will and choices, whether in moments of glory or crisis, a tendency of avoiding conflict; fulfilling duties and giving importance to emotions and responses of others, resulted in preservation and inculcation of attitudes seen in the text. These values proved to be useful particularly in shaping the general response to internment and coping mechanisms that were employed thereafter. (202-203)

Ann Gomer Sunahara observes that cultural values such as *enryo* (reserve or restraint), *gamen* (patience and perseverance) and *shikataga-nai* (resignation) enabled the Japanese North Americans to endure internment (Sunahara 149). Kamat and Fernandes highlight that

Naomi’s mother in spite of being a Nisei has been constructed as an epitome of *enryo*, *gamen* and *giri-ninjō* , perhaps to indicate the great cultural influence the Issei parents had on their Nisei children, particularly the elder ones, given the first-borns have special significance in Japanese culture. *Giri-ninjō*, that is,

prioritizing filial obligations is seen when she accompanies her mother Mrs. Kato while visiting her ailing grandmother in Tokyo even during the war.

(Kamat and Fernandes 203)

The fact that Naomi's mother prioritizes taking care of Chieko, Setsuko's daughter, suffering from leukemia over the possibility of returning to Canada as a citizen with the prevailing war restrictions exhibits how *enryo* and *gamen*, that is, restraint and endurance have been the values that Naomi's mother has practiced throughout her life. She remains true to these principles even if it means separation from her daughter. In fact, Naomi's ability of eventually transcending her personal grief after comprehending the tragic fate of her mother, perhaps, stems from these principles as well.

Naomi recalls the unusual responses of her mother and Obasan to multiple situations which had been incomprehensible to her as a child such as

the composed response of her mother instead of a bitter scolding during the chicken incident in her childhood (Kogawa, *Obasan* 71); an advice by Obasan during Grandma Nakane's funeral of not being *Wagamama*, that is, selfish and inconsiderate by not honouring the wishes of others (Kogawa, *Obasan* 151) and understand that she was expected to consider her personal attachment to her mother and the resultant grief after separating from her as secondary to the significant filial obligations. (Kamat and Fernandes 203)

Kamat and Fernandes further add "[t]he sacrifice of personal emotions render Naomi's loved ones with the quality of *yasahi* and *kawaiso*; both values are about being tender and helpful to others in moments of crisis" (203).

The collective silence of the community about internment and the personal silence of Obasan, Naomi's mother and other Issei over filial grief are a result of

practicing restraint as a cultural value. The memories of internment are “drowned in a whirlpool of protective silence.... For the sake of the children” (Kogawa, *Obasan* 26) “Kodomo no tame” in Japanese. When Naomi looks back at the void that her mother’s sudden disappearance created in her life as a child and her desperate efforts to find out the reasons behind the same, she recounts how she had to confront Obasan’s cold silence on the topic “Why did my mother not return? After all these years, I find myself wondering, but with the dullness of expecting no response.. I was consumed by the question. Devoured alive. But Obasan gave me no answers. I did not have, I have never had, the key to the vault of her thoughts” (31).

On the way to the internment camp, Obasan is kind and caring towards a new mother in the bus. She provides shelter to Nomura-Obasan, an invalid woman, in her barrack. In her process of coming to term with personal grief, Naomi highlights “I had not known that Grief had such gentle eyes – eyes reflecting my uncle’s eyes, my mother’s eyes – all the familiar lost eyes of Love” (295).

Grandma and Grandpa Nakane who had gone to Salt Spring Island for their annual visit are interned in Sick Bay after the bombing of Pearl Harbour. Naomi notes the Pool in Sick Bay was “a prison at the exhibition grounds called Hastings Park in Vancouver. Men, women and children outside Vancouver, from the “protected area” – a hundred mile strip along the coast – were herded into the grounds and kept there like animals until they were shipped off to roadwork camps and concentration camps to the interior of the province” (93).

In Otsuka’s *When the Emperor was Divine*, the father is seen embracing protective silence about his incarceration ““[h]e never said a word to us about the years he’d been away...never talked about politics, or his arrest... He never mentioned his loyalty hearing before the Alien Enemy Control Unit... We didn’t want

to know... All we wanted to do, now that we were back in the world, was forget” (133) Kamat and Fernandes note “The last chapter of the novel titled “Confession” depicts the acute guilt and tendency of self-loathing in the male members of the community, who had been arrested and interrogated by the FBI under the pretext of national security” (204).

Fugita and Fernandez enlist some material and psychological consequences that the incarcerated had to live through

When the resettlers left camp for the last time, not only did they face numerous social and economic uncertainties, but psychological ones as well. On the personal and perhaps even subconscious level, some former incarcerated felt either anguish about being powerless to resist the injustice which had been meted out to them or, on the other hand, thought that their own or the ethnic group's inadequacies were somehow responsible for their treatment. (112)

In Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*, Shinji and Keiko, the Nisei parents of Murasaki, embrace silence for the sake of the future of their child.

Aunt Emily observes in Kogawa's *Itsuka*

How well I know the Issei, who will never ever complain. It's their code of honor requiring them to gaman, to endure without flinching, that makes them the silent people of Canadian nursing homes. From their early childhood in Meiji Japan, they witnessed the poverty of fellow villagers who suffered in silence, for the love of parents, for the honor of ancestors, for the sake of the whole... This is where the Issei have gone. Into their last days – one by one. They wait alone at home or with family or in these permanent places of

transition, their final internment centers, holding tickets to a distant land. (148-149)

*Itsuka* means someday in Japanese. The title of the novel symbolically reinstates the hope the Issei had in a bright future. Nakayama sensei called the Isseis the people of sacrifice “they came to the new land only to perish in the culture clash. They offered their lives for the young. “Itsuka” Nakayama wishes that someday their sacrifices would be known and the children would return to them - someday - have faith in love” (Kogawa, *Itsuka* 149).

Nakayama Sensei understands the commitment of the Issei to prioritize the future of their children amidst the war and the resultant chaos “I know that what the issei wanted above all, wanted more than life, was to give good gifts to the young. Beneath all the community turmoil, beneath the bafflegab about cooperation, beneath the weariness and the paranoia, I have heard many an issei say quietly, “A good name – that is only treasure. That is only issei want give children. To future” (149).

Nakayama Sensei celebrates the spiritual resilience of the Issei that formed the foundation of the culture of their community when they came to North America and helped them to brave multiple adversities, in a relatively long passage

The good name of the Issei is their legacy to us. Though they lacked political power, their spiritual powers remain – their steadfast rock-hard endurance, their determination, dignity, graciousness, loyalty, modesty, resourcefulness, reliability, industry, generosity, their reverence for nature, their respect for education, their amazing tenderness toward the young, their intense passion for us to be worth something. But first and foremost was their arigatai, their gratitude, the underground stream which nourished their deepest roots.

Because of it, they endured. They endured for the sake of the long term good,

for the well-being of the whole. They endured for a future that only the children will know. Their endurance is their act of faith and of love. What they offer to the future are their keys to the safekeeping of the soul. (149)

In her quest to unravel the secrets buried under the protective silence, Naomi narrates her visit to a private hospital in Tokyo which was previously Miss Best's orphanage where her mother had sought refuge after the bombing "My mother's secret place. This is where I yearned to be through all the days of my searching childhood ...where Mother and Grandma ended their days in hiding, hoarding to themselves the story of the hibakusha, the survivors of the atom bomb. Here on this time-heavy soil, they breathed and died, connected to us by dream alone... I am sleepwalking" (97).

Nakayama Sensei had visited Japan in 1949 and brought back news of Miss Best's survival of the bombing.

But as for Mother and Grandma, it was only a picture of shadows that finally emerged. Aunt Emily sifted through the rubble heap of postwar Japan and came to the silence that was Mother's final will. Mother covered her trail with leaves and commanded the mist. She would not be followed. Yet not all the footprints disappeared. A letter from Grandma said that they were in Nagasaki when the bomb fell. Mother was disfigured. The flesh melted from her beautiful face. She preferred to have her children think she had perished. (97)

Miss Best's helpers had reported arrival of two Japanese Canadian women from Nagasaki. When Emily sought official help of the government, she learned that the two women had recently died. Naomi laments

We know so little of their last days, except that they lived within a well of silence, a grave before the grave. A haunted place. Mother hid herself from the view. She scuttled through the night. By not communicating, she believed, she

spared her children pain. A strange faith... There is in life, I have learned, a speech that will not be hidden, a word that will be heard. This day in Japan, I hear Mother in the sounds of footsteps, in the swishing of the broom outside, in the light laugh of a little boy. (99)

### **3.2.5 Post-internment Memories**

Sugiman delineates certain positive and negative fallouts of the internment for Japanese Canadians, particularly, in the light of the dispersal policy followed by the state post internment.

Notwithstanding its evils, in spite of the incurment of pain, the internment brought many Japanese Canadians together in close physical proximity, in a situation of shared oppression. Though families were often separated, groups of Nisei women lived together in forced communities that were characterized by age, sex, and racial/ethnic homogeneity. Isolated in desolate parts of the interior of BC, communities of internees had little choice but to develop bonds based on social support and common experience. (Sugiman 378)

The dispersal policy had devastating consequences for families. There was a looming threat of severing the long cherished social bonds during the internment. Sugiman observes that “the Japanese Canadian communities that had ironically been affirmed by the internment, were forcibly dispersed. Many social bonds were severed and ethnic identities and loyalties were denied, as Japanese Canadians sought assimilation as a strategy to protect themselves from the harsh racism that they had experienced in Canada” (378).

#### **3.2.5.1 Return of Fathers**

As part of the assimilative stand that the Japanese Americans adopted post internment, we see that some members of the community were reluctant to

acknowledge their Japanese cultural heritage, they avoided socializing with the fellow members of their community and experienced constant pressure to excel particularly hoping for acceptance into the American society. Being compelled to assimilate in the face of increasing racial discrimination, Nagata et al. observe how this contributed to racial trauma “traumas stemming from deliberate, human-designed action can have especially insidious impacts. For Nisei Japanese Americans, the unjust imprisonment by one’s own government has been described as a betrayal. Rejection by the mainstream society led to psychic damage and culminated into a deep sense of personal inferiority and self blame (43).

In the literary expressions of the internment that have been studied for this research, post internment of families and post incarceration of men, there is a sense of perpetual dread. There are descriptions of shootings, killings and lootings, particularly, targeting those with Japanese roots on racial lines, including houses being set on fire by conservative white groups.

The boy in Otsuka’s *When the Emperor was Divine* emphasizes “We would dress just like they did. We would change our names to sound more like theirs” (114) to the extent that he thought of not recognizing his mother if she called him by his Japanese name. The Nisei changed most of the aspects of their identity that reminded them of their Japanese roots. There was a single goal behind all these alterations “We would never be mistaken for the enemy again” (114).

When the family received a telegram from the father informing them about his return from Santa Fe in December 1945, they found it difficult to believe that it was true. They were excited, yet they felt anxious till they saw him in person.

When they go to receive their father, they are astounded by his weak appearance “a small stooped man carrying old cardboard suitcase stepped out... He

moved slowly, carefully, with aid of a cane... we had never seen before” (131). They did not react the way they had expected themselves to, that is, to run up to him or wave hands and shout with joy. When their mother asks the children to go to him they feel “the man who stood before us was not our father. He was somebody else, a stranger who had been sent back in our father’s place. *That’s not him*” (132). The image of father they had cherished was as a handsome, strong man sure of himself. A person who would draw, sing and laugh with them. When their father returned from the prison, he looked much older than fifty-six years. He had worn dentures and lost his hair. His ribs could be seen and he seemed tired, old, weak and had lost his vitality. The father hugged the children and repeated their names to memorize them, as if he had forgotten them.

Otsuka portrays the long-term impact of the internment and incarceration on the people through the character of the father. The father dreamt of missing the train, unable to return home and being interned for life. Internment had changed his outlook towards life and society completely. He was suspicious of everyone from neighbours to service boys. He was convinced that someone was spying on their house. He hated talking on phone or eating out for the same reason. He cautioned children that anyone could be an informer. He firmly believed that the rift between the Americans and the Japanese Americans would always exist “They just don’t like us. That’s just the way it is” (134). He was overcome by pessimism and rejected all possibilities of developing trust between the two communities. The sense of betrayal would continue lingering over their future interactions. He would get enraged at “unanticipated delay of any sort” (134). Once he was in a queue at the bank for a long time. He lost his temper and began to shout at the staff. The family chose not to recognize him.

The impact of the internment not only affected the way the detainees reacted to the situations in the society, but also their interpersonal and filial relationships. The father did not go to work as the company that employed him before the war had been shut down. No other company was ready to employ him due to his Japanese roots. Besides, his health too had deteriorated. He would spend his time noting words from the newspaper in his small book, cleaning the house or arranging snacks for the children. He had a common response to any news that was given to him “Is that so?” “Always it seemed he had something else on his mind” (135). The father would indulge in overthinking as it had become an unconscious pattern with increasing vulnerability. He would also lament over the promise he had made to his wife while getting married that she would never have to work in her life. As a result, a sense of failure and helplessness would overcome him. The father embraced isolation as a coping mechanism. He would sleep early to get rid of the day. Thoughts of separation from his family and the outer world would continue to occupy his mind. Suspicion and insecurity dominated the psyches of the traumatized Japanese North Americans. Though, overtly they seemed to return to a sense of normalcy post internment, feelings of betrayal by the state, the society and their neighbours did haunt their lives.

In her memoir, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston also discusses her father’s return. Ko Wakatsuki returned to the internment camp from the prison in September 1942. He had gone through many terrible experiences during his detainment in North Dakota, which had changed him. A symbol of this transformation was the cane he held to favour his right leg. He looked considerably old than before.

Carrying a cane in feudal Japan represented a dignified existence. Wakatsuki Houston compares Ko’s stick to that of a military officer’s. It also represents the pride in the samurai ancestry as Wakatsuki Houston juxtaposes it with the sword of Ko’s

great-great grandfather during the time of Japan's transition to a modernized social system where the age old privileged class structures are diminishing

homemade version of a samurai sword his great-great grandfather carried in the land around Hiroshima, at a time when such warriors weren't much needed anymore, when their swords were both their virtue and their burden. (Houston and Houston 47).

The cane is the manifestation of the last vestige of power after humiliation during detention as Ko uses it to assert his authority in the family by threatening the kids and wife with it in his hallucinations after being drunk. Ko gives in to drinking and stops socializing. Wakatsuki Houston feels sad when some women in the block call her father an *Inu*, a derogatory term used for collaborator and informer of the enemy. While reflecting on this incident as an adult, Wakatsuki Houston comprehends her father's stand of isolating himself from the community.

Ko Wakatsuki maintained complete silence about his time in detention, like most of the Japanese North American fathers. Ko avoided speaking about his time in Fort Lincoln. It was not the physical hardships he faced there and in the camp that made him suffer in silence, rather "it was the charge of disloyalty. For a man raised in Japan, there was no greater disgrace" (72). From the perspective of patriarchal conditioning, he felt vulnerable and powerless. Most Issei men felt a sense of emasculation with no rights and control over their lives.

Wakatsuki Houston reports of internal rebellions, protests for justice and for an increase in wages while marking the anniversary of internment as well as establishment of kitchen workers' union in the camp her family lived. The internees held public meetings for demanding higher wages, better food as well as a sign of

open revolt, exhibition of patriotism, and a wholesale return to Japan. As time passed, these protests turned loud and violent. There were assassination threats too. On 5 December 1942, “Fred Tayama, a leader in the Japanese American Citizens League and a “friend” of the administration was badly beaten by six men” (73). Three men were arrested the next day and one was sent to jail at Independence. This accused was a young cook “known for his defiance and contempt for the authorities” (73).

Wakatsuki Houston also notes that there were pro Japan forces, headed by a Hawaiian born First World War veteran, which worked for repatriation to Japan and protested the internment.

Ko like many older Issei men did not take a regular job. He instead preferred devoting time to his hobbies. One of his hobbies was brewing alcohol. After the turmoil of the first year settled, authorities allowed the camp inmates to go out for recreation. Ko began hiking, collecting wood, carving furniture from it and also created a small rock garden with stepping stones. Stepping stones are an integral part of any Japanese Tea garden. They are known as *Tobi-Ishi* and are slightly elevated from the ground level. Tea Master Sen no Rikyu first used them with the purpose of mentally preparing the guests for the tea ceremony while they ‘arrive’, by making them set aside their everyday life as walking on a path of stepping stones demands complete attention from a person.

Ko was also fond of sketching and painting mountains. Whitney was the highest peak in the nearby mountains. Wakatsuki Houston notes “Whitney reminded Papa of Fujiyama, that is, it gave him the same kind of spiritual sustenance” (98). The mountain peaks have inspirational value in Japanese culture like many other cultures in the world. The rocks in the garden were their miniature representations. They had symbolic significance as enduring entities that faced the powerful, natural forces in

the physical world akin to individuals who confronted inevitable circumstances in the social world. Ko sought courage to deal with the prevailing conditions from his rock garden. Ko resigned to the circumstances as many had, *Shikata ga nai*. He decided to endure “the climate, the confinement, the steady crumbling of family life” (98).

Gardening provided solace to the inmates. The rich alluvial soil and diversion of some water from the Los Angeles bound aqueduct enabled some of the inmates who were professional gardeners to raise a farm nearby Block 28. Wakatsuki Houston associates, metaphorically, the emergence of greenery with the people living in Manzanar developing a sense of temporary belongingness. The attachment to this previously unlivable place make the feelings of Japanese Americans towards Manzanar, in particular, and the U.S. in general, quite ambivalent. It seemed “almost lovely land you could not escape from yet almost didn’t want to leave”. Manzanar “became a world unto itself, with its own logic and familiar ways” such that the inmates became averse to relocation to an unknown place as they knew, certainly, that they would face difficulties in adjusting to a new environment and its rules “It was as if the war were forgotten, our reason for being there forgotten” (99-100).

Nisei, having spent their formative years in internment, decided either to enroll themselves to get recruited in the special Nisei unit of the U.S. Army or join arts and sports clubs to facilitate their assimilation in the mainstream society. Unlike the Nisei, the Issei men, like Ko, could not recover from the major setback the internment had given their lives. Wakatsuki Houston notes that Ko could not recover from this situation financially and spiritually “one of the amazing things about America is the way it can both undermine you and keep you believing in your own possibilities, pumping you with hope” (154). Ko, as a new beginning, decided to follow his dream of a housing co-operative and prepared a blueprint to approach the

Los Angeles city authorities for support. Wakatsuki Houston's mother on the other hand, resumed her job in the canneries the way she had worked before internment. Wakatsuki Houston emphasizes that Ko could never agree to taking up any such job himself or rather her mother could not see him doing that as it would be a sign of loss of self-esteem and helpless acceptance of the circumstances for Ko, which was not his nature.

In Kogawa's *Obasan*, Tadashi Nakane and Isamu Nakane, Naomi Nakane's father and uncle, return to camp after being taken to New Denver. Naomi describes her response when she meets her father after a long time "We do not talk. His hands cup my face... I am Goldilocks, I am Momotaro returning. I am leaf in the wind restored to its branch, child of my father come home. The world is safe once more and Chicken Little is wrong. The sky is not falling down after all (202).

Government orders that prevented father and Uncle from returning to them reach Naomi via Emily in 1972, that is, twenty seven years after the internment. Uncle Isamu was allowed to move to Kaslo for Eastern placement post internment. However, father was not deemed fit due to health reasons. Naomi's father was sent to New Denver repatriation centre considering that eventually he shall be sent to Japan.

In conclusion, this chapter utilizes elaborate textual illustrations from memoirs and fiction to showcase how the writers, as the representatives of their community, have resurrected internment as a personal and collective memory by articulating their trauma through their works. Affect Theory and Material Engagement Theory have been useful in discussing the role of objects and spaces in memory making process in the fictional narratives of the internment. The reflections of internment in the literary works have been divided into three phases namely pre-internment memories,

memories of the internment and post-internment memories. Concerns such as protective silence, postmemory, memory households and nostalgia have been crucial in understanding internment as a central memory for Japanese North Americans for multiple generations.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## RACIALIZATION, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND INTERNMENT

This chapter looks at the process of racialization of Japanese in varied local contexts in North America, particularly, the mainland U.S., Canada and Hawaii. With the help of critical concepts such as racial formation, heterogeneous ethnic group and racial triangulation, this chapter attempts to understand the racial hierarchy prevalent in the predominantly white society that the Japanese North Americans operated in. Internment was a culmination of a prolonged history of racial discrimination. This chapter examines deep-rooted racial stereotypes, regulations pertaining to enemy aliens, phenomenon of picture brides, legal construction of race, loyalty questionnaire, racism within military service, draft resistance and model minority myth which are central to drawing a comprehensive picture of racial discrimination faced by Japanese North Americans. The theoretical arguments are substantiated by apt textual illustrations from literary expressions of the internment.

### 4.1 Racialized Discourse and Racist Expressions

David Goldberg in his book *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* (1993) examines various facets of racialized discourse and racist expressions including the formative power dynamics manifested in primitive terms, which dictate the descriptions, representations, conventions and implications for a racial community. According to Goldberg, “expressions of the racialized discourse comprise of beliefs and verbal outbursts (epithets, slurs, etc.), acts and their consequences, and the principles upon which racialized institutions are based” (41).

While providing an overview of previous discussions on racism and racialised discourse he points out that “racialized discourse can be comprehended with the enunciative and the analytic texts. Racism as a discursive object has been variously analyzed as rationalizations for psychosexual fear; for economic or social disparities; for cultural exclusions; or for political entitlements”. Further, Goldberg delineates multifarious articulations of racist expressions which “involve enunciations of racist principles, supposed justifications of differences, advantages, claims to superiority (whether considered 'natural' or 'developed'), and legitimations of racist practices and institutions”. These expressions impact various arenas, such as scientific, linguistic, economic, bureaucratic, legal, philosophical, religious, and are in turn transformed by them. Racism as a discursive object is based on racial expressions “indicating ascribed or self-assumed social identities predicated on racialized group membership” (42).

The function of racialized discourse is to “show how, methodologically, socioeconomic materiality and ideological conception are mutually interactive or codetermining” (Goldberg 46). Goldberg explores the possibility of determining unified grammar of racial discourse. He analyses imagery, metaphors and stereotypes employed in the descriptions of various racial communities and the distinctions in perceptions. Racialized discourse is not limited to mere descriptions, but consists of “a set of hypothetical premises about human kinds...and about the differences between them (both mental and physical). It involves a class of ethical choices (e.g., domination and subjugation, entitlement and restriction, disrespect and abuse). And it incorporates a set of institutional regulations, directions, and pedagogic models” (47). These hypotheses, choices and models get translated into prescriptions for behaviour.

Goldberg notes that the “primitive terms are manifestations of power relations vested in and between historically located subjects, and they are effects of a determinate social history. . . . They generate the concepts and categories in terms of which racism is actually expressed and comprehended.” (48). Primitive terms engender factors such as classification, hierarchical value, identification, discrimination, exclusion, domination, subjugation, entitlement and restriction, which work to legitimize the racial status quo.

Goldberg visualizes the process of identification and discrimination in racial discourse gradually stemming from pre-conceptual stage of primitive terms. “*Difference* and *identity* inherent in the concept of race, furnishing whatever grounds can be claimed for racial classification. Domination of a particular race is established in respect to a series of differences from other individuals or groups”. Further, he adds “racial identity, even when externally ascribed, implies unity at least conceptually. When this identity is internalized it prompts identification, a social sense of belonging together. It is then that racial differentiation begins to define otherness, and discrimination *against* the racially defined other becomes at once *exclusion* of the different” (51). Differential exclusion is the foundation of what manifests as racist expression. It is at the core of “racist desires, dispositions, beliefs, hypotheses, and assertions (including acts, laws, and institutions). . . . of entitlement and restriction, endowment and appropriation” (52).

Goldberg considers the role of epistemes in racial discourse and their interplay in the politics of truth, power and authority. He opines “Authority is established and exercised only by being vested with the force of discrimination, exclusion, . . . . Racialized discourse has for the most part dominated definition of otherness

throughout modernity, and racist expression has largely furnished the material power for the forceful exclusion of the different” (52).

An institutional or personal authority becomes necessary to implement discriminatory or exclusionary practices in racist communities as mere sense of belonging cannot be an influential force. This authority differentiates between those entitled to benefits of the status quo and those to be restricted and discriminated against. “By internalizing this authority and subjecting themselves to the law thus author(iz)ed and enforced, group members incorporate themselves and establish cohesion” (53). Eventually, the group assumes a superior position. If the authority attains state power, the racialized discourse is implanted in institutional practices. Additionally, racialized discourse played a crucial role in dictating relationships between “social subjects”. Beliefs such as mind and body could be perceived as distinct entities and could be exploited as physical machines paved way to “technologies of discipline and power [being] superimposed upon human subjects; they encouraged docility by reducing even *social* subjectivities, or at least some forms of social subjectivity, to physical dimensions and correlates” (53) and perpetuated exploitative regulations.

For human subjects, body is integral to personal experience. Metaphorically, the term body is also used to discuss structure of power in a society in terms such as “Body politic”. Central to the body politic is a complex system of identities, distinctions and exclusions. “Corporeal properties have also furnished the metaphorical media for distinguishing the pure from the impure, the diseased from the clean and acceptable, the included from the excluded”. A hierarchical order is established based on differentiation founded on so called purity “whether interpreted biologically (in terms of blood or genes), hygienically (in terms, for instance, of body

odor), culturally (for example, language as signifying the evolution of thought patterns and rational capacity), or even environmentally (virtuous character, like nose shape and size, determined by climate)". Any transgressions are portrayed as threats to the order (54).

Goldberg highlights that racialized discourse has ironically unified subjects in authority and allowed them to justify exclusionary practices towards the racial others, often with assumptions of legal and moral objectivity. He notes "these authoritative issues of racialized exclusion, entitlement, and expectation are exemplified most vividly by immigration policy. Eugenicists, for instance, addressed the political, legal, and moral issues of immigration from the standpoint of their 'scientific' findings". For instance, the policies in the U.S. in late nineteenth century favoured immigration of certain ethnicities such as English, Irish, German and Scandinavian over others within European immigrants. In the context of the immigrants of Asian origin, "Orientals' were... excluded altogether, culminating in the complete ban on Japanese immigration in 1924" (55).

Goldberg comments on the persuasive appeal of racialized discourse, personal conviction or "rational willingness" on part of the racist subject to embrace the racialized discourse. He examines racist expression and racialized discourse in terms of agency and subjectivity. Formation of subjectivity involves self-recognition and mutual recognition on social plane through interpellation. "Language furnishes a key for becoming conscious of oneself as distinct from the world, social discourse provides the means for social self-definition. Naming one's race, on the plane of racial identity, has come to function in something like the way that naming oneself at the level of self-consciousness and self-identity does" (57-58). Internalizing racial law also comprises of self-recognition along prescribed social, perhaps, role models.

“Each level of subjection to authoritative discourses or to racial authority is established by way of sociolinguistic symbols. These symbols incorporate general rules and taboos that represent The Law: the Law of Authority in general, or the Racial Law in particular” (58).

Goldberg analyses impact of racialized discourse on intentions, dispositions, reasons, and goals determined by racist subjects. The general intention or goal of racists is racial exclusion. However, Goldberg considers specific goals such as “domination or subjugation; of maximizing profit by maintaining a cheap labor force, a reserve army of labor; of reserving jobs for members of what they take to be their own race; or of maintaining indigenous culture. Certain reasons provided by racists as justifications to their discriminatory acts include “scapegoating (e.g., a conspiracy theory), rationalizations (like inferiority), or rational stereotyping (e.g., a normative judgment appealing to factual evidence)”. Psychological pressure, fear of physical danger and conformism to community regulations are some other factors that shape behaviour of racist subjects (59).

## **4.2 Race: Multiple Meanings**

Goldberg provides an historical overview of race as a phenomenon. Race has been seen from a biological perspective wherein race is interpreted as “kinship” or “common gene pool” and as a universal factor contributing to the foundation of social structure. Secondly, race has been perceived from a social perspective. In the social sense, race has been defined by relations prevalent in the contemporary society of specific historical periods. Race has evolved to indicate various meanings such as natural kind based on roots or origins and population based on lineage. At times, race is equated to class, that is, “socioeconomic status or relation to the mode of production”. This perspective underscores the material implications of racial position

for a community. “As status, race is simply an index of social standing or rank reflected in terms of criteria like wealth, education, style of life, linguistic capacity, residential location, consumptive capacity, or having or lacking respect” (69). Race has also been seen in the context of culture including the perception that there exist certain superior characteristics embodied by certain linguistic communities “the cultural conception includes identifying race with language group, religion, group habits, norms, or customs: a typical style of behavior, dress, cuisine, music, literature, and art” (70). Ethnocentric conception of race, that Goldberg calls ethnorace, looks at cultural identification and distinction underlying the process of defining ethnicity wherein “the biological in a sense becomes one among the possible cultural criteria for determining ethnicity” (75). According to Goldberg, certain stages such as boundary formation and naturalization of social identity are common to formation of racial and ethnic categories. He enlists five factors to be taken into account while ascertaining a group as a race “(a) a history of being so named; (b) the processes and criteria of their boundary construction; (c) the rhetoric of their genesis; (d) the sorts of contestational and exclusionary relations the group so circumscribed has with other groups at the time; and (e) the terms of self-identification and self-ascription” (76-77). However, Goldberg also warns against the danger of reducing race solely to ethnicity and ignoring specific experiences within racially defined groups, at times due to the vested interest of furthering an assimilationist agenda for the immigrants “Perceived failures of some racially defined groups to advance or integrate are then taken to turn not on dominant boundary construction, restriction, and exclusion but on the absence of certain kinds of values on the part of the group itself” (78). In the ethnic paradigm of race, the racial other is considered to be alike in the predefined racial categories and the particular differences are glossed over in favour larger categories.

While implicating intersection between concepts of race and nation, Goldberg employs Étienne Balibar's terms to provide twin perspectives on race, firstly as 'nonnational nations', in other words, '*supranational*' and secondly as 'bounded nation', that is, in specific spirit '*supernational*' (80). Goldberg takes a step forward from the relative abstract nature of Omi and Winant's concept of racial formation which emphasizes on the structural dimension of assigning racial significance to social relationships. Goldberg utilizes two terms, namely, race creation and race constitution to explore the hierarchical, racial arrangements in a society, initially, propounded by actual social actors, which are later passed down as apparently natural course of social order through discourses, expressions and other meaning making mechanisms. It is through racial constitution that an individual learns their position in the racial hierarchy prevalent in the society. Thus, racial politics is closely connected to the political agency of various communities in a society.

Goldberg points out that the conventional understanding of racism as either fuelled by personal prejudice or sustained by social, ideological and institutional mechanisms for economic exploitation and political exclusion is delimiting in nature. He sets out to take into account the systemic nature of racism along with laying of well-defined principles to hold individuals accountable for racist expressions. Though racism comprises of 'social practices which (implicitly or explicitly) attribute merits or allocate values to members of racially categorized groups, solely because of their race' (97), yet there is a need to distinguish between racialized expressions which are a part of benign, colloquial speech in contrast to derogatory, racist expressions. Thus, Goldberg emphasizes that the primary basis of racism is advocating and practicing exclusion of people for being designated as members of another racial group. Hence, while examining racist expressions, it is vital that their long-term impact be assessed

by identifying consistent patterns and possibilities of refrainment. He further explicates that racists are inclined to attributing, overtly or indirectly, racial characteristics or traits which are apparently distinct from themselves to others. These biological or social attributions function not only as distinguishing markers, but also as explanations for indisputable and fixed racial categories that justify preferences and potential exclusions and inclusions. In addition to this, racist institutions are those organisations whose foundational principles and societal initiatives encourage and disseminate racist ideas and actions. It also implies that such institutions fail in addressing or eliminating any institutional procedures that lead to discriminatory outcomes. Hence, Goldberg highlights “where there is a recognizable, institutionally governed pattern of racially predicated discrimination or exclusion, ongoing because unrectified, the presumption must be that the continuing exclusions are considered permissible by those institutionally able to do something about them” (99). Racist practices can operate with prevalent exploitative class distinctions based on principles of economic oppression and wealth appropriation. Racism serves to curtail opportunities and rights of racially defined poor such that the products of their hard work are conveniently appropriated and economic inequality sustained given the racial power structure. However, “racism may sometimes be about domination in the sense of being in a position to exclude others from (primary) social goods (including rights), to prevent their access, or participation, or expression, or to demean or diminish their self-respect” (101).

Goldberg examines mechanisms of production of racial knowledge and otherness and the role of power in the same. He points out that in this process of knowledge production about the racial other, a repository of information, ideas, mental representations, behavioural patterns and predictions regarding responses is

created where the other gets imprisoned within the representational delimitations imposed by the powerful. In the colonial context, this holds true for the colonized people of colour who were subjected to scrutiny by the dominant white colonizers.

### **4.3 Construction of Race in Japanese North American**

#### **Context**

In the context of the internment, dominant American and Canadian lobbies did perpetuate certain representations of people of Japanese origin along the lines of conventional paradigms such as the unassimilable other or yellow peril through official documents as well unofficial signs and behavioural patterns. In the colonial context, the plantations, ghettos, prisons and other spaces of the Other became testing grounds for the racially discriminatory practices. Similarly, in face of the internment, the camps became sites of interrogation and experimentation on the racially marginalized Japanese Americans and Canadians. Goldberg notes that,

The philosophical abstraction becomes objectified, once objectified reified as natural, and so extended universally...Those thus rendered Other are sacrificed to the idealization, excluded from the being of personhood, from social benefits, and from political (self-)representation. Erased in the name of a universality that has no place for them, the subjects of real political economy are denied and silenced, ontologically and epistemologically and morally evicted. (151)

Don Nakanishi cites the example of the model minority myth in the context of Asian Americans, particularly the Japanese Americans as an instance of knowledge production that subsumes the diverse racial experiences of members of the

community under a generalized identity glossing over personal, ethnic, national and historical situations. Model minority myth presumes assimilation as the exemplary model of incorporating immigrants into the mainstream society. Goldberg emphasizes that “this image prompts two unreasonable (because unwarranted) implications: first, that Asian Americans as a totality no longer experience structural forms of racist exclusion; and second, that those who continue to face such discriminatory exclusions have only their own pathological deviance to blame” (208).

### **4.3.1 Racialization of Japanese and the Heterogeneous Local Realities**

Jane Yamashiro in her research article titled “A Triple Parallax : Japanese as a Heterogenous Global Ethnic Group” attempts to comprehend the challenges people of Japanese ancestry face having socialized in heterogeneous social environments away from their homeland and at times, having been compelled to return. While examining the peculiar case of Japanese Americans and the “alternative construction of Japaneseness”, Yamashiro observes that “both commonalities arising from shared ancestry (and culture) and differences arising from sociohistorical circumstances simultaneously shaped interactions between ethnic Japanese from different societies” (190). She propounds a concept called “heterogeneous global ethnic groups” to discuss the multiple identities which differ due to their sociohistorical context, yet are connected by virtue of shared ethnicity, ancestry and culture. She draws from Stuart Hall’s discussion on cultural identities and Lisa Lowe’s concept of heterogeneity within an ethnic group, for instance in the context of Asian American identity. Along with historical and geographical circumstances, Yamashiro also considers the racial positioning of groups with shared ancestry in diverse societies, particularly with regards to Omi and Winant’s concept of racial formation, who shed light on how “a society has different racial classifications and boundaries for racial categories based

on historical particularities, ethnic groups sometimes constructed as racial groups and other times as ethnic groups that are subsumed by larger racial groups” (J. H. Yamashiro 191).

In his article titled “Cultural Identity and Diaspora”, Stuart Hall looks at cultural identity from two angles. Firstly in form of a core that comprises of “one, shared culture” concealed by the “imposed selves”, which constitutes of the “common historical experiences and shared cultural codes ...with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning” (223). He strengthens his view by citing Franz Fanon who looked up to the quest of rediscovering such a core as a source of hopeful rehabilitation beyond the colonial distortion and rejection of past. Hall also considers role of imagination in this quest and in turn the significance of such a rediscovery as an exercise in production of identity (224). In his second view on cultural identity Hall highlights the “deep and significant difference” that is inherent given that it is a dynamic position as he acknowledges that “identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past” (225).

Yamashiro points out that Stuart Hall’s perception about shared ethnic identity is a relatively essentialist one, though it emphasizes on the positive aspects of considering the characteristics that consolidate and unify a group by bringing to fore the true, shared identity as opposed to the overt identity influenced by local differences. Yamashiro highlights that heterogenous global ethnic groups not only share claims to a real or imagined ancestry, but also to “a body of cultural references, and an historical past, but not necessarily contemporary cultural forms or identifications” (192). However, she cautions about making any presumptions about the everchanging relationship between past, present and future based on ideas of a

shared past. Lowe's concept of heterogeneity signifies "the variation within a bounded category, based on gender, class, and generation...as well as difference based on systematic racial constructions" (192). By drawing from concepts theorized by Hall and Lowe, Yamashiro defines heterogeneous global ethnic group as "people who share a common ancestry, real or imagined, who are historically and culturally linked, but whose histories have diverged to create new, unique cultural forms and communities around the world" (192). This concept underscores the "common history in the ancestral homeland prior to emigration" and takes cognizance of the potential of constructing a shared ethnic identity while simultaneously accepting the present diverse, local identities within the group.

One of the factors responsible for varied local identities within a heterogeneous global ethnic group is geographic and historical diversity inclusive of the specific contexts of immigration and influences due to assimilation and acculturation as much as the changes in the culture in the homeland over prolonged periods of time. For instance, as Harry Kitano points out, the Japan the Issei emigrated from in the early twentieth century and the modern twenty first century Japan are different cultural spaces. Hall locates cultural identities in histories. They do not exist in isolation. Hence, there is a need to "acknowledge ruptures and discontinuities, and to think about cultural identities as more open ended and vulnerable to change" (J. H. Yamashiro 193). Cultural fluidity and contextuality enable complex articulation of identities. Racialized social structures, that is, institutionalized perceptions of race that dictate the placing of various ethnic groups in the social hierarchy also contribute to heterogeneity.

The fluidity and dynamism integral to cultural identity culminate in dual perceptions that come to be associated with the Japanese in the North American social

fabric. Yamashiro concludes that the Japanese have been seen as an ethnic group at some junctures and as a race at some other points. This categorical fluctuation is subjected to the historical timeframe and the geographical location. "...within each geopolitical location, is historical diversity, as well. Over time, there may be periods in a which Japanese have been constructed as a race and other times they are seen as an ethnic group. The multiple and varying constructions ethnic Japanese demonstrate how racial categories, boundaries, and meanings intersect with political and social forces, and differ by context" (194).

Racialization as Japanese or as Asiatics or Orientals was negative in 1940s given the Second World War and the subsequent internment in 1940s. There was rearticulation of identity with Asian American movement in the 1960s. However, there was re-emergence of anti-Japanese sentiment in the 1980s with economic competition between the U.S. and Japan. Yamashiro provides a historical overview of the changing connotation and use of Japanese as a category in the U.S. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, migration of Japanese student labourers to the U.S. increased manifold. Japanese religious, social and cultural organisations were established. At this juncture, the term Japanese did not necessarily have negative identitarian connotation. The Gentlemen's Agreement in 1907-08 imposed limitations on migration of Japanese based exclusively on family reunification which brought into existence the phenomenon of picture brides where Japanese men in the U.S. would finance the entry of their Japanese wives after matrimonial arrangements by seeing photographs. However, the existing anti-Chinese rhetoric soon was extended to the Japanese and a common racial category namely Asiatics seems to have taken shape by early 1900s as seen in press releases and naming of White organizations that lobbied to protest Asian immigration.

Further, Yamashiro notes that Takao Ozawa, a Japanese immigrant who had sought to be naturalized as a citizen in the U.S. was refused citizenship on grounds of belonging to Mongolian race, when as per the provisions of act governing naturalization, the person was required to be a free white person. Yamashiro underscores that this case was an example of, in words of Ian Haney-López "the legal construction of race". She concludes "Despite Japanese attempts to present themselves as similar to white Americans, U.S. court rulings and anti-Japanese organizations successfully racialized Japanese as Asians, Orientals, and Mongolians as a way to rigidly differentiate them and justify their exclusion from American citizenship and other resources" (197).

During the Second World War, with Imperial Japan becoming an enemy of the U.S., Japanese were racialized as a distinct group subjected to racially motivated state regulations such as the Presidential Executive Order 9066 that led to the forced uprooting and incarceration of the Japanese Americans in interior camps. Racialization was utilized to defend unfair and discriminatory policies. Post war, they were investigated into and proven to have originated from anti-Japanese sentiments of the white economic lobbies that saw the immigrants and their descendants as competition in agricultural sector. Stereotypes such as yellow peril and rapidly growing population were prevalent on the Pacific coast. Yamashiro also highlights that the statements of Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, Commanding General of the Western Defense Command such as "In the war in which we are now engaged racial affinities are not severed by migration" (198) construct a relationship between ethnic origin and national affiliation such that it is claimed that the immigrants are inclined towards supporting their homeland. Other enemy aliens such as ethnic Italians, Germans were interned, but not uprooted based on differential racialization

process such that the European ethnic groups were racialized white, which equalled being American, whereas Japanese were racialized as non-Americans (199). In addition, visual guides to distinguish between Japanese and Chinese were also published in renowned magazines during the war which also explains another facet of racialization process.

Post war, the changing relationship between the U.S. and Japan and the backdrop civil rights movement, paved way to construction of pan-ethnic Asian American identity “As a response to racial categorization of them by mainstream American society, people of Asian ancestry began to come together to assert a rearticulated shared ethnic identity as Asian Americans” (J. H. Yamashiro 200). Some factors that contributed to emergence of this new identity are generational distance from conflicting national histories after settling in the U.S., greater interaction between various ethnonational communities having moved beyond segregated neighbourhoods and the realization that they are subjected to similar racially discriminatory practices brought about solidarity between the communities of distinct Asian ethnicities. It was an empowering step towards reclaiming an unified identity as Asian Americans.

#### **4.3.1.1 The Unique Case of Hawaii Japanese Americans**

Yamashiro opines that it is important to comprehend the racialization process of Hawaii Japanese Americans in relation to the Hawaiian society which would serve to indicate their position in the society’s racial framework. It is distinct from the position of the Japanese Americans on the mainland. She notes six reasons which have led to this difference. Firstly, the influence of the “local” on the racial and ethnic identities of the people of Japanese ancestry in Hawaii needs to be taken into account

as it imparts uniqueness to their identity formation. Secondly the pattern of immigration of Japanese to Hawaii is not the same as on the mainland. Thirdly, the plantation system has immense influence on racial formation in Hawaii. The proportion of Japanese in the constitution of the total population is significant. The experiences of Hawaii Japanese Americans are not similar to those on the mainland. Lastly, they have consolidated significant political, social and economic power which imparts distinctive identity to Hawaii Japanese Americans (203-204).

In fact, the use of the term “local” with Japanese has multiple dimensions to it. Yamashiro notes two reasons why the Japanese prefer this association and they do not feel the need to specifically emphasize the term “American” in their identity, firstly the Asian ancestry of a section of Hawaiian population is a recognized fact and secondly it is a conscious position taken to distinguish themselves from “Haolified” Continental Japanese Americans (204). The term “haole” is used for whites and also to indicate that they are culturally nonlocal. The term local is also used by those of Japanese ancestry to prioritize their connection with Hawaii over their ethnic background. The term “local” stands for distinction in terms of birth or considerable period of time spent on the island such that the person has imbibed the unique lifestyle of the islands. Yamashiro observes “since the mid-1990s, “local” is contrasted with and constructed against not only whites, immigrants, and the military, but also tourists and Japanese foreign investors...claiming a local identity is a way to maintain solidarity with other ethnic groups despite a growing gap in socioeconomic status and access to power in Hawaii” (205). Joy Kogawa in her novel *Itsuka*, describes the trip of Naomi, the protagonist and a Sansei and Emily, her aunt and a Nisei activist to Hawaii in July 1976, where they are given a warm welcome by Emily’s Nisei friends there. Emily introduces her niece as

another “kotonk” – a jocular term for Japanese Americans from the mainland. They say our heads are made of wood and make a kotonk sound...Hawaii’s niseis, Aunt Emily says, are as unbent as freestanding trees. Unlike us crippled bonsai in Canada, they’ve retained community here. (101)

Interestingly, Aunt Emily, a Canadian Nisei, also employs the term “kotonk” to introduce her niece to her Hawaiian Nisei friends categorizing all Japanese Canadians together with the Japanese American mainlanders, probably, considering the factors such as construction of identity, degree of preservation of culture and community ties in contrast to their Hawaiian Japanese American counterparts.

#### **4.3.1.2 Japanese Migration to Hawaii and Racialization in the Plantation System**

Japanese migration to Hawaii had begun with agreements between the Hawaiian monarchy and Imperial Japan. Hawaii became a U.S. territory in 1898 and a constitution was drafted for the territory wherein, it was compelled to adopt U.S. laws. Yamashiro, with help of historical sources, traces three periods of Japanese migration to Hawaii “During the first, from 1885 to 1894, married couples and single men emigrated as Japanese government-sponsored contract labourers” (206). These labourers primarily worked on sugar cane plantations. The planters sponsored the passage. The immigrants belonged to poor strata of Japanese society. On the continent, specifically on the West Coast, however, neither there was sponsorship by the government nor any plantations. “From 1894 to 1908, migrant sponsorship shifted from the Japanese government to private emigration companies (*imingaisha*) based in Japan”. Either Japanese immigrants went as private contractual labourers or utilized their personal finances, sometimes, even raising money through loans. The Organic Act of 1900 brought to halt contractual labour migration as well as the existing

contracts. Thus, Yamashiro notes “1908-1924 was a period of primarily "independent" emigration meaning that most people were not sponsored by the government or private emigration companies but, instead, had the support of relatives already in the United States” (207). Gentleman’s Agreement of 1907-1908 ended migration to the continent as well as to Hawaii, considering the latter became a territory of the U.S.

The plantation life was harsh. The terms in the contracts were violated by the planters and the Japanese labourers challenged the harsh treatment. When anxiety due to the swift increase in the Japanese population was mounting, the U.S. took over Hawaii. Yamashiro underscores that “as a way to curb the growth of Japanese in the Islands (and to keep any one ethnic group from gaining too much power including the ability to strike), planters brought in workers from places such as Portugal, Spain, and the Philippines” (207-208).

A hierarchal system emerged between the groups of multiple racial and ethnic groups. This hierarchy manifested in terms of separation, housing, earnings and standard of living. At this point, Yamashiro points out, the ethnic background was read as race. This systematic separation and differentiation based on country and language reinforced differences between groups and made distinctions between them socially recognized” (208).

The dominant class, the planters, comprehended the fact that this segregation would serve their interests. When it came to wages managerial positions at the top rung were occupied by “Americans, Englishmen, Scots, and Germans...By 1890, those at the bottom included Portuguese, Hawaiian, Chinese, South Sea Islanders, and Japanese”. Japanese were categorized as Orientals on the continent as well as in

Hawaii. Hence, “in 1908, for the same type and amount of work, Japanese were paid \$18.00 per month while Portuguese and Puerto Ricans were being paid \$22.50, had better houses, and were allowed to use an acre of land each”. While observing the composition of Japanese immigrants considering their hometowns in Japan, Yamashiro notes “the Japanese who emigrated to Hawaii were similar to their continental counterparts- being predominantly from rural farming families in Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Kumamoto, and Fukuoka prefectures in south-western Japan- the Hawaii contingency also included a large proportion of Okinawans from 1900” (208).

Yamashiro cites Harry Kitano’s statistical data from his book *Generations and Identity : The Japanese American* (1993) “When the United States entered World War II, there were 157,000 people of Japanese ancestry (including 35,000 Japanese noncitizens and 68,000 people with dual citizenship) out of a population of 421,000 in the U.S. territory of Hawaii... In other words, Japanese comprised 37.3 percent of the local population” (210).

#### **4.3.1.3 Hawaii Japanese Americans and the Internment Experience in Milton Murayama’s Novels**

Yamashiro explains the factors that led to a difference in the internment experience of Japanese Americans and Japanese Hawaii Americans. Firstly, the limited number of Hawaii Japanese Americans that were interned, precisely 3,341 of almost 160,000, “a smaller proportion of the total ethnic Japanese population than on the U.S. continent” (J. H. Yamashiro 210). They were distributed in Hawaii and on the mainland. This was because many men served in the U.S. forces. In contrast, as mentioned earlier, 120,000 people, including Japanese immigrants and their

descendants born in the U.S. were interned on the mainland. Some reasons for internment of limited number of Japanese Hawaii Americans included necessity of their labour, arrangement for transportation to the continent and economic cost of sustenance of this population either locally or on the mainland.

Another contested reason, that Yamashiro cites, is Nisei men were a significant part of Hawaii's armed forces and defence "a large number of Japanese Americans had been in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) at the University of Hawaii since before the war began, so there was already an interest in serving in the military" (211). However, some researchers point out that, though these students were allowed to be a part of Hawaii Territorial Guard (HTG) after bombing of Pearl Harbour, they were soon relieved from their duties in January 1942 based on the orders from Washington. Milton Murayama notes the same in his *All I Asking For Is My Body* (1988), when Kiyoshi Oyama, the protagonist records "All the ROTC students at the University of Hawaii, McKinley and Farrington were called out to form the Hawaii Territorial Guard on the first day, and there were many *niseis* among them. At the same time the *niseis* who'd been drafted in the Army were kicked out of their outfit and assigned to do labor work like stringing barbed wire at beaches. Their guns were taken from them" (80). Murayama speaks about the irrational rumours prevalent at that point of time such as one of the Japanese pilots shot down is said to have worn a McKinley High School ring. Some add that arrows were demarcated in cane fields through patches to direct the Imperial army to Pearl Harbor. Internment as a measure was being contemplated. There were stringent restrictions in place. Kiyoshi documents "Hawaii was under martial law....A Japanese was forbidden to carry more than \$200, and no more than three Japanese could congregate at one place. The *niseis* in the Hawaii Territorial Guard were discharged as untrustworthy. All the Japanese on

the West Coast were pulled in, and it was only a matter of time before they came to get us” (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 87). The Nisei Hawaii Japanese Americans changed the nomenclature they used to identify themselves. Kiyoshi observes they preferred AJA, that is, Americans of Japanese ancestry as *Nisei* seem to emphasize on Japanese roots.

Yet, being one of the largest ethnic groups in Hawaii at that point of time, their contribution could not be disregarded. Hence, a decision was made to recruit Japanese Hawaii Americans along with Japanese Americans to form a separate unit. Yamashiro notes “while most of their continental counterparts were interned with their families in rural areas in the United States, many Hawaii nisei men volunteered for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team in Europe or as Japanese translators and interpreters in the Military Intelligence Service” (J. H. Yamashiro 211). In *Plantation Boy*, Toshio Oyama underscores

Before the war the papers kept harping about the loyalty of the nisei. Of 400,000 people in Hawaii, Japanese were 150,000, of whom 100,000 were nisei. What if there’s a war with Japan? Every admiral, general, and congressman said the nisei cannot be trusted. At the 1937 statehood hearing a nisei stood up and said as much as he hated to see a war between America and Japan, that was the only way he could prove his loyalty, by packing a gun against Japan. (21)

These veterans took up vital roles postwar in the socio-political and economic realms of Hawaii, particularly, given they could get education from premier institutions with the help of the GI Bill.

Murayama provides details pertaining to enlisting of Niseis into army at various junctures in the Oyama tetralogy. Firstly, he mentions the formation of Hawaiian Provisional Infantry Battalion with the pre-War *nisei* draftees and sent to Wisconsin. In January 1943, army called for 1,500 *nisei* volunteers, a mix from Hawaii and the mainland to form an all-*nisei* regiment, which would participate in war in the European front. He notes that there were around six niseis from Kahana, Hawaii and almost one thousand from the mainland in 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion. (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 87,97).

Similarly, in *Plantation Boy*, Murayama records the discharging of nisei students from the University of Hawaii ROTC and anti-Japanese rumours prevalent at that point of time. Further, after the University opens, around 160 nisei students come together to form the Varsity Victory Volunteers to take up volunteering work such as digging ditches. Toshio Oyama, the protagonist, has some of his friends joining the efforts too. He notes “Happy Sumida, Seiji Nakama, and all the niseis in Hawaii National Guard regiments are segregated, their rifles taken away, and detailed to stringing barbwire on the beaches. Niseis are reclassified 4E, ineligible for the draft” (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 6).

Toshio mentions a letter he received from Seiji Nakama, his brother-in-law in July 1946 from Camp McCoy in Wisconsin that Fourteen hundred fifty-three Hawaii Japanese Americans from two Hawaii National Guard battalions join the all-nisei 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion. They are given training to join missions in Europe. Toshio emphasizes later in the novel that the army called for 1,500 volunteers from Hawaii and 3,000 from the mainland, when in reality, comparing the demographics would make it clear that proportionately there were greater number of Japanese Americans in Hawaii than on the mainland. Toshio analyzes that recruiting more volunteers from

the mainland had a certain purpose. He questions “*how come they asking for 3,000 from the mainland camps and only 1,500 from Hawaii? We outnumber the mainland nisei. It’s because they wanna empty the camps and cut down the costs*” (22). In wake of the internment, the army receives poor response from the mainland and it is forced to reconsider the numbers. Toshio records the changes made “1,500 from the mainland and 2,900 from Hawaii. I don’t blame the mainland guys. I wouldn’t volunteer either if they herded me behind barbwire” (22).

In addition to this, he presents comparison between the position of Japanese Americans in Hawaii and on the mainland

“The plantation collapse without Japanee labor. Carlyle going fight tooth and nail to keep us....Besides, the Japanee in Hawaii don’t have a pot to piss in. The mainland Japanese, they own land. So even if they chase us out, they come up empty”. (6)

In *Plantation Boy*, Toshio notes that those working for the Japanese consulate in Honolulu such as Mr. Hamaguchi and Isao Oyama, Toshio’s father, who also registered births and deaths for the Japanese Government were called for inquiry. Some of them, though the remuneration was meager, took up these tasks as a matter of esteem associated with it. Isao Oyama, who had been the custodian of funds of Kahana Japanese Club was questioned about the withdrawal of significant amount from bank as well as about the cancellation of Japanese citizenship of his sons. The difference between inquiries in Hawaii and on the mainland was that interventions prevented arrests in the case of the former. On the mainland, Isseis at the helm of affairs of various immigrant organizations were imprisoned. Toshio observes

Rev. Sherman, the Methodist minister, asks the Army to relax the no-more-than-three-Japanese rule...I used to think Rev. Sherman was just another nice-guy haole minister who didn't want to rock the plantation boat. But soon after Pearl Harbor he went to the Army and swore everyone in his congregation was loyal. Which is why Papa and Takemoto *sensei* never got pulled in. (11)

Race resurfaces time and again irrespective of volunteering for military service. The Nisei volunteers are at the receiving end of the racial prejudice of the general public. Hideo Tsuda, a Nisei volunteer writes to Toshio from Mississippi "They pulled down the shades on all the coaches. We couldn't get off the train till dark. Can you imagine? They were afraid we'd scare people. But we have to believe it's all for the good. We will not fail" (29).

In *Plantation Boy*, there is a heated debate between Bill Toda and Kiyoshi Oyama deliberating the racially biased nature of wartime measures. Bill opines "It's for revenge...It was a racial war. How come they never rounded up the Germans and Italians on the mainland? How come they never dropped the atomic bomb on Germany!?" Kiyoshi counters by observing that "the Japanese were bombing innocent civilians in China in 1937. Hiroshima and Nagasaki would not have happened without Pearl Harbor". Bill reiterates "They would never have atom-bombed Germany". Kiyoshi highlights "Maybe not. The German army surrendered when it lost twenty percent of its men...The Japanese were ordered to fight to the last man". Bill objects "don't spread stories and be loyal to your class" (63-64). Kiyoshi as a part of the military intelligence service chooses to justify the actions of the American Army. While Bill questions the racial prejudice dictating the military actions, he himself is

not an exception to racial indoctrination when Bill reminds Kiyoshi about the racial and class boundaries, when he feels Kiyoshi is justifying the white military agenda.

Happy Sumida, a Nisei volunteer in army shares his experience with Toshio Oyama regarding racialization and class intersection during his mission in Europe. His experience in majority white societies gives him a better perspective of the colonial mindset of the white plantation bosses

Things are so different. The haoles here are working class: waitresses, janitors, farmers, day laborers, etc They're not only tough but also hard working. The plantation haoles are colonists actually, the white man's burden and all that. In fact to the poor Indians see around here, all America is a colony. (11)

#### **4.4 Racial Formation and Racialization**

Michael Omi and Howard Winant in their book *Racial Formation in the United States* (2015) observe that, in the U.S., “from the very inception of the republic to the present moment, race has been a profound determinant of one’s political rights, one’s location in the labor market, and indeed one’s sense of identity” (8). They set out to unravel the socially constructed nature of race wherein racial structures are influenced by sociohistorical relations. They point out at the evolving nature of perception about Asian Americans from “yellow peril” to a “model minority” based on the U.S. and Asia relations.

Omi and Winant assert that “it is not possible to understand the (il)logic of any form of social stratification, any practice of cultural marginalization, or any type of inequality or human variation, without appreciating the deep, complex, comingling, interpenetration of race, class, gender, and sexuality” (106). It is crucial to understand the intersection of race and gender and how it aids the othering of the marginalized.

Omi and Winant take an overview of discussions around race which could be primarily classified into two major perspectives. Firstly, race has been seen as an essential category and secondly, race has been considered as an illusion. While comprehending the process of racialization, which is the first step in their theory of racial formation, Omi and Winant draw attention as an essential category, race has been reduced to biological differences, particularly to observable traits such as “skin color, hair texture, or eye shape, to more obscure human variations occurring at the genetic or genomic levels” (Omi and Winant 109). When viewed as an illusory category, race is thought of as an ideological construct that has been extended to mean culture within the deliberations about ethnicity, to inequality and hierarchical structures in discussions about class and to imagined ancient civilizational legacy in debates about formation of nations. Omi and Winant challenge these established positions and propose that race cannot be accepted as a natural justification for distinction between humans. However, one must also be mindful about not dismissing race as a mere illusory category “while it may not be “real” in a biological sense, race is indeed real as a social category with definite social consequences” (110).

Omi and Winant define race as “a concept that signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies”. Though the selection of physical features based on biology may seem random, the assignment of connotation is governed by social and historical context and has political and ideological implications. Omi and Winant observe “bodies are visually read and narrated in ways that draw upon an ensemble of symbolic meanings and associations”. The bodily differences such as those in skin colour, hair, cheek bones, nose become signifiers of distinctions in characteristics and traits such as intellectual capabilities, dispositions, agility and vigour. Omi and Winant emphasize that

“through a complex process of selection, human physical characteristics (“real” or imagined) become the basis to justify or reinforce social differentiation. This process of selection, of imparting social and symbolic meaning to perceived phenotypical differences, is... “racialization”. We define racialization as “the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice, or group.” (110-111). They assert that it is necessary to look at race as a part of societal hierarchies and a mechanism of representation that must be challenged and resisted, unlike the conventional approaches that either dismiss race with idealism advocating transcendence or blindly accept it as so-called natural state of affairs.

#### **4.4.1 Racialization and the Crossroads of Socio-cultural**

##### **Interrelations**

Race lies at the intersection of social structure and cultural representation. These two dimensions overlap in a complex manner such that in order to racialize a person or a group it is integral to situate them in the socio-historical context marked by multiple regulations in form of “demographic and cultural boundaries, state activities, “life- chances,” and tropes of identity/difference/(in)equality”. These interrelations and simultaneous processes of locating in a social structure and signifying individuals or groups and manifesting racial hierarchies in institutions, identities and practices are embodied in, what Omi and Winant call, racial projects. A racial project encompasses ideological facets as well as practical implementation of racial distinction such that it is “simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial identities and meanings, and an effort to organize and distribute resources (economic, political, cultural) along particular racial lines” (125). Racial projects, when manifested on larger scale, take form of state policies and collective efforts, while on a smaller scale, they even impact interpersonal exchanges. Racial

projects are reproductions of existing social hierarchies as much as they could be profound challenges to them. Omi and Winant point out that racial projects could also go beyond national boundaries with phenomenon such as migration wherein the racial conceptions of migrating individuals are formed by a dialogue between ideas prevalent in their home countries as well as those in their countries of settlement. Multifarious racial projects are at play in standardizing mechanisms of signification and interpretation as routine procedures of fathoming the world.

Racial projects form the core of the process of racial formation. Racial formation, Omi and Winant opine “is a synthesis, a constantly reiterated outcome, of the interaction of racial projects on a society- wide level” (127).

Racism cannot be limited only to hate speech and crimes. It is ingrained in varied structures, policies and practices of the society. Omi and Winant define “anti-racist projects as those that undo or resist structures of domination based on racial significations and identities” (129). Racial identities, at personal and social levels, are constructed through perpetuation or resistance to the existing social structures. Omi and Winant draw attention to the fact that modern state utilizes racial ideology to hold together contrary structures such as “despotism and democracy, coercion and consent, formal equality and substantive inequality, identity and difference” (138).

The Naturalization Law of 1790, laid down the eligibility criteria for American citizenship for the first time. It asserted that only free “white” immigrants could become citizens. In order to prevent free people of colour from seeking citizenship, they were deprived of right to vote prior to the Civil War. Omi and Winant note that it was the McCarran–Walter Act of 1952 that finally made provisions for racial groups such as the Japanese to become naturalized citizens. Omi and Winant look at the two concepts provided by Antonio Gramsci “war of

maneuver” and “war of position” to analyze the evolution of the U.S. as a racial state. In the former, no space is available for the opposition within the system. Resistance to the autocratic system comes from the outskirts, where the subaltern mobilize themselves. The latter, refers to a system that provides room for the opposition to question the governing group through legislative and judicial mechanisms. In the American history, the racial minorities had been compelled to move outside the system given the war of maneuver and had to gather in ethnically demarcated places such as Chinatowns and Japantowns. Eventually, after gaining political rights, it turned into a war of position. Political struggle is crucial to pave way to war of position and to creating space for opposition within the system.

Omi and Winant explore the dual aspects of the term body politic in the context of racism. Firstly, it stands for political bodies such as a nation and secondly, it also signifies the politicized body which becomes an instrument to establish control in a racialized society. Policing, violence and confinement are some mechanisms utilized by a racial state to regulate the bodies of the racial minorities. The internment can also be seen as one such act.

In American society, the whites and those who reap advantages of white supremacy and racial discrimination against the people of colour are considered to be, in terms borrowed from Gramsci, the fundamental or the dominant groups and those at the receiving end of the discriminatory practices are the subordinate groups. Omi and Winant point out that “racial politics are unstable because state and opposition are both the targets and operators of intersecting racial projects”. The racial state seeks to establish its hegemonic domination through repressive measures such as violence as well as through instances of incorporating the opposition. It is a process of bringing about, in Gramsci’s terms, an unstable equilibrium. A constant movement “disruption

and restoration of the racial order”, that Omi and Winant call, the trajectory of racial politics, which comprises of a certain form of exchange between the racial state and the anti- racist social movements. There are possibilities of change in the existing racial order when the state responds with measures and reforms in line with the demands of the movements (147-149).

## **4.5 Racial Triangulation**

Claire J. Kim in her research article titled “The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans” looks at two approaches that set out to expand the understanding of race as a phenomenon in the U.S. beyond the paradigm of black and white. She calls the approach taken by Omi and Winant, wherein they study racialization, racial projects, racial state and racial formations to comprehend the process of production of racial categories, different trajectories approach. She notes the contribution of this approach as paving way to broadening the understanding of racism from a singular phenomenon to a process constituting multiple sociohistorical formations. The second approach taken by scholars such as Gary Okihiro, when he asserts that Asian Americans have become an intermediate group, is named as the racial hierarchy approach by Kim. In this approach, the whites are placed on the top and the black on the bottom, while the other racial groups are visualized and located in between on a certain scale of denoting superiority and inferiority. Kim notes that both the approaches can overlap when we study distinct racialization processes of various groups over time and when we specifically look at their locations in an apparent hierarchy at a given point in time. Kim brings in deeper insights about race that these approaches seem to have overlooked. Firstly, in the context of the different trajectories approach, Kim emphasizes that racialization of various groups is interconnected, it does not take place in a secluded space such that Asian Americans

have been racialized by placing them in relation to the whites and the blacks.

Secondly, while studying the status of Asian Americans in a racial state, one cannot ignore the fact that there are multiple dimensions or axes on which various groups are placed, the relations of superiority and inferiority cannot be reduced to a singular scale as in the racial hierarchy approach. For instance, alongside racial inferiority, there also the apparent outsider or alien paradigm often employed to discriminate against Asian Americans. In order to facilitate better visualization, Kim proposes a field of racial positions such that Asian Americans seem to have been racially triangulated in relation to the Whites and the Blacks.

Kim asserts that the field of racial positions comprises of a plane with two axes, namely, the superior/inferior axis and the insider/foreigner axis. Various groups are distinctly racialized on these axes. Opinion makers, primarily, “white elected officials, journalists, scholars, community leaders, business elites and so on” (Kim 107) influence and shape the field in elite as well as popular terms. Two overlapping processes namely, relative valorization and civic ostracism lead to racial triangulation. Kim elucidates relative valorization as when “dominant group A (Whites) valorizes subordinate group B (Asian Americans) relative to subordinate group C (Blacks) on cultural and/or racial grounds in order to dominate both groups”. Civic ostracism is when whites as a dominant group construct Asian Americans, a subordinate group as “immutably foreign and unassimilable with Whites on cultural and/or racial grounds in order to ostracize them from the body politic and civic membership” (Kim 107). Kim observes that racial triangulation has been prevalent since 1850s. Kim cites the example of California as a state that benefited from racial triangulation of the Asian Americans. It could meet its requirements for cheap labour by employing Chinese immigrants by constructing them as superior to Black labour, on one hand, and on the

other by representing them as perpetually unassimilable. Biological racism was rampant. Third category of Asiatic or Mongolian or Oriental was constructed as another rigid category alongside the whites and the blacks with specific cultural and biological connotations. Exploiting the labour of Chinese and other Asian immigrants, who aimed at making a fortune and returning to their native countries, was foundational to an economic system that wished to realize the conception of pure White political system.

Kim quotes remarks of Charles Wolcott Brooks (1833-1885), former U.S. consul General and Commercial Agent of Japan in California during a hearing on Chinese immigration in California in 1879 who opines that the superiority and meticulousness of the Chinese create hurdles in their process of assimilation unlike the blacks (110). Presumed inassimilable nature and denial of claims to citizenship and voting rights due to their alien status contributed to the construction of the Oriental race as suitable for harsh, physical labour and as a substitute to the blacks, who had increasingly been confronting racially prejudiced regulations. Southern white political and economic lobbies too realised the convenience of employing this race in plantations and in construction of railroads. Their inclination to stay for short term and ineligibility for citizenship made them ideal for the exploitative mechanisms of the dominant group. Hardworking, intelligent, docile, apolitical, non-citizen were certain attributes conferred on the Oriental race in the course of their representation by the powerful. For a major part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Asian Americans sought acceptance from the mainstream white society “the Asian American struggle has at times rested upon appeals to be considered White” inclusive of the privileges that come with this consideration. Along with valorization, measures of civic ostracism were also at play “Asian immigrants, seen both as unfit for and

uninterested in the American way of life, were in fact the only group in American history to be legally rendered “aliens ineligible to citizenship”” (Kim 112).

Irrespective of the legal contestations to regulations regarding naturalization and citizenship involving Asian immigrants, the dominant whites continued to adopt stricter measures to highlight distinctions between them and the Oriental or Asiatic or Mongolian race.

The amendment in 1870 to the Naturalization Law of 1790 extended citizenship to “aliens” of African origin, yet specifically emphasized on the phrase “free whites” throughout various judgements. When Asian immigrants argued by citing certain concessions given to them in course of being identified more as white than as black, court rulings solidified the distinctions between Asians as belonging to Mongolian race viz whites, who belong to the Caucasian race “which was the “well settled meaning [of White] in common popular speech” (Kim 114). Another ruling that Kim cites in the context of a Japanese immigrant named Takao Ozawa who was denied citizenship in 1922 “Japanese-born Ozawa was a member of the “yellow” rather than Caucasian race therefore not White. Playing upon valorizing notions of Asian immigrants relative to Blacks, Ozawa’s counsel made the unsuccessful argument that White meant *not* Black, or “a superior class as against a lower class”” (114).

Exclusion movements against Chinese immigrants in 1870s and Japanese immigrants in 1900s followed by internment during the Second World War, Kim underscores, were manifestations of the “ideological foundation” laid down by racial triangulation. She adds “The road from racial triangulation (defining the alien) to exclusion (keeping the alien out) and internment (rounding up the alien within) turned out to be remarkably smooth” (Kim 115). Anti-Chinese movements had set the

narrative by repeatedly asserting the unassimilable nature of “Mongolian” or “Asiatic” race including their representation as an economic and military threat. This culminated into Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 which prohibited Chinese immigration and also declared Chinese immigrants as “aliens”, who were not entitled to claims of citizenship. The Japanese immigrants were also categorized as belonging to Mongolian race.

The dominant white society did create distinctions of identification within the Mongolian race. Initially, the Japanese were valorized, however, deteriorating relations between the U.S. and Imperial Japan changed the dynamics. Kim notes “the anti-Japanese exclusion movement of the early 1900s modelled itself so closely after the earlier anti-Chinese movement in its personnel, organization, rhetoric and agenda”. Passing of the Immigration Act of 1924, which stopped Japanese immigration did not pacify the white lobbies. They “continued to view Japanese immigrants and their descendants as the enemy within, harbingers of the “yellow peril”” (116). Reducing the Asian and Asian American culture and identity to essentialized characteristics worked on the basis of augmenting/extending facets of identities of Chinese and Japanese immigrants with an aim of representing them to be alike while contrasting them with the dominant, White identity. Similarly, this essentialized view also involved glossing over the difference between being an Asian and an Asian, specifically in context of the fact that “many Japanese Americans were native-born citizens by the time of World War II made no difference to those sounding the “yellow peril” alarm: race to them was a matter of blood, not formal citizenship” (Kim 116) In fact, this in line with Yamashiro’s discussion on the attempts of the white lobbies of constructing a relationship between ethnic origin and national affiliation irrespective of immigration and settlement in a new land while

providing insights on the process of racialization of Japanese Americans and other racial minorities. Anti-Asian rhetoric of racial ties with the homeland, unassimilable nature, images of perceived danger such as that of a viper or that of yellow peril were typically used in shaping the narrative. Kim notes that “there was indeed an “impassable difference” between Whites and Asian Americans during the century of open racial triangulation, but it grew out of the former’s exercise of racial power rather than the latter’s blood” (116).

Further, Kim looks at how since the mid 1960s, particularly post the civil rights movement, the apparently colourblind nature of the American society has been used as an ideological instrument to practice coded racial triangulation. She delineates that “the field of racial positions has now been rearticulated in cultural terms: rather than asserting the intrinsic racial superiority of certain groups over others, opinionmakers now claim that certain group cultures are more conducive to success than others...Culture has become code for the unspeakable in the contemporary era” (Kim 117). The overtly cultural distinctions and the concealed racial connotations are essentially hierarchical arrangements that facilitate white privilege through apparently a “nonracial language”. Cultural justification of disparities in agency and rights accorded to various communities aids the dominant group in projecting that realization of the American Dream, in other words, the promise of equality of opportunities to pursue personal aspirations, is still plausible. Kim observes that “the valorization of Asian Americans as a model minority who have made on their own cultural steam only to be victimized by the “reverse discrimination” of race-consciousness programs allows White opinionmakers to lambast such programs without appearing racist – or to reassert their racial privileges while abiding by the norms of colorblindness” (118). The model minority myth

disguises the white-non-white conflict into competition over resources and opportunities between non white communities.

#### **4.5.1 Racialization and the Model Minority Myth**

Kim notes that the term model minority myth was first used in an article written by William Petersen titled “Success Story, Japanese-American Style” in *The New York Times Magazine* in 1966, which is an instance of relative valorization of Asian Americans vis-à-vis Blacks. “According to Petersen, Japanese Americans have succeeded relative to problem minorities such as Blacks because they hold “Tokugawa” values (diligence, frugality, and achievement orientation) that link them with the “alien” culture of Japan and serve the same motivating purpose as the Protestant ethic” (119). Petersen’s argument rests on the assumption that the Japanese Americans, in spite of a majority being born in the U.S. considering the prohibitive laws of immigration between 1924 and 1965, are custodians of the Japanese culture rather than American values, which in turn is deducted from the essentialized understanding of culture as related to descent or biological race. This serves to demarcate specific racial positions to Asian Americans as well as Blacks in the racial hierarchy promoting the dominant interests.

Kim points out certain contradictions inherent within the model minority myth. On one hand, there is relative valorization of Asian Americans, such as Japanese Americans, in comparison to the politically active blacks, primarily to delegitimize their struggle and on the other hand, there is civic ostracism as the model minority myth, like the previous narratives, still does not consider Asian Americans capable of assimilating in the society. It simply enlists the cultural values of the community such as “diligence, family solidarity, respect for education, and self-sufficiency” as foundation of their economic success. In turn, the model minority

myth also indicates that Asian Americans are engaged in pursuing their aspirations that they do not have time to be part of political activism. Scholars have repeatedly underscored the shortcomings of this myth which primarily overstates financial position of Asian Americans, glosses over the inherent diversity in the community to conceal discriminatory practices targeting the community. Kim observes that the myth has sustained for a long time as it serves the dominant discourse of constructing “a racially coded good minority/bad minority opposition supportive of the conservative imperative to roll back minority gains while appearing nonracist” (118). Another implication of the myth is the claim, on part of the dominant group, that politically active blacks have not been successful due to the cultural limitations of the community. It can also be inferred that the myth serves to warn the model minority about the consequences of political activism through relative valorization.

Model minority myth was employed to delegitimize the black struggle in mid 1960s and early 1970s, similarly, it was also utilized again in 1980s to detract various social welfare measures implemented post civil rights movement. Kim cites media articles such as “The Triumph of Asian Americans” by David Bell and “The Silent Minority : Asian Americans’ Affinity with Republican Party Principles” by William McGurn which invite Asian Americans, relegated to the status of ineligible aliens in terms of politics for a long time, to participate in politics. However, they construct a framework of values suitable to the dominant white interests and rooted in the essentialized cultural, to be also read as racial, preconceptions, within which the model minority can operate. These articles project Asian Americans as “political paragons” such that they are “sweet, docile and eager to follow white directives” and “ “honor” ...the white prerogatives” (Kim 122). Another interesting term that Kim draws on and which fits well into the jargon of relative valorization of Asian

Americans is “Confucian-Americans”, implying Americans of Chinese, Japanese and Korean descent, from Lawrence Harrison’s book *“Who Prospers? How Cultural Values Shape Economic And Political Success (1992).*

Kim emphasizes that the opinion makers have continued to observe, quietly stringently, the distinctions between Whites and Asian Americans according “permanent foreignness” to Asian Americans, which has primarily implicated disastrous consequences for them such as increase in racial violence since the 1980s “the most dramatic manifestation of persistent practices of civic ostracism. The model minority may prosper in American society because it has been culturally programmed to do so, but, in the eyes of most Whites, it will never be truly American” (126). However, Kim also points out that civic ostracism could also be practiced in seemingly benign ways such as the media coverage of Kristi Yamaguchi, a fourth-generation native-born Japanese American Olympic skater, who represented the U.S. in 1992 Olympics. Kim cites a cover story written by Frank Deford wherein he refers to Yamaguchi along with her Japanese competitor, Midori Ito, while underlining the fact that their “bloodlines both stretch back, pure and simple, to the same soft, cherry-blossom days on the one bold little island of Honshu...deep within her, she [Yamaguchi] is still Japanese – some of her must be – and if she should win it’s because ...only she has the best of both worlds” (126-127). Kim reports that even Senator Daniel Inouye, a war veteran, who served in 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team during the internment, received hate letters asking him to go back to Japan for having questioned White war veterans during Iran-Contra hearings in 1987. She adds “Asian Americans who have achieved positions of authority or leadership routinely confront accusations that their foreignness makes them unfit for their jobs” (127).

During the US-Japan trade tensions in 1980s, Kim notes that, there was resurgence of the “yellow peril” narrative and opinion makers made accusations of “economic Pearl Harbor”. Phone messages and mails received by the Japanese American Citizens League<sup>3</sup> during Pearl Harbour anniversary exhibited racial hatred and used slurs pointing at their foreignness. Kim highlights “since civic ostracism has always entailed a double elision among Asian American subgroups as well as between Asian Americans and Asians, the anti-Japanese furor has in fact produced a climate of fear for all Asian Americans” (128). In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed this elision, however, in the context of Chinese Americans, such that racial hatred towards them did not just endanger their lives, but also led to violence against Asian Americans and vandalizing of sites of historic importance for this community.

#### **4.6 Decoding the Racialized Discourse around Internment**

Ann Sunahara’s *The Politics of Racism* (2000), Gary Okihiro’s *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (2001) and Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez’s *Altered Lives, Enduring Community: Japanese Americans Remember their World War II Incarceration* (2004) could be considered as intermediary texts that document the historical and socio-cultural context of the literary expressions of the internment. These texts work to decode the racialized discourse employed by the dominant white racial group and economic lobbies to shape the anti-Japanese, in particular, and anti-Asian rhetoric, in general during the Second World War and the prior periods. Sunahara states in the aims of her text “With the use of the government’s own documents, this book seeks to strip away the mask of wartime rhetoric and examine from the perspective of federal government policy the seven years in which Japanese Canadians were exiled in their own country. It is the story of how the government

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<sup>3</sup> Japanese American Citizens League is national organization with a mission to safeguard civil and human rights of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans

came to set its harsh policies” (2). She looks at the construction of the rhetoric by politicians of British Columbia, where there was a considerable population of Japanese Canadians (precisely, 23,450), its development under the reign of William Lyon Mackenzie King followed by their maturation during the wartime to their implementation under the all-pervasive War Measures Act, in spite of resistance from certain military and RCMP officers as well as members of the Parliament. The text comments on, in Theo Goldberg’s words, the internalizing process of the racialized discourse by social subjects, when Sunahara observes “It tells how a minority of Canadians became pariahs in the eyes of their fellow Canadians” (2).

#### **4.6.1 Role of Race in Japanese Canadian Internment**

Sunahara records multiple instances of active as well as passive racism that aided in the internment. She underscores that government documents “demonstrate that each Order-in-Council under the War Measures Act that affected Japanese Canadians – uprooting, confinement, dispossession, deportation and dispersal – was motivated by political considerations rooted in racist traditions accepted, and indeed encouraged, by persons within the government of the day” (Sunahara 2). Further, she quotes remarks of Thomas Shoyama, editor of *New Canadian*, a Nisei newspaper, who points out how political campaigns in British Columbia “appealed to the fear of economic competition, fear of social disruption and intermarriage, and fear for personal and national security” (The Politics of Racism 5-7). Shoyama was vigilant to spot fabricated falsities in election campaigns of 1935 as well as by white supremacist groups such as White Canada Association dedicated to “combating the “evils” of the Asian presence in British Columbia” (Sunahara 7). The tendency was to villainize Japanese Canadians, a racial minority by identifying them with the enemy in the war and using this hatred to fuel their version of patriotism. Shoyama sensed that there

could be larger ramifications of this racialized discourse for the community including violence.

Acculturation and assimilation were encouraged in case of the Nisei children getting education in Canadian public schools

They had been carefully taught that things British and Canadian were right and that, by inference, all else was suspect. Racism, they were told, was the fault of the non-white minorities. The cause of racism, they were taught, was the failure of non-whites to assimilate into the Anglo-Canadian culture. Only when they became totally Canadian could they take their rightful place in Canadian society. The *Nisei* learned their lessons well (Sunahara 5-6)

Sunahara looks at this unique dilemma, that the Nisei faced, of being unable to be an integral part of neither the dominant white society nor the Japanese Canadian community, as cultural marginality. According to Sunahara, approximately, 36% of Nisei were over twenty years. Hence, Nisei were infantilized and were not considered for positions of leadership.

As are the characteristic operating methods of racialized discourse identified by Goldberg, Sunahara's evidence sheds light on similar constructions and patterns marginalizing Japanese Canadians. Kamat and Fernandes summarize Sunahara's arguments as follows

On the economic front, the racists targeted the Japanese Canadians on two levels. They were considered inferior on racial grounds and hence not eligible for equal pay. However, they were accused of undermining the white interests by working for lower wages. At the same time, they were condemned for superior productivity and longer working hours. Their dedication was seen as a part of larger economic conspiracy. (Kamat and Fernandes 196)

Along with economic reasons, the racists claimed on socio-cultural level, typically citing the biological view of race and the presence of independent socio-religious and educational institutions, emphasized on the unassimilability of Japanese Canadians.

The Anti-Japanese rhetoric also emphasized on the Imperial Japanese mission of espionage through Japanese Canadians. Dual citizenship, preference of Issei to send their children to Japan for education as well as utilization of Imperial government study material in Japanese schools were used to prove the claim. Japanese Canadian settlements in urban as well as rural areas of Frazer Valley were also targeted under the suspicion of destroying state and military equipment. In spite of restricted opportunities in farming, fishing, lumbering and mining, that Japanese immigrants and their descendants were involved in, given the stringent rules governing permits for the same, they were accused of having a strategic advantage over the dominant whites.

Though there were community institutions that worked to bring the community together and find solutions for the problems the community faced such as Canadian Japanese Association, primarily a conservative Issei organization, and Japanese Canadian Citizens' League, the most active of the many Nisei organisations, Sunahara observes that the "ideological, cultural and generational divisions" rendered the community leaderless during the impending crisis of internment (8-10). The Gentlemen's Agreement decreased the immigration of Japanese from 400 to 150 per year in 1928. Drafting of Nisei in military was prohibited from 1939. Provincial law of 1902 deprived Asians of voting rights. The Canadian government ensured that records of every Japanese Canadian were maintained.

Sunahara draws attention to The Standing Committee on Orientals, made in 1940 for consultations with the federal government regarding Asian matters. It

constituted of “Professor Henry F. Angus of the University of British Columbia, Assistant Commissioner Frederick J. Mead of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Lieutenant Colonel A.W. Sparling of the Department of National Defence, Mayor F.J. Hume of New Westminster, and Lt. Col. Macgregor Macintosh, a xenophobic Conservative” (Sunahara 11). She further adds that “Dr. Hugh Keenleyside, an Assistant Under-Secretary at the Department of External Affairs; Dr. George Sansom, a professor of Asian studies at Columbia University” were the other members of the committee and, a fact that must be particularly noted is that, they along with Asst. Comnr. Mead advocated inclusion of Asians in this committee. Mead, specifically, wanted to reduce the impact of radicalizing the white populace by conservatives. Sparling and Ian Alistair Mackenzie, the Minister of Pensions and Health and M.P. for Vancouver Centre were against this idea of including Asians in the committee. Even the Major General H.G.D. Crerar, Maj. Gen. Ken Stuart and Lieutenant General Maurice A. Pope in the military could not resist the discriminatory wave against Japanese Canadians. Sunahara, in her article titled “Japanese Canadians” highlights certain measures taken by the government to prohibit Japanese Canadians from returning to the West Coast such as disposing their properties through Custodians of Enemy Property from January 1943. This was justified under the pretext of making the internment financially viable. After the internment, Sunahara points out that around 4,000 people of Japanese origin were deported to Japan (Sunahara, Japanese Canadians).

While providing a historical overview of the policy decisions that crafted Japanese Canadians as aliens with the help of political rhetoric and with grave implications for the community, Sunahara observes that Mackenzie, as Minister of National Defence, influenced L.R. LaFleche, civilian Deputy Minister, when he

expressed his apprehensions about exemption of Japanese Canadians from internment on personal assurance of amiable behaviour in the face of possibilities of war to the Chairman of a federal Interdepartmental Committee on Orientals in 1938 (14). The next year, another forum called the Interdepartmental Committee on the Treatment of Aliens and Alien Property endorsed the necessity for internment of those of Japanese origins while speculating espionage and sabotage and also under the apparent pretext of safeguarding lives and assets of enemy aliens. The Department of Labour and the Department of Fisheries, around the same time, worked to support the baseless accusations of White Canada Association, an Anti-Asian group, of Japanese Canadians being an economic threat to white businesses. Support to the Japanese Canadian cause came from the Department of External Affairs, specifically, Dr. Hugh L. Keenleyside, Assistant Under-Secretary in charge of the American and Far Eastern Divisions at External Affairs. In 1941, Sunahara notes, Keenleyside, as a member of the Permanent Joint Board of Defence, which was formed to synchronize military efforts of the U.S. and Canada, managed to avert the possibility of deportation and incarceration of people of Japanese origin.

Sunahara observes that Asst. Comnr. Mead, a supporter of the Japanese Canadian community in the RCMP, had first come in contact with the community through Etsuji Morii, a controversial, yet influential figure in the Powell Street ghetto in Vancouver. During the pioneer period, Morii opened a social club for Japanese immigrants, who worked as seasonal labourers in farms and were fond of gambling, so as to keep the resources of the community within itself, rather than their expenditure in Chinatown. The Issei admired the aspect of Morii's personality. Gradually, with the arrival of Japanese women in 1910s, Morii became a sort of a patron or padrone, who financed martial arts from his earnings through the club. He

even provided access to his club at minimum fees to the Japanese Canadian Citizens' League. However, Sunahara underlines that the Christian Niseis continued to perceive him as a gangster. Similarly, the socialist Issei looked at him as a fascist. Morii's significance to the RCMP primarily depended on the fact that "In this role he stood between the Japanese community and the larger society to prevent unpleasant situations from rebounding on Japanese Canadians. This was the role he assumed with the RCMP, a protecting intermediary contact" (16). Sunahara specifically refers to Morii's handling of Board of Inquiry in 1938, which focussed on the Issei crossing of Washington-British Columbia border. They were not aware of stringent immigration regulations, of existence of two separate nations within the American continent and partial carelessness considering their short stay, which had turned them into illegal immigrants. Morii accepted the responsibility of collecting the arrival details of these members and facilitating communication between the government and the community. However, there was the looming fear of illegal immigration being used for racist propaganda. RCMP was willing to overlook some previous charges against Morii given that there had not been any immediate criminal records, reverence by the community and his occupation of multiple executive positions in the community organizations. Sunahara opines "What mattered most to them [RCMP] was that Morii appeared to know everything that went on in the Japanese community in B.C. and to be in a position to stop any potential subversion" (17). Sunahara quotes Morii's words of guarantee said to S.T. Wood, the Commissioner of the RCMP in 1940, when there were questions raised about the presence of Japanese veterans in Canada as immigrants "the Japanese believe that their future and that of their children are bound up in the fortunes of the Canadian people and for that reason Canadian interests are their interests" (17). Mead often drew attention to the confrontational statements made

by white conservatives and racists, which, for him, posed greater threat to social harmony than the Japanese immigrants. The Canadian Prime Minister could not bring himself to trust the observations of senior military officials. The attack on Pearl harbour came as a major catastrophe that jeopardised the fate of Japanese immigrants and their descendants. The Canadian government condemned the attack, yet expressed faith in the loyalty of Japanese immigrants and their children to ensure that anti-Japanese protests would not escalate. Sunahara notes that discussions between Norman Robertson, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs and the American ambassador to Canada, Jay Pierrepont Moffat concluded that, given the uncertainty caused by Pearl Harbour attack, internment may seem necessary. Sunahara underscores that around forty aliens were arrested as an immediate measure, which included Japanese veterans and influential members of organisations. Language schools and Japanese press were closed and fishing boats were confiscated. Japanese Canadians were relieved from their employment in various sectors including businesses. The Japanese community in Canada chose to believe these measures were taken for their own safety. Sunahara notes that the reckless statements by Frank Knox, the American secretary of the navy, transformed the attitudes of society and media towards people of Japanese origin. The media outlets, which were appealing to be calm in the face of war, were now asserting that safety of Japanese immigrants and their descendants would be subjected to their conduct.

In the Conference on Japanese Problems held in January 1942 and presided over by Ian Mackenzie, Sunahara notes “The British Columbia delegation absolutely refused to accept the RCMP opinion that Japanese Canadians were loyal. Unanimously they declared that they did not trust persons of Japanese racial origin and that they considered the continuing presence of Japanese Canadians in B.C. a

menace to public safety” (27). The former emphasized on considering the public opinion preventing anti-Japanese riots. Consensus was reached on withdrawing licences to Japanese fishing boats and disposing them to non Japanese, forbidding use of radio by Japanese aliens and forming civilian service corps to recruit Japanese Canadians. However, there was no definite stand taken on internment.

Sunahara provides statistical data about letters received by Prime Minister King between 17 December 1941 and 10 January 1942 asking for Japanese internment. She notes that around twenty-eight from forty-five letters received advocated incarceration of all Japanese Canadians or of only Japanese aliens. From twenty-eight letters, only eight came from mainland British Columbia, where the majority members of the Japanese community resided. She concludes that most of the letters had come from people of Victoria, where there was relatively less presence of Japanese immigrants and their descendants and where there were greater Anti-Asian sentiments, later manifested in Anti-Japanese agitation of January 1942.

The federal Cabinet depended on the report compiled by Ian Mackenzie as an expert in Asian matters to make crucial decisions about the Japanese community in Canada. Having earned political leverage through his anti-Asian stand, Mackenzie cleverly made strategic arguments asking for transfer of 1,700 male Japanese aliens to work camps to help secure the West Coast and appealing to those naturalized or citizens by birth to get themselves recruited in Civilian Service Corps. Further, Sunahara adds that Mackenzie countered the arguments in support of the Japanese community by officials in the military by citing “selected excerpts from a letter from Major General Alexander (the Officer-in-Command, Pacific Coast) to the Chiefs of General Staff that supported the B.C. arguments” (29). The American policy of removing aliens from Pacific coast in January 1942, which was a result of racist

traditions as well as strategy initiated by Provost Marshall General, Maj. Gen. Allen W. Gullion of bringing enemy aliens under the jurisdiction of the War Department from that of the Justice Department, had an impact on the Canadian policy as well. In addition to the demands of the British Columbia delegation during the Conference on Japanese Problems, the cabinet also approved of measures such as

all male enemy aliens of military age were to be removed from the coastal defence zone before 1 April 1942 under an Order-in-Council that gave the Minister of Justice complete power over enemy aliens in Canada and the right to detain any resident of Canada without trial on the grounds of national security...their sole purpose was to effect the removal from the Pacific Coast of all male Japanese aliens of military age and “between 800 and 1,000 Canadian citizens” of Japanese ancestry. (Sunahara 30)

The decision of removing male aliens was a major disruption in the socio-economic structure of the community. They included significant figures of the community. Sunahara observes that most Issei had decided to dedicate their lives to Canada in the 1920s when they started their families and ventures in farming and commerce. After 1923, racial discrimination and regulations prevented them from becoming naturalized citizens. Sunahara emphasizes “as a consequence, by 1942 over 24 per cent of Japanese Canadian wage earners were still aliens, including the bulk of the employers within the Japanese minority” (31). Accusations of espionage and sabotage implied that the government had marked Japanese Canadians as “dangerous subversives”. White business lobbies of interior British Columbia, who were initially planning to utilize the labour of unemployed Japanese immigrants and their descendants gave up on the idea following the announcements of the government. Demarcating defence areas and evacuating the Japanese aliens from them, the

government realized, would be a complex task. Discussions about regulating Nisei and naturalized Japanese Canadians through civilian service corps in the realms of politics and media made Nisei apprehensive and disappointed before pledging their participation.

Gradually, Members of Parliament from British Columbia increased the pressure of removing Nisei and naturalized citizens as well labelling them as disloyal. Observations of civil servants such as Keenleyside were overridden by vested political interests of Mackenzie as it was a time period when targeting racial minorities in election campaigns was still acceptable. The fact that Japanese Canadians were disenfranchised proved to be a salient factor in this matter. Politicians cited prevention of interracial riots as a pretext for removal. President Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 giving the War Department the authority to remove Japanese Americans from the coast had an enormous impact on the decision making of the Canadian government, which also decided to compel the family members of the removed Japanese aliens to evacuate with them. The culmination was the issuing of P.C. 1486 on 24 February 1942 which gave the Canadian Minister of Justice to order removal and detainment of any alien or citizen from the so called protected area on the coast. The Canadian public was persuaded to believe the narrative of prioritizing national security and protection of the racial minority. Sunahara notes that National Defence Minister J.L. Ralston and the Canadian military were of the opinion that civilians could resolve the issue of evacuating people of Japanese origin and there was no need to deploy special forces for the task (39).

Uprooting of Japanese Canadians was agonizing to the community. Sense of betrayal, rage and suspicion prevailed. Sunahara observes "With the announcement of a total uprooting, citizenship became irrelevant. Whether *Issei* or *Nisei*, Japanese alien or

Canadian citizen, everyone had become an enemy alien” (46). It was devastating that neither their willingness of serving the nation nor their business networking could help Japanese Canadians. Moreover, the government did not end the issue by uprooting a symbolic number. The community was subjected to restrictions such as registration and periodical appearance before the RCMP, limitation on travel, prior permission to shift to a new residence, observing dusk-to-dawn curfew and being compelled to desert their homes, farms and businesses without certainty of a destination.

Mackenzie initiated the formation of British Columbia Security Commission for coordinating the evacuation of Japanese Canadians and providing basic facilities in the new locales such as temporary facility in Hastings Park in Vancouver and the camps. This commission had an advisory role to play in the context of policy making. The Cabinet Committee on Japanese Questions and the Departments of Labour and Justice had the final word in decision making.

Sunahara records that by 16 March 1942 through the British Columbia Security Commission enraged Japanese Canadian families were compelled to move from the West Coast to Livestock Building at Hastings Park in Vancouver. After the relocation, the inmates shouldered the responsibility of transporting limited belongings, constructing partitions, furnishing the basic accommodation allotted to them, raising temporary structure for a school and for leisure activities. E.C.P. Salt, a retired RCMP officer had been appointed as the superintendent of the facility. A liaison committee of three Isseis headed by Etsuji Morii was formed to coordinate between the inmates and the superintendent. Well educated Nisei, who were rendered unemployed during the war, were deputed to cater to administrative responsibilities in Hastings Park. However, their duties proved to be hurdles in their bond with the community, specifically their agitated family members. Sunahara documents a

testimony of a Nisei woman working in British Columbia Security Commission, who recalls being perceived as “stool pigeon” or a police informer and “an inu” a dog. Living in Hastings Park was a humiliating experience. Separation from family, carrying few pounds of luggage, physical examination of men for suitability for road work, renunciation of property rights to Custodian of Enemy Property of land they were not compelled to sell previously. Boys and men above thirteen years were detained in a separate building and were prohibited from visiting their families. Sunahara underscores “the shipment of men to the road camps often meant a further fragmentation of families. Fathers who were aliens were shipped to camps near Jasper, while their adult *Nisei* sons went to camps near Hope or Princeton, B.C., or to Schreiber, Ontario” (50). Teenage Nisei boys were left in the men’s accommodation after their fathers had been assigned to road camps. Lives of women were limited to livestock barns, anxious elderly, children, ailments and stench of animals. Not all were privileged to have a wooden horse stall as an accommodation. Women with little or sick children were allotted this accommodation. Sunahara highlights the psychological impact of living in pathetic conditions amidst war tensions “to the inmates of Hastings Park the stink of the livestock barns was more than just an irritating smell. It was a constant reminder that to Canadian politicians and their white electors, Japanese Canadians were no better than animals” (50). When Austin Taylor accepted the chairmanship of British Columbia Security Commission, he had presumed that Japanese Canadians would be relocated considering family units. However, he attempted to resolve the issue of separation of families by researching financial aspects of sending families to old, abandoned, mining towns, Indian Residential Schools as well as labour demands in Alberta and Manitoba sugar beet farms.

Possibilities of employment in Alberta made uprooted British Columbia Japanese seek accommodation with their acquaintances and relatives in there. There were, Sunahara notes around 534 Japanese Canadians there. Various white organizations registered their objection to bringing Japanese Canadian labour into Alberta including beet workers' union, local and labour councils, trade institutions and citizens' committees. They asked for exclusion or military supervision and ultimate removal of Japanese Canadians. Sunahara reports that

the protests were based on a mixture of ignorance and the identification of British Columbia's "Japanese problem" with Alberta's "Hutterite problem." The Hutterites were German-speaking pacifists who lived on communes in southern Alberta. In view of the war with Germany, local "patriots" damned the Hutterites as enemy aliens, shirkers of their patriotic duty, and because of their communal way of life, as unfair competition. (70)

The Alberta nativists asserted that British Columbia Japanese posed greater danger than Hutterites considering their unassimilability, potential for economic competition, but also due to their racial background, that is, being non-white and the perception that they were capable of treason by virtue of their race and ethnic origin.

Influential Albertans tried to persuade the people by focusing on reception of Japanese from British Columbia as a patriotic duty to safeguard the national coast, where they were seen as a threat. Additionally, sugar beet farming was a means of supporting the country in the war and utilizing the Japanese labour was necessary.

#### **4.6.2 Role of Race in Japanese American Internment**

Okiihiro's *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (2001) and Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez's *Altered Lives, Enduring Community: Japanese Americans Remember their World War II Incarceration* (2004) delineate the conditions the Japanese Americans were subjected to. Racial discrimination in the

U.S. compelled the community members to limit themselves to work on daily wages positions in farming and industrial as well as hospitality sector. Solid social ties within the community enabled them to survive through the discriminatory practices. Okihiro observes “their race, Old World culture, economic competition, segregated communities, and uncertain allegiance to the United States” (104) contributed to the insecurities of the mainstream white society along with the prevalent political propaganda and war hysteria. In the U.S., Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1907, the Alien Land Law of 1913, which prevented Isseis from laying claim to land, and Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924 were some concrete manifestations of the discriminatory attitude.

Okihiro cites multiple theories that were propounded by various scholars to analyze the causes of the internment. The Pressure Group theory explains internment as a result of vested political and economic interests of certain regional groups. Oriental Exclusion League and its successor, The California Joint Immigration Committee, Western Growers Protective Association, the American Legion and Native Sons of the Golden West along with some labour unions are some examples of such groups. The military historians such as Stetson Conn, Rose C. Engelman, and Byron Fairchild, as noted by Okihiro, point out at the gradual change in the stands taken by Lieutenant General DeWitt, in charge of the defense of the West Coast in the U.S. from opposing mass evacuation to joining those who advocated stringent security measures presuming that the loyalty of Japanese Americans was questionable in the face of war. Major Karl Bendetsen representing provost marshal general in War Department, Washington, D.C, the military historians mark, persuaded DeWitt to favour the internment including demarcating exclusion zones. California’s Governor Culbert Olson presented evacuation as a major public demand. President Franklin

Roosevelt, as Roger Daniels underscores, “was motivated by expedience and racial prejudice. Victimized the Japanese was popular especially when the war was not going well for the Allies, and Roosevelt harboured prejudice against the Japanese as a group, viewed them with suspicion, and favoured their mass internment in Hawai’i” (Okiihiro 102). He finally endorsed the evacuation and internment through the executive order on 19 February 1942.

Okiihiro considers the protest of Japanese sugar workers in 1920 as a key event in the shaping of narrative about Japanese resistance as Imperial Japan’s strategy to take over Hawaii’s economy. The planters and military supported this narrative. It allowed the government to justify surveillance of the community, imposition of martial law and eventual internment. The attack on Pearl Harbour revived the old animosity and historical racial prejudice. Racial expressions such as “yellow peril” and “yellow menace” were part of the Anti-Japanese discourse. Okiihiro points out that this discourse prevalent in the media as well as in regional politics. For instance, Congressman Leland Ford of Los Angeles asserted that the existence of Japanese Americans on the coast was a serious security risk to California.

Opinions contrary to the popular opinion on the issue such as that of Congressman John Costello of Los Angeles and some officials from the Justice Department and the Army were conveniently overlooked. In legal cases filed by Japanese Americans, the Executive Order 9066 and Public Law 503 “affirmed that the evacuation was constitutional. . . . some military officers, including [Lieutenant General John] DeWitt, shared the public’s racist attitude toward the Japanese. The Justice Department’s abdication of responsibility to the War Department allowed the Army’s plan to go forward” (Okiihiro 106-108).

Okihiro establishes the point that DeWitt's racial prejudice against the Japanese Americans was the root cause that fuelled the racial discourse, which culminated in the internment. He elucidates crucial questions that Jacobus ten Broek, Edward N. Barnhart, and Floyd W. Matson ask, while assessing the role of prejudice in the wartime measures and the constitutional validity of those regulations

why DeWitt bowed to various pressures and petitions. Public opinion might sway politicians, but the military? Further, defense of the West Coast depended on military strategy, so why should the Army have followed the opinion of civilians and civilian organizations?... DeWitt's racism and that of his staff predisposed them to believe that Japanese presence in the United States posed a danger. They did not need to be persuaded of this danger. They already believed it. (109)

They trace the anti-Asian and anti-Japanese sentiments as well as deep-seated racial prejudice to "anti-foreignism of American gold miners in California". A combination of factors such as disregard for law, avarice and intolerant attitude towards the people of colour including the prevalent stereotypes, which influenced the popular imagination even after the gold rush and kept alive the culture of white supremacy characterized by "social inequality, physical attacks, and exclusion" as well as their representation as possessing questionable character, morally unfit of assimilation and citizenship (Okihiro 110). The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was a significant step in translating the existing prejudice into a law. When the Japanese immigrants came into the country as substitutes to the Chinese labour in the farming and trade sectors they

were thus lumped together with the Chinese as cheap labor. As groups, they were inevitably compared, and were collapsed into a single category. The

Japanese acquired the undesirable traits of the Chinese stereotype and none of its virtues. And the menace of the Japanese to America as the “yellow peril” was compounded with the rise of Japan. (111)

Okihiro opines that Japan’s war atrocities, cinematic and mass media depictions of Asians as the antagonists in the U.S. and political rhetoric contributed to sustain the prejudiced perception. Nativist groups such as the American Legion and Native Sons of the Golden West, previously mentioned in the context of pressure group theory, operated based on the racial prejudice and appealed for exclusion of Japanese immigrants citing their so called unpatriotic behaviour. Japanese Exclusion Act of 1924 that followed was also a result of the same prejudice. The economic aspect on their agenda included prevention of the upward mobility of Japanese immigrants as the owners of land, rather to restrict them to being labourers and helping hands. The racialized discourse of suspicion, espionage, sabotage and disloyalty flourished after being aggravated by the bombing of Pearl Harbour.

A significant term in the Anti-Japanese racialized discourse was “yellow peril”. There was consequent identification of Japanese Americans with real or possible spies and saboteurs affiliated to the enemy in the war. Okihiro charts out the pattern of interpreting the community’s way of living and culture to suit the racialized discourse such as

Their geographical concentration in strategic military and industrial areas confirmed their prescience and planning; their adherence to Japanese culture showed that they were held under the sway of their leaders and the emperor; and their Buddhist and Shinto temples, language schools, and newspapers were evidences of their disloyalty. (112)

Seeing them as a source of acute economic competition and turning them into scapegoats of long tradition of racial discrimination, while justifying internment as a measure to protect the racial minority, stemmed from the racialized discourse.

## **4.7 Battling Racial Discrimination through Literary Expressions**

In the literary expressions studied for this thesis, we find multiple examples of unjustly imprisoned Japanese American characters questioning the racial discrimination and stereotypical depictions of their community. Ichiro in Okada's *No-No Boy* (1957) contemplates of asking the judge

“was it a just thing to ruin a hundred thousand lives and homes and farms and businesses and dreams and hopes because the hundred thousand were a hundred thousand Japanese when Japan is the country you're fighting and, if so, how about Germans and Italians that must be just as questionable as the Japanese or we wouldn't be fighting Germany and Italy?... what do you think they'll say when you try to draft them into your army of the country that is for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? If you think we're the same kind of rotten Japanese that dropped the bombs on Pearl Harbor, and it's plain that you do or I wouldn't be here having to explain to you why it is that I won't go...I say you're right and *banzai* three times and we'll sit the war out in a nice cell, thank you. (Okada 31-32).

Perhaps, it was to save themselves from the atrocious interrogation that some Issei farmers or businessmen and Nisei resisters chose to confess the allegations levied on them, in spite of being innocent. At times, the rage against the injustice, they were

subjected to, erupted in these encounters of interrogations. Father's Loyalty hearing before the Alien Enemy Control Unit in Otsuka's *When the Emperor was Divine* (2002) has been depicted in the last chapter titled "Confession". The father, a generic Issei man, who has been lifted in his bathrobes and tortured to speak what the investigators want to listen, vents out his frustration "I was tired. I was thirsty. I was scared. So I did what I had to do. I talked" (Otsuka, *When the Emperor was Divine* 140), moreover, he confessed falsely with a hope of being released sooner.

In this chapter, the father becomes a representative of the Issei men, who had been repeatedly accused of espionage, of providing crucial military information and resources to the imperial army. Issei men had been purposefully vilified and were accused of going about their lives unnoticed doing all the menial jobs with an aim of bringing about the "yellow peril". Their facial features were given racial connotations, particularly, due to the semblance with the Japanese.

Perhaps, in a fit of rage or as an act of defiance, the father chooses to give a false confession of the crimes he had not committed. The crimes he is accused of seem to be beyond his capacity as a civilian and as an immigrant such as sending aerial photographs of major cities; radio communication with enemy submarines; signalling the aviator with red paper lantern. He is charged of poisoning the food of Americans; spying on them while working for them; planning sabotage by planting mines in public facilities such as railway stations; leaving lights on during blackouts and revealing personal information of the employer to the enemy.

Through this chapter "Confession", Otsuka reiterates the socio-economic status of the Japanese Americans as a ethnic and cultural minority in the U.S. She lists the various occupations the Japanese Americans took up: florist, grocer, porter,

waiter, store owner, shoeshine boy, Judo teacher, Buddhist or Shinto priest - Right Reverend Yoshimoto, general managers of Japanese firms such as Mistubishi, dishwasher and Chinese or Japanese restaurants, janitor, laundryman, nurseryman, fisherman, helping hand at farms, cannery worker, chicken sexer, roadside vendor, member of Japanese cultural associations such as Cherry Blossom Society, Haiku Association, Bonsai Club (Otsuka, *When the Emperor was Divine* 142). Though the occupations were not high-paying jobs, still they rendered them vulnerable to the prejudice of the mainstream white society.

#### **4.7.1 Picture Brides: Intersections of Racism and Patriarchy in Otsuka's *The Buddha in the Attic***

The Gentlemen's Agreement in 1907-08 laid down conditions and regulations on Japanese migration to the U.S. A deciding factor was family reunification. This led to the emergence of a social phenomenon called the picture brides, where Japanese men in the U.S. would finance the entry of their Japanese wives after matrimonial arrangements by seeing photographs. Julie Otsuka, in *The Buddha in the Attic* (2011), describes the journey of one such unnamed picture bride, symbolically, representative of all the picture brides, who came to the American mainland in early 1900s.

Otsuka employs first person plural “we” as a collective perspective of the picture brides. Throughout the novel, she juxtaposes this “we”, to mean Japanese American community in the larger context of the racial status quo, with the whites, who are perceived as “they”. Many of these picture brides have resolved to migrate to escape the poverty at home as much as to help their families by lowering the expenses of marriage. Otsuka also employs typography to employ the instructions given to the

brides by their mothers and elders expecting them to behave as per the prescriptions of the patriarchal society

Most of us on the boat were accomplished...and would make good wives. We knew how to cook and sew. We knew how to serve tea...and sit quietly on our flat wide feet for hours, saying absolutely nothing of substance at all. *A girl must blend into a room: she must be present without appearing to exist.*

(Otsuka, *The Buddha in the Attic* 6)

The picture brides are set to face cultural shock in an unknown land. They express their anxiety about the same "What would become of us, we wondered, in such an alien land?" .. "We imagined ourselves - an usually small people armed only with our guidebooks- entering a country of giants" (7). Many underwent a sense of betrayal, when they saw old, shabby men waiting to receive them. They realized that the photos accompanying the letters were, sometimes, even twenty years old. Though they would be overcome by a strong urge to go back or to escape, they were compelled to sacrifice their dreams and live lives of drudgery. They joined their husbands on farms and went from places to places as landless labourers to harvest produce. They suffered from heat strokes and other ailments far away from home. The brides observe "Home was wherever the crops were ripe and ready for picking. Homes were wherever our husbands were" (25).

Issei women, who had arrived as picture brides and continued to serve in white households, at the crossroads of race and gender, speak of the prescriptions imposed on them being on the lower rungs of the societal hierarchy "Stay away from them, we were warned. Approach them with caution, if you must...Expect the worst, but do not be surprised by moments of kindness... Be humble. Be polite. Appear eager to please" (25-27).

The women also experience instances of assimilation and valorization for the hard work they put in as house helps “They gave us new names. They called us Helen and Lily. They called us Margaret. They called us Pearl. They marvelled at our tiny figures and our long, shiny black hair. They praised us for our hardworking ways. *That girl never stops until she gets the job done. ... No better class of help can be found*” (Otsuka, *The Buddha in the Attic* 40). The Issei women were valorized in relation to black and Chinese house help “Others of us, though tempted, kept our hands to ourselves, and for our honesty we were well rewarded. *I'm the only servant she'll let upstairs in her bedroom. All the Negroes have to stay down below in the kitchen*” (45).

There was a constant racial tension amidst the unpredictability of their white mistress and the kind of treatment they might give the Issei women. These encounters signified the careful treading of the racial line, which also implied risking transgressions of the racial status quo. The Issei women, in Otsuka’s novel express the relief they felt, when they were entrusted with the responsibility of the house and there were moments, when there was lack of surveillance “we liked it best when they were out... Nobody was watching us then.. The whole house was empty. Quiet. Ours. We felt calmer then. Less afraid. We felt, for once, like ourselves” (Otsuka, *The Buddha in the Attic* 44). Yet, in the larger public domain, racial discrimination was rampant and knowing one’s place in the racial hierarchy was expected “We made ourselves small for them - *If you stay in your place they'll leave you alone* - and did our best not to offend...We learned to live at a distance from them, and avoided them whenever we could” (52).

In a chapter titled “Children”, the Issei women describe various mechanisms their children learnt to survive in the mainstream, white society. It included coming to

terms with racial labels and physical features, battling with street violence and racial hate crimes and lingering sense of being the racial other

Because they knew that no matter what they did they would never really fit in. *We're just a bunch of Buddhaheads...* They learned there were certain things that would never be theirs: higher noses, fairer complexions, longer legs... They learned not to go out alone during the daytime and what to do if they found themselves cornered in an alley after dark (77)

The last line of this chapter reads like a prophecy of the impending internment, fallout of persistent racial prejudice. The dreams of the Nisei children are juxtaposed with the anxious words of the Issei mothers "And even though we saw the darkness coming we said nothing and let them dream on (79).

In the next chapter titled "Traitors", the Issei women note how public perception and racial hatred intensified overnight after the attack on Pearl Harbour. The media contributed to spreading the rumours about Japanese Americans "They said that thousands of our men had sprung into action, with clockwork precision, the moment the attack on the island had begun... They said we had signalled to the enemy planes with flares from our fields. They said that... children... had reported that their parents had celebrated the news of the attack... *They were shouting banzais* (85). News stories accusing the Japanese Americans were on the newspapers and the radios. Various theories regarding planned attacks were in circulation. The Issei wives paraphrase what they heard on the radios "The enemy was planning a combined attack on the coast from without and within and all alert, keen-eyed citizens were being asked to inform the authorities of any fifth columnists who might dwell in our

midst. Because anyone we were reminded, could be a spy. Your butler, your gardener, your florist, your maid” (90).

Further, the Issei women express their apprehension about being removed from the places, where they lived as an urgent war measure

In the newspapers, and on the radio, we began to hear talk of mass removals. *House to Hold Hearings on National Defense Migration. Governor Urges President to Evacuate All Enemy Aliens from the Coast. Send them Back to Tojo!*...We would be sent far away...We would be held under protective custody arrest for the duration of the war. (93)

In the last chapter of the novel titled “A Disappearance”, the narrators seem to have shifted to a collective of whites, instead of the Issei women. The whites seem to be friendly neighbours, who wonder about their Japanese neighbours. Some even express concern over their disappearance

The Japanese have disappeared from our town. Their houses are boarded up and empty now. Their mailboxes have begun to overflow...Thick knotty weeds are sprouting up through their lawns...*God be with you until we meet again...*we cannot help but wonder : Who put up the sign? Was it one of them? Or one of us? And if it was one of us, which one of us was it? (115-116)

Otsuka provides an unexpected perspective on what, perhaps, some white neighbours must have felt by the sudden occurrences during the Second World War. There is a mixed reaction. Some are genuinely worried, whereas, others seem to have chosen to believe the wartime propaganda, that the Japanese Americans were involved in sabotage. The whites refer to the assurances of their political leaders about the safety of their Japanese neighbours “Our mayor has assured us there is no need for alarm.

“The Japanese are in a safe space...He is not at liberty, however, to reveal where that place is. “They wouldn’t be safe now, would they, if I told you where they were.” But what place could be safer, some of us ask, than right here, in our own town?” (116). Alternately, there are others, who have not felt comfortable having the Japanese in the neighbourhoods “There are certain members of our community, however, who were more than a little relieved to see the Japanese go. For we have read the stories in the papers, we have heard the whispered rumours” (118).

Otsuka also captures the gradual feeling of guilt, which sets in, for not having intervened, when the Japanese Americans were compelled to leave their homes “For several weeks, some of us continue to hold out hope that the Japanese might return, because nobody said it would be forever...We wonder if it wasn’t somehow all our fault. Perhaps we should have petitioned the mayor. The governor. The President himself. *Please let them stay*”. Questions are raised against the government’s decision to uproot the Japanese Americans, without much information provided to the public about their impending fate “People begin to demand answers. Did the Japanese go to the reception centers voluntarily, or under duress?...Who, if anyone, will intervene on their behalf? Are they innocent? Are they guilty?”. Otsuka also paraphrases the responses that those, who dared to raise questions received. They were standard answers harping on the cooperative compliance of Japanese Americans “The mayor urges us all to be patient...There was disloyalty on the part of some, time was short, and the need for action was great. The Japanese left us willingly, we are told, and without rancor, per the President’s request...Their resettlement is proceeding according to plan” (122-124).

#### 4.7.2 Critiquing Racial Stereotypes and War Hysteria through Literary Expressions of the Internment

Otsuka records the various derogatory names given to people of Japanese ancestry during the Second World War in the U.S. as evidences of the widespread racial discrimination against them: “Jap, Nip, Slits, Slopes, Yellowbelly, Gook ...I’m the one you don’t see at all - we all look alike. I’m the one you see everywhere” (Otsuka, *When the Emperor was Divine* 143). Fear about the ‘other’ was prevalent among both the communities. “I’m your worst fear - you saw what we did in Manchuria, you remember Nanking, you can’t get Pearl Harbor out of your mind” (143). In the war hysteria, media propaganda and rhetoric shaped by politicians and nativist economic groups alike, the Americans labelled the members of the Japanese community in the U.S. as saboteurs, traitors, strangers, slant-eyed snipers - the people who before the war had worked for them as their houseboys, cooks, gardeners (143). The irrational fear took the better of general public. It renewed the age old stereotypes and trust issues. The father continues to narrate the saga of his suffering “Search my office. Ransack my house. Cancel my insurance. Auction off my business. Hand over my lease. Assign me a number. Inform me my crime” (143). The investigation agencies seem to record their prejudiced, superficial observations rather than the true details of the interrogation “*Too short, too dark, too ugly, too proud... always laughs loudly at the wrong time...Is treacherous and cunning, is ruthless, is cruel*” (144).

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, in her memoir, *Farewell to Manzanar*, while talking about her father Ko Wakatsuki enlists racial prejudice as a cause that prohibited him from realizing his complete potential in the U.S. Ko tried his hands at a variety of occupations. However he could not establish and make a name for himself in even a single one. Jeanne notes “he never quite finished anything he set out to do.

Something always stopped him: bad luck, a racial barrier, a law, his own vanity or arrogance or fear of losing face” (Houston and Houston 55). Ko laid importance on education. He attended a law school and wanted to help his friends settle their “legal squabbles” which included issues of immigration and repossession of fishing boats. He also translated legal documents for the government for some time. Ko’s refusal to accept the prejudices and humiliation, while training to be a lawyer in the years before the First World War, proved to be major hurdles in the process of obtaining the degree. While farming, Jeanne notes “The alien land laws prevented him from owning property, but he could lease the land, or make a tenancy deal and work it” (Houston and Houston 55). He spent his time farming in multiple places in California. Later, he started fishing out of Santa Monica. By December 1941, he had two boats named *Waka* and *Nereid*, just before Pearl Harbour was attacked.

Jeanne documents that one of the places, where the Issei men were detained, was Fort Lincoln. As Papa was fluent in Japanese and English, he would narrate the English news in Japanese after translation and with voice modulation almost turning it into a performance. Papa also worked as interviewer, helping the Justice Department interview other Isseis.

Ko is interrogated by the FBI officials at Fort Lincoln. They procure information about Ko’s life in Japan such as Ko lived in Ka-ke, a small town in Hiroshima on the island of Honshu. He attended four years of Chuo Gakko, a school for training military officers. His Uncle was a famous general and had defeated the Russians at Port Arthur in 1905. Ko could not contact his family in Japan as he was isolated and also he could not afford a trip home.

During his interrogation, Ko points out that it would be foolish on the part of the Japanese vessels to move away from their fleet and so close to the enemy coast to refill their tanks. Ko also regards the scenario as a sad state of affairs for the U.S. as well as Japan. He thinks that Pearl Harbour attack was planned to advance the ambitions of the military regime in Japan. He feels that when military governs a country, war is a natural outcome. Ko condemns the Japanese as well as the American Military equally (Houston and Houston 62). Logically, given the rich resources, weapons and man power, America is superior to Japan in terms of military might. However, the Japanese, Ko feels, can compensate with their attitude and spirit as they are “courageous fighters”. Ko also regrets, the fact that, the Japanese people are being misled by their military leaders. He adds “they [Japanese] will fight well. But their leaders are stupid. I weep every night for my country” (63).

Since the statement is being recorded, the interrogator notes down the fact that Ko still considers Japan as his country. It is natural as Ko was born and brought up and has his relatives there. When questioned about his loyalty to the Emperor of Japan, Ko remains silent. Ko says to the twenty nine year old American interrogator “I have been living in this country nine years longer than you have. Do you realize that? Yet I am prevented by law from becoming a citizen. I am prevented by law from owning land. I am now separated from my family without cause...” ( 63).

#### **4.7.3 Racial Discrimination and the ‘Loyalty’ Questionnaire in Wakatsuki Houston’s Memoir**

Ko is a quintessential Issei, who has been shaped by the Japanese values and worldview. His family prestige and his Samurai heritage are sacred to him, in spite of immigration. He seeks solace in the nostalgic past in the face of hostile attitude and

racial discrimination in the U.S. He faces a moral dilemma while pledging his loyalty to one country. He summarizes it in poignant words: “When your mother and your father are having a fight, do you want them to kill each other? Or do you just want them to stop fighting?” (Houston and Houston 64). The interrogation and the internment take a toll on Ko and as a result of this humiliation, he starts drinking and stops socializing and isolates himself. Jeanne realizes much later that “there were deeper, uglier reasons for his isolation” (66).

Once Jeanne hears two Terminal Island women calling her father *Inu* in the latrine block. *Inu* literally means a dog in Japanese. However metaphorically it was used as a “disrespectful insult word used for people with bad manners, or worse, breaches of faith and loyalty” (66). Jeanne points out that *Inu* had been used as a term to mean collaborator or informer and was used for the:

1. former members of Japanese American Citizens League for helping the army with evacuation
2. Men who co-operated with camp authority in any way
3. Genuine informers in the camp who conveyed information to War department and FBI

The camp dwellers suspected Ko Wakatsuki for being an *Inu* as he was released earlier than the other Issei men (67). The actual reason was that the Justice Department had not found any record or reason to detain him any longer. However the camp mates believed in the rumour that as an interpreter he had bought his release through the information he procured from other Issei men.

Ko avoided speaking about his time in Fort Lincoln. The humiliating charge of disloyalty affected him more than the physical hardships he endured. Jeanne notes

“for a man raised in Japan, there was no greater disgrace” (Houston and Houston 72). He felt vulnerable and powerless. The frustration and rage, that had built up, took form of a riot in December, 1942. An entry in the Densho Encyclopaedia provides the following explanation “The incident was triggered by the beating of Japanese American Citizens League official Fred Tayama upon his return from a meeting in Salt Lake City and the arrest and detention of Harry Ueno for the beating.” (Manzanar Riot/Uprising). The riot was appropriated by the media propaganda and anti- Japanese lobbies, who claimed that it was an anniversary demonstration organized by militant, pro-Japan forces in the camp. This added to the Anti-Japanese sentiment in the region.

Jeanne records in her memoir that the internees held public meetings for demanding higher wages, better food, as a sign of open revolt, exhibition of patriotism, and a wholesale return to Japan. As time passed, these protests turned loud and violent.

On 5 Decemeber 1942, “Fred Tayama, a leader in the Japanese American Citizens League and a “friend” of the administration was badly beaten by six men” (73). Three men were arrested the next day and one was sent to jail at Independence. This accused was a young cook “known for his defiance and contempt for the authorities” (Houston and Houston 73). The cook’s genuine protests against the camp’s chief steward, who was a Caucasian and stole meat and sugar to sell in the black market and exploit the wartime scarcity, were given a racial turn. He attempted to organize a Kitchen Workers’ Union against this issue as there were rumours that infants had died due to sugar being substituted by saccharin in the recipes. The young cook’s arrest became the immediate cause of the December riot. There was a lynch mob roaming in the premises as well.

The pro-Japan forces focused on convincing the internees for repatriation to Japan as they sought to free themselves from the racially biased American society. The conflict between pro-Japan faction and the authorities escalated eventually. Moreover, the protests were prompted by disillusionment, racial politics and helplessness, rather than treacherous intentions. This is evident from the fact that the man, who emerged as one of the leaders of the rioters, as noted by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, was “Hawaiian-born Joe Kurihara. During the First World War he had served in the U.S. Army in France and in Germany and he was so frustrated by his treatment in Manzanar he was ready to renounce his citizenship and sail to the old country” (75).

Kurihara was a Nisei and challenged the oppressive mechanism of internment by delivering speeches that asserted that emphasis on Tayama’s beating was being utilized to conceal the sugar fraud. The authorities agreed to release the cook. However a mob of 2,000 people gathered. With no Internal Security Force to confront them, the mob divided itself into two groups. One group headed to the police station to release the cook and the other group marched to the hospital to kill Tayama who was hidden under a hospital bed. This group was unsuccessful in finding Tayama. Hence, they shifted their attention to other “Inus” or the fellow members of their community, they felt were close to the American administration and, thus, were traitors to the pro-Japan cause, on the “death list” (76).

The first group was countered by the military police. When they were asked to disperse they stoned the police, shouted slogans and sang songs in Japanese. The police used tear gas bombs as a reaction and began shooting at the mob. One person was killed, one 19 year old was critically injured, who died after five days, and ten were treated for gunshot wounds. The sounds of mess bells ringing and police jeeps

patrolling, notes Wakatsuki Houston, was heard throughout the night. Racial turn to protests and opposite factions clashing with each other escalate the conflict and result in stringent measures on the part of the government. The reservoir crew with Japanese American men, which had legal permission to be out of the camp on the night of the riot, to check the water supply to the camp, was also stopped and interrogated by the military police.

The War Relocation Authority asked the Japanese American internees to fill in an application for Leave Clearance in 1943 which was also known as “Loyalty Oath”. Two questions that were crucial in this application were close-ended in nature. The first one asked the applicant whether he would serve in the Armed Forces of the U.S. on “combat duty, wherever ordered?” and the second inquired if the applicant could “swear unqualified allegiance to the U.S.A” and defend the country against any attack by foreign or domestic forces and “forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor or any other foreign government” (81). The questions resonated the widespread suspicion about the allegiance of Japanese American community to the U.S. A negative answer to both the questions would result in initial imprisonment at Tule Lake Camp in northern California and deportation to Japan. A positive answer would be taken as an agreement to be drafted in the army. Men above seventeen years of age had to fill the form. Ko Wakatsuki and Woody, his son have conflicting views about the latter voluntarily joining the U.S. Army. Woody looks at the recruitment in the army as a way for the Nisei to prove their loyalty to the U.S.

There were three options to move out from the internment camps, such as Manzanar. Firstly, to join the infantry, secondly, to go back to Japan and thirdly, relocation, this option was for “interned citizens who could find a job and a sponsor somewhere inland, away from west coast” (Houston and Houston 84). Security

clearance that was required for the purpose of relocation took many months of processing.

Mike Masaoka, a key figure in the Japanese American Citizens' League had advocated for the adoption of an resolution "pledging Nisei to volunteer out of the camps for military service", two weeks before the December riot as he thought that "the most effective way Japanese Americans could combat the attitudes that put them in places like Manzanar was to shed their blood on the battlefield" (85). The exclusive Nisei regiment that was formed as a culmination of his efforts, including decorated officers and with, perhaps, one of the highest numbers of deaths and casualties in the history of the U.S. military served to counter the prejudice towards the community and suspicions of the general public. According to Densho Encyclopedia, approximately, 800 men were killed or were missing in action and there were more than 9,400 casualties.

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston points out that the government announced its plan to form all-Nisei 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team with certain vested interests such as adding to the infantry, speeding up the process of relocation and "weed out" or at least expose the number of Japanese sympathizers. The "loyalty oath" made many "once-loyal citizens to turn militantly anti-American" (Houston and Houston 86). John Okada sheds greater light on the fate of those who gave negative answers to both the questions. For the sake of the unity of the family, Ko decided to give positive answers to both the questions and stay in the U.S. The dilemma faced by many Japanese Americans while answering the "loyalty oath" is best expressed in "NO NOs back to Japan, the YES YESs into an American society full of wartime hostility and racial hate" (87).

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston records in her memoir, the plan of pro-Japan forces to build up a resisting faction by, at times, bullying the inmates in responding negatively “YES YES was just what they expected of an *inu*” (87), that is, those who were perceived as traitors for helping the camp administration, rather than taking a pro-Japan stance. During a discussion in a meeting in the mess hall, Ko responds that he would give positive answers to the questions. Ko is called an *inu* and the debate culminates into a scuffle and an exchange of series of curses between Ko and the Pro-Japan group. Wakatsuki Houston notes that her father sang the Japanese National Anthem, perhaps, as a marker of his love for his motherland and as a reminder of endurance, resilience and a prayer for peace that the song signifies.

#### **4.7.4 Lawsuits against the Internment: Legal Construction of Race**

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston also discusses the three groundbreaking legal cases filed to challenge the internment, namely those filed by Gordon Hirabayashi, Fred Korematsu and Mitsuye Endo. These cases shed greater light on legal construction of race as delineated previously by citing Takao Ozawa’s example in the context of Yamashiro’s arguments. These cases confront the racial prejudice embedded in the legal system as well as expose the discriminatory nature of wartime measures.

At the time of the internment, Gordon Hirabayashi was a Nisei student from the University of Washington, who had challenged the evacuation order as based on racial bias, unconstitutional and condemned it for abusing civil rights. He had also violated the curfew that had been imposed in 1942 on the west-coast Japanese as an act of resistance to the same. “When Hirabayashi's team of lawyers appealed his case to the Supreme Court, it was the concurrent sentence that allowed the court to choose only one of his convictions for consideration...Instead of ruling on the issue of the

constitutionality of exclusion as Hirabayashi had hoped, the court only considered his conviction for disobeying curfew” (Lyon). The Supreme Court justified the curfew as a measure of wartime emergency.

Wakatsuki Houston also discusses Fred Korematsu’s case, which was about defying the exclusion orders that compelled the Japanese Americans to evacuate to the internment camps in the interior of the country. She notes “Fred Korematsu, a young Nisei living in Oakland, had ignored the evacuation to stay with his Caucasian girlfriend” (126). She adds that Korematsu altered his facial features with plastic surgery, changed his name and pretended to be a Spanish Hawaiian. FBI arrested him after discovering the truth. The issue of racial prejudice being involved in the evacuation was raised again as the litigants’ pointed out that German Americans or Italian Americans, in spite of having their roots in enemy countries had not been isolated like the Japanese Americans. In spite of the logical argument placed before the Supreme Court, it upheld the military’s decision of evacuation.

Lastly, the U.S. Supreme Court’s verdict on *Ex parte Mitsuye Endo* on 18 December 1944 was another landmark ruling, which stated that ““citizens who are concededly loyal" could not be held in War Relocation Authority concentration camps. The ruling provided impetus to the process of bringing about closure of the internment camps later. However, the court avoided commenting on the issue of constitutionality of the internment. Mitsuye Endo was a 22-year-old clerical worker for the California Department of Motor Vehicles based in Sacramento, who had been fired from her government job as a Nisei and had been sent to her family detained at Tule Lake. James Purcell, a San Francisco-based attorney took up Ms. Endo’s case with help of JACL and filed the *habeas corpus* petition seeking her release on 13 July 1942, arguing that her detention had deprived her of the right to report to work as a

state employee. Till the legal procedure was completed, Endo had to remain in Topaz. It was in May 1945, that she left Topaz to relocate to Chicago with her sister (Niiya). The Roosevelt administration after being informed about the Supreme Court verdicts in Korematsu's and Endo's cases to be given on 18 December, issued Public Proclamation 21 on 17 December 1944 which revoked the exclusion orders. This proclamation allowed the camp inmates to return home from January 1945. An announcement was made that the camps would be shut down in the following twelve months.

The cases of Fred Korematsu and Gordon Hirabayashi along with that of Minoru Yasui were revisited during the 1980s and coincided with the redress movement. The process began the conclusions drawn by Peter Irons, a legal scholar, who noted that "the government had knowingly presented false charges of Japanese American disloyalty and espionage". These findings made the attorneys of the aforesaid parties "petition for a writ of error *coram nobis*, a somewhat obscure procedure used to correct a fundamental error of fact in a trial after the defendant has been found guilty and served his sentence" (Niiya, Coram Nobis Cases). The proceedings continued for five years. These reconsiderations have a significant role in the Japanese American community's long battle for justice.

#### **4.7.5 Witnessing Post-Internment Racism in Wakatsuki Houston, Uchida and Otsuka**

Wakatsuki Houston records the worsened situation on the West Coast in terms of racial discrimination post internment "three years of wartime propaganda - racist headlines, atrocity movies, hate slogans, and fright-mask posters - had turned the Japanese face into something despicable and grotesque". Apart from the traditionally

racist organizations such as American Legion and The Native Sons of the Golden West, many new ones had emerged like “No Japs Incorporated in San Diego, The Home Front Commandoes in Sacramento, and the Pacific Coast Japanese Problem League in Los Angeles” (Houston and Houston 127). She notes that there were consistent efforts on the part of the political, economic and native organizational lobbies to prevent return of the Japanese American farmers to the coast. Isolated existence of the Japanese Americans for a considerable period during the internment had created greater hurdles in future coexistence. The white public perception was to suspect the community as an unassimilable ethnic group. After the decision of closure of camps, the Japanese Americans were compelled to consider relocation as there was deterioration of facilities with curtailing of allotted resources and neglect of constructed facilities. Wakatsuki Houston notes the cases of victimization of community members on their return to the coast, beginning from January 1945, “A Nisei man had been assaulted on the street in Seattle. A home was burned in San Jose. Night-riders carrying shotguns had opened fire on farmhouse near Fresno, narrowly missing two sleeping children” (128). One of Wakatsuki Houston’s sisters and her husband left the camp in May. They had to be accompanied by guards for their protection. She further adds that the acts of violence remained ingrained in the collective consciousness of the community, rather than the successful attempts at resettlement. The Wakatsuki family decided to try settling on the Eastern coast as there was no history of many Asians living there. They were optimistic living as a united family in a new place.

However, Wakatsuki Houston notes that long history of racial prejudice against the community and the resultant legislations posed challenges at various junctures in the process of resettlement. The process of resettlement was speeding up

with weekly targets scheduled to be achieved in the course of time. The Japanese Americans were allowed to choose the place to relocate and government paid the fare. If no place was chosen then the government would send them to the region they lived in before internment. However, there was shortage of housing facilities on the coast. Ko decided to wait for the government to decide his fate just as it had detained him and disrupted his life. The conditions were not favourable for individual effort on his part as he had lost the right to own his fishing business and his equipments including his boats and nets. They were either stolen or confiscated, “a California law passed in 1943 made it illegal now for the Issei to hold commercial fishing licenses” (134).

Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been devastating for the family. With the end of the war, Wakatsuki Houston underscores “At Manzanar...there was some rejoicing...At least we were no longer the *enemy*” (140). On one hand, there was hope that victory of the U.S. and the allied forces would eliminate the immediate cause of suspicion of espionage and treason.

Woody, Ko’s second son faces a terrible dilemma as a member of the U.S. occupation forces in April 1946 in Ko’s hometown, that is, Ka-ke near Hiroshima. Questions of race and national loyalty again seem to come to the forefront for Woody “Being an American is hard enough; being a Nisei among these occupying forces is sometimes agony. He dreads those looks that seem to call him traitor to his homeland or his race” (144). Ironically, his race had made him an enemy in the U.S. However, in Japan, that is, the motherland of his parents, he is seen as a traitor and is overcome by guilt for the bombings by the U.S. and other war measures to get the military regime to surrender, that subjected the Japanese civilians to immense suffering.

Apprehension and anticipation about his visit to his father's hometown in Hiroshima make Woody weary. He thinks that the family would perceive him as an American soldier and that would further estrange their relations. Woody carries packs of sugar for the family, a commodity crucial to Japanese cuisine, yet its prices had increased tremendously post-war with the emergence of black market. Woody is astonished when the family starts on a note of acceptance and nostalgia. Wakatsuki Houston notes "but he knew, as soon as he arrived, that he did not need the sugar to cancel out his GI crewcut and his American smile. Being Ko's son was enough, being family. That was all they saw" (144). The strength of the family ties seem to allow Woody to momentarily overcome the implications of immigration, cultural clash, wars and national histories on his personal life. He feels that his bond with his father has been rejuvenated after listening to Aunt Toyo's stories about Ko, her financial support for his immigration to Hawaii and his reverence of the Samurai heritage of the family.

Wakatsuki Houston examines her own preconditioned perception of the Oriental race on lines of physical features symbolic of racial construction. Wakatsuki Houston's weariness about the so-called yellow race came from her father's reference to "Chinaman" throughout as a scary figure throughout her childhood. This can be seen as an instance of internalized racism, while operating in the mainstream White society and also based on the distinctions drawn within the Asian American community on apparent superiority of Japanese over those of Chinese origin. The latter is villainized in the children's stories. Before the internment, Wakatsuki Houston had lived in a predominantly white area. She felt that staying in 'working class, all Japanese locality' on Terminal island and the sight of 'demon-children' and

'Orientals' was a nightmare. It was after living in the camp that Wakatsuki Houston gradually overcame her indoctrination.

Wakatsuki Houston enlists a number of encounters which are forms of racial microaggressions that she faced in educational institutions. Derald Wing Sue defines racial microaggressions as "commonplace verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to people of color" (29). He further classifies them into microinsults, microassaults and microinvalidations. While microassaults are intentional, whether verbal or non verbal; microinsults and microinvalidations are apparently unconsciously committed. They could include insensitive attitude and negation of the lived reality of a person of colour. In addition to that, Sue delineates the themes of microinsults and microinvalidations, which range from ascribing intelligence based on race, dehumanizing and criminalizing people of colour to alienating, colour-blinding, meritocracy and denial of racial discrimination.

In Wakatsuki Houston's case, she notes that her classmates found it astonishing to see a person with Japanese features speaking impeccable English "a pretty blond girl in front of me said, quite innocently, "Gee, I didn't know you could speak English." She was genuinely amazed. I was stunned. How could this even be a doubt?". Wakatsuki Houston realizes that having Japanese roots in America may not always mean explicit racial hatred or violence, rather she would apparently always be perceived as someone "foreign" or "someone other than American" (157 - 158). These racial microaggressions in turn are benign methods of highlighting the presumed foreignness and unassimilability of the non whites, which in turn could be used as, as Kim points out earlier in the chapter, pretexts of civic ostracism in larger political contexts.

The emphasis on difference and othering lead Wakatsuki Houston to indulge in self-loathing in her youth. She observes that in youth, her classmates and other members of the mainstream society noticing her physical and facial features, before anything else, made her realize that it was “an instant knowledge that brought with it the first buds of true shame” (158). She adds further “They wouldn’t see me, they would see the slant-eyed face, the Oriental” (158). As seen in her observations, the racial difference paved way to racial stereotyping and reiteration of the prevalent racial stereotypes and prejudice in the American society. Withdrawal and seeking invisibility were natural reactions of the Nisei post the internment, primarily due to these acts of racial microaggressions. Wakatsuki Houston’s documentation of racial discrimination in her memoir substantiates the perspective that internment could be seen as an instance of, in Kim’s words, civic ostracism. She notes “You cannot deport 110,000 people unless you have stopped seeing individuals” (159). Erosion of individuality, racial stereotyping and rampant racial prejudice led to larger ramifications of, what existed and operated in the mainstream society as products of racializations and constructions of popular imagination, in form of the internment.

Wakatsuki Houston points out how racist structures instilled, in the non whites in the U.S., an inferiority complex. They would be confronted with the “double impulse: the urge to disappear and the desperate desire to be acceptable”. The social conditioning of the racial minorities would bring about “...acquiescence on the part of the victims, some submerged belief that this treatment is deserved, or at least allowable. It’s an attitude easy for nonwhites to acquire in America. I had inherited it. Manzanar had confirmed it” (159).

Yoshiko Uchida’s *Journey to Topaz* (1971) also portrays the dark realities of the internment, the moral dilemmas faced by the Japanese Americans in the face of

rampant racial discrimination and the resilience of the community through this literary work of children's fiction. Yuki's mother questions the executive order directing evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast "The paper says it's for our own safety, trying to find some logical reason for such an illogical act" (Uchida 29). Julie Otsuka also notes absurd explanations of internment provided by the government in her novel *When the Emperor was Divine* "You've been brought here for your own protection, they were told. It was all in the interest of national security. It was a matter of military necessity. It was an opportunity for them to prove their loyalty" (Otsuka, *When the Emperor was Divine* 70). The questions raised by Uchida and Otsuka are substantiated by Okihiro's analysis "race hatred constituted a compelling argument for mass evacuation— to protect them from the threat of riots and acts of violence" (Okihiro 112).

Towards the end of war, when Universities urge the government to allow Nisei students to return to campuses, Ken, Yuki's brother, is faced with a dilemma whether to prioritize the familial responsibilities or to pursue his education. Mr. Toda, an elderly man in the camp, notes the injustice the Nisei adolescents had been subjected to, given the racial prejudice and war hysteria, as they had to spend their youth in confinement shouldering the conventional responsibilities their fathers would have taken care of under normal circumstances "It is too bad life must be filled with such difficult choices. Why must we choose between Japan and America? I love them both. I belong to both...It is too bad Ken must choose between his responsibility to you and finishing school...It is a hard choice" (Uchida 78).

Uchida portrays the death of Mr. Kurihara, an old Issei man, who had a Japanese food shop in San Francisco before the internment, being killed by a guard for having been spotted at the southern border of the camp allegedly trying to escape

the camp. In fact, he had been collecting fossilized arrowheads of American Indians in the desert, precisely why he had gone to the southern border of the camp. He had decided that he would return to Japan after the internment instead of living in the U.S. as an enemy alien.

Uchida also deals with the issue of recruiting Nisei in the American army. She portrays mixed reactions of the community. Some perceive the policy as a trick of the American government to make Nisei soldiers cannon fodder in the war. Others condemn the government for presenting this policy after internment instead of providing it as an opportunity to build trust prior to evacuation. Ken, Yuki's brother decides to join the army. The army recruiter notes "the President felt that all loyal Americans regardless of race should be permitted to exercise their responsibilities as citizens...As a special unit they would stand out...They wouldn't simply be additional manpower dispersed throughout the regular army, but could prove their loyalty as a special group in a very dramatic way" (131-132).

#### **4.7.6 A Comprehensive Account of Long Battle to Redress in**

##### **Kogawa's *Itsuka***

In Joy Kogawa's *Itsuka*, she creates a fearless, Japanese Canadian Nisei activist in the form of Aunt Emily, who attempts to utilize all democratic and legal measures to expose the racial discrimination faced by her community and to bring about change in the racial status quo. Naomi Nakane, the protagonist of the novel notes "Back in the late forties, she [Aunt Emily] helped found the National Japanese Canadian League, the umbrella organization for all the local leagues across the country. She had big dreams then. "Human rights is our responsibility," she said" (Kogawa, *Itsuka* 111).

Kogawa portrays the prolonged struggle in form of redress movement post internment. Within the community, there are factions that have conflicting interests regarding the issue of redress. Nikki Kagami, elected representative of Toronto League did have plans of claiming twenty-five million dollars as collective compensation for the internment.

Aunt Emily and her group were sceptical about her accountability as she did not reveal plans of equitable distribution after receiving the amount. They desired a democratic decision making and transparent sharing of information. Hence, they formed the Democracy group, initially an additional group of friends, which grew to become a group seeking information relevant to redress from Nikki Kagami. They posed multiple questions to her “Was Government going to give her twenty-five million dollars? How had she come to that figure? Was there going to be a review of the War Measures Act?”. Nikki did not deem any of these questions worth to be answered. She constantly emphasized on her connections in the ministry, which could benefit the cause “she said things were well in hand. She knew the people in the Department of Multiculturalism. There was no need...for anyone to get excited” (183).

Aunt Emily was of the opinion that the redress movement should represent all factions within the community. It was necessary that an organization, that provided platform for people across affiliations and generations to voice their views, created awareness about the movement. She asserted “Japanese Canadians everywhere should have a voice in redress. And that can only happen, they say, if we have a strong grass roots national organization” (186). A national council of Japanese Canadians is formed and all local centres are made accountable to it, whenever there are any steps to be taken regarding the redress. Nikki Kagami is not comfortable with this arrangement.

Racial tensions resurface in intellectual terms as there are disagreements between Morton Mukai, a passionate activist, a part of the redress movement, and Dr. Clive Stinson, vice-president of St. John's fellow of the Royal Military Academy and consultant to the Multicultural Directorate. Dr. Stinson objects to Morton's piece on racism in *Bridge*, multicultural magazine. He considers it to be an attempt to incite people on racial lines. Dr. Stinson approves of Nikki Kagami, as a representative of the community for her cooperative nature. In other words, Kagami is not perceived as a threat to the prevalent racial status quo. Those who challenge this status quo to bring about awareness and transformation like Morton Mukai are not given the liberty to express their opinions.

Morty Mukai's capsule history captures the vital junctures of racial injustice against the Japanese Canadian community. He begins with the forced uprooting of 22,000 Japanese Canadians, a majority were Canadian-born or naturalized citizens in 1942. He delineates the adverse impact of War Measures Act including profiling and imprisonment "without trial in animal stalls at Hastings Park in Vancouver, in hastily built internment camps, in prisoner-of-war camps, We were forced to labor on road gangs" (171).

Further, he underscores the dispersal of the community to east of the Rockies and deportation of 4,000 of Japanese Canadians after the war "These war crimes and acts of racism by the Canadian Government – actions opposed by senior officials within both the Department of National Defense and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police – have never been officially acknowledged nor have the victims been compensated" (172).

Another vocal critic of the government's racially biased policies pertaining to Japanese Canadians is Naomi's Uncle Dan. He is a Nisei war veteran and an activist "fighting the good fight in the courts. "He's the most battle-scarred Canadian around,".... He fought as a young man for the franchise. Then in the forties, patriotic citizen Dan fought for the right to fight for his country. He fought against Japan in the Intelligence Corps. He fought against the exile of Japanese Canadians" (180).

In contrast to this, Nikki Kagami perpetuates the mainstream discourse around race. She looks at Japanese Canadians as "We're middle-class, law-abiding, good Canadian citizens. A model minority" (208). She attempts to delegitimize the efforts of Aunt Emily's group labelling them as a "militant pressure group" and by considering the national council "illegal". She opines that their efforts are about creating unrest in the community and the demand for individual compensation stems from personal greed of the members, rather than a vision for community's welfare. Aunt Emily rightly assesses role of Nikki Kagami in the racial politics "the ones who have the biggest teeth are people of privilege. They define and control. And Nikki is being used by the powerful to define us to their advantage" (212). Further, she adds redress is a Canadian liberation movement. We're fighting the oppression of an entire Canadian minority (221).

Naomi notes that the Prime Minister plans of settling the redress issue with general funds before his retirement. One step towards this direction is the organization of ethnocultural breakfast by Minister of Multiculturalism. During this event, a delegate points out the workings of the white privilege, particularly, when it comes to acknowledging diverse realities and providing equal access to power. She observes

Every one of us lives and breathes in structures of racism from the moment we're born. We're caged in standards controlled by people of privilege – standards of truth and goodness, standards of excellence, standards of beauty which are standards of privilege through and through, and those are the bars that deny our specific realities and lock out of even your most anti-racist institutions. (226)

Nikki Kagami campaigns with more vehemence as she sees more people joining Aunt Emily's position on redress

I represent Toronto's Japanese Canadian community and twenty-four organizations there. We do not support the position of the National Japanese Canadian League. Redress is a painfully divisive community matter. The federal government is wisely avoiding it. Toronto should do likewise. Moreover...those NJCL people are militant left-wingers- they support the New Democrats. (250)

Nikki tries all plausible narratives to discredit the struggle for redress. She provides her support to the government's non-committal stand on the issue. She uses ideological labels for the supporters of individual compensation through redress. Further, she brings in the displeasure of the Issei to further her agenda "the issei don't want the community to fight with Government...They want redress to go away....You people won't accept an apology unless there's cash. It's disgusting...It's blackmail" (257).

During deliberations, Dr. Stinson also joins Nikki Kagami in accusing Aunt Emily and the demands made by her group of coming from position of personal interest and of winning political leverage in the entire process. He asserts

I know innocent people suffered. That's what war's all about...What you need to understand is that justice isn't served by special-interest groups making history up for their own selfish ends. It's not justice you're after. It's advantage over other groups. It's political privilege. So I say the redress movement is wrong. You're abusing the political process. (262 -263)

In addition to that, he attempts to portray compensations as a burden on the nation "your community doesn't need money....If symbolism was all that mattered...you'd have accepted a token amount...the League is after more money...Forty years after the event, you can't expect taxpayers to foot the bill (263-264).

Aunt Emily explicates persecution by virtue of race by changing the context from Japanese Canadians to an imaginary scenario with English Canadians at the receiving end of the prejudiced policies. She states

If Government swindled you for no other reason than that you're English – if you...were denied your rights for seven years and you had no access to the courts and no vote, if all English people in this country were scattered and Englishness was so despised that you had to hide everything English about yourself ...You'd never regain the inheritance you could have passed on to your children – which has now been handed on to some other racial group... you should strive to reveal that evil for what it is. (264)

Morton records the multiple times, since November 1984 till July 1987, when discussions about redress and National Japanese Canadian League's demands for apology, acknowledgement of injustice, restitution, compensation for income and property losses and repeal of War Measures Act have been terminated. After American resolution about redress, an agreement is reached in Canada on 22

September 1988 “there’s to be a full acknowledgement of the injustices, individual compensation of \$21,000 each to those affected (the Americans are to receive \$20,000), a community fund and a race-relations foundation. It’s a \$350,000,000 package” (322).

Kogawa records the symbolic acknowledgement of racial injustice faced by Japanese Canadians during the internment through the Prime Minister’s speech

Nearly half a century ago, in the crisis of wartime, the Government of Canada wrongfully incarcerated, seized the property of and disenfranchised thousands of citizens of Japanese ancestry...Error is an ingredient of humanity. So too is apology and forgiveness....as inadequate as apologies are....they are the only way we can cleanse the past so that we may, as best we can, in good conscience face the future... (325)

Naomi expresses the value of the apology for the community “The children, the grandchildren, will know that certain things happened to their ancestors. And that these things were put right” (325). The apology transformed the meaning of Canadianness for the community. The acknowledgement of the wrongs of the government was also an acknowledgement of the belongingness of the community to Canada and that no entity can deny that right to them in the future “We’ve all said it over the years. “No, no, I’m Canadian”.....Sometimes it’s been a defiant statement, a demand, a proclamation of a right. And today, finally...to be Canadian means what it hasn’t meant before. Reconciliation. Liberation. Belongingness. Home” (328). A detailed statement of acknowledgement by the Canadian government, attached to the novel, reads as follows

Despite perceived military necessities at the time, the forced removal and internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II and their deportation and expulsion following the war was unjust. In retrospect, government policies of disenfranchisement, detention, confiscation and sale of private and community property, expulsion, deportation and restriction of movement, which continued after war, were influenced by discriminatory attitudes. Japanese Canadians who were interned had their property liquidated and the proceeds of sale were used to pay for their own internment....

Therefore, Government of Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, does hereby :

- 1) acknowledge that the treatment of Japanese Canadians during and after World War II was unjust and violated principles of human rights as they are understood today
- 2) pledge to ensure, to the full extent that its powers allow, that such events will not happen again; and
- 3) recognize, with great respect, the fortitude and determination of Japanese Canadians who, despite great stress and hardship, retain their commitment and loyalty to Canada and contribute so richly to the development of the Canadian nation. (333-334)

## **4.8 Nisei, Military Service and Racism**

The primary and celebrated contribution of Nisei in the American military service was through the 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT) in Europe as well as part of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). In the context of Hawaii, Nisei were an integral part of the Hawaii National Guard. Some had been drafted, while some Niseis had volunteered. Fugita and Fernandes

note “after Pearl Harbor, soldiers in the Guard became members of the 298th and 299th Infantry Regiments, which performed patrol and construction duties. In June 1942, most of Hawaii's Nisei soldiers, over 1,400, were shipped to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, to begin training as the newly formed 100th Infantry Battalion” (86). This change, though seen as a wartime precaution, was essentially a reaction due to the fear of invasion of Hawaii by enemy forces and the supposed hurdles distinguishing the Japanese from Japanese American from the racially biased stance of the white decision making bodies.

Fugita and Fernandez note that Camp McCoy was not only a training camp, but also, an enemy alien camp. The battalion comprising of Niseis was employed to keep a watch on enemy aliens, who were primarily, Issei. Shifting to Camp Shelby, Mississippi after six months presented, before the Hawaiian Nisei, greater dilemmas in the face of volatile racial relations of the Japanese American community with the Southern whites considering daily decisions such as using coloured or white men’s rooms or racially segregated areas in local buses. Fugita and Fernandez emphasize that the members of the battalion were considered as whites in these mundane contexts. The 100th Battalion was sent to North Africa in August 1943 and was exposed to intensive warfare in Italy. This battalion had its own stature, when it was made a part of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team comprising of Hawaiian and some mainland incarcerated volunteers, which was formed in early 1943. It was permitted to retain its unit designation. Some scholars such as Fujitani point out that the formation of this team was a strategic move to counter the view that racial discrimination was prevalent in the U.S. The team constituted of individuals, who were visibly Japanese and, thus, the authorities thought, would serve the purpose. War Department was keen on recruiting members primarily from internment camps.

However, almost ten thousand Hawaii Japanese Americans chose to volunteer. Fugita and Fernandez cite statistics that 2,686 volunteers were accepted from Hawaii and around 800 from the camps. Participation of Hawaii Japanese Americans in huge numbers is a consequence of absence of any internment camps there. Daniel Inouye notes a sense of humiliation that the Hawaii Japanese felt when they were designated as enemy aliens. He adds that the proclamation that Americanness is dependent on values and attitude rather than on skin colour or race was seen as an opportunity by Hawaii Japanese to prove their loyalty to the country by taking up even manual work related to construction after being recruited in military service. They, like their counterparts on the mainland, had an additional responsibility of acting in interest of the future of their community in the country.

The limited number of Japanese Americans, who chose to volunteer, Fugita and Fernandez note, tried to demonstrate the possibility of allegiance to the U.S., in spite of their confinement along with their families in camps based on racially discriminatory policies. When in Camp Shelby, Inouye recounts the conflict between “mainland Kotonks” and “Hawaiian Buddhaheads” wherein the Hawaii Japanese Americans were sceptical of their counterparts on the mainland as they saw Japanese Americans from the mainland mocking them for the uniquely Hawaiian pidgin English they used for communication. Some features of this pidgin are that it is a fascinating mixture of “Hawaiian, Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, and a combination of strange construction” (89). Though at a juncture certain senior military officers were contemplating rethinking of this arrangement of combining Hawaii Japanese Americans and the mainlanders to form a regimental combat team, long period of training brought about a sense of unity. The motto of the team “Go for Broke” has

been adopted from Hawaiian gambling (crapshooting) slogan. Toshio sings the song in Milton Murayama's *Plantation Boy*

*Pau, pau, pau, pilikia*

*Nui, nui, mai kai fine*

The night is young, we are young,

Honey, let's go for broke (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 29)

In May 1944, the team fought Germans in Italy and rescued Texas Lost battalion. The Japanese Americans contributed to the war effort through Military Intelligence Service. Fugita and Fernandez note that around six thousand men and fifty one women from Women's Army Corps were a part of the activities of MIS. Many of them were Nisei and Kibei, particularly trained linguists with fluency in English and Japanese.

#### **4.8.1 Contribution of Canadian Nisei**

In Canada, Susan Yatabe and Ewan Craig record that Japanese immigrants in Canada, that is, the Issei had contributed to the war effort during the First World War with a view of proving their loyalty to adopted homeland "Over 200 Japanese Canadians volunteered for the Canadian Army... Thirteen were awarded Military Medals for Bravery" (Yatabe and Craig).

Further, they note that First World War veterans of Japanese origin were the only exceptions in the Japanese Canadian population to be given the right to vote. This was possible due to the persistent political lobbying by veterans. However, as the war atrocities committed by Japan in China and other parts of the world came to light, Canadians began viewing those of Japanese origin with greater suspicion and they began to protest their presence in the neighbourhoods.

During the Second World War, Yatabe and Craig underscore that “the Japanese Canadian Citizens League sent a telegram to Prime Minister Mackenzie King that pledged loyalty and offered the services of all Japanese Canadians to the war effort” (Japanese Canadian Participation in World War I and World War II). Between 1942 and 1945, Nisei were prohibited from enlisting into the Canadian army, though many were inclined to. Prior to the attack on Pearl Harbour, Nisei, except those in B.C., were permitted to register themselves. In spite of the prohibition, around 32 Nisei served in Canadian forces and participated in war efforts in Europe. Some of them had veteran parents, who had fought in the previous war (Yatabe and Craig).

There was an urgent need of translators and interpreters to interrogate Japanese prisoners of war in 1944. Australia and Britain proposed recruitment from the Japanese population in Canada, being the only human resource available for the task in the British Empire. Japanese Canadians were strategically recruited without guaranteeing any rights in return, not even the right to citizenship. Yatabe and Craig observe “When Japanese Canadians volunteered to go to war, they were urged to sign up as members of the British army so that they could not demand the vote when they returned from the war” (Japanese Canadian Participation in World War I and World War II). The recruitment began in January 1945. Those who enlisted had been interned with their families previously. They faced objections and disowning from family members as a cost for their decision to volunteer. The Nisei recruits were divided into two groups, namely, India group which headed to India under British officer Captain Mollison and secondly, the S-20 group which received training in Brantford, Ontario and, additionally, language training at Canadian Army Japanese Language (S-20) School, Vancouver, given that one fourth of the total Niseis could

speaking Japanese prior to training. Two batches of graduated Niseis from S-20 worked abroad in the Far East in War Crimes Investigation Force and in the occupation forces in Japan. Around thirty Niseis from S-20 and almost equal number of those in India group worked all over Asia with British Forces Southeast Asia Command. Yatabe and Craig record that “their jobs included interrogating surrendered Japanese soldiers (to determine whether they had committed war crimes), psychological warfare, broadcasting of radio messages, intelligence gathering, translating and interpreting documents” (Japanese Canadian Participation in World War I and World War II). After returning from war, nothing much had changed for the Japanese Canadian war veterans. They were still “enemy aliens” in the eyes of law considering that The War Measures Act was still in place. Greater dilemma of dispersal to the East or repatriation to Japan awaited them and their families. In 1947, having met with protests, the Federal Cabinet revoked the deportation legislation. It was only in 1949 that the Japanese Canadians were given the right to vote and to return to the previous areas along the coast, where they lived before the war.

#### **4.8.2 Draft Resistance**

Draft resistance refers to the opposition of almost 300 Japanese Americans to enlist for recruitment in the U.S. Army under The Selective Service and Training Act of 1940 endorsed by President Roosevelt in September 1940 in light of the Second World War. This act extended the age bracket for eligibility for military service from 18 to 35 years to men between 18 to 45 years of age. In addition to this, registration of men of up to 65 years of age was compulsory. Draft resisters have also been seen as resisters of conscience post the civil rights movement and Asian American political movement. They represent a faction of the community that did not face the unjust nature of policies in silence and passivity. Scholars consider that, though the reasons

for resistance were complex, the resisters embodied the American spirit in challenging the injustice they were subjected to. Some also opine that, alternately, unconditional obedience, a typical Japanese quality, perhaps made Nisei soldiers pledge their unconditional loyalty to the U.S. in spite of the past prejudice they battled as a community.

In January 1944, when it was decided to draft Japanese American incarcerated into the Army, the resistance on the part of the incarcerated was natural given the terrible confinement they had lived through, which had made them question their claims to the rights provided by the American constitution. The incarcerated emphasized that this was another addition to the series of unethical measures taken by the government against the community. Through the interviews with resisters, Fugita and Fernandez conclude that some incarcerated internalized guilt and took it upon themselves to provide a proof of their loyalty to the U.S. by enlisting themselves for military recruitment. However, few of them contemplated upon the fact that the onus of eliminating the label of being disloyal and being an enemy alien laid upon the government before asking the incarcerated to join military service. Fugita and Fernandez note that “unlike the 442nd volunteers, many of whom were intent on proving their Americanism, the resisters insisted that their rightful, unsullied American identity must be restored first before they would act like an American. To have their rights stripped away without due process of law and then be forced to serve in a segregated combat unit was just too much for these individuals” (92). The nature of resistance was complex given that many of them had answered yes-yes on the loyalty questionnaire. The resisters also included those who had answered No-No on the questionnaire, an issue examined by John Okada in his novel titled *No-No Boy*. Fugita and Fernandez record that “In early 1943, the Army and the WRA attempted to

determine the loyalty of individuals in all ten of the camps ... This process was called registration. Ultimately, Tule Lake was chosen to become a segregation center and to house the so-called "disloyals" from all of the WRA camps" (56)

Organized bodies representing the draft resisters included Fair Play Committee in Heart Mountain Camp. Leaders of this group were given sentences of imprisonment. More than sixty, who did not appear for physical examination before recruitment, were presented in mass trial conducted in Cheyenne, Wyoming. They were also sent to serve a prison sentence.

In the the trial at Tule Lake, the Presiding judge Judge Louis Goodman dismissed charges levied on the resisters, Fugita and Fernandez underscore, citing the unconstitutional nature of incarcerating American citizens, questioning their loyalty towards the country, commanding them to enrol themselves in military service and putting them on trial for resisting the pressure. In Poston, Arizona, a fine of one cent was levied on the resisters in 1946. Fugita and Fernandez record that the resisters were granted presidential pardon before Christmas of 1947 by President Truman. They also observe that many Nisei misinterpreted draft resistance as a negative answer to the questions in the loyalty questionnaire. The resisters had to face ostracism within their own community.

#### **4.8.3 'Loyalty' Questionnaire and the No-No Boys in Okada's Novel**

*No-No Boy* is a story of, as the title suggests, a No-No boy named Ichiro. The protagonist has returned home after serving a term in the prison for not answering the loyalty questionnaire with positive responses and for not agreeing to being drafted in the army. He is caught up in a family that includes a brother, who hates him for not enrolling himself in the army and acts as his substitute to save the family from disgrace. The father is relatively weak and powerless in the dynamics of the house.

The mother strongly believes that Japan has won the war and the American media has conspired to hide it from the American public. She looks up to Ichiro for refusing to join the army and feels that he is as proud a Japanese as herself. Okada uses the analogy of Momotaro, a Japanese folktale where a boy emerges from a peach and provides immense joy to an old couple, perhaps to indicate the unending nature of familial obligations emphasized in Japanese culture.

Ichiro considers himself to be half Japanese who can no longer look at himself as Japanese enough in such uncertain circumstances of persecution on racial grounds, where being Japanese is equated to being an enemy alien. Living with Americans has made him fall in love with the American ways of life, yet he cannot be an American wholeheartedly as his Japanese ancestry, racial affiliation and value system are at conflict with the American aspects of his identity. His predicament is aggravated against the backdrop of the Second World War, when his loyalty to the U.S. is tested, when he is called upon to register for getting enlisted in the army to fight the Japanese enemy. Ichiro is overcome by a feeling of bitterness towards his Japanese heritage. However, having his mother as a central figure in his life, makes abandoning Japanese values difficult for him. He feels a sense of incompleteness. He finds himself in a state of limbo following his failure to fight for U.S. by enrolling in the American army. Neither is he able to wholeheartedly extend his support to Japan by following into the steps of his mother. He articulates his dilemma by venting out his emotions “I am not your son and I am not Japanese and I am not American” (Okada 256). Ichiro feels alienated from both points of reference in his process of identity construction. John Okada voices the dilemma of many no-no boys having witnessed the stages of pledging allegiance to the U.S. and multiple perspectives about the same having personally served in World War II in Japan to encourage people there to surrender.

In the introduction to the 1979 edition of Okada's *No-No Boy*, originally published in 1957, Lawson Fusao Inada notes that Okada's life was a testament of what it meant to be an "Oriental" a "Jap" in the U.S. He considers Okada's writing, in retrospect, to be a crucial "living force" of sustenance for the collective identity, particularly, when scholars have come to discuss issues of race and identity, in spite of not receiving critical acclaim it deserved in the initial years after its publication. Similar sentiment is conveyed in the afterword by Frank Chin that accompanies the 2014 edition. He expresses astonishment about the fact that John Okada was not known in Seattle as much as elsewhere, in spite of Seattle being his place of birth. He highlights "to Asian Americans outside of Seattle, John Okada is the proof of our yellow soul" (Okada 253). It is unsettling for him to see that the Asians had been in the U.S. for around 150 years "nine Chinaman generations, four Japanese American generations, three Filipino and two Korean, [yet] not one of us had an urge to say what's what and who's who about ourselves" (Okada 254). Discovering *No-No Boy* comes as a moment of emancipation for Chin, as he had felt the burden of taking up the responsibility of being a pioneer in Asian American literature for long, he adds "I didn't want to be the first yellow to write in Seattle" (Okada 254). Chin points out at his own cultural conditioning and the underlying racial status quo in society by confessing "I was brought up to believe that there was nothing else for me to be but a Chinese foreigner or a fake white American, as if there were nothing for whites to be other than British subjects or American colonists" (254). Chin sheds light on the predicament of associating one's identity with the land particularly when one belongs to a different race and ethnicity than the one that is the mainstream at a given point of time. He questions the fact that the Asian Americans have not been entitled to assert their identity as Americans unlike the whites who did so and freed themselves from

the colonial baggage by declaring their independence. Okada, Inada and Chin reclaim racial terms that previously have been used in discriminating against Asian Americans in the racial discourse prevalent in the U.S. such as “Oriental”, “Jap”, “yellow”.

Wenyng Xu, in the research article "Sticky Rice Balls or Lemon Pie; Enjoyment and Ethnic Identities in *No-No Boy* and *Obasan*" explores Okada's decision of not portraying a definite end to the perpetual dilemma of identity crisis faced by Ichiro, Japanese American protagonist of his novel. Xu notes “Okada's inability to resolve Ichiro's identity crisis is also in the absence of an alternative discourse in the 1950s to that of either American assimilation or Japanese nationalism” (24-25).

But Jinqi Ling, in the research paper titled "Race, Power, and Cultural Politics in John Okada's *No-No Boy*", comments on the challenge Okada faced while writing the novel. Firstly, he had the responsibility of communicating the immensity of the disruption caused by the Second World War and internment in the lives of Japanese Americans. Secondly, the scope and tools offered to a writer hailing from his community in the 1950s were certainly limited. Jinqi Ling observes “Okada's awareness of this tension is both the sense of urgency with which he wrote *No-No Boy* and his rhetorical decision to write a novel. ... By writing a novel with a fictional hero, Okada could not only speak the ideologically unspeakable but also keep his narrative position usefully ambiguous” (362).

In Okada's novel, Ichiro seems to raise a question that draft resisters had also raised, when they were asked to enlist themselves into the army

You can't make me go in the army because I'm not an American or you wouldn't have plucked me and mine from a life that was good ... fenced me in the desert like they do the Jews in Germany and it is a puzzle why you haven't

started to liquidate us though you might as well since everything else has been destroyed. (31)

Though he is fully aware of the backdrop of such a sacrifice, Ichiro wonders if negative answers to the loyalty questionnaire and refusal to join army against the backdrop of war culminated in a permanent loss of opportunity to reclaim his Americanness. The rage, anxiety, shame and humiliation inflicted by enforced pledging of loyalty had made some Nisei answer the questions negatively. During a visit to a bar with Freddie Akimoto, another no-no boy, he contemplates on the same issue and assesses the possibilities ahead. Ichiro realizes that

Time would ease the rupture which now separated him from the young Japanese who were Americans because they had fought for America and believed in it. And time would destroy the old Japanese who, living in America and being denied a place as citizens, nevertheless had become inextricably a part of the country which by its vastness and goodness and fairness and plenitude drew them into its fold, or else they would not have understood why it was that their sons, who looked as Japanese as they themselves, were not Japanese at all but Americans of the country America. (Okada 51-52)

Okada presents various complex questions inherent in the measure of determining loyalty to a nation based on racial origins, institutionalizing racial discrimination as wartime measures and, on a contradictory note, make it mandatory for a community that had been perceived as “enemy alien” to register for military recruitment.

Ichiro attempts to discern the reasons behind his refusal to join the American army. He finds himself divided between his personal loyalty to his mother’s point of

view, more than his allegiance to Imperial Japan, and the expectation of the mainstream society as much as his own generation, the Nisei, of pledging allegiance to the U.S. For Ichiro, it becomes a familial conflict than the larger national issue of loyalty in the face of war. However, succumbing to the maternal pressure has greater implications for his identity as a Japanese American. He reiterates his dilemma in the following words:

you were still half my mother and I was thereby still half Japanese and when the war came and they told me to fight for America, I was not strong enough to fight you and I was not strong enough to fight the bitterness which made half of me which was you bigger than the half of me which was America and really the whole of me that I could not see or feel. (16)

Ichiro also points out at the racial status quo in the American society, which hinders the process of cultivating a sense of belongingness to the U.S., particularly if one is a descendant of Japanese immigrants. Racial discrimination cannot be overlooked, while pledging allegiance to the U.S. as there are constant reminders of prejudice in social interactions, policy decisions and media

But I did not remember or I could not remember because, when one ins born in America and learning to love it more and more every day without thinking it, it is not an easy thing to discover suddenly that being American is a terribly incomplete thing if one's face is not white and one's parents are Japanese of the country Japan which attacked America. (53-54)

When Ichiro thinks of resuming his education, Baxter Brown, assistant professor in Engineering acknowledges the American spirit in the immense contribution of Japanese Americans to the war effort. He feels that rage against

internment and evacuation is justified on the part of the community. He observes “You fellows as American as I am. And you’ve proved it. That outfit in Italy. Greatest there ever was. You were there too. I suppose?” (55). Questions like these make Ichiro anxious considering the fact that non- participation in the war has put his future prospects of being a part of the mainstream society in jeopardy. Seeing Kenji, a war veteran and friend, walking with a cane as gangrene has set in after injuring one of his legs in the war, adds to Ichiro’s anguish. Ichiro envies the ease with which the war experience has facilitated Kenji’s integration into the society and has helped him to embrace American identity.

I’ll change with you, Kenji...Give me the stump which gives you the right to hold your head high. ..give me with it the fullness of yourself which is also yours because you were an enough to wish the thing which destroyed your leg and, perhaps, you with it but, at the same time, made it so that you can put your one good foot in the dirt of America and know that the wet coolness of it is yours beyond a single doubt. (64)

Ichiro’s younger brother joins the army irrespective of mother’s objection to the same. It is, perhaps, partly to assimilate into the American society by proving his loyalty to the country as much as to avoid ostracism and violence from fellow Niseis. Ostracism is demonstrated in Bull’s comment on Ichiro “No-no boys don’t look so good without the striped uniform” (74). Bull is Kenji’s friend and a war veteran.

Taro is compelled to get Ichiro in a dark alley after having drinks to prove to his Nisei friends that he condemns his brother’s decision to resist drafting. Physical violence is one of the ways in which the Nisei punish the resisters like Ichiro. They assert that their subjective opinions have placed in jeopardy the collective image of

the community vis the mainstream white society. Ichiro highlights the repercussions of having a different perspective on allegiance on his relationship with his brother. He feels like a scapegoat, who is being victimized as a result of disappointments and frustrations of Niseis, who in spite of having served in the army, have not seen desired change in the racial status quo in the society

I am not one of those who wait for the ship from Japan baggage ready, yet the hundreds who do are freer and happier and fuller than I. I am not to blame you but you blame me and for that I hate you and I will hate you more when you go into the army and come out and walk the streets of America as if you own them always and forever. (81)

Ichiro is not an exception to the immense guilt some Japanese Americans felt as a result of the social conditioning and wartime propaganda projecting resistance equivalent to treason or betrayal of the American cause. Ichiro articulates his regret as follows

Why is it that, in my freedom, I feel more imprisoned in the wrongness of myself and the thing I did than when I was in prison? Am I really to know again what it is to be American? If there should be an answer, what is it? ...There is no retribution for one who is guilty of treason, and that is what I am guilty of. The fortunate get shot. I must live my punishment. (82)

Another example of a resister in Okada's *No-No Boy* is Mike, Ralph's brother. Ralph is Emi's dead husband. Emi, a friend of Ichiro tells him about Mike, when she sees him struggling to bring his life back on track after a sentence. She narrates how Mike, a First World War veteran faced humiliation, when the government decided to uproot even those who had previously fought on behalf of the U.S. along with those

that it suspected to be pro-Japan in their stance or were suspected of espionage. Mike decides to join the pro-Japan forces in the camp as a consequence of the humiliation.

He thought there might be justification in interning some of the outspokenly pro-Japanese aliens, but he scoffed at the idea of the government doing such a thing to him. When it became apparent that the government proposed to do just that, he burst into a fury of anger and bitterness and swore that if they treated him like a Japanese, he would act like one. ... Along with the other rabidly pro-Japanese, he ended up at the Tule Lake Center, and became a leader in the troublemaking, the strikes and riots. (98)

Further, Mike opts to go to Japan. Emi opines Japan probably was “a country he didn’t know or love, and I’m sure he’s extremely unhappy” (Okada 98). Emi makes a rational observation to uplift Ichiro’s spirit. She concludes that in light of Mike’s decision, Ichiro’s stand is quite fair.

Mike doesn’t have any more right than you to be here. He has no right at all anymore. It was as if he joined the enemy by antagonizing the people against the government, and you certainly never did that. All you did was to refuse to go in the army and you did so for a reason no worse than that held by a conscientious objector. (99)

Okada also provides space to the Issei perspective on belonging to the U.S. Ichiro is seen questioning himself whether he judged his mother harshly for choosing to side with Imperial Japan. Being an Issei, it was her birthplace. As an Issei, she must have witnessed, on multiple occasions, the racial discrimination that the Japanese immigrants are subjected to in the U.S. He observes:

Was it she who was wrong and crazy not to have found in herself the capacity to accept a country which repeatedly refused to accept her or her sons unquestioningly or was it the others who were being deluded, the ones like Kenji, who believed and fought and even gave their lives to protect this country, where they could still not rate as first-class citizens because of the unseen walls? (104)

Kenji's father blames himself for choosing to migrate to the U.S. and being naive for being ambitious to grow affluent and return to his hometown. He feels that it was his decision to immigrate that was the root cause of challenges his family had to face in the new land and eventually, his son's sacrifice of risking his life in war. However, he also notes that he had grown roots in the American soil when he saw America becoming an integral part of his son's identity:

His son was a man who had gone to war to fight for the abundance and happiness that pervaded a Japanese household in America.... He... remembered only that it was the time when this country which he had no intention of loving had suddenly begun to become a part of him because it was a part of his children...And in the dying of the foolish dreams which he had brought to America, the richness of the life that was possible in the foreign country destroyed the longing for a past. (120)

Okada, while shedding light on Kenji's decision making process, emphasizes the moral dilemma that confronted the Nisei, who chose to join the army, through Kenji's father's views

It was because he was Japanese and, at the same time, had to prove to the world that he was not Japanese that the turmoil was in his soul and urged him

to enlist...underneath it, a conviction that he loved America and would fight and die for it because he did not wish to live any place else... an American interned in an American concentration camp was indeed a flimsy thing. So, on this steadfast bit of conviction that remained, and knowing not what the future held, this son had gone to war to prove that he deserved to enjoy those rights which should rightfully have been his. (121)

Kenji's father feels immense guilt when he hears a testimony of a Nisei soldier, who had come to visit his family in the camp. He narrated the humiliation the Nisei were subjected to by making them do menial jobs after recruitment such as cleaning latrines, dishes and garbage. Secondly, he recollects how the Nisei soldiers were confined to the warehouse and were guarded by some white soldiers with machine guns during the visit of President Roosevelt.

Further, Ichiro contemplates on the bitterness in the relationship between the Issei and the Nisei. Every subsequent generation of descendants finds that the previous generation is more Japanese than itself. Perhaps, the bitterness is rooted in generational gap, when it comes to perceptions about identity. Conflicting values, the American influence and sense of belongingness are some factors that make the perceptions of both the generations distinct. Ichiro observes "And the young Japanese hates the not-so-young Japanese who is more Japanese than himself, and the not-so-young, in turn, hates the old Japanese who is all Japanese and, therefore, even more Japanese than he" (136).

Kenji sheds light on the stark reality of the unchanged racial status quo in the American society in spite of Nisei volunteering to fight in the war. In society, the Japanese Americans are still subjected to racial discrimination, verbal abuse and

physical violence. Kenji rightly points out the insecurity of the Nisei veterans, who cannot come to terms with the unjust prejudice still prevalent in spite of their sacrifices. They consider the draft resisters and No-No boys as the root cause of the problem. Hence, they vent out their frustration by targeting such members of the community. Kenji asserts that

Let them call you names. They don't mean it. What I mean is, they don't know what they're doing....they pick on you because they're vulnerable. They think just because they went and packed a rifle they're different but they aren't and they know it. They're still Japs....The guys who make it tough on you probably do so out of a misbegotten idea they maybe you're to blame because the good that they thought they were doing by getting killed and shot up doesn't amount to a pot of beans...Then they'll be the same as you, a bunch of Japs. (163)

Kenji points out that the Japanese tendency to live in isolated communities in specific places or returning to the places they had been previously evacuated from, such as Seattle or the Pacific coast, like his father, which could further jeopardise their prospects of assimilating into the white society. He remarks

You weren't here when they first started to move back to the Coast. There was a great deal of opposition – name-calling, busted windows, dirty words painted on houses. People haven't changed... I got to thinking that the Japs were wising up, that they had learned that living in big bunches and talking Jap and feeling Jap and doing Jap was just inviting trouble. (163)

It is tragic that the sense of community that the Japanese Americans tried to build for themselves was looked down upon, particularly, with suspicion. Kenji, a

Nisei veteran, also succumbs to this pattern of thinking, primarily a result of self-loathing, which was in turn a culmination of prolonged racial discrimination. He underscores that

I hear there's almost as many in Seattle now as there were before the war. It's a shame, a dirty rotten shame. Pretty soon it'll be just like it was before the war. A bunch of Japs with a fence around them, not the kind you can see, but it'll hurt them just as much. They ...hollered when the government put them in camps and put real fences around them, but now they're doing the same damn thing to themselves. (163)

Okada ends the novel on a possibility that the Nisei veterans and the resisters as well as the No-No boys would reconcile someday recognizing the community ties binding them all together. The conflict between Bull, a Nisei war veteran and Freddie, a No-No boy is settled with Freddie's death in an accident. Bull's reaction to his death seems to indicate the future course of the conflict. Though Bull does not regret blaming No-No boys, however, he cries after Freddie's death and Ichiro consoles him. This, perhaps, for Okada was a way of opening up a possibility of future reconciliation within the two factions of the Japanese American community.

#### **4.8.3.1 The 'Loyalty' Question and Canada**

Sunahara observes that Ian Mackenzie, a Canadian Cabinet Minister and M.P. for Vancouver, had made it his mission to deport Japanese Canadians. The image of Japanese Canadians as a dangerous racial minority had been well-established in the popular psyche by the anti-Japanese white leaders of British Columbia. The government had temporarily considered resettling Japanese Canadians to the east of Rockies till the end of the war. The agreement with Alberta of removing Japanese

Canadians post war, compelled the government to propose policy of voluntary repatriation of civilians and deportation of those deemed “disloyal”. Ascertaining so-called disloyalty was a major challenge. Norman Robertson, a principal advisor to the Prime Minister, opined that those Japanese Canadians interned at Angler and those who had ever sought protection of Spanish Consul, including those who have sought to register complaint for denying civil liberties due to internment, be deemed as “disloyal”. Sunahara points out that “Spain was the neutral power designated under the Geneva convention to police the treatment of Japanese aliens in Allied nations during the war” (114). If this criterion was applied, all community leaders in internment camps in British Columbia and amongst those working in fields of Alberta and Manitoba as well as Nisei protestors in camps would get labelled disloyal. Some civil servants proposed carrying out a loyalty survey along the lines of the American one swearing allegiance to Canada, forsaking allegiance to Japan and pledging not to interfere in Canadian war effort. Those who refused to swear allegiance were to be taken to special camps and deported along with those interned in Angler later. Many civil servants perceived deportation of a few as a justified option considering that it would pave way to permanent resettlement of those who swore allegiance. Robertson argued for joint policy on part of Canada and the U.S. in the matter of deportation. Since the American Constitution at least acknowledged the citizenship of the Nisei on paper, deportation could not be a plausible policy for the U.S. With American courts upholding the rights of Japanese Americans to freedom of movement in January 1945, the Canadian Government proposed a repatriation survey planning to consider those who chose Japan as disloyal and those who chose Canada would be investigated further through a loyalty commission. Sunahara notes “the repatriation survey did not offer a truly voluntary choice between Japan and Canada... It was a choice calculated

to induce the bitter and confused inmates of the detention camps in B.C. to choose Japan” (105). The repatriates were assured that they could work in Canada till deportation and would also receive certain amount as relief to settle in Japan. The disadvantages of choosing to stay in Canada were emphasized. The plan was to transport those who chose to stay to Kaslo for indefinite period of time with a condition of accepting whatever employment would be assigned by the government with an uncertain timeline of moving to east of Rockies. Sunahara records that any refusal to abide by government orders would be noted in the individual’s file as an instance of non-cooperation. Such an individual would not be even entitled to the meager allowance available for those remaining in Canada.

Government was not bound to guarantee permanent resettlement, employment or housing facilities. The future seemed bleak with a possibility of discrimination and violence. The Pro-Japan factions in the camps encouraged people to choose repatriation. Multiple factors that led to exponential increase in the number of individuals choosing repatriation included the sense of temporary security that the possibility of staying in detention camps in comparison to confronting the uncertain future with choosing to stay in Canada. Secondly, many had dependent family members and some had also fallen prey to the misinterpretation promulgated by Commissioner of Japanese placement due to his ignorance. He concluded that signing repatriation request would not immediately imply surrendering of nationality. It would happen only at the time of deportation. Though government officials were aware of the pressure under which the survey would be signed by Japanese Canadians, they emphasised its voluntary nature on public platforms. The government was working to make the responses to the survey binding on people in September

1945 as the astonishing end to the war made many withdraw their responses of getting repatriated to Japan.

Sunahara records that Labour Minister Humphrey Mitchell in a meeting of the Special Cabinet Committee on Repatriation and Relocation, previously, the Cabinet Committee on Japanese Questions, proposed “deportation of all Japanese aliens, except a few who would be allowed to remain on compassionate grounds; of all naturalized Japanese Canadians who had signed repatriation requests; and all *Nisei* who had not revoked their repatriation requests before the surrender of Japan on 2 September 1945” (109). For effective implementation of this proposed repatriation program, Mitchell wanted cooperation from the committee in passing three Orders-in-Council under the War Measures Act respectively making the repatriation requests irrevocable, taking away citizenship from the repatriates, who had requested for repatriation to Japan and establishment of loyalty commission to distinguish between aliens who could be considered for stay in Canada. The Special Cabinet Committee consented to suggest repatriation of all those who had requested as well as those interned at Angler with exception of a few *Nisei* and naturalized citizens, who had revoked their requests prior to Japan’s surrender. However, the committee opined that implementation of the program should begin only after consultation and a positive indication from General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Allied Commander in occupied Japan. Considering the impoverished conditions of war torn Japan, deportation could only be thought of in 1946. With War Measures Act expiring on 1 January 1946, there would legal hurdles in implementing the program. War Measures Act was to be replaced by National Emergency Powers Act, still under discussion in the Parliament as Bill 15, which, unlike the former, empowered the Parliament to invalidate any Orders-in-Council passed under the law.

As a way out, the federal government inserted paragraph 3(g) which, Sunahara documents

gave the Governor-in-Council (in fact the Cabinet) power over “entry into Canada, exclusion and deportation, and revocation of nationality.” As written, paragraph 3(g) would give the federal Cabinet a year in which to revoke the Canadian nationality of, and to deport, any resident of Canada. Further the deportations could not be challenged by Parliament, since no Orders-in-Council would be involved. Rather, the deportations could be effected by a Ministerial Order. (111)

The opposition and the press severely criticized paragraph 3(g). The government was compelled to withdraw this controversial paragraph. However, the government resorted to Section 4, which provided all Orders-in-Council existing under War Measures Act on 1 January 1946 an extension of a year under Bill 15. The Parliament could not intervene into any such orders.

Finally, the Cabinet upheld the right of Nisei to remain in Canada irrespective of being labeled loyal or disloyal. It approved an Order-in-Council for deportation of all Japanese aliens, who had requested for deportation including those interned in Angler; naturalized citizens who had not revoked repatriation requests prior to 2 September 1945; Nisei who did not revoke their repatriation requests prior to actual deportation, and the wives and children of those belonging to the aforesaid categories. In an effort to safeguard the citizenship of Canadian-born Japanese, another order revoked citizenship of only naturalized Japanese Canadians to be deported. Third order established a loyalty tribunal to investigate into cases of Japanese Canadians

referred to it by the Minister of Labour. Thus, apparently Japanese Canadians were to be deported without deliberations in the Parliament.

The Japanese Canadians found support in twenty-eight Members of the Parliament belonging to Co-operative Commonwealth Federation as well as an organization devoted to social service named Co-operative Committee on Japanese Canadians in Toronto. The latter submitted a petition to the Government in 1944 appealing dispersal of Japanese Canadians across Canada and restoration of their civil rights including ownership of property. They initiated a publicity campaign and circulated pamphlets to create awareness about Japanese Canadian cause. With the backdrop of Soldiers' Vote Act denying voting rights to individuals with racial origin similar to a country at war with Canada, new Nisei leadership emerged to protest the denial of their democratic rights. With help of former members of Japanese Canadian Citizens' League, Japanese Canadian Committee for Democracy was formed in Toronto to represent the community. JCCD joined forces with Co-operative Committee on Japanese Canadians and sent a delegation to the government condemning the repatriation survey. Many local organizations, churches and media bodies extended their support to the campaign. Representatives from camps also registered their protest against the survey.

Robert J. MacMaster, counsel for Vancouver's Consultative Council and belonging to the anti-deportation lobby faced hurdles in meeting his clients in the community. He argued prior to deportation there was a legal requirement of detainment of the deportees, which had been done under the now redundant War Measures Act. This detainment could be challenged through writ of *habeas corpus* considering the post war circumstances. These proceedings would delay deportation and the government could not afford numerous such petitions and proceedings. The

government agreed to negotiate with the anti-deportation lobby. The latter explained the unconstitutional nature of deportation of citizens. The same could be considered a war crime on the international scenario. The legal and the media pressure was mounting on the government. The lobby reiterated, Sunahara reports, that “the deportation of Canadian nationals of Japanese ancestry was an assault on Canadian democracy and must not be allowed to occur. They [anti-deportation lobby] discovered that the Canadian public agreed” (122). The controversial orders were to be referred to Privy Council in England. When the Council ruled that the orders were legal in December 1946, deportation seemed unnecessary to many political representatives given the overwhelming response to anti-deportation movement and the dispersal of Japanese Canadians across the country. Prime Minister King proposed keeping restrictions on the community for further two years and making efforts for permanent resettlement was the only sound option on humanitarian grounds.

In conclusion, this chapter delineates various theoretical frames to perceive the process of racialization in context of Japanese North Americans. It looks at the multiple factors that differentiated the internment experience of Japanese Americans on mainland and Canada in contrast to their counterparts in Hawaii. The chapter reads the testimonies of internment, racial discrimination and stereotyping in the literary expressions through the lenses of Omi and Winant’s racial formation, Yamashiro’s concept of heterogeneous ethnic group and Kim’s racial triangulation theory. Ann Sunahara’s *The Politics of Racism* (2000), Gary Okihiro’s *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (2001) and Stephen Fugita and Marilyn Fernandez’s *Altered Lives, Enduring Community: Japanese Americans Remember their World War II Incarceration* (2004) work as foundational texts to provide a well-grounded historical context to racial discrimination against Japanese North Americans. This chapter does

not only attempt to decode deep-rooted racially discriminatory practices, but also provides an overview of regulations pertaining to enemy aliens, phenomenon of picture brides, legal construction of race, loyalty questionnaire, racism within military service, draft resistance and model minority myth, which are integral to understanding race as a major concern in literary expressions of the internment.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# HAWAII JAPANESE AMERICANS: NAVIGATING THROUGH RACIAL AND SOCIO-LINGUISTIC STRATIFICATION

While considering processes of racialization and questions of race construction in the context of the Japanese in North America, the case of Hawaii Japanese Americans presents a unique opportunity to understand how multiple factors distinguished the process of race construction there from that on the mainland. One crucial factor, definitely, was the plantation system, particularly, in sugarcane plantations, established and sustained for a considerable period of time by the white planters. The Japanese were imported as unskilled labourers and occupied a lower position in the social hierarchy as reflected in their employment designations and residential arrangement. The plantation bosses harped on the historical fault lines between the workers of various Asian communities and countered any efforts of organized resistance by pitting them against each other.

Milton Murayama, in his Oyama tetralogy, delineates the impact of decades of exploitation and plantation mentality on Hawaii Japanese Americans. The tetralogy comprises of four novels titled *All I Asking for is my Body* (1975), *Five Years on a Rock* (1994), *Plantation Boy* (1998) and *Dying in a Strange Land* (2008). The protagonist of the first novel is Kiyoshi Oyama, a dutiful son, who registers himself to get drafted in the army during the war and, miraculously, manages to win a gambling game to win an amount that is equivalent to the family's piled up debt. *Plantation Boy* focuses on Toshio Oyama and his struggle as the first born son to escape the grind of

the plantation life and pursue his dream to be an architect. Toshio and Kiyoshi are prevented from attending high school as they are required to help the parents pay off the enormous debt incurred as a result of family obligations and maintaining the family name. *Five Years on a Rock* focuses on Sawa Oyama, mother of Toshio and Kiyoshi. She is an issei picture bride, who arrives in Hawaii with dreams, which are shattered as she toils to support her family. *Dying in a Strange Land* depicts the individual quests of the Oyama children as they struggle to become successful in life, while attempting to resolve the inherent clash between their Japanese and American values.

This chapter analyzes the impact of local reality on the racialization of Hawaii Japanese Americans. It elaborates on the all-pervasive racial and socio-linguistic stratification, which impacts multiple walks of life including family and social life, occupations, military recruitments and choice of language. This chapter looks at various symbolic powers such as standard language, gender and generational dynamics, which influence the operation of characters in the representative texts and the prolonged struggle they embark upon to free themselves from the stratified plantation mentality.

## **5.1 Plantation System: Exploitative Working Conditions and Organized Resistance in Murayama's Novels**

In *All I Asking for is my Body*, Kiyoshi Oyama, the protagonist of the novel describes the harsh working conditions in which the plantation workers slogged

The dust hangs in reddish clouds all around us. We are drenched, our denim pants cling to our wet legs, sweat trickles down faces and necks and moistens palms and backs of hands. We wipe continually, hands on pants, shirt sleeves

over eyebrows, blue handkerchief around neck. You wear a broad straw hat against the sun, you hold your breath and try to breathe the less dusty air in gasps, you tie the bottom of your pants legs to keep the dust and centipedes out, you stop and clean your nostrils of chocolate dust with the blue handkerchief wet from wiping your neck. Life is fifteen minutes for breakfast, thirty minutes for lunch, pau hana [break time] at 2:30. (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 39)

In *Plantation Boy*, there are records of organized resistance against the exploitation of workers by International Longshore and Warehouse Union, that is, ILWU. Agricultural workers are brought under the umbrella of National Labor Relations Act by National Labor Relations Board in January 1947. In May, the Democratic legislature passed Little Wagner Act to include field-workers on the sugar and pineapple plantations into the category of “agricultural workers”. ILWU organizes a majority of pineapple plantations and sugar plantations to demand rise in hourly wages and reduction in working hours (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 72). ILWU takes concrete steps to ensure unity of workers. The San Francisco branch makes the dockworkers union extend support to the Hawaiian protests. ILWU takes measures to prevent eviction of workers from company owned houses, a threat which had been previously used to curb protests. The immigrant labour imported from Philippines are also made members of ILWU to further ensure that racial divisions would not be used against the workers’ solidarity. The Plantation bosses try to paint the workers’ protests as an ideological threat associating them with communism.

One hurdle in the process of consolidating plantation workers is the inability to classify *lunas*, whether they are a part of the management or whether they could be considered as workers. Toshio notes “a plantation *luna* is a strawboss, who keeps

record of the gang's or individual's piecework production" (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 73). Not just the nature of their job, but also their position in the residential hierarchy set them apart from the workers. *Lunas* live in Lunaville and not among workers. The Nisei *lunas* do not join ILWU. Hence, the Hawaii Japanese American community ostracizes them by considering their refusal to join as an act of undermining the resistance.

The Niseis involved in the work undertaken by ILWU are accused of being communists and are arrested. In *Plantation Boy*, Toshio notes the publication of a pamphlet called "The Truth About Communism in Hawaii" by Ichiro Izuka, which is taken as a significant document to take action against those named in the same. There are "anti-nisei, anti-labor, anti-statehood" politicians, who, Toshio underscores, utilize this for political leverage. Further, Toshio adds "We have to sign affidavits at work saying we're not Communists" (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 82).

The May Day strikes of 1949 are used to round up leaders opposing capitalist agenda. Political claims are made about communist takeover, which makes Toshio question the racially biased and anti-workers political rhetoric

*But that's the same thing they said about us Bulaheads before the war. We were the Fifth Column ready to take over as soon as the Japanese army landed. Now the Communists and the ILWU are ready to take over. But where's the Soviet army? How can anybody take over without an army?"* (84).

Further, Toshio notes that the House Un-American Activities Committee summons all the individuals named in Izuka's pamphlet. Jack Hall, Hawaii Regional Director of ILWU is specifically accused of being a part of communist activities. In reality, he is targeted for bringing about solidarity of workers. Jack Hall asserts that he has filed a

non-Communist affidavit with the National Labour Relations Board. He is eventually arrested. There are plans of deporting Harry Bridges, another prominent figure in ILWU. In order to understand the charges, Toshio reads Smith Act or Alien Registration Act of 1940, which is to be used to deport Bridges. Toshio is able to discern political machinations involved in these moves when he emphasizes “*It’s like the Japs making “Dangerous Thoughts” a crime. No wonder lawyers are crooked, the laws are crooked. They for snagging not crooks but political enemies!*” (103). Further, he underscores that the nisei vets would have the potential to challenge the monopoly of the five oligarchs and transform the political system in Hawaii considering their graduation from reputed law schools under the GI Bill. The approaching elections of 1954 see Republicans and Democrats consolidating their vote banks based on relevant issues. The Nisei are seen playing an active role and Hawaii Japanese Americans constitute thirty-five percent of the registered voters in the territory. Toshio observes

Before the war the older niseis said we should stand back and not scare the haoles and have them accuse us of bloc voting. Now these young guys say “*Tanomimasu*” or “*Okage sama de*” even if it’s the only Japanese they know. Every nisei knows what it means “I appeal to you,” or “I am what I am because of you”. (107)

The electoral battle seems to have taken a distinct turn with “haole Republicans versus Buddhahead Democrats” (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 108). In spite of attempting to label ILWU having communist interests and tarnishing the campaign of Democrats, the Democrats win a sweeping majority. Toshio marks the immense contribution of the Nisei war veterans in this success

when the Republican “Truth Squad” rush up the platform, grab the microphone and call the Democrats “tools of the ILWU and Communists,” Inouye grabs aback the microphone with his left arm and shouts. “I lost one arm fighting the Fascists, I’ll give this other arm to fight the Communists!”... Democrats win 2/3 of the territorial House and Senate, and nearly half of them are nisei! (109)

In spite of having stronghold in regional legislature, the Democrats are not in a position to pass bills as the Governor of Hawaii intervenes and withholds reforms. Toshio also comments that there is racial prejudice in the Senate seen in the remarks of one white senator from the South “How would you like a Senator Yamamoto to be sitting next to you?” (109).

Toshio rightly marks the fact that the real revolution and strong challenge to the exploitative colonial system came from the consolidation of the workers by ILWU and organized resistance in the canefields. The political change was its fall out “Everybody talks about the “1954 revolution” when the Democrats took over the legislature. They forget the real revolution took place in the canefields when the ILWU broke the monopoly of the Big 5” (166).

Premonitions of the challenge to the colonial system are seen in the conversations that take place in the classrooms of the plantation school. A teacher, whom the students have named Snook, questions his students, who opt to work in the fields at slightly higher wages, when the Filipino workers stage a strike. He tries to create awareness about the exploitative working mechanisms of the plantation bosses “The plantation divides and rules, and you the exploited are perfectly happy to be divided and ruled. Do you see what I’m driving at? The Filipinos strike, and you are

all too happy to break that strike. It's a big deal. The plantation raises your pay. Doesn't it prick your conscience just a little bit? Don't you feel you're cutting off your own nose? (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 33). He looks at the plantation as the last remnant of feudalism in the U.S. When Kiyō responds saying that there is nothing to be guilty about while earning some extra money as a result of the protests, Snook contemplates about the role of education in emancipating from exploitative structures present in the society.

This is an education for me... I always thought everybody low on pecking order hated it....You love getting pecked from above, you enjoy pecking those below....Too much pecking order makes for timid individuals. What do you want to be in life?...A cog in the machine? An eternal yes man? ...it's senseless for me to stand up here and try to prod you into developing an inquisitive mind. (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 33)

Murayama, through Toshio, does not fail to comment on the historical injustice the indigenous Hawaiians have been subjected to. The Hawaii Japanese Americans were also a cog in the wheel of the larger colonial system considering they were brought as labourers to slog in the fields. Many Hawaiians objected to Hawaii attaining statehood as it would be successful culmination of the American mission, which started with annexing Hawaii in first place. Toshio observes "I don't blame them. First the haole planters kicked out Queen Liliuokalani and seized the government, then they got Hawaii annexed in 1898 to protect "American" interests in the wake of the Spanish-American War. Statehood will be the final nail in the coffin". However, the bitter truth is that the course of history cannot be undone, as Toshio opines "But how can they turn back the clock? The colonials are here to stay, and us

their imported labor. They complain statehood means the niseis and the ILWU will dominate Hawaii” (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 143).

## **5.2 Plantation System and Social Stratification**

Joan Chang, in an article titled “Social Stratification and Plantation Mentality: Reading Milton Murayama” defines plantation mentality as “the mental attitude of people who, subject to a contract-like agreement, maintain a self-deprecatory attitude and toil to the point of self-sacrifice, as they are caught up in the intricacy of social stratification under the colonial surroundings in Hawaii” (155). Chang underscores that the basis of social stratification is various forms of symbolic capital. The mechanisms of discrimination involve “family background, religious influence, language, ethnicity, gender, and educational achievement” (Chang 155). These criteria further reinforce the unequal treatment meted out to various sections of the society. In his novels, Murayama describes the settlements or camps of labourers belonging to various races and nationalities. His characters are a mix of Issei and Nisei. He documents the history of plantation system through various strikes, elections and till attainment of statehood by interweaving it with the family saga of the Oyamas and their familial conflicts. In the initial part of the tetralogy, the Oyamas are compelled to move from Peplau, a relatively suburban town to Kahana, a typical plantation town, which represents the stratified structure of the plantation system. In *All I Asking For Is My Body*, Kiyoshi Oyama, the protagonist describes the structure of Kahana, “a company town with identical company houses and outhouses, and it was set up like a pyramid” (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 28) . Mr. Nelson, the haole or white overseer of Kahana was at the top of the hierarchy. The Portuguese, Spanish and Nisei luna or foremen were on the second rung, followed by the Japanese

camp and lastly the Filipino camp. The hierarchy was based on the dual planks of race and class.

The stratification is resonated in residential and shared spaces. The Nisei *lunas*, that is, straw bosses, have better houses with basic amenities such as baths and indoor toilets. The Japanese labour camp has identical wooden frame houses. The living conditions deteriorate as one moves to the Filipino camp. The government road ends before Mr. Nelson's yard. The plantation camp roads are dusty.

Donald Ellis distinguishes between social differentiation and social stratification. He emphasizes the fact that whenever there is relative ranking between various roles in society and they "are afforded more respect, money, honor, and status" based on the ranking system, it is a sign of social stratification. He further defines "Social stratification is the institutionalized social arrangement that determines who gets what and why, and rank and status are associated with these arrangements" (Ellis 181). Social stratification is justified on multiple levels through prevalent beliefs regarding religious, political, racial, economic distinctions and maintained through ideological and legal provisions.

Ellis adapts Harold Kerbo's framework to provide four characteristics of stratification system namely nature of boundaries, placement methods, legitimization and major factor of stratification respectively. These four characteristics operate in five types of systems, namely, communal, slave, caste, feudal and class. Interaction between characteristics and types determine the nature of stratification. Ellis highlights two placement methods, that is, ascription and achievement respectively. Ascription is "when individuals are placed in classes or groups according to criteria over which they have no control. These are determined by your parents, sex, or race... Achievement is when your group membership is the result of your individual merit"

(183). However, Ellis argues that these characteristics need to be re-contextualized in terms of concerns related to race, gender, and power. In the racial context, the rigid ascribed nature of positions determined by discriminatory practices call for re-examination of characteristics of stratification. Thus, Ellis observes,

Racist communication is prompted by negative attitudes toward a race and embedded in an ideology about why races have the qualities they do.

Ideologies generate specific attitudes. So holding the belief that an individual *should* be assigned to a "station" in life for reasons out of his or her control (e.g., race, gender,) is what is called "racist" or "sexist." When one has an ideologically generated attitude about a group based on belief in ascription, then any new information is nullified. Even if a member of a stigmatized group does achieve, such an achievement will be attributed to circumstances or extraordinary assistance rather than individual merit. In this way, the racist or sexist attitude is maintained and the person is continually "placed" in the group by ascription. (183)

Since plantation system utilized the ideological instruments of racial discrimination given its colonial and white predominant nature, this stratification system operates through the logic of ascription.

Ellis opines that ideology is the most effective mechanism of maintaining stratification. In order to legitimize stratification, an ideology needs to justify its fairness. In the American context, Ellis points out that there is emphasis on individualism, that is, "individual skills, motivations, and circumstances act as a differentiation system that determines the distribution of societal rewards and punishments. There is a dominant U.S. ideology that if you invest in yourself, there will be a payoff" (184).

### **5.3 Standard Language as Stratifying Symbolic Power**

However, there are complex issues of race, gender and power underlying the individualistic ideology. Ellis borrows Bourdieu's term symbolic power, that is, "the invisible power that accompanies routine social interaction" (185) to indicate how the disadvantaged are manipulated into participating in their own oppression through common belief in distinguishing norms, moreover, modes that accord superiority to the dominant group, thereby, legitimizing the discourse around the power structure. Usage of standard American English becomes a form of symbolic power, which assumes the inferiority of the Hawaiian pidgin and its speakers such as the Hawaii Japanese Americans, when it comes to larger contexts of employment opportunities and socialization. The Hawaiian pidgin is also perceived as a visible indicator of the plantation mentality and the associated emotional and traumatic baggage of generational exploitation.

Ellis notes that symbolic power also translates into symbolic violence of values and ethics such as trust, obligation, loyalty, piety and so on. One instance in Murayama's texts is when the parents look down upon Toshio for not conforming to the Japanese conception of filial piety. However, it is a symbolic violence against Toshio's personal freedoms and autonomy to expect him to be obligated to surrender his income to clear the piling family debts.

Institutions determine the socio-cultural schemata within which individuals operate. Institutions influence perceptions of individuals by virtue of constructing reality through linguistic code. Ellis points out "institutions of all types use language and symbols to legitimize existing social reality. The evocation of images to encourage acceptance of certain beliefs is true in the spheres of class, economics, gender, and ethnicity" (187) including othering of certain groups within the society.

Institutions emphasize on group membership. Formation of groups entails drawing boundaries and in turn, according to Ellis “any act of boundary making is a communicative act” (187). He underscores that even an expression of verbal utterance such as a derogatory remark sets a boundary with signified identity position for an individual. The plantation setup is a larger institution within the Hawaiian society. In this institution, there are specific groups of labour demarcated along ethnic lines.

Race, power and legal provisions are intricately related as seen before. Ellis through Weber’s concept of rational-legal authority, which establishes the power of law in modern, industrialized, open-class societies such as the U.S., draws home the use of legal ideology for stratification. In such societies, differences are signified with meaning and justified as right through legal provisions. Ellis adds “skin color is a good example. By itself, it is a "mere" difference, but when meanings are attached to it, inequality is the result” (190).

Power of domination from its primal reliance on force is transformed into its legitimized form and serves as a “cultural and philosophical justification for the differences” (190) through the intermediation of rational-legal authority. Labels used to construct identifying markers for stratified groups and its members are essentially linguistic constructions. Ellis observes that language has a major role in constructing and expressing identities and power dynamics in a society. During the process of socialization, individuals learn multiple communication codes including that of their own group and class as well as that of the other, dominant group. The dominant group, generally, uses the linguistic standard and employs the discourse of dominance. In context of the Hawaii Japanese Americans, the standard English is the communication code of the powerful, white plantation bosses and the pidgin is the communication code of the labour force with certain vocabulary shared across the

Japanese, Filipino and Portuguese workers, while some Japanese words and concepts incorporated exclusively by the Hawaii Japanese Americans inherited from the Issei immigrants.

### 5.3.1 Japanese and the Hawaiian Pidgin in Murayama's Novels

The Japanese imported not just words, but also cultural perceptions into the Hawaiian society. In *All I Asking for is my Body*, Sawa asks Kiyoshi not to play with Makot Sasaki, a Nisei from the only Japanese house in the Filipino camp under the pretext of bringing shame to the family. She says “people will say, ‘Ah, look at the Oyama’s number two boy. He’s a *hoitobo*! He’s a *chorimbo*! That’s because his parents are *hoitobo* and *chorimbo*!” *Hoitobo* means beggar in Japanese and *chorimbo* is something like a bum, but they’re ten times worse than beggar and bum because you always make your face real ugly when you say them and they sound horrible” (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 2). Sawa as an Issei uses Japanese words such as *hoitobo* and *chorimbo* to inculcate socially acceptable behaviour by shaming Kiyoshi. Toshio, a Nisei uses a Hawaiian term and a Japanese phrase, that is, *wahine* and *kodomo taisho* to indicate lack of courage in Makot to interact with his peers and rather restricting himself to the company of those younger than him. *Wahine* means a woman in Hawaiian and plays on the gender biased notion of women’s inferiority. The Japanese term *kodomo taisho* means general of the kids, which again accords inferior position to kids as opposed to adults with regards to courage and strength. Another Japanese term used in its shortened form and rooted in the so called inferiority of girls and children is *habut*, that is, *habuteru*, which means “to pout the way girls and children do” (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 8). The Issei women and parents end their questions with a Japanese term for emphasis such as, when Sawa is not well and losing hope, Mrs. Kanai, the wife of Methodist language

school principal, consoles her with rhetorical questions to emphasize the fact that she cannot afford to lose hope “You have to get well, *ne?* You have to *want* to get well, *ne?* It would be *zannen* to die in a strange place like Hawaii, *ne?* (14). Another Japanese term and cultural concept used by the Issei is *zannen*, which means, misfortune or disappointment and, in this context, to die in a foreign land.

Toshio and Kiyō are second generation Hawaii Japanese Americans and are fluent in code mixing and switching as they often employ vocabulary, which is a mixture of English, Japanese and Hawaiian. The Nisei use *bobora* (country bumpkins) to refer to those who seem very Japanese, particularly, with short, military haircuts (28). Though it is a Japanese loanword in the Hawaiian pidgin, it derives from a Portuguese word for Japanese pumpkin, that is, *abóbora*.

Kiyō uses a Hawaiian word, that is, *pakiki*, which means, hard resistance, to critique the tendency of the Isseis to hold on to their own conviction at all costs, particularly, their resistance to accepting the fact that Japan was losing the war and that it had committed terrible atrocities on prisoners and civilians “Issei had this *pakiki* mind, they got an idea and that was it, all the facts in the world couldn’t make them change it, and they got mad if you contradicted them or brought up a subject which shouldn’t be brought up” (81).

Bulahead is a term used for people of Japanese ancestry in Hawaii. Happy Sumida mentions the explanation of the origin of the term given to the counterparts on the mainland, while working in the army, in a letter he writes to Toshio, his friend in *Plantation Boy*

They call us “Buddhaheads”. I told this one guy, “It’s ‘Bulahead’. Buddha’s got nothing to do with it” It comes from *bobura* or “the raised-in-Japan bumpkin”. *Boburahead* became Burahead, then Bulahead. It started as a

putdown, then we started calling ourselves Bulaheads too. (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 32)

### 5.3.2 Language and Bureaucratic Stratification

Communication codes elucidate the inherent conflicts between classes. Ellis underscores “the working-class code is very evident in the workplace, where language and relationships are regulated in ways that maintain differences in power, and differences between the dominant and knowledgeable individuals and those with little power and symbolic resources” (193). The lower classes such as the labourers operate in a system where they are denied knowledge and agency. They are subjected to surveillance and punishment. Class consciousness plays a role in determining inter-class relationships.

Racial discrimination and plantation mentality make Toshio succumb to Charles Ames, a white architect’s exploitation. His attempt of escaping the plantation system leads Toshio to being on the lowest rung of the bureaucratic stratification as a draftsman pursuing his degree to become an architect through correspondence college. Barbara Hutton consults Ames and gives him the project of building an Oriental house. After the project is finalized, Ames leaves drawings to Toshio. Dike Masuo, a Nisei, who also works for a haole architect overhears Ames making a racially stereotypical remark in presence of Masuo’s boss “Orientals shouldn’t get paid so much because they save half of what they make” and informs about it to Toshio . (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 124).

In spite of working on important projects, neither is Toshio given an equivalent remuneration nor there is due acknowledgement of his efforts. In *Plantation Boy*, when Toshio arrives at Ames’ accommodation, he sees a group of whites mocking him “Oh, Chuck, your boy is here!...So he’s the tiger of Malaya...He

doesn't look ferocious, he's more--...Like a trading number" (131). Toshio vehemently expresses his frustration in pidgin while driving them down.

You think we nothing but houseboys! I going show you some day! I going get my license and I'll show you who needs who more! No draftsman in town working harder! .... I work around the clock for three months! I ignore my family! I push myself so hard I almost crack up and all I get is one shoe shine! Without me you nothing! You one parasite! Just like the plantation bosses! One more thing! You go around telling everybody Orientals overpaid, they save half of their pay...You know, I can make you or break you!... (131)

Chang observes that this verbal expression is "a convergence of his multi-layered anger at infantilization (calling him a boy), dehumanization (comparing him to a tiger and a trade number), degradation of Japanese Americans in Hawaii, homogenization of different Asian groups (mingling the Japanese with the Malaysians), the stereotyping of Asians as servants, the mistreatment by different powerless groups of each other, and the exploitation of the Asian by the whites" (156-157). It is towards the end of the novel that Toshio realizes that if he has to establish himself on independent terms he must walk out of Ames' office. This in turn also symbolizes his freedom from the plantation mentality, which accords a superior position to the *haole* or white plantation bosses. He concludes "*I oughta thank Chuck for kicking me out of my plantation mentality*" (181).

### **5.3.3 Pidgin and Hawaii Japanese American Identity**

Murayama is a significant writer in the canon of Japanese American writers, particularly, for his innovative use of Hawaiian pidgin and creole in his Oyama tetralogy. We see the Issei mixing Japanese into the Hawaiian pidgin, which according to Chang "hybridizes the languages spoken by local and immigrant

groups—native Hawaiians, mainland Americans, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos—thus serving as a lingua franca for the people of Hawaii” (160). As is the case of pidgin, it primarily serves the purpose of limited communication and is not a native language to any group. However, with the Nisei using the Hawaiian pidgin, it becomes a creole, considering that it becomes a native language of the second generation of families such as the Oyamas, who use it to signify their unique Hawaii Japanese American identity. This is confirmed by an observation made by Stephen Sumida, a nisei literary critic, that Hawaiian Creole is the native language of the Nisei and it embodies the efforts of their predecessors to bridge the need of communication across diverse communities. In addition to the stages of pidgin and creole, Chang underscores citing Michael Argyle’s remark that in a stratified society there is hierarchical division between groups based on various facets of speech such as “accent, grammar, complexity, and other features” (161). Kiyoshi in *All I Asking for is my Body* distinguishes between “good” English and pidgin English, similarly, “good” Japanese and pidgin Japanese. The term “good” points out at the superiority and authenticity of a certain kind of language. Pidgins are considered to be corrupted forms of the “good” versions. Speaking every version has an implication for the speaker. For instance, speaking “good” English indicates that the Nisei speaker is “*haolified*”, that is, has assimilated in the mainstream society or imitates the ways of the mainland, which in turn is frowned upon by Hawaii Japanese Americans. However, realization of dreams and escaping the plantation mentality entails outgrowing Hawaiian pidgin, yet there is nostalgia and identity inextricably linked to the pidgin version spoken by Nisei among their peers and within their family. “Good” Japanese, on the other hand, signifies a position of upholding Japanese cultural values like the Issei and Kibei. Inversely, not speaking “good” English also becomes an act

of deference to the Issei parents and their cultural values such as filial piety. Chang cites Rob Wilson to examine the dual perceptions pertaining to pidgin. It is “at times a language of liberation, an act of vernacular defiance, and at other times a language of confinement, of social stigma and limitation” (Chang 161). Considering the time periods covered in Murayama’s novels, in a major part of *Five Years on a Rock*, providing Sawa’s testimony, the pidgin is used. Further, with Toshio and Kiyoshi narrating their life stories through *Plantation Boy* and *All I Asking for is my Body*, the pidgin is upgraded to creole with Nisei native speakers.

In terms of identity, pidgin is considered as an indicator of the inassimilable nature of Hawaii Japanese Americans. This is emphasized by media such as radio and *haole* newspapers. The significance of speaking English as a way of encouraging assimilation is often emphasized. Toshio notes that

Pidgin was foreign...whenever there was a debate about statehood for Hawaii...they always came back to the same question, “What about the Japanese and Japanese-Americans? They’re foreign, their language and culture are foreign, they can’t be assimilated, they can’t even speak English after eight years of grade school. What if there’s a war with Japan? Whom will the AJA’s fight for? (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 61)

In *Plantation Boy*, Toshio underscores the reaction of the Hawaii Japanese American war veterans about representation of 100/442 regiment in a movie produced by MGM by employing vets from Los Angeles. They object to this representation considering that a majority of the vets were from Hawaii and not the mainland “The local vets, led by my old pal, Sunshine Kashima, protest, Hey, 100/442 was 2/3 Bulaheads! *Well, at least they using real Japanese. I’m sick and tired of Pakés [Chinese] and Yobos [Korean] playing bucktoothed Japs. Maybe we’ll finally find out*

*what it was like*” (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 85). However, Toshio feels it is an improvement that at least the vets are represented by the members of the Japanese American community rather than the members of any other Asian nationality.

The unintelligibility of pidgin, previously contemplated as a literary hurdle, when Murayama incorporated it in his first novel, now in *Plantation Boy*, the third novel, becomes an asset exhibiting its potential, particularly in the face of war censorship, when Toshio employs it in the letters he writes to his soldier friends. Pidgin comes to represent privacy and genuineness, which is not embodied by standard English for the nisei. Pidgin, as Toshio observes in *Plantation Boy*, becomes a channel to express his rage against racial status quo.

While Toshio is working on a project under Charles Ames, a white architect, Toshio is asked to show Bob Agena’s Japanese-style house in Kapahulu to Mr and Mrs. Hampton, who are relocating to Hawaii. When he takes them there, Agnes Agena comments “Why are there so many Japs?” (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 169). Toshio responds in pidgin and asserts the right of his community to be in Hawaii, owing to the crucial role it played in Hawaii’s history “The plantations wen bring our parents to work the canefields! We born here! We fought the Japs and the Nazis! We only thirty-five percent of the population, but we took eighty percent of Hawaii’s casualties. We wen earn the right to be here! We wen work and die for it! You no can afford Chuck or me! Go hunt for bargains someplace else!” (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 169).

In *Plantation Boy*, there is bi-lingual discourse comprising of standard English in the professional set up, when Toshio works under Ames and creole English, when he interacts with his family and peers within or outside the plantation system. Chang observes that *Plantation Boy* brings about a transformation in the status of pidgin. It

does not only upgrade to the status of creole considering that the novel is narrated by Toshio Oyama, a nisei protagonist, but the values associated with it also change across generations. Chang notes “The transformation of pidgin from an index of shame and oppression to an expression of pride and emancipation corresponds to the theme of this novel: a transformation from the plantation mentality to a new consciousness, however subjective, of ethnic autonomy” (162). Further, Chang draws home the point that Murayama must be credited with the accomplishment of providing Hawaiian pidgin a literary stature.

#### **5.4 Gender as Symbolic Power in Patriarchal Society**

Within the Oyama family, the patriarchs have a certain symbolic power by virtue of their gender, that is, male privilege. Their wives are second in the hierarchy, at times being custodians of Japanese cultural values and trying to imbibe them in the second generation. At various junctures in the family history, we find Haru, Sawa’s mother in law trying to inculcate discipline by inducing guilt in her for a crime she has not committed, that is, of stealing from the family petty cash. In absence of the older generation, Sawa takes up this role when she constantly emphasizes on filial piety by paying family debts. Sawa reprimands Toshio, when he points out that Takao Oyama, his grandfather, compelled them to give their earnings to clear his debt “Grandfather cried with gratitude when he left. He said he couldn’t ask for more filial children. We did all we could for him. That’s filial piety” (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 42). Toshio defies the protocol and expectations from a first born son. He does not hesitate to challenge the hierarchy within the family and the emphasis on filial piety “What about piety from the parent to the children? You people are *ko-fuko* [undutiful to the children]” (42). Eventually, Kiyoshi, the obedient, third son, also realizes that he must take charge of his life in *All I Asking For Body* and of his body,

as the title suggests, by enrolling in the army instead of continuing to toil in the cane fields.

#### **5.4.1 Issei Women and Double-Voiced Articulation**

Though overtly, Sawa advocates and ensures culturally acceptable behaviour when it comes to herself and her family, she is not an exception to being on the receiving end of the gendered nature of Japanese cultural norms and societal rules. Chang points out the nature of language that the Issei women speak in the Oyama tetralogy, which indicates the gendered status quo in the stratified society. “Sawa Oyama tells the story in a language mixed with Japanese and English, and in a style juxtaposing an external discourse relating what happens and an inner discourse revealing how Sawa feels” (159). Murayama provides platform to Sawa’s story through his novel *Five Years on a Rock*. She is a representative of numerous picture brides that arrived in Hawaii and in other parts of the mainland after stringent immigration regulations pertaining to Japanese were implemented. Chang opines that Sawa’s expression unravels the “double-lingual” and “double-voiced” discourse. She speaks a blend of Japanese and English, like many Isseis, who learnt English only after arriving in the U.S.. Similarly, as a woman in a patriarchal immigrant community, her expressions are embedded with socio-cultural and linguistic conventions that allow her to articulate on dual planes, firstly, the culturally acceptable public interactions and secondly, the glimpse of her true, personal and subjective emotions on a personal plane of existence, most of the times, the latter are kept to herself, moreover, they are muted testimonies, only readers are privileged to read. Chang highlights “the former presents her as a resolute upholder of traditional Japanese values, the latter discloses her bewilderment, complaints and exasperation” (Chang 160). Further, she notes the self-deprecating language used by Japanese

women as marker of humility, feminine grace and reticence. On the public plane, the Japanese immigrant women are expected to behold the core of Japanese cultural positions when it comes to their attitudes towards their husbands' families, elders, physical labour, verbal communication and behaviour. Chang underscores the emphasis on "absolute stamina, stoical taciturnity and unconditional filial piety" irrespective of the fact that cultural values were being used for subservience and exploitation within the community and by the plantation system on a larger scale. As these values are ingrained in Sawa, she is seen forgoing her personal desires of the greater good of her family and for marking reverence towards the will of elders.

In *Five Years On a Rock*, a novel dedicated solely to narrating the Oyama Saga from Sawa Oyama's point of view, Murayama presents the gender biased society, that the Issei women need to navigate their way through. Migration to Hawaii has not changed the conservative way of life, rather it has made added drudgery and poverty to the multiple hurdles faced by Japanese women. When Sawa consults the village headman about the proposal received by her family regarding being a picture bride to Isao Oyama and relocating to Hawaii, he explicates Brides leaving for Hawaii don't need dowries...engagement gifts from Hawaii are in cash, and they're ten times larger than those in Japan.... as high as 2,000 yen [\$1,000]. So leaving for Hawaii means you'll be saving your parents \$400 in dowry, besides getting them, let's say, given the Oyamas' finances, a \$500 engagement gift" (Murayama, *Five Years on a Rock* 7).

With the limited choices in life available to her generation, Sawa decides "*Since I'm a woman and can't amount to anything, I thought, I might as well go to Hawaii*" (7). The italicized typography presents the double-voiced nature of Sawa's articulation. It signifies the thoughts she is compelled to keep to herself due to the

cultural norms and societal expectations. The values associated with various steps in kimono sewing, one of the skills desirable in Japanese brides, are gendered in nature. Sawa sheds more light on the multiple meanings of the words for the steps, which in their homonymic forms delineate various attributes that an ideal Japanese bride must inculcate in herself

All the homonyms were there. “Basting”, or *shitsuke*, could also be written with the characters for “disciplining”. *Eri o awaseru* – “to match the collars” – could also mean *eri wo tadasu* – “to straighten oneself” Posture was all-important. *Orime tadashisa* – “straightness of the folds” – meant also “correctness of manners.” I had to be attentive to the smallest detail. (13)

Sawa recollects her mother’s instructions, while boarding the ship to Hawaii “be careful, obey your master, keep up his face, *gaman*, *gambare*, be patient, persevere” (15). These instructions again resonate the fact that the onus of adjustments and compromises is on the women. In Sawa’s case the virtues of service and kindness are taken to extremes when she is treated like a servant and is expected to help in the family business of tofu making, rearing the pigs and domestic chores such as cleaning the dishes, laundry and sewing. She is also subjected to the misbehavior of her husband’s siblings, namely, Chiyako and Kingo. Isao, her husband, neither supports her, nor intervenes, when she is falsely accused of stealing money from the family petty cash.

Sawa, as a mother, worries about inculcating traditional values in her children “It was no wonder the boys were losing their manners. They’ve stopped saying, “*Gochiso sama!*”, *Tada-ima!*”, and all the rituals of good manners. Rituals inculcated manners, and manners were morals” (142). This perhaps comes from a position of a woman subjected to years of patriarchal social conditioning, which subjects mothers

to specific parenting anxiety, considering they are supposed to perform the role of custodians of culture. In case of any rebellion by children, the mother is blamed. Further, she adds, perhaps, from her real voice, which is muted in the public sphere and must be limited only to her private realm of thinking. She laments the fate of her family, particularly, the losses in spite of having stringently followed the social norms

It's another lie. Suffering does not beget luxury. When was our luxury? The three short years when Isao was *onaga* king? No, suffering begets more suffering, and death, death. Like Toru, like Kingo. Poor boys; they never had a chance. They were pushed by their mothers to succeed where their fathers had failed. Poor Mother Haru – marrying Father Takao only begat suffering. (142)

She seems to be depressed due to her personal ill health along with the filial suffering. She resorts to traditional beliefs to make sense of the situation “It happened in cycles of fours. *Shi*...”death” is *shi* “four”. I’m the fourth... My comb falls out, and I pick it up without stepping on it first. Picking up at a “comb”, *kushi*, means also picking up the other *kushi*, or “painful death”... I must be chosen for somebody else’s *bachi* [substitute] (142-143). Even in thinking of death, she is conditioned as a woman, in considering the welfare of others and looking at herself as a substitute for someone, such that the other could live.

The Japanese proverbs incorporated by Murayama through translation also reflect the gender biased mindset of the society “Train the bride when she first arrives”; “Don’t feed the bride autumn eggplant or autumn mackerel”; ‘A bad wife is fifty years of bad crops’; Brides and mothers-in-law are like dogs and monkeys”; “Yesterday’s bride is today’s mother-in-law” (41). As an agrarian society, there is equating of a woman’s body with the land and crops. Pregnancy saves Sawa from the regular drudgery and emotional torture. She remarks

*Pregnancy is a miracle.* “The womb is a borrowed thing,” the farmers used to repeat the old samurai saying. But it worked both ways. As soon as you were carrying a child, especially a male child to carry on the paternal line, you became a hallowed vessel. (64)

In a patriarchal society, there is gendered stratification of privileges. In society that Murayama depicts in his novels, a woman’s agency to make life choices is looked down upon. Obaban, Isao Oyama’s aunt, who eloped with a man she loved before completing the mourning period after her parent’s death, is looked down upon the Oyama family elders. Mrs. Kato, a neighbour in the plantation camp, starts living with Mr. Shimazu, a man she falls in love with. When Toshio traces similarities between cases of Obaban and Mrs. Kato, Isao reacts “How can you deal with somebody who knows no shame?...*Obaban’s* case was different. Her first husband left for Japan with the children..It allowed *Obaban* to get on with her life...Mrs. Kato is an open embarrassment. She’d be shunned if she lived in Kahana” (131). Ostracism is one of the common instruments used to control women. They need to bear the brunt of their choices, particularly, if they involve the transgression of patriarchal boundaries. Sawa vents out

I feel trapped, like Mrs. Kato (I keep calling her Mrs. Kato), “Why doesn’t she leave?” people say. But how can she when he does not? It’s Mr. Shimazu who doesn’t know shame. It can’t be helped. We’re only women. We *gaman* too much, they pile too much on us; it’s a Japanese disease. (144)

Sawa’s real reaction to Mrs. Kato’s case remains within the private realm of her articulation.

Little seems to have changed over generations. Toshio, in *Plantation Boy*, notes distinct societal perspectives about efforts put in by a wife. The white wives are

appreciated for their hard work, while the same is expected of a nisei wife. He remarks

Before the war the only haole girls were daughters of the plantation bosses, and they didn't know how to boil water. Now people say of the hardworking, undemanding haole war bride, "She's a wife." You never hear people say that of a nisei wife. It's taken for granted she's a good wife. (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 100)

In Sawa's story, gender discrimination, domestic violence, silent suffering are concrete realities concealed under the garb of devotion, valorization of strength and filial piety. She needs to maintain the facade of a happy marriage before the community. She conceals her suffering, when Mrs. Kanai comes home as one of her children speaks about the arguments and violence at home.

Once Takemoto *sensei*, while discussing assimilation of Japanese Americans and their allegiance during the Second World War with Kiyoshi, employs the analogy of a bride, which has a relatively patriarchal connotation considering it involves complete surrender of the bride's identity, almost equated to death and rebirth during marriage. Kiyoshi asks "Shouldn't the *Nisei* fight for America in case of war with Japan?". Takemoto *sensei* responds

Yes. It's like a wedding, where the bride cuts off all relationship with her original parents and is reborn a member of her husband's family. That's why she wears a white death robe beneath her wedding kimono. It's a symbolic death and she can't go back to her old family. In this case it's as if the *Nisei* is the bride and America the groom. (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 81)

## 5.5 Generational Stratification within a Family

Not only does stratification exist in the larger context of race, class and language, among other aspects, in the plantation system, but also, within the familial context. In the Hawaii Japanese family as an institution, there is a generational hierarchy with the Issei at the helm of it and insisting on complete submission and obedience from their Nisei children. Toshio's consistent challenge to and grievances against the exploitative parental authority for abusing his body by compelling him to work in the cane fields against his wish in name of filial piety are reiterated in *All I Asking for is my Body* and *Plantation Boy*.

As discussed previously, family background becomes a source of symbolic power. When family background is interlinked to family roots and the territorial location, greater layer is added to the complex question. Chang rightly points out a commonality between Hawaii's position in the stratified system with regards to the mainland U.S. and Okinawa's supposed inferiority to the Japanese mainland. Okinawa was annexed to the Japanese mainland in 1879. Prior to this, it had its own cultural, linguistic background and governing institutions. Similarly, Hawaii was annexed to the American mainland in 1898. This question comes to fore when Toshio falls in love with an Okinawan girl. Oyamas look down upon her. It indicates that the prejudice has been transported with immigration. The discriminatory attitude has not changed. In *Plantation Boy*, Toshio notes the dynamics among youngsters, which is very subtly laced with this inherent prejudice passed down by their parents

Most high school girls acted haolefied and didn't date us "cane-top college" guys, but then most *naichi* guys didn't go steady with Okinawan girls. The *naichi* parents from the main islands of Japan looked down on the Okinawans, Filipinos, haoles and everybody else. (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 8)

However, in times of need, Toshio gets help from his in laws to battle financial challenges he is facing. Chang observes “It is ironic that the Japanese immigrants in Hawaii, who suffer from discrimination by people in mainland America, should hold a bias against people from the island of Okinawa” (164).

The Kibei are also at the receiving end of the internal stratification, in spite of being a part of the community and educated in Japan. They become misfits in their generation. Though admired by Issei, the Nisei wanting to adopt the ways of the mainstream American society, choose to distance themselves from the Kibei due to their excessive adherence to Japanese values.

## **5.6 Racial Stratification and Racial Shame**

In *Five Years on a Rock*, certain crimes by community members and the reactions of Sawa and Isao shed light on the racial stratification in place in the Hawaiian society of 1920s-30s. Sawa is shaken by the news that a Nisei named Fukunaga Yutaka, has kidnapped and killed a white boy. She expresses her agitation in following words

It would have nothing to do with me if the culprit were a *gaijin* [foreigner], but how could a Japanese do such a thing? ‘*Nihonjin no kuse ni*,’ we say; “in spite of being Japanese” how could you do it? Killing your own was bad enough, but a *haole!* They were like the samurai and nobility of feudal times.

Commoners had to walk several steps behind so as not to step on their shadows. How could he not know his place? (Murayama, *Five Years on a Rock* 108)

Juxtaposing the traditional Japanese class status quo of samurais and commoners with the racial status quo of whites and Japanese Americans, where the former are superior and the latter are considered inferior in both the dynamics, Sawa reveals the deep-

rooted indoctrination she has been subjected to as a member of both the Japanese society prior to marriage and as an immigrant picture bride in Hawaii after marriage. Isao thinks of the Nisei boy as a “disgrace” to the entire community and as someone, who has exhibited his cowardice by targeting the son rather than the father, who was compelling Fukanaga’s mother to pay the pending rent. When Sawa brings up the issue of filial piety given that Fukanaga’s inability to pay rent stemmed from sending money to Japan to his family, which later led to a conflict with the white man, Isao observes that Fukanaga’s efforts ultimately resulted in shame for the family “First he tries suicide and disgraces his parents. Then he tries to act heroic and disgraces them even more” (Murayama, *Five Years on a Rock* 109). The Oyamas do not spend time on contemplating about the reasons that led to the crime, rather they adopt an attitude of loathing towards self and towards their community. Chang rightly observes that “the minority groups cope with hostile surroundings by adopting a self-contemptuous mentality” (166).

Another incident that exposes the racial stratification in the society is when allegations are levied on a group of men, including a Japanese, of raping the wife of a white navy officer in Honolulu. Though the courts releases the men due to lack of evidence, the Japanese man is kidnapped and murdered by the in-laws of the woman. The discrepancies and racially biased nature of American legal system is exposed when Fukunaga is given a death sentence for killing a white boy, while the white navy officer and the in-laws of the white woman involved in killing the Japanese boy are initially given a ten year sentence, which is later condoned. Isao registers his protest “There’s a law for whites and a separate law for nonwhites” (Murayama, *Five Years on a Rock* 132). Sawa’s poignant comment reflects on the racial status quo embedded in the stratified society “The crime was not knowing one’s place. One should never

cross the line” (Murayama, *Five Years on a Rock* 132). Chang underscores “Sawa’s response represents the contradictory roles that minority groups ironically play: as both victims and upholders of the racist ideology of white supremacy” (166).

The relationship between race and shame is evoked both in personal as well as collective contexts. In the face of historical wrongs and war atrocities committed by Japan, Toshio feels ashamed due to his race “You know I’m real happy there’re no Chinese in Kahana.. I wouldn’t be able to hold up my head to them...I’d be ashamed to after what the Japanese Army did to Nanking” (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 44).

Kiyoshi, in *All I Asking for is my Body*, emphasizes how racial pride and racial shame are instilled by the Japanese on a community level and these notions govern the behaviour of community members. The members face the danger of being punished in case of violation of acceptable behaviour. Kiyoshi contemplates

Here [in Hawaii] they worried you to death, made you a nervous wreck...don’t do anything that’d bring shame to the Japanese race, don’t be a rotten apple and spoil the whole barrel. What chance have I got, me, a single apple getting slammed by a barrelful of rottenness? Even if I tried deliberately...I wouldn’t be able to produce one-thousandth of the massive shame of Pearl Harbor.

(Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 79)

In *Plantation Boy*, racial stratification creates hurdles in Toshio’s career, particularly, when Ray Simpson, a vet in late 30s invites Toshio to join him on the mainland as he is starting his own business. He has an opportunity of being a designer instead of being a mere peon draftsman under Ames. However, Fujie alias Carol, Toshio’s wife points out that the mainland would not be a conducive environment for their children as they would be subjected to racial discrimination “We’re barely out of

the plantation, I don't see how we can make another jump to the mainland... Besides, we have to think of the children. I don't want them to go to a school where they'll be called Japs" (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 85).

The racial status quo poses a major hurdle in the path of any effort to bring about change in the existing hierarchy. In *All I Asking for is my Body*, Isao's take on the ongoing strikes, while arguing with Toshio, reflects how he seems to have come to terms with his place in the hierarchy as he says "We should know our place and not anger them [whites]. That's the only way we'll gain their respect" (Murayama, *All I Asking for is my Body* 37).

## **5.7 Racial Stratification and Military**

Military is also not an exception to the racial status quo and stratification. Kiyoshi had opted to join the military to seek freedom from the hierarchy of the plantation system and as a channel to reclaim his masculinity, which had otherwise been suppressed in the drudgery of physical labour to clear the family debt. Testimonies of Nisei soldiers in the *Plantation Boy* reveal the hierarchical and biased nature of the military. 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an exclusively Nisei unit with significant number of Hawaii Japanese Americans, which would later go on to win accolades for its indispensable contribution to the war effort, is also subjected to racial prejudice. In *Plantation Boy*, Froggy Yasui speaks of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team being held outside Rome in spite of playing a crucial role in weakening the enemy's defence such that another unit could claim the honour of walking into Rome. Toshio also adds to the analysis of prejudiced attitude of the government towards Japanese American military personnel when he looks at the honours conferred on his community and their white counterparts

A Kotonk, Sadao Munemori, gets the Congressional Medal of Honor, the first for the 100/442. He threw himself on a grenade and saved his buddies. Haole soldiers were given the CMH for the same thing, so they had to give it to him. As Froggy said, many Kotonk and Bulahead's DSCs should've been CMHs, and the 100/442 could've been the first unit into Rome. (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 55)

Toshio notes the sentiments of the Hawaii Japanese Americans fighting as part of the 442nd expressed in the news pieces and interviews "We're not going to let down the people back home," they say. "It's our chance to prove our loyalty". They want to see action, not be a labor battalion in the rear". In addition to this they speak of battling two enemies "the Nazis and prejudice at home" (Murayama, *Plantation Boy* 34).

Froggy returns home with a cane to support himself. He complains that the Japanese American team has been used as cannon fodder. Toshio notes the tragic circumstances with the Japanese Americans sacrificing their lives in the war and their families living behind barbed wires. The battle of proving loyalty in the face of racial prejudice seems unending

the papers say the 100/442 liberated Bruyeres and Biffontaine and rescued the Lost Battalion. I keep a count – 49 killed in October. Many Kotonks. *How the parents must feel, living in barracks behind barbwire, getting the telegram, "We regret to inform you..."*....They had over 800 casualties to to rescue 211. The 100/442 is awarded more Presidential Unit Citations. Enuff already. They wen prove their loyalty several times over. (48)

Gradually, those questioning the loyalty of Hawaii Japanese Americans become silent as the significant contribution of the Hawaii Japanese Americans within

the 442nd regimental team comes into spotlight. Toshio, In *Plantation Boy* notes “The 100/442 had over 700, or 80 percent, of Hawaii’s KIAs and 18,000, or 88 percent, of WIAs [wounded in action]. They fought 225 days and won more decorations for valor than any other unit its size and length of service in American history” (66).

While assessing the stratified nature of the military, Chang notes that Kiyoshi had a bad bargain considering that in order to escape the plantation and the stringent control of his family over his life, he surrenders his autonomy to the military by voluntarily enlisting in the same. However, the efforts of the Japanese American soldiers do little to change the racially stratified system back at home. She adds “the Japanese American soldiers have used their bodies to prove their patriotism to the country; however, the loyalty proved in the war does not automatically improve the status of the Japanese in society. After the war, when men return to the plantations, the occupational structure stratifies employment according to race as before” (Chang 168).

The second generation of Oyamas challenge stratification at multiple levels. Kiyoshi wins the game of craps, while working in the military, to temporarily present a ray of hope for the family by clearing family debt. Toshio clears a difficult exam to get his architect’s licence to apparently free himself from occupational stratification. Many Oyama children take western names and succeed in their pursuits, while attempting to challenge the stratified nature of society. In *Plantation Boy*, Toshio records the alternate western names he and his siblings adopted

I picked Steven as my American name when enrolling at the American Correspondence School. Back in the late ‘30s many high school kids were picking American names without legalizing them...Fujie called herself Carol, Takako Betty, Miwa Aileen. Joji was Georgie in Pepelau, and Kiyoo became

Morris when he joined the Army. I chose Steven because it was less common than Stephen...For me Steven meant I was leaving behind West Maui for a new identity in Honolulu. (79)

## 5.8 Ambiguous Endings

Do Murayama's works provide a possible solution to bring about a change in the stratified society? The answer is complex. Chang records that Murayama's works present a contradiction between the themes, that seek to challenge the stratified nature of society, and the characters, that struggle to work their way through the existing hierarchical order. She opines

this discrepancy on the one hand reveals an always existing protest of the powerless class against the unfairness in different stratifications, and on the other hand discloses a strategy applied by the weak to fight against the dominant class, i.e., not to work outside but within the pecking order for a possible change of their individual position. (Chang 165)

*Five Years on a Rock* is replete with examples of gender discrimination, domestic violence and silent suffering, yet Sawa, the Issei protagonist remains true to the patriarchal cultural values instilled in her. *All I Asking for is my Body* comments on the exploitative nature and hypocrisy inherent in expecting filial piety from children unilaterally. Kiyoshi, the protagonist is still shown to be an obedient and caring son.

*Plantation Boy* exposes the racial status quo operating in professional setups.

However, Toshio, the first born son of Oyamas and an aspiring architect tries to fulfil the biased norms laid down by the hierarchal system to climb the social ladder and establish himself in his profession. Further, Chang notes "Ambiguity arises as the intention to protest against and the intention to merge into the dominant culture grow indistinguishable from each other" (165). Ambiguity also leads to continuation of the

cycle of exploitation, wherein every protagonist becomes a cog in the wheel of operation. Sawa passes on the mental abuse to her children, in spite of being a victim herself. Toshio struggles to articulate his rage for being discriminated against for speaking in pidgin English. Kiyoshi continues to express his reverence towards his parents.

In conclusion, Murayama successfully presents multiple inextricably linked stratifications involving language, class, race, ethnicity, family and military. In this context, Chang observes, at times, how the deep-rooted stratification can virtually be invisible unless thought critically about by those at the receiving end

we see the characters strive to free themselves from one stratification only to...[be] trapped in another. Toshio may have shed for himself, and his family as well, the “plantation mentality” of controlling stratifications in family, military and ethnicity based communities, only to find...[himself in an] equally ghastly stratification, that of a society that stresses educational credentials, material possessions, and professional connections. (171)

## CHAPTER SIX

# CONCLUSION: A GLIMPSE OF THE POST- INTERNMENT WORLD

This chapter shall shed light on the journey of redress. It shall also look at the social media presence and prominent campaigns of the community organizations, who consider it to be their moral responsibility to raise their voices against all forms of injustices in North America. Further, it would provide concluding remarks on the study, reinstate its relevance and make suggestions for future research.

### 6.1 Redress Movement in the U.S.

In the American context, three organizations representing the Japanese American community worked consistently to strengthen the redress movement namely the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the National Council for Japanese American Redress (NCJAR) and the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (NCRR). The Redress Movement refers to “the efforts to obtain the restitution of civil rights, an apology, and/or monetary compensation from the U.S. government during the six decades that followed the World War II mass removal and confinement of Japanese Americans” (Densho Encyclopedia). Seeds of redress movement were probably sown in the initiatives of JACL such as the organization’s stand in favour of men in the community joining the military service during the internment. This position contributed to reinforcing the fact that Japanese Americans were loyal to the U.S. and helped JACL secure support of camp administration and officials in the government for Evacuation Claims Act of 1948, which proposed, in a

narrow sense, token compensation to the community, for lost property. Further, JACL had a crucial role to play in lobbying for naturalization of Issei through McCarran-Walter Act of 1952. It also worked to repeal alien land laws, which prevented Issei from owning land. In addition to that, efforts of JACL accelerated the process of revoking Title II of the Internal Security Act of 1950, which allowed the detention of dissidents on mass scale. One of the instances of the prospective misuse of the emergency detention provisions of the act was by the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1960s to curb students' protests. This brought to fore the dangers of abusing the provisions to further racist agenda and repeating of traumatic history of the internment. The immense efforts of the Japanese American community helped in revoking the law in 1971 and it also brought about annulling of Executive Order 9066 in 1976.

In the post-internment period, President Truman's statement in February 1948 acknowledging racial prejudice being a root cause of internment set the tone for his eventual signing of the Japanese-American Evacuation Claims Act into law in July 1948. However, it did not take into account the immense psychological cost of the internment in form of shame, trauma, loss of opportunities and deaths. Though there were around 26,000 claims amounting to 148 million dollars, around 37 million dollars were allotted as compensation. Records mark that the final claim was settled in 1965 considering that the time frame of the act was extended for the benefit of the community (U.S. House of Representatives).

The first act of commemoration of the memories of the internment by the community was in form of a pilgrimage to Manzanar in 1969. This was followed by the National Day of Remembrance organized in 1978 at the Puyallup fairgrounds in Washington, a space that housed a temporary camp during the internment. Thereafter,

there have been consistent commemoration efforts through events, discussions, circles and annual pilgrimages. In the digital age and owing to the pandemic, some commemorative events have also been organized through online mode.

President Gerald R. Ford's statement on the thirty fourth anniversary of signing of Executive Order 9066 was another public acknowledgment of the loyalty of Japanese American community and their role in safeguarding the interests of the American nation. In addition to the statement, he also signed Proclamation 4417, also known as "An American Promise" which officially ended the relocation program started during the internment. Though the camps had been closed, the legalities had not been brought to a close.

Commemoration is looked at as a preventive measure to ensure a discriminatory act like internment is not repeated in the future. Manzanar and Minidoka camp sites were enlisted in National Register of Historic Places. Between 1991 to 1993, Manzanar War Relocation Center and the Rohwer Relocation Center Memorial Cemetery were designated as national historic sites. National Japanese American Memorial was inaugurated in 2001 as a significant record of commemorating the internment in the national memory. President Clinton's Proclamation 7395 led to the establishment of the Minidoka Internment National Monument. Celebration of the Asian/Pacific American Heritage Awareness Month in May was another step towards underscoring the contribution of the community to the country. Bush administration also allocated some funds for preservation of Japanese-American confinement sites.

Sarah Franklin Doran notes that the formation of Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in July 1980 empowered the community to move beyond shame surrounding the discussion about internment and start their

efforts to seek redress (Doran). The recommendations of the commission were instrumental in doing the groundwork for passing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

Clifford Uyeda took charge of JACL as the new president and appointed John Tateishi as chair of the Redress Committee under the aegis of the organization in 1978. Congressmen Daniel Inouye and Norman Mineta opined that redress as a recommendation from the commission would help in accelerating the process of sanctioning of funds. Additionally, Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga, both war veterans and initially elected from Hawaii Territorial House of Representatives, advised JACL to pursue formation of commission and investigating into the mechanisms that brought about a grave racial injustice in form of internment than merely limiting the purview of their efforts to seeking monetary compensation. They introduced a bill proposing formation of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians on 2 August 1979, which was signed into a law by the Congress and former President Carter into a law in 1980 (Yoshida).

The commission organized hearings in ten cities including Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, Seattle, New York and Boston between July to December 1981. It listened and documented testimonies of victims. Around 750 former internees and policy makers joined the initiative in recording their observations. Mineta suggested to the commission the framing of detailed guidelines to ensure uniformity in the testimonies. JACL provided a list of community members to be contacted for testimonies. Ron Wakabayahi, the executive director of JACL recollected how the traumatic nature of internment as a memory prevented the victims from completing their testimonies (Doran 83). The National Coalition for Redress/ Reparations (NCRR), a Sansei organization, on the other hand, worked to make hearings more inclusive with facilities such as translation for non-English speaking, working class

members of the community to testify. NCRR's efforts of building a strong support base for redress and its commitment to playing proactive role in organizing annual pilgrimages to sites such as Manzanar and carrying out anti-racism campaigns and redress survey were immensely appreciated by the veterans of the community.

The National Council for Japanese American Redress (NCJAR) founded in 1979 questioned JACL as the sole representative body of the community and advocated for a bill proposing \$15,000 in reparations and \$15 for each day of incarceration. NCJAR applauded the wartime resisters and criticized the position of JACL during the internment. Aiko Herzig- Yoshinaga's research, which brought to light documents concealed from the government, including Lieutenant General John L. Dewitt's prejudiced report questioning Japanese American loyalty, provided NCJAR with additional evidence to substantiate their claim of government conspiracy against the community. These newly discovered documents also formed the basis of coram nobis cases appealing vacating of wartime convictions of Minoru Yasui, Gordon Hirabayashi, and Fred Korematsu. Further, NCJAR sought appeal in the court when their previous demand was not considered in Congress and proposed \$220,000 in reparations. The efforts came to standstill only when the recommendations of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) secured a sum of \$20,000 and an apology from President Reagan for all the surviving internees. Doran observes how testimonies forged deeper connections and called for greater engagement on the part of Nisei and Sansei in the community organizations.

CWRIC submitted a report titled "Personal Justice Denied" on 24 February 1983 and underscored how racial prejudice, war hysteria and inability of the administration to commit to an objective stance had led to the internment of the Japanese American community. It suggested "an apology from the federal

government, presidential pardons for those convicted of curfew and exclusion violations, a request that federal agencies review applications for restitution related to incarceration, and recommended that the government establish a foundation for research and public education on WWII incarceration” (Yoshida). CWRIC recommendations also led to the introduction of H.R. 442, “The Civil Liberties Act of 1985” in the house. The title of the bill commemorated the contribution of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, entirely constituting of the Nisei soldiers. Initially, it had 99 sponsors. However, after persuading Senator Ichiye Hayakawa to withdraw his opposition to the bill and efforts of JACL lobbyist Grant Ujifusa of convincing the conservative supporters to view redress as acknowledgement of patriotism and military contribution of Japanese American community, the number of sponsors of the bill increased to 119 sponsors.

The full house voted on the bill on 17 September 1987, that is, on the 200th anniversary of the signing of the American constitution as, symbolically, “the passage of this bill was less about monetary reparations and more about a reassertion of the inalienable rights” (Doran 97). The bill was signed into a law on 10 August 1988. The first apology letters and cheques were signed by President Bush in October of 1990 after making redress an entitlement programme wherein funds are set aside and payment was to be made in course of three years beginning with the older Isseis.

The racial hostility that stemmed during the Vietnam War, brought the various ethnic groups of Asian origin under the umbrella identity of Asian Americans and further strengthened the Asian American civil rights movement, which otherwise had faced inherent divisions. Students groups played a major role in reasserting the Asian American identity through strikes, protests, publications, demands for ethnic study

programmes and alliances, particularly, beginning from San Francisco State University and the University of California, Berkeley.

## **6.2 Redress Movement in Canada**

Ann Sunahara observes that redress was crucial in the history of Japanese Canadian community as well given that it would signify formal acknowledgement of injustice on part of the government and counter the disloyalty narrative perpetuated against the community. The process towards redress began with Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) challenging the legislations that prevented the community from returning to the West Coast, unlike their counterparts in the U.S., who were allowed to return two years prior. These restrictions were put forth as a specific security measure for the province of British Columbia. Extending the validity of National Emergency Powers Act 1945 for one more year was being deliberated upon. In addition to that objections were raised against Bill C-138, which proposed granting of the federal franchise to Japanese Canadians. However, after discussions it was passed on 15 June 1948. A similar bill on the provincial level of B.C. was passed on 24 March 1949. These bills were central in eliminating future possibilities of discrimination against the Japanese Canadian community. Further, Sunahara notes that the primary reaction of the federal government had been denial of economic losses during the internment process. However, the Japanese Canadian Committee for Democracy in Toronto, with help of Issei, compiled data through the Economic Losses Survey and presented that the value of prewar property was approximately over \$1.6 million. JCCD and the Cooperative Committee on Japanese Canadians cited the American Evacuation Claims Act to suggest a possible compensation of losses in the Canadian context as well. When the federal government indicated the rarity of the feasibility of compensating such huge losses, the aforesaid bodies called for

investigation into the unjust circumstances of sale of properties of Japanese Canadians.

Though the popular opinion was in favour of the cause of compensation, acknowledgement of injustice would implicate the government in the racial injustice suffered by Japanese Canadians during the internment. Sunahara notes that from multiple sources of direct losses of property including sale by the Custodian of Enemy Property for lesser value than that prevalent in the market then, theft, forced sale and loss of revenue, income and insurance due to the uprooting, the Special Cabinet Committee on Repatriation and Relocation limited itself only to the first two (Sunahara 137).

In 1950, The Royal Commission on Japanese Claims (1947-1951) also known as the Bird Commission after its head Justice Henry Bird suggested \$1.2 million compensation to individuals, which would, after deducting the legal fees, amount to \$52 per person. Earlier, it had announced on 18 July 1947 that only legally proven claims would be considered, which further narrowed the scope of seeking justice. Nonetheless, the Cooperative Committee on Japanese Canadians and National Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association participated in the Commission with the hope of seeking expansion in terms. With an aim of bringing about greater unification of the Japanese Canadian community, Japanese Canadian Committee for Democracy merged itself into the Toronto chapter of the Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association (JCCA) in September 1947. Executive committees of this newly formed organization were formed at state as well as national level. Sunahara records that George Tanaka, the National JCCA assumed the role of leadership in arranging legal and financial resources to present claims. The recommendations of the Bird commission brought redress related matters to a standstill till the rejuvenated efforts in 1980s.

1980s brought about a thorough churning within the community and compelled it to address issues of leadership, grassroots endeavours of community engagement for the cause of redress and compensation, and appeal to government for a fruitful discussion and measures on the subject. The American investigation and hearings about internment also had an impact on the course of events in Canada. *Equality Now!* a report written by the Special Committee on Visible Minorities with regards to Redress for Japanese Canadians was released in March 1984, which also played a crucial role in shaping the public opinion on the issue. In 1980, the National Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association was renamed as National Association of Japanese Canadians. This renaming showcased the shift in the perspective of the organization after disagreements between George Imai and Art Miki. George Imai was the former Chairman of the National Redress Committee, who supported the acceptance of government's proposed apology with creation of a foundation for racial harmony, but without individual compensation. However, the young members of the community headed by Art Miki perceived this shallow apology as a humiliation to the community. The prolonged and persistent deliberations of NAJC with multiple Ministers of State for Multiculturalism paved the way for the signing of the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement on 22 September 1988 and a formal apology by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney along with individual compensation in 1988 as well as opening of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation in 1997.

### **6.3 Significant Community Social Media Platforms:**

#### **Remembering the Past and Advocating Against Hate in the Present**

The COVID 19 pandemic brought to the foreground the need of establishing virtual connections and relying on e-resources to carry the research forward. The community also embraced online platforms with greater rigour to organize events of

commemoration such as virtual annual pilgrimages, panel discussions, Zoom breakup rooms to foster and cherish bonds across generations. The Japanese American community has a proactive presence and engagement on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube apart from independent websites and repositories.

An extensive digital repository of testimonies and photographs has been maintained by *Densho*, a nonprofit organization founded in 1996. The name of the organization as well as its mission statement delineate clearly its aim of preserving and passing down the stories of the internment to the future generations. Another significant organization is the *Manzanar Committee*, founded in December 1969 marked by first pilgrimage to Manzanar with primarily Sansei participants. This organization goes a step further from preservation to focus of education and awareness through teaching and annual pilgrimage programmes such as “Manzanar at Dusk”, It also provided vital support to the cause of redress. Apart from this, National Park Service, a federal government agency of the U.S. maintains separate web pages to encourage participation of general public in exploring Manzanar as a national historic site through physical tours and online resources. Having met during one such annual pilgrimages in 2016, Kimiko Marr and Marissa Fujimoto founded the Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages and contribute regularly to a YouTube channel by the same name as well as a separate website which focuses on documentation of places as well stories of people within the community.

*Tsuru for Solidarity* describes itself as “a nonviolent, direct action project of Japanese American social justice advocates working to end detention sites and support front-line immigrant and refugee communities that are being targeted by racist, inhumane immigration policies” ([tsuruforsolidarity.org](http://tsuruforsolidarity.org)). This group expands

its purview from education and awareness to building solidarity with communities of colour and protesting against racial violence as well as emphasizing on healing from past trauma through intergenerational and intercommunity circles and gatherings. Projects such as Tessaku, that is, iron fence, derived from a magazine in circulation in Tule Lake, and 50 Objects Nikkei directed by Nancy Ukai, do inspiring work of recording personal stories and tracing the history of the community through its individual members and their photos, expressions and memory objects.

Another crucial repository is Discover Nikkei Project organized by Japanese American National Museum and funded by the Nippon Foundation to exhibit the diversity of experiences of people of Japanese descent and putting in perspective both the local as well as the global identities of the community. An equally proactive organization that strives to advocate against racism in the Canadian context is *Elimin8Hate*. As an advocacy arm of the Vancouver Asian Film Festival, it emphasizes role of art, film and media in representation of diverse racial groups and reclaiming of their voice in the socio-political discourse. This organization underscores inclusivity of racial experiences of all Asian Canadians and aims to forge a society based on racial equity.

Highlighting commitment to racial equality through marking days of national significance has symbolic value. Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution celebrated on 30 January honours his legacy in bringing about racial equality and upholding of human rights.

The racial stereotypes, prejudice and hatred against Asian Americans resurfaced as the world battled with a pandemic. Data compiled by the research center of California Department of Justice recorded a total of 89 anti-Asian Hate Crime events in 2020 of which the highest were committed in March (Research Center).

Stop AAPI Hate advocacy group collected data of around 2,800 hate incidents, a majority of them amounting to verbal harassment, in 2020 targeting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders through the group's self-reporting tool (Covid 'hate crimes' against Asian Americans on rise). Following the Atlanta spa shootings on 16 March 2021, various Asian American organizations came together to observe #StopAsianHate National Day of Action and Healing on 26 March 2021 to condemn all acts of verbal and physical violence fuelled by racial hatred.

In a statement issued by President Biden on occasion of the 79th anniversary of Executive order 9066, that is, the Day of Remembrance of Japanese American Internment, he underscored

The internment of Japanese Americans also serves as a stark reminder of the tragic human consequences of systemic racism, xenophobia, and nativism. I reflect on the bravery of so many Japanese Americans who stood up against this hateful policy, including civil rights leaders like Fred Korematsu who fought against Japanese internment and were a symbol of hope. Their legacies remind us all that civil liberties must be vigorously defended and protected (Biden)

Further, President Biden signed COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act on 20 May 2021 as a measure to counter racism and racial hatred.

## **6.4 Major Observations of the Study**

The following salient observations were made in the course of this study

- i. There was literary output by Japanese American and Japanese Canadian authors in the form of memoirs, fiction and poetry. However, works had been analyzed

singularly without locating them in larger temporal, generational or spatial contexts. This called for comprehensive study of literature pertaining to the internment by setting systematic parameters.

- ii. There were secondary sources documenting the reality of internment through meticulous historical records and statistics such as those by Sunahara, Okihira and Fugita and Fernandez. However, there were no critical works relating these secondary sources and historical data to the literary contributions of those who endured the internment and their subsequent generations. This necessitated research that would find connections between history, memory and literary imagination.
- iii. There were occasional references to the internment in works of trauma studies and memory studies. However, literary texts pertaining to the internment had not been examined from the lens of memory and trauma and thus, opened up an ocean of research possibilities.
- iv. Whether it was surveys carried out by community organizations and NGOs such as *Densho* or the sociological and psychological research by stalwarts such as Donna Nagata, Karen Suyemoto and Pamela Sugiman, these studies had key insights on internment trauma and its intergenerational impact. There was a need to unravel expressions of latent traumatic memories through the existing patterns within internment literature, particularly, memoirs and fiction.
- v. Additionally, protective silence emerged as a major thematic concern in the texts under study. It was vital to explore the cultural values that encouraged the community to embrace silence and the long journey that the community embarked upon while discovering ways to heal from and articulate trauma and preserve memories.

- vi. Investigation into the root causes of the internment necessitated deeper understanding of phenomena such as racialization, racial prejudice, stereotypes and racial discrimination. It was essential to not just trace the evolution and perpetuation of stereotypes, but also provide an historical overview of the racial discourse itself with substantial data through illustrations from speeches, reports, texts, representations and constructions as well as policy decisions.
- vii. The unique case of Hawaii Japanese Americans called for special examination into factors that brought about a differential racialization with specific emphasis on the plantation system and the culminating multifarious stratifications.
- viii. While preserving and remembering the memories of the internment, the community has proactively undertaken efforts to bring about healing of trauma and to ensure that such injustice is never repeated again. Through its multiple organizations at national level and their state chapters as well as through federal provisions of memorial institutions it actively seeks to create awareness and take affirmative action about racial discrimination and hate incidents as well as hate crimes. Thus, a cursory documentation of prominent platforms including those with virtual presence proved to be an apt conclusion.

## **6.5 Findings of the Study**

Following are the findings of this study:

- i. Selecting memoirs and novels that represented three broad geographical locations with presence of Japanese immigrants and their descendants, namely, the U.S. mainland, Hawaii and Canada as well as the same reflecting at least two generations, namely, Nisei and Sansei, made this study comprehensive in terms of exploring the research hypothesis and objectives.

- ii. Taking off from the detailed historical records provided by the secondary sources, this study could locate the select literary expressions of internment within the complex interplay of history, memory and literary imagination.
- iii. Goto, Kogawa and Otsuka's novels as well as memoirs of Sone, Wakatsuki Houston and Hongo provided fecund textual possibilities of exploring articulation of trauma through non linear narratives, motifs and imagery embedded within dreams, repetitions and belated processing of unassimilated traumatic experiences of the internment, separation and loss.
- iv. The memoirs, in particular, through perfect employment of reflective voice, unraveled the complexities of identity, race and memory. David Mura's insights proved useful in this regard.
- v. The complex role of cultural values such as conflict avoidance, restraint, endurance, fatalistic acceptance, perseverance, prioritizing the well being of children and of others with reference to Issei and some Nisei characters was crucial in painting a holistic picture of the community's saga of courage and justice. These values did not merely make the community embrace silence as a defense mechanism, but it also played crucial role in rebuilding efforts post internment and taking steps towards healing of trauma.
- vi. Through insights from works of Goldberg, Omi and Winant, Jane Yamashiro and Claire Kim as well as Joan Chang a meticulous investigation was launched into the process of racialization and by examining construction of racial stereotypes, resultant racial discrimination, relative valorization and civic ostracism substantiated by textual and documentary illustrations, a holistic analysis of discerning the racially discriminatory basis of the internment was presented.

- vii. In course of various chapters, this study documented and elucidated concepts such as draft resistance, picture brides, plantation system and mentality and social stratification as they emerged to the fore and occupied crucial positions in the interpretation of the select texts. In fact, a separate chapter was devoted to study the unique Hawaii Japanese American experience.
- viii. Finally, a faithful account of the redress movement and current awareness campaigns initiated by various community organizations and social media platforms was also recorded to reassert that the battle against racial discrimination is still ongoing.

## **6.6 Suggestions and Scope for Future Study**

Some suggestions for future research in this area could be venturing into Japanese American poetry and exploring depiction of internment experiences in the same. It would be worthwhile to excavate memoirs or literary works by Issei, which were not available when this study was undertaken. Perhaps, English translations of any works or diaries written by Issei could be unearthed. Literary expressions of Yonsei and Gosei, that is, the fourth and the fifth generations could also shed light on differences in perceptions and intergenerational trauma processing. There are also convergent identities such as Jewpanese, a term used for those with Jewish and Japanese parentage or Black Japanese Americans and studying articulations by the members of these communities would make for interesting research endeavours. Films, documentaries, series and animation films about internment and related experiences would open up new vistas of analysis. Discussions pertaining to environmental concerns related to camp sites as well as preservation of these sites of

national importance have been gaining momentum. Venturing into these arenas could produce fruitful research studies.

## **6.7 Relevance of Present Study**

The present study is one elucidation of highlighting the detrimental consequences of racially discriminatory discourse on an immigrant community and its descendants. It is a chronicle of impact of disrupting, segregating and separating policies such as internment, which were justified in name of wartime necessities and security measures during the Second World War. This study attempted to bring to the spotlight the intergenerational effects of discriminatory policies on individuals and communities as they battle shame, silence and trauma as well as struggle to preserve the personal and community memories and re-imagine their identities through literary expressions. Through myriad expressions from varied locations and distinct generations, this study envisioned to capture the immense resilience and courage that the Japanese North American community has been exhibiting over the course of several decades in articulating their identity, seeking justice for the historical wrongs and ensuring that the internment is never forgotten lest there is repetition of history.

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## APPENDIX I

### TIMELINE

**1860s:** Earliest recorded Japanese migration to U.S. via Hawaii

**1870 – 1911:** Various naturalization legislations that act against the interest of Japanese immigrants

**1882:** Chinese Exclusion Act

**1897:** British Columbia denies the franchise to citizens of "Asiatic" origin.

**1902:** The Privy Council of Britain supports the BC law which denies the vote to Asians and as a culmination Japanese Canadians cannot vote or hold public office and take up professions such as lawyers, pharmacists, architects, chartered accountants or teachers.

**1904:** Japanese Canadian farmers begin to settle in the Fraser Valley and establish themselves as successful berry farmers.

**1907-08:** Gentlemen's Agreement. "Picture bride" system of marriage becomes widespread.

**1908:** Japan agrees to restrict the number of passports issued to male labourers and domestic servants to a maximum of 400 a year.

**1913:** Alien Land Bill prohibited Japanese aliens from owning land in California

**1922:** Ozawa Case regarding naturalization

**1923:** Amendment to the "Gentlemen's Agreement". The number of passports is restricted to 150 Japanese male immigrants per year

**1928:** Wives and children are now included in the 150 a year quota.

**1931:** In Canada, surviving Issei WW I veterans finally receive the right to vote and become the only Japanese Canadians to be enfranchised.

**1940:** Alien Registration Act

**7 January 1941:** A Special Committee of the Cabinet War Committee recommends that Japanese Canadians not be allowed to volunteer for the armed services due to the prevailing public opinion.

**March to August 1941:** Compulsory registration of all Japanese Canadians over 16 years is carried out by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

**7 December 1941:** Imperial Japan attacks Pearl Harbour. U.S. and Canada declare war on Japan. Local authorities and the F.B.I. begin to round up the leaders and prominent community members of the Japanese American community. Within 48 hours, 1,291 Issei are in custody. These men are held under no formal charges and family members are forbidden from seeing them. Most would spend the war years in enemy alien internment camps run by the Justice Department. In Canada, under the War Measures Act, Order in Council PC (Privy Council) 9591, all Japanese nationals and those naturalized after 1922 are required to register with the Registrar of Enemy Aliens.

**8 December 1941:** In Canada, 1,200 fishing boats are confiscated and put under the control of the Japanese Fishing Vessel Disposal Committee. Japanese language newspapers and schools close. Insurance policies are cancelled.

**16 December 1941:** In Canada, PC 9760 is passed requiring mandatory registration of all persons of Japanese origin, regardless of citizenship, as enemy aliens.

**16 January 1942:** PC 365 designates a 100 mile-wide area inland from the West Coast as a “protected area” and required all male Japanese Canadian nationals between the ages of 18-45 to be removed from the protected land

**7 February 1942:** All able bodied male “enemy aliens” aged 18 and over are forced to leave the protected coastal area before April 1. Most are sent to work on road camps in the Rockies.

**19 February 1942:** In the U.S., Executive Order 9066 empowered the Secretary of War and select military commanders to exclude people of Japanese descent, irrespective of being aliens or citizens, from the demarcated areas on the West Coast to prohibit sabotage, espionage and fifth column activity without trial.

**24 February 1942:** In Canada, P.C. 1486 empowered the Minister of Justice to control the movements of all persons of Japanese origin in the protected area and required removal of all persons of Japanese ancestry from protected area.

**26 February 1942:** Notice is issued by the Minister of Justice ordering all persons of “the Japanese race” to leave the coast.

**4 March 1942:** BC Security Commission is established to plan, supervise and direct the expulsion of Japanese Canadians. As per PC 1665, property and belongings are entrusted to the Custodian of Enemy Alien Property as a “protective measure only.”

**18 March 1942:** In the U.S., Executive Order 9102 established the War Relocation Authority (WRA) with Milton Eisenhower as director.

**21 March 1942:** First 81 “evacuees” arrive at Manzanar as volunteers to set up the camp for thousands of Japanese Americans scheduled to arrive in April.

**24 March 1942:** The first Civilian Exclusion Order issued by the Army is issued for the Bainbridge Island area near Seattle.

**26-28 April 1942:** Manzanar's population doubles in three days, from 3,309 to 7,101.

**1 June 1942:** Administration of Manzanar is transferred from the Wartime Civilian Control Administration (WCCA) to the War Relocation Authority (WRA).  
Owens Valley Reception Center becomes Manzanar War Relocation Center.

**10 August 1942:** The first inmates arrive at Minidoka, Idaho.

**12 August 1942:** The first 292 inmates arrive at Heart Mountain, Wyoming.

**27 August 1942:** The first inmates arrive at Granada, or Amache, Colorado.

**11 September 1942:** The first inmates arrive at Central Utah, or Topaz.

**18 September 1942:** The first inmates arrive at Rohwer, Arkansas.

**22 September 1942:** Incarcerated population reaches peak of 10,046 in Manzanar.

**October 1942:** In Canada, 22,000 persons of whom 75% are Canadian citizens (60% Canadian born, 15% naturalized) have been uprooted forcibly from the coast.

**20 October 1942:** In the U.S., President Roosevelt calls the "relocation centers" "concentration camps" at a press conference. The WRA had consistently denied that the term "concentration camps" accurately described the camps. About 120,000 Japanese Americans including two-third of them being American citizens are uprooted from the Pacific coast.

**15 November 1942:** The first two volunteers for the Army leave Manzanar for Camp Savage, Minnesota. Forty others eventually volunteer.

- 5 December 1942:** Fred Tayama, a Japanese American Citizen's League (JACL) leader, is assaulted in his apartment by six men. Some JACL members were rumored to be supporters of the administration and informants.
- 6 December 1942:** "Manzanar Riot." Military police fire into a large crowd gathered at the police station demanding the release of Harry Ueno, arrested for allegedly assaulting Fred Tayama.
- January 1943** P.C. 469 authorized the Custodian of Enemy Property to sell property of Japanese Canadians that was being held in trust.
- 9 January 1943:** 16 incarcerated individuals involved in the riot are sent to the WRA Isolation Center near Moab, Utah. Moab was established for dissidents and "chronic troublemakers" from all ten war relocation centers.
- 23 January 1943:** Order in Council grants the Custodian of Enemy Alien Property the right to dispose of Japanese Canadian properties in his care without the owners' consent.
- 1 February 1943** The 442nd Regimental Combat Team is activated, made up entirely of Japanese Americans.
- 10 February 1943:** Registration of all incarcerated individuals 17 years of age and older commences at all ten war relocation centers. The incarcerated individuals are required to complete a 30 question loyalty questionnaire titled the "War Relocation Authority Application for Indefinite Leave Clearance", also referred to as Loyalty questionnaire or Oath in the texts studied for this thesis. Those who answer "yes" to questions 27 and 28 are considered eligible for relocation

outside the exclusion zones. Those who answer “no” are considered disloyal and are scheduled for segregation to Tule Lake Segregation Center.

**24 February 1943:** Nearly all Bainbridge Islanders leave Manzanar for Minidoka War Relocation Center in Idaho.

**February 1943:** P.C. 496 required that Japanese Canadians had to apply for a license to purchase property.

**April 1943:** P.C. 469 ordered the deportation of Japanese Canadians to Japan or their removal to eastern Canada.

**21 June 1943** The United States Supreme Court rules on the Hirabayashi and Yasui cases, upholding the constitutionality of the curfew and exclusion orders.

**13 September 1943** The realignment of Tule Lake as a camp for "dissenters" begins. After the loyalty questionnaire episode, "loyal" internees begin to depart to other camps. Five days later, "disloyal" internees from other camps begin to arrive at Tule Lake.

**9 October 1943:** The first 257 incarcerated are sent to Tule Lake Segregation Center from Manzanar.

**14 January 1944** Nisei eligibility for the draft is restored. The reaction to this announcement in the camps would be mixed.

**20 January 1944:** Selective Service inductions of Japanese Americans resume.

**26 January 1944** Spurred by the announcement of the draft a few days before, 300 people attend a public meeting at Heart Mountain camp. Here, the Fair Play Committee is formally organized to support draft resistance.

- 21 - 26 February 1944:** Remaining incarcerated scheduled for segregation leave Manzanar for Tule Lake. A total of 2,165 Manzanar incarcerated are segregated.
- 4 August 1944:** Prime Minister King states it is desirable that Japanese Canadians are dispersed across Canada. Applications for “voluntary repatriation” to Japan are sought by the Canadian government. Those who do not apply must move east of the Rockies to prove their loyalty to Canada. “Repatriation” for many means exile to a country they have never seen before.
- 2 January 1945:** The west coast exclusion order is lifted and Japanese Americans can return to their former communities.
- 9 October 1945:** Administration begins establishing departure dates for incarcerated remaining at Manzanar.
- 21 November 1945:** The last incarcerated leaves Manzanar.
- 1 January 1946:** On expiry of the War Measures Act, the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act is used to keep the measures against Japanese Canadians in place.
- 24 January 1947:** Deportation orders are cancelled. 4,000 Japanese Canadians have already been “repatriated.”
- 18 July 1947:** The Bird Commission is formed to inquire into losses through sales at less than market value and through theft of property by the Custodian of Enemy Alien Property.
- September 1947:** The National Japanese Canadian Citizens’ Association is established at a conference in Toronto.

**1948** : In the U.S., Evacuation Claims Act

**31 March 1949:** Restrictions imposed under the War Measures Act are lifted and franchise is granted to Japanese Canadians. Japanese Canadians are free to move anywhere in Canada. This is the last of the WW II restrictions to be lifted.

**1950:** In the U.S., Internal Security Act is in existence and could be used to detain citizens perceived as security threat to the nation.

**1952:** In the U.S., McCarran-Walter Act for Naturalization of Citizens allowed Asians to immigrate and become citizens.

**1969:** Pilgrimage to Manzanar

**1971:** Revoking of Internal Security Act in the U.S.

**1976:** Annulling of Executive Order 9066 in the U.S.

**1980s:** Consistent efforts for redress in the U.S. and Canada.

**July 1980:** Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in the U.S.

**March 1984:** Release of *Equality Now!* a report written by the Special Committee on Visible Minorities with regards to Redress for Japanese Canadians

**1988:** Civil Liberties Act

**22 September 1988:** Formal apology by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney along with individual compensation in Canada

**October 1990:** First Apology Letter and distribution of cheques in U.S.

**1997:** Opening of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation

**26 March 2021:** In the U.S., #StopAsianHate National Day of Action and Healing

**20 May 2021:** COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act signed in the U.S.

**Note:** The above timeline contains the events referred to in the thesis in a chronological order. Timelines created by Satsuki Ina (available on PBS website), published by National Park Service pertaining to various camp sites and made by Masako Fukawa and team as an educational resource have been consulted for the same. Details of the sources are available in the bibliography.

## APPENDIX II

### GLOSSARY

- **Anshan:** Contraction of ani-san or elder brother
- **Bobora (H):** Country bumpkin
- **Chorimbo:** Tramp
- **Densho:** To pass on to the next generation or to leave a legacy
- **Enryo:** Reserve or restraint
- **Gaijin:** Non-Japanese or outsider
- **Gamen:** Patience and perseverance
- **Haole (H):** White person or foreigner
- **Hoitobo:** Beggar
- **Inu:** Traitor
- **Issei:** First generation Japanese immigrants to U.S. and Canada
- **Itsuka:** Someday
- **Kawaiso:** Helpful
- **Kibei:** Children of Japanese immigrants/Nisei sent to Japan for education and returnees to the U.S. or Canada
- **Kodomo taisho:** General of the kids
- **Kodomo no tame:** For the sake of the children
- **Luna(H):** Foreman
- **Nisei:** Children of Issei, Second generation Japanese Americans/Canadians
- **Obasan:** Grandmother
- **O Mukashi:** Once upon a time
- **Pau (H):** Finished

- *Sansei*: Children of Nisei, Third generation Japanese Americans/Canadians
- *Shikataga-nai*: Resignation to fate
- *Tada ima*: I'm home
- *Wahine (H)*: Woman
- *Yasahi* : Tender
- *Zannen*: Mortifying

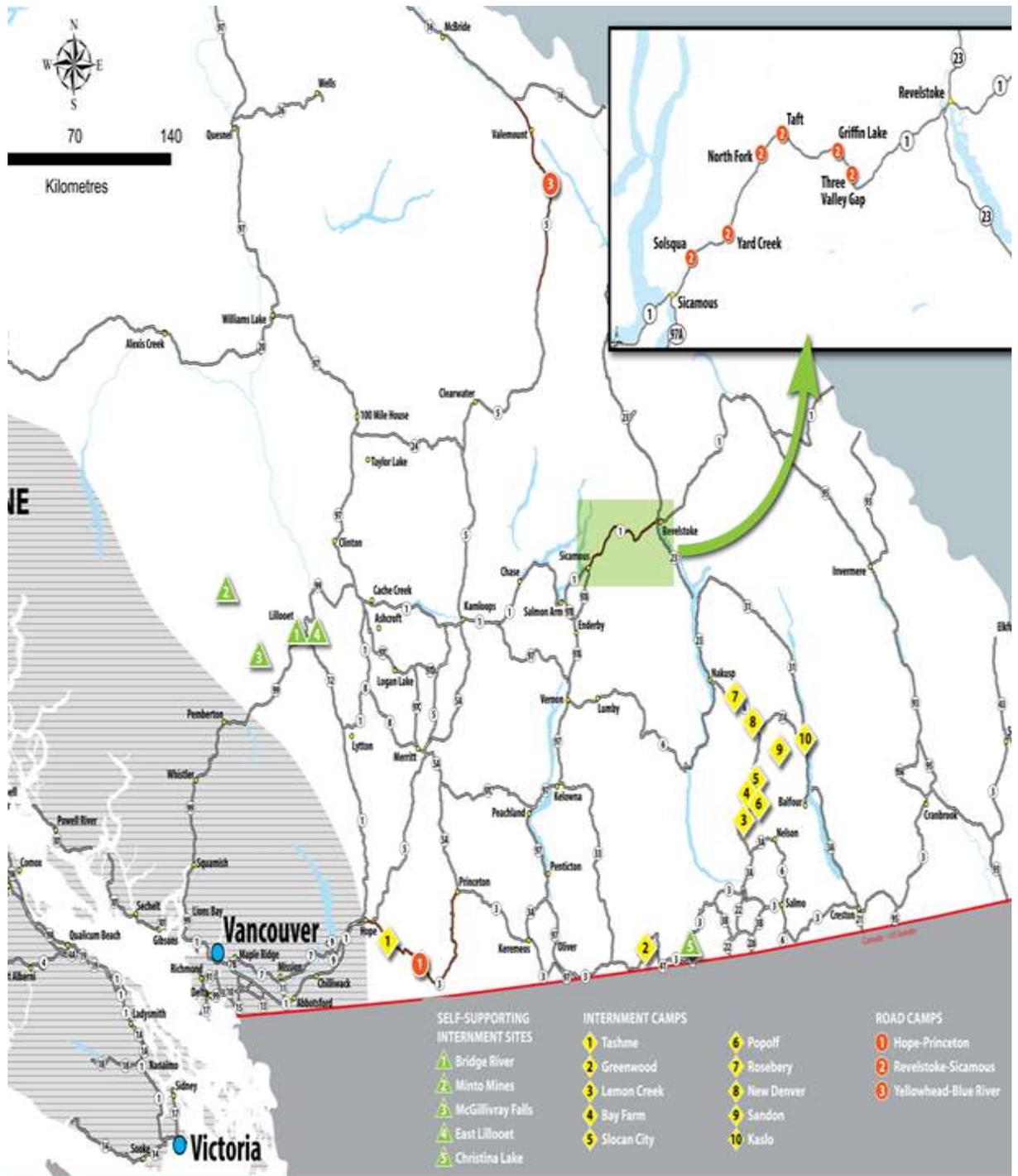
**Note:** All the words are Japanese except those indicated with (H). (H) indicates words used as part of the Hawaiian pidgin.

## APPENDIX III

### MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS



**Fig. 1.** Linder, Douglas. "Maps of Assembly Areas, Internment Camps, and Exclusion Zone." 9 Apr. 2008, *Famous Trials*, famous-trials.com/korematsu/2563-map-of-assembly-areas-and-internment-camps.



**Fig. 2.** Ibuki, Norm. "The Lost Highways: BC JC Heritage Sign Project Ends, Ontario's Begins - Part 1." 6 Feb. 2019, *Discovernikkei.org*. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and Japanese Canadian Legacy Committee. [discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2019/2/6/sign-project-1/](http://discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2019/2/6/sign-project-1/).

**WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY  
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION**

**Presidio of San Francisco, California**

**May 15, 1942**

**INSTRUCTIONS  
TO ALL PERSONS OF  
JAPANESE  
ANCESTRY**

**Living in the Following Area:**

All of that portion of the County of King, State of Washington, within the boundary beginning at the point at which the Snohomish-King County line meets Puget Sound; thence easterly and following said county line to the western limits of the Snoqualmie National Forest; thence southerly and following the limits of said National Forest to the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River; thence westerly and following the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River, and the Snoqualmie River to its intersection with U. S. Highway No. 10 at Fall City; thence westerly along said Highway No. 10 crossing Lake Washington Floating Bridge to the west line of Lake Washington; thence northerly along the west line of Lake Washington to East 85th Street extended; thence westerly along East 85th Street extended and 85th Street to Puget Sound; thence northerly and following the shoreline of Puget Sound to the point of beginning.

Pursuant to the provisions of Civilian Exclusion Order No. 80, this Headquarters, dated May 15, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above area by 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Wednesday, May 20, 1942.

No Japanese person will be permitted to move into, or out of, the above area after 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Friday, May 15, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the representative of the Commanding General, Northwestern Sector, at the Civil Control Station located at:

122 Kirkland Avenue,  
Kirkland, Washington.

Such permits will only be granted for the purpose of uniting members of a family, or in cases of grave emergency.

The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and instructions on the evacuation.
2. Provide services with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property, such as real estate, business and professional equipment, household goods, boats, automobiles and livestock.
3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.
4. Transport persons and a limited amount of clothing and equipment to their new residence.

**The Following Instructions Must Be Observed:**

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person in whose name most of the property is held, and each individual living alone, will report to the Civil Control Station to receive further instructions. This must be done between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Saturday, May 16, 1942, or between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Sunday, May 17, 1942.

2. Evacuees must carry with them on departure for the Assembly Center, the following property:

- (a) Bedding and linens (no mattress) for each member of the family;
- (b) Toilet articles for each member of the family;
- (c) Extra clothing for each member of the family;
- (d) Essential personal effects for each member of the family.

All items carried will be securely packaged, tied and plainly marked with the name of the owner and numbered in accordance with instructions obtained at the Civil Control Station. The size and number of packages is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group.

3. No pets of any kind will be permitted.

4. No personal items and no household goods will be shipped to the Assembly Center.

5. The United States Government through its agencies will provide for the storage, at the sole risk of the owner, of the more substantial household items, such as iceboxes, washing machines, pianos and other heavy furniture. Cooking utensils and other small items will be accepted for storage if crated, packed and plainly marked with the name and address of the owner. Only one name and address will be used by a given family.

6. Each family, and individual living alone, will be furnished transportation to the Assembly Center. Private means of transportation will not be utilized. All instructions pertaining to the movement will be obtained at the Civil Control Station.

**Go to the Civil Control Station between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M.,  
Saturday, May 16, 1942, or between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M.,  
Sunday, May 17, 1942, to receive further instructions.**

J. L. DeWITT  
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

SEE CIVILIAN EXCLUSION ORDER NO. 80

**Fig.3.** DeWitt, J. "Civilian Exclusion Order." 15 May 1942, *Rohwer Japanese American Relocation Center*, [rohwer.astate.edu/history/](http://rohwer.astate.edu/history/).



**Fig. 4.** “Boarding Trains for Manzanar Relocation Center.” 1942, *Records of Rights*, National Archives, Records of the War Relocation Authority. [recordsofrights.org/events/133/japanese-american-internment](https://recordsofrights.org/events/133/japanese-american-internment)



**Fig. 5.** Albers, Clem. “Lunchtime at the War Relocation Authority center for evacuees of Japanese ancestry (Manzanar).” 2 Apr. 1942, *Library of Congress*, [loc.gov/item/2021647196/](https://loc.gov/item/2021647196/)



**Fig.6.** Iwata, Jack. "Tule Lake Internment Camp - Ambulance at Entrance." 15 Jan. 1946, National Archives Catalog, [catalog.archives.gov/id/175539457](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/175539457).



**Fig.7.** "Personnel of 442nd Infantry Regiment." 5 Jan. 1944, National Archives Catalog, [catalog.archives.gov/id/138926276](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/138926276)



**Fig.8.** “Back from the fighting front on furloughs to visit their families at Topaz Relocation Center.” National Archives Catalog, [catalog.archives.gov/id/539513](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/539513)



**Fig.9.** “Minidoka Project - Cottages near Jackson Lake Dam.” National Archives Catalog, [catalog.archives.gov/id/100310733](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/100310733)