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Hirabayashi, James A.

film review "Farewell to Manzanar"

1977

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ANOTHER  
PERSPECTIVE . . . .

JAMES HIRABAYASHI

FAREWELL  
TO  
MANZANAR

I like John Korty, a good man, who seems to have a humanistic concern for others. That he has been a conscientious objector since high school, when he read a biography of Gandhi, is but one indication of a general philosophy imbued with altruism (Judy Stone, *San Francisco Examiner*, Oct. 7, 1975). This attribute can readily be seen in his films: *Crazy Quilt*, for example, is typical of his sympathetic and empathetic characterizations.

Thus it must be both puzzling and disconcerting for Korty to find himself suddenly the focus of bitter attacks, and particularly so since they are descending upon him from representatives of a group of people usually thought of as quiet and unassuming. Why this perplexing situation?

Part of the answer rests on an understanding of some fundamental issues currently being debated in the Japanese American community. It not only rests on a comprehension of these basic issues, but on the relationship of these factors to members of an ethnic community who, with a rising sense of consciousness, are seeking to define meaning in their lives.

Let's begin with John Korty himself. In his interview with Judy Stone, referring to his recent film, *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*, he says: "I heard that people right-of-centre watched and thought 'I'm not going to like this' and it got to them. They found out more about the black experience without being hit over the head, and without being made to feel pinned up against the wall and made terribly guilty." He goes on to say that he believes that "real political change happens very slowly" and that there's no point "in making a film which delights radicals and throws off everybody else." Finally, he maintains, "I think that's what pictures like 'Pittman'

and 'Manzanar' can do. They make broad and possibly less sharp statements but they make them to 40 or 50 million people and I would like to think that because of seeing 'Pittman' those 40 to 50 million are more receptive to what happens in civil rights."

Well, then, who is the film *Manzanar* for? What story does it tell? How does it tell the story? And from whose perspective? Is it about Japanese Americans as they really were? Or as some might want them to seem? For whom? How do we characterize this film (for many of the millions of television viewers, their first glimpse of Japanese Americans)? Perhaps Korty is right. Why made a film that delights only radicals? But, then again, why not do a film that may have meaning for the Japanese American, the subjects of the film? Even if we are relating to the millions of television viewers, wouldn't it be much more significant for them to be exposed to an experience as it is seen from the point of view of those who lived and felt that experience? I would think so; but in any case, it is absolutely necessary for the Japanese Americans to base the descriptions of their experience initially upon their *own* conceptualizations, or else they, themselves, are doomed never to understand that experience.

It is a complex issue and it does not begin with the film. Rather, it is a fundamental problem in American society, namely the way in which the dominant members choose to view and treat ethnic minorities. The thesis that racial oppression characterizes the relationship between the majority members of the American society and the ethnic minorities within it has already been amply documented. A specific aspect of this relationship is that ethnic minorities are viewed in such a way that knowledge about them rests on only one kind of data based on a perspective thoroughly external to the experiences of those ethnic minorities. And that is the sad thing: it may be easier for white Americans to understand things seen from their own perspective, but what they are presented with is essentially that which is selected and reinterpreted for them. This can result only in a distortion of the Japanese American experience.

The problem of bias actually begins with the book, *Farewell to Manzanar*. Why didn't Jeanne Houston write the book herself? She is the Japanese American and the one with the primary experience, albeit the experience of a nine-year-old child. In a letter, Jeanne writes: "My husband is first and foremost a novelist.

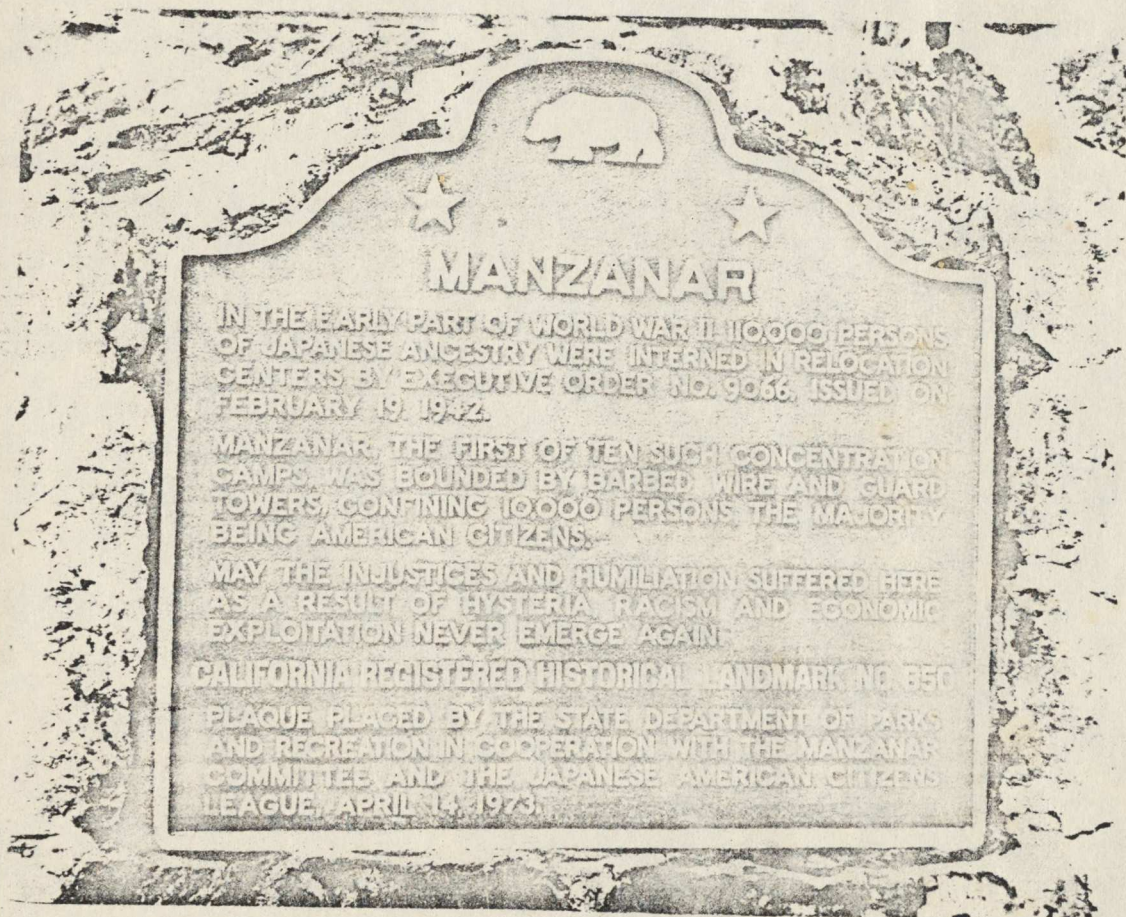


Our collaboration resulted because *I couldn't* write the story." Since James Houston is a trained and experienced practitioner of creative writing, it was natural enough that he should become the co-author. But Jeanne continues in her letter, in answer to a specific criticism voiced by a former internee of a camp: "Our problems (disagreements), my husband feels, is that some of the literary effects, which are always arguable, may not have coincided with your vision of the experience." Here, subtly but surely, arises the problem of bias in the conceptualization.

Within any literary style, there is an intimate relationship between the content of the experience and the form in which that experience is described. If a literary form which is developed within the context of an interpretation of middle class American experience is then used to describe the Japanese American experience, distortion of that experience is sure to result. Thus the question of "literary effects" (i.e. the

literary form which James Houston used) may not be as arguable (or as arbitrary) as we are led to believe. Recall that Jeanne says to the person *who actually had the experience* that her husband feels that some of the literary effects (which changed the interpretation of the situation insofar as the Japanese American was concerned) are arguable. Really?

The issues of perspective and conceptualization are crucial. Creative writing deals directly and essentially with emotions. When changes are made, either in content or in form, as in the taking of "literary licence," we never stop to question whether that licence is still within the boundaries of the basic conceptual framework of those having the initial experience. But if the basic perspective of those *interpreting* the experience is different from those *having* the experience, and then, in addition, literary licence is taken, there is a further distortion of the initial experience. This is but one kind of difference which results



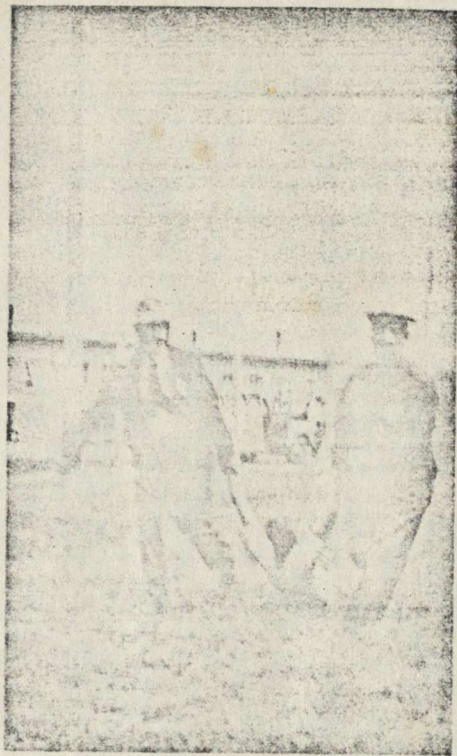


when the interpretation of an experience is from an external point of view.

When Korty became involved in the writing of the television script, along with the Houstons, a further departure occurred from the Japanese American view, for while Korty's interpretation may be sympathetic and empathetic, it is nevertheless an external one. Now to return to an earlier query: Who is the film for? Korty certainly does not intend it for the radicals, but now it seems it is not for the Japanese Americans either. It is for those millions of television viewers; but the film is the Japanese American experience as interpreted by a number of key people who are *external* to that experience. In addition, there is the matter of a national television network and of the sponsors who "foot the bill." What of these additional constraints on Korty? Now what of the "inside view" of the Japanese Americans?

Thus a part of Korty's problem is that this entire perspective is external to that of the people he is depicting. To use an illustration drawn from the theatre: If I wished to understand the character of the Japanese, would I watch Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Mikado?" I rather imagine that, if I did, I would discover much more about the English than I ever would about the Japanese. Or consider the following hypothetical problem: If I wanted a director for a film on a Japanese family, should I retain Korty or Ozu? Surely, if these directors have any personal style, they would not produce exactly the same film. Well, what is the nature of the differences which we would expect? One major difference would result from the fact that Ozu's life experience is that of a Japanese, while Korty's is that of an American middle-westerner. Thus the life experiences of Ozu would coincide with the subject matter of the film, while Korty's would not. This factor certainly would result in a difference in interpretation. These life experiences have to do with cultural differences between Japan and America in the anthropological sense, which include language differences. This leads to fundamental divergencies in interpretation of a kind which causes a bilingual person to deplore the lack of relationship between the action and speech on the screen and the subtitles which attempt to translate from one cultural/linguistic system to another.

Further, if we consider the experiences of these men as directors, Ozu's style as director has been developed and refined as a result of making films about Japanese life. Obviously, a director's style, which



produces his "stamp" on the film, results from his own singular experiences, both as a person and as a director. Thus, part of Korty's problem with *Manzanar* is that, first, his perspective is external to the Japanese American experience and that, second, his directing style was developed by interpreting American life experiences.

Another source of Korty's predicament, strangely enough, is that he is a liberal. This problem is better understood if the thrust of liberalism of the Fortys and the Fifties is understood in its proper context: The hope was to push for gradual social change, with the ultimate goal that of the achievement of equality in this country through the integration of ethnic minorities into the mainstream of American life. But wait, integration? Integration into what? In actuality, integration within the values of middle-class American society, those values held by the same millions of Americans to whom Korty is trying to relate, in the first place. However, as a liberal who is sympathetic with the Japanese Americans, Korty wanted the minority involvement. Necessarily this involvement included performers in the film; beyond that, though, he asked also for community input and for feedback



both on the script and on the film during production. And there's the rub.

Some of us believe that ours is a pluralistic society with different varieties of life experiences. All Americans do not have exactly the same life experiences. If we Japanese Americans are ever to understand ourselves, we must deal directly with our own life experiences, and deal with them by codifying that reality (for us) in terms of our intrinsic perceptions and conceptions. We cannot allow the destruction of the linkage between the primary experience and the conceptualizations which follow from them. Such symbolic and formalized presentations as literary works or films must be true to those experiences. For us to achieve this relevance we, as individuals and/or as a group, must ensure the proper linkage in the creative process, we must communicate and grow from the understanding which follows from this critical examination of our primary experiences.

Our self-awareness needs to rest upon this base. However, when Korty begins with an external perception of the Japanese American experience, and when his view is influenced by the target audience and its needs, and when it is further constrained by a national television network and its sponsors, then it becomes patently clear why, in the



*Photographs courtesy of Wayne Collins from Years of Infamy by Michi Weglyn.*

end, he cannot accept certain kinds of input from the Japanese American community, input for which he originally asked. The conflicts inherent in such a situation arise basically out of the existence of different conceptual frameworks, different meanings, different understandings, and different priorities to be placed on the interpretation of the initial experiences. The error Korty made was to ask for this input; even with good intentions, he could not readily have dealt with responses based on such culturally different assumptions.

Am I making too much of the issue of perspective? Let's examine it. How do we make Japanese Americans palatable to middle-class Americans, a concern of Korty's? Does one make the Japanese Americans more acceptable by making them understandable in terms of the middle-class framework? Should this be done by making them seem more assimilable (as, for example, S. I. Hayakawa desires)? Thus, there are a myriad of subtle choices, for example, which ultimately determine the characterizations of the various role portrayals in the film. The results constitute character development, just to take one aspect of film making.

Ultimately, it is a serious problem for us. Much of the "mood" of the Japanese Americans is missing from this film. Of course it is missing, for the imposition of external frameworks in the interpretation of people's lives will always tend to miss the internal moods. It is not a question of whether we are emotionally moved by the film, even to the point of tears. For it is not a requirement that we perceive things from the perspective of the subjects of the film to feel empathy and to have emotional reactions. Empathy is the imaginative ascribing to a situation of feelings and attributes present in oneself. In other words, it is the projection of one's own internal feelings onto what is being viewed in the film. But cinema, as well as all other creative arts, must provide for the Japanese Americans what we desperately need right now. That need is an opportunity to examine the basic nature of our experiences, and that cannot be achieved without viewing those experiences from our *own* perspective.

In the final analysis, although the film gives an empathetic view of the Japanese Americans, in reality Korty is speaking to middle-class society, and makes the film a symbol of criticism directed at them. To return to the interview with Judy Stone, Korty told her that he has long been wanting to do a film about the problem of young WASP Americans, "young people desperate to have a feeling of what I call moral legiti-



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macy . . . " I believe that he has already made the film, in fact, two times — *Pittman* and *Manzanar*. He made these films for the WASPs and he used the Black and Japanese Americans as vehicles to do it.

So the film, *Farewell to Manzanar*, is really a message and a lesson for the WASPs. It uses the Japanese Americans to describe that lesson. The Japanese Americans are ultimately used as objects, because the external perspective, the message and the lesson are really for the WASPs. For us, the film was anticipated with great expectations, but alas, it ends with a feeling of *deja vu*. We have been used before!

For the Japanese Americans, it is a fundamental question of our relationship to the dominant society. Do we submit to being redefined and judged in terms of some arbitrary standards, or do we, instead, seek to integrate ourselves with reality as we perceive it? I wondered, after seeing *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* (and thinking about the concentration camps), whether perhaps the real madness is not submission and acceptance of the tyranny of the "sane." The hospital ward (Manzanar camp), many of whose denizens are voluntary commitments (the position of the Japanese American Citizens League) is a symbol of the acquiescence of the governed. When the patients consent to be governed, they consent also to be oppressed. (Is there a parallel between Nurse Ratched and General DeWitt?) The hospital as an institution (Middle Class Society) oppresses the patients (Japanese Americans) because they have the power to do so, and because the patients (McMurphy — Chin?) allow them to. Quietly submitting to an external definition, and accepting it, is but the beginning of oppression.

There is, however, another consideration as well: isn't it equally important for others to see us as we see ourselves? Even if we should wish to focus on those millions of middle-class television viewers, isn't it important that they come to understand us as we understand ourselves? Perhaps the

viewing is easier for them if our behavior is reinterpreted in terms of their framework; but if that process *changes the meaning* of our experience, then there is no real chance of a rapprochement, because that depends upon a true understanding.

We have not only been catering to middle-class Americans, but adapting to *their* standards based on *their* values. Isn't it much better that we insist on our own conceptualizations and interpretations and insist that middle-class Americans broaden their framework so that they might better appreciate the totality and the variability of the real world they inhabit, which happens to include us? For us not to insist on this, allows others to view us as they wish; and in a society with a history of racism, I emphatically say that we contribute to our own demise if we do so!

— J. A. Hirabayashi

#### FURTHER NOTES ON MANZANAR . . .

#### A RESPONSE

Received your comments on my review of the film *Manzanar*. Thanks. Unless I get feedback, I am not quite sure that my views were properly expressed so I consider your response a beginning of a dialogue, hopefully to further unravel and clarify the essence of Nikkei experience. I am sorry that you found my review somewhat wanting (although you have always been careful not to bruise my ego) as I do not give any specific examples of the theoretical issues which I raise in my review but let me explain that I wrote it after several people had already written theirs, especially Ray Okamura and Frank Chin, both of whom go into specific details in their reviews. Thus, I felt no specific need to replicate their arguments and decided to focus on theoretical issues. My review ought to be read in conjunction with theirs.



Let me make a general comment before I consider the specific points you raise. You, along with a few others, have complained that I over-generalize when describing the American society by characterizing it in terms of WASP patterns and argue that it is an error of the same sort I am objecting to in the stereotyping of the ethnic minorities. Perhaps so, but we are often measured against those ideal values of our society. It seems to me that "the society" always judges us in terms of their ideal values while allowing themselves behavioral variation from the ideals so I feel justified in characterizing the dominant society in those terms although I recognize the existence of deviations from the norm. To be sure, there are variations in values also but in the judgment of the ethnic minorities, we have been constantly measured against the ideal middle class values.

Let me quote from your notes because I want to respond to some of your specific comments:

My main reservation about your paper would probably be corrected if you were to footnote some qualifications — especially where authenticity is reserved sort of on a genetic insider perspective (reverse racism), assumption that there is *an* authentic story (can you imagine Japanese Americans in such an agreement), even your use of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* . . . was that story written by an ex-patient and acted by ex-patients? Sometimes, in certain circumstances there are insider blind spots and bias . . .

Apparently my review made some people defensive, particularly some of my *hakujin* friends who seem embarrassed for Korty and objected to the fact that I leave Korty (and by extension, *hakujin* in general) with no resolution to their problem. Although you qualify your objections in the second paragraph, you use what I consider to be arguments based on the dominant society perspective.

In my review I argued that there is a distinction between external and internal perspectives; that Korty's view is external since both his life and cinematic experiences are external to Nikkei life and that *Manzanar* is not useful for Nikkei in their

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quest for self knowledge for it only adds still another example of an external view of their experiences.

Let me consider each of your specific comments in turn and give you my responses. Let's begin with: "where authenticity is reserved — sort of on a genetic insider perspective (reverse racism) . . ." This is a rather complex issue and has more than one facet. Any perspective, whether insider or outsider, rests on assumptions and therefore have their biases. To be sure, insider biases are particularly subject to rationalizations, but the outsider view has biases also. However, when the outsider bias is interwoven with racism, it becomes particularly destructive to the Nikkei. The dominant society bias relative to the ethnic minorities in this country must always be considered explicitly associated with hierarchy and power. I have already argued this thesis for the Nikkei in our society. Because of the relationship of these factors, there is certainly a difference between what you call "reverse racism" and racism. You see, once we begin to insist upon the right to engage in self definition and assert that we must engage in this endeavor ourselves, the charge of "reverse racism" is quickly leveled at us. But there is a difference between our insistence on engaging in self definition and the dominant society making external assessments of us and imposing judgments on us. The qualitative difference is that we are defining our own lives and not making judgments about other people from our perspective and from a superordinate position.

"Authenticity" is a rather interesting concept. In the original review, I maintained that the outsider's perspective depends upon a frame of reference which rests upon their assumptions derived and refined over the years as people interpret their own experiences. This framework is then placed onto the ethnic experience. Perceptions of the Nikkei experiences derived in this way is not the right kind of data for the Nikkei to use to begin their quest for self-definition.



What does "authenticity" mean? It means to me that we can speak of an "authentic insider's view" or an "authentic outsider's view" at the same time even when they are different views. So, it appears that "authenticity" refers to the "goodness of fit" between the observations and the frame of reference. We need to start with our own assumption, framework and "authenticity."

It is not only unreasonable but untenable to insist upon a single "authentic story" which you refer to in the following quote: "Assumption that there is *an* authentic story (can you imagine Japanese-Americans in such an agreement) . . ." There may be many versions of an event, some good and some bad, whatever the criteria might be for making such judgments. But if we are to delve into that process of self-discovery, we will need to be defining, refining, testing and developing our observations and interpretations of our life experiences. Much of this process will include the reexamination of the assimilationist framework that has been thrust upon us and that we have been accepting without question over the years.

We should not even try to have a single "authentic" story about any event. A single story about any occurrence which is a common experience for a number of people can be achieved only at a high level of abstraction where details of an event may be completely ignored. These very details are essential to our self examination. Besides, do the members of the dominant society always insist upon total agreement for their views on anything? I have always heard at professional social scientists' meetings how healthy it is to have variant views on things (unless it is some heretic challenging basic assumptions). At any rate, to insist that the insider perspective in this case be a single view and have the concurrence of all Japanese Americans is ridiculous. It is only a defensive reaction of people who are challenged and who insist upon rigid standards used in the judgment of others which they do not apply to themselves.

I am not saying that Hiroshi Kashiwagi, just because he is Japanese American, has a monopoly on the "truth" concerning Japanese Americans in his creative works. They are his interpretations of his lived-in experiences. As for his play, *Plums Can Wait*, he probably would not write the same play today if he were to start from scratch but I am willing to bet that with whatever faults, *Plums* contributes more to furthering the understanding of the Japanese American experience than the film *Manzanar*.

What is my evidence? Well, let's focus on the issue of language. When Frank Chin took Kory to task in his comparison of *Manzanar* with *Go For Broke*, he made the point that some 20 years ago when *Go For Broke* was made, at least some Nikkei language was present in the dialogue but that Kory had robbed the Japanese Americans of their language. From Kory's point of view special terminology may not have appeared to be that crucial in his interpretation of the events at Manzanar and, besides, his television audience would not understand "foreign" terms.

How important is Nikkei language in the understanding of the Nikkei experience? I would say critically important. I will even go further and argue that one cannot understand the real essence of Nikkei experience without relating to Nikkei language. Note that Kashiwagi does not avoid Nikkei language (that mixture of Japanese, English, neologism and new structures that makes up Nikkei language) but it becomes a critical feature of his plays.

George Lamming, a Black writer from the Caribbean, points out that one can interpret the relationship between Caliban (the slave) and Prospero (the master) in Shakespeare's *Tempest* as analogous to the relationship of two opposing sides in a colonialist society. I believe that the analogy can be extended to the relationship between the dominant society and the ethnic minorities in the United States. Let's begin with a quote from Lamming:

Prospero has given Caliban language and with it an unstated history of consequences, an unknown history of future intensions. This gift of language meant not English, in particular, but speech and concept as a way, a method, a necessary avenue towards areas of the self which could not be reached in any other way. It is this way, entirely Prospero's enterprise, which makes Caliban aware of possibilities. Therefore, all of Caliban's future — for future is the very name for possibilities — must derive from Prospero's experiment, which is also his risk.

Provided there is no extraordinary departure which explodes all of Prospero's premises, then Caliban and his future now belong to Prospero . . . Prospero lives in the absolute certainty that language, which is his gift to Caliban, is the very prison in which Caliban's achievements will be realized and restricted.

But Caliban already has his own culture, the one he had before Prospero arrived and thus unfamiliar to Prospero. Caliban recalls but only in images, not words; for he is trapped in Prospero's language. For us, this different culture is not one that existed





before but one which we have and are creating, Nikkei culture. In a previous paper, I have argued that our total society is a pluralistic one and that the life styles of the ethnic minorities represent unique distillations of historical and situational experiences. Now, let's consider a quote of Freire's:

This habit of submission led men to adapt and adjust to their circumstances, instead of seeking to integrate themselves with reality. Integration, the behavior characteristic of flexibly democratic regimes, requires a maximum capacity for critical thought. In contrast, the adapted man, neither dialoguing nor participating, accommodates to conditions imposed upon him and thereby acquires an authoritarian acritical frame of mind.

Rather than to "contain" our experiences within the boundaries of the dominant society language (proper standard English), we must relate to the Nikkei language for it is only through the conceptualizations developed in the unique language that we can achieve an understanding of our experiences.

To return, for a moment, to Caliban and his problem:

He, Caliban, captures, in his own and Prospero's language, a culture Prospero did not create and cannot control, which he, Caliban, has recognized as his own, but in the process the language is transformed, acquiring different meanings which Prospero never expected. Caliban becomes 'bilingual.' The language he shares with Prospero and the language he has minted from it are no longer identical. Caliban breaks out of the prison of Prospero's language. This provides a new point of departure.

Prospero's lessons cannot be unlearned, so Caliban will continue to understand Prospero's language. But Prospero will have only a partial grasp of the language which is now Caliban's own, so long as he retains his old attitudes. He is bound to miss essential parts, nuances and references, everything that relates to that different cultural background, and so he will misunderstand Caliban's new language.

The ways in which the Nikkei differ is that their language and culture derives from two major historical sources and the confluence of these in Japanese America. The experience of the Issei in the new setting is re-

flected in the Issei language which became liberally sprinkled with English as Kashiwagi properly reflect in Mrs. Wada's speech in the *Plums*. This becomes a part of the Nisei experience and is incorporated and evolves into Nisei language.

But here again, the pressures to conform, to assimilate, attacks not only cultural aspects but also that specific aspect of culture, language. We learn to use "proper" English. Saroyan makes the following evaluation in the introduction to Toshio Mori's *Yokohama, California*:

His stories are full of grammatical errors. His use of English, especially when he is most eager to say something very good, is very bad. Any high school teacher of English would flunk him in grammar and punctuation.

This is the crux of the dilemma. An imposition of standard "proper" English prevents us from achieving a thorough understanding of the Nikkei cultural experience, for it cannot be achieved in a language not of the experience, anymore than Caliban could get at his culture through Prospero's language, unchanged.

I have isolated language as one key factor in explaining why I believe that Kashiwagi goes much further in contributing to the understanding of the Nikkei experience, insofar as the Nikkei are concerned. And for whatever reason Korty eliminates our language, I agree with Frank Chin that Korty robs us of a chance to relate to our experience. We should not be eliminating the very means to an understanding of our lives but we should be encouraging the examination of the interplay of Nikkei culture and language.

If you will reexamine my use of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* in my review you will see that I have not used that example to explicate the inside/outside perspective issue. I used it to make a comparison of the relationship between the inmates and the hospital administration (and by extension the society) and the Japanese Americans (and by extension, ethnic minorities) and their relationship to the dominant society. I was arguing that the power relationships were analogous.



## An American Promise

### PROCLAMATION 4417

In this Bicentennial Year, we are commemorating the anniversary dates of many of the great events in American history. An honest reckoning, however, must include a recognition of our national mistakes as well as our national achievements. Learning from our mistakes is not pleasant, but as a great philosopher once admonished, we must do so if we want to avoid repeating them.

February 19th is the anniversary of a sad day in American history. It was on that date in 1942, in the midst of the response to the hostilities that began on December 7, 1941, that Executive Order No. 9066 was issued, subsequently enforced by the

criminal penalties of a statute enacted March 21, 1942, resulting in the uprooting of loyal Americans. Over one hundred thousand persons of Japanese ancestry were removed from their homes, detained in special camps, and eventually relocated.

The tremendous effort by the War Relocation Authority and concerned Americans for the welfare of these Japanese-Americans may add perspective to that story, but it does not erase the setback to fundamental American principles. Fortunately, the Japanese-American community in Hawaii was spared the indignities suffered by those on our mainland.

We now know what we should have known then — not only was that evacuation wrong, but Japanese-Americans — names like Hamada, Mitsumori, Morimoto, Noguchi, Yamasaki, Kido, Munemori and Miyamura — have

To analyze the film in terms of the inside/outside perspective is a different matter. A good actor tries to identify with his role and will try to internalize the "feel" of the experience in whatever manner possible so that he can project it in his part. And I suppose a writer goes through the same process. I don't know how much of an insider's perspective Kesey, the script writer, Nicholson or the other actors were able to achieve. I note in a review by Colin Dan-gaard (San Francisco *Examiner and Chronicle*, May 16, 1976, p. 16) that they did use some patients and doctors at the Oregon State Hospital where the film was made (I cannot resist noting that the doctors were paid \$600 a week, while the patients were paid \$35 a day). Dr. Dean K. Brooks (the superintendent at the hospital) said of Nicholson "at times I couldn't tell it (Nicholson's ability to 'act crazy') from the real thing." It would certainly be interesting to find out the acting instructions given to the "real" patients by the director Milos Forman. I wonder if he had the "real" patients act out stereotypic behavioral patterns in the film portrayals?

I am not arguing a pure reductionist's position which would ultimately say that an individual's experience can never be communicated to another person. I am saying that one must understand one's own biases and that this process takes sensitivity to one's own assumptions and frame of reference and a lot of hard work and plenty of time. My friends the Rundstrom Twins and Clint Bergum made a film about the Japanese tea ceremony some years ago. They worked with Mrs. Uyeda (a teacher of the Omote Senkei School of Tea) for about five years before they com-

pleted the film and this included learning the tea ceremony as students and doing a photographic essay prior to producing the film. (They even insisted that I, their thesis advisor, go through the tea ritual, which I did to my benefit).

Even prior to their interest in the tea ceremony, they were already students of another Zen art form, archery, which they had studied in Okinawa and Japan. Through these experiences in different cultural forms they became sensitized to the fact that their own ethnocentric frame of reference may affect the meaning of the art form insofar as the Japanese are concerned. Therefore, they recognized the problem and spent much time and energy to deal with it and the excellence of their film is a measure of their success in relating to this issue. They have been influenced by teachers like John Adair and John Collier, anthropologists at San Francisco State University who use photography and film as tools to get at perspectives of the people rather than as recording instruments of outsider selected perceptions.

I am certainly not saying that Kory should never have made the film. But he should be more cognizant of the fundamental issues of perspective which are so important to the ethnic minorities he is filming. If it is an external perspective, he should label it as such and explain to the Japanese Americans why he cannot accept their input as it doesn't fit into his outsider conceptions of their experiences. However, if he should want to relate to the insider perspective, he should strive to understand, first of all, his own assumptions and attempt to get at the assumptions underlying the vision of those who had the experience.



been and continue to be written in our history for the sacrifices and the contributions they have made to the well-being and security of this, our common Nation.

The Executive Order that was issued on February 19, 1942, was for the sole purpose of prosecuting the war with the Axis Powers, and ceased to be effective with the end of those hostilities. Because there was no formal statement of its termination, however, there is concern among many Japanese-Americans that there may yet be some life in that obsolete document. I think it appropriate, in this our Bicentennial Year, to remove all doubt on that matter, and to make clear our commitment in the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim that all the authority

conferred by Executive Order No. 9066 terminated upon the issuance of Proclamation No. 2714, which formally proclaimed the cessation of the hostilities of World War II on December 31, 1946.

I call upon the American people to affirm with me this American Promise — that we have learned from the tragedy of that long-ago experience forever to treasure liberty and justice for each individual American, and resolve that this kind of action shall never again be repeated.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of February in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundredth.

Gerald R. Ford

I realize that the insider bias has blind spots. That is one reason why I accept external views of my experiences to check my own views. What I am saying is that we have had outsider views all along and indeed they have been used to determine our lives. We desperately need insider views at this time. But why is it that there is always an attack from the outsiders on the issue of subjectivity as if they are not subjective at all? When these critiques, as I have reiterated several times, are associated with positions of power, it always comes cloaked in the guise of "truth," "authenticity" or "holier than thou" attitudes. What about judgments of "bad grammar" and "it is a matter of 'literary effects' and thus the author's prerogative?" Doesn't it strike you as being somewhat arrogant in view of the arguments I have been giving?

Finally, let me refer you to two products by Japanese Americans which I believe, in view of the discussion above, goes a lot further in explicating the Japanese American perspective. The first is a book written by Michi Weglyn, *Years of Infamy* (William Morrow, New York: 1976). This is about the concentration camp experience during World War II from a Japanese American viewpoint.

Last week, I was privileged to preview a film which will be shown on PBS television in the Fall. It is called *The Gold Watch* and it focuses on a Japanese American family and community just prior to the beginning of the War. It is written by one of our most promising playwrights, Momoko Iko. The first act of this play is published in *AlIIEEEE: An Anthology of Asian-American Writers* (Howard University Press, Washington, D.C., 1974).

Read the book and watch the play and I'm sure that you'll understand what I am talking about.

— James Hirabayashi

#### Footnotes:

1. For a discussion of this issue, see: Jahn, Janheinz, *Neo-African Literature: A History of Black Writing*, New York, Grove Press, 1969, pp. 233ff.
2. Freire, Paulo, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, New York: Seabury Press, 1973, pp. 23-4.
3. Jahn, *op. cit.*, 239ff.
4. See the discussion in Frank Chin et al.: *AlIIEEEE: An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975, p. 22.

