

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis:

WORLD WAR II MINIDOKA
INCARCERATION CAMP GARDENS:
EVIDENCE OF LOYALTY TO THE UNITED
STATES OR REBELLING AGAINST THEIR
INCARCERATION

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Studies in Cultural and Heritage Resource
Management, 2023

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Following the fatal attack on Pearl Harbor in February 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. Executive Order 9066 authorized the War Department to “prescribe military areas in such places and of such extent as he or the appropriate Military Commander may determine, from which any or all persons [of Japanese ancestry] may be excluded” (Roosevelt 1942). Over

110,000 Japanese immigrants, *Issei*, and second-generation Japanese Americans, *Nisei*, were removed from their homes and incarcerated at isolated relocation centers located in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming (Burton 2005; Burton et al. 1999; Burton and Farrell 2001). One of these locations was the Minidoka Relocation Center, located in south central Idaho in Jerome County and is the focus of my thesis. The two types of gardens that I researched were Japanese-style ornamental gardens and the Western-style victory gardens planted and maintained by the incarcerated. Using archaeological evidence, historic photographs, oral histories, the diary from Arthur Kleinkopf (the education superintendent at Minidoka) and comparing typical Japanese-Style and Western-Style garden designs, I will discuss what the data reveals about the garden design at the Minidoka Incarceration Camp. Despite their unjust incarceration and the policy of forced Americanization within the Minidoka Incarceration Camp, were the incarcerated compliant or were they politically resisting this incarceration through their gardens?

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AGAINST THEIR INCARCERATION

by

Isla Stevenson Nelson

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Following the fatal attack on Pearl Harbor in February 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. Executive Order 9066 authorized the War Department to “prescribe military areas in such places and of such extent as he or the appropriate Military Commander may determine, from which any or all persons of Japanese ancestry may be excluded” (Roosevelt 1942). Over 110,000 Japanese immigrants, *Issei*, and second-generation Japanese Americans, *Nisei*, were removed from their homes and incarcerated at isolated relocation centers located in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming (Burton 2005; Burton et al. 1999; Burton and Farrell 2001). One of these locations was the Minidoka Relocation Center, located in south central Idaho in Jerome County and is the focus of my thesis. Despite their unjust incarceration and the policy of forced Americanization within the Minidoka Incarceration Camp, were the incarcerated compliant or were they politically resisting this incarceration through their gardens, which were constructed throughout the camp.

On March 18, 1942, the federal government formed a new agency, the War Relocation Authority, which oversaw the removal of the Japanese and Japanese Americans living along the West Coast following Executive Order 9066. The War Relocation Authority was tasked with setting up functioning communities, which included educational programs, recreation facilities, newspapers, and other elements of community life. The War Relocation Authority supplied basic food, housing, medical care, heating stoves, electricity, and a clothing allowance. To save money and prove that the inmates were not being "coddled," the daily food costs were limited to a maximum of \$.50 per incarcerated. This resulted in poor food, both in quality and nutrition, at least

until the incarcerated could produce their food. Also, to encourage self-reliance among those confined, the War Relocation Authority employed those at Minidoka to perform most tasks within the Incarceration Center. The incarcerated employees were paid a flat rate of \$14 per month for ordinary workers, and \$19 per month for doctors and dentists. The War Relocation Authority banned private enterprise in the camps, however, they sponsored the formation of cooperative enterprises to provide additional services including barbershops, and shoe repair shops (Robinson 2015).

The War Relocation Authority emphasized propagation of American values through patriotic exercises including Boy Scout troops and organization of English and citizenship classes for *Issei*. The War Relocation Authority and the Office of War Information produced favorable propaganda that included pamphlets entitled *Nisei in Uniform* and *Myths and Facts about Japanese Americans*. Famous photographer, Ansel Adams, was invited to the Manzanar Incarceration Camp, where he photographed smiling and industrious *loyal* inmates. As a condition of their release from these camps, the War Relocation Authority required the incarcerated to attend officially sponsored seminars that included topics such as *How to Make Friends* and *How to Behave in the Outside World*. The incarcerated also had to pledge that they would not congregate with other Japanese Americans in their new homes to promote their “*assimilation*” (Robinson 2015).

Incarcerated Making Their Mark on the Landscape

The two types of gardens that I researched were Japanese-style ornamental gardens and the Western-style victory gardens planted and maintained by the incarcerated. Were the Minidoka incarcerated compliant with this unjust incarceration or is there evidence this was not the case?

Did these gardens indicate that they were persevering within the incarceration camp? Through my research I will analyze these gardens through the lens of archaeological documentation, oral history, historic photographs, and a diary from the education superintendent at Minidoka Incarceration Camp. I will also compare the incarcerated gardens to typical Japanese-Style and Western-Style garden designs to determine if the Minidoka incarcerated were compliant or if they were politically resisting their unjust incarceration through their gardens.

The below text provides background on the Minidoka Relocation Center and how it became known as the Minidoka Internment National Monument, and then later and currently the Minidoka National Historic Site.

Minidoka Relocation Center

The construction of the Minidoka Relocation Center began on June 5, 1942, while the first incarcerated arrived on August 10, 1942, to a site that was still being constructed; there was no running water and the sewage system had not been installed. The peak population at the Minidoka Relocation Center was approximately 9,400 at one time, but over 13,000 incarcerated lived here from its inception until the last incarcerated left on October 23, 1945 (Burton and Farrell 2001:10). The Minidoka Relocation Center was 33,000 acres in size with over 600 buildings, five miles of barbed-wire fencing, and eight guard towers that surrounded the administrative and residential parts of the Center (Burton and Farrell 2006:5). The incarcerated built a 5-mile-long irrigation canal to the relocation center, and cleared and farmed approximately 350 acres in 1942, and 420 acres were under cultivation in 1943, and approximately 740 acres were planted in 1944

(Burton and Farrell 2006:6). Figure 1-1 is an overview aerial showing the Minidoka Relocation Center in circa 1946.

Following the closure of the Minidoka Relocation Center the areas suitable for grazing were transferred to the Bureau of Land Management and areas suitable for irrigation and farmland were transferred to the Bureau of Reclamation for small family farms. In 1947, 43 farms were allotted to World War II veterans using a lottery system and in 1949, 46 additional farms were allotted. In addition to the farm allotments, each World War II veteran was given two barracks to move onto their new farmland (Burton and Farrell 2006:7). Of course, there were stipulations that the new homesteaders had to follow including a requirement to move onto their farm within six months, and they had to live on the land for three years at which time 1/16th of the land had to be under cultivation. Sixteen of the parcels had been partially or completely cultivated by the incarcerated during their time at the Minidoka Relocation center (Burton and Farrell 2006:8). Figure 1-2 depicts the same area in 1957, which is mostly agricultural fields with limited remains from the Minidoka Relocation Center. One notable landscape feature present, that is similar in both aerials, is the Northside Canal.



Figure 1-1. Aerial view of the Minidoka Relocation Center in 1946.
(Downloaded from Historicaerials.com)



Figure 1-2. Aerial View of the Minidoka Relocation Center in 1957.
(Downloaded from Historicaerials.com)

The Minidoka Relocation Center was formally listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 18, 1979 and only consisted of 6.06 acres of the original land area. The 6.06 acres included the entrance where a bridge crossed the Northside Canal and the ruins of two structures consisting of the guard station and visitor's reception center (Zontek 1979). Figure 1-3 is the map included in the National Register of Historic Places nomination form highlighting the 6.06 acres (Zontek 1979).



Figure 1-3. Map from the National Register of Historic Places nomination form highlighting the 6.06 acres.
(Taken from Zontek 1979:21)

Minidoka Internment National Monument

The Minidoka Internment National Monument was established through a presidential proclamation as the 385th unit of the national park system on January 17, 2001, with the goal of preserving and protecting 72.75 acres of the original 33,000-acre Minidoka War Relocation Center (National Park Service 2016:7; Figure 1-4). Once Minidoka became part of the national park system, the location was then managed by the National Park Service. Beginning in May 2001, the Western Archaeological and Conservation Center of the National Park Service conducted the first archaeological investigation at the Minidoka Internment National Monument (Burton and Farrell 2001:1). A cultural resources inventory survey was completed of the Monument, the Bureau of Reclamation inholding, and a small Bureau of Reclamation parcel located on the east side of the Monument for a total of 83 acres. This initial archaeological site identification survey included feature recording and mapping, and photography that provided information to the National Park Service of the various structural remains and artifacts that were still present (Burton and Farrell 2001:v).

Minidoka National Historic Site

On May 8, 2008, the U.S. Congress passed Public Law 110-229, which expanded the national monument size to 388 acres (refer to Figure 1-4) and changed the name to the Minidoka National Historic Site (National Park Service 2016:7). The goal of becoming a National Historic Sites was to “protect, preserve, and interpret the resources associated with the former Minidoka Relocation Center where Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II” (Public Law 110-227:771).

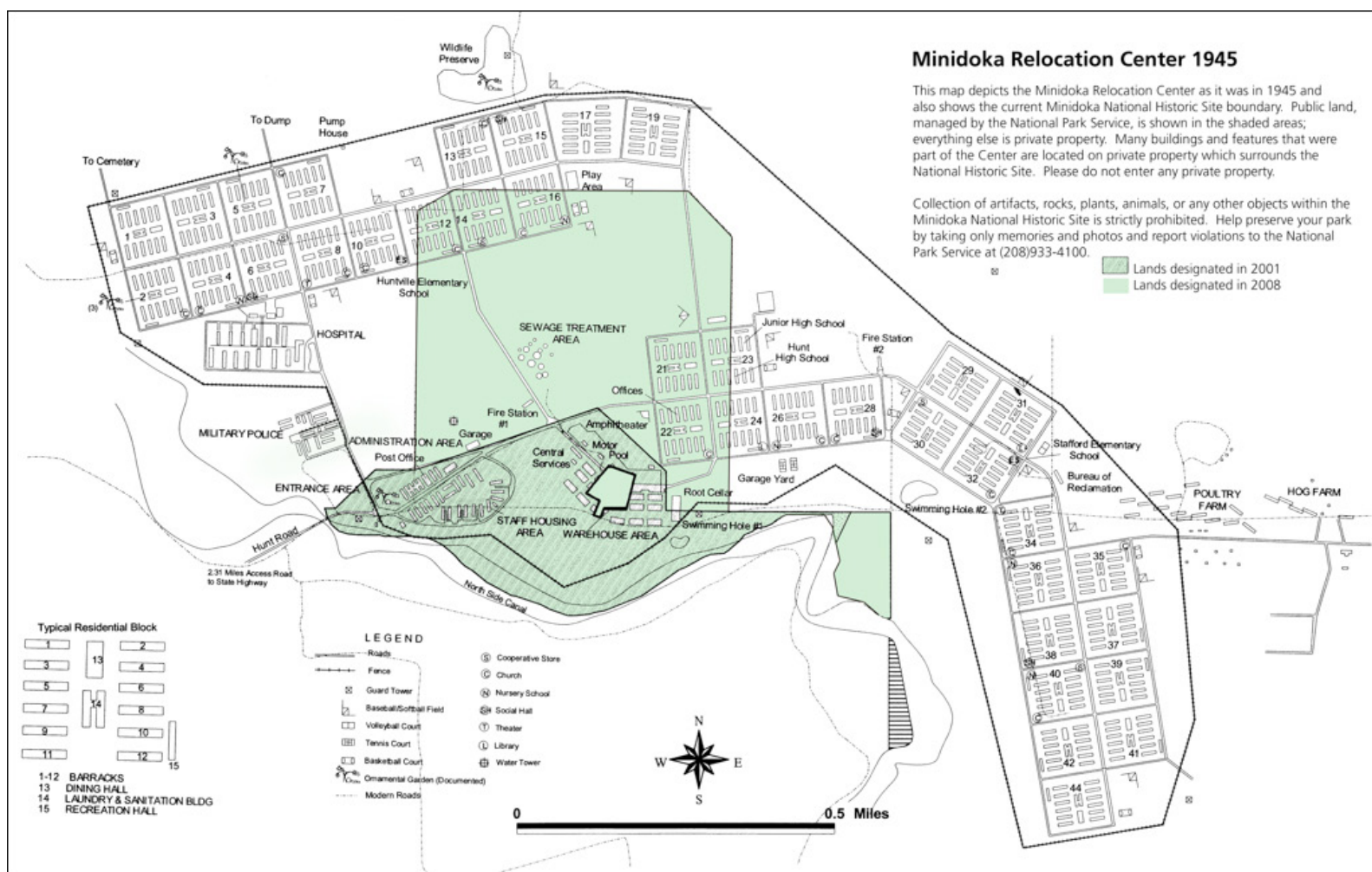


Figure 1-4. Map showing the Minidoka Internment National Monument boundary in 2001 and the Minidoka National Historic Site boundary in 2008.

(Taken from Hernandez 2012, Courtesy of the National Park Service)

Organization of Thesis

My thesis consists of eight chapters. Following the Introduction (this chapter), I will discuss the theoretical background I will use regarding my analysis of the Japanese gardens in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 presents the historical background and context of the Minidoka Incarceration Camp, Chapter 4 describes my research design and methods, and the results are presented in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 discusses the analysis and Chapter 7 presents my conclusions while Chapter 8 is the bibliography.

A Note on Terminology

Many people refer to this episode in history as the “Japanese Internment”, however this phrase was carefully crafted and utilized by the United States government to appear that the wholesale incarceration of a group of people would not raise the fury of the majority population (Wakatsuki et al. 2018:8). “U.S. citizens of Japanese ancestry were referred to as “non-aliens”, people who were not faced with a natural disaster were nonetheless “evacuated” from their homes” (Clark 2020:13). The Japanese immigrants, *Issei*, and second-generation Japanese Americans, *Nisei*, were first taken to “assembly centers” before their final confinement at “relocation centers”. The term “internment” has been used and does not adequately describe their incarceration. According to the Geneva Convention, “internment” refers to the legal wartime detention of enemy aliens, not citizens (Wakatsuki et al. 2018:8). In this paper, I use the terms “incarcerees” and “incarceration”, which is the terminology currently used in academic scholarship and more accurately describes the experience for those that were incarcerated.

However, if I'm citing period documents, I will use the term Minidoka Relocation Center, as this was the initial name of this location.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background

Cultural Landscape at Minidoka

Cultural Landscapes as defined by J. Edward Hood (1996:123) is a way of “expressing how landscapes are created in terms of human use through action and perception and are loaded with cultural meaning in specific historical contexts”. A cultural landscape includes all aspects of a culturally defined space, including architecture, gardens, yards, organization of towns, fields, which all have historically derived meanings (Hood 1996:123). Looking at a landscape not only in its physical state, but the meaning behind these spaces, helps to understand the social relationships present. Those with power and authority often have more ability to transform the physical landscape to fit their interests. The ultimate outcome will be the product of their efforts and the types of resistance encountered (Harvey 1985 as cited in Hood 1996:124). “The cultural landscape contains and intertwines the material reproduction of society with the cultural understandings of that process” (Hood 1996:139). A single landscape can be considered multilocal as different people may differently experience it (Rodman 1992:647 as cited in Yamin and Metheny 1996:xvii).

Most archaeologists focus on the diagnostic artifacts as temporal markers, however recognizing the landscape is just as informative and important at an archaeological site (Metheny et al. 1996:20). Scientific methodologies can be used to recover the precise information regarding the garden configurations; however, gardens are places of beauty and repose, and these feelings must be examined to understand the cultural landscape. A multidisciplinary approach must be used including scientific method blended with attention to the everyday use and attitudes

towards the past landscapes (Beaudry 1996:4). Bruce Trigger (1991) reaffirms the notion that the blending of data from the sciences and humanities enriches the interpretation of past landscapes. The cultural landscape is a vital link to understand the past of an area and a community.

Maintaining Japanese cultural heritage through the landscape was important at Minidoka and has continued through recent years. In 1994, the government of Japan took the initiative and organized the Nara Conference jointly with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; International Centre for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments; and International Council On Monuments and Sites to discuss the cultural diversity and cultural heritage in relation to conservation in order to evaluate the value and authenticity of cultural property more objectively. During this conference, the Nara Document of Authenticity was drafted by 45 representatives from 28 countries that addressed “the need for a broader understanding of cultural diversity and cultural heritage in relation to conservation in order to evaluate the value and authenticity of cultural property more objectively” (Lemaire and Stovel 1994). Attendees at the conference reached a consensus that “authenticity is an essential element in defining, assessing, and monitoring cultural heritage”. They also recognized that “authenticity” can vary from culture to culture thus needing to consider the underlying cultural context. An important statement from the Nara Document of Authenticity related to the cultural landscape at Minidoka includes “Conservation of cultural heritage in all its forms and historical periods is rooted in the values attributed to the heritage” (Lemaire and Stovel 1994). The incarcerated were able to preserve their cultural heritage through altering the landscape and making their own place.

Institution of Confinement

When discussing the incarceration of Japanese immigrants and Japanese American citizens, one must consider why the United States government chose confinement as their answer to the “wartime hysteria, failed civic leadership, and racial prejudice” (Casella 2007:134). Foucault “exposed transformations of punishment between the 1750s when the public spectacle of torture dominated, and the 1830s when disciplinary confinement had emerged as the central mode of punishment” (Casella 2009:22). He later went on to say that all institutional forms produced ‘docile bodies’ through corrective training (Foucault 1977:17; Casella 2009:22). Social power infuses modern confinement institutions either as an oppositional relationship of dominance and resistance or as a subversive means for minimizing the everyday pains of confinement (Casella 2007:2). Scott (1990) studied the idea of resistance and how everyday activities intended to “undermine, thwart, or obstruct conditions of domination” (Scott 1990 as cited in Casella 2007:24). Through this resistance, a “gradual erosion of the authority through subtle, and frequently anonymous activities undertaken in response to an opponent who would likely win any open confrontation” (Scott 1985 as cited in Casella 2007:24). Additionally, this “resistance” needed to be coordinated as a group and not individually to defend these secluded moments. Scott (1990) introduced the term ‘hidden transcripts’, which refers to the distinct patterns shared by insubordination as “nonelite, undocumented, and anonymous everyday events that accumulated over time into a force of collective resistance” (Scott 1990 as cited in Casella 2007:25).

Within these institutions, discipline is carried out by controlling the individuals through surveillance, classification, routines, and examinations (Casella 2007:67). Confinement is

considered as a form of punishment by some scholars (Feinberg 1972:25; Casella 2007:3), while others feel that it has a rehabilitative purpose to transform dangerous individuals (Foucault 2001 [1964]; Tonry and Petersilia 2000 as cited in Casella 2007:3). Additionally, confinement has become thought of as a way for socio-economic neutralization (Parenti 1999; Mathiesen 1990; Rafter 1990; Katz 1986; Ignatieff 1978 as cited in Casella 2007:3).

To understand the importance of the cultural landscape within the institution of confinement at Minidoka, two theoretical frameworks will be applied including, social power, and panopticism.

Social Power

The notion of power is the underlying issue to manage the incarcerated. Power was defined by Max Weber in 1947 as “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance” (Weber 1978:152; Casella 2007:58). Power can best be understood in terms of command and control. Weber defines domination “as the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons” (Weber 1978:53). Weber recognized three types of authority including traditional, charismatic, and rational. Traditional authority is that of a powerful and dominant individual or group as the accepted authority and not challenged by subordinate individuals. Weber considered patrimonialism to be a modern form of the traditional authority as it is the rule by an administration or military force while the patriarchy at the level of the household or family will continue, but the patriarch will rely on the administration (Weber 1978:240). All relationships within institutions (including Minidoka) were based on domination and resistance

of the authority's power (De Cunzo 2009:206). Goffman (1961) outlined four types of inmate response to cope and survive this power struggle. The first is "situational withdrawal" where the inmate rejects everything except immediate events around them while others responded through "intransigent" tactics that intentionally challenged the institution system by refusing to cooperate. The third response is "colonization" where the inmate accepts the incarcerated life and achieves a relatively content existence through acquisition of internal privileges and the last response "conversion" is the notion that the inmate attempts to act out the role of the perfect inmate; this inmate response is the "docile bodies" referred to by Foucault (Goffman 1961 as cited in Casella 2007:29). Landscape features provide archaeological evidence to the conditions of confinement, segregation, domination, and surveillance that characterized daily life while in exile (Markus 1993 as cited in Casella 2007:136).

Panopticism

Panopticon, developed by Jeremy Bentham, was a circular prison design with the guard tower located in the middle. This allowed the prison guard to see into the prisoner's cells, however, the prisoners could not see the guards in the central tower. The effect of being watched created a self-governance of the prisoners forcing them to discipline themselves (Newburn 2017). "Imprisonment was meant to deprive the inmate solely of liberty, not of health or life" (Casella 2007:19). In Michel Foucault's essay entitled "Panopticism", he made the argument that we live in a society of 'surveillance' and that this surveillance forms the bases of authority over individuals" (Foucault 1977:240). Foucault observed that the underlying significance of panopticism architecture transformed the noncompliant and delinquent into docile and malleable

citizens (Casella 2009:23). With the powerful watching over the powerless, this causes the individuals to think twice before taking an action. Due to the lack of privacy, an internal surveillance among the incarcerated was created (Dowling 2014 as cited in Clark 2020:75).

The War Relocation Authority was the newly created government agency responsible for the relocation process: determining camp locations, inmate placement, camp design, and construction (Burton and Farrell 2001:8). The vast majority of the barrack buildings were standard military design with timber-framing, tar paper siding, and without indoor plumbing. The predominant style of buildings at Minidoka were utilitarian, which expressed expediency of construction and limited resources (Tamura 2007:61). Although the buildings were constructed in a uniform style, the exterior and outside space were individualized by the residents who added gardens with rustic fences, shade structures, and awnings over windows (Tamura 2007:61). Rather than surveillance, the relocation centers were designed with order and containment as they were arranged in a rectilinear grid system of blocks that varied in size depending on the function of each zone (Cassella 2007:50).

Conclusions

The War Relocation Authority inferred that the gardens were signs of Americanization of the incarcerated, which was the farthest from the truth. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, these gardens celebrated Japanese heritage and style, rebelling against the American rigid gardening style (Suto and Voeks 2021:87). By examining the cultural landscape at Minidoka, the location and design of the garden features indicate the feeling the incarcerated

experienced about their confinement, their struggle with the dominant social power, and how they managed to continue living their lives with the watchful eyes above.

Chapter 3: Historical Background and Context

Background

Three months after the fatal attack on Pearl Harbor in February 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. Executive Order 9066 authorized the War Department to “prescribe military areas in such places and of such extent as he or the appropriate Military Commander may determine, from which any or all persons may be excluded” (Roosevelt 1942). Over 110,000 Japanese immigrants, *Issei*, and second-generation Japanese Americans, *Nisei*, were removed from their homes and incarcerated at isolated relocation centers located in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming (Burton 2005; Burton et al. 1999; Burton and Farrell 2001). “The ‘crime’ of those incarcerated was their ethnicity: all were of Japanese ancestry. Although those incarcerated retained much of their Japanese culture and heritage, over two-thirds of them were American citizens (Camp 2016:171) who had been schooled in the ideals of equality, democracy, and justice, as embodied in the United States Constitution” (Farrell and Burton 2004:22).

This wartime xenophobia towards individuals of Asian heritage within the United States was part of a larger trend that began with the emergence of global capitalism in the 1400s (Shackel 1993; Harrison 1995:51; Johnson 1996; Leone and Potter 1999; Hall 2000; and Orser 2007 as cited in Camp 2016:171).

What Sparked Anti-Japanese Sentiment?

To understand what sparked the anti-Japanese sentiment, it is necessary to examine the arrival of Chinese immigrants, which were the first large group to immigrate from Asia. Chinese

men began immigrating to California during the American Gold Rush (Meger 2005:38) because they could earn much more in America than in their homeland. The labor of these Chinese immigrants contributed to both industry and agriculture with the majority of them contributing to the buildings of the western leg of the first transcontinental railroad (Daniels 2004:7). Once the railroad was completed, approximately ten thousand Chinese workers lost their jobs, and a majority moved to San Francisco. Due to this move, many local to San Francisco resented the Chinese immigrants as competition for available jobs with a slogan “The Chinese Must Go!” (Daniels 2004:7). Western politicians began to support this movement and on May 6, 1882, President Chester A. Arthur signed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was a policy that provided an absolute 10-year ban on Chinese laborers immigrating to the United States (NARA 2023). “Chinese laborers was defined as both skilled and unskilled laborers and Chinese employed in mining” (Chinese Exclusion Act 1882). This was mainly due to the notions that Americans held as to why they were unemployed, and that their declining wages was due to Chinese workers (Camp 2013; Miyawaki 2014; Fong et al. 2022). In 1892, Congress extended this act for another 10 years in the form of the Geary Act. The Geary Act was made permanent in 1902 and added the restriction that Chinese residents were required to register and obtain a certificate of residence that needed to be always on the person (Camp 2013:37; NARA 2023). Chinese residents that were caught without this document were subject to detention and deportation (Immigration History 2019). The Geary Act regulated Chinese immigration into the 20th century, however, Congress adopted new means for regulations including quotas and requirements pertaining to the national origin following World War I. The Immigration Act of 1917 extended the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) by extending the immigrants to “Asian Indians

and all other native inhabitants of a ‘barred Asiatic zone’ that ran from Afghanistan to the Pacific” (Ngai 2004:18 as cited in Camp 2013:37). Additionally, this Act required a literacy examination for all immigrants who wanted to enter the United States (Camp 2013:37). It is important to note that immigrants from Asia could not become naturalized citizens, and remained “aliens ineligible to citizenship”, however, their children born in the United States were American citizens (Daniels 2004:12). Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1924, also known as the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act, which initiated a racially based quota system for determining the number of immigrants that would be admitted into the United States using the 1890 census data (Camp 2013:38; NARA 2023). The limit for each nationality was 3 percent of the total specific nationality already residing in the United States per the census data (NARA 2023).

Japanese immigrants, known as *Issei*, began arriving in the United States during the late nineteenth century, around the same time as the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act (Wyatt 2012:9; Ng 2014:28). Japan began to initiate and modernize itself, referred to as the Meiji Restoration by implementing technological changes, which brought rapid industrialization to the country. This modernization impacted the farmers negatively by now having to pay a fixed tax on the land; thus, causing Japanese farmers to seek other avenues of employment (Ng 2014:20). The first wave of Japanese immigrants arrived in 1884 to nearby Hawaii as contract laborers. In 1898, following the United States’ annexation of Hawaii, contract labor was prohibited causing many Japanese to move to California, Oregon, and Washington. Many of these *Issei* had been farmers in Japan and were able to flourish in agriculture as this was an undeveloped industry along the West Coast. Unfortunately, they began to experience Anti-Japanese discrimination and hostility

that began to grow including from the American Federation of Labor Leader who lobbied for Japanese exclusion (Daniels 1988 as cited in Ng 2014:29). Additionally, beginning in the 1870s within the state of California, schools were segregated for children of “Chinese or Mongolian descent” (Daniels 2004:12). On October 11, 1906, the local San Francisco school board ordered Japanese children to attend school in Chinatown (Daniels 2004:12). President Theodore Roosevelt began negotiations with Japan, which resulted in the Gentlemen’s Agreement, a series of notes exchanged between the two governments from 1907-1908. Under this Agreement, Japan agreed to stop issuing passports to Japanese laborers and the United States promised not to pass legislation against the Japanese and that Japanese families could be reunited (Daniels 2004:13). At this time, tens of thousands of Japanese women and children legally immigrated to the United States between 1908 and 1924 to join their Japanese family members. Many of the wives were “picture brides”, which led many to believe there was a conspiracy between Washington D.C. and Tokyo to flood the Pacific Coast with Japanese (Daniels 2004:13).

By 1909, Japanese farmers controlled approximately 150,000 acres of farmland in California due to leasing and share-cropping contracts despite not being citizens, thus causing another anti-Japanese controversy. Many white farmers believed that the *Issei* farmers had driven them out of the market; however, this was not true. Japanese farmers cultivated “new lands with their labor intensive, high-yield agriculture, which contrasted with resource-intensive, low-yield American agriculture” (Daniels 2004:14-17). In 1913, California enacted an alien land bill that would deny “aliens ineligible to citizenship” the right to own agricultural land. The *Issei* found a loophole by putting their land in their American-born children’s name. As legal guardians of their children, they retained control of the land (Daniels 2004:14). Unfortunately,

in 1920 California passed a stronger alien land act that prohibited children born in the United States to Japanese parents from holding titles to land and in 1923 the law was amended to prohibit leasing and sharecropping by Japanese Americans as well (Wyatt 2012:11). Americans also began to fear Japan as they proved they were a force to be reckoned following the Russo-Japanese War, which stimulated fears of Asian conquest – “the Yellow Peril” (Burton et al. 1999:27).

Despite Japanese American immigrants experiencing exclusions in labor, immigration laws, land ownership, and the right to naturalize, they chose to rise above the anti-Japanese sentiment.

The Roundup of Japanese Americans

Long before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States government had begun investigations as early as 1937, regarding possible actions if a war with Japan was going to occur. The Japanese American Citizens League, an all-*Nisei* organization represented the pro-American attitude and emphasized their loyalty and Americanism. The Japanese American Citizens League creed, which was an optimistic and patriotic expression, was written in 1940 and was published in the Congressional Record on May 9, 1941 (Burton et al. 1999:27; Daniels 1989:24-25). Around the same time, the United States passed the Alien Registration Act of 1940, which required all aliens over fourteen years old to register and be fingerprinted. The Federal Bureau of Investigation also compiled a list of dangerous German, Italian, and Japanese aliens that were to be arrested or interned at the outbreak of war with their respective country (Burton et al. 1999:28).

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Justice Department arrested 3,000 “dangerous” enemy aliens including 1,500 Japanese including community leaders who were involved in Japanese organizations and religious groups (Burton et al. 1999:28). They were arrested despite the results of the Curtis B. Musson report discussing the West Coast Japanese Americans. Musson concluded that “most of the Japanese Americans were loyal to the United States and that many would have become citizens if they had been allowed to do so” (Burton et al. 1999:28). However, the Musson report also noted the vulnerabilities along the West Coast including dams, bridges, harbors, and power stations. The Army Intelligence responded to the report and argued that “widespread sabotage by Japanese is not expected...identification of dangerous Japanese on the West Coast is reasonably complete” (Daniels 1989:28).

“Military Necessity”

General John L. DeWitt, commander of the Western Defense Command and the United States 4th Army, recommended “that action be initiated at the earliest practicable date to collect all alien subjects fourteen years of age and older, of enemy nations and remove them” to the interior of the country and hold them under restraint after removal” (Daniels 1989:39 as cited in Burton et al. 1999:29). Two days later, General DeWitt recommended that all Japanese, native-born and alien be removed from the entire area west of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Mountains (referred to as the Western Defense Command Zone) as a “military necessity” stating “the Japanese race is an enemy race” and “the very fact that no sabotage has taken place to date is disturbing and confirming indication that such action will be taken” (Hersey 1988:44 as cited in Burton et al. 1999:30).

Executive Order 9066

Despite internal government opposition, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, which authorized removing the Japanese living on the West Coast under the name of “military necessity” by claiming the Japanese enemy aliens were potential threats to national security during war time (Burton et al. 1999:31). The military and federal government initially framed this removal as voluntary resettlement, and approximately 5,000 Japanese and Americans of Japanese descent moved outside of the Western Defense Command zone (Ng 2002:21). Two West Coast Military Zones were created, which divided Washington, Oregon, California, and Arizona into two military areas. Military Area No. 1 was subdivided into a “prohibited zone” along the coast and the adjacent area referred to as the “restricted zone” (Figure 3-1; Burton et al. 1999:32, Daniels 2004:53). Voluntary evacuation came to a halt on March 29, when Public Proclamation No. 4 was released, which forbade all Japanese from leaving Military Area No. 1 until ordered (Burton et al. 1999:33). The Wartime Civilian Control Agency (WCCA) was established to coordinate the evacuation to the inland incarceration camps (Burton et al. 1999:351). The first evacuation began on March 24 near Seattle on Bainbridge Island and continued along the West Coast for a total of 108 “Civilian Exclusion Orders”. After the initial notification, the Japanese were given six days to dispose of their possessions and packing only “that which can be carried by the family or the individual” including bedding, toiletries, clothing, and eating utensils (Burton et al. 1999:33).

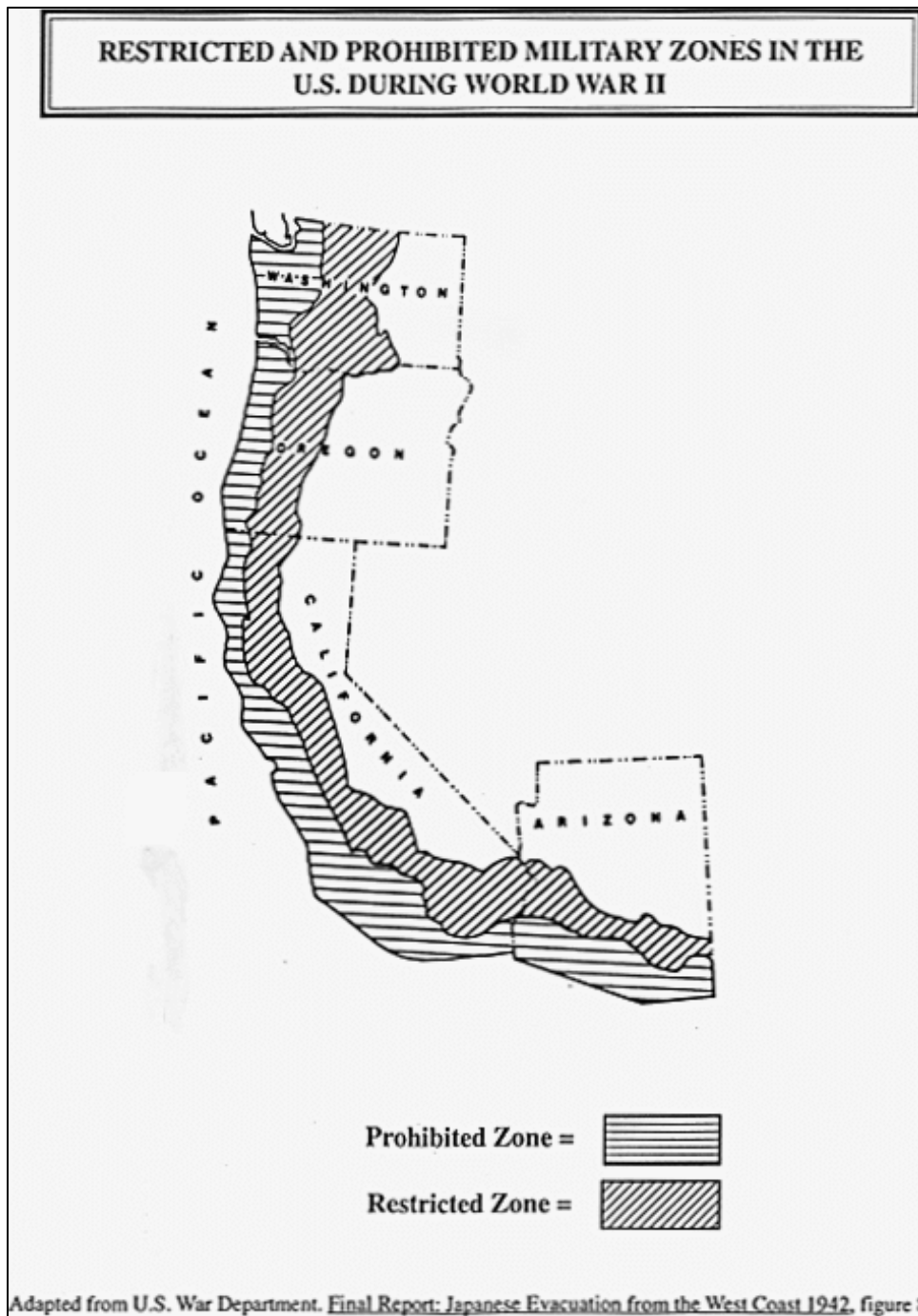


Figure 3-1. Restricted and Prohibited Military Zones in the United States During World War II.

Adapted from U.S. War Department Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast 1942, Figure 8.

Assembly Centers

Once the Japanese reported to the collection points, they were transported to 1 of 17 assembly centers located in Washington, Oregon, California, and Arizona. Eleven of the assembly centers were located at racetracks or fairgrounds while others were at livestock exposition facilities, a former mill site, migrant workers camps, and an abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps camp (Burton et al. 1999:35). The Japanese lived at these assembly centers until the relocation centers were completed and they could then be transferred to these locations. Each assembly center was surrounded by a barbed wire fence and patrolled by armed military police (Burton et al. 1999:352). Due to construction delays and lack of supplies, the transfer of the Japanese occurred over five months ending on October 30, 1942 (Burton et al. 1999:352).

Incarceration Camps

The War Relocation Authority was the newly created government agency responsible for the relocation process: determining camp locations, inmate placement, camp design, and construction (Burton and Farrell 2001:8). There were ten incarceration camps administered by the War Relocation Authority: Manzanar (California), Tule Lake (California), Granada/Amache (Colorado), Topaz (Utah), Poston (Arizona), Gila River (Arizona), Minidoka (Idaho), Heart Mountain (Wyoming), Rohwer (Arkansas), and Jerome (Arkansas) (Figure 3-2; Burton and Farrell 2001; Burton et al. 1999:39). The incarceration camps needed to be in rural, wide-open areas owned by the federal government that were far removed from national defense sites. The locations were determined by adequate water supply, access to transportation including railroads and major highways, and a climate that could support large-scale agricultural production (Burton

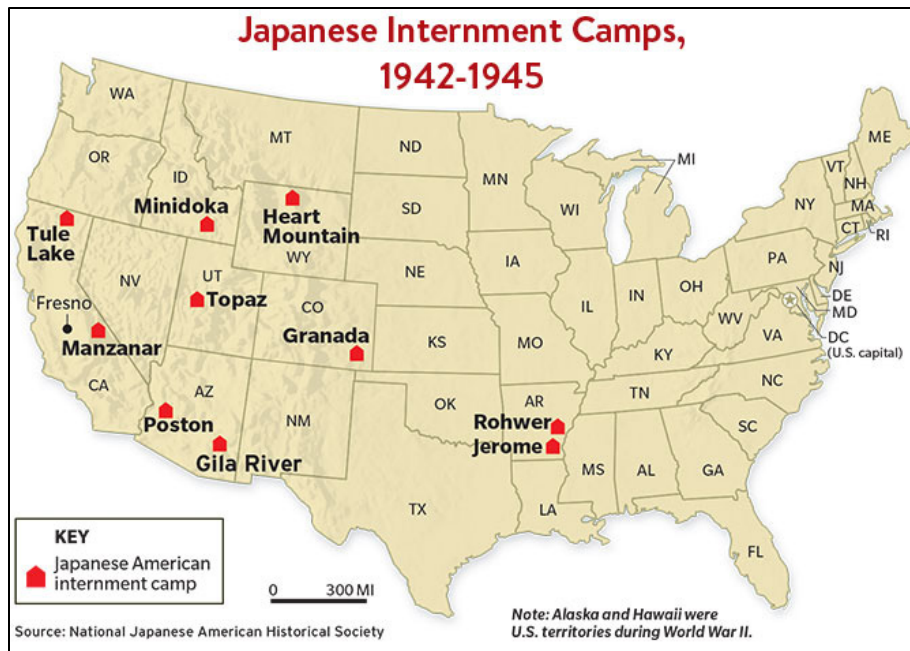


Figure 3-2. Locations of the ten incarceration camps administered by the War Relocation Authority.

and Farrell 2001:8; Burton et al. 1999:38; Ng 2002:37). These incarceration camps were designed to be self-contained communities with hospitals, schools, churches, post offices, offices, warehouses, and residential areas (i.e., barracks) with the residential core being surrounded by a large buffer zone that was also to be used as farmland (Burton and Farrell 2001:8-9). Due to the war, food shortage was an issue, and the War Relocation Authority did not want to make it appear that the incarcerated were receiving special treatment. Therefore, meals consisted of “wieners (hotdogs), dry fish, rice, macaroni, and pickled vegetables” (Ng 2002:41). In Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston’s book *Farewell to Manzanar* she described one the meals she ate after she arrived “...they plopped in scoops of Vienna sausage, canned string beans, steamed rice that had been cooked too long, and on top of the rice a serving of apricots.....Among the

Japanese, of course, rice is never eaten with sweet food, only with salty or savory foods” (Ng 2002:41-42). The food quality improved once the incarcerated began to run and cook the mess hall operations.

Minidoka Relocation Center

The construction of the Minidoka Relocation Center began on June 5, 1942, while the first incarcerated arrived on August 10, 1942, to a site that was still being constructed; there was no running water and the sewage system had not been installed. Minidoka was in a very remote area in southern Idaho with views of agricultural fields with mountains in the distance, which helped create the feeling of isolation. This environment was completely different from what most of internee’s were used to coming from the Pacific Northwest. During the winter, temperatures frequently dropped below freezing, and during the summer, it could reach over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The barracks were constructed from tarpaper and greenwood thus causing the barracks to be extremely hot during the summer months and bitter cold in the winter (Burton 2005; Burton et al. 1999; Burton and Farrell 2001).

Henry M. recalled how incomplete Minidoka was upon arrival when he told an interviewer, “The place was a huge dust storm area and the only thing you could see was a big cloud of dust on the horizon and that's where the camp was. When we got to our block, which was Block 19, the water facilities weren't running.”



Figure 3-3. “A panorama view of the Minidoka War Relocation Authority Center. This view, taken from the top of the water tower at the east end of the camp, shows partially completed barracks”. Taken August 18, 1942.

Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-G-11D-105, Densho Digital Repository

He continued, “But they were hard pressed to keep up with the increasing demands of the incoming population. The barracks weren't completely finished, and there was... huge piles of lumber across the street from the block. Then the winds would come up and create all kinds of dust conditions that were very difficult to put up with.” “In Minidoka's case they hardly built anything other than the sewage facility, which was not complete at that time. And they hadn't built all the structures for all the barracks. So consequently, it was a chaotic mess.” (Densho Archive. Henry M. Interview II, segment 4. Interviewed by Tom Ikeda [May 4, 1998]).

Minidoka covered approximately 33,000 acres in size with 900 acres being used for residential purposes. The camp was a secure military installation with barbed-wire fences and eight guard towers. A significant pre-existing feature at the south edge of the site is the North

Side Canal, which provided irrigation water and determined the crescent shape of the site plan. Thirty-five residential blocks were constructed at Minidoka and within the residential areas, there were 4 general stores, 2 dry good stores, 2 barber shops, 1 beauty parlor, 2 mail order stores, 2 dry cleaning stores, 2 watch repair shops, 2 radio repair shops, a check cashing service, 5 libraries, a theater, a camp newspaper, 2 elementary schools, 1 junior high, 1 high school, a 196-bed hospital, 2 fire stations, and 7 churches (Figure 3-4; Burton 2005; Burton et al. 1999; Burton and Farrell 2001).

Minidoka consisted of five Protestant denominations that had organized themselves into a single Federated Christian Church, a Catholic church, and Buddhist temple. The Federated Christian Church was staffed by eight Japanese American clergymen and two Caucasian pastors, Reverend Emory Andrews and Reverend Everett Thompson. Reverend Andrews and Reverend Thompson both had served many incarcerated in Seattle and moved to Twin Falls to be close to their parishioners. Father Leo Tibesar also followed his Catholic parishioners from Seattle and ministered at Minidoka for two years (Fiset 1997:82). Father Tibesar lived at the Minidoka Relocation Center, which the administration defied the War Relocation Authority's rule. Buddhists were the most numerous of the incarcerated with three sects holding services and the Young Buddhist Association had a large membership (Niiya 2021).

Each of the residential blocks had 12 tar paper housing barracks, a mess hall, recreation hall, and a central H-shaped building with bathrooms, showers, and a laundry (see Figure 3-4). One side of the H-shaped building housed the laundry, and the other side had the bathrooms and showers with a 1,350-gallon coal heated water heater in the middle. The bathrooms side was divided into men's and women's sections with toilets, showers, wash basins, bathtubs (women's

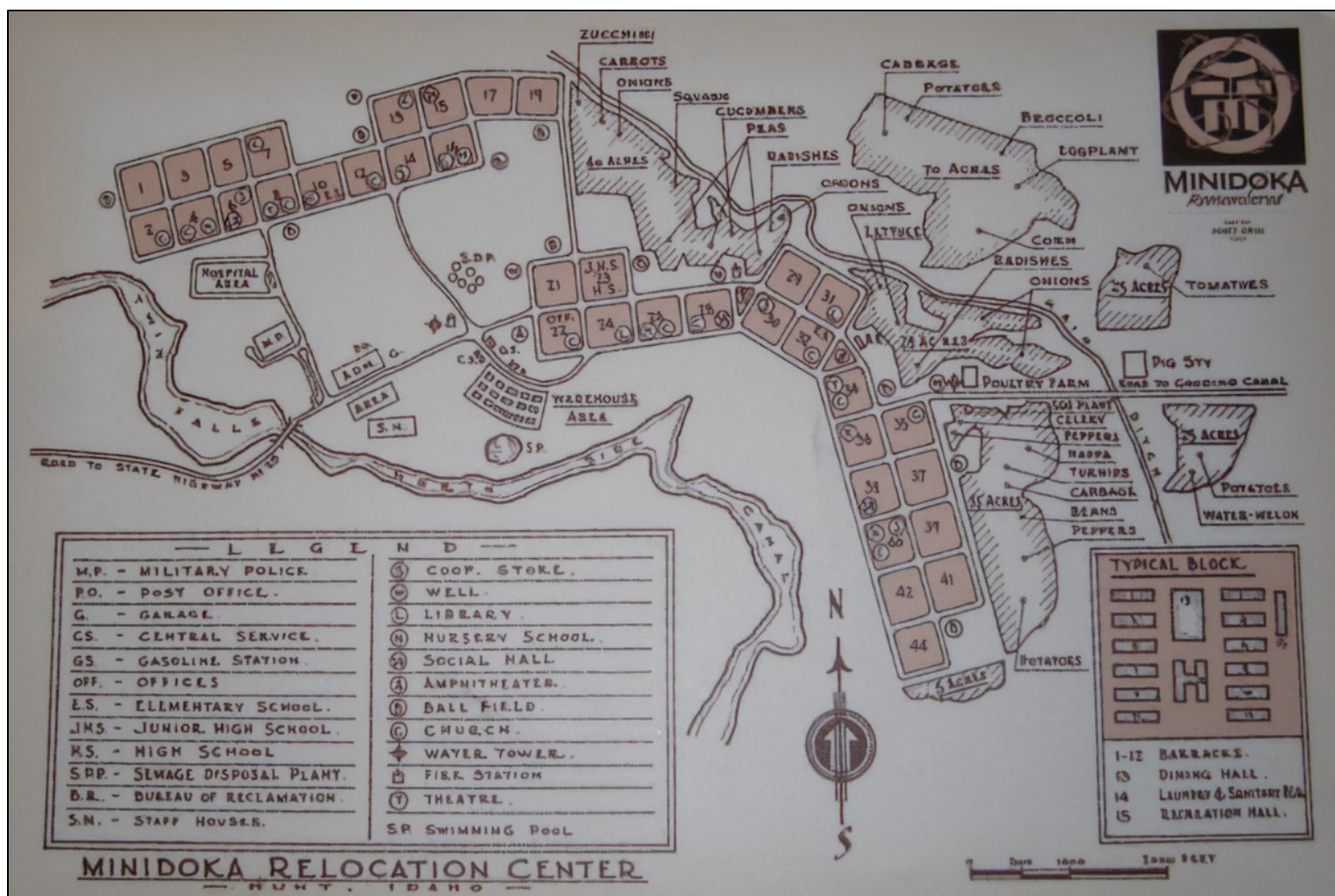


Figure 3-4. Overview map of Minidoka Relocation Center with vegetable gardens and farms labeled.

Accessed online: *Rights Matter: the story of the Bill of Rights* (rightsmatter.org)

side only), and urinals (men's side only) (Niiya 2021). Each barrack measured 120 feet by 20 feet in size and was then divided into six apartments/units measuring 20 feet by 20 feet in size. Each apartment would house a family or a group of individuals and came furnished with Army issue cots and a pot-bellied stove for burning coal and sagebrush (Figure 3-5). The incarcerated had to construct furniture from scrap lumber and other materials around the camp. The walls dividing the units did not extend to the ceiling and the barracks had no insulation (Burton 2005; Burton et al. 1999; Burton and Farrell 2001; Niiya 2021).



Figure 3-5. Example of the interior of the barracks with a pot-bellied stove.
Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-G-16B-970, Densho Digital Repository

Minidoka incarcerated cleared land for large-scale farming activities (Figure 3-6) and produced crops and livestock for use at Minidoka and resale, constructed and repaired canals, and provided vital agricultural labor for the region (Hernandez 2012). The vegetable gardens were located to the north and east of the residential areas (see Figure 3-4). A total of 350 acres



Figure 3-6. “An evacuee drives a heavy tractor pulling a triangle to heavy railroad irons breaking off sagebrush. This is one of the methods of clearing off land of the sagebrush adjacent to the Minidoka Relocation Center.”

Courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration, Densho Digital Repository

were cleared and farmed during 1942 while in 1943, 420 acres were cultivated and 740 acres in 1944 (Burton and Farrell 2001:13). There was also a poultry farm, a hog farm, a farm mess hall, a picnic area, and a landscaped park (see Figure 3-4). In addition to working their own farms, 2,400 Minidoka residents worked for the nearby farmers during the 1943 harvest. With many area men serving in the military, the labor provided by the incarcerated was invaluable (Niiya 2021).

Despite being wrongfully incarcerated, the incarcerated almost immediately after arriving at Minidoka Incarceration Camp began personalizing and beautifying their apartments and immediate surroundings. Residents developed ornamental gardens and planted flowers throughout the camp.

Why Gardens?

In landscape architecture, the focus has been on Japanese garden design as they are aesthetically sophisticated landscapes (Tamura 2004:1). However, the incarceration gardens constituted subtle acts of political resistance (Tamura 2004:2; Suto and Voeks 2021:87) by claiming a space as their own and modifying it for their use (Suto and Voeks 2021:87). The War Relocation Authority inferred that the numerous gardens were signs of Americanization of the incarcerated. These gardens celebrated their style and Japanese heritage as opposed to the U.S. style of gardens that were rigid (Suto and Voeks 2021:87).

The National Park Service conducted archaeological studies beginning in 1999, which provide a baseline of information regarding the physical and material features of the incarceration camps (Burton et al. 1999). Over the past two decades, archaeologists have examined the garden landscapes of Japanese American incarceration at Gila River Relocation Center (Ozawa 2016), Kooskia Internment Camp (Camp 2016), Manzanar Relocation Center (Noah 1999; Tamura 2004; Beckwith 2013; Burton and Farrell 2014, 2015; Ng 2014; Burton 2015), Amache Relocation Center (Garrison 2015; Starke 2015; Swader 2015; Clark 2017a, 2017b, 2020), and Minidoka (Burton and Farrell 2001; Burton et al. 2003; Tamura 2004). Additionally, overview studies have been conducted regarding garden features at the incarceration camps (Helphand 2006; Dusselier 2009; Suto and Voeks 2021).

However, minimal studies have been conducted regarding the horticulture/ garden landscape at Minidoka. In 2001, the National Park Service conducted archeological investigations at Minidoka with a focus on uncovering and mapping the entrance garden (Burton et al. 2003). This ornamental garden was planted behind the Honor Roll in June 1944. As stated in a Minidoka Irrigator article on June 3, 1944, Chief Gardener Fujitaro Kubota led the

landscaping project. The article read, “The area [is] being developed by the landscape unit under the supervision of F. Kubota, near the front entrance gate.” (Burton et al. 2003:11). Fujitaro Kubota was a master designer of Japanese style gardens using “Japanese techniques, Japanese symbolism, and American aesthetics in his designs to create beautiful and meaningful gardens” (Burton et al. 2003:12).

Anna Tamura, a landscape architect with the NPS, wrote an article for the *Landscape Journal* (2004) that focused on the gardens present at the Manzanar Relocation Center in Owens Valley, California and Minidoka. At the time of the article, both locations had recently become units of the National Park System. Tamura states that “after 50 years of neglect and invisibility, these sites are slowly reentering our national consciousness through grass roots efforts in collaboration with the National Park Service” (2004:3). The author noted that studies regarding these gardens were limited likely based on the lack of historical records, research materials (including photographs), these locations appear like archeological sites and not incarceration camps, and finally, the discussion of the incarceration of Japanese Americans is a sensitive issue (Tamura 2004). Tamura distinguishes that the Block 22 garden at Manzanar was at the center of incarcerated backlash towards the War Relocation Authority, while the entrance garden at Minidoka was “intentionally designed to broadcast loyalty and patriotism to the United States” (Tamura 2004:17).

In 2007, the NPS conducted a Cultural Landscape Inventory of the Minidoka Internment National Monument (Tamura 2007). One area that the Cultural Landscape Inventory examined were cultural traditions present within the Minidoka Internment National Monument. “Cultural traditions are those that are reflected in expressions of ethnicity in the physical landscape”“to serve both personal and community-oriented cultural biases, needs, and traditional use”

(Tamura 2007:80). These cultural traditions are evident with the creation of Japanese-style ornamental gardens and Japanese vegetable gardens and crops (Tamura 2007:81).

Japanese-Style Gardens

Japanese-style gardens embody design aesthetics that have been developed through centuries of practice and refinement in Japan. These garden designs stem from both Shintoism and Buddhism, which are both practiced in Japan. Shintoism places natural features such as weathered boulders and ancient trees within their gardens, which embody the spiritual power known as *kami* (Tamura 2004:11). The Japanese word for garden, *niwa*, means literally “the place where *kami* congregate”. *Kami* is usually translated as gods or spirits, but it can also mean elements of the landscape or forces of nature, or the essence of existence that is found in everything (Burton 2015:261). Shinto structures within a garden can consist of an enshrined rock or tree and not an actual building. Another item found within Shintoism inspired gardens are the *torii* gates. *Torii* gates mark the boundary between common and sacred space, which mark the entry of the Shinto sanctuary (Burton 2015:262). Shinto shrines typically use the existing landscape elements and do not include built gardens, however, Goto notes “the Shinto reverence for great rocks, lakes, ancient trees, and other ‘dignitaries of nature’ would exert an enduring influence on Japanese garden design” (Goto 2003 as cited in Burton 2015:262). Buddhism garden design, coming through China and Korea to Japan, is based on stylized construction techniques and ornate aesthetics. “The result was a fusion of native Japanese aesthetics, tending toward simplicity and naturalness, with highly stylized and regimented Chinese design. Thus, in addition to fulfilling aesthetic needs, the traditional acts of designing, creating, and tending a garden were acts of spiritual practice (Tamura 2007:81). The majority of

the ornamental gardens were developed by *Issei*, as they were the most skilled and knowledgeable about Japanese garden traditions (Tamura 2004:9). Urban *Nikkei* were more experienced in ornamental gardens than rural *Nikkei* because they were experienced landscape professionals (Tamura 2004:9).

Japanese gardens can be traced through the evolution of culture and religion and how these influenced the characteristics of the garden style.

During the sixth century Japanese merchants began to bring back many facets of the Chinese culture including Buddhism and Daoism influenced garden designs. These gardens began to include symbolic gates, ponds and streams all while containing Buddhist and Daoist elements like mythical mountains, islands, and seas. During this time, garden ponds were usually rectilinear with straight banks of piled stones (Burton 2015:262). Another element of these gardens was the placement of a stone object placed in the center that represented Sumeru Mountain, the central world mountain in Buddhism. The Sumeru Mountain symbol became a very popular element in the Japanese gardens during this time period (Burton 2015:263). Between A.D. 794-1185, the Heian Period, large gardens were built typically for elaborate parties and for recreational activities including fishing, boating, and for enjoyment. These large gardens included ponds and islands connected by arched bridges where boats could pass. It was during this time, that gardens were designed to follow the Chinese-inspired principles of geomancy (*feng shui*) including the placement of stones to emulate nature and create visual depth, including: (1) asymmetrical placement, to be more fluid and natural; (2) staggered layout, so that views from the building were diversified; and (3) diagonal placement, to add false perspective”(Burton 2015:264-265).

Zen Buddhism began to influence Japan beginning in the Kamakura Period (A.D. 1185-1333) and continued through the Muromachi Period (A.D. 1333-1573). A new form of gardening began to appear and was minimalist in its nature, the *karesansui*, also referred to as dry landscape. The main elements of *karesansui* include rocks and gravel, with the sea symbolized by gravel that is raked in patterns that suggest rippling water, and plants are less important, if present at all (Burton 2015:266).

Garden design began to change again during the Azuchi-Momoyama Period (A.D. 1573-1603) with the new design aesthetic, *wabi-sabi*, and the tea ceremony houses. *Wabi* is the appreciation for that which is simple, even rustic and *sabi* is the admiration for items with the patina of age (Clark 2020:34). Characteristics of *wabi-sabi* include “asymmetry, asperity (roughness or irregularity), simplicity, economy, austerity, modesty, intimacy, and appreciation of the ingenuous integrity of natural objects and processes” (Burton 2015:266). The main elements of the tea garden include a simple entry gate, a waiting bench, a toilet, a stone lantern, a water basin, and stepping stones. The placement of the stepping stones that lead to the main tea room is a hallmark of this garden type (Burton 2015:267).

During the Edo Period (A.D. 1603-1867), the construction and maintenance of gardens was being done by professional gardeners for the ruling class that wanted their gardens to be extravagant and use for recreation. It was during this period that large strolling gardens were created, that synthesized pond gardens, dry landscapes, and tea gardens and could be enjoyed from a variety of viewpoints along a circular trail. Regional feudal lords, daimyo, had these large strolling gardens in their hometowns and at their secondary villas. They were built to exhibit their power and big colorful rocks became a status symbol (Burton 2015:269). In

Chinese and Japanese traditions, the turtle and crane are symbols of long life and happiness, which began to appear in gardens during this time (Burton 2015:270).

It was not until the Meiji Period (1868-1912) that Japan began transforming itself to a modern state from an isolated feudal society. Western-style gardens began to appear, which included lawns and flower gardens. Western-style city parks were built, in addition to many of the formerly private strolling gardens were now available to the public. It was also during this period that Japanese gardens were introduced in the United States at the Worlds Fair expositions, private estate Japanese gardens, commercial tea houses, and public Japanese gardens at schools and in parks (Burton 2015:273).

Victory Gardens

Victory gardens are also referred to as “war gardens” or “food gardens for defense” and were first introduced by the government during World War I as a “movement to help relieve wartime food shortages without funneling more land and labor into established agricultural enterprises” (Clark 2020:119). Due to the wartime demands the increased food production on the home front were seen as an essential part of national security and Allied victory (Hayden-Smith 2017:22). Even President Woodrow Wilson told the American citizens that “Food will win the war” (Hayden-Smith 2017:20). Victory gardens became more widespread during World War II and the government encouraged its citizens to plant gardens with the official Victory Garden Program, which launched in 1941. These gardens, used along with rationing cards and stamps, helped to prevent food shortages and allowed commercial crops to feed the military troops (Dyer and Ellis 2023; Figure 3-7). Citizens planted victory gardens in many different

locations including private gardens, public lands, parks, playgrounds, rooftops, churchyards, window boxes, and front-step containers (Dyer and Ellis 2023).



Figure 3-7. Example of a propaganda poster regarding victory gardens.
Downloaded from Dash 2011

Victory gardens were almost immediately planted at all ten incarceration camps as a way to alter the barren and dusty physical landscapes of the camps by planting flowers and vegetables (Dusselier 2008:53). Most incarcerated people planted a victory garden next to their barrack in addition to community gardens established between barracks (Tamura 2007:42). The incarcerated people were aware that they may be uprooted again before being able to reap the fruits of their harvest, however, they wanted to show that they could be counted on to do their part in the war effort

(Helphand 2006:157; Suto and Voeks 2021:76). “Most of victory gardens were structured similarly to modern community gardens, with a large plot of land subdivided into sections assigned to individuals or families” (Suto and Voeks 2021:77).

The elemental design of victory gardens or western style gardens can be traced to the Rectangular Land Survey conducted by the United States government beginning in 1785 and continued into the early twentieth century. The surveyors laid out imaginary straight lines, patterns, and grids across mountains and valleys, lakes and swamps, and prairies and plains, which molded the ways that people interacted with the land and each other (Carstensen 1968, 1988; Raban 1996:58 as cited in O’Reilly 2011:31). Thus, the boundaries of towns and farms were plotted into squares, which encouraged the straight-line system over the United States today.

Western gardening aesthetics typically focus on architectural order and the organization of geometric patterns that present a uniform layout style and order (Scienceblog 2010; Suto and Voeks 2021). Not only is the arrangement symmetrical, flowers and grass are pruned into squares and everything in the garden is created by man and not nature (Pang 2012:33). “The tree pruning technique, geometric pattern-style garden, plant maze, jungle, water law and sculptures are formal beauties pursued by Western rule-based gardens” (Scienceblog 2010:2).

Most victory gardens, including those at the Minidoka Incarceration Camp, consisted of western style vegetables but also Japanese vegetables (Matsudaira 2018:6; Tamura 2017).

Conclusion

The cultural landscape at Minidoka is a reflection of traditional gardening landscapes in Japan. Because of the climate and topography in Japan, traditional occupations included

farming, forestry, and fishing as the occupants were reliant on the natural resources (Clark 2020:31). There is a sense of holiness of natural beauty thus becoming an important aspect in the development of Japanese gardens. Japanese farmers also saw nature as a “benevolent protective force by having their farms guarded by a local Shinto deity and were beseeched at key moments, such as the first planting of rice” (Clark 2020:32). Kendall Brown notes that Japanese-style gardens were “a crucial part of the immigrant experience for many ethnic Japanese in the West, and integral in terms of economics and the politics of identity” (Brown 1999:12). This gardening landscape is also an expression of placemaking by physically changing the environment. As Clark states, placemaking is a “universal human practice” (2020:158). Being able to make a place is a way for people to “reclaim the self through remaking places” (Clark 2020:158). Historically, Japanese gardens were considered sacred spaces and gardening was therefore a spiritual act. By gardening, the incarcerated were able to cope with their emotional recovery of being incarcerated by clearing their mind all while being productive in their own space.

The Japanese and Japanese Americans that were incarcerated during this episode in United States history cannot be forgotten. While living behind the fence line with military guards watching over their every move, they were able to leave their mark on the landscape through their gardens. I employed various research methodologies to analyze the meaning behind these plots of land, that the incarcerated marked as their own.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

Research Goal and Objective

It has been stated that the Block 22 garden at Manzanar was at the center of incarcerated's backlash towards the War Relocation Authority, while the entrance garden at Minidoka was "intentionally designed to broadcast loyalty and patriotism to the United States" (Tamura 2004:17). The majority of the camp gardens have been destroyed due to post-war agricultural field development, however, the extant gardens located at Gila River, Arizona; Granada (Amache), Colorado; Topaz, Utah; and at Minidoka, Idaho are considered precious "cultural resources that merit increased efforts for their preservation" (Tamura 2004:19).

There are two Japanese phrases *shikata ga nai*, which translates to "it cannot be helped" (Ng 2002:185) and *gaman*, which translates to "enduring the seemingly unbearable with patience and dignity" (Hirasuna 2005:I as cited in Clark 2020:69) that must be discussed when examining this garden landscape. Were the Minidoka incarcerated compliant and *docile bodies* with this unjust incarceration or is there evidence this was not the case? Did these gardens indicate that they were persevering within the incarceration camp? Can these questions be answered through the lens of archaeological documentation, oral history, historic photographs, and the diary from Arthur Kleinkopf (the education superintendent at Minidoka), and comparing typical Japanese-Style and Western-Style garden designs regarding this institutional confinement? Through my research I will analyze if the Minidoka incarcerated were 'docile bodies' or if they were politically resisting their unjust incarceration through their gardens.

Research Methods

Previous Studies

The National Park Service conducted archaeological studies beginning in 1996, which provide a baseline of information regarding the physical and material features of the incarceration camps (Burton et al. 1999; Ng 2014:17). Over the past three decades, archaeologists have examined the garden landscapes of Japanese American incarceration at Gila River Relocation Center (Ozawa 2016), Manzanar Relocation Center (Noah 1999; Tamura 2004; Beckwith 2013; Burton and Farrell 2014, 2015; Ng 2014; Burton 2015), Amache Relocation Center (Garrison 2015; Starke 2015; Swader 2015; Clark 2017a, 2017b, 2020), and Minidoka (Burton et al. 2003; Tamura 2004).

As part of my research, I gathered the above referenced technical reports, specific to Minidoka and focused on the recordation of the gardens. I analyzed the design of these gardens and any underlying design that may be construed as a subtle act of political resistance. Overview studies have been conducted regarding garden and garden features at the Japanese American incarceration camps (Helphand 2006; Dusselier 2009; Kobayashi 2019, Suto and Voeks 2021). In 2007, the National Park Service conducted a Cultural Landscape Inventory of the Minidoka Internment National Monument (Tamura 2007). The overview studies and Cultural Landscape Inventory assisted in my analysis and interpretation of the garden designs.

Oral History

As another primary data source, I accessed previously recorded oral histories associated with the Densho project that sought to record the Japanese American experience at the incarceration camps (Densho 2023). *Densho* is a Japanese term that means “to pass on to the

next generation,” or to leave a legacy. Densho has documented the testimonies of Japanese Americans who were incarcerated, in addition to collecting historical images from this time period (Densho 2023). The narrators are the oral history interview subjects from the narratives that have been collected as part of the Densho Digital Repository (Densho 2023). The oral histories were organized by topic rather than indexed by key words. The topics that I reviewed and listened to included living conditions, social and recreational activities, work and jobs, and food, in order to identify portions of the narratives where incarcerated described their gardens at Minidoka.

Historic Photographs

To assist in my analysis, I analyzed available historic photographs of the Minidoka gardens using the Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive’s online collection located at <https://calisphere.org/exhibitions/t11/jarda/>, the Densho Digital Repository found online at <https://ddr.densho.org>, and the Library of Congress digital collection. I also viewed published historic photographs in “Minidoka National Historic Site” (Wakatsuki et al. 2018) and “Minidoka: An American Concentration Camp” (Tamura 2013). I viewed the available photographs of these gardens to understand if there were any subtle acts of political resistance that were not verbally communicated through oral histories or in the previously produced reports. While viewing these photographs, I looked for coded words/messages through the layout of their gardens (like the “V” at the entrance gate), and if their victory gardens were designed in a non-linear manner.

An official War Relocation Authority photographer, Francis Stewart, photographed the initial removal of Japanese Americans from California, the War Relocation Authority

administrators, and Japanese Americans at the incarceration camps. Most of his photos were of the ten permanent War Relocation Authority camps including Minidoka (Hirabayashi 2020). Unfortunately, two well-known photographers, Dorothea Lange and Ansel Adams did not visit Minidoka. Dorothea Lange was hired by the War Relocation Authority to photograph the exclusion process beginning in March 1942. Her focus was on the incarcerated in California including Manzanar. Because Lange often called attention to the injustice of the incarceration, the War Relocation Authority never released most of her photographs (Alinder 2020). Ansel Adams documented Manzanar and published “*Born Free and Equal: Photographs of the Loyal Japanese Americans at Manzanar Relocation Center*” in 1944 (Matsumoto 2020). Later in life, Adams claimed that the military had confiscated a large number of copies of his book and destroyed them because of the book's perceived anti-Americanism (Matsumoto 2020). The War Relocation Authority requested that both Dorothea Lange and Ansel Adams “depict the daily life in a positive light without images of the fences and watchtowers” (Tamura 2004:21).

Chapter 5: Results

Introduction

Because of the desolation and dusty ground, the incarceratedees strived to create beauty in their new environment. Below is a discussion of the documented gardens at the Minidoka Incarceration Camp, including both ornamental and victory gardens, presenting archaeological evidence, historic photographs, and oral histories. Were the Minidoka incarceratedees compliant and *docile bodies* regarding their unjust incarceration or were they politically resisting their unjust incarceration through their gardens?

Japanese-style ornamental gardens have been documented within the entrance area, the wildlife preserve, Block 5, (which was moved to Seattle after World War II), Block 26, and the Block 34 pond (now located on private property adjacent to the National Monument) (Tamura 2007:81) (Figure 5-1; Please note that gardens located at Blocks 26 and 34 are not shown in this figure.) This chapter discusses the five documented Japanese-Style ornamental gardens using the data I was able to find through archaeological evidence, historic photographs, and/or oral histories. This information is followed by the data I was able to find regarding victory/residential gardens through historic photographs and oral histories.

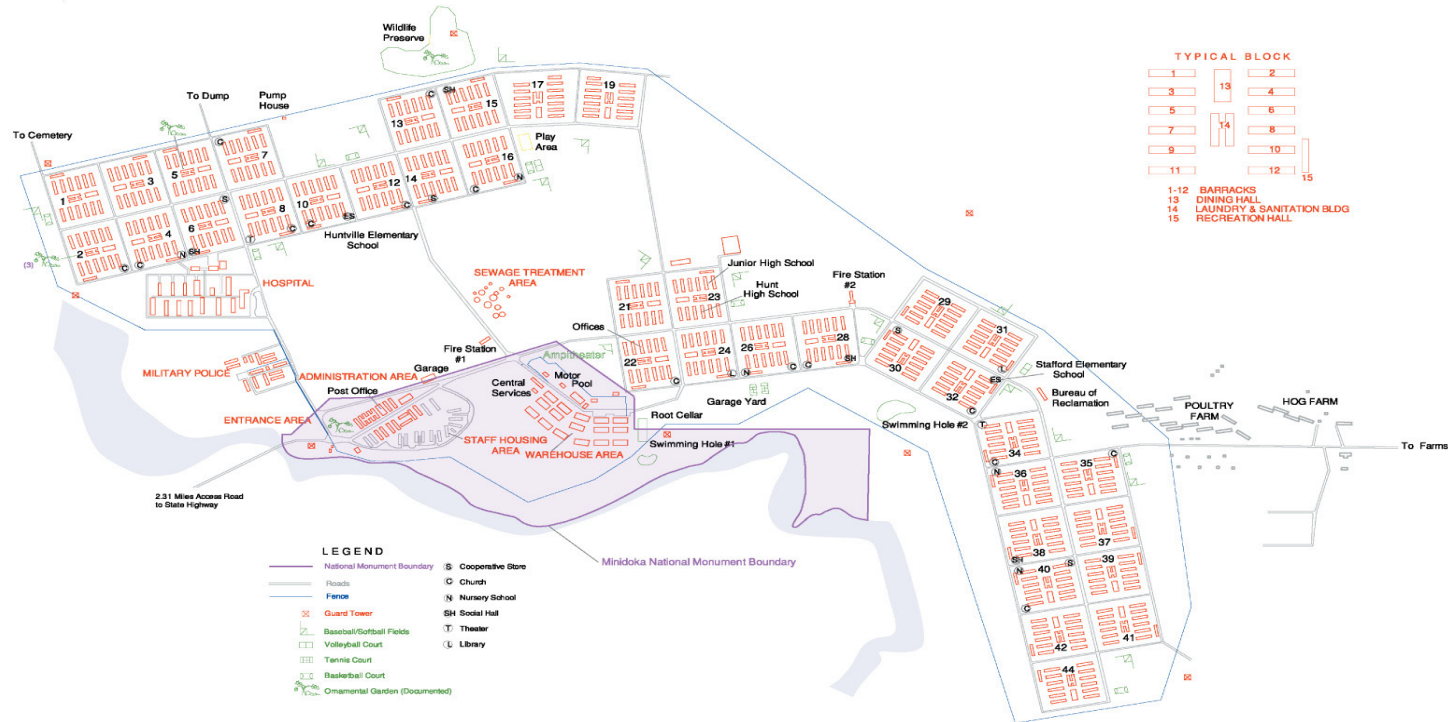
Japanese-Style Ornamental Gardens

Entrance Garden

In 2001, the National Park Service conducted archeological investigations at Minidoka with a focus on uncovering and mapping the entrance garden (Burton et al. 2003). The entrance ornamental garden is approximately 0.5 acres in size and was planted behind the Honor Roll in

Minidoka Internment National Monument

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



1945 Historical Map

Graphics developed by Jones & Jones

Jones & Jones
Architectural
Landscape Architects Ltd.

SHAPES
ASSOCIATES

Figure 5-1. 1945 historical map of the Minidoka Internment National Monument.
Prepared for the National Park Service by Jones and Jones Architects and Landscape Architects, Ltd.

1944 and in front of the War Relocation Administration buildings. The Honor Roll was a prominent feature of the entrance garden, which listed the names of *Nisei* serving in the United States military from Minidoka (Figure 5-2). An incarcerated, Fujitaro Kubota, supervised the development of this garden in June 1944. Mr. Kubota was a master designer of Japanese-style gardens and one of Seattle, Washington’s most renowned landscape designers. Robinson (1992) noted that he rarely produced plans or graphic illustrations of this gardens and he relied on his “design sensibility and the site with which he worked”. Therefore, it is unlikely that plans or documents were used for this specific entrance garden at Minidoka.



Figure 5-2. Photograph of the Honor Roll in the Entrance Garden.
Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-CMB-II-1251, Densho Digital Repository

During the 2001 survey, the fieldwork focused on determining if the entrance garden still existed as there were no photographs and very little information regarding the “appearance, design, and construction of the entrance garden” (Burton et al. 2003:12). “The entrance garden

appeared to include two large earthen mounds with rock features, two low rock-covered mounds, a small depression, one or two pathways, and stepping stones, all within a ring of trees” (Burton et al. 2003:12). The largest mound (Feature E-6) measures 3.5 feet high and 48 feet in diameter and consists of 35 large basalt rocks, two upright pipes, and an embedded wire. Feature E-10, a 5 feet high mound is present and measures 65 feet by 40 feet with two high points separated by a low swale. A large standing basalt boulder (Feature E-9) is in the southwest corner of this mound along with ten other smaller basalt rocks. The placement of vertical stones in the form of stele is a common practice in Japanese style design (Figure 5-3). Features E-8, E-11, E-12, and E-17 are all disturbed landscaping elements. Feature E-8 consists of a low (less than 1 foot high) earthen mound with 16 basalt rocks and a small tree stump, while Feature E-11 includes a pile of approximately 25 basalt rocks. Feature E-12 is a 1.5 foot deep by 6 feet diameter hole with a few small basalt rocks and Feature E-17 is an obscured basalt-lined pathway that runs parallel to the main entrance road. Surrounding the garden perimeter are mature black locust and Siberian elm trees (Burton and Farrell 2001:34-35). Figure 5-4 depicts the features recorded by Burton and Farrell (2001).

Two features within the garden were excavated to determine if they were ponds or other water features. One feature (part of Feature E-10) consisted of two vertical pipes located at the edge of the mound with rocks piled around them. The excavation concluded that this feature was not a pond or other water feature but associated with a watering system, potentially for hose faucets (Burton et al. 2003:13). The second feature (Feature E-12) proved to not be a water feature either and was likely the remnants of a post-and-pier foundation for a building that was never built (Burton et al. 2003:13). The archeological field crew removed grass from a 1-acre area delineated by roads and historic trees. Two basalt lined pathways forming a “V” totaling



Figure 5-3. Feature E-9, Upright stone in the entrance garden, circa 2002.

(Taken from Burton et al. 2003:17)

Courtesy National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

325 feet in length were uncovered by excavating with trowel and shovel near exposed rocks.

Both basalt lined pathways were in good condition and the original thin gravel surface was found to be intact for most of the alignments (Burton et al. 2003:12-13). Large basalt stepping stones forming a “T” were found at the western end and between the two pathways. While viewing the large mound from the historic location of the War Relocation Administrative building, two concentrations of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal boulders located between the north and south edges of the mound resemble the shape of an eagle with outstretched wings, while the boulder facing this vantage point, resemble’ s an eagle’s head (Figure 5-5) (Burton et al. 2003:19; Tamura 2007:82). Figure 5-6 is a photograph showing the entrance garden following the 2002 archaeological fieldwork.

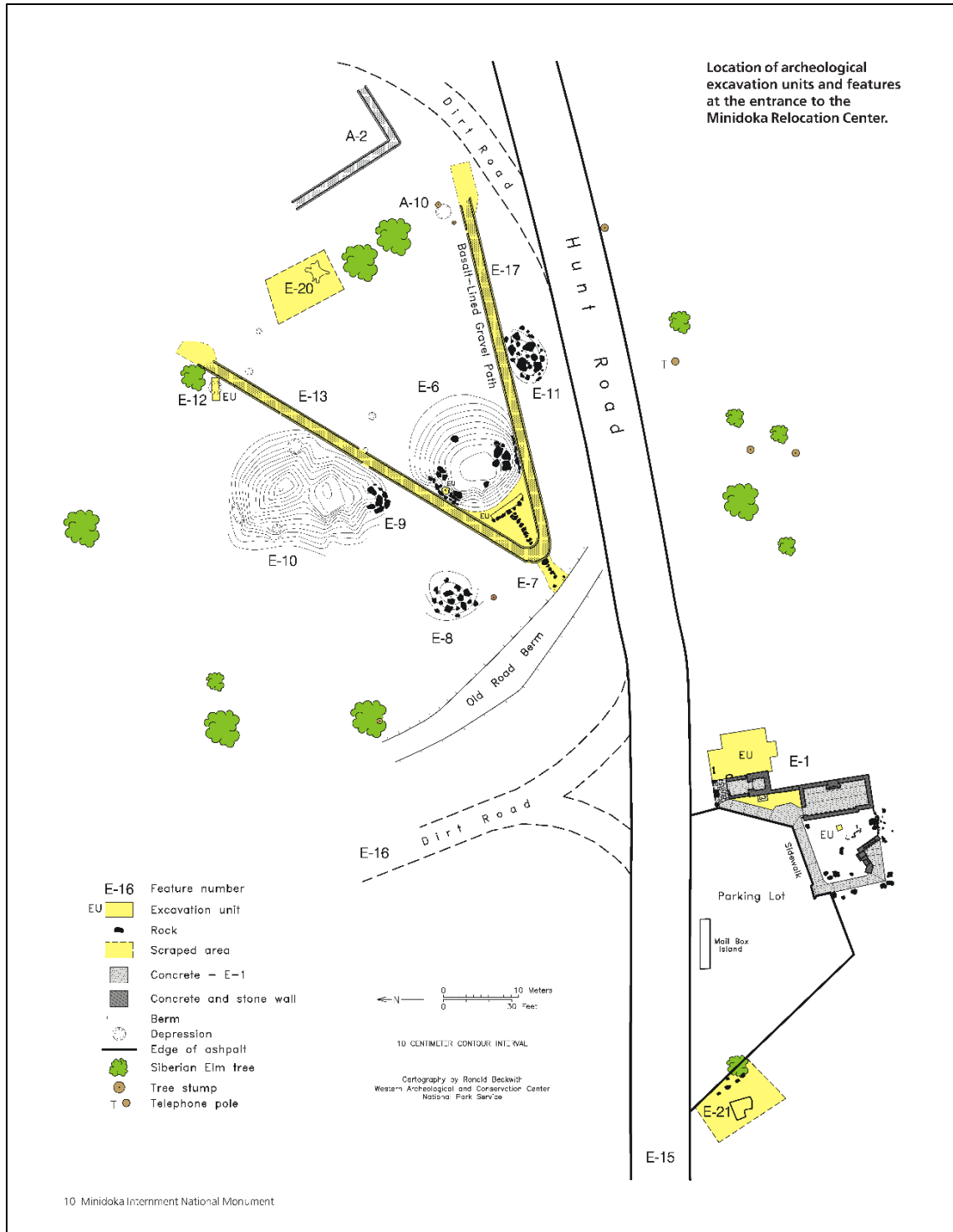


Figure 5-4. Location of archeological excavation units and features at the entrance to the Minidoka Incarceration Camp.

(Taken from Burton et al. 2003:10)

Courtesy National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior



Figure 5-5. Boulder resembling shape of an eagle's head, Minidoka Internment National Monument, 2002.

(Taken from Burton et al. 2003:18)

Courtesy National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior



Figure 5-6. The entrance garden at Minidoka Internment National Monument after archeological work, 2002.

(Taken from Burton et al. 2003:16)

Courtesy National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

Wildlife Preserve Garden

The Wildlife Preserve Garden was located north of Blocks 13, 15, and 17 (see Figure 5-3) and displayed artfully pruned sagebrush, differing types of native vegetation, and flowers enclosed by rock walls. This garden was developed by Mr. Nitta and featured a *torii* gate,

bridges, and camp stoves to use while picnicking (Tamura 2007:43). As mentioned previously *torii* gates are traditional Japanese gates that mark the boundary between the sacred and ordinary space and are generally a symbol of Shinto shrines (Japan Architecture 2023). The Wildlife Preserve is presently located on private land outside of the current Minidoka National Historic Site boundary and is surrounded by agricultural fields (Figure 5-7).



Figure 5-7. View of the remnants from the Wildlife Preserve.
(PWRO-Seattle, 2002)

Block 5 Garden

The Block 5 Garden was created by Mr. Yasusuke Kogita outside of his barrack. Mr. Kogita and his two sons would collect plants, stones, and boulders from natural basalt outcroppings outside of the incarceration camp fence. They used a crowbar and a homemade cart to collect these items in the sagebrush (Eaton 1952 as cited in Suto and Voeks 2021:51). The largest of the rocks collected was nicknamed “Stove-pipe Rock” due to its hollow interior

and weighed one ton. Mr. Kogita transported willow starts on the train to Minidoka Incarceration Camp while other plants included bonsai sagebrush, native water plants, and annual and perennial flowers that were artistically arranged around two ponds (Tremayne and Shallat 2013). Many of the flowers were planted from seeds that he purchased through the Sears Roebuck catalog. In order to get water to ponds, he used water from the laundry overflow and filled the ponds with local fish from the Northside Canal (Tamura 2004:16). This garden was recognized for being one of the most creative, labor intensive, and renowned gardens in the incarceration camps (Tamura 2004:15).

The Block 5 garden is no longer located at Minidoka; after the camp closed in 1945, Mr. Kogita hired a moving company to transport all the boulders and plants back to Seattle. He initially recreated the garden in front of a small hotel that he purchased in Seattle's International District. Today, his son Paul has nearly all the boulders and rocks at his home in Seattle (Tamura 2004:15).

Block 26 Garden

Fujitaro Kubota, the master designer involved with the entrance garden, lived in Block 26. He built and maintained 6 feet by 80 feet long hotbed tree and flower nursery adjacent to Block 26, which was reminiscent of his time before the war, when he owned his own nursey in Seattle, Washington. The plants that he grew were transplanted to other areas within the camp (Tamura 2007:82). It was noted that in June 1944 under the direction of F. Akimoto that lived in Block 3, flowers and pine tree seedlings were transplanted from this nursery to the administration and hospital area (Tamura 2007:32).

While researching the Densho Digital Repository, I was unable to find a photograph depicting this nursery, but its existence is significant because these important plants were used throughout the camp in the individual gardens.

Block 34 Pond

Burton and Farrell conducted an archaeological reconnaissance survey on lands currently located outside of the Minidoka National Historic Site boundary but were within the original Minidoka Incarceration Camp boundary (2001:95). One of the intact features they encountered was a small concrete and basalt rock pond located approximately 0.2 miles east of the boundary on the south side of Hunt Road. Large cottonwood trees were located adjacent to the pond, which more than likely preserved this feature (Figure 5-8). Based on the location of this pond, it appears to have been in Block 34 near Barracks 2 (see Figure 5-3; Burton and Farrell 2001:95).

While researching the Densho Digital Repository, I was unable to find a historic photograph depicting this pond and associated ornamental garden.



Figure 5-8. Fish pond remnants in the area of historic Block 34.

Taken from Tamura 2007:31

Victory Gardens

Another prominent cultural tradition present at the Minidoka Incarceration Camp were the incarcerated vegetable gardens, known as victory gardens. Victory gardens were first introduced by the government during World War I as a “movement to help relieve wartime food shortages without funneling more land and labor into established agricultural enterprises” (Clark 2020:119). This movement was reenergized during World War II and made its way to all ten incarceration camps. Most incarcerated people planted a victory garden next to their barrack in addition to community gardens established between barracks (Tamura 2007:42). These gardens demarcated personal and private space within the Minidoka Incarceration Camp. Japanese vegetables that have been documented at the Minidoka included “daikon (large white radish),

nappa (cabbage), gobo (burdock root), azuki (sweet red beans), and shingiku (edible chrysanthemum)” (Tamura 2007:83). These victory gardens were a way for the Japanese Americans to “modify the government issued meal plans into a diet richer in fresh and familiar vegetables” (Tamura 2004:9). Schools also had victory garden’s planted where each grade would be responsible for their own plot. Unfortunately, I did not find any photographs depicting the finished garden, only the initial clearing of the land.

Minidoka Incarceration Camp is located in a barren landscape with dirt and dust storms “so thick that we couldn’t even see 3 feet in front of us” recalled Virginia Fumiko Tomia in a 1944 interview (Niiya 2021). One way to control the dust was to plant vegetation, including ryegrass. I found a photograph depicting incarcerated preparing the land prior to planting rye grass, but not how it looked after the rye grass had been established.

Figures 5-9 through 5-14 include historic photographs I found during my research on the camp gardens.



Figure 5-9. Japanese Americans sitting behind a barrack, circa 1944.

Note the fence and landscaped area in the background.

Courtesy of the Mitsuoka Family Collection, Densho Digital Repository



Figure 5-10. Tamaki Onodera standing on the front steps of her barracks. This photo was taken on the day of the memorial service for her son, Satoru Onodera, who was killed in action. Note the visible flowers and garden.

Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-CMB-V1-1252, Densho Digital Repository



Figure 5-11. Four children in a garden at Minidoka, circa 1945.

Courtesy of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community, the Kitamoto Family Collection, Densho Digital Repository



Figure 5-12. Man leaving Laundry #14 with two buckets, circa 1942-1945.

Note the landscaping in front of the barracks in the background.

Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-CMB-12-1490, Densho Digital Repository



Figure 5-13. Another picture of the same group of high school students cleaning up for gardens outside of a school, circa 1942-1945.

Based on the age of the students, this is most likely the Hunt High School located in Block 23. Note that the young gentleman sitting on the step is wearing a baseball glove.

Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-CMA-MS-16, Densho Digital Repository



Figure 5-14. Hunt High School students clean and rake areas between classroom barracks preparatory to planting rye-grass, circa May 1943.

Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-G-11G-243, Densho Digital Repository

Evidence of Gardens from Oral Histories and Diaries

During the Oregon Nikkei Endowment and Densho project, George Nakata noted that “.....suddenly there were many things that started to emerge. Farmers that had farms around Hillsboro and Gresham, Milwaukie, Hood River [Oregon] started to really grow gardens. And so supplementing that food that were brought into camps by requirement, many of the Japanese and Japanese American farmers started to grow other things, some berries, some row crop, some fresh vegetables, some Japanese vegetables” (Densho digital archive. George Nakata Interview, segment 15. Interviewed by Masako Hinatsue [August 23, 2004]).

Another narrator, Lucy Kiriara discussed how bad the food was in the mess halls and stated “And fortunately, they did start farms on there. They farmed the land so we did have some fresh vegetables and so forth.” (Densho digital archive. Lucy Kiriara Interview, segment 10. Interviewed by Steve Ozone [October 13, 2009]).

When Mitsuko Hashiguchi was asked by the interviewer “So were they already growing some fresh vegetables?”, she responded with “Oh yeah, things were just really growing very well. So all the fresh vegetables and everything was just getting more Japanese style” (Densho digital archive. Mitsuko Hashiguchi Interview, segment 57. Interviewed by James Arima [July 28, 1998]).

A fellow Minidoka incarcerated, Robert Hosokawa, wrote a report for the War Relocation Authority that documented camp life that described the gardening activities. An amateur gardener, Tomita Akiyama turned to gardening through the use of available natural materials, creativity, and the desire to make the most of the situation. Hosokawa discussed Akiyama’s garden with him:

“Asked why he had taken the trouble to plan such a garden when he might be here but a year or two, Akiyama said that this was a means of bettering the quality of life during that interim, no matter how short or long. It gave pleasure to his spare moments and it made his home more livable. At the same time it contributed to the community as a whole” (Hosokawa 1943 as cited in Tamura 2004:15).

Arthur Kleinkopf, the education superintendent at Minidoka, described Japanese gardens in his diary as: “Had Mark Twain been here he might want to re-write his description of the sagebrush. It has been transplanted to many rock gardens around the barracks together with moss, cactus, and desert grass. It adds much to the artistic beauty” (Kleinkopf 21 June 1942 as cited in Goto n.d.:68).

Author Kleinkopf noted in his diary “I notice still more attempts being made toward beautifying the grounds around the barracks”, “Saw a lady carrying two shapely clumps of sagebrush and one, large tumbleweed. Watched her as she carefully planted them near her doorway. Near another doorway I saw a small pond with a footbridge across it” (Kleinkopf 1942:24). The War Relocation Authority also planted grass and trees that were donated to Minidoka by residents in nearby cities, Jerome and Twin Falls (Meger 2005:115; Hausler 1964:21).

Summary

By analyzing the archaeological documentation, oral history, and historic photographs, of the documented Japanese-style ornamental gardens and victory/residential gardens, I will discuss how each of these include design elements of Japanese style and/or western classic garden style.

Chapter 6: Analysis

The results presented in the previous chapter indicate that the incarcerated did design and plant ornamental and/or victory gardens as these gardens demarcated personal and private space within the Minidoka Incarceration Camp. In this chapter I analyzed the Entrance Garden, Wildlife Preserve Garden, Block 5 Garden, and the victory gardens using archaeological evidence, historic photographs, oral histories, the diary from Arthur Kleinkopf (the education superintendent at Minidoka) and comparing typical Japanese-Style and Western-Style garden designs. This chapter excludes analysis of the Block 26 Garden or Block 34 Pond, for lack of comparable data. These analyses assess the evidence that incarcerated were politically resisting their unjust incarceration in ways that are expressed in the designed landscape, or if they were expressing compliance and loyalty towards the United States while incarcerated? This analysis remains open to the possibility that incarcerated Japanese Americans expressed both protest and loyalty at once, in different contexts.

The Entrance Garden

The Entrance Garden at the Minidoka Incarceration Camp is a clear example of a combination of Japanese garden design while showing loyalty to the United States. As discussed previously, Japanese-style gardens can include strategically placed rocks and boulders, artificial mounds, small architectural features, and a path or the use of stepping stones. As discussed in Chapter 5, the Entrance Garden included “two large earthen mounds with rock features, two low rock-covered mounds, a small depression, one or two pathways, and stepping stones, all within a ring of trees” (Burton et al. 2003:12). Stepping stones were introduced during the Azuchi-Momoyama Period (A.D. 1573-1603) and were typically placed in a strategic location that lead

people to the main tea room. The Entrance Garden was designed to welcome all visitors to the Minidoka Incarceration Camp as if they were inviting the visitors to walk up the stepping stones to view the Honor Roll similar to a tea room. Another element of gardens during the sixth century was the placement of a stone object placed in the center that represented Sumeru Mountain, the central world mountain in Buddhism (Burton 2015:263). A large boulder resembling an eagle's head is in center of the entrance garden following another historic element of Japanese garden design. The two basalt-lined pathways that formed a "V" could have been designed to emulate visual depth following Chinese-inspired *fen shui* design.

Burton et al. 2003 states that when viewing the large mound from the historic location of the War Relocation Authority administrative building, two concentrations of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal boulders located between the north and south edges of the mound resemble the shape of an eagle with outstretched wings, while the boulder facing this vantage point, resembles an eagle's head (Burton et al. 2003:19; Tamura 2007:82). The "V" shape was often used to signify "victory" during World War II (Burton et al. 2003:19; Tamura 2007:82). Within Japanese garden design, "the location and arrangements of boulders are important components to the overall design" (Burton et al. 2003:16). The entrance garden and Honor Roll symbolized the merging Japanese traditions and American patriotism as well as a symbol of tradition and inner strength (Burton et al. 2003:19). Figure 6-1 is an overview composite of the Entrance Garden. Additionally, the Entrance Garden shows evidence that the incarcerated wanted the War Relocation Administration to believe they were loyal towards the United States by designing the garden with the "V" shape, placing a boulder that resembles an eagle's head, and the overall design reminiscent of an eagle with outstretched wings.

Composite
overhead view
of a portion of
the excavated
area at the
Honor Roll and
entrance
garden. North is
to the top. Note
the V-shaped
rock-lined
pathway, the
stepping stones,
and the large
basalt boulders
that formed
part of the
Japanese-style
garden.

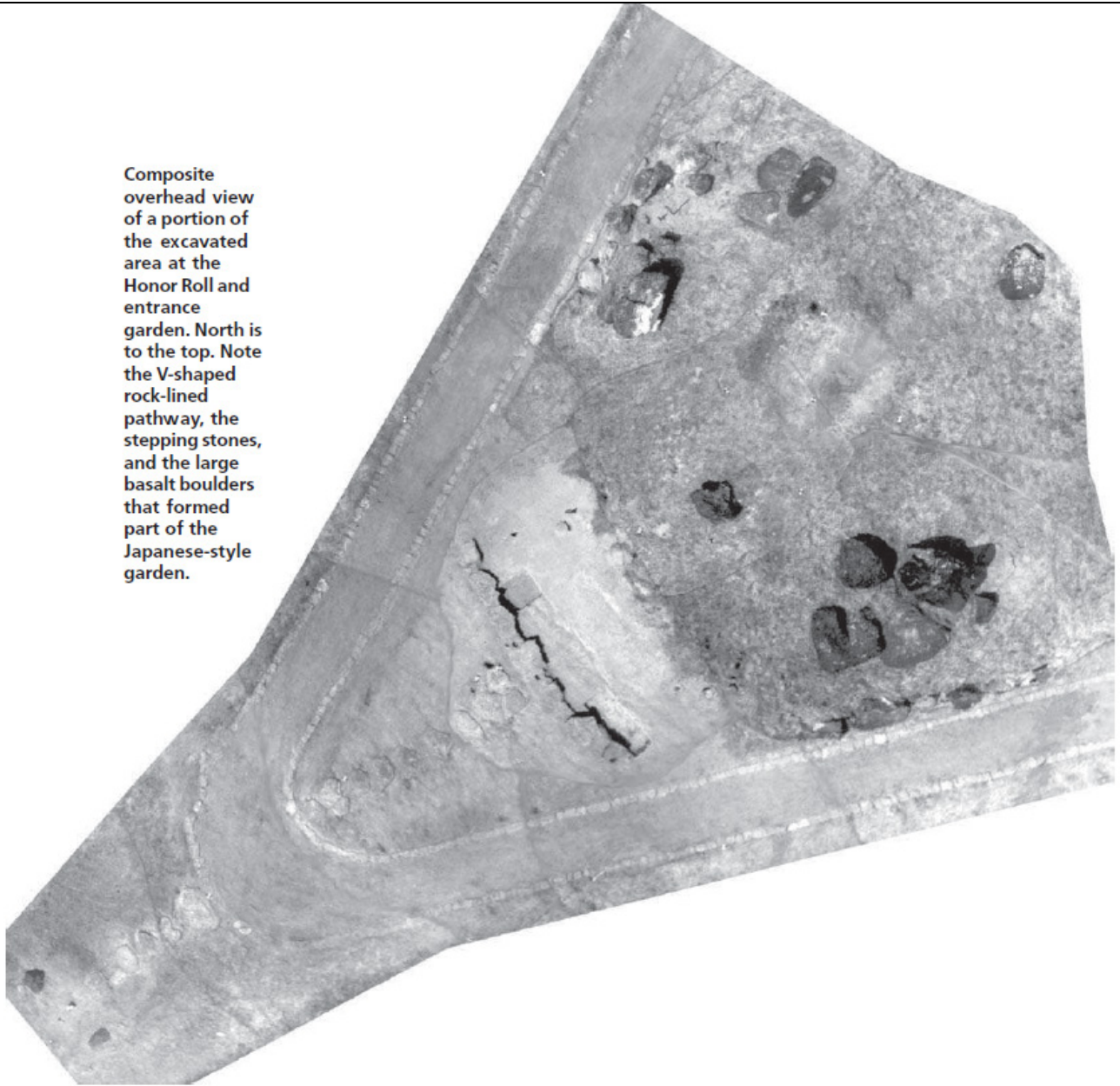


Figure 6-1. Composite overhead view of a portion of the excavated area at the Honor Roll and entrance garden.

Taken from Burton et al. 2003:14
Courtesy of the NPS, U.S. Department of Interior

Wildlife Preserve Garden

The wildlife preserve garden was designed using both Japanese and Western styles. This garden featured a *torii* gate, which are traditional Japanese gates that mark the boundary between the sacred and ordinary space and are generally a symbol of Shinto shrines (Japan Architecture 2023). Shinto shrines typically use the existing landscape elements and do not include built gardens. However, this garden featured camp stoves, bonsai sagebrush, differing types of native vegetation, and flowers, which is indicative of western style gardens. The Wildlife Preserve Garden also featured bridges, which can be traced back to the Heian Period (A.D. 794-1185). During this period large gardens were built typically for elaborate parties and for recreational activities. I cannot think of a better way to recreate than to have a picnic with family all while in a location that is considered sacred space. Figure 6-2 is an overview photograph of the Wildlife Preserve Garden circa 1944.

There is no evidence that the Wildlife Preserve Garden design explicitly showed loyalty towards the United States.



Figure 6-2. Wildlife Preserve, circa 1944.

Courtesy of the Mitsuoka Family Collection, Densho Digital Repository

Block 5 Garden

Mr. Yasusuke Kogita's garden outside of his barrack in Block 5 was recognized for being one of the most creative, labor intensive, and renowned gardens in the incarceration camps (Tamura 2004:15). As discussed in Chapter 5, this garden included large basalt rocks, bonsai sagebrush, native water plants, and annual and perennial flowers arranged around two ponds (Figure 6-3). Mr. Kogita transported willow starts on the train to the Minidoka Incarceration Camp and those were also planted in his garden. A crudely made stone lantern was added to the garden using local stones and materials he and his sons collected outside of the incarceration camp. The Block 5 Garden has design elements of Japanese style dating to the Edo Period (A.D. 1603-1867), which incorporated pond gardens and dry landscapes and the Meiji Period (1868-1912) where flower gardens became popular due to the western-style introduction. Mr. Kogita utilized the local plants, including sagebrush, in addition to planting flower seeds he purchased

through mail order. Sagebrush is a native drought tolerate plant that flourished in the area of the Minidoka Incarceration Camp. While the Block 5 garden used both Japanese and Western style design elements, the Japanese style is much more apparent at first glance and is reminiscent of gardens in Japan.

The garden contains no apparent, overt expression of loyalty towards the United States.



Figure 6-3. Yasusuke Kogita (far left), stands in the garden he created, circa 1944.

*Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-CMB-II-1254,
Densho Digital Repository*

Victory Gardens

As previously discussed, victory gardens were reenergized during World War II, and made their way to Minidoka Incarceration Camp. These gardens were typically planted next to their barrack in addition to community gardens established between barracks. These victory

gardens were a way for the Japanese Americans to “modify the government issued meal plans into a diet richer in fresh and familiar vegetables” (Tamura 2004:9).

During my review of published oral histories, these vegetable gardens were discussed by three interviewees (see Chapter 5). To summarize, the mess hall food was terrible, and the fresh vegetables and fruit were a highlight at mealtime.

An example of a victory garden was planted in front of a barrack in Block 35 (Figure 6-4). From the photograph, it is evident that the rows were planted in a linear design with fence posts located between the barrack and garden. Another family garden is demarcated by a low fence and appears to be planted with a linear design as well (Figure 6-5).



Figure 6-4. Family Garden at Block 35.

*Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-CMA-CS-216,
Densho Digital Repository*



Figure 6-5. Family gardens in Minidoka, circa 1942-1945

*Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-CMA-CS-217,
Densho Digital Repository*

The below photograph is of Mrs. Kinoshita standing in her garden on the day of her son's memorial service who was killed in action while fighting overseas. This garden must have been a location that she spent numerous hours and one might call it her "happy place". There is evidence of rows of corn to the right, with possibly onions in the background, and another vegetable planted in rows in front of her (Figure 6-6).



Figure 6-6. Akino Kinoshita standing in her garden. This photo was taken on the day of the memorial service for her son, Francis Kinoshita, who was killed in action. Circa 1942-1945

Courtesy of the National Archives, photo no. 210-CMB-VI-1250,

Densho Digital Repository

The photographs that I found during my research indicate that the victory gardens did not follow Japanese style of formal garden design, but the western style by planting the rows in a linear design. Despite planting their gardens in rows, what they planted was much more important. With planting traditional Japanese vegetables, the incarcerated were subtly being defiant by supplementing the mess hall food with familiar and preferred ingredients. Not only were the incarcerated planting gardens, but they would also save food from the mess hall and create customary Japanese dishes with the leftovers. Hanaye Matsushita mentions in her correspondence to her husband, Iwoa, (who was considered an enemy alien and detained at Fort Missoula, Montana) that another incarcerated made *sekihan* (red rice) using leftover rice from the mess hall breakfast and *norimaki* (rice rolled in seaweed) (Fiset 1997:204).

Summary

Overall, the four gardens that I analyzed do indicate that the incarcerated were politically resisting their unjust incarceration by holding tight to their pre-camp life by incorporating traditional Japanese garden elements into their gardens at Minidoka. This included the use of stepping stones, ponds with local fish caught from the nearby Northside canal, a crudely made stone lantern, the placement of a stone object in the center of a garden that represented Sumeru Mountain, the central world mountain in Buddhism, and a *torri* gate. Although the Entrance Garden was thought to show loyalty to the United States, it did include design aspects related to Japanese-style ornamental gardens. I was unable to find hidden messages, like the “V” in the entrance garden showing loyalty to the United States in the other three documented gardens. Whether the incarcerated brought seeds with them on the train or purchased seeds through catalogs, planting these gardens with traditional Japanese vegetables was a subtle act of resistance and creating a space that resembled their lives before incarceration. By growing familiar vegetables was another aspect of the incarcerated trying to resemble their lives prior to their incarceration. Another subtle act of resistance was going outside of the camp fence line to gather items from the surrounding landscape that would be used in their ornamental gardens. The incarcerated created a normal Japanese culture within the camps the best they could, all with the government watching their every move.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

In landscape architecture, the focus has been on Japanese garden design as they are aesthetically sophisticated landscapes (Tamura 2004:1). However, the incarceration gardens constituted subtle acts of political resistance (Tamura 2004:2; Suto and Voeks 2021:87) by claiming a space as their own and modifying it for their use (Suto and Voeks 2021:87). As noted in Helphand (2006:198), incarceration gardens represented “the anticamp, where acts of cultural identity could be construed as subversive to those in power.” The War Relocation Authority inferred that the numerous gardens were signs of Americanization of the incarcerated. These gardens celebrated their style and Japanese heritage as opposed to the United States’ style of gardens that were rigid (Suto and Voeks 2021:87).

All relationships within institutions, including the Minidoka Incarceration Camp, are based on domination and resistance of the authority’s power (De Cunzo 2009:206). Goffman (1961) outlined four types of inmate response to cope and survive this power struggle. The first response “situational withdrawal” is described where the inmate rejects everything except immediate events around them, the second was “intransigent” where others respond through tactics that intentionally challenge the institution system by refusing to cooperate. The third response “colonization” is thought of when the inmate accepts the incarcerated life and achieves a relatively content existence through acquisition of internal privileges and the fourth response “conversion” is the notion that the inmate attempts to act out the role of the perfect inmate; this inmate response is the “docile bodies” referred to by Foucault (Casella 2007:29).

The Minidoka incarcerated responded to their unjust incarcerations by responding through “conversion”. “Conversion” is similar to the Japanese term *shikata ga nai* that roughly translates

to “it cannot be helped” (Ng 2002:185) and *gaman*, which translates to “enduring the seemingly unbearable with patience and dignity” (Hirasuna 2005:I as cited in Clark 2020:69). These phrases have been used to explain the resignation and lack of protest by the Japanese and Japanese Americans on their incarceration. Although the incarcerated were living a relatively content life behind the barbed wire, the War Relocation Authority assumed that the incarcerated were trying to emulate being loyal to the United States and appearing as though they were the perfect inmate as described above through “conversion” response. However, through the designing and planting of their gardens, the incarcerated were subtly undermining the United States’ authority and power over them in this everyday activity that they most likely participated in prior to their unjust incarceration. As discussed in Chapter 2, Scott (1990) studied the idea of resistance and how everyday activities intended to “undermine, thwart, or obstruct conditions of domination” (Scott 1990 as cited in Casella 2007:24). This gradual erosion of the authority through subtle, and frequently anonymous activities was undertaken in response to their incarceration. Scott (1990) also introduced the term ‘hidden transcripts’, which refers to the distinct patterns shared by insubordination as “nonelite, undocumented, and anonymous everyday events that accumulated over time into a force of collective resistance” (Casella 2007:25).

There were numerous Japanese-ornamental gardens and victory gardens planted by incarcerated, than what I could find during my research. By planting these gardens, the incarcerated population showed a collective resistance by claiming the land as their own. I attribute the lack of available photographs to the notion that many incarcerated did not bring a camera with them. A point to remember was that the Japanese Americans were given six days following the

evacuation order to dispose of their possessions and packing only “that which can be carried by the family or the individual” (Burton et al. 1999:33).

While researching and writing this thesis, there are many ways that the *Nissei* and *Issei* resisted their incarceration, however, I focused only on the documented gardens at Minidoka. If I had more time, I would expand my research to other aspects of their lives inside the barbed wire to uncover any other evidence of this subtle resistance at the Minidoka Incarceration Camp. More research needs to be conducted at Minidoka and my hope is that future students in Idaho will understand that is episode, not only in our nation’s history, but our state history needs to be examined and documented for future generations. We as a country and state cannot forget how these citizens were treated, solely based on their ancestry.

Through my research, I found it compelling that many of the incarcerated were employed in the agriculture and landscape industries prior to their incarceration. Further research could be done regarding life within Minidoka by examining if these incarcerated worked in the nearby agricultural fields or if they held a different job within the Camp. Also, future research could examine their professions post-incarceration. Did they return home and continue working in their pre-incarceration industries or did they find employment conducting different type of work?

Another topic of future research could include whether the incarcerated returned home or if they stayed in Idaho. Once the incarceration camps were closed, the incarcerated had to pay for their relocation on their own. If an incarcerated had less than \$500, the War Relocation Authority would provide \$25 per person, the train fare, and meals on route for their return home (Burton and Farrell 2001:22). However, many incarcerated did not have a home or job to return to and remained in southern Idaho and worked in the agricultural industry. Their post-incarceration life

is an important topic that needs to be explored further. The Japanese Americans showed their resilience while being incarcerated; did this resilience continue during their resettlement?

So I go back to my research question: Were the Minidoka incarcerated 'docile bodies' or were they politically resisting their unjust incarceration through their gardens? The answer is they were politically resisting their incarceration through 1) taking a piece of ground and making it their own following Japanese-ornamental garden styles and 2) keeping with their Japanese traditions and persevering through following *shikata ga nai* and *gaman*. They were not 'docile bodies' living behind the barbed wire.

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