

US Cultural Cold War Diplomacy and the Politics of Representation of Ethnicity: “America” in Agawa Hiroyuki’s *Kariforuniya*

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Abstract | As Cold War tensions escalated in the 1950s, the US began to promote cultural exchanges and propaganda activities as it ended its military occupation of Japan. In this context, the Rockefeller Foundation, a major player in reconstructing US-Japan cultural relations in the post-treaty period, invited Agawa Hiroyuki (1920-2015) to the US in 1955 as a participant in its Creative Fellowship program. Agawa was a novelist known for his depictions of the war—particularly Hiroshima. Following study in the US, however, he shifted his thematic focus from atomic bombs to Japanese Americans. In this article, I examine the “America” represented in Agawa’s novel *Kariforuniya* (California, 1959), published upon his return to Japan. Even while incorporating negative historical legacies, such as the Japanese Immigration Law and the forced internment of Japanese during the war, Agawa depicts an America in which ethnic and racial conflict is gradually subsiding. Furthermore, he conveys this image through Japanese-American characters, eliciting identification from Japanese readers. By comparing the similarities between the novel’s portrayals of second-generation Japanese Americans engaged in agriculture and the United States Information Service (USIS) film *Japanese Farmers Visit California*, I reveal how *Kariforuniya* conveys a narrative consistent with US cultural Cold War diplomacy: an America of modern affluence and increasing racial harmony. The novel thus served as a means of strengthening US-Japan relations, suggesting the powerful influence of US cultural Cold War diplomacy on postwar Japanese literature.

Keywords | Agawa Hiroyuki, Rockefeller Foundation, cultural Cold War, USIS, ethnicity

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Introduction: Postwar Japanese Literature and the Cultural Cold War

In the 1950s, as the Cold War intensified, the US and Soviet Union initiated a fierce cultural war that would engulf the entire world. During the early part of the Cold War, government institutions such as the US State Department and United States Information Agency (USIA), alongside various private organizations, oversaw US cultural diplomacy. This involved a wide array of activities including broadcasting, films, exhibitions, book translation and distribution, information propagation and public relations through education, and various personnel exchanges through invitations to eminent individuals and civilian dispatches.

In terms of US global Cold War strategy, Japan was the “anticommunist breakwater” of the Asia-Pacific. It was thus a key battlefield in the cultural Cold War. As the US ended its occupation of Japan, in order to ensure that Japan would join the free world as a pro-American democracy, it considered the establishment of intimate cultural relations with Japan indispensable.¹ Following the Treaty of San Francisco, for the promotion of personnel exchanges and propaganda activities, the US established a large-scale US-Japan cultural exchange program. It thus endeavored to consolidate the US-Japan alliance and strengthen solidarity between American and Japanese citizens under the Cold War system by disseminating a “proper” image of the US in Japan through media and direct personal contact.

How did such Cold War cultural politics influence postwar Japanese literature? Many Japanese writers participated in post-peace treaty US-Japan cultural exchanges. Through a variety of programs, including those overseen by the US State Department, the Fulbright Fund, the International House of Japan, and the Asia Foundation, they came into direct contact with the free world. As “cultured individuals,” they were extensively involved in international exchanges and cultural enterprises. Therein writers invited to the US by the Rockefeller Foundation offer a particularly interesting case.

The Rockefeller Foundation played an important role in the reconfiguration

1. John D. Rockefeller III's (1951) report on his visit to Japan in 1951, which served as an advisory document for John Foster Dulles' peace delegation, demonstrates US perceptions at the time regarding US-Japan cultural relations. See Matsuda (2008) for an examination of the process by which US-Japan cultural relations were established around the time of the Treaty of San Francisco, focusing on Rockefeller III and the Rockefeller Foundation. See Tsuchiya (2009) for an investigation of the process by which the occupation cultural policy of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers' Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) transitioned to the cultural policy of the US State Department and United States Information Service (USIS).

of US-Japan cultural relations following the Treaty of San Francisco, through a wide range of philanthropic activities.² In 1953, the Foundation launched the Creative Fellowship to support one-year sojourns in the US for Japanese writers. By the early 1960s, it had supported one-year visits by ten writers and literary critics representative of postwar Japanese literature: Fukuda Tsuneari, Ōoka Shōhei, Ishii Momoko, Agawa Hiroyuki, Nakamura Mitsuo, Kojima Nobuo, Shōno Junzō, Ariyoshi Sawako, Yasuoka Shōtarō, and Etō Jun.³ Considering the number of writers involved and the lengths of their stays in the US, one can say that the Creative Fellowship program provides a representative example of the cultural Cold War in the field of literature.

Nonetheless, the experiences of the writers who participated in the program were undoubtedly varied. Meanwhile, it would be inaccurate to describe the program as a one-sided reflection of American interests. The year-long stay of each writer resulted in literary works of varying tones and themes, and one must interpret the program in terms of the individual experiences of its participants.

In this article, I examine the remarkable change in the image of “America” in Creative Fellowship participant Agawa Hiroyuki’s work. Research on the Cold War in Japan has been lively since the early 2000s. However, a thorough assessment of the relationship between literature and the Cold War remains lacking.⁴ By investigating Agawa’s work, I show how literature served as an important battleground with regard to representation during the Cold War.

Agawa Hiroyuki (1920–2015) was famous for novels depicting the Asia-Pacific War and featuring protagonists such as admirals and commandos. An important literary theme established in his early postwar works was the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. In particular, *Devil’s Heritage* (*Ma no isan*, 1954), which portrays the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission active in Hiroshima eight years after the dropping of the bomb, clearly conveys Agawa’s critical perspective regarding the US’s culpability in the attack. In the same year the book was published, the Rockefeller Foundation invited Agawa to spend a

2. Representative of these activities in Japan were support for the creation of the International House of Japan, libraries, American Studies Seminars, and the scholarship program for inviting Japanese to the US.

3. Nakamura Mitsuo returned to Japan after just a month for personal reasons. Etō Jun extended his sojourn after completing his first year with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation, staying for another year as a visiting professor at Princeton University’s Department of Oriental Studies.

4. In a pioneering work exploring the absence of Cold War consciousness, Marukawa (2005) presents a study of Japanese literature focusing on the Cold War. For studies focusing on the relationship between Japanese literature and the cultural Cold War, see Kim Jiyoung (2015) and Umemori (2014), which explore the Rockefeller Foundation’s support for study in the US.

year studying in the US. Notably, the theme of atomic bombs disappeared in his subsequent work. In a previous study (Kim Jiyoung 2013) analyzing Rockefeller Foundation Archive documents, I reveal how the Foundation intended to suppress Agawa's discussion of the atomic bomb through its fellowship program; while for Agawa, who was facing creative limitations, a year-long stay in the US provided him with a decisive opportunity to abandon the theme of the atomic bomb.

Agawa's sojourn in the US marked a significant transformation in the image of America in his writing. Following his return to Japan, Japanese Americans replaced his focus on atomic bombs, as represented in his novel *Kariforniya* (California, 1959), which I analyze in terms of its cultural-political implications with respect to representation during the Cold War. In 1950s Japan, media across a diversity of segments presented an appealing image of America as a part of the cultural Cold War. Lately, this has been the subject of lively research pertaining to films produced and screened by the USIS, which took charge of public relations and propaganda with regard to Japan in 1953. Some of these studies point out how race and ethnicity served as important elements in US self-representation during the Cold War.⁵ In this article, I analyze Agawa's America by focusing on the representation of Japanese Americans in *Kariforniya*. I then compare the novel with the USIS film *Japanese Farmers Visit California*, each of which shares a similar setting. By drawing attention to an image of America that transcended genre, I reveal the negotiation between literary representation and the cultural Cold War.

Study in the US and a New Literary Theme

Rockefeller Foundation Archive documents and personnel statements reveal the character of the Creative Fellowship. Subjects of study were determined according to each participant's particular interests, ensuring a free experience in America. Creative fellows were entrusted with no particular duties, even though the Foundation covered all expenses and provided support in terms of advice and introducing contacts to ensure a fruitful year-long stay. It even offered to cover expenses for travel to Europe or other places in the West after participants had stayed for several months in the US.⁶ The program thus required nothing of participants beyond remaining in the US for a certain period of time.

5. See Dudziak (2000) and Lui (2012).

6. For examples, see "Japanese Literary Fellowship Program" (1959).

Why would the Rockefeller Foundation have offered such generous support? Foundation records indicate a clear cultural Cold War strategy in response to communism. In the 1950s, the Soviet and Chinese governments invited writers from overseas to visit and survey their countries. Marxism and communism also had a significant influence on Japanese intellectuals at the time. Thus the Rockefeller program, encouraging writers to “freely” deepen their understanding of the American lifestyle through a long stay, made use of literature as a “Cold War weapon” partly in response to the communist cultural offensive.⁷

However, both Japanese and Americans cooperatively participated in the planning and management of the fellowship program, which emphasized respect for the freedom and autonomy of its participating fellows. One should therefore bear in mind that the program’s propagandistic aspects were excluded from implementation as much as possible, a strategy also naturally intended to evade any criticism of the program. The Creative Fellowship program was in this way a cultural Cold War plan designed to promote intimate relations between Japanese writers and the US through generous support, the political nature of which was suppressed.⁸

The reason why Agawa’s case is interesting is, as I mentioned above, that his thematic focus at the time of the fellowship program’s announcement was the atomic bomb. At that time, immediately after the publication of *Devil’s Heritage*, Agawa was renowned as the flag bearer of “atomic bomb literature,” which revolved around Ōta Yōko’s literary coterie (see “Bungaku hitosuji” 1953). The fact that the Rockefeller Foundation desired Agawa to abandon his focus on the bomb through study in the US is corroborated in documents pertaining to the early promotional phase of the program (Daniel J. Meloy’s Letter 1954; Excerpt from Shio Sakanishi’s Letter 1954). At the time, anti-Americanism had reached its peak in Japan in the wake of the US hydrogen bomb test on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, which had resulted in the Daigo Fukuryū Maru’s (Lucky Dragon No. 5) exposure to radiation in March 1954. Meanwhile, it looks as though Agawa was experiencing creative difficulty in depicting the atomic

7. While preparing a program to support literature and art in January 1950, Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Division Director Charles B. Fahs (1950) recorded in a memo, “The communists assume that literature, properly ‘guided,’ is an asset to the development of communism.” Sakanishi Shio (1959), a managing member of the Creative Fellowship program, pointed out that the groups of writers visiting China and the Soviet Union for short periods of time were little different from “tourists,” arguing for the necessity of long-term sojourns.

8. Since I have already discussed the Rockefeller Foundation’s Creative Fellowship in detail in a previous work (Kim Jiyoung 2015), I treat it only briefly in this article.

bomb, since he himself had never been one of its victims.⁹ He accordingly accepted the chance to participate in the fellowship program in order to discover a new source of creative inspiration, eventually settling on Japanese Americans, a great many of whom had emigrated to the US from Hiroshima.¹⁰

Amid such intersecting intentions and expectations, Agawa departed Japan in November 1955 to begin a year of study in the US—the very nation that had deployed atomic bombs against Japan. His departure was quite timely, coinciding with the USIA's inauguration of the nationwide touring exhibition advertising "Atoms for Peace" (November 1955-August 1957), intended to transform the image of the atom in Japan. During the course of his travels, Agawa stayed in Hawaii for about a month before moving on to the mainland US, passing through Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle along the West Coast before settling for about three months in the Pacific Grove, which was located on the Monterey Peninsula in California. Agawa described the century-old Japanese immigrant community there: "There is an army language school and there are many Japanese immigrants in the area. Along with the Japanese-language teachers at the school, the community consists of recent immigrants, such as war brides and others who came over after the war, as well as first-, second-, and third-generation immigrants" (H. Agawa 2006, 412).¹¹ One may assume that Agawa engaged in many exchanges with this community over the course of his stay.

That summer, Agawa left Monterey for New York. Along the way he passed through Nevada and Utah, and spent some time in Denver, Colorado and Washington, D.C. Agawa had particularly wanted to visit Denver, which had become a popular destination for Japanese immigrants because, during the war, it was one of two cities—the other being Chicago—that had been exceptionally tolerant of, and which had received, Japanese evicted along the West Coast (H. Agawa 1955). The area around Denver had become home to a large Japanese-American community that included Japanese who had been relocated following forced internment during the war.

Arriving in New York in August, Agawa reported to Rockefeller Foundation

9. In the epilogue to *Devil's Heritage*, Agawa wrote: "I experienced difficulty imagining the pain of the radiation victims," revealing this kind of creative difficulty.

10. Elsewhere (Kim Jiyoung 2013) I explore in detail the Rockefeller Foundation's selection of, and support for, Agawa and his representations of America with respect to the atomic bomb. I thus deal with these issues only briefly here.

11. Regarding the Japanese American community in Monterey, California, see Yamada and Nikkei Amerika Shimin (2009).

Humanities Division Director Charles B. Fahs:¹² “I was able to adequately observe Japanese communities.” After departing New York in September, he continued his travels for another two months, passing through London, Paris, Rome, Switzerland, Austria, Northern Italy, Istanbul, Hong Kong, etc. (H. Agawa n.d. b). Arriving back in Japan in early December, he immediately sent a letter to the Foundation expressing his gratitude, saying: “It was the most significant and happiest period of our life and we enjoyed it very much” (H. Agawa 1956a).¹³

A year-long stay in the US inspired Agawa to write short stories such as “*Nisei* (second-generation) Soldier” (*Nisei no heishi*, 1954), written just before his departure for the US, followed by those such as “A Faraway Country” (*Haruka na kuni*, 1957), and “Flower Sleep” (*Hana no nemuri*, 1960), which depicted immigrant Japanese Americans. In August 1958, about a year and a half after returning to Japan, Agawa began the serialized publication of his novel *Kariforuniya* in the literary magazine *New Tide* (*Shinchō*).¹⁴ This work, which was Agawa’s only full-length novel dealing thematically with Japanese Americans, portrays the six-month stay in Los Angeles of protagonist Tazawa Ken, who works at the Association for Discussing Japan-US Issues (Nichibei Mondai Konwakai) and who is invited to teach at a Japanese-language school in Los Angeles. Overall, the book depicts the West Coast community of Japanese Americans and Japanese residing in the US.

In the following passage, Agawa describes his motivation for writing the novel:

That summer, I left Monterey for New York, where I reported directly to the Rockefeller Foundation. There, Robert July said to me with a smile, “I always read your reports with interest, but it would be great if the analysis was a bit more in-depth.” Naturally that would be the case. The Foundation had also agreed to support my travel in Europe, although irrelevant to my “research on Japanese

12. Charles B. Fahs is one of the representatives of the prewar generation of Japanese studies scholars along with Edwin O. Reischauer, Hugh Borton, and Robert B. Hall. He attended both Kyoto Imperial University and Tokyo Imperial University between 1934 and 1936, with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation. During the war and for a time after, he worked for the Office of Strategic Services and the State Department. In 1946, he attained a position as assistant director of the Rockefeller Foundation’s Humanities Division, and in 1950 he became director. In 1961, Ambassador to Japan Edwin Reischauer appointed him as a cultural advisor to the Tokyo embassy. He then oversaw all Rockefeller Foundation humanities programs with regard to Japan until his retirement.

13. Agawa arrived in Japan on December 4. The letter is dated December 12.

14. After the serialized publication concluded in September of that year, *Shinchōsha* published the work in a single volume.

Americans,” while all I had to do was submit a final report upon returning to Japan. Considering this, I felt sorry to Dr. Fahs and Mr. July. Thus I resolved to write *Kariforniia* to reap the fruit (?) of my sojourn in the US. (H. Agawa 2006, 413)

In this passage, one can confirm that the Rockefeller Foundation’s generous support and intimate relationships with its staff inspired Agawa to write the work based on his experience in the US. In this sense, the novel was a “literary report” of Agawa’s participation in the fellowship program as well as a “fruit” of the cultural Cold War program.

Etō Jun (1989, 55-56), who would later become a Creative Fellowship recipient, reviewed *Kariforniia* in the serialized column “Contemporary Literary Criticism” (*Bungei jihyō*), pointing out its lack of criticality and describing it as a “study report in the form of a novel.” This seems a rather accurate assessment of the novel’s character. Although historical facts about Japanese Americans constitute the core of novel’s content, Agawa (2006, 412) did not show an especially deep qualitative interest in the theme, as he remarked a year after its publication, saying: “I was not particularly passionate about the ‘research’ [during my study abroad].” The novel did not therefore present any deep insights pertaining to Japanese Americans, amounting instead to little more than a superficial work.

However, *Kariforniia* was literarily significant insofar as it was a Japanese-language novel about Japanese Americans written by a non-immigrant.¹⁵ Despite this fact, there is almost no existing research focusing on it.¹⁶ Considering that the novel was a product of the cultural Cold War and that Japanese readers were likely to accept it as a field report on Agawa’s study in the US, it would be meaningful to investigate its role with respect to Cold War US-Japan relations. In order to do this, I discuss the relationship between US cultural Cold War diplomacy and the representation of race and ethnicity before analyzing the novel itself.

15. Japanese novels dealing earnestly with Japanese Americans were extremely rare; one rare example that contains descriptions of Japanese immigrants in 1900s America is Nagai Kafū’s *America Story* (*Amerika monogatari*, 1908). Novels about Japanese Americans were typically written in English by Japanese immigrants. Some well-known examples are second-generation immigrant John Okada’s *No-No Boy* and Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston’s *Farewell to Manzanar*.

16. Tanaka (2007), the sole example, uses historical documents to uncover the actual circumstances of Japanese Americans.

US Cultural Cold War Diplomacy and Representations of Race and Ethnicity

Cultural Cold War research has recently become a burgeoning field. Some of this research points out the ways in which representations of race and ethnicity held particular importance for the US's implementation of cultural diplomacy during the Cold War; the so-called "African-American problem" has become well known internationally. The existence of such racism not only significantly undermined the US's presentation of itself as a democratic country espousing the values of freedom and equality, but was also a source of concern as potentially arousing antagonism among the non-white peoples of Asia and the Third World. In particular, as the civil rights movement began to garner global attention, and as racism in the US served as fuel for Soviet propaganda, the propagation of an "appropriate" image of America emerged as an urgent task. The US thus began a vast effort to erase the image of a racist nation through public relations diplomacy.

The important point to keep in mind is that the USIS propaganda aiming to deal with the African-American problem did not simply deny that the problem existed. That would have been imprudent as long as it could not be concealed, and would risk US credibility. The US State Department thus opted for a strategy of representing an America in which the racial problem was progressing toward a resolution. Regarding the USIS strategy pertaining to the African-American problem, law historian and analyst of US Cold War racial strategy Mary Dudziak (2000, 76-77) states: "By acknowledging the problem's history and emphasizing its improvement, the US race problem was narrated as a story of progress." She argues that this was a powerful and compelling narrative.

Meanwhile, the US media strategy relating to race was not merely passive. That is to say, it did not simply combat discrimination against and negative images associated with certain ethnic groups, but occasionally actively referenced elements of race and ethnicity. By analyzing US Cold War public relations and propaganda films, Mary Ting Yi Lui (2012) shows how the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers' Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) and USIS films gradually moved away from overtly proclaiming the virtue and strength of the US and toward a "localization strategy" that tailored film content and direction to specific audiences. According to Lui, the public relations campaign targeting Asia and the Third World effectively elicited positive responses from viewers by featuring characters linked to their specific national contexts. In Japan, for example, such films portrayed the US through the eyes of Japanese tourists, Japanese students studying in the US, Japanese residing in the US,

Japanese wartime brides, and Japanese Americans. The purpose of such films—which Lui refers to as “people-to-people films,” borrowing from the name of the international friendship program of the Eisenhower administration in the 1950s—was to arouse a sense of empathy among Japanese viewers, thus conveying a “proper” image of, and inducing a sense of solidarity with, the US (Lui 2012, 159).

In other words, US Cold War diplomacy adhered to a strategy of representation that was adjusted to differing situations and requirements. While endeavoring to do away with the image of a racist nation, the US also acknowledged that racial elements, depending on how they were used, could serve as useful public relations and propaganda tools. It thus strived to form positive impressions of America through careful manipulation of the ways in which race was represented in movies and other media. Meanwhile, Japanese were interested in Japanese living in America for reasons other than an interest in Japanese Americans; whether or not American society completely accepted Japanese immigrants, who were of the same national heritage, served as a touchstone for judging American perceptions of the Japanese.

Taking into account these circumstances, and considering the production and reception of texts in the context of the cultural Cold War, the politics of representation in *Kariforuniya* become all the more clear: Agawa served as an informant, satisfying the demands of Japanese readers seeking unbiased information about the US from a Japanese writer, as well as the expectations of Americans, by promoting an image of America created by a Japanese writer through a fellowship program. Furthermore, he served as a bridge in US-Japan relations by using Japanese and Japanese-American characters effectively to arouse the sympathy of Japanese readers. With these points in mind, I analyze Agawa’s portrayal of Japanese-American immigrants in *Kariforuniya* with respect to representations of ethnicity during the Cold War.

Representations of “America” in the Cultural Cold War: Ethnicity in *Kariforuniya*

1. Narrative Structure

Bearing in mind the US strategy of ethnic and racial representation in the context of cultural Cold War diplomacy, which I examined in the previous section, the first notable point about *Kariforuniya* is its narrative structure. Much of the narrative unfolds through the accounts of Japanese-American

characters. While overall it is the protagonist Tazawa that narrates the story from a first-person perspective, Agawa's abundant use of dialogue allows its Japanese-American characters ample opportunity to speak. One may regard this use of diversely situated characters as a strategy to illuminate reality from various angles. Just as with the USIS film strategy discussed above, the words of Japanese-American characters would have more easily elicited readers' sympathy with the image of America presented.

Conversely, Tazawa's narration also maintains a certain critical distance with respect to the work's Japanese-American characters. As protagonist and first-person narrator, Tazawa plays an important role for the reader, selectively recollecting Japanese-American characters' statements and adding appropriate commentary. In this sense, one could say that Tazawa's narration represents the novel's overall tone; the novel's role as an exploration of the so-called "Japanese-American problem" is succinctly expressed in the lengthy report included near its middle, entitled "On Japanese Immigrants Residing in California" (My Report to the Association for Discussing Japan-US Issues) (H. Agawa 1959, 399-422).

Paying attention to the novel's double-layered narrative structure, which incorporates Japanese-American characters and Tazawa's narration, in the following section I first look at how the Japanese immigrant characters in the novel narrate their experiences as witnesses to history. I then look at how Tazawa incorporates these testimonies into a unitary narrative.

2. The Representation of Japanese Americans

(1) Japanese Americans as Historical Witnesses

Kariforuniya deals quite broadly with topics related to Japanese Americans. Tazawa's interest in Japanese immigrants living in the US revolves around three main subjects: generational identity differences, status within American society, and loyalty to America during the war. A diverse range of characters appears in the novel, including first-generation immigrant Kikuzō and his son Hoover, and second-generation immigrant Machida Ryōtarō, who was born and raised in the US, and his younger brother Kenjirō, who attended middle school in Wakayama before the war and later returned to the US, and who is referred to as a "*kibei nisei*" (second-generation returnee). Each of these characters reveals his or her particular experiences.

In terms of determining the status of Japanese Americans in US society, the rejection of Japanese immigrants prior to and during the war was a major issue. It is a well-known fact that discrimination against Japanese immigrants became

institutionalized as the American public began to call for the expulsion of Japanese in the early twentieth century. Examples include the segregation of Japanese students in San Francisco (1906) and the “Japanese Exclusion Act” (Johnson-Reed Act, 1924). In the novel, these circumstances are narrated through the first-generation immigrant, Kikuzō. What is interesting about his description is that it does not adopt a unilaterally critical position toward white Americans.

According to Kikuzō, it was not only Americans but also Japanese in Japan who discriminated against Japanese immigrants. Moreover, the expulsion of Japanese immigrants from California was largely due to the attitude of first-generation immigrants, who came to America to pursue profit and return to Japan rich, while consistently rejecting any thought of assimilating into American society. He states: “Any country would reject a people that refuses to assimilate and associate with and share in the faith of its people, simply taking what they can and returning to their homeland” (H. Agawa 1959, 71).¹⁷ Considering these factors, Kikuzō concludes that if one sees both sides of the issue and judges it “impartially, ... those discriminated against are discriminated against for a reason.” However, he emphasizes that since the war Japanese-Americans have reflected on their history and begun to share in the faith of white people and forge relationships with them as “good friends” (H. Agawa 1959, 71-72).

Kariforniya's narrative, grounded in Tazawa's perspective, does not completely accord with Kikuzō's logic. Considering his rejection from a boarding house and issues such as the ongoing discrimination against African Americans in the South, Tazawa tends to attribute the root cause of discrimination in the US to racial prejudice. Nonetheless, the commentary of first-generation immigrants within the novel, which considers the history of discrimination in the US and anticipates improvements in race relations, leaves readers with a clear impression.

Kikuzō also describes his experience during the war. As is well known, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the outbreak of the Pacific War in February 1941, Japanese residing along the US West Coast (Washington, Oregon, and California) were designated “enemy aliens,” regardless of their nationality, and moved inland to prison camps. Through President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signing of Executive Order 9066 in February 1942, eleven thousand Japanese, including seven thousand of American nationality, by virtue of their biological heritage alone, were stripped of the property they had worked so hard to accumulate, evicted from their land, and moved to ten prison camps overseen

17. For research on first-generation Japanese immigrants to the US, see Ichioka (1992).

by the War Relocation Authority. The US military also announced a plan to create a Japanese battle unit, implementing a system of “loyalty registration” that asked Japanese men over the age of seventeen with US citizenship to pledge their loyalty to the US and intention to join the military. Responses to this measure pressuring Japanese into choosing between Japan and the US varied greatly by age and identity, and it engendered significant division and conflict among Japanese immigrants. Although some fiercely resisted the measure, many regarded it as a good opportunity to prove their loyalty and enlisted in the US military. It was in this context that the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Infantry Regiment, composed of second-generation Japanese immigrants, were dispatched to and fought on the Italian front line. Sacrificing their lives to fight resolutely for and protect their American “homeland,” many Americans saw these soldiers as making a significant contribution to the war effort and praised them for their “valor.” Many Japanese-American soldiers lost their lives in the war.¹⁸

Regarding the internment of Japanese during the war, Kikuzō affirms that it was so thorough that “even orphans were sent from the orphanages.” Meanwhile, second-generation returnee Machida Kenjirō, who served in Saipan during the war, points out the inconsistency of the loyalty registration implemented in the prison camps: “White people discriminated against Japanese, causing them hardship and treating them unfairly. I thought, why was it that only we had to prove our loyalty to the US?” He appeals to Tazawa by relating the unreasonable treatment of Japanese in greater detail: “They asked if we, excluded from American citizenship, would take up the American flag and charge alongside the blacks. On the Italian frontline, the black troops were placed in front. The Japanese troops, our brothers, behind them. The white troops oversaw the battle from the rear, armed with machine guns. Do people like you even know that?” (H. Agawa 1959, 117-18). Accounts such as this reveal two aspects of the racial hierarchy within American society: white people’s racism against Asians and Africans, whom they insert between themselves and the line of fire, and Japanese racism toward Africans.

According to Kikuzō, however, the past in which Japanese were considered an “enemy race” and discriminated against is now considered the “greatest stain on American history” and a “national humiliation.” Kikuzō thus dismisses the internment of Japanese as but a matter of the past. In the novel, Japanese-American characters including Kikuzō consistently portray themselves to

18. Regarding the internment of Japanese immigrants and identity issues, see Nozaki (2007); Iino et al. (1994) also deal with this issue in detail. Regarding Japanese participation in the American war effort, see Iino (2000).

Tazawa as having overcome the hardships of the past and as gradually improving their status in American society.

Regarding loyalty to the US, Machida Ryōtarō, who claims that his loyalty is “one hundred percent true,” states: “Discrimination against newcomers by seniors is but a natural phenomenon, observable even in the animal world.” Just as the Irish and Germans eventually improved their status in the US after enduring much persecution and exclusion, he says, for Japanese, “there is only the path of bravely battling prejudice and discrimination.” Affirming the duty of American citizens to fight against discrimination, Ryōtarō thus argues that joining the US Army during the war was the “quickest shortcut to proving oneself as a US citizen” (H. Agawa 1959, 124).¹⁹ Following Ryōtarō’s logic, as the product of citizens working individually toward obtaining their rights, America is progressing toward racial equality and harmony; and America is a nation worthy of such an effort.

What kind of America is conveyed in Japanese-American characters’ accounts in Agawa’s novel? The Japanese-American characters acknowledge the reality of racial prejudice and a painful past characterized by such events as the forced internment of Japanese immigrants during the war. However, one should not overlook the fact that they reference these negative features in the context of the American values that offset them. The faith Japanese-American immigrants had in America is expressed most succinctly in the words of the first-generation immigrant principal of the Japanese language school: “This country called America is essentially a second-generation country. . . . Second-generation English, German, and French immigrants, African descendants, and second-, third-, and fourth-generation Italians and Jews all brought with them the benevolent characteristics of their races, creating the great federation that prevails today” (H. Agawa 1959, 317). This expression of support for multiculturalism—the kind that also characterized the civil rights movement of the 1960s—conveys to the reader an image of a federation displaying the power of diverse ethnic groups coexisting dynamically. Furthermore, the expression of the unwavering faith in American democracy via Japanese rather than white Americans would have been much more persuasive to Japanese readers.

(2) *The Narrative of Tazawa’s Report*

Next, I pay attention to how the report that Tazawa sends back to Japan, which

19. Regarding the loyalty of second-generation Japanese immigrants to the US, see Hosokawa (1984). Bill Hosokawa was a second-generation Japanese immigrant who was born in Seattle and who became a reporter for the *Denver Post*. Morita (2007) deals with the draft dodging of second-generation Japanese immigrants in detail.

appears in the middle of the novel, represents and conveys the testimonies of Japanese Americans regarding their past and present. Early in the report, with respect to Japanese Americans' sense of belonging as people straddling the US and Japan, Tazawa stipulates: "They are clearly American citizens." In this sense, Tazawa understands the Japanese-American problem solely as an American problem. Regarding the status of the Japanese-American problem in the US, he points out that Japanese Americans constitute a very small part of the overall population and says: "The Japanese-American problem is not really as important a problem for America as a whole as Japanese in Japan might think." He also draws a stark distinction between the Japanese-American and African-American problems, which are often compared, arguing that they are completely different in terms of scale and historical background (H. Agawa 1959, 401).

Furthermore, Tazawa introduces in the report the history and current situation of Japanese Americans in US society. As I mentioned above, one can describe the history of Japanese Americans as a painful history in which they were subjected to considerable prejudice and social discrimination. A notable feature of the report, however, is not so much that content per se, but the manner in which it is presented.

The attitude toward the history of Japanese Americans in Tazawa's report, while not denying outright the violent aspects of the treatment of Japanese by white society, consistently maintains a neutral position and suppresses criticism as much as possible. By viewing the history of racial prejudice against, and the exclusion of, Japanese from the perspective of white Americans, illuminating the ways in which Japanese people were at fault, and drawing on social and historical explanations, Tazawa's report makes it possible to view the history of discrimination against the Japanese in the US from multiple viewpoints. Meanwhile, regarding undeniable acts of violence such as the forced internment of Japanese during the war, it seeks a balanced perspective, portraying some Americans' benevolent behavior as a counterweight. The report's narrative thus attempts to mediate between Japanese and Americans, as well as between Japan and the US. It appears to present a "fair" and objective tone, but in fact one can say that it resorts to generalizing about racial discrimination, making the task of assigning blame ambiguous, and risks framing discrimination and prejudice against Japanese immigrants in terms of "both sides being at fault."

Above all, what one must not overlook is that the report, which presents diverse testimonies, adopts a progressive narrative structure. America after the Second World War, built on the painful experiences of Japanese in the US, is summarized in the statement: "First-generation immigrants abandoned their migrant-labor spirit and determined to settle in the US while white Americans

abandoned their suspicion of the Japanese, and they began to intermingle with each other” (H. Agawa 1959, 417). In this manner, Agawa depicts the postwar period as a moment of harmony following the end of conflict. The experience of Japanese and white Americans fighting together in the war served to weaken white Americans’ racial prejudice, and the high regard for the “valor and loyalty” displayed by second-generation Japanese who fought as US citizens was a decisive factor in dramatically improving white Americans’ perceptions of Japanese. Since Japanese had also contributed to the war effort, following the war the legal status of Japanese immigrants improved considerably, with the government approving naturalization of first-generation Japanese immigrants, interracial marriage, and property rights. Second-generation immigrants were now free to participate in any profession except politics, something previously unimaginable. In their everyday lives, excluding discriminatory practices still remaining with respect to choosing one’s residence, Japanese Americans now enjoy a status as “complete” Americans and are virtually equal with white Americans. In this respect, the report, which conveys the past and present of Japanese Americans, concludes with a bright outlook of an America in which generations beyond third-generation immigrants will achieve complete assimilation, including “marrying with other races.”

Considering the narrative presented by the Japanese characters in Agawa’s novel, how might one conclusively describe the characteristics of the report’s narrative structure? First, by defining Japanese immigrants as US nationals, it subsumes the history and present of Japanese Americans under “American history.” What one should pay attention to is that the narrator, Tazawa (i.e. Agawa) does not exclude any of the diverse perspectives of the Japanese Americans he encounters in his report; the varied testimonies of the Japanese-American characters discussed above are fully present. However, these individual voices coalesce in a master narrative that emerges in the narrative structure. Therein, the temporal axis plays an important role; since the narrative concerns a Japanese minority, while referencing their painful history and struggle, it makes sense of this history retroactively as a process of overcoming past conflict. Furthermore, the narrative is consolidated according to a temporal axis oriented toward a bright future of racial harmony. In this respect, the diverse experiences and voices of Japanese immigrants are endowed with a place and citizenship in the historical narrative of the immigrant nation of America and converge in a single national narrative of an America progressing toward racial equality and integration. One can thus argue that the novel represents Japanese Americans as the embodiment of racial harmony and integration, projecting a vision of democratic development.

Viewing the novel's message in this manner, it looks quite similar to that of other Cold War media in the 1950s. In the next section, as an example of this, I look at the American narrative of national unity evident in a film produced by the US State Department on Japanese-American farmers in California. By comparing Agawa's portrayal of Japanese-American farmers in *Kariforuniya* with that of the film, I uncover the message behind his representation of Japanese-Americans.

Analysis of Portrayals of Japanese Immigrant Farmers: Comparing *Kariforuniya* and a USIS Film

1. *Kariforuniya*'s Portrayal of Machida's Farm

At first, Tazawa encounters the Japanese community as a distant onlooker. His visit to second-generation immigrant Machida Ryōtarō's farm, however, serves to deepen his interest in, and understanding of, the Japanese-American problem. Tazawa's portrayal of Machida's farm, located in South San Antonio, California, provides an opportunity to inquire into Agawa's representation of America.

Machida, to whom locals refer as the "rice king," manages an enormous farm. He is a second-generation immigrant so successful that he and his brother own a small, single-engine light aircraft (a "sports plane"). This portrayal of socially successful Japanese immigrants suggests their acceptance within American society and conveys to the reader the way in which America is overcoming racial discrimination.

What is unique about the description of the farm is the racial configuration that emerges among the characters. White contract workers use light aircraft to sow rice seeds, and Machida's family employs a long-serving white housekeeper. On his trip to the farm, Tazawa enjoys a lunch of "coffee and sandwiches delivered by the white housekeeper." And upon finishing the day's work, he converses with a white engineer who has developed a new strain of rice seed for the farm (H. Agawa 1959, 373-74). Machida's farm thus appears not only as a place of racial harmony but also one in which traditional management-labor relations have been overturned, with white people no longer enjoying superior status.

What impresses Tazawa the most on his trip to the farm, besides race relations, is the production system. On Machida's seven-thousand-acre rice and wheat farm, the rice planting is completed in about a month by dropping the seeds from the air using light aircraft. In the farm's workshop, like a "food

factory,” the processes of threshing, cleaning, and milling the rice are all semi-automated using machines. Following the milling, the yield is automatically gauged, packaged, and made ready for shipment. Regarding Machida’s farm—which manages everything from planting and harvesting to threshing, milling, packaging, and shipment as a single integrated process—more as an example of “agricultural enterprise” than “peasant farming,” the book emphasizes its modernity.

Furthermore, unlike under the “landlord” system of Japan’s past, the production system Tazawa so admires employs machines as “serfs” to operate on a massive scale. In this regard, it not only embodies technological progress in agricultural production, but is also perhaps emblematic of “democratic America,” representing the values of freedom and equality. With reference to Lui’s (2012) argument regarding Cold War representations of race and ethnicity, by juxtaposing such advanced technology with the non-white, Japanese Machida brothers, this depiction offers Japanese readers a more intimate connection with the progressive technology realized by America and allows them more easily to imagine themselves enjoying its benefits. Tazawa also describes the scenery at the farm, describing how “machines cultivate, draw water, and plant seeds, demonstrating an intense energy oriented toward a future in which agricultural produce is blindly produced on a vast scale,” and says: “I thought I saw America—one part of Western America.” Through such descriptions, an image of America as a progressive nation brimming with youthful vitality is impressed upon the reader.

By summarizing the message of Agawa’s *Kariforuniya* in terms of two symbols of America—racial harmony and technological progress—one can see how such a message transcends genre, neatly coalescing with the message of CIE/USIS films. Accordingly, an interesting work to compare with Agawa’s novel is the film *Japanese Farmers Visit California* (1953), an American propaganda film recently rediscovered by Mary Ting Yi Lui.²⁰

2. Comparison with the Film *Japanese Farmers Visit California*

James R. Handley was a US Army colonel who wrote scripts and directed films for the army before moving on to oversee film planning and production at the US State Department. Collaborating with Hollywood director Carl K.

20. According to Lui (2012, 164, 181), the film was based on Handley’s film *A Letter from California* and was given two titles, *Japanese Farmers Visit California* and *Providers All*. The script can be found in Handley (1952), which is the property of the US National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD. See United States Information Service (1953).

Hittleman, he produced the film *Japanese Farmers Visit California*, for which he wrote the script. *Japanese Farmers Visit California* was a documentary about a Japanese youth group's visit to the US. In cooperation with the California state government and the Japanese Association for International Collaboration of Farmers (AICF), the State Department initiated a program in the summer of 1952 inviting young Japanese farmers to California for a year-long stay. The first visiting group consisted of forty-six farmers from all over Japan. These farmers learned about cutting-edge agricultural technology and strengthened solidarity between Japanese and American farmers. It was hoped that, upon returning to Japan, they would serve as new leaders to replace the old landed class, becoming agents of democratization in the countryside (Lui 2012, 161-64).

This kind of program was quite significant for postwar Japanese society. In 1950s Japan, not only did rural land make up a vast proportion of the national territory, but there was also an enormous economic disparity between cities and the countryside. Improving the lives of a great number of citizens through modernization of rural areas was thus considered an urgent task.²¹ Under such social conditions, a modernization plan modeled on the US influenced not only cities and industries, but also farming areas.

Meanwhile, according to Lui, the "farming village" held particular importance as the setting for globally distributed US public relations films. Rural character remained strong in the nations that America targeted for public relations and propaganda activities all over the world, including Japan. Accordingly, the US produced many films targeted specifically at farmers (Lui 2012, 158). *Japanese Farmers Visit California* was one such production.

The film featured one of the visiting Japanese farmers in the leading role, showing his visit to three second-generation Japanese immigrant-owned and four white American-owned farms. According to Lui's analysis of the film's representational strategy, the filmmakers intentionally used elements of race and ethnicity to convey the film's message more effectively to Japanese, and included "an image of America's racial and economic equality." In other words, the film treats the white American-owned and Japanese American-owned farms equally, intentionally conveying the notion that each of the owners enjoys a similar level of wealth. Also, it "emphasizes some aspects of the role played by Japanese Americans hosting Japanese visitors while erasing others" (Lui 2012, 164). Finally, the film "focuses on particularly successful second-generation Japanese immigrant farmers, portraying California as an equal multi-racial,

21. The Ikeda cabinet included agricultural modernization as a core task in its 1960 "Income-doubling Plan" for mitigating inter-territorial and inter-industrial income disparities, modernizing small and mid-sized businesses, and developing economically backward territories.

multi-ethnic society” (169).

According to Lui, the film’s message for Japanese viewers goes beyond racial equality. In addition to displaying technologized agriculture, it conveys an image of the middle-class family, inserting scenes depicting a pleasant lifestyle represented by modern electric appliances and household items, and harmonious, happy families. The film also combines imagery of cooperation and harmony between people of differing ethnicities, expressed in scenes in which Japanese visitors work and enjoy leisure activities together with white workers on the farm, with imagery of the richness of the countryside.

Is not such a representation strikingly similar to that in Agawa’s novel in terms of setting, scenario, and the visit to Machida’s farm? Indeed, *Kariforuniya*’s implied meaning becomes all the more obvious when compared with *Japanese Farmers Visit California*. Lui (2012, 164) interprets the film as “attempting to portray images of American culture, society, and technology as concrete examples of the nation’s modernity and social equality.” She points out how Japanese-American farms in California serve as a site of American cultural diplomacy in the film.

Similarly, might not Agawa’s novel, which shares in common the film’s “localization strategy” in representing race and ethnicity, also have served as a canvas onto which the reader could project an image of America representing modernity and equality? The similarities between the two works are not merely a coincidence. In the postscript, Agawa (2006, 413) writes that Machida’s farm was “modeled on [that of] farm owner Koda of South Dos Palos, California,” who was also known as the “rice king,” nevertheless admitting that he did indulge in a little creative license. The Koda family hosted the visiting group from Japan, and their farm served as an important location in *Japanese Farmers Visit California*. Lui (2012, 168, 177-78) also mentions the “rice farm of the Koda family in South Dos Palos, California.” Undoubtedly, both Agawa and Lui are referring to the same place.

Agawa also stayed at Yaemon Minami’s²² farm, one of the biggest in California, during his visit to the US (H. Agawa 1956b, 8-9). He almost certainly also based his detailed descriptions of the farms in *Kariforuniya* on his observations there. Many commonalities exist between the setting and scenery of Yaemon’s farm as described in one of Agawa’s reports to the Rockefeller Foundation and those of Machida’s farm as described in the novel, including the use of a light aircraft for seed planting, radio transmission for communicating

22. Yaemon was a first-generation immigrant from Wakayama Prefecture who came to the US in 1905.

across the farm's vast territory, and a workshop for processing and preparing produce for delivery. Yet there were also important differences between the two farms. Unlike Yaemon's farm as described in Agawa's report, to which Mexican farmers were recruited for the harvest season (8-9), the contract workers on Machida's farm as described in the novel are all white. One can reasonably interpret this difference as an intentional choice by Agawa to emphasize racial integration with white people.

Conclusion

In this article, I have explored representations of ethnicity during the Cold War focusing on *Kariforuniya*, the novel Agawa Hiroyuki wrote upon returning to Japan after spending a year in the US as a recipient of the Rockefeller Foundation's Creative Fellowship program, set up as a part of the cultural Cold War. *Kariforuniya* depicts an America overcoming racial conflict and moving toward modernity and affluence through the eyes of Japanese and Japanese-American characters. In this respect, one can say that its representation of America is similar to that in *Japanese Farmers Visit America* and other USIS films and American media during the Cold War. Agawa had been a fierce critic of the US through the thematic use of the atomic bomb in his work, but following a sojourn in the US, his writing began to reflect the message of the public relations and propaganda produced by US cultural Cold War diplomacy. Furthermore, in terms of how *Kariforuniya* elicited Japanese readers' identification with Japanese-American characters and imagining of harmony between Japan and the US through such representations, it likely contributed to strengthening US-Japan relations.

In that case, what problems does this article present regarding postwar US-Japan relations? First, until now, Japanese postwar literary expression and relations with the US have been discussed mainly in terms of occupation-period censorship. However, through an analysis of Agawa's work, this article suggests a need also to examine the dynamic relationship between the Cold War and literary expression. In a report to the board of directors of the Creative Fellowship program, Sakanishi Shio, who was deeply involved in the program as a managing member, described Agawa as an example of the program's success:

Because he is a native of Hiroshima and was drafted into the Navy during the war, all these works deal with the atomic bombing and the tragedies of the young lives lost in the war. It seemed at one time that he was possessed by these subjects, and some of us felt that it was necessary for him to get away from the

country. The fellowship did help to free him from this mental state, and he since has produced some important works on other subjects. (Sakanishi 1959, 26)

As an example of one of these “important works,” Sakanishi mentions *Kariforuniya*. Also in the report, Sakanishi quotes Shiga Naoya’s evaluation: “He [Agawa] possessed a rare talent. I hoped to encourage him to abandon the subject of the Hiroshima atomic bomb but was unsuccessful. I am grateful to the Foundation for offering him the opportunity to study abroad, as will many other Japanese continue to be in the future” (Sakanishi 1959, 26-27). These remarks clearly indicate that the battle over representations of America transformed, and continued even after the end of the occupation-period censorship conducted by the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers.

Second, there is a need to understand the particularity of the America of the Cold War, which engaged in cultural exchanges rather than censorship. While seeking to win over Japanese writers with generosity and friendliness, this America desired to maintain a role as a guarantor of free creative activity. Agawa’s motivation for writing *Kariforuniya*—that he “felt sorry to Dr. Fahs and Mr. July” (H. Agawa 2006, 413)—clearly demonstrates how his intimate relationship with the Rockefeller Foundation significantly impacted his literary expression. The “People to People Program,” proposed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, emphasized the importance of “relationships between people” and the belief that “world peace could be achieved by gathering together the people of the world to exchange ideas and experiences” (Lui 2012, 159). The spirit of the People to People Program also resonated in the Rockefeller Foundation’s scheme, regardless of the fact that it was organized by a private body, in terms of how it emphasized the importance of building individual relationships.

In closing, *Kariforuniya*’s image of America reflects the change in Agawa’s perception of the US. As Tazawa nears his arrival back in Japan at the end of the novel, he remembers the “honest, friendly, and open Americans,” and is saddened by his departure from “this exciting and enormous country” (H. Agawa 1959, 257). Might not this have been the very same feeling Agawa experienced upon completing his year-long study in America? Reminiscing about his childhood, Agawa’s second son, Naoyuki, stated that he “heard many stories about the dreamlike country of America.” His father, who had become captivated by America during his study there, practiced elements of American lifestyle upon returning to Japan, using English around the house and installing a sprinkler in the garden of his small housing complex, for example. Recalling

one such anecdote, Naoyuki stated: “This writer, who was incited against America following its dropping of the atomic bomb on his hometown Hiroshima, was transformed into a lover of America. Could not one say the Foundation’s objective was achieved?” (N. Agawa 2001, 128). In this respect, one might view Agawa as an example of the process by which Japan’s antagonistic relationship with the US, owing to the war and occupation, began to improve in the 1950s as Japan achieved a modern, affluent American lifestyle in its high-growth period.

In this article, I have attempted to encapsulate the interlocking and intermingling aspects of a genre-transcending depiction of America by comparing *Kariforuniya* with a US State Department propaganda film and revealing it as a byproduct of the cultural Cold War. I have thus suggested the need to reconsider postwar Japanese literature in the context of Cold War history.

• *Translated by Keiran MACRAE*

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