



Disposable Entities: Biopolitics and the Incarceration of Japanese Americans

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Abstract : In 1942, right after Japan's surprise assault on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, on the ground of military necessity, incarcerated 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry without trial or proof of their guilt. More than two third of these detainees were American born citizens. As the detainment raised serious constitutional breaches, many scholars believed that it was motivated by mass hysteria, race undesirability and national security. Despite the rigor in the previous claims, we have not deemed them founded enough to grasp the complexity of the imprisonment program. This paper transcends orthodox narratives as it questions the role the U.S., as a state endowed with strong institutions and elite, played in the decision to incarcerate people of Japanese ancestry. Our approach, throughout this enquiry, is built on both descriptive and qualitative research methodologies. This mixed process is backed by a strong theoretical groundwork structured around the notion of biopolitics. This work, while investigating official governmental justifications, asserts that the elite's class interests – not race undesirability, hysteria or national security – accounted for the forced removal and detainment of people of Japanese parentage. This research proves that the internment was part of a well-established proceeding aimed at containing the Japanese community. Through a series of technics such propaganda, Californian authorities created an anti-Japanese sentiment. Hence, they incited people – after freaking them out with an imaginary Japanese threat – on calling for the removal of the Japanese minority. The detainment program was part of a strategy of domination aimed at getting rid of the Japanese competition in Continental United States.

Keywords: Japanese-Americans, internment, biopolitics, state sovereignty, bare life.

Résumé: En 1942, juste après l'assaut surprise du Japon contre Pearl Harbor, le président des États-Unis, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, pour des raisons militaires, a incarcéré 120 000 personnes d'origine japonaise sans procès ni preuve de leur culpabilité. Plus de deux tiers de ces détenus étaient des citoyens nés aux États-Unis. Comme la détention soulevait de graves violations de la Constitution, de nombreux universitaires croyaient qu'elle était motivée par l'hystérie de masse, l'indésirabilité raciale et la sécurité nationale. Malgré la rigueur des revendications précédentes, nous n'avons pas jugé qu'elles étaient suffisamment fondées pour saisir la complexité du programme d'emprisonnement. Cet article transcende les récits orthodoxes en remettant en question le rôle que les États-Unis, en tant qu'État doté d'institutions fortes et d'une élite, ont joué dans la décision d'incarcérer des personnes d'ascendance japonaise. Notre approche, tout au long de cette enquête, repose sur des méthodologies de recherche descriptives et qualitatives. Ce processus mixte est soutenu par un solide travail théorique structuré autour de la notion de biopolitique. Ce travail, tout en enquêtant sur les justifications officielles du gouvernement, affirme que les intérêts de classe de l'élite – et non l'indésirabilité raciale, l'hystérie ou la sécurité nationale – expliquent le retrait et la détention forcés de personnes d'origine japonaise. Cette recherche prouve que l'internement faisait

partie d'une procédure bien établie visant à contenir la communauté japonaise. Grâce à une série de techniques de propagande, les autorités californiennes ont créé un sentiment anti-japonais. Par conséquent, ils ont incité les gens – après leur avoir fait peur avec une menace japonaise imaginaire – à demander le retrait de la minorité japonaise. Le programme de détention faisait partie d'une stratégie de domination visant à se débarrasser de la concurrence japonaise aux États-Unis continentaux.

Mots clés : Américains d'origine japonaise, internement, biopolitique, souveraineté de l'État, vie nue

Introduction

In 1942, two months after Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR), after marking America's entry into the Second World War, signed Executive Order 9066 (Otfinoski, 2020). This law was based on the assumption that people of Japanese derivation (living in the U.S., West Coast) were America's enemies. The order authorized the forced removal and incarceration of some 120,000 enemy aliens of Japanese descent without trial, no legal charge against them and no proof of their guilt (Kaelberer & Burgan, 2018). Incarcerated in the name of national security, the Japanese, two third of whom were American citizens, were denied their fundamental human liberties (Robbins & Barber, 2011). This removal occurred regardless of the constitutional infringement it provoked along with the emergence of credible intelligence contesting the existence of a Japanese threat on the West Coast (LeMay, 2013). Contemporary scholarship on the internment articulates around three main axes. In *Magic: The Untold Story of the U.S. Intelligence and the Evacuation of Japanese Residents from the West Coast During WWII*, Lowman (2000) argues that, based on intelligence, the Japanese community constituted a threat to national security. An opposing narrative has been developed by Ivey and Kaatz (2017) in *Citizen Internees*. They pinpointed race undesirability to be the main reason behind the removal and incarceration process. Robinson (2001) in *By Order of the President*, claimed that wartime hysteria, not race undesirability or national security, accounted for the rejection Japanese-Americans faced. A summary of the literature we have reviewed tends to define the internment from military necessity, hysteria, or race standpoints. This paper asserts that none of the above reasons can, on a sufficient fashion, explore and explain the incarceration process. They fail in contextualizing this calamity in relation to the political system, state apparatus, and the social makeup that prevailed in the U.S. These analyses are partial and focus on portions (race, national security, hysteria) of a bigger issue. They miss on the institutional and systemic dimensions of this crisis. The purpose of this paper is to examine the role the U.S. – as a state, system of governance with a large panel of institutions – played in the internment process. This probe demonstrates that the internment of Japanese Americans didn't happen by

chance and that it was not linked to unpredictable social conditions. In determining the state's implication in this tragedy, we shall explore the process through which states turn illegality legal. How do they create conducive environments for marginalization, segregation, and oppression within the midst of free and democratic institutions and systems of governance?

This research is built on both descriptive and qualitative research strategies. We do assess Japanese Americans' social conditions before, during and after Pearl Harbor as to determine the systemic harassment they were subject of. We shall then assess how the social exclusion they faced before Pearl Harbor connects with the internment scheme. This work is driven by the theory of biopolitics. The term biopolitics derives from biopower. This notion pertains to the use of technology as a means to enhance individual human life and health (Mills, 2018). From this humanitarian approach, developed governmental policies resulting from the emergence of life administration strategies from many inter-connected fields—statistics, economy—aimed at fostering life at a greater scale. We then observed a shift from the individual to the mass (Foucault, 1978). In the hands of politicians and governments, biopolitics evolved away from its initial inclusive nature. While still advocating mass wellbeing, it adopted a discriminatory policy toward segments of the population—who had to be sacrificed in favor of the other(s)—i.e., inclusive exclusion (Agamben, 1998). This new approach spawned class struggles and exploitation in liberal European societies—bourgeoisie *vs.* proletariat. From the same analytical axis, we can explore notions such as imperialism, colonialism and slavery. Biopolitics made race and social class salient and prescribed intergroup interactions from a zero-sum reasoning. Resultantly, for one race, group, or class to survive, the other(s) had to be oppressed. Through technological advancement, violence became an extension of the politics of domination. Race is then viewed as class distinctions between humans. Conflict has become a means to hierarchize societies (Bernacconi, 2001). Difference has become an abnormality superior races, groups or classes should tame (Taylor, 2017). Biopolitics emerges as a natural structure meant to overcome competition i.e., the possibility to put other races, groups or social classes to death. This process is done through the notion of inclusive-exclusion which gives, theoretically, citizens equal right under the law while hierarchizing them in relation to their race or social status (Agamben, 1998). In that sense, in the American context, biopolitics promotes well-being respectively for white and rich Americans at the expense of segregated minorities (race) along with poor and middle class whites (class conflict) in some instances.

1-Conceptualizing the Biopolitical Dispositive

So far, our understanding of biopolitics has evolved around the vague notions of state and state institutions (governance apparatus). However, these concepts do

not pertain to homogeneous entities working jointly, in all circumstances, for the same goals. When we talk about state, state institutions or governance apparatus, within the context of this work, we mean the elite i.e., interest groups. These are what people, in most societies, would hierarchize as the “rich,” the upper, or the dominant class. They are the one who detain the economy (businessmen), the means of production (industries, companies), the political apparatus (decision-making), the right to punish (judiciary), retribute and oppress (security forces and the military), make laws regulating social life, and the ability to frame and impact public opinion (mainstream media and the means of information). While individual members of this class may not always share similar interests, they always cooperate to protect their class privileges through laws and legislations. The biopolitical dispositive puts state institutions, the military, the economy and the media in the service of the elite. To sum up, biopolitics is the process through which the elite take over governance apparatuses as a medium to achieve class or individual interests.

To grasp the essence of what we are referring to, let us take slavery in both its economic and social dimensions. At initial stages, this practice was not about race. It was all about economy and power (Parish, 1997). The southern aristocracy (elite) building their economic model upon chattel slavery used state apparatus to generate laws that would legalize and help sustain this inhuman practice (White, 2017). However, given that no law can perpetuate without social legitimacy, they had to frame the mind of poor and middle class whites into adhering to their vision. In order to do so, we had the emergence of the ideologies (media-led propaganda) of slavery (eugenics, religious justifications). They served as justification for the subjugation of the black race. The premise that black people were genetically inferior to whites had its way into popular belief (Hasian, 1996). Romancing about white supremacy, poor whites gave the system of slavery the validity it needed for its perpetuation. Race has been instrumentalized to sustain and justify the institution of slavery. In this context, the biopolitical dispositive, backed by a strong ideological platform, promotes the well-being of the white elite at the expense of both the poor white populations and the slave. It serves both class and racial purposes. It is important that we stress the vital role ideology (media) plays in the success of biopolitical proceedings. Owning information outlets (media), the elite generate support, acceptance and legitimacy without which the biopolitical mechanism wouldn't work.

2- Investigating State Sovereignty in Biopolitical Mechanisms

The question that emerges from our argumentation is how states can, on legal grounds, marginalize a given group in favor of another. To what extent state apparatuses have the power to disrupt the norms they institute? To answer

to these questions, we shall explore the essence of state power – sovereignty – and its exercise. We have two schools of thought as we relate to sovereignty. The first, from Foucault, considers that states exercise sovereignty and power through the establishment of norms erected in laws. These laws, safeguarded by state institutions, regulate social life (Calarco & DeCaroli, 2007).

If Foucault's normative state sovereignty allows states to administer social life through laws, Agamben's notion of "state of exception" provides them with the ability to end this normality. States can suspend the laws (norms) modulating normal life. Sovereignty remains states' ability to either institute or terminate the state of normality. They can create laws and violate them as they see fit. In short, laws are contextual and may not secure individual people's rights. States decide whose right should be protected and whose right should not. They can either value a group's life or negate it. A disallowed life is one that is rendered unsacred, disposable. This is bare-life i.e., the life of the marginalized, the oppressed. It is a life exposed to death and sacrifice (Svirsky, 2012). To sum up, "the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, in a large degree, in the power and capacity to dictate who may live and who must die" (Mills, 2018, p. 1). The exercise of sovereignty remains a control over life and death: the right to kill. It defines life as the "deployment and manifestation of power" (Mills, 2018, p.2).

Biopolitical dispositive can exercise its control over mortality, anytime, based on what it perceives as a threat be it grounded or not. From this initial stage it will develop ideologies justifying future actions – framing public opinion, creating enemy images – to build support and authority for future actions. The final step consists of disposing of the target groups (putting them to death) through states institutions (Congress, the judiciary, the military) by means of legislations.

3-From their Arrival to Pearl Harbor: The Japanese Facing Oppression

Upon their arrival in the late 1860s, the Japanese took over the field of agriculture in the West Coast. By 1910, 39,000 persons of Japanese parentage, including 6,000 tenant farmers, were involved in farming (Bernstein et al., 1982). In 1920, they owned "74,769 acres, cash-leased 192,150 acres, sharecropped 121,000 acres, and contracted 70,137 acres" (Takahashi, 1997, p. 19). Their production was worth \$6 million and in California, this represented "30% to 35% of the state's entire truck crops" (Takahashi, 1997, p. 19). Building on their success in agriculture, they developed other business ventures. By 1919, in Seattle, they owned and "operated 47% of hotels, and 25% of grocery stores" (Takahashi, 1997, pp. 19-20). The Japanese were also dominant in the fishing and flower industries (Takahashi, 1997). In the 1920s, California's Japanese crop production valued \$67 million. It represented 10% of California's total crops value (Bernstein et al., 1982).

Standing from a biopolitical lens, the success of the Japanese in agriculture would have, without doubt, deteriorated local elite's economic status (interest). The Japanese, by monopolizing local resources, have become threats to the white man's prosperity. Their success at the expense of the white Californian elite constituted an attack on local establishment. The latter aimed at taking back control i.e., resuming normality, controlling the whole economy the agriculture field included. Such dispositions wouldn't be achievable without the biopolitical dispositive that allows the elite to use all state resources – the military, Congress, the judiciary, and media – to the fulfilment of their individual or class interests.

Consequently, local Californian authorities began enacting laws which would pare down the Japanese's main source of wealth i.e.; the land they farmed. In 1913, California issued the Alien Land Law (Shaefer, 2008) as they banned Japanese immigrants' land ownership. This legislation meant to curtail the privileges aliens enjoyed (Takahashi, 1997). However, this law, in the course of time, had become obsolete. The Japanese community kept on purchasing land through their American born offspring. The latter were, from constitutional and legal standpoints, allowed to own land. The Japanese could then keep the economic *status quo*.

The Alien Land Law had a strong media back up. The propaganda machine sought to create a hatred of the ethnic Japanese by portraying them as "unassimilable" and "undesirable" (Ancheta, 2006, p. 62). Their traditions and societal values were deemed incompatible with western systems of beliefs. It was through similar beliefs that, on December 11, 1906, San Francisco School-Board banned children of Asian lineage from attending primary schools (Ancheta, 2006). They were assigned segregated schools. As we scrutinize both the Alien Land Law and the school ban decision, there is no convincing, or coherent substance for sound analysis. What adults' land ownership has to do with school ban for children? A resentment resulting from economic considerations was given cultural, civilizational justifications. In biopolitical proceedings, the question is not whether there is coherence between interests, action or ideologies. What matters is taking the enemy down, no matter how, by curtailing his privileges.

Before the Alien Land Law, the U.S. signed, with Japan, in 1908, the Gentlemen's Agreement. The latter "agreed not to issue more workers' passports valid for continental United States" (Ancheta, 2006, p. 34). The Gentlemen's Agreement was followed by the 1922 Cable Act that threatened Americans to have their citizenship revoked if they get married within the Japanese community (Cho, 2013). Two years later, the Immigration Exclusion Act became effective. It put an end to all Asian immigration in the U.S. except for Filipinos (Baron et al., 2006). All these measures were meant to get rid of the Japanese the same way they did with Mexicans (Balderrama & Rodriguez, 2006) and the

Chinese whom, prior to the Japanese, in 1822, were excluded by the Chinese Exclusion Act (Soennichsen, 2011). Actually, the Japanese were brought to replace them and ended up enduring the same oppressive social force. It is important to mention that prior to Pearl Harbor, the biopolitical dispositive, although very active, had failed to take down the ethnic Japanese.

It was within such a tense social atmosphere, fed on anti-Japanese sentiment, that Pearl Harbor occurred. This tragedy created the state of exception. After Pearl Harbor, the media intensified its propaganda campaign in discrediting the Japanese. They aggravated people's fear by manufacturing an imaginary enemy. The Japanese had become the other and their demise was made possible through the fabrication of an enemy image. As a result, their lives were negated, disallowed dehumanized as they were morally and even physically reduced animalistic attributes.

Dehumanization is a process that justifies oppression. It alleviates the oppressor's guilt, and responsibility by making abstraction of the sacredness of the victim's humanity (Kaufmann et al., 2011). The latter is then perceived as an object, a thing that can be disposed of. It reduces human life to nothingness: bare-life.

Pearl Harbor and the media-created fear succeeded in crystalizing white-Japanese relations. Interest groups, the elite, in the field of agriculture, could then take advantage of the momentum. They didn't shy from admitting that they wanted to cast aside the Japanese for their sole interests. Some wouldn't mind resurrecting white supremacist ideologies. They asserted that the question was about white man's prosperity on the Pacific Coast at the expense of the Brown man. They aimed to drive out the Japanese so that "white farmers can take over and produce everything the Japs grow" (Williams, 2017, p. 67). The justification of their selfish enterprise found its legitimization in the notion of race. Many, especially military officers (General John DeWitt), claimed being against the Japanese presence on the West Coast because of their disloyalty. They belonged to an enemy race whom patriotism couldn't be tested because they "were not Caucasian" (Muller, 2007, pp. 17-18). This is what fouled many scholars such as Lynda Ivey and Kevin Kaatz, in *Citizen Internees*, into believing that race undesirability accounted for the Japanese rejection and detention.

However, this work asserts that this was a strategy biopolitical dispositive used to gather support among scared white populations. Playing the race card also allowed the elite to split enemy aliens into two categories – those they could trust and tolerate (Italians and Germans) and those that couldn't be trusted (Japanese). In choosing to widen racial divides, the biopolitical dispositive relied on white supremacist ideology to gather white support against a non-white group for a cause that wasn't race but economy-driven in the first place.

The internment of people of Japanese ancestry was, at a large degree, controversial. A series of government-ordered investigations—the Tolan Committee, (Hixson, 2003) the FBI and the Munson reports—concluded that the Japanese didn't constitute, in any manner, threats to national security (Robinson, 2009). They asserted that the Japanese had and would remain loyal to America no matter what. Therefore, the military necessity (national security) rationale, from the start, couldn't stand as justification for the incarceration of thousands of innocent people.

This justification seemed less sound when German and Italian nationals were neither removed nor incarcerated although they were also enemy aliens. Their country sided with Japan and fought against the U.S. Their non-incarceration accounted from the racial approach the American military had taken as it deemed non-Caucasian groups disloyal because of their race. Another factor that discredited this national security rationale was the fact that Japanese community in Hawaii was not incarcerated. Strategically, Hawaii represented a bigger threat to national security than California due to its proximity with Japan along with its huge Japanese population (O'Brien & Fugita, 1991). All these factors weigh in favor of our claim i.e., national security was only a pretense to part with the Japanese competition on the West Coast.

4-Bear-Life, Dehumanization and the Right to Kill

The Japanese-Americans' internment is the perfect illustration of bare-life and state of exception. Oppression, was given a legal form. In normal settings, constitutional rights constitute the norms. However, this normality was suspended by the state of exception magnified in Pearl Harbor. This event set the fate of the Japanese community by pushing them into concentration camps.

Concentration camps served first and foremost as platforms to instore domination and control over their inhabitants. They helped in negating the ethnic Japanese's constitutional and human rights. The latter were denied their freedom of movement (they were confined in camps and guarded like prisoners), of speech (what they said during their meetings and published in their newspapers had first to be approved by camp administrations), expression (not allowed to relate their inhuman conditions, in the camps, to external agencies, or sources) and association.

Even if systematic murder was not the end goal of this internment program, attempts were made to reduce their humanity to the mechanical act of breathing. The internment, as a domination apparatus, aimed at methodologically and systematically stripping internees from all human features through the following steps.

First, the internment led to the destruction of the juridical character of the ethnic Japanese by virtue of which humans are protected by law. The internees

became all the sudden stateless, foreigners in the country that birthed them much like the Jews in Nazi Germany. Because they had no status as Americans due to the state of exception, they lost their constitutional rights.

Second, detainees were placed outside the normal juridical system. They were not governed by the laws that administered normal social life. Assembly centers, the first stage of the detention program, were under the supervision of the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA), a military ruled organization. The camps were ruled under the military. They had the same status as Guantanamo an Abu Graib i.e., a no man's land (Andreopoulos et al., 2011) supervised by no judicial institution where detainees were the prey to soldiers' physical and psychological abuses. Such dispositions render the application of justice impossible.

Third, detainees were held in inhuman living conditions as most centers were built on racetracks, fairgrounds or livestock pavilions, in underdeveloped areas fit for wild life (Burton et al., 1999). Families of five to eight members lived all together in "20/20 feet apartments" (Weglyn, 1976, p.84). Apartments were located within barracks and the latter hosted four to six families. Barracks, in their turn, made a block (Weglyn, 1976). A block was made of twelve to fourteen barracks. Each block could support 250 to 500 persons. They were composed of a mess hall, a recreation hall, latrines, and a laundry room (Weglyn, 1976). A center averaged roughly forty-eight blocks (Weglyn, 1976).

All the centers were surrounded by barbed wires and under the Military Police's surveillance (MP). Control tours were established for a stricter surveillance of the evacuees much like in prisons (Weglyn, 1976). Within these conditions, evacuees faced a total lack of privacy. Family life was massively disturbed. Privacy became a luxury they could not afford while they were herded like animals in complete disregard of their needs and rights.

Daily activities like bathing, or going to latrines, caused problems for many evacuees. Showers and latrines were used on a communal ground. Internees had no other choice than bathing in front of complete strangers because of doorless bathrooms. As a result, some people showered exclusively by night while everybody was asleep. Putting them in such harsh conditions was meant to undermine their moral capacity to think by themselves; to make them internalize their sub-humans and inferior status. The biggest success of the internment remains its ability to take away internees' human dignity.

On top of all that, evacuees were physically abused by camp guards. Many were killed as they stood against their inhuman treatments (Girdner & Loftis, 1969). For instance, at Topaz, James Wasaka, a sixty-two years old evacuee was shot to death by a guard on April 1943 as he tried to escape the detention center (Girdner & Loftis, 1969). Similarly, at Tule Lake, on May 24, 1924, Shoichi James Okomoto was also shot dead by a guard (Soga, 2008). The life of an internee

was not worth much of consideration as multiple instances of lethal shooting cases occurred throughout the detention. Innocents and not enemy combatants, they were incarcerated without charge, or trial in a country that grants criminals the right to be tried by a jury.

Camp experience damaged the Japanese community's unity. The Kibei¹ contested the authority of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), a Nisei² ruled organization. They accused them of collusion with the centers' administrations. Gradually, the former organized resistance in the centers. The Black Dragons was the most important of these resistant groups. They targeted JACL members they called "*inu*" (dogs) in reference to their betrayal of the Japanese community (Bernstein et al., 1982).

As the war neared its end, the biopolitical dispositive sought to definitively settle the Japanese question. Given that national security wouldn't be a strong justification to confine the Japanese in post-war America, the War Relocation Authority (the organization in charge of the Relocation Centers) planned on reducing their population through a well-controlled mechanism. It enacted a huge repatriation campaign based on allegations of disloyalty. Was considered disloyal and repatriated anyone denying previous allegiance to Japan. Was given a second chance (Nisei and Kibei) those who accepted, after recognizing their previous allegiance to Japan, to join the military. In short, for one to remain in the U.S., he had to calumny himself/herself and pay its tribute to society by giving his life on the battlefield. The biopolitical dispositive had come to an end as it exposed to death thousands of innocent people who had to fight for a country that had stolen their humanity, freedom and dignity. Those refusing to enroll in the military along with those denying prior allegiance to Japan were repatriated (Weglyn, 1976).

The repatriation scheme allowed the government to mow down the Japanese populations in the West Coast by two third. For the most part, Kibei and Issei³ refused the terms of social re-insertion – recognizing guilt for a crime they didn't commit and joining the army as a sign of attachment to the U.S. – and went back to Japan. Even at that point, the federal government portrayed their refusal to join the army as a sign of their fidelity to Japan while the latter had just lost faith in the government that taught them the virtues of democracy, justice and equality. It is important to recall that the reason why the U.S. forced detainees in recognizing previous devotedness to Japan was because it would

¹ Part of the first generation of Japanese-Americans. They Kibei received a substantial part of their education in Japan. They were detained during WWII.

² Part of the first generation of Japanese-Americans. In contrast to the Kibei, they received all their education in the United States and never left the nation.

³ First generation of Japanese living in the U.S.

justify the national security rationale. This would have justified the detention program as the detainees confessed their guilt.

5-Outcome

Shall we consider the internment scheme a success within a biopolitical context? The answer is positive if one takes into consideration the losses the Japanese minority endured. Broom and Riemer assumed that, for the Los Angeles area alone, individual evacuees suffered respectively a \$1,000, and a \$2,500 median property, and median income loss. The sum makes an approximate \$77 million (Bernstein et al., 1982). These figures can help us conceive, at least slightly, what the internment cost the Japanese community. While away, their houses were vandalized and their properties stolen. According to census figures of the West Coast, the 6,118 Japanese owned farms were worth \$72,600,000 plus an estimated \$6 million of equipment (Weglyn, 1976). The Issei owned 2.2% of California's farmable land (Weglyn, 1976). When they left, their farms passed into the hands of Caucasian operators, thus, putting an end to their influence in the field of agriculture. The removal succeeded in getting rid of the Japanese competition. The Japanese-American community made of doctors, dentists, teachers, and architects saw their careers end abruptly.

In short, the internment was a complete achievement in terms of inter-ethnic battle for resource within a biopolitical approach. On one hand, it served to get rid of competition by stealing the Japanese's properties. On the other hand, it secured the white's racial primacy.

Conclusion

Transcending official military narratives, government allegations of military necessity and hysteria, this paper draws a gruesome picture of the internment. It paints the internment in its true colors i.e., a strategy of domination; an enterprise motivated by class interest and justified by racial unconformity and orchestrated fear. We have demonstrated that economy and profit are central in understanding racial hatred and discrimination; that military necessity, hysteria, fear rationales were groundless; that media helped in demonizing the Japanese community as it framed public opinion. When a dominant group internalizes its own interests as legitimate, it creates justifications for any mistreatment it may perpetrate against subordinate groups. The biopolitical system succeeded in getting rid of the Japanese question as it turned them into disposable entities, abstract objects, the elite could use to ensure their own class prosperity. These were people (Japanese) who have been made stateless on the soil that saw them come to life. They had lost wealth they made decades to generate. Finally, they were forced to die to defend a country that called them the enemy. More importantly, they had lost faith in the country that,

internationally, criticized the Holocaust and the inhuman treatment the Jews experience in Nazi Germany. What happened to the Japanese is, to some extent, comparable to what happened to the Jews during the Holocaust. Both groups' lives were considered unsacred and disposable. Both were exposed to death with a slight nuance. Germany physically eliminated, on a large scale, its victims while Americans exposed theirs to violence and death respectively in detention camps and on the battlefield. Hence, the end goal was the same: getting rid of the supposed enemy. The major difference between these two schemes lies in the death toll *Shoah* generated in comparison to the Japanese internment program. In short, through the detainment program, race was instrumentalized as a political weapon to marginalize, exploit and oppress the Japanese community.

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