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# Making the Desert Bloom: Landscape Photography and Identity in the Owens Valley American West

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Making the Desert Bloom:  
Landscape Photography and Identity in the  
Owens Valley American West

Kaily Heitz

In Partial Fulfillment of a Degree of Bachelor of Arts in  
Environmental Analysis

Pitzer College  
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#### A Note on Methodology

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this thesis, my research methods combine historical primary and secondary document library research with ethnographic field studies, the latter of which includes personal reflections and interviews. As my arguments are meant to undermine the validity of the notion of objective perspective, I have chosen to incorporate my own voice toward the end of this body of text.

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis analyzes the way in which landscape photography has historically been used as a colonialist tool to perpetuate narratives of control over the American West during the mid to late 1800s. I use this framework to interrogate how these visual narratives enforced ideas about American identity and whiteness relative to power over the landscape, indigenous people and the Japanese-Americans imprisoned at Manzanar within Owens Valley, California. I argue that because photographic representation is controlled by colonist powers, images of people within the American West reinforce imperialist rhetoric that positions whiteness in control of the land; thus, white settlers used this narrative to justify their stagnating agricultural development in the Owens Valley, Native Americans were documented as a part of the landscape to be controlled, and the internees at Manzanar were portrayed such that Japanese culture was obscured in favor of assimilationist, Americanizing tropes of their status as new pioneers on the American Frontier.

## INTRODUCTION

The camera is not an objective instrument. We use it daily to document our own lived realities. It is a representational tool, illustrating how we see the world, construct our own realities and how we choose to remember them. The same is true of photography from the days of its infancy in the mid 1800s. In this thesis, I argue that it has been used particularly within the Western landscape to uphold and espouse American colonist, nationalist and expansionist rhetoric. During the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century, landscape photography helped make the frontier appear attainable and alluring as a commodified space. Embedded within the dream of the American West is a visual conceptualization of who qualifies as an American to assume power in this space. Because it exists largely within the white imagination, it is therefore chiefly whites who are meant to take control of the landscape of the Western Frontier. In braving the challenging environments and eliminating Native Americans, white settlers fulfilled dreams of expansion; making that space productive for ranching and farming laid further claims to the Western landscape in the name of American imperialism.

The Owens Valley is a particularly interesting case for studying this phenomenon because its environment, frequently the setting for 20<sup>th</sup> century Western films, has come to be visualized as the “classic” American Western space. But the actors who have played out the role of the hero of the American West shifted many times over the course of US colonist history in California. This thesis looks at the history of Owens Valley between the mid 1800s and the end of World War II through the lens of photography in order to better understand how the camera acted as an ideological tool that shaped the national and cultural identities of the various communities that have lived there.

The first and second chapter substantiate why landscape photography is a particularly apt medium for looking at the formation of narratives about the West and American frontier identities; understood as a scientific format for understanding space in an apparently omnipotent, realistic and objective manner helped to concretize the legend of the West as an attainable, commercially viable space for viewers and pioneers. Chapter three looks at the history of Owens Valley's inhabitants; power over the land shifted according to who controlled natural resources, water being the most critical. Photographs at this time aligned with the popular postcard images that presented Western landscapes as idyllic, flourishing and quaint in order to justify the value of developing communities in the Owens Valley despite the diminishing quality of agriculture there. This contrasted sharply with the objectifying pictures taken by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, which posed the most threat to those idyllic, established settlements. The fourth chapter analyzes the way in which forced notions of patriotism and loyalty were introduced into the Owens Valley through the relocation of 10,000 Japanese Americans to the area of Manzanar during World War II. Residents' landscaping and agricultural products were rooted in acts of resistance and regaining a semblance of community, identity and control; but government commissioned photographs, alongside Ansel Adams' *Born Free and Equal*, equated their re-appropriation of the land with motifs of the Western pioneer, thereby construing these as acts of patriotism, obscuring Japanese heritage and making a case for Japanese integration into American society.

Each of these chapters in the history of the Owens Valley illustrate how national ideology, photography and concepts about landscape work in tandem to enforce a particular idea of American identity as belonging to the white family in control of their



environment. Native Americans historically had absolute control over their landscapes, but they were visually documented in such a way that essentialized, othered and undermined their power in order to make way for white settlers. Images of Japanese Americans largely drained them of their culture, community and the trauma they experienced in being uprooted from their homes and de-Americanized. Photographs re-integrate them by using the story of the American frontier farmer as a motif to assimilate them into white society. Ultimately, it is whiteness in landscape imagery that is most comfortably expressed in romanticized, picturesque settings.

## CHAPTER 1

### PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE WILD: A NEW FAITH ON THE FRONTIER

*[Photography's] perfection is unapproachable by human hand and its truth raises it above all language, painting or poetry. It is the first universal language addressing itself to all who possess vision, and in characters alike understood in the courts of civilization and the hut of the savage. The pictorial language of Mexico, the hieroglyphic of Egypt are now superseded by reality. "The Daguerreolite" The Daily Chronicle regarding The Gallery of the West<sup>1</sup>*

Just a year after its invention, Cincinnati's *The Daily Chronicle* praised the camera as a tool that represented cultures and places with more finesse than any other human invention theretofore invented because it appeared to mimic reality. More importantly, photography is presented as a nuanced visual code that can be "universally" interpreted to subvert language. More than one hundred years later, we look back at historical photographs with the same sense of awe at the eerie accuracy with which they portray the past. The dangerous assumption made here is that what we see in a photograph is fundamentally true and an accurate portrayal of reality. Allan Sekula, Susan Sontag and John Berger contend that the language of photography that the Cincinnati chronicle proclaimed could supercede the inscriptive language of other civilizations' is not neutral, but controlled by the people who released the shutter. The universality of representation in the photograph need be contextualized within expanding capitalist and scientific interests of the time; it is therefore necessarily rooted in a colonialist language of desire to control a sense of reality and the progress of global history. Provided that photography is understood to exist within the confines of

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<sup>1</sup> "The Daguerrolite" *The Daily Chronicle*, January, 1840, 2 in David Sekula, "The

colonialist expression, the supposedly impartial eye it turns onto landscapes and non-white peoples represents them as objects of colonial control.

### Universal Truth and Representation in Photographs

Representation, regardless of the medium in which it is conveyed, is never objectively neutral or universal. According to Stuart Hall in “Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practice”, meaning as it is inferred from visual, auditory or written codes, is culturally constructed. An image, despite its likeness to reality, is only ever an image and can therefore only do the work of a signifier that refers us to the real world; in making this leap from image to its real-world implications, subjective, and therefore culturally informed, interpretation has to occur.<sup>2</sup> Yet the acquisition and dissemination of these images as unarguable Truth suggests, as Hall proposes, that an underlying Power structure exists that controls Knowledge of reality. Michael Foucault’s tripartite of “Knowledge, Truth and Power” highlights the hegemonic control over relative epistemologies<sup>3</sup>; by claiming that photography portrays universal Truths about reality, all other representations, like those of the Egyptian hieroglyph or Mexican pictograph, become mere interpretations of reality and therefore obsolete.

Sekula states that the elimination of alternate epistemologies has much to do with the relevance of science as a system of knowledge for establishing truth, saying, “This epistemology [of acquisition and distribution of truth] combines a faith in the universality

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<sup>2</sup> Stuart Hall ed. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London: SAGE publications, 1997) , 36-64.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

of the natural sciences and a belief in the transparency of representation.”<sup>4</sup> Because photography, which makes use of mechanics and chemical operations, is considered the most scientific method for fixing images, it is also considered able to conduct accurate data directly from the real world to the viewer. As an example of how photography is elevated to a higher standard of truth than other practices of image-making, prior to William Henry Jackson’s



**Figure 1: Thomas Moran, "Mount of the Holy Cross," Courtesy of The Autry Museum, 1875**

photograph of the fabled Mount of the Holy Cross in Colorado (Fig. 2), people believed it to be a myth written into the expeditionary tales of Western exploration. In 1873, Jackson led a group to locate and document the mountain of legend; it was thereafter considered an unconstitutionally true symbol of Christianity in the Western landscape.



**Figure 2: William Henry Jackson, "Mount of the Holy Cross," 1873**

Accompanying Jackson was painter, Thomas Moran. In direct contrast to Jackson’s topographical depiction, Moran created a dramatic, highly impressionistic piece meant to capture the “true impression” of the landscape (Fig. 1). Said he, “I place no

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<sup>4</sup> Sekula, “The Traffic in Photographs,” 18.

value upon literal transcripts from Nature. My general scope is not realistic; all my tendencies are toward idealization.”<sup>5</sup>

Photography’s relationship to science often gives it credence as non-idealized and therefore lacking in a culturally specific code. In his article, “The Rhetoric of the Image,” Roland Barthes illuminates that this corroborates the persuasive power of the photograph without raising suspicion as to the intentions or bias of the photographer; rather “a pseudo-truth is surreptitiously substituted for the simple validity of openly semantic systems; the absence of code disintellectualizes the message because it seems to found in nature the signs of culture.”<sup>6</sup> The photograph is therefore the perfect tool for claiming the supremacy of European vision of the world because it is able to equate, with scientific, “un-biased” acuity, a version of reality framed by a photographer with the real world.

Raising the legitimacy of white narratives through the impartial lens of the camera beyond rebuke results in the consequential elimination of non-white perspectives in either one of two ways. Edward Steichen’s 1955 exhibition, *The Family of Man*, is often cited for its idealist attempt to represent people from around the world as a united, largely homogenous humanity. These photos, from 273 photographers in only 68 countries, projected American cultural values (such as the concept of the nuclear family) onto communities from around the world, implying that theirs were universal standards of reality and that photography offered a universal point of access to humanistic discourse.<sup>7</sup> This process of assimilation was countered by “othering” practices of anthropological

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<sup>5</sup> National Gallery of Art, accessed April 23, 2014, <http://www.nga.gov/feature/moran/west9.shtm>

<sup>6</sup> Roland Barthes, “The Rhetoric of the Image,” in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. Alan Trachtenberg. (New Haven: Leete’s Island Books, 1980), 279.

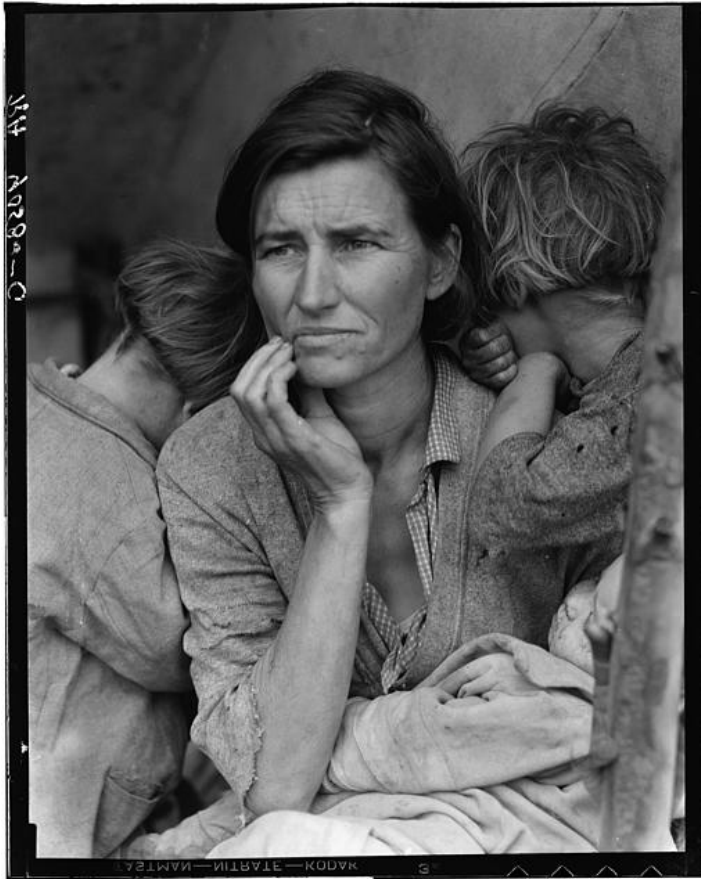


Figure 3: Dorothea Lange, "Migrant Mother," 1936, featured in Edward Steichen's 1955 exhibit, "The Family of Man"

photographer operates as if that activity transcends class interests, as if its perspective is universal."<sup>9</sup> Photography was thus used to loftily scrutinize unfamiliar people and obscure particular meaning through the blanket vantage of the camera.

Photography does not exist within a cultural vacuum. These conversations, only a few of much broader discussion of photographic representation, illustrate how photography is not an objective instrument, but a transmutable tool that has aided in the construction of hegemonic colonist power through the control of relative epistemologies and interpretations of reality.

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<sup>7</sup> Sekula, "The Traffic in Photographs"

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 18.

<sup>9</sup> Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977): 55

### New Gods: The Camera as a Conductor of Ideology

Photography is intentionally used as a tool to aid in the dissemination of colonist ideology. While it is clearly bound to representational bias, photography is nevertheless a highly persuasive medium because it easily convinces viewers to believe in a particular interpretation of reality. This has to do with the perception that not only is photography scientific, and therefore more truthful, but that it inculcates a religious or ritualistic quality that invites belief.

Writing about the evolution of human characteristics in the environment in *The Only World We've Got*, Paul Shepard focuses on the importance of vision in developing self awareness and situating oneself in the world. What we see is what we know; vision connotes a sense of immersion in space, of "being here."<sup>10</sup> Visual art is thus the highest expression of knowledge because it roughly communicates knowledge as it can be perceptually inferred. The concept of "vision," however, transcends human inference when we consider, as Shepard does that our eye is only a tool for comprehending light. If light is our only means by which we interpret and construct knowledge about the world, it may rightly be considered a fundamental element to our understanding of self in relation to space; in Shepard's analysis of Otto Van Simson's commentary on the nature of light, he says, "that light was the closest approximation to pure form, and the Middle Ages raised light to the status of mediator between bodiless and bodily substances, both spiritual body and embodied spirit. As the cause of all organic growth light was conceived as the transcendental reality, engendering the universe and illuminating our

intellect for the perception of truth.”<sup>11</sup> We rely upon our eyes to gain an understanding of the world; light is therefore raised to the status of God because it makes life and objects visible.

If we consider photography as nothing but a mechanism for fixing patterns of light onto light-sensitive material, it is easy to understand the conflation of the camera with impenetrable reality and omnipotent truth. Oliver Wendell Holmes’s exclamation that photography made “form henceforth divorced from matter,” in his 1859 essay on “The Stereoscope and the Stereograph” seems far more plausible given the ephemeral task assigned to the photographer: convert light, which is the basis of visual perception and subsequently form, knowledge and truth, into a fixed, reproducible image.<sup>12</sup> In a photograph, we communicate this ultimate knowledge of not only space and form, but time; Shepard argues that “In transmitting cultural information, “I see” means “I understand” when applied to events in the past. A “seer” is one whose vision extends forward through the unity of time and space in which the tradition-oriented society lives.”<sup>13</sup> To control a camera is to control light and pin down a particular moment in time.

The trust that we place in the camera to produce accurate images that subsume form and its power to apparently freeze time conflates scientific realism with dogmatic belief. The camera, especially when considered as a medium for elemental light, can be therefore be considered a divine tool. Berger discusses the way in which the judgmental, all-seeing eye of God has been replaced by the surveillance of the camera.

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<sup>10</sup> Paul Shepard, *The Only World We’ve Got* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1996): 15

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 20.

<sup>12</sup> Sekula, “The Traffic in Photographs.”

<sup>13</sup> Shepard *The Only World We’ve Got*, 15



At first, the secularisation of the of the capitalist world during the 19<sup>th</sup> century elided the judgment of God into the judgment of History in the name of Progress. Democracy and Science became the agents of such a judgment. And for a brief moment, photography, as we have seen, was considered to be an aid to these agents. It is still to this historical moment that photography owes its ethical reputation as Truth.<sup>14</sup>

Within the era of science and reason, we rely upon the camera to dictate our judgment of history and reality under the assumption that these images provide us with a closer approximation of truth and therefore choose to *believe* in the capabilities of an industrial tool.

### Controlling the View

Photographers take a rather dogmatic approach to their subject. The authoritative, surveying stance of the camera imbues it with a authoritative quality. This is particularly true of landscape photography because the way in which we physically and ideologically alienate ourselves from nature is mirrored by the functionality of the camera in removing ourselves from the subjects being shot. Removing the person from the image of the land allows nature to retain its power as that which is uncorrupted while still exerting control over it by introducing a frame onto a scene and “capturing” its visage. Equal control is exerted over native peoples not pictured as a part of the landscape.

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<sup>14</sup> David Berger, *About Looking* (New York: Vitage International, 1991): 58



## *Wilderness*

Wilderness is discursively distinguished from our everyday environments in that it is meant to exist as the antithesis to human civilization<sup>15</sup>. In pre-Renaissance European Christian rhetoric, wilderness was construed as fearful, wild and uncouth precisely because it had been left untamed.<sup>16</sup> It was, says William Cronon, “a place to which one only came against one’s will,” where only those banished by God wandered. Henry David Thoreau too comments on wilderness as an undomesticated space. But his writing is indicative of a change in behavior towards nature; instead of reviling the wilderness, Thoreau embraces a self-imposed exile as a “sauntering”<sup>17</sup> vagabond in God’s holy land. Even in descriptions of more pastoral landscapes, nature is revered in an ephemeral appeal to those characteristics of the land that haven’t been manipulated by people. For instance, in the famous passage from his 1849 lecture, Ralph Waldo Emerson writes,

“When we speak of nature...we have a distinct but most poetical sense in the mind. We mean the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects. It is this which distinguishes the stick of timber of the wood-cutter, from the tree of the poet. The charming landscape which I saw this morning, is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape.”<sup>18</sup>

Dialogue about wilderness as a place that is separate from humanity and undesired shifted to a place that is separate and *desired*. This changed how we culturally construct wild spaces as places of untamed nature to places that could be ideologically

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<sup>15</sup> William Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature” in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, ed. William Cronon. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995): 69-90

<sup>16</sup> Allen Carlson, *Nature and Landscape: An Introduction to Environmental Aesthetics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009)

<sup>17</sup> Allen Carlson and Sheila Lintott, *Nature, Aesthetics and Environmentalism: From Beauty to Duty* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008): 54

controlled. This, argues Alan Carlson, was achieved by creating distance through which spectators could gain a sense of power over the landscape as an aesthetic, visual subject. He says that there developed "...a mode of aesthetic appreciation that looked upon the natural world with an eye not unlike the distancing, objectifying eye of science. In this way, the tradition laid the groundwork for the idea of the sublime. By means of the sublime even the most threatening of nature's manifestations, such as mountains and wilderness, could be distanced and appreciated, rather than simply feared and despised."<sup>19</sup> From a distance, nature could be appreciated from an aesthetic perspective purely for its form. The ability to distance ourselves from nature and view it from a "disinterested" lofty plane allowed people to control and appreciate nature for its aesthetic appearance and still experience it as that which is separate from and untainted by us. This shift is also responsible for changing visual discourse from "wilderness" to "landscape," which focuses upon viewing the land and controlling aspects of the unknown associated with the "untamed" wilderness. This brings us back to issues of representation; in representing objects of desire through the lens, like landscapes, many scholars would disagree with Emerson in saying that the landscape can indeed be visually manipulated and owned by those in control of the view.

Up to this point, the recurrence of religious language has been a theme because landscape photography has combined two systems of dogmatic belief: faith in a machine to portray reality in life-like detail and our awe of God's creation in Nature. The most disturbing aspect to keep in mind, however, is that landscape photography is not itself a

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 50

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 4.

belief but a medium through which people as photographers, responding to their respective audiences, enact colonist ideology regarding control of these spaces.

### *Voyeurs and Consumers*

Nature in its aestheticized form moves from “wilderness,” which exists as a space entirely outside of human control, to “landscape,” which is a space that contains little or no obvious signs of human manipulation but is within control of, if not entirely constructed by, the artist’s gaze. In his analysis of how traditional landscape art projected Eurocentric perspectives of conquest over the environment, Charles Garoian suggests that the composition of the image reflects domesticating ideologies it was meant to enforce. Using tools to confine the view, for instance, mirrors the process of subduing an expansive wilderness into a manageable tract; the more advanced the tools, the more efficient control the artist and colonist may gain over the land. The actual perspective presented, argues Garoian, separates the viewer from the scene, “as if through a transparent window,”<sup>20</sup> but incorporates them into the experience of power over the land.

According to Sontag, the strictly documentary nature of photography necessitates that the photographer assume the role of voyeur: a passive, detached observer.<sup>21</sup> We simultaneously rely on the camera’s ability to take in more information than can readily be absorbed by the human eye,<sup>22</sup> so much so that the photograph appears to present a reality more real than our own lived experiences<sup>23</sup>. This practice of observing an

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<sup>20</sup> Charles Garoian, “Art Education and the Aesthetics of Land Use in the Age of Ecology,” *Studies in Art Education* 39, No. 3: 244-261.

<sup>21</sup> Sontag, *On Photography*, 55.

<sup>22</sup> Shepard, *The Only World We’ve Got*, 4.

<sup>23</sup> Sontag, *On Photography*.

unfamiliar place from an uninformed distance invariably results in its essentialization when reproduced for viewing audiences. Voyeuristic control and the construction of a hyper-real space, says Sontag, makes space seem easily attainable. “Faced with the awesome spread and alienness of a newly settled continent, people wielded cameras as a way of taking possession of the places they visited.”<sup>24</sup> The ability of photography to reduce entire vistas and civilizations to fit a single frame produces a simplified version of something real that can then be assigned value, reproduced for incorporation into a global capitalist economy and consequently physically and ideologically possessed by the masses<sup>25</sup>.

Sontag and Berger further contend that these images are necessary to maintaining hegemonic power because they manufacture ideology sold as information; “Cameras”, say Sontag “define reality in the two ways essential to the workings of an advanced industrial society: as a spectacle (for masses) and as an object of surveillance (for rulers). The production of images...furnishes a ruling ideology.”<sup>26</sup> The essentialized subjects of publicly distributed photographs are commodified and reinforce a power structure that relies upon the limited knowledge those photos can confer.

It is in this act of symbolic monetary possession of landscape that colonial ideology is best expressed. Landscape argues W. J. T. Mitchell, is a medium,

for expressing value, it has a semiotic structure rather like that of money, functioning as a special sort of commodity that plays a unique symbolic role in the system of exchange-value...Landscape is a marketable commodity to be presented and re-presented in ‘packaged tours,’ an object to be purchased, consumed, and even brought home in the form of souvenirs such as postcards and photo albums. In this double role as commodity and potent cultural symbol,

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>25</sup> Sekula, “The Traffic in Photographs.”

<sup>26</sup> Berger, *About Looking*, 59-60

landscape is the object of fetishistic practices involving the limitless repetition of identical photographs taken on identical spots by tourists with interchangeable emotions.”<sup>27</sup>

Photography is therefore a way of disseminating ideology scripted into the landscape genre. Both landscape and photography act as methods for divorcing matter from reality and constructing new ideological spaces.

Importantly, David Hickey’s essay on “Shooting the Land,” articulates that our relationship with the landscape and the photos we consume and collect of those spaces represents a “disembodied romance with the evacuated landscape that presents itself to us as a container for the spirit....it is the eternal, visual *idea* of nature that we worship in these images and not its harsh, historical facticity.”<sup>28</sup> Garoian corroborates this idea by saying that the perspective of most landscape art is complicit in the expansion of Western ideology over the environment<sup>29</sup>. Thus, landscape photographs are meant to disseminate ideas about nature as a disembodied space but one that could still be voyeuristically controlled by the audiences who consumed them. By the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, landscape photographs, with some exceptions, acted as invitations to white pioneers to take advantage of the spaces they depicted and made seem so attainable.

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<sup>27</sup> W. J. T. Mitchell, “Imperial Landscape” in *Landscape and Power*, W.T. J. Mitchell ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994): 14-15.

<sup>28</sup> David Hickey, “Shooting the Land” in *The Altered Landscape* ed. Peter E. Pool et al. (Reno: Nevada Museum of Art and University of Nevada Press, 1999): 28

<sup>29</sup> Garoian, “Art Education,” 247

## Conclusion

What these theorists have sought to prove is that photography is not a mirror of reality but a construct representing hegemonic discourses on truth. It is a tool in the employ of the colonist powers that be and therefore represents a narrative of distanced domination over the landscapes and civilizations it seeks to control. This distance is necessary to essentialize expansive views and cultures for efficient integration into the colonist, capitalist system. To expand on this theory, the following chapters address how photography is a colonizing force that imposes white values and perspectives and how it has been inscribed in the language of landscape images of the American West.



## CHAPTER 2

### AT THE FRONTIER: CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF THE AMERICAN WEST

*For Americans, true freedom is not the choice at the ballot box but the opportunity to create a new world out of nothing: a Beverly Hills, a Disneyland, a Dallas, a Tranquility Base.*- Frederick Turner, “Cultivating the American Garden”<sup>30</sup>

American identity thrives in the outer edges of the frontier. According to Turner, it is at the “meeting point between savagery and civilization”<sup>31</sup> that Americans create themselves; they contrast themselves against what they are not—in this case, the Native American “other”—and define themselves by constant, forward-thinking progress and the freedom to exert absolute, hard-earned control over their environment.<sup>32</sup> Romanticized photographs of sublime, open landscapes or lone figures laying claim to their surroundings corroborated these ideals because it contained a narrative that gelled with myths of the American Frontier newly incorporated into ideas of national identity through a highly believable medium. These photographs were employed by corporate tycoons and the U.S. government, both of whom wanted to gain adequate information about the West while simultaneously alluring public audiences to migrate and pave the way for American civilization on the frontier. Considering that photographs of the American West were produced within this framework of expansionist agendas and the development of a growing national identity, this chapter underlines the importance of photography as a methodological tool for shaping American identity in the West.

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<sup>30</sup> Carol C. Chin, *Modernity and National Identity in the United States and East Asia 1895-1919*, (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2010): 129

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 23

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

## Photography and Westward Expansion

1851, the year of the first World's Fair in London marked the height of academic discourse in the natural sciences and a more analytical interrogation of nature.<sup>33</sup> That same year, glass plate negatives were invented; the wet collodian technique, which made a negative image from light-sensitive chemicals poured onto glass, freed photography from the complex, studio-based daguerreotype process.<sup>34</sup> Images of the land simultaneously began to shift from familiar, pastoral interpretations of nature to more investigative depictions, but maintained a sense of romantic idealism. Because wet plate photography produced negatives, rather than a single positive daguerreotype picture, a single negative could be used to print multiple positive images and thereby disseminate ideologies embedded in its depiction. This coincidence of a newly mobile imaging tool that could produce prints for wide distribution during an era of expanding interest in natural science and colonial exploration catalyzed the advancement of landscape photography and laid the groundwork for a new vision of the land.

The role of photography alongside the ideals of Manifest Destiny was to document Westward expansion and largely affirm these ideals for Americans on the home front. The term "Manifest Destiny" was coined in the 1840s to rally the public behind political agendas to expand the borders of the United States West to the Pacific. It was the destiny of America to make manifest ideals of self-sufficiency and democratic

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<sup>33</sup> Weston J. Naef *Era of Exploration: The Rise of Landscape Photography in the American West, 1860-1885* (Buffalo: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1975)

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 14

freedom across the continent.<sup>35</sup> In the words of John O’Sullivan, the nation was meant to be looking forward in the “fulfilment of our mission—to the entire development of the principle of our organization—freedom of conscience, freedom of person, freedom of trade and business pursuits, universality of freedom and equality. This is our high destiny, and in nature's eternal, inevitable decree of cause and effect we must accomplish it.”<sup>36</sup>

Wet-plate photography was particularly useful in perpetuating this idea because the positive prints made from its film could be widely disseminated and coupled with words to enhance the narrative meaning of an image. The daguerreotype, though indeed a tool occasionally used to document the steadily expanding western frontier, was limited in its ability to confer meaning and, since it could only produce one image, was not very widely accessible<sup>37</sup>. Historian Peter Bacon Hales write that, “whereas the daguerreotype implied a democracy of ownership, making precious miniatures available to a mass population, the new negative/positive process offered a democracy of sight, allowing a wide range of viewers to share the same image of Lincoln, of Niagara Falls, of Yellowstone or the field where General Reynolds fell.”<sup>38</sup> Land-hungry Americans were equally desirous of owning the view over the sublime landscapes of California. In this way, photography gave people the opportunity to explore the West without ever leaving their homes.

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<sup>35</sup> “Manifest Destiy: An Introduction” PBS, accessed April 24, 2014, [http://www.pbs.org/kera/usmexicanwar/prelude/md\\_introduction.html](http://www.pbs.org/kera/usmexicanwar/prelude/md_introduction.html)

<sup>36</sup> John L. O’Sullivan, “The Great Nation of Futurity,” *The United States Democratic Review*: 6 Issue 23 (New York: J. and H.G. Langley, 1839): 426-430

<sup>37</sup> Martha Sandweiss, *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002)

<sup>38</sup> Peter Bacon Hales “American Views and the Romance of Modernization” in *Photography in Nineteenth-Century America* Martha Sandweiss and Alan Trachtenberg ed. (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum, 1991): 207

## The American View Tradition in the Antebellum Era

Between victory in the Mexican-American War in 1850 and the end of the Civil War in 1865, Manifest Destiny and American nationalism took the form of large panoramas that displayed heroic images of the America's frontier. These displays attracted crowds of people eager to witness an artist's rendition of unknown landscapes. Crucial to what became known as the American "view tradition" was the size, detail, and narrative drama of the piece, not strictly the

accuracy of the portrayed image. In 1852, John Wesley Jones displayed a panoramic painting called "Pantoscope of California, Nebraska, Utah and the Mormons." (Fig. 4) The showing received national praise, one Boston newspaper noting that "As a picture alone—a work of art—it is admirable, but as developing the vast scenery of our own country and revealing to us that land so romantically interwoven with our nation's destiny, it is intensely interesting and instructive."<sup>39</sup> Although the expedition required



**Figure 4: "Jones Great Pantoscope of California" 1852.**

to make the image involved extensive use of daguerreotype photography, Jones made no use of them in the actual showing. Rather than accuracy, the audiences of the view tradition desired the exciting—a bird's eye views of the path west and expansive images

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<sup>39</sup> Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 49-50

that allowed viewers to vicariously follow the expedition on their travels along a dramatically lit painted plain.<sup>40</sup> Due to the distinctly narrative character of the view tradition, it was invariably bound up in popular nationalist rhetoric that inspired support of western expansion.

The daguerreotype was *too* literal for popular viewing audiences. Within the view tradition, a successful image needed an element of explicit narrative in order to appeal to public audiences; the daguerreotype lent itself primarily to technical insiders and developers who needed the visual information it could provide. After the Civil War, wet-plate negatives began to be widely circulated due to their ability to provide easily distributable and informative narrative. This moved American nationalist sentiments toward commercialism in the view tradition.

Another photographic medium that began to circulate among middle class viewing audiences was the stereograph. The camera featured a double lens placed about eye-width apart. The twin images it captured could then be viewed through a table-top or hand held focusing apparatus until the picture appeared three dimensional. Like the panorama, the stereograph lent itself to immersive, and therefore highly realistic views of the American landscape. Alfred Bierstadt, a well-known landscape painter, used a stereo camera during his time with the Lander expedition to the Rockies in 1859; he later published these images in the *Catalogue of Photographs*, featuring what he called “the only views in the market giving a *true* representation of Western Life and Western Scenery.”<sup>41</sup> The stereograph, which would later become highly popular, was a uniquely

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 140.

private market that gave photographers new avenues for entering the commercial view tradition.

Experiments with expedition wet-plate photography began in the late 1850s. Lieutenant Joseph C. Ives's 1857 expedition to the Colorado River was among the first American topographical surveys to incorporate the still relatively new wet-plate technology. As could be expected, Ives wrote of the process, saying that "the attempt has not met with distinguished success."<sup>42</sup> It would take almost another decade for photographers learning to master the challenges of the wet-plate process in the field to receive attention for their work. After the Civil War, the West was envisioned as a commercially lucrative space. It was no longer just an abstract idea elucidated in narrative detail by painters, but a space within reach through the completion of the transcontinental railroad.<sup>43</sup> Wet-plate photography provided an ideal means for developers to investigate and advertise the frontier to the public because they made the land appear so readily attainable. In a country still fractured by war, the idea of rugged entrepreneurial individualism sold well. The business of landscape photography in the West had begun.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 122-123.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

### “Owning the View”

“I shall hope to live to sit upon yonder balcony and look down upon a city embracing in itself and its suburbs a million of people. I shall see cars from the city of Mexico, and trains laden with gold and silver bullion and grain that comes from Sonora and Chihuahua on the south and from Washington Territory and Oregon on the north...I shall look out through the Golden Gate and I shall see fleets of ocean steamers bearing the trade of India, the commerce of Asia, the traffic of the islands of the ocean.” - Leland Stanford, *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 19, 1875<sup>44</sup>

In 1878, photographer Edward Muybridge produced a massive 360 degree view of San Francisco using thirteen 18 X 22 inch frames from the vantage of Mark Hopkins’ mansion on California Street the top of Nob Hill.<sup>45</sup> The panorama is characteristic of the American view tradition in spectacle and a breadth of perspective unattainable in-person. Behind the scenes of these optics are people like Hopkins and Stanford, who funded and provided access to the vantage point for the photographic view. The camera hereby enabled prospectors of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to break down barriers of time and space to see beyond their physical means to “own the view”<sup>46</sup> in apprehension of owning the land. Photographers of Western landscapes required the funding and support of their patrons; as such, many of their images existed as a means of vicariously obtaining a space for their commercial investors which had not yet been secured. The completion of the transcontinental railroad facilitated this endeavor.

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<sup>44</sup> Peter Bacon Hales *Silver Cities: Photographing American Urbanization, 1839-1939* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005): 168.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.



**Figure 5: Alexander Gardner, "Canada de las Uvas, or Tejon Pass in Sierra Nevada, California, 1,690 miles west of Missouri River," 1868**

### *Rail and the March West: The Commercial Lens*

Images sponsored by railways carry less ideology about the constructs of Western wilderness than they do about Manifest Destiny and the simple desire to advance American interests in exploring new territories. To sell them as cultural commodities, a photograph, limited by its apparent reality and lack of expressive interpretation, needed the aid of description and an idea the public could attach to the images.

Alexander Gardner's photographs in *Across the Continent on the Kansas Pacific Railroad* and A. J. Russell's images from *The Great West Illustrated* demonstrates the way in which commercial interests, American empiricism and photography began to cohere before the public eye by making the Western frontier appear enticingly expansive and within reach. Gardner, employed by the Union Pacific (or Kansas Pacific) Railway, produced a series of images and labels that documented the construction of a more southern route to the Western Frontier. What made Gardner's images successful beyond



the scope of rail company interests was his ability to draw in a wide variety of audiences by publishing the photographs as both 6 X 8 inch paper prints, which could be manipulated into a variety of distributable formats, and stereographs which, by this time, were popular and easily accessible<sup>47</sup>. Additionally, the use of printed labels below the images made the subtext of the photographs much more legible; that is, the text-image message immersed viewers in a story much like those of earlier panoramas that, in this case, explored landscapes and documented the Native Americans and frontiersmen along the course of the railway. The labels also indicate where each scene was shot, which made each image not only narrative but located them as accessible places. This appealed to American ideas of progress and made the Western landscape seem more attainable.

Similarly A.J. Russell, who worked for the Union Pacific line in 1868, used the technique of wet-plate prints in tandem with rhetorical labels to sell the potential of the West to the American populous. His publication featured large prints that moved beyond records of what was or what had been—it excited tangible American fantasies of the future. Russell stated that the album “is calculated to interest all classes of people, and to excite the admiration of all reflecting minds as the colossal grandeur of the Agricultural, Mineral Commercial resources of the West are brought to view.”<sup>48</sup> The images detailed dramatic open spaces and celebrated the frontiersmen of the rail, suggesting that the region was prime for future development.

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<sup>47</sup> Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 171.



**Figure 6: Andrew J. Russell “Hall’s Cut” from *The Great West Illustrated*, 1869.**

Thus, nature and the Western landscape through the lens of commercial photography were seen as spaces of great possibility and abundance waiting to be cultivated.<sup>49</sup> Arid deserts were treated to their own picturesque aesthetic but, by and large, were viewed as spaces for future capitalist creation. Given that a photographer could not afford to produce images of the West without private or government backing, the influence these corporate and nationalist agendas had over the photographic construction of the Western landscape in public discourse was substantial. Additionally, by this point, photography had an edge in popular consumption; widespread photographic literalism combined with nationalist rhetoric offered the public apparent proof of the viability of Manifest Destiny.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Hales, “American Views and and the Romance of Modernization”



**Figure 7: Andrew J. Russell “Devil’s Gate, Dale Creek Canon” from *The Great West Illustrated*, 1869.**

### *Geographical Surveys*

Whereas photographic constructions of nature in the American West by railroad photographers made the future vision of this landscape seem attainable, the role of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) photography was to catalogue in detail the various aspects of the land that could be made useful for its transformation. Shortly prior to the establishment of the USGS, the Corps of Topographical Engineers served the purposeful goal of advancing Western expansion through detailed mapping but with an eye toward the Romantic grandeur of the landscape.<sup>51</sup>

Among the first successful government topographical surveys to use photography was of Colonel F.W. Lander and Colonel W. F. Raynolds in 1858 and '59 of the Corps.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 128

<sup>52</sup> Naef, *Era of Exploration*.

Ferdinand Vanderveer Hayden, who accompanied Reynolds on his expedition and became director of the United States Geological and Geographical Survey in 1868, was highly outspoken in favor of investing in photography to facilitate the nation's march westward in light of its facile distribution; in fact, he used much of A.J. Russell's photography as justification in his illustrative publication *Sun Pictures of Rocky Mountain Scenery*. In an 1875 annual report, Hayden refers to photographs as aesthetically pleasing but even more that "They have done very much, in the first place, to secure truthfulness in the representation of mountain and other scenery...to represent correctly the surface of the country upon his map...Securing faithful views of the many unique and remarkable features of newly explored territory..."<sup>53</sup> Now possessing the skill and knowledge to operate the camera successfully, Hayden argued that its practicality in clearly depicting images for geological surveys made it an unarguable necessity for future expeditions.

Six years prior to the publication of the above report, Hayden hired photographer William Henry Jackson for his survey expeditions of Wyoming and Colorado under the Secretary of the Interior.<sup>54</sup> His was one of four main government surveys of the West that took place between 1867 and 1879; these included Clarence King's survey of the fortieth parallel with the War Department in 1870, John Powell's expedition through the Rocky Mountains along the Colorado River with the USGS in 1870, and Lieutenant George Wheeler's exploration of the region west of the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian in 1871, also with the USGS.<sup>55</sup> The images that Jackson shot, along with the works of Timothy O'Sullivan of

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<sup>53</sup> Hales, "American Views and the Romance of Modernization," 214.

<sup>54</sup> "The Four Great Surveys of the West," United States Geological Survey accessed April 24, 2014 <http://pubs.usgs.gov/circ/c1050/surveys.htm>

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

Wheeler and King's surveys, and Carleton Watkins briefly of the King survey, became some of the most well known images of the West from this era.

Part of these photos' appeal stemmed from the fact that surveyors wanted these images to not only convey meaningful information, but to describe the romantic grandeur of the West. Photographers were often furnished with government funded equipment and given the freedom to develop unique visual styles that contributed to the grounding of the landscape photography genre.<sup>56</sup> Stylistically, images by photographers Jackson, O'Sullivan and Watkins varied in composition; yet their freedom of expression was leashed by audience expectation and the construction of meaning through national, commercial and religious entities. Their images were read in light of a variety of ideologies, each of them concerned with attributing meaning to spaces of the West.

The most regaled of these photographers was Carleton E. Watkins' images of Yosemite, which typified what was to be expected of successful large format landscape views.<sup>57</sup> Though he worked with several surveyors, Watkins produced images more independently than other survey photographers, often making images out of artistic motivation more so than scientific. Working with so-called "mammoth" sized, glass-plate negatives that were 20 X 24", Watkins showed an impressive collection of immersive views from his first trip to Yosemite in 1861. When he returned to the Yosemite Valley in 1866, he began working somewhat tangentially with Josiah Whitney from the California State Geological Survey who was on a mission to measure the Valley in order to request that the region become a "public pleasure area," the antecedent to Yosemite's

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<sup>56</sup> Naef, *Era of Exploration*.

<sup>57</sup> Hales "American Views and the Romance of Modernization," 208

status as a national park.<sup>58</sup> That same year, his images were praised by editor Reverend H. J. Morton in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, who said

Open before us the wonderful Valley whose features far surpass the fancies of the most imaginative poet and eager romancer. The magic of art is here truly exercised for our accommodation and delight. Without crossing the continent...we are able to step, as it were, from our study into the wonders of the wondrous Valley, and gaze at our leisure on its amazing features.<sup>59</sup>

Watkins' images were very popular within the American view tradition and rising landscape art scene; however, he was increasingly beholden to produce images for his sponsors, who wanted more practical images. His photographs construed nature such that it seemed ordered, controlled and picturesque<sup>60</sup> and may have been suitable for the frontier tourist industry that was to boom some 30 years later. During the early period of the land rush, however, his eye for romanticizing the landscape lent itself toward advertising alluring, bucolic agricultural and commercial spaces. For instance, his photograph of *Cape Horn, Colombia River, Oregon* depicts a calm lake surrounded by steep cliffs; in the face of this vast outdoor space, a man sits still in his boat, a crate of fruit and the glimmer of a railway not far offshore. The image began as a part of a trip that was to be funded initially by Whitney, who was eager to gain images of the northwest coast. Later, Watkins was to receive sponsorship from the Oregon Steam Navigation Company, which controlled transportation lines along the river and the parallel railroad.<sup>61</sup> The photograph Watkins produced masterfully and subtly incorporated picturesque composition with advertisement. It is a space in which nature seems to

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<sup>58</sup> Naef, *Era of Exploration*, 50.

<sup>59</sup> Hales, "American Views and the Romance of Modernization," 210

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Hales, "American Views and the Romance of Modernization," 211

dominate but yields its power, beauty and bounty, as represented by the crate of fruit, before settler technology.

A similar image was taken by Timothy O'Sullivan while working for the Wheeler survey: *Black Canyon, Colorado River*. It too depicts a man in a boat sitting idly by a seemingly still lake set deep amongst jagged cliffs. Yet unlike Watkins' idyllic scenes, O'Sullivan's pictures from the survey reports show much starker, more sublime landscapes. Rather than inviting control, Wheeler used O'Sullivan's photo to narrate the hardship of the journey, continuing the antebellum view tradition narrative of the heroic Western explorer.<sup>62</sup>



**Figure 8: Carleton Watkins, "Cape Horn, Colombia River, Oregon" 1867. Image courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum**

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<sup>62</sup> Sandwiss, *Print the Legend*.



Figure 9: Timothy O'Sullivan "Black Canon, Colorado River, From Camp 8, Looking Above," 1871.

During his employment with Clarence King in 1868, O'Sullivan's tendency to display the dramatic, rugged and sublime would be strategically used. King was an avid believer in what he called "catastrophism," an anti-Darwin approach to evolution. Instead of gradual changes that occur over time, King argued that nature shifted suddenly and dramatically, suggesting that consistent catastrophic upheavals must have necessitated repeated re-creation of human civilizations and eco-systems.<sup>63</sup> O'Sullivan's images of towering precipices, canyons and precarious pillars of rock were King's method of proving his theory.

It would appear contradictory that a scientific surveyor was seeking to provide support for Christian theology. Yet geology, especially as it was portrayed by sublime

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<sup>63</sup> Naef, *Era of Exploration*.



imagery, offered theologians an opportunity to re-assert the presence of God in the creation of the Western landscape. Louis Figuier writes that

Geology is...far from opposing itself to the Christian religion...Nothing proves with more certainty than the study of geology the evidence of eternity and divine unity; it shows us, so to speak, the creative power of God in action. We see the sublime work of creation perfecting itself unceasingly in the hands of its divine Author, who has said “Before the world was, I was.”<sup>64</sup>

The West in many of O’Sullivan’s pictures was a simultaneously terrifying and beautiful wilderness. Rather than repelling expansionism, evidence of a Christian God’s hand in the West further justified settlement either to tame nature or to merely stand back and appreciate God’s work.<sup>65</sup>

The latter of these two options often took the form of displaying images of Western spaces as, if not readily commercially exploitable or inhabitable, at least visually and rhetorically consumable. Nature’s great “temples” and “cathedrals”<sup>66</sup> are dramatically displayed in Jackson’s presentation of Yellowstone from his 1871 and ’72 survey with Hayden. As far as the goals of a scientific survey go, Jackson’s images were highly successful: they were technically superior to the hand drawings that had been the only representation of Yellowstone until that point. Yale geologist James Dwight Dana said in 1873 of images of several geothermal structures that they “may be studied with much of the satisfaction to be had from actual examination.”<sup>67</sup> But Jackson’s images surpass this need. Not only would they go on to aid Congress’s decision in 1872 to make the area into a national park, but he expanded his 1873 publication in response to “the

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<sup>64</sup> Martin Christalder, “American Landscape: Geology and the Sacred, Commerce and Manifest Destiny” *Pioneers of Landscape Photography: Gustav LeGray and Carleton E. Watkins*, Weston J Naef and Margaret Stuffman ed. (Mainz, Germany: H. Schmitt, 1993): 107-127.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

increasing interest in and demand for the more striking views...”<sup>68</sup> Thus, Jackson’s (and, it can be argued, Watkins’) images set the framework for creating marketable images of nature that has been commodified for its views. Necessary to this perspective, however, is that it is devoid of inhabitants.

### Who’s Missing?

The images of the West that have been described up to this point reflect the goals of American imperialists, religious theorists and citizens to take control of the landscape of the Western Frontier. Because these desires take place primarily in the white imagination, it is only with categorical or historicized reference that we see Native Americans depicted as a part of the construction of the West. Other immigrant populations and races are even less well represented, demonstrating that the Western

landscape was a space envisioned primarily for white citizens.



**Figure 10: A. J. Russell "East Meets West at the Laying of the Last Rail," 1869.**

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<sup>67</sup> Sandweiss *Print the Legend*, 200.

<sup>68</sup> W.H. Jackson cited in Sandweiss *Print the Legend*, 196.

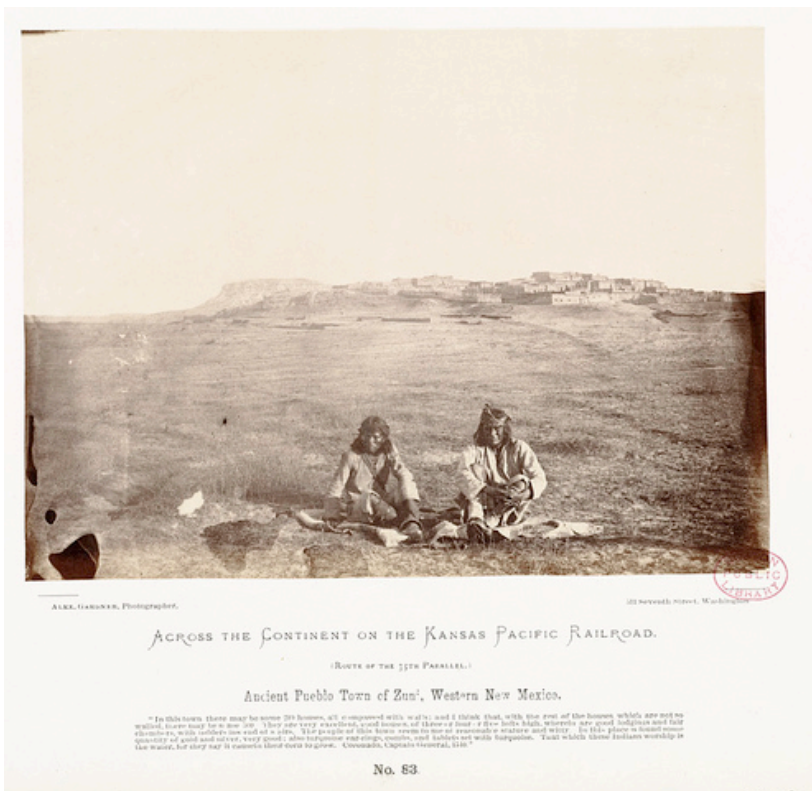
“White imagination”<sup>69</sup> here refers to hegemonic narratives that glorify the exploration and conquest of Western landscapes and its native peoples. American expansionism, though fueled by non-white labor, explicitly excluded these people from images representing popular visions of the West. For instance, documenting the completion of the transcontinental railroad were photographers A.J. Russell, Charles Savage and Alfred A. Hart. They each took photos of the Central and Union Pacific trains meeting head to head, the chief engineers shaking hands with a large crowd of people surrounding them. Yet they failed to represent the Chinese laborers, which made up about 90% of the railway’s work force, responsible for bringing the trains together. This exclusion perpetuates the myth that only whites were the only people there, although much evidence exists to the contrary. Believing that the land was virgin territory devoid of its own history justified the struggle of obtaining it from Native Americans and the Mexican government. By making it seem attainable through view photography, settlers and capitalists were encouraged to traverse Westward to begin the process of colonization.

Expansionism in the white imagination depended upon erasing or else reducing the autonomy of non-white inhabitants of the West. At the time of the Mexican-American War, proponents of Manifest Destiny advocated on the platform that non-white residents of the newly annexed West would gradually assimilate into white populations.<sup>70</sup> Images like Gardner’s image of the Pueblo Indian town of Zuni (Fig. 11), for instance, emphasizes the value that might be inherred from incorporating Native American lands;

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<sup>69</sup> This term was inspired by Toni Morrison *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992).

seated as they are with such an expanse of land space behind them, it is the photographer that assumes an authoritative, surveying stance over the land, not the Native American subjects of the shot. At the time that this image was taken, a number of violent wars against Plains Indians (the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa and Comanche) resulted in their relocation to reservations<sup>71</sup>; photographers hereby began to shift their focus from images that integrated non-whites of the West to those that isolated, categorized and historicized them in anticipation of their eventual extermination.



**Figure 11: Alexander Gardner, "Ancient Pueblo Town of Zuni, Western New Mexico," 1867.**

“In this town there may be some 200 houses, all compassed with walls; and I think that with the rest of the houses, which are not so walled, there may be some 500. They are very excellent, good houses, of three or four or five lofts high, wherein are good lodgings and fair chambers, with ladders instead of stairs. The people of this town seem to me of reasonable stature and witty. In this place is found some quantity of gold and silver, very good; also turquoise ear-rings, combs and tablets set with turquoise. That which these Indians worship is the water, for they say it causeth their corn to grow.”

Western landscape photography facilitated this ideological genocide; audiences of the view were interested in what was there in so far as what it had to offer for the future.

In this sense, the camera’s ability to control time not only made Native American

<sup>70</sup> Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Destiny and American Territorial Expansion: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2012)

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

histories irrelevant but gradually erased them in favor of white American visions for the future. Journalist E.L. Godkin in 1864 wrote “The West...has inherited nothing, and so far from regretting this, it glories in it. One of the most marked results of that great sense of power by which it is pervaded, is its strong tendency to live in the future, to neglect the past. It proposes to make history, instead of reading it.”<sup>72</sup> Indeed, whereas landscape photography was meant to enhance the reality and viability of Manifest Destiny, photographs of Native Americans seem to flatten and subdue their existence into a timeless ethnographic study.<sup>73</sup> Wheeler’s survey, for instance, first published images of Navajo people as self-sufficient, non-troublesome neighbors in order to assuage fearful settlers. When Wheeler re-produced the images in 1889, violent Indian removal tactics that had been employed against the Plains tribes had been exerted on Western groups as well; Wheeler’s captions too shifted from construing the Navajo culture as industrious and independent to a defeated, dying tradition. From calling them “an intelligent and fierce people by nature,” he says of the image *Aboriginal Life Among the Navajoe Indians*, “The head and lord of the family looks on with phlegmatic equanimity at the patient industry of the squaw and indulges in day dreams, undoubtedly of war or excitement of the chase, performed by him or his ancestors.”<sup>74</sup>

The daguerreotypes that were taken as a part of expeditions and surveys may not have appealed to thrill-seeking audiences, but certainly did to the U.S. War Department. From Lieutenant Lorenzo Sitgreaves’ survey of 1850, daguerriest W.C. Mayhew took images of the other expedition members around camp, their wagons, horses and the

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<sup>72</sup> Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 180

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 194.

Native Americans they encountered.<sup>75</sup> Taken into consideration alongside the grandiose pictures of empty landscapes, with exception, perhaps, of the lone explorer looking out over some sublime view, these images create a visual portfolio of the national agenda: the steady push Westward onto desirable land and to understand who stood in their way.

The production of wet-plate negatives of Native American groups further disempowered them. Whereas individual daguerreotypes could be purchased by the subjects of the images themselves, negatives could be copied and re-printed hundreds of times. The meaning conveyed through a private portrait, only intelligible to someone who knew the subject, was subsequently lost in public, impersonal markets. Lacking intimate knowledge, portraits of Native Americans made it possible to categorize them and facilitated in the national remorseless tale of the native “vanishing races.”<sup>76</sup> For instance, said Hayden in 1877, the value of images of Native Americans “increases year by year; and there will be no more trust-worthy evidence of what the Indian have been than that afforded by these faithful sun-pictures.”<sup>77</sup> It is here that the photographer is allowed to be the hero in the saga of the West, salvaging what remains of vanishing native cultures through extensive photographic study. Nowhere do we see how processes like the USGS, a branch of American imperialism, are implicated in the silencing of these cultures. Viewers are meant to accept that this is the necessary sacrifice for the progress of Manifest Destiny and that to “truthfully” and “objectively” document what can be seen by the public eye, but not intimately understood, is the photographer’s dutiful tribute to the Native American people.

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<sup>75</sup> Naef, *Era of Exploration*.

<sup>76</sup> Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 217.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid 219.

Photographers were complicit in the national agenda for removal of non-white people from the imagined space of the Western Frontier. Landscapes and portraits of Native Americans were used together in photographic legends to give viewers on the home front an idea of what was there if only as a means for indulging their fantasies as to how space *could* be used. Although many Native Americans still inhabited the lands being portrayed, their presence was assumed to be temporary and soon extinguished. Non-white laborers who contributed to attaining technological control over these landscapes were also disproportionately represented. If they were photographed at all they were never depicted in positions of power. The landscape that was imbued with mythologies of the expansion of American democracy, freedom and rugged individualism was therefore visualized as extending primarily to white citizens.

## Conclusion

Photographs from the mid 1800s constructed the West to appear fruitful and attainable as a way of enhancing the narrative ideology of Manifest Destiny for white American audiences. By making Native Americans the scrutinized subject of these images, photographs visually relegated them to the past, thereby extraditing them from their lands and marking those landscapes as belonging to white imperialists. As the West became occupied, these future-oriented visions of the American frontier shifted to portray idyllic towns and farms to show how westward expansion had been successfully achieved. The following chapter examines how the now familiar motif—the glorified pioneer exploring and controlling the rugged Western landscape—continued to provide visual justification for American colonialism and occupation of indigenous lands for consuming audiences, including the pioneer communities themselves.



**CHAPTER 3:**  
**THE “LAND OF LITTLE RAIN”**

*“A land of lost rivers, with little in it to love; yet a land that once visited must be come back to inevitably. If it were not so there would be little told of it.” –Mary Austin, 1903<sup>78</sup>*

The Owens Valley is a beautiful windswept, high desert. Lying in the rain shadow of the jagged, 10,000+ foot peaks of the Sierra Nevadas to the west and cradled to the east by the sloping, dusty White-Inyo Mountain Range, the valley is a narrow strip of land extending 80 miles long and, on average, only 10 miles across.<sup>79</sup> It is a space given to constant upheaval, as the Sierras continue to thrust upward, and contains a rich, tumultuous history of the collision of groups of people and their grapple for power over the landscape. Of particular importance is water; the snowmelt off of the Sierras that flows into the Owens River, and which fed the once impressive Owens Lake at the southern edge of the valley, represents the only source of water for the generations of civilizations that have inhabited this challenging environment. It necessarily became a point of contention between Native American groups, white settlers and the thirsty residents of Los Angeles, all of whom needed this resource to transform and claim power over the land.

The photos to be analyzed of the Owens Valley from this period come from local photographer, Andrew Forbes, and photographers for the Los Angeles aqueduct. Within their respective viewing audiences, these images reinforced and validated narratives of control over the landscape. For view-seekers, both local residents and tourists, Forbes

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<sup>78</sup> Mary Austin *Land of Little Rain* (Bedford: Applewood Books, 1903): 6

<sup>79</sup> John Walton *Western Times and Water Wars: State, Culture and Rebellion in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992): 6

provided images that supported the second stage of the ideals of Manifest Destiny: that settlers had successfully domesticated the native people and landscapes to suit the needs of colonist. Images from the aqueduct reflect the closed-door nature of Los Angeles' involvement in that they are aesthetically meant for an inner-circle, private audience. Unlike photography from the late 1800s, which preliminarily projected ideals onto the Western landscape, photography in the Owens Valley acted as a secondary means of ideologically or "objectively" justifying the displacement of people and natural resources.

### Native American Visions of the Land

The first people in the Owens Valley were the Paiute or, as they called themselves, the *nu'mu* or *nu'ma*, which translates to "The People." They are recorded as having lived in the region since around A.D. 600 but have probably been in the region much longer in undocumented prehistory. Hunters, gatherers and successful agriculturalists, the Numu were among the first groups to make use of the lush abundance snowmelt water through the use of irrigation canals. Dams and ditches were constructed by digging to divert a certain amount of water from streams into low-lying areas to enhance the natural yield of staple crops like yellow nutgrass, wild hyacinth and spike rush bulbs.<sup>80</sup> This system was carefully executed by a dedicated head irrigator, who determined how much water was needed to flood a field and which of these fields would be harvest for seeds and bulbs.<sup>81</sup> Another staple in their diet included the pine nut, which could be harvested from the lower regions of the White-Inyo range. This was

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<sup>80</sup> Sharon E. Dean et al. *Weaving a Legacy: Indian Baskets & the People of Owens Valley, California* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2004): 3

supplemented by seasonal harvest of the Pandora moth and brine fly larvae, which bred at Owens Lake and just north of the valley near Mono Lake. The latter two goods, unique to the Owens Valley, made for highly valuable trade goods with groups across the Sierras; trade also existed between the Paiute and other Eastern Sierra groups, such as a Panamint Shoshones to the south, the Western Monos, Southern Miwoks and other related Paiute groups north and east of the valley.<sup>82</sup>

The Paiute exerted a great amount of effort manipulating their environment in order to harvest food. In addition to physical nourishment, their environment provided them with spiritual strength. The Numu felt connections with animals, natural features or even “the blue haze sometimes over the valley,” which reportedly saved a mythological hero’s wife from burning in a fire.<sup>83</sup> Each carried their own unique characteristic; the eagle, for instance, symbolized speed and agility.

The story the Paiute tell about the landscape of the valley is rich with its geologic and anthropologic history. That the entire area used to be an inland sea some 10,000 years ago<sup>84</sup> before the valley floor dropped and filled with alluvium<sup>85</sup> is told by Hoavadunuki, who lived in a village in current-day Big Pine:

The world was once nothing but water. The only land above the water was Black mountain. All the people lived up there when the flood came, and their fireplaces can still be seen. Fish-eater and Hawk lived there. Fish-eater was Hawk’s uncle. One day they were singing and shaking a rattle. As they sang, Hawk shook this rattle and dirt began to fall out of it. They sang all night, shaking the rattle the whole time. Soon there was so much dirt on the water that the water started to go

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<sup>81</sup> Rebecca Fish Ewan *A Land Between: Owens Valley, California* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000): 87

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>83</sup> Julian H. Steward *Ethnography of the Owens Valley Paiute* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1933): 308

<sup>84</sup> Dean, *Weaving a Legacy*.

<sup>85</sup> Ewan *A Land Between*.

down. When it had gone all the way down, they put up the Sierra Nevada to hold the ocean back. Soon they saw a river running down through the valley.<sup>86</sup>

As the environment changed, so too did the people and their stories. A warming climate between 2000 BC and 500 AD created a shift in subsistence from large game hunting to semi-transitory communities near water, dependent on the pine nut and irrigation farming. The shift is noted in a 1909 reproduction of the tale originally told by “American Joe” in 1867; “The bears became very angry. They burrowed a great hole under the lake, and filled it with wood from the forest and set fire to the wood—and a great fire arose from the valley. It dried up the lake, and the snows from the mountains, and burned off the forest, so that all the country became bare.”<sup>87</sup> Despite containing one of the few perennial streams in the Great Basin, the dry barren landscape is what whites initially perceived about the landscape of the Owens Valley.

#### First Impressions: Unimpressive

White settlers, upon first arriving in California, seemed less than impressed with the Owens Valley. Zenas Leonard, a trapper from Pennsylvania, is accredited with making one of the earliest recorded trips to the valley in 1834 with the Chiles-Walker expedition. Having taken a route through the San Joaquin Valley to the west prior to reaching the valley, the comparative lack of water and greenery was disappointing. “The country on this side is much inferior to that on the opposite side—the soil being thin and rather sandy, producing but little grass, which was very discouraging to our stock...”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 4-5.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 7.

Other written documents of the region prior to 1850 focus less on scenery than they do on the difficulty of the journey through the desert and apprehension of passing through the daunting Sierra Nevada Range. Anticipating the green, “land of plenty” that had been promised just on the other side, Theodore Talbot and Edward Kern made similarly disparaging comments about the Owens Valley in their 1845 expedition with surveyor John Fremont. Yet their documentation of the Valley is not quite as bleak as Leonard’s as, having followed a stream into the valley, there is ample mention of water resources. On December 16, Kern “struck Owen’s River. It is a fine, bold stream, larger than Walker’s. The same chain of mountains bounds it on the east, while on the western side rises, like a wall, the main chain of the California Mountains.”<sup>89</sup> As they move through the valley, he notes that they were “obliged to keep some distance from [the river] on account of a large marsh.”<sup>90</sup>

The valley still received mixed reviews for much of the rest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But with the gold rush and California’s annexation in 1850, the Owens Valley began to be integrated as a part of the visionary American Frontier rather than as merely a pit stop on the way to the Central Valley. This shift in attention toward the potential of America’s new territory drew higher regard for the region. A survey by Captian John W. Davidson in 1859 through the valley reported that “every step now taken shows you that nature has been lavish of her stores. The Mountains are filled with timber, the vallies with water, and meadows of luxuriant grass.”<sup>91</sup> People surging Westward took this account as

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<sup>89</sup> Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence ed. *The Expeditions of John Charles Fremont* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970):55

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 55.

<sup>91</sup> Ewan, *A Land Between*, 11.

affirmation of the manifest settlement of California. Photography, however, would not be used to validate this movement until after settlement had occurred.

### Battling for the Frontier

U.S. expansionist rhetoric drove white explorers and settlers into the Owens Valley; what observations they could document about the value and potential of the place allowed this rhetoric to grow. Given the nature of early documentation of the region, this seems a feeble claim for justifying the expropriation of land from Native Americans who had been living there for centuries. But the promises of Western settlement were heady enough prospects to procure a forceful, often violent exile of the Paiute from the Valley.

Embedded within the conceptualization of the West as land rife with resources and open land is either the vilification or belittling of its Native American inhabitants to justify forced expulsion. The story told about the Paiute went both ways, initially because the Numu tribes of the Owens Valley were often confused by whites with their Mono Lake and Shoshone relatives. For instance, when Kern arrived in the Valley, he regarded the native people with wariness. “The Indians are numerous here, though they keep out of sight. They are badly disposed. Colonel Childs [Joseph B. Chiles] had trouble with them here. They shot one of his men. Walker’s party killed some twenty five of them, while on his side some of his men were wounded and eight or nine horses killed.”<sup>92</sup> The incident Kern cites from Colonel Chiles and Joseph Walker’s expedition in 1833 actually occurred

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<sup>92</sup> Jackson and Spence, *Expeditions*, 55.

northeast of the Owens Valley in Humboldt Sink County in territory belonging to a band of Shoshone people.<sup>93</sup>

In fact, the term “Paiute” was often used broadly to refer to Native American groups from across the Great Basin region and often interchangeably employed with the derogatory term “Digger,” so-called due to their foraging practice of digging for edible bulbs and roots<sup>94</sup>; Solomon Carvalho, who journeyed with Fremont on his fourth expedition just south of the Owens Valley comments “The camp is filled with Diggers; Fremont calls them Pah Utahs, i.e. Utahs living on the water. These Indians, we find are great thieves; they appear friendly, and we put up with their peccadilloes for policy’s sake.”<sup>95</sup> Carvalho points to several issues attributed to the native people of the region: that they were untrustworthy and that they were the gatekeepers of the basin’s water, the most critical resource for establishing white settlement.

As settlers advanced, the government policies that had withheld aggressive retaliation against native groups became more lax. In 1859 Captain J.W. Davidson was commissioned to lead an expedition from Fort Tejon, 200 miles northeast of the Valley, to seek out and punish Owens Valley Paiute groups supposedly responsible for stealing horses from the western side of the Sierras. Upon arriving, however, it became clear that they were “not only not horse thieves, but that their true character is that of an interesting peaceful, industrious people, deserving the protection and watchful care of the

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<sup>93</sup> Walton, *Western Times and Water Wars*.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Solomon Nunes Carvalho *Incidents of Travel and adventure in the Far West: with Colonel Fremont’s Last Expedition across the Rocky Mountains, including Three Months’ Residence in Utah and a Perilous Trip Across the Great American Desert to the Pacific* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004):227

Government.”<sup>96</sup> In taking the “White savior” approach, however, Paiute removal could be justified in being in the interests of their own “civilization.” This too disregards the more than 57 miles of irrigation works the Numu people had built through the valley to cultivate native crops. Whites who arrived after Davidson did not acknowledge the works as an agricultural system, but rather as “diverted streams to water wild plants.”<sup>97</sup>

Despite Davidson’s assessment, conflict and outright aggression between the native groups and invading forces had increased. In 1859, the first surge of the gold rush arrived in Owens Valley; mines were established as far north as Mono Lake, to the east in present-day Aurora, Nevada, and all the way south to the Mojave Desert. Within a year, Monoville, the camp established at Mono Lake, had grown to a population of 2000.<sup>98</sup> Permanent settlement, accompanied by the presence of cattle, was established in August of 1861 by Charles Putnam and Samuel Bishop, who saw the valley as empty land ideal for pasture. Now, not only were the Paiute competing for water and space, but arable land, which was being trampled by grazing cattle. Whites, explains Paiute woman Mattie Bulpitt, began to starve Paiute groups out of the valley.

The white men begin to come, one at first, then more and more, and from then on the valley was thickly settled with white people. The cattle begin to arrive with the settlers, little at first, then they begin to multiply. Through all this the Indians were very friendly, never complaining of the cattle and horses which roamed over their taboose [tubers] and sunflowers and other seeds producing foods for the Indians. They used to irrigate these fields. Eventually the white man begin to tell the Indian what to do. They told him not to pick the seed because if we pick seed from the plant, more plants will not grow. And when they go out to irrigate their seed beds, the white man says not to take any of the water. If you do my horses and cattle will not have anything to eat. Always the same story.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Walton, *Western Times and Water Wars*, 13.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 17.



Without their regular cache of winter crops, Paiute groups began to supplement their stores with ranchers' cattle and horses. Tension reached a head when, in 1861, a Paiute was killed in the act of stealing a cow for its meat and a rancher was killed in revenge. Though a hasty truce was drawn the following January, battles between Paiute groups and white settlers began again after army reinforcements established themselves at Fort Independence in July of 1862. Intent on gaining control of the land for agricultural and "mining interests...too great for the whites to give it up tamely"<sup>100</sup> Lieutenant Colonel George Evans's re-introduce starvation strategies. Since the Paiute groups had the upper hand in knowing the landscape much better, Evans' goal was to "keep the Indians out of the valley and in the hills, so that they can have no opportunity of gathering and preserving their necessary winter supplies, and that they will be compelled to sue for peace before spring and grass come again."<sup>101</sup> The war continued off and on until 1865. By this time, some two hundred Paiute people had been killed and more than nine hundred had been forcibly removed from valley lands into the Sebastian Indian Reserve near Fort Tejon; many returned, however, setting up rudimentary camps in the mountains above the valley.<sup>102</sup>

Having won the war, whites eagerly began to stake their claims; ironically, though whites now symbolically and fiscally owned the land (and their surrounding views), they required Paiute irrigation technology, knowledge and labor in order to make their investment lucrative. Farm hands were most needed to support the transformation of

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<sup>100</sup> George W. Davis, et al, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1897): 49. Accessed April 28, 2014. <http://books.google.com/>

<sup>101</sup> Ewans, *A Land Between*, 102-103

<sup>102</sup> Walton, *Western Times and Water Wars*.

Owens Valley from a perceived outlying desert to a hard-earned part of the white American frontier; one resident recalled that “Without [the Indians’] assistance in the farm work of the valley (which comprises barley, wheat, oats, corn, and vegetables to supply the mines of Silver Peak, Belmont, and Cerro Gordo and for home consumption) would cease.”<sup>103</sup> Inducted into the wage-labor economy that had developed in the region, the Paiute became essential to white settlers’ continued transformation of the Valley as not only farm hands, but as domestic workers.<sup>104</sup> In 1873 the Bureau of Indian Affairs attempted to relocate the Paiute to the Tule River Reservation along with Native American groups from across the eastern and western Sierras. Whites, who depended on the local labor force, objected to the move and successfully repelled the government mandate. The Paiute were able to stay in their homeland and practice their traditional customs. The BIA would continue to assist Paiute obtain homesteads until 1923.<sup>105</sup> In the end, however, being forcibly removed from their lands required that most Paiute relocate to one of the four reservations within Inyo County; they had lost their autonomy over the future of their tribe and the Owens Valley.

### Living the Fantasy

Dreams that had been perpetuated by images and epic stories about the Western frontier were achieved in the Owens Valley through colonization and subjugation of the land and its indigenous people. Taking control of the space through appropriated

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<sup>103</sup> Dean, *Weaving a Legacy*, 24.

<sup>104</sup> Walton, *Western Times and Water Wars*.

<sup>105</sup> Dean, *Weavgin a Legacy*.

irrigation technology did not transform it into an oasis precisely, but changed it to fit the vision of an agricultural, productive American landscape, despite initial perceptions.

The call of the soil is the call to freedom...From everywhere comes this call of the soil; from the North, the South and the West; but the call is loudest and most promising in the new sections which have recently been opened by systematic reclamation, and where great systems of irrigation have changed thousands of acres of arid desert lands into fertile farming regions. Such a section is the Owens River valley, once merely a suburb to Death Valley, but now a paradise of homes, where thousands of thrifty farmers have reaped a bountiful reward from the land of plenty.<sup>106</sup>

The challenge of bringing water into drier more outlying regions of the valley was not necessarily feasible, but it fit into the imagined space of the Western frontier and became a part of the narrative of the Owens Valley; the challenge was a part of the rugged individualist experience and contributed to the “Americanization” of the place. Historian Simonson describes this phenomenon, “In first being overwhelmed by nature, and then in overcoming it, the pioneer underwent a process which ‘Americanized’ him. It freed him from dependence upon Europe...The frontier transformed his old ways into new American ways, and subduing nature became the American’s manifest destiny.”<sup>107</sup> The Owens Valley of the colonist inhabitants became idealized in their minds as the realization of what Western landscape rhetoric and photography had promised.

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<sup>106</sup> Ewan, *A Land Between*, 109.

<sup>107</sup> Ewan, *A Land Between*, 110.

## Photography: Re-envisioning the Owens Valley

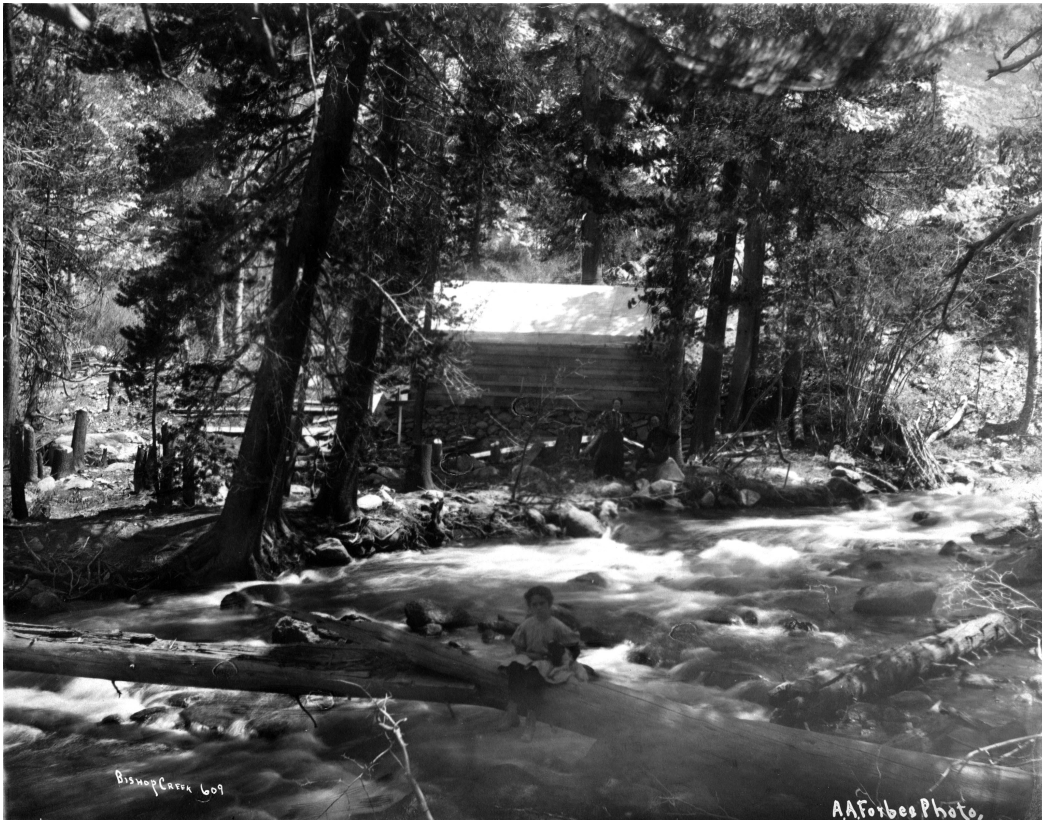


**Figure 12: Andrew Forbes "Lone Pine, Cal." Courtesy of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History**

By the time photographer Andrew Forbes arrived in the Owens Valley in 1902, life on the western frontier had been well established. The West had transitioned from a place of mystique in the American imagination to an ideological motif integrated into the American visual vernacular. Landscape photography by this time was highly commercialized and views of iconic western scenery were in broad circulation. As western expansion accelerated in the late part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the frontier became better known by whites, the West lost some of its original flavor of adventure. In the process of taming the “wild west,” the frontier became a central part of America. The mythical qualities of the West—as a place of great open spaces, rugged cowboys and primitive Indians—that spoke to an American sense of freedom and cultural pride and had so enthralled view tradition audiences in the 1860s lived on in commercial photography. By the 1890s, the mammoth and stereo views of Carleton Watkins and William Jackson were being replaced by postcard images that commoditized the land not only for its potential resource value, but for its value as spectacle. The view, now composed of ranches set against mountain backdrops and portraits of Native Americans, could now be owned for little more than a few cents; and, with the outcropping of frontier

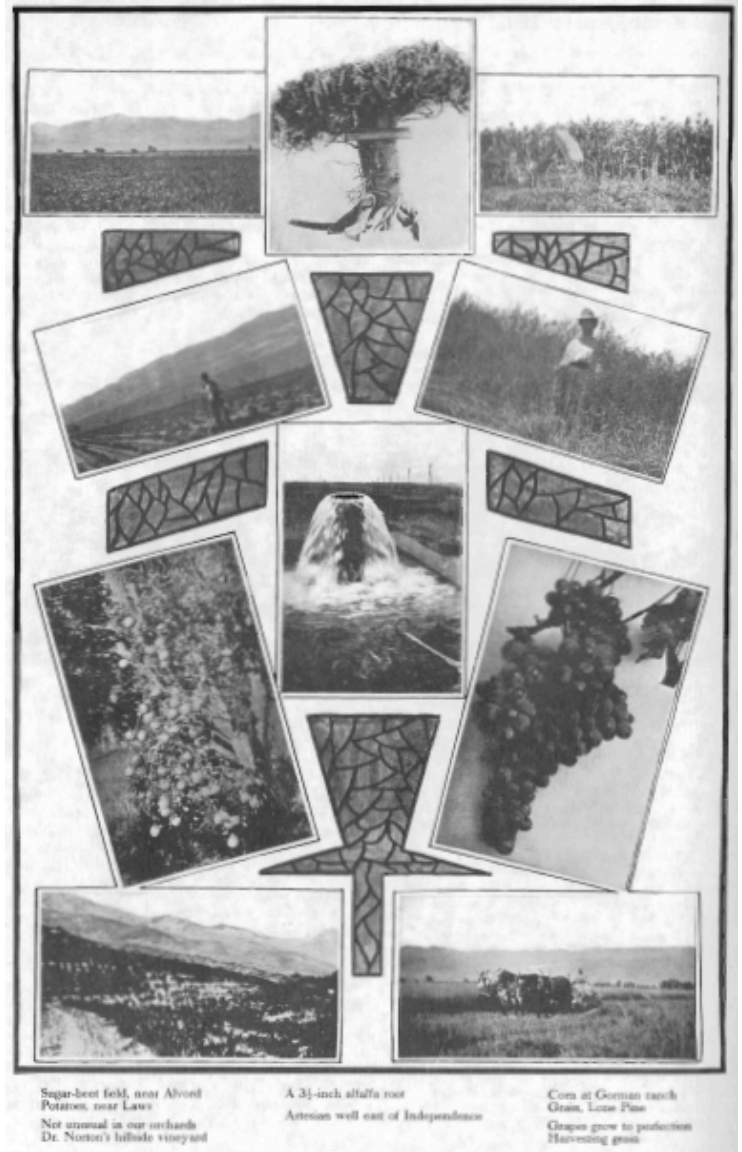
hospitality and the expansion of rail and roadways, it was accessible for exploration by the average tourist.

As a result, the Owens Valley became inscribed into the idyllic, pasteurized vision of the West. No longer the wild, untamed frontier, Andrew Forbes' photos compose a domesticated depiction of the region. Having been an itinerant photographer in Oklahoma and across much of the Southwest, Forbes was accustomed to taking quick images of cowboys, railway workers and Native Americans to sell as souvenirs that perpetuated archetypes about the storied American West. Accordingly, his images celebrate the community he came to call home in an idealized form that prided contemporary Americanizing visions of the land.



**Figure 13: Andrew Forbes. Image courtesy of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.**

Undoubtedly these images were meant to corroborate the promising narrative from 40 years prior—that the space of the West, so full of potential, had been successfully settled. However, there is a forced sense of tranquility to Forbes' images that masks Owens Valley residents' growing apprehension as to the future of their community. The gold mines had dried up; the promise of water and fertile soil too had been slowly deteriorating since their arrival and would only be exacerbated by the incursion of Los Angeles bureaucrats scouting for water. It is with desperation that Forbes and the various Inyo County publications he often photographed for, seem to be selling the value of Owens Valley as an Eden of the West to general audiences and, most especially, to themselves.



**Figure 14: Spread highlighting the bounty of Inyo County's agriculture, *Beautiful Inyo County*, 12. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.**

In truth, as the Paiute legends had aptly noted, the Owens Valley had been getting drier ever since the Pleistocene era.<sup>108</sup> The sudden influx of settlers to the region diverting water in ever expanding increments put additional strain on water resources

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

and, in the long term, contributed to the alkalization of the soil.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, local publications continued to proclaim the value of the region. The *Sierra Magazine* encouraged its readers by saying, “This is a peculiar land, and the soil has peculiar qualities. It requires water. Give it water and you work a miracle. Put an abundance of moisture on this sand and the sand disappears. In its place comes a rich loam. The ground is full of nitrates. It is full of potash, It has all the plant-life giving characteristics a farmer most desires and it has them in inexhaustible quantities.”<sup>110</sup> The *potential* of the land, scripted into the narrative about the West, here appears more alluring than the reality of the situation in the Owens Valley. In terms of aesthetics, an Inyo County publication from 1915, “Beautiful Owens Valley,” recounts life in the Owens Valley in alluring detail. It describes the community in the valley through text and images (largely shot by Forbes) focusing almost exclusively upon the landscape and apparent successes of the community in controlling their environments with no mention of the aqueduct now draining water from their farms. With something close to desperation, the book begins “‘There,’ descriptively remarks a visitor, ‘the music of a hundred streams is ever upon the air; the harmony of swaying trees and brimming life is an endless accompaniment to the song of the rivers and brooks; all telling of the life to be lived, of happiness to be gained, in the bosom of nature, under the shadow of the ice peaks and the mountains of ever melting snow.’ ...To this peerless county the book is dedicated in the hope that the day of

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<sup>109</sup> National Park Service, Manazar National Historic Site, *Cultural Landscape Report: Manzanar National Historic Site*, 2006. Accessed April 26, 2014.

<http://www.nps.gov/manz/parkmgmt/upload/Manzanar-CLR-LOW-RES.pdf>

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, 40.

its due value to the world may be hastened to some small extent.”<sup>111</sup> This is indicative that the value of the region as a community was depreciating, thanks in no small part to the incursion of the aqueduct. Narratives about the Owens Valley thus often fall back on the scenery as a means of generating ideological value.

The landscapes and lives of people in the Owens Valley constructed in Forbes’ images therefore generally cohere to a familiar commercialized conception of the domesticated West to boost morale and re-incorporate the region into a glorified Western narrative. The composition and aesthetic of his photos appear to draw upon romantic styles made popular by early landscapists like Carleton Watkins and W.H. Jackson and chiefly depict mountains, towns, and “Indian views”<sup>112</sup> Forbes’ image from South Lake, Bishop (Fig. 15), for instance, recalls a Watkins-like approach in its balanced composition; the horizon is positioned slightly above the middle, representative of how a viewer might perceive the landscape. The reflection of the mountains in the frozen lake is picturesque, calm and is reminiscent of Watkins’ images of reflecting pools in Yosemite and along the Oregon coast. This perspective—gazing apparently unseen onto a man in a tranquil landscape—creates an element of voyeuristic and ideological control over the scene.

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<sup>111</sup> Inyo County, California *Beautiful Owens Valley* (Bishop: The Inyo County Register, 1915): 3

<sup>112</sup> Sharon Ellen Dean, and New School University. *Vision, Social Change, and the American West: The Photographs of Andrew A. Forbes (1862--1921)*. Dissertation Abstracts International, 2002.





Figure 15: Andrew Forbes "South Lake Bishop, Cal." Courtesy of Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History

This control also translated to his images of the Paiute. What does not remain in the public archives of his photos are the many settler family studio portraits he was commissioned to take because they were purchased for private viewing. While some Paiute portraits were commissioned, many still remain in circulation because their images were made into postcards for commercial sale. Selling pictures of cultural symbols, like the woven baby baskets, and typifying portraits (Fig. 16 and 17), essentialized and commoditized Paiute culture as a means of corroborating the popular domesticating narrative. Additionally important to note is that because Paiute culture was reduced to a



**Figure 16: Andrew Forbes, "Mother and Child Piute."** Courtesy of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History



**Figure 17: Andrew Forbes, "Captain John, Last Chief of the Piutes."** Courtesy of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

few essentializing postcards, they were never fully brought into the fold as Americans; rather they remain ideologically and physically on the fringes of activity in Owens Valley, serving as laborers but living in reservations separate from whites.

Forbes' photos lent the residents of the Owens Valley a sense of autonomy over the landscape by reinforcing narratives of control that had been disseminated during the heyday of Manifest Destiny; it also reassured American audiences that expansionist visions had been made reality. The perpetuation of false promises would assuage settlers as their hold on the land shifted into the hands of the city of Los Angeles.

#### Power Plays: The Aqueduct

The lure of the land for inhabitants of Owens Valley was not easily translated to outsiders, who initially found the valley's howling winds, extreme climate and lack of rain an intolerable exchange for a little land and mountain views. Though gold attracted the first white settlers to the region, what encouraged them to stay and what makes it the gem of the Great Basin was its expansive store of fresh water. "You know, Sadie," says character Galen in John Glanville Dixon's *Brothers and Brides Go West* "the gold, silver, and other mines of the West are gradually being worked out, leaving of coal mines and oil wells will also gradually disappear, but the 'white gold' of the snowy Sierra, through the foresight of a kind Creator, is annually replaced." Pointing to the snow-capped range, he said, "There is California's *real* Mother Lode, a wealth of water, which cannot be taken away."<sup>113</sup> Water, not views or small town agriculture, was what put Owens Valley squarely in the middle of one of the largest controversies in California history.

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<sup>113</sup> Ewan, *A Land Between*, 39.

The trouble began just at the turn of the century during the rapid population boom of Los Angeles—which topped 100,000 by 1900—and its coincident drought.<sup>114</sup> At that time, Owens Valley residents were anxiously anticipating the implementation of a major water reclamation project funded through the federal National Reclamation Act of 1902. Engineers had already taken measurements of Owens River, Bishop and Pine Creek and submitted them for dam, reservoir and irrigation plant site development.<sup>115</sup> Citizens, glad that their plea for recognition of the Valley’s natural value was finally getting attention, were eager to believe that the project would irrigate an additional 60,000 acres of public land for their cultivation. In reality, the vision for the future—that cherished narrative of the West’s boundless resources—belonged to the city of Los Angeles.

Los Angeles was in a state of crisis; LA water reservoirs were disappearing at an alarming rate as people continued to pour into Southern California. Fred Eaton, a Los Angeles native and self-taught hydrologic engineer, was among the first to plan for the future of the city’s water. Having been invited up to Owens Valley by writer Mary Austin’s brother-in-law, Frank Austin, in 1892 to view his irrigation project, Eaton was aware of the valley’s perennial systems of lakes and rivers.<sup>116</sup> He also noted that it had the benefit of being 4,000 miles above sea level, a large incline relative to Los Angeles that would require no extra energy were they to extract water from the region. In 1904, Eaton brought his friend and successor to the newly re-formulated Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, William Mulholland, to inspect the area. The two were

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<sup>114</sup> Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water* (New York: Viking, 1986)

<sup>115</sup> Karen S. Langlois, “Mary Austin and Andrew Forbes: Poetry, Photography, and the Eastern Sierra,” *California History* 85 (2007)

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

given the grand tour, on multiple occasions, by local Reclamation Service engineer Joseph Lippincott.<sup>117</sup>

Here, the hard lines of legality, or at least sincerity, began to blur. Lippincott, in need of an engineer to handle an issue of land allocation between two hydroelectric projects, hired Eaton for the job. Eaton used this opportunity to gain access to maps, deeds and other official holdings he would be otherwise barred from.<sup>118</sup> He even extended his scouting responsibilities to Andrew Forbes, whom he hired to take photographs of local water resources with which he was familiar. The *Inyo Register* of Bishop reported rather blandly on this occurrence: “Photographer Forbes is out picturing the water supply sources of the valley under arrangement with Fred Eaton. What it’s for no one knows.” The *Inyo Independent* too commented on this small, but significant bit of news: Forbes “went to Cottonwood...making a thorough collection of photographic views of all the mountain streams and camping places along the Sierra from Olancho to Long Valley for Fred Eaton.”<sup>119</sup> Through a series of underhanded deals, marked up offers on key private lands, and steady, secretive extraction of documentary information, control of Owens Valley began to shift into Los Angeles’s hands.

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Reisner, *Cadillac Desert*.

<sup>119</sup> Langlois, “Mary Austin and Andrew Forbes,” 40.



Figure 18: "Artesian well near L.A. Aqueduct. This is the best well but has a small flow. April 18, 1912," Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.

Residents began to pick up on news of the shifting winds when other Reclamation Service members discovered that Eaton's place on the board was disingenuous. By this time, however, Eaton had what he needed: a sizeable and valuable tract of land sold to him by the manager of the Nevada Power Mining and Milling Company.<sup>120</sup> Initially unbeknownst to locals, the future of the Owens Valley and its promised 60,000 irrigated acres had just been sold down the river.

In the years that followed, bureaucrats from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) would continue to con and finagle many more residents out of their water rights so that the construction of the 223 mile long aqueduct could commence. By 1907, city officials had garnered federal support, even getting President Roosevelt to write on their behalf, "It is a hundred or a thousandfold more important to

state that this water is more valuable to the people of Los Angeles than to the Owens Valley.”<sup>121</sup> Water, once represented in icons of romanticized frontier life became, in government eyes, a scrupulous capitalizing tool. What supported life for the Paiute and fostered community control for the white settlers of the valley created opportunities for expanding capital for Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley just to the north of the city. The grandiose western landscape aesthetic meant little to city officials; their goal of obtaining as much information and power over the Owens Valley is evident in their commissioned photographs of the construction of the aqueduct. Not meant to seduce public audiences, progress is their main directive. Gone from these images are romanticized frozen lakes or carefully composed landscapes like those of Watkins or Forbes; they are crude, obviously quickly taken photographs meant to convey information with none of the dragging ideology.

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<sup>120</sup> Reisner, *Cadillac Desert*.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, 85-86.



**Figure 19: "View of Fairmont Dam looking westerly. L.A. Aqueduct. April 14, 1912." Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.**

It wasn't only the white homesteaders who were being displaced; as farmland was sold out to the LADWP, the Paiute, many of whom relied on farm wage labor employment, found themselves suddenly out of a job. By this time, most Paiute clans that hadn't purchased private land—or sold it back to the city—were living in reservations set up by the Bureau of Indian Affairs around the town of Independence. By 1910 employment opportunities were at a dismal low; the Fort Independence Reservation wrote a statement for a US Senate committee investigating the state of Indian employment.

We, the Indians of Independence Fort, Calif, Inyo county, say once we Indians had our ways and had own food and meat and we owned this valley—Owens Valley. When the white people come they took away everything from us and learned us how to work, and we worked for them. Now they took the work from us, we are without work now. We want work to be given to us, we the Owens Valley Indians, right in Owens Valley.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Dean, *Weaving a Legacy*, 31.



Circumnavigating around the direct issue of employment, the government addressed their complaints by moving the Paiute yet again to larger, more developed but inappropriate reservations in Bishop, Manzanar and Big Pine. The reservation at Independence lay on water-rich land and selling it allowed the LADWP to expand their land grab.



**Figure 20: "Completed L.A. aqueduct looking south from bridge between Independence and Citrus. April 18, 1912." Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.**

The photographs taken before, during, and after the construction of the aqueduct confer a narrative counter to the romanticizing views of the Owens Valley. These images are therefore imperfect—blurred or dusty—and often include lengthy descriptive captions, as their purpose was indeed to distract attention from anything but the necessary details: where the water was and whose land it passed through. Gone from these images are sweeping vistas of the landscape and bucolic homesteads. In the hands of city water investors, the camera was used as a private tool for investigation rather than as a medium

for public propaganda. The LADWP needed only to justify and document the ways in which they were exerting power over the land and people at Owens Valley; they did not require public opinion or need to substantiate their progress.

### Conclusion

The initial waves of settlers who passed through here found that the lived reality of the American West in spaces like the Owens Valley was far more challenging to maintain over the long run than photographs had suggested. White residents therefore used photography as a means of disseminating narratives that supported and encouraged their control over the land and justified the expulsion of the Paiute. Ultimately, however, their story was usurped by the LADWP, which used photography for its investigative mechanics to fulfill a different kind of Western narrative: the much grander dreams of bringing water to a desert city of millions. The camera was ultimately used as a tool by those in power to construct narratives about the Owens Valley that justified their transformation of the landscape in the name of American ideas of progress. This justifying bias of American photography in the West would also be used to explain the relocation of thousands of Japanese and Japanese Americans to the Owens Valley during World War II.

**CHAPTER 4:**  
**THE MAKING OF MANZANAR**

November 15, 2013: Visiting Manzanar

*The stretch of land known as “Manzanar” lies along a barren stretch of the 395 highway between the towns of Lone Pine and Independence. Its dry scrub is interspersed with clusters of cottonwood; fine alluvial powder settles on everything, the dust pushing up into the steep crags of Mt. Williamson that looms directly west of here. Except for the wind, everything is eerily quiet, time almost seeming to stop. I walk in tune with the silence, buried deep into my coat; it’s November and there’s a wintery sharpness to the air as it sweeps through the skeletons of old gardens and barracks. Looking back, I can see the deep, dry footprints I’ve left in the clay—they’re they kind of impressions that I know will linger awhile until the dust fills them up again.*

The landscape leaves just as much of an impression upon oneself as one leaves upon it. Manzanar, in particular, is an unforgettable space, scarred with the memories of people who have struggled to claim it as their own. Vicious and unforgiving one moment, still and sublimely beautiful another, converting the land here has been no easy feat. Yet stories recount Manzanar as being endlessly fruitful; when the Numu lived there, they called it *Tupusi witu*, identifying it as the place where ground nuts could be found, as well as *taboose* bulbs.<sup>123</sup> As white settlers descended into the valley, Manzanar became a homestead and stopping ground for travelers before finally being turned into an apple orchard. Finally, the Japanese-Americans interned at Manzanar created flourishing pleasure gardens, parks and farms that produced enough fruit to sell outside of the valley. Through the process of successfully manipulating the environment at Manzanar, each group that resided here gained a sense of unique, ethnic autonomy over the land. The rich

history and diversity of the interned Japanese and Japanese American community at Manzanar in particular, however, was largely overshadowed by Americanizing narratives scripted into the landscape in which they lived. In other words, the act of producing culturally familiar foods and environments within the Western landscape of the Owens Valley was photographically constructed to incorporate and assimilate people of Japanese ancestry into white, American society.

### Pre-War Manzanar: A Gathering Ground

In 1862, John Shepherd arrived with the initial wave of cattle ranchers, miners and homesteaders who came to Owens Valley. At that time, settlers arriving in the valley used a wagon road along the western edge of the valley; in the process, they passed by a relatively large Paiute settlement along a creek named for so-called Captain George, leader of the village. Shepherd, at first drawn to the region for its mining opportunities, took up a job as a freight hauler and upkeep manager at the stage stop at George's Creek. Shortly thereafter, he purchased a 160 acre homestead just north of George's Creek. Within several years, his ranch expanded to some 2000 acres and his large Victorian style home became a crucial juncture in the Owens Valley. Having developed a toll road between Owens Lake and the mining towns of Darwin and Panamint City, he was well acquainted with new arrivals to the valley.<sup>124</sup> The Inyo Register recalls that "He brought

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<sup>123</sup> Ewan, *A Land Between*.

<sup>124</sup> National Park Service, *Cultural Landscape Report: Manzanar National Historic Site*

his family to the country, locating on the beautiful stream... There he built a home noted...for its comfort and its open handed welcome to the friend or transient.”<sup>125</sup>

Shepherd was also known for extending his hospitalities to the local Paiute. He worked closely with Captain George on incorporating indigenous people into the work force on his ranch to harvest the grain and alfalfa that supplied the nearby mining towns. The Paiute had soon established a small camp and burial ground just west of his ranch in the foothills above the fields. The surrounding ranches, which herded cattle, sheep and cultivated grain and fruit orchards, were flourishing, having been irrigated by a 15 mile long ditch that brought water to the region from Owens River.

At the same time that Mulholland and Eaton were buying up the valley for Los Angeles, George Chaffey, who had successfully designed an irrigation system to carry water from the Colorado River into Mexico, initiated his own plan for improving water retention for the region. In 1905, Chaffey purchased Shepherd’s lands, as well as some of the surrounding properties, ultimately to own the water rights to Shepherd, Bairs and part of George’s Creek; five years later, he initiated the Owens Valley Improvement Company (OVIC). The project was meant to create a self-sufficient town that used a gravity flow concrete irrigation system to supply the area with water for the development of apple orchards. Chaffey advertised the area, which he called “Manzanar,” Spanish for apple orchard, to investors in San Francisco and Los Angeles in plots of 10, 20 and 40 acre shares. Local residents also began purchasing acres at Manzanar and by 1912, it had developed into its own community complete with a school, central assembly hall, a

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<sup>125</sup> “Pre-War Manzanar.” Accessed April 26, 2014.  
[http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/exhibits/manz/pre\\_war\\_manzanar.html](http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/exhibits/manz/pre_war_manzanar.html)

cannery, garage, blacksmith and supply store. The apples and other canned goods assembled at Manzanar could be easily distributed along the road, which would later become the 395 highway, and nearby rail.

The OVIC ran successfully for another 12 years, about half of the land having been sold out to individual farmers, before the LADWP purchased the property at Manzanar. Although they continued to manage fruit production at Manzanar for some years after, their main interest was in channeling its water to the city and by 1934, they had re-directed all irrigation channels toward the aqueduct. “Manzanar,” decries one Sacramento Union article “...was once famous for its apples. The orchardists of Manzanar won first prize at the State Fair in Sacramento and at the Watsonville apple show. Los Angeles water and power board came and bought every orchard and ranch that its agents could trick the owners into selling... Today Manzanar is a ghastly place.”<sup>126</sup>

By that time, the LADWP had secured their hold on Owens Valley water, owning more than 95% of the valley. All of the residents of Manzanar had been forced to leave while many others in the valley, with employment opportunities scant, had also fled to the cities. Those who remained turned back to cattle ranching, leasing their land from the LADWP, and tourism for their income. The fact that the city now owned such a large and productive tract of land with relatively easy access by train and auto paved the way for what was to come.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Manzanar National Historic Site, “Cultural Landscape Report,” 23

“The Unwounded Casualties of War”<sup>128</sup>

The bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, set in motion the uprooting of yet another California community. Japanese American neighborhoods across the West Coast were suddenly papered with flyers elucidating the mandates of Executive Order 9066, which had been officially signed into action February 19, 1942. People of Japanese descent were given, in some cases, less than 48 hours<sup>129</sup> to make arrangements for their businesses, homes and possessions in preparation for the move to one of ten inland “relocation centers” in California, Arizona, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah or Arkansas.

The purported reason for this disruption was to take precautionary measures against espionage activities. Yet just a month before the bombing, a secret services report confirmed that Japanese Americans “possessed an extraordinary degree of loyalty to the United States.”<sup>130</sup> Rather, the bombing acted as a catalyst for anti-Japanese sentiments, which had been growing since the first immigrants began arriving in the late 1800s. Plans for excluding and segregating Japanese immigrant populations began to be voiced as early as 1900 primarily through outspoken labor groups, the largest coalition of which was the Japanese Exclusion League of San Francisco formed in 1905.<sup>131</sup> Threatened as they were by the influx of a low-wage workforce and a highly competitive farming nexus, farmers and labor unions were particularly vociferous in disseminating

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> *A Challenge to Democracy*, Newsreel, War Relocation Authority (1944): 1:01

<sup>129</sup> Manzanar National Historic Site, *Remembering Manzanar* (Huntingtown: Signature Communications)

<sup>130</sup> Japanese American Citizens League, “Historical Overview” *Curriculum and Resource Guide*, 2002.

propaganda that alienated and ostracized Japanese immigrants. By 1905, Japan's victory against Russia sparked wide circulation of articles, images and films that decried immigrant communities' loyalties to a country that had just become a potential threat.<sup>132</sup> Over the next several decades, anti-naturalization laws, strictures on Japanese immigration and restrictions on land ownership would continue to pit white American citizens against people of Japanese-descent.<sup>133</sup>

Acting on decades of contempt, racism and fear, the FBI began raiding homes after the bombing, suspicious of any perceived threat or allegiance to Japan, destroying weapons and radios. Cameras too were viewed as weapons against the United States. While people were



**Figure 21: WWII Propaganda "This is the Enemy," United States War Department, United States National Archives.**

forbidden to document the injustices occurring around them, private family photographs became sinister documents. Said one college sophomore at the time, "I spied [my] mother with tears burning pictures of her relatives back in Japan, looking at them one by one for the last time and burning them."<sup>134</sup> The ashes of their destroyed photographic narratives were replaced by anxious government depictions. Photographers Clem Albers, Dorothea

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<sup>131</sup> Tsuden Kashima, *Personal Justice Denied* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997)

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> These include the Immigration Act of 1924 and the Alien Land Law of 1913.



Lange, and Francis Stewart were some of the many commissioned to document the execution of Executive Order 9066; they specifically were assigned to the Manzanar Relocation Center.

### New Neighbors

The original plan had been for much more of the Owens Valley to be used for the relocation of everyone of Japanese descent from the coast. Word had gotten around about Owens Valley thanks to the ad campaign run by community member, Robert L. Brown, to bolster the local recreational tourist economy. According to an interview with Brown, Manchester Boddy, of the Los Angeles Daily News who had published on their behalf, first made the suggestion; “I’ve just been in touch with Attorney General Biddle and the Army is going to move all the Japanese off the West Coast and they’re going to do it real fast. I suggested to Biddle that a good place to put them would be up in the Owens Valley.”<sup>135</sup> Brown says, “They never mentioned Manzanar. They didn’t even know there was such a place. They were just thinking in terms of the whole area.”<sup>136</sup> When Glenn Desmond of the DWP heard about these plans, he protested at the threat this posed to LA’s water security. So fearfully protective were they of the aqueduct that when word got back to the chief of engineering for the DWP, H.A. Van Norman, he tried to convince the federal government to consider an area near Park, Arizona instead. He, along with many other politicians, argued that putting people of Japanese descent so close to a major

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<sup>134</sup> Jasmine Alinder, *Moving Images: Photography and the Japanese American Incarceration* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009): 1

<sup>135</sup> Jessie A. Garrett and Ronald C. Larson, *Camp and Community: Manzanar and the Owens Valley* (Fullerton: California State University, Japanese American Oral History Project, 1977): 25

water source was surely asking for an act of sabotage to occur.<sup>137</sup> Ultimately, however, a smaller parcel of land, about 6000 acres at Manzanar, was specifically selected because it had the water irrigation systems and power to support the 10,000 people who would come to live there between the spring of 1942 and the fall of 1945. General DeWitt, military commander and chief of relocation operations, also liked the location because, while there was adequate transportation thoroughfare, it was also isolated far enough away from the coast and nearby communities, making it easy to police.<sup>138</sup>

The LADWP weren't the only people grumbling about the decision. Before official word on the War Department's decision to move thousands of Japanese Americans to Owens Valley was released, a few Army Corp engineers had let spill that "they were going to bring a hundred thousand 'Japs' up to Lone Pine."<sup>139</sup> Having been mostly isolated until the paving of the 395 highway just three years previous, residents had little idea what to expect. The only other Japanese Americans in the region had been landscapers employed briefly in Bishop. Xenophobic sentiments circulated, a Lone Pine barber saying "We ought to take those Yellow-tails right down to the edge of the Pacific and say to 'em: 'Okay boys, over there's Tokyo. Start walkin'!"<sup>140</sup> For the most part, however, people responded rather complacently; once official word had been sent out through communications channels, like the Owens Valley Citizens Committee, Rotary

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Monica Embry, "A Place Like This: An Environmental Justice History of the Owens Valley—Water in Indigenous, Colonial and Manzanar Stories" (Thesis, Pomona College, 2009).

<sup>138</sup> Japanese American Citizens League "Historical Overview." Accessed April 27, 2014. <http://www.jacl.org/edu/JAHistory.pdf>

<sup>139</sup> Garrett and Larson, *Camp and Community*, 26.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, 5-7.

Clubs, women's clubs, and the like, were able to quell most anxieties. Additionally, they were told that it was a part of their American duty to play host to the relocation center.

This neutral attitude turned to a much warmer welcome when construction began. "At that time," recalls J.B. Hopkins, a local carpenter store owner and community leader,

...work was real scarce, and they hired anybody that could pound a nail, who happened to be a carpenter that day, and he went out there and got a job. And they were paying, as I recall, \$1.35 an hour, plus overtime, which was good money in those days. And they were working ten hour days I believe. And people that heard about these jobs came into this county from practically all over the state of California. It was a tremendously big construction job.<sup>141</sup>

The tremendous economic boost the relocation center brought to Lone Pine and the Inyo County generally was significant enough to warrant cross-county jealousy: "Mono Envy: Inyo's Getting Jap Camp"<sup>142</sup> read one headline. Local towns would continue to receive intermittent business through the camp as people arrived, in the midst of construction, in need of furnishings, clothing and basic supplies.

Nevertheless, a certain degree of resentment, if not outright racism, distanced local residents from their new neighbors. Having already been cheated out of their homes, businesses and water by the LADWP, they were highly distrustful of the newcomers. Over the next few years, they would become particularly bitter about the fact that the people of Manzanar produced such successful gardens. "They were royally treated... The Japanese had the best of everything... There were all those beautiful trees down there," commented local Mary Gillespie. "It was paradise out there, really," agreed another resident Jack Hopkins.<sup>143</sup> Even local Paiute, who felt a sense of camaraderie with

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid, 45.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Karen Piper "Manzanar" *LOST Magazine*, November, 2006. Accessed April 26, 2014. [www.lostmag.com/issue10/manzanar.php](http://www.lostmag.com/issue10/manzanar.php)

the Japanese Americans for being uprooted from their homes and confined in the Owens Valley, harbored some cynicism toward the situation. Tom Gustie, a Paiute man who was stopped by a guard who thought he was an internee trying to escape, joked, “I never should have told them. I could have lived there and not had to work. They brought the Japanese up here and fed them and everything. They never fed us.”<sup>144</sup>

The Japanese Americans’ success in making the challenging environment of the Owens Valley blossom appears to have opened old wounds regarding contention for power over the transformation of the landscape. Both the Paiute and the white settlers had had their control over the land taken from them; ironically, the Japanese American’s situation appears to be flipped—forcibly removed from their homes, they were given the opportunity to find empowerment and form a new community by transforming the desert.

#### From Concentration Camp to Community

“Everybody knows that it was [an] injustice. But...there’s no growing in that. I want [people] to look at what [Manzanar residents] did, how they lived, how they spent their days creating beautiful things;...they turned a concentration camp into a community.” Hank Umemoto, 2014<sup>145</sup>

In the chaos that ensued after Executive Order 9066 was announced, people were concerned mainly with trying to keep their families and essential belongings together. They were told a time, date and place to assemble with as much luggage as they could carry. From these assembly points, people were transported either by train or bus to the relocation center; not having been told where they were going or what to expect; people were kept, quite literally, in the dark until their arrival. Although ordered not to look

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

outside the train window, Hank Umemoto, 13 at the time, recalls “I pulled back the shade and laid eyes on the most spectacular sight I had ever seen. Silhouettes of pine trees against the Milky Way were casting shadows in the moonlight. It was a breath-taking image forever imprinted on my mind, and although I felt deserted and lonely, I also experienced something warm, peaceful and serene.”<sup>146</sup> People disembarking from their journey had similar first impressions of the landscape and what they could begin to expect of their stay there. Most notably, people have remarked that it was a desolate but beautiful place whose mountains, constantly blowing sands and magnificent skies would be most memorable—but it came with the bitter realization that they were no longer free or even American.<sup>147</sup>

From the train window, Manzanar appeared to be a beautiful place; once people began living there, however, they quickly realized what a challenging environment it was. “Volunteers”—painters, plumbers, doctors and cooks—who arrived in late March had helped to continue setting up the camp.<sup>148</sup> But even as families began to arrive as late as May, barracks were bare bones and poorly constructed. The lumber used in construction was still green and untreated, meaning that as it dried, knots and splits in the wood formed. When the afternoon winds swept through the valley, they kicked up a daily dust storm from which no one was protected. “When we first got to Manzanar,” says former internee, Wilbur Sato, “the barracks were green pinewood. The floor was separated. When the wind blew, it blew all the sand up through the floor. And you had to

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<sup>145</sup> Hank Umemoto, Interview by Kaily Heitz, Gardena, CA, March 15, 2014.

<sup>146</sup> Hank Umemoto *Manzanar to Mount Whitney: The Life and Times of a Lost Hiker* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2013): xii

<sup>147</sup> “Common Ground: The Heart of Community.” Japanese American National Museum. 100 North Central Ave, Los Angeles, California, 90012. March 22, 2014.

sit...and you're living in a sand storm, and the sand would come up through there. And you'd sit there for an hour or so, dust on you. Every day that was the pattern."<sup>149</sup>

Furthermore not having known what to expect, people were poorly prepared for the blisteringly hot days and freezing nights. With only thin blankets for protection, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston describes in her memoir that, "During the night Mama had unpacked all our clothes and heaped them on our beds for warmth."<sup>150</sup>

No one was ready for this kind of desert life. People brought to Manzanar came from a variety of places along the coast; chiefly, however, it culled people from the Terminal Island commercial fishing and immigrant community near Long Beach, Los Angeles, and Bainbridge Island, Washington. Many of them were farmers, landscapers and fishers;<sup>151</sup> through their first summer at Manzanar, everyone would pull together their commonalities to take control of this unexpectedly difficult environment to create the amenity gardens, vegetable plots, lawns and the expansive farms, orchards and parks for which Manzanar was to become locally renowned.

### *A People with Land But No Country*

The first few months were turbulent; in addition to learning to cope with the desert climate, social stratification between Issei, Japanese-born immigrants, and Nisei, first-generation Japanese-Americans, was intensified by the stress of having their cultural and national loyalties questioned. Those farming communities from Bainbridge Island,

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<sup>148</sup> National Park Service, *Cultural Landscape Report*.

<sup>149</sup> Wilbur Sato, Interview by Kaily Heitz, Gardena, CA, February 1, 2014.

<sup>150</sup> Jeanne Wakatsuki-Houston *Farewell to Manzanar: A True Story of Japanese American Experience During and After the World War II Internment* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973): 23

for instance, explains Wilbur Sato, not only underwent a huge environmental shift from rainy Washington to bone dry Owens Valley, but had experiences that were vastly different from those from Terminal Island. Even Sato, who came to Manzanar from Terminal Island, experienced difficulties. “We didn’t get along with the Terminal Island people because we didn’t speak Japanese! They beat us up!”<sup>152</sup>

Cultural, linguistic, and generational gaps in the community were made more noticeable by the condensed layout of the camp. Whereas previously, families were largely insular groups that ate and worked together, the camp facilitated the creation of new social structures. At mess halls, traditional family dinners broke up, as older children preferred to eat with their friends.<sup>153</sup> Indeed, many people recall the creation of close friendships with a fondness matched only by their reminiscence of the mountain views.<sup>154</sup> Having grown up on a farm, residents like Hank Umemoto had been accustomed to having to walk miles to see their friends. For a teenager, having friends suddenly living right down the block made experience at camp bearable, or, for him, even “the best years of my life.”<sup>155</sup>

But the good times came at a cost. For many, the act of being expatriated by their own country was traumatizing. This was particularly true for Nisei citizens, who, having been American all their lives, were suddenly told that “A Japs’ a Jap. It makes no difference whether the Jap’s a citizen or not.”<sup>156</sup> Sato, whose mother he describes as

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<sup>151</sup> National Park Service, *Cultural Landscape Report*.

<sup>152</sup> Sato, Personal Interview.

<sup>153</sup> Wakatasuki-Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*.

<sup>154</sup> Japanese American National Museum, “Common Ground.”

<sup>155</sup> Umemoto, Personal Interview.

<sup>156</sup> Popularly known quotation from General John DeWitt in response to questioning regarding allowing Japanese families to return to the West Coast, 1943.

being “fiercely patriotic”, was especially outraged by this sudden revocation of nationality.

This is our country. This is a time of great patriotism. All the great movies, the war movies, and we’re all into winning the war, and yet they’re calling us “Jap” and they’ve got all these pictures on the wall and everything else. It was very confusing. You think you’re American and then all of a sudden, they’re sending you to this place!<sup>157</sup>

The irony Sato points to here regards how the highly glorified American ideals popularized by the media conflicted with derogatory, racist propaganda that unfairly implicated Japanese American citizens as enemies to the state.

Photographic documentation from camp glosses over the confliction many residents felt. Cheery images of Japanese American citizens partaking in commemorating Memorial Day, playing baseball, gardening and sitting in classes portray Manzanar as just another American community. Yet Japanese heritage was much more widely expressed than can be seen in most government photography; for



**Figure 22: Francis Stewart, "Memorial Day services at Manzanar, a War Relocation Authority center where evacuees of Japanese ancestry will spend the duration. American Legion members and Boy Scouts participated in the services," May 31, 1942.**

instance, the New Year tradition of pounding rice into sweet cakes, a custom known as *mochi-tsuki*, annually brought together Issei and Nisei communities together to celebrate

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<sup>157</sup> Sato, Personal Interview.



at Manzanar.<sup>158</sup> The most egregious representation of Japanese cultural heritage circulated through government photography depicts traditional elevated sandals, *geta*, which were only acknowledged for being useful for walking in the dust (Fig. 23).



**Figure 23: Clem Albers, "Manzanar Calif--Close-up of geta stilt-like sandals which are especially useful in dust. These are made by evacuee craftsmen in this War Relocation Authority center," April 2, 1942.**

To the white American, the line between national and cultural identity was indistinct; visual narratives of patriotism excluded cultural or political diversity. To add insult to injury, they held Japanese Americans responsible for proving their loyalty to a country that had revoked their constitutional rights. In 1943, a questionnaire was distributed to all detainees aged 17 and older to conduct a survey of the population and to weed out the "disloyal" individuals from the rest. The most contentious of these questions

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<sup>158</sup> *Manzanar Free Press* Pictorial Edition, Vol IV, September 10, 1943. 8.

were number 27 and 28 which asked “Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?” and “Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces and foreswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power or organization?”<sup>159</sup> In addition to serving as an underhanded compulsory draft, question 28 assumed that Nisei were loyal to a country they were not born into and put Issei in the difficult situation of having to retract their only official citizenship. Deciding how to answer these questions often resulted in bitter family arguments and further fragmentation of already brittle relationships. Those who answered “no” to these questions, known derogatorily as the “no-no boys,” often refused out of principle to compromise their beliefs in what America purportedly stood for—equality, justice and freedom—for an unjust, backward break with these mores. These men were subsequently transported to the Tule Lake camp in California; if they were further determined to be “disloyal,” they would be deported to Japan.<sup>160</sup>

### *Taking Up Space: Making Manzanar Their Own*

By all accounts, Manzanar began as a concentration camp. In addition to being subjected to environmental and psychological hardships, internees were surrounded by five strands of barbed wire, eight guard towers, and army patrols complete with guns and bayonets. Many residents coped with this injustice using the Japanese idiom *shikata ga*

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<sup>159</sup> “The Question of Loyalty,” *Densho*. Accessed April 26, 2014.

<http://densho.org/learning/spice/lesson5/5reading5.asp>

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

*nai* and *gaman*, which roughly translate to “It cannot be helped” and “silent endurance.”<sup>161</sup> This does not imply, as photographs typically portray, that internees passively accepted their situation as necessary sacrifice. Rather, these sayings helped motivate what Umemoto refers to as the conversion of Manzanar from a concentration camp into a community. It provided them with an ideological springboard for taking back agency over their new community. While there existed many axes for resistance, of particular visual importance was internee relationships with the landscape. This narrative has been represented to fit an American integrationist lens that divested the conflict and complexities of Japanese culture from their image. However, gardens, parks and farms acted as spaces for healing and power critical to the creation of a community unique to the residents of Manzanar.

Many Japanese people brought to Manzanar were landscapers who had begun businesses in Los Angeles. Japanese-style gardening began to gain its reputation among Western sophisticates during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with its debut at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair.<sup>162</sup> Issei immigrating to America in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century found their skills as nursery workers, landscape workers, designers and businessmen valued, respected and well-compensated. Indeed, hiring a Japanese landscaper indicated that the white employer had enough status to employ some to design an “authentic” garden. Ironically, as a result of the ethnic niche market that resulted, many immigrants learned landscaping

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<sup>161</sup> Embry, “A Place Like This,” 143

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

in America, which derived less from a traditional spiritual affinity for nature than appealing to Los Angeles clientele.<sup>163</sup>

In addition to landscaping skills, many immigrants hailed from the farming class in Japan. Their knowledge about fertilizers, irrigation, land reclamation and intensive cultivation made them successful agriculturists along the West Coast.<sup>164</sup> By the 1940s, traditional and more efficient farming tactics allowed Japanese immigrants to rise to the top of the commercial truck farming market in California.<sup>165</sup> Their ability to convert outlying, undesirable parcels of land into productive farms was also what made them powerful in the face of structural restrictions on their land base; it simultaneously threatened the tenuous, monolithic control of the West whites clung to, who issued propaganda to make it appear that Japanese immigrants were using lands near industrial areas as a means of encroaching upon national security.<sup>166</sup> Turned out of their marginal, but productive lands, the Japanese farmers who came to Manzanar provided valuable tools for locating a sense of power and autonomy in an equally challenging environment.

Gardens and parks at Manzanar typically served as areas of aesthetic relief from the bleak, dusty environment. But they also served as spaces for resistance and community gathering. The garden at the Block 22 mess hall holds special significance in that it was where people met and began the protest that resulted in the violent riot on December 6, 1942.<sup>167</sup> The political, social and generational stratification that had been exacerbated in camp reached its peak on December 5<sup>th</sup>, when a group of internees

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<sup>163</sup> Anna Hosticka Tamura, "Gardens Below the Watchtower: Gardens and Meaning in World War II Japanese American Incarceration Camps Part 1." *Eden* 11 (Fall 2008)

<sup>164</sup> Kashima, *Personal Justice Denied*, 30.

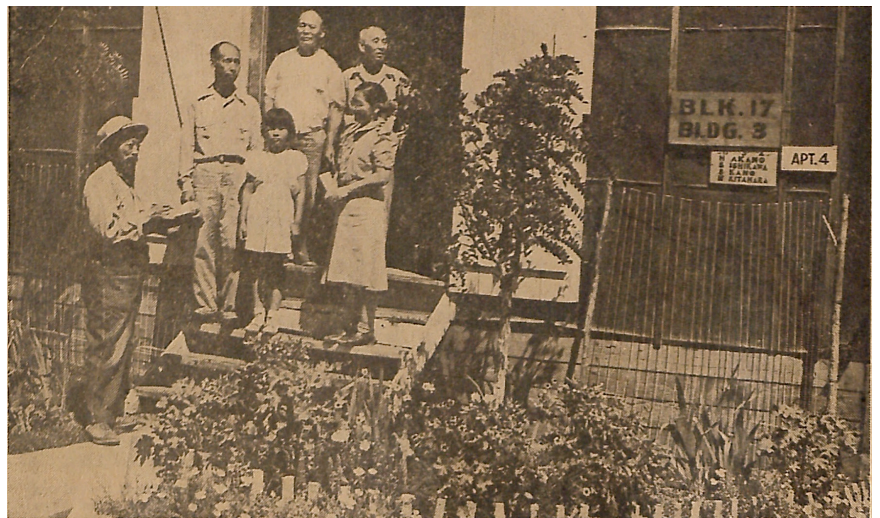
<sup>165</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*, 31.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

attacked an alleged government collaborator, Fred Tayama; his association with the Japanese American Citizens League, viewed as a favored, assimilationist group, further aggravated these accusations. One of his accused attackers was a prominent labor union and community leader, Harry Ueno. His imprisonment moved thousands of Japanese American residents to protest. As masses gathered at the community prison, minor scuffles quickly turned violent. Outnumbered and unnerved, armed guards fired shots into the crowd, killing two and wounding ten other people.<sup>168</sup>

The garden at Block 22 holds, perhaps, the most painful memory of political resistance. However, the gardens constructed throughout the camp are powerful in their own right because they provided spaces in which residents could reclaim vocations or hobbies that had allowed them to be free and independent prior to the war. Campaigns to beautify and develop the landscape of the camp were promoted by both the community members, who sought out projects to make use of their time, and by War Relocation

Authority (WRA) officials who needed to boost internee morale and desired to make the camps self-sustaining. In June of 1942, the administration distributed 200 pounds of rye grass seed, rakes and shovels to each block for the purpose of establishing



**Figure 24: Families often had small gardens such as these outside their barracks. Manzanar Free Press Pictorial Edition, 1943. Honnold/Mudd Special Collections, Claremont University Consortium.**

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<sup>167</sup> National Park Service, *Cultural Landscape Report*.

<sup>168</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*.

lawns. By the middle of the summer, people had established small gardens and vegetable plots—encouraged by the WRA as developing “Victory Gardens” in solidarity with the national agenda promoting resource conservation—which produced potatoes, onions, cucumbers, Chinese cabbage, and watermelon; flowers such as chrysanthemums, nasturtiums, carnations and roses were also commonly planted.<sup>169</sup> In addition to disrupting the bleak vista of tar-papered military barracks, they served a highly practical purpose in that they cut down on the amount of exposed soil that could be blown around during afternoon dust storms. These also proved to be fairly lucrative; by the following spring, enough tomatoes, eggplants, aster and peppers were being grown on people’s private plots to be sold to other residents, which put more profit into community shareholdings.<sup>170</sup>

Parallel to these individual landscaping projects grew the development of much larger scenic parks and farms, the undertaking of which provided people with a sense of purpose and pride in the face of daily humiliation and uncertainty. Fortunately, these desires worked alongside the WRA’s need to cut costs; developing farms would subsidize the cost of food supplies to the camp. Land for farming therefore had been cleared early in April by internee farm workers, who were paid through the Public Works Division. By June 21, the first 12 crates of red radishes had been harvested and delivered to the mess halls for consumption and more than 126 acres were under cultivation. As farmers became more accustomed to the soil and climate at Manzanar, production would increase such that 400 acres of land were being used to supply more than 80% of the camp’s fresh

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<sup>169</sup> National Park Service, *Cultural Landscape Report*.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

produce.<sup>171</sup> Although technically commissioned and overseen by white government workers, resident farmers were given the autonomy to grow what they liked, which meant that produce could be tailored to suit customary diets. Whereas the WRA initially provided unsuitable food they had guessed would be customary, such as rice drenched in fruit syrup,<sup>172</sup> Japanese farmers and gardeners produced foods that were used to create more familiar meals. Vegetables for Japanese pickles, or *tsukemono*, for instance, were commonly grown in the “Victory Gardens” at camp.<sup>173</sup>

Landscaping also provided people with the ability to express traditional aesthetic customs while making creative use of the natural resources and environment at Manzanar. Landscapers would also often compete to produce magnificent gardens in the public spaces between barracks or at the communal garden space near the mess halls. In addition to taking



**Figure 25: "A view of the garden strip arranged by William Katsuki, former landscape gardener from Southern California, alongside his home in the barracks at this War Relocation Authority center for evacuees of Japanese ancestry," June 30, 1942.**

creative advantage of available materials within the camp—often using, for instance, scrap lumber, shipping crates or irrigation canals to create decorative fences and

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Wakatasuki-Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*.

<sup>173</sup> *Manzanar Free Press*.

waterways—landscapers were sometimes given access to areas outside of Manzanar.<sup>174</sup> Henry Nishi, for instance, petitioned for the creation of a nursery for the camp during that formative first summer; about a month later, his father, Kuchirio Nishi, proposed the construction of what would become the most famous and well-documented camp garden, Merritt Park. The men, under armed guard, were allowed to leave the camp to collect native plants and local granite and volcanic rocks.<sup>175</sup> In doing so, they converted the Western aesthetic landscape and natural resources into something uniquely their own.



**Figure 26: Merritt Park pictured in Ansel Adams', "Pool in pleasure park, Manzanar Relocation Center, Calif," 1943.**

The fact that the landscape around Manzanar was so flush with natural resources for beautification projects lends itself to the idea that exertion of creativity and control over their environment was partially inspired by the beautiful scenery already present.

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<sup>174</sup> National Park Service, *Cultural Landscape Report*.



Commenting on the fact that other camps didn't have nearly so many decorative gardens as Manzanar, Umemoto reflects that,

I think it's the surroundings, atmosphere at Manzanar...they had the high Sierras to the west and to the east is Inyo mountains. And I remember once in a while the moon would come up right when the sun was setting and the sun would cast it's light on the moon the moon would appear orange...it would turn the whole area orange...All around was this beautiful scenery and atmosphere and that gave people and incentive to build these beautiful gardens.<sup>176</sup>

Despite the hardships and circumstances under which Japanese-Americans were placed in the Owens Valley, the residents at Manzanar were justifiably awed and inspired by their surroundings. The indignity lay in the fact that they could not enjoy these views as citizens on the other side of the barbed wire.

When the sun went down, it played on these [red] rocks [in the Inyo Range]. It was like watching a fish tank. I mean, it just moved, everything moves. And our life, when we're there, life stands still; we still don't know what's going to happen to us, we don't know how long we're gonna be there...And people would gather at that fence at the eastern part of Manzanar as the sun was going down in the evening and they'd just sit there and watch this.<sup>177</sup>

Japanese Americans were rendered immobile in this space, but not impassive, so took what opportunities they could through gardening and landscaping to gain agency over a situation otherwise outside of their control.

In the environments they created against the backdrop of the Inyo and Sierra mountains, residents could almost forget that they lived in a prison camp, instead focusing on the resilience of and individuality present within their community. This is evident in the fact that Merritt Park was one of the most photographed areas of camp. People would arrange themselves on the steps of the gazebo to take wedding, family, and

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<sup>175</sup> Tamura, "Gardens Below."

<sup>176</sup> Umemoto, Personal Interview.

<sup>177</sup> Sato, Personal Interview.

other private portraits because it offered one of the few perspectives from which one was unable to see the barracks, watch towers or barbed wire. Through such photographic representations and, most especially, the reconstruction of space, the residents of Manzanar were able to convert a bleak concentration camp into a flourishing community.

Community, Assimilation and Photography at Manzanar



**Figure 27: Ansel Adams "Farm, farm workers, Mt. Williamson in background, Manzanar Relocation Center," 1943.**

*...I came to Manzanar with my camera in the fall of 1943...I believe that the arid splendor of the desert, ringed with towering mountains, has strengthened the spirit of the people of Manzanar. I do not say all are conscious of this influence, but I am sure most have responded, in one way or another, to the resonances of their environment. From the harsh soil they have extracted fine crops; they have made gardens glow in the firebreaks and between the barracks. Out of the jostling, dusty confusion of the first bleak days in raw barracks they have modulated to a democratic internal society and a praiseworthy personal adjustment to conditions beyond their control. –Ansel Adams<sup>178</sup>*

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<sup>178</sup> Ansel Adams, *Born Free and Equal: The Story of Loyal Japanese Americans, Manzanar Relocation Center, Inyo County, California*. (Bishop: Spotted Dog Press, 2002): 13

Ansel Adams' glowing photojournalistic review of Japanese American progress at Manzanar portrayed them as diligent, patriotic citizens who had made the best of a regrettable situation. In the fashion of the rhetoric surrounding the West, they were made out to be tough frontiersmen, just as much products of their environment as the arable farmland was a product of their hard work. What we do not see depicted in Adams images or much of Lange, Albers and Stewart's earlier photos, is the psychological trauma internment inflicted upon Japanese Americans' diverse sense of self, nationality and cultural identity. What agency people took back for themselves through gardening was construed through the lens as benign patriotic perseverance and the continued Americanization of the Western landscape. American identity in the grandiose landscape of the Owens Valley was impressed upon the Japanese-Americans of Manzanar through photography in order to assuage white Americans that they were loyal citizens and to encourage assimilation and re-integration into society.

### *Hidden Agendas: WRA Photography*

Between the attack on Pearl Harbor and the announcement of Executive Order 9066, the camera was perceived as a weapon. Before Japanese "spies" could do any damage, the US military confiscated their cameras and family photos. In turn, the military used photography as a means of keeping a close eye on the perceived threat of JA communities by requiring individuals on the West Coast to obtain photo identification.<sup>179</sup> In mid-March of the 1942, the supervision of Japanese American incarceration transferred from the Western Defense Command to the newly created civilian agency, the

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<sup>179</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*.

War Relocation Authority. Rather than incriminating Japanese Americans, photographers hired through the WRA were commissioned to document the relocation project as a humane and efficient process in line with their goals to “reestablish the evacuated people as a productive segment of the American population; to provide, as nearly as wartime exigencies permit, an equitable substitute for the lives and homes given up; and to facilitate the reassimilation of the evacuees into the normal currents of American life.”<sup>180</sup> Their photography



**Figure 28: Clem Albers, "Eacuees of japanese ancestry arrive here by train and await buses for Manzanar, now a War Relocation Authority center." Lone Pine, California. April 1, 1942.**

necessarily reduces the violence of incarceration; the most common photos displayed from relocation depict smiling families boarding trains, playing baseball in dusty fields, or patiently standing in lines to receive supplies. These photos appear to be a complete reversal of exclusionary, anti-Japanese propoganda that had persisted throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the ultimate goal was not to return Japanese-descended people to the coast, where most of the tension had arisen between competing white businesses and agriculturalists, but to disperse them across the country in the hopes of diluting the integrity of the community.

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<sup>180</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*, 25.

Although photographers Dorothea Lange, Clement Albers and Francis Stewart were employed by the WRA to document relocation, none of them fully approved of the project. Albers and Lange, who worked for the WRA during Phase I of its existence, witnessed the hardship Japanese Americans endured during their first few months at Manzanar. Arriving in Manzanar in April of 1942, Albers who was then working for the San Francisco *Bulletin*, took many incisive photos of people arrive at a camp still in the midst of construction.<sup>181</sup> Scattered within his collection from his brief stint with the WRA, Albers included several tongue in cheek images that confront the injustice of the situation. For instance, a series of photos that appear to document helpful army officials



**Figure 30: Clem Albers, "Persons of Japanese ancestry being helped from the train by MP's upon their arrival at the Manzanar Relocation Center," April 1, 1942.**



**Figure 29: Clem Albers, "Pruning trees at this War Relocation Authority Center, where 10,000 evacuees of Japanese ancestry are spending the duration, while an M.P. is standing guard in the foreground," April 2, 1942.**

<sup>181</sup> Gerald H. Robinson, *Elusive Truth: Four Photographers at Manzanar* (Nevada City: C. Mautz, 2002)

assisting evacuees off of the train read as an alarming juxtaposition of innocents—children, the elderly and the blind—being held by the elbows by men with guns hanging by their sides (Fig. 30). Albers made no attempt to obscure the level of undeserved surveillance initially felt by Japanese Americans, revealing that even a simple task such as pruning trees necessitated armed guard (Fig. 29).

Lange, too, was equally unnerved by the project. Having just finished working with the Farm Securities Administration (FSA) on documenting the Depression, Lange



**Figure 31: Dorothea Lange, "Grandfather of Japanese ancestry teaching his little grandson to walk at the War Relocation Authority center for evacuees," July 3, 1942.**

had high expectations of the power of social photojournalism on democratic change. Seeing civil rights revoked in such an outwardly racist fashion fueled her to photograph the daily challenges they faced. As witness to the beginning of construction in March of 1942 and its budding garden and community spaces later that summer, she managed to capture several poignant images of their situation; on the whole, however, her photos were easily appropriated to government use to show how well internees were adapting. Lange herself would later write to Ansel Adams about

her disappointment. "I fear the intolerance and prejudice is constantly growing. We have

a disease. It's Jap-baiting and hatred. You have a job on your hands to do to make a dent in it—but I don't know a more challenging nor more important one. I went through an experience I'll never forget when I was working on it and learned a lot, even if I accomplished nothing."<sup>182</sup>

Her disappointment had partly to do with the fact that both hers and Albers' photos were subject to high levels of scrutiny; their negatives were usually confiscated by the Wartime Civil Control Administration, a branch of the Army which was in charge of camp operations at that time. By the time Francis Stewart, and eventually Ansel Adams, arrived, the WRA had transitioned into "Phase II" of its photographic documentation project,

which was more lax in its censorship but equally as propagandistic. "Photographs not suitable for publication, because of subject matter, will be designated for impounding, and negatives of such photographs shall be forwarded promptly to Washington. All existing prints of such photographs will be destroyed."<sup>183</sup> Captions were also frequently



**Figure 32: Dorothea Lange, "This evacuee is foreman of the Hobby Gardens project at this War Relocation Authority center," July 2, 1942.**

<sup>182</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*, 43.

<sup>183</sup> Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, *Japanese American Resettlement Through the Lens: Hikaru Carl Iwasaki and the WRA's Photographic Section, 1943-1945* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2009): 11.



adjusted to dictate the WRA's new focus.<sup>184</sup> Phase II merely implied a restructuring of WRA's photographic division accompanied by a shift in the narrative WRA officials were looking for in their photos; instead of documenting the removal process, they sought to emphasize Japanese American suitability for resettlement.<sup>185</sup>

*The New Pioneers: Ansel Adams' Photography at Manzanar*

Ansel Adams is best known for his dramatic images of the Western landscape. While his photos are magnificent works of art, he came under fire during the 1930s for his work's lack of contribution to social causes.<sup>186</sup> Adams was at first adamantly resistant to this call to action, relying on the power of visual narratives of the land. After having worked with Dorothea Lange on her prints for the FSA and once the war had begun, however, Adams began to feel the need to make a notable contribution to his country through his work. When Ralph Merritt, the newly appointed director of Manzanar and friend of Adams' through the Sierra Club, came to visit him in Yosemite late in the summer of 1942, he invited Adams to come document the camp. Adams agreed, equally lured by the dramatic landscape of the Owens Valley and the chance to make the injustices done to Japanese Americans known on a broader scale than could be achieved through government filtered photographs.

The work that Adams produced at Manzanar, however, was not as revolutionary as one might think. While it countered prevailing racist and xenophobic thought that portrayed Japanese Americans as not even human, much less American, it was not any freer of government propaganda and censorship than Lange or Albers'. Merritt and the

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<sup>184</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*, 39.

<sup>185</sup> Hirabayashi, *Japanese American Resettlement*.

WRA had been working on reversing the military strategy that had, up until then, completely segregated Japanese Americans from society. Shortly before assigning Adams to the project, Merritt had attended a conference with other WRA officials on “Americanization as the solution for the Japanese American evacuation problems.”<sup>187</sup> In accordance with this strategy, he encouraged Adams to take pictures of residents hard at work and to exclude any images of violence, aspects of daily life that were distinctly Japanese, guard towers or barbed wire in order to convince the public that Manzanar was just like any other American community.<sup>188</sup>

Adams’ depiction of the community at Manzanar, which culminated in the publication of his book *Born Free and Equal*, is unique in that he intentionally situates the camp within the landscape of the Owens Valley. While he makes mention of the dust and extreme temperatures, he focuses primarily on the relationships inhabitants and viewers have with the land. Broad sweeping views of the Sierras draws a double entendre in visual connotation between his work depicting classic American landscapes, used to convey narratives about American democracy, freedom and the frontier, and its more menacing comparison to a barrier meant to confine and isolate this group of people. Disturbingly, images like that in figure 33 draw comfortable connections between the community people had formed at Manzanar and their environments, as if to suggest that they were just as at home on the frontier as the American pioneer.

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<sup>186</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*.

<sup>187</sup> Anne Hammond, “Ansel Adams at Manzanar War Relocation Center, 1943-1944.” *History of Photography* 30, no. 3 (September 2006): 246.

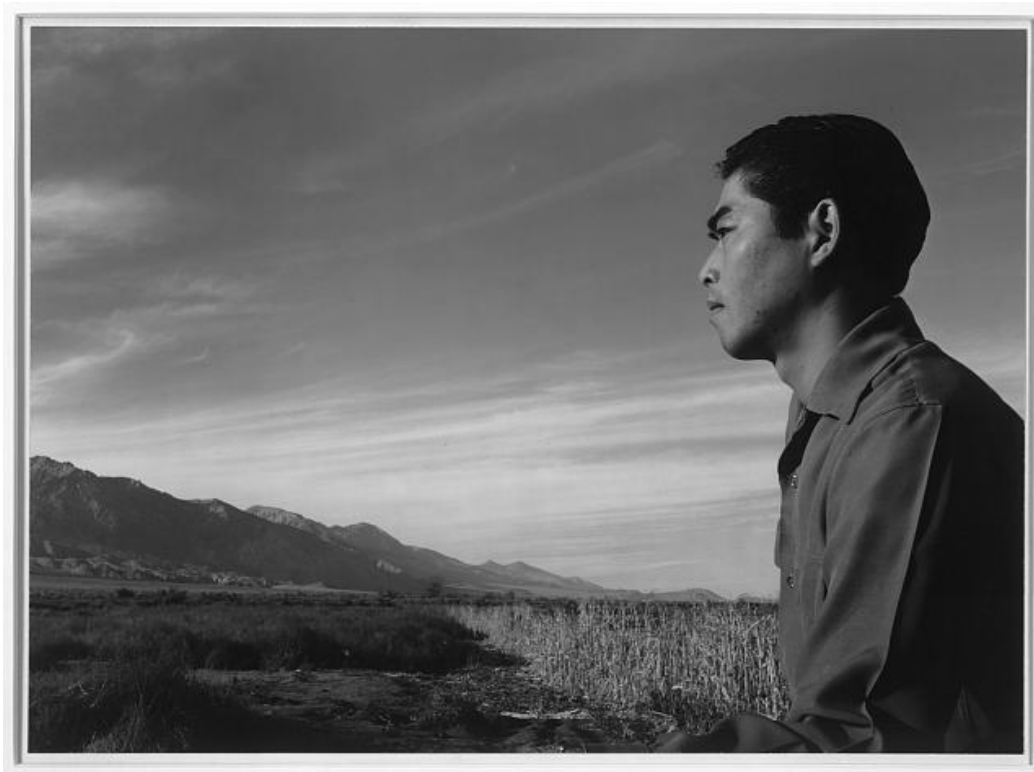
<sup>188</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*.



**Figure 33: Ansel Adams, "Manzanar street scene, winter, Manzanar Relocation Center," 1943.**

In focusing on the landscape and the flourishing communities and farms Japanese Americans had created within it, Adams locates the narrative within the legend of the American pioneer. Nowhere is resistance, anger or frustration with the limitations and challenges of living in Manzanar represented. Rather, Adams implies that the land imbued people with spiritual strength, though not “all [were] conscious of this influence,”<sup>189</sup> which disallowed them agency over their own, cultural sources of strength. What they achieved is attributed to their status as outstanding American citizens who braved the frontier and made the best of their situation. Adams’ images worked to inscribe residents of Manzanar into a pioneer ideology not only to convince white citizens of their “American-ness,” but to convince the residents themselves to embrace it

as an aspect of their American duty.<sup>190</sup> By this time, the WRA had begun to encourage residents to find employment preferably further inland and move out of the resettlement camps. In an ironic twist of rhetoric, Merritt told the 1943 graduating class of Manzanar High that “Your world does not lie in the old home in California—your world does not lie in this temporary home between the Inyos and the Sierra...your home lies in the great country to the east... You are the new pioneers.”<sup>191</sup> True to the form of Western frontier ideology, the California landscape was rife with challenges and opportunities to prove oneself as an American with a right to own and transform the land; ultimately, however, the Western landscape was only ever a proving ground. The power of representation of these actions lay with the people who paid for the land: the U.S. government.



**Figure 34: Ansel Adams, "Tom Kobayashi, Manzanar Relocation Center," 1943.**

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<sup>189</sup> See footnote 168.

<sup>190</sup> Hirabayashi, *Japanese American Resettlement*.

<sup>191</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*, 64.

*Toyo Miyatake: Seeing the Community*

In contrast to Adams and the WRA, Toyo Miyatake's photos functioned privately to provide community members at Manzanar with documentation of their own stories—he took portraits, wedding photos, and pictures of everyday events for the local newspaper, the *Manzanar Free Press*. He was not trying to summarize life at Manzanar, but to provide a record for the people. Said he, “As a photographer, I have a responsibility to record camp life, as it will be very important to the future of Japanese Americans in the United States.”<sup>192</sup> Yet this was no easy feat; the act of smuggling in a camera lens and film holder for a view camera into camp was so highly dangerous, he did not tell his family he was doing so, for fear of being discovered and separated from them. The importance he connoted with photography for Japanese-Americans was directly counter to the essentializing and Americanizing narratives enforced by outside photographers.

Before coming to Manzanar, Miyatake ran a successful photography studio in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo community. In the 1920s, Miyatake befriended well known art photographer, Edward Weston, who admired and respected the Japanese community. It is this connection that may have helped Miyatake gain consent from Merritt to begin documenting camp life. Additionally, however, Merritt was inclined to give the residents of Manzanar more autonomy and opportunity to begin their own businesses on the premises in order to quell tensions after the December 6<sup>th</sup> riot. Miyatake had the local

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<sup>192</sup> Manzanar National Historic Site Visitor Center, 5001 Highway 395, Independence, CA, 93526, November 15, 2013.

carpenter build a wooden body for his camera and proceeded to open his photo studio at Manzanar one year after arriving.<sup>193</sup>

Although Miyatake was allowed to run his own studio and arrange shots how he liked, “authorized personnel” were required to be on the premises to release the shutter. When the *Manzanar Free Press* actually had to shut down for two days due to their “lack of photographer,”<sup>194</sup> the actual photographers were present, but their white supervisors were not. Merritt allowed their wives to supervise photo sessions before finally granting Miyatake free reign.

Miyatake’s photos capture more intimate details of Issei and Nisei lives that exist beyond the limitations they experienced at Manzanar. They weren’t entirely representative of the psychological experience of living there; says Sato

[Toyo Miyatake] didn’t really show the people, their problems or anything. He had girls prancing and things like that, school girls and happy people and so on. They really didn’t do a good job in that sense in photography. It’s good in a way that he took so many pictures, that you have those pictures. But in terms of really



**Figure 35: Miyatake's images for the Manzanar Free Press were meant to be relatable to the community; they represent Japanese culture more liberally than other photographers' images. Toyo Miyatake Studio, Manzanar, *Manzanar Free Press Pictorial Edition*, 1943. Honnold/Mudd Special Collections, Claremont University Consortium.**

<sup>193</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid*, 83.

depicting...they didn't try to, they weren't social in terms of ideas about, criticizing or anything.<sup>195</sup>

Although Sato disparages Miyatake here for his lack of critical interrogation, Miyatake did not task himself with making poignant political statements, but to conduce the narrative residents wished to see and remember. Thus, people used photography to gain agency over how they represented themselves at Manzanar, which meant that the stress of the situation was intentionally muted.

On the whole, Miyatake's studio at Manzanar produced municipally or privately oriented photographs meant to be read in the context of newspapers, year books or family photo albums. After shaking loose his authorized guard, however, Miyatake did make a few highly political prints. Most well known of these is "Boys Behind Barbed Wire." The image of three boys gripping the barbed wire fence is much like many of Clem Albers lesser known works, in that he conflates symbolic violence with innocence, highlighting the injustice of the situation. However, this image has been appropriated by the media in a way that laments the situation without, as Sato says, "really depicting" the struggles and strife of the community, but rather points to a much larger political discussion about race and rights in America. The real strength in his work lies in his private, commissioned works much more so than malleable, politicized images like "Boys Behind Barbed Wire."

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<sup>195</sup> Sato, Personal Interview.

## Remembering Manzanar as More Than an American Tragedy

Whether it be Adams' portraits or Miyatake's "Boys at the Barbed Wire," photographs published about Manzanar are immediately incorporated into a charged discussion about American citizenship that assumes that the subjects of these images in fact even considered themselves American. Many, if not most, people of Japanese ancestry were indeed extremely loyal to America and came out of the internment experience more committed to the country than ever.<sup>196</sup> But the assumption that everyone in these camps was so forgiving undermines the influence of more than 40 years of anti-Japanese propaganda and exclusionary tactics that tried to discredit Japanese immigrant American patriotism. For residents like Umemoto, the process of reconciling hatred, abandonment and denial of his American identity with a sudden demand for integration took years.

It took me over 50 years before I was able to say I am an American. Because while in camp, being sent to camp like that, you're not an American, you're told you're not an American, you're just a worthless little Jap. So that was so deeply ingrained in my mind that I feel guilty to say that I'm an American. And during the...Korean War, I was in the Army. I'm a veteran, I was born here, I have [an] inalienable right to say that I'm an American. But even so, the scar is so deep that it took about 50 years before it healed. And today, I...call myself a Jap and say that I'm a stoic American.<sup>197</sup>

Photos overlook the heterogeneity of the Japanese and Japanese American identity at Manzanar. This perception is aided in no small part by the sublime Western landscape in which they were placed. Paired with scenic views of the landscape and depictions of residents converting the landscape into a town on the American frontier, these visual narratives confine residents' identity to that of a pioneer American eking out life in

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<sup>196</sup> Japanese American National Museum. "Common Ground."

<sup>197</sup> Umemoto, Personal Interview.



search of justice and freedom without recognizing the psychological damage this sudden flip flop in ideology may have produced.

While these photographs are intended to criticize the situation, they also make room for national forgiveness, which is questionably deserved. At the time, images like Adams' presented a heroic and intimate counter-narrative to predominant racist images. In hindsight, however, they create a misleading documentation of internment as not being so bad, relieving white Americans of some guilt. In contrast to the Nazis, Americans treated the Japanese well; says Sylvia Danovitch "We can look with relief to these pictures, cognizant that, like other nations, we imprisoned people who we believed might be dangerous in wartime, but, unlike other nations, we did not mistreat, dehumanize, or starve them. Reporters freely entered the camps and internees were often allowed out. We committed a grave error, but we were civilized. The photographs are our witness."<sup>198</sup>

What people like Danovitch forget is the uncivil manner in which Japanese immigrants and their families were bullied and stereotyped before and for sometime after their internment.<sup>199</sup> Photographs like Lange's, Adams' and Albers' overcompensate for these racist and xenophobic sentiments by branding the community as equally American and as at home in the arid West as the frontier pioneer. In doing so, they simplify the social, linguistic and generational diversity within the community at Manzanar and eliminate any images that may have marked them as culturally Japanese. Given that photography is the primary medium through which people currently gain access to reflections on Manzanar, people still remember internment as an American tragedy that occurred to American citizens on American soil. While they constructed environments

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<sup>198</sup> Alinder, *Moving Images*, 15-16.

and images to forget that they lived in a prison camp, we have constructed a photographic memory that forgets that they were Japanese.

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<sup>199</sup> Umemoto, Sato, Personal Interviews.

November 15, 2013: Reflections on the Manzanar National Historic Site Visitor Center

*I spoke to one of the park rangers/museum interpreters. When he told me about the history of the film that was made for the museum, he said that the chief interpreter threw the original script away because it was being read by a Japanese man whose second language was English. "These were not Japanese people. They were American citizens." He said it so adamantly, as if it would be justified if they were only Japanese immigrants—he was essentially saying 'Look! Look they're not foreigners, this is an American story! Americans need to be represented, not Japanese.' I understand this, but it also negates the importance of their very immediate Japanese heritage, which was still being perpetuated by resident elders who did grow up in Japan... We are agreeing to a narrative that wants us to overlook these diversities entirely and assimilate rather than differentiate.*

**THE SPIRIT OF MANZANAR**

As we turn the pages of this Pictorial of Manzanar, we take pride in all that our community life has come to mean. In one year's time there have sprung into being farms and workshops, homes and schools, churches and gardens. Like the design woven into a beautiful cloth, all these had a part in creating this new home of the people of Manzanar from the raw lands of the desert.


But the triumph of Manzanar is not in the things that have been created, it is in the spirit of the people who have been tested by the winds of winter, by the heat of summer, by the loss of old homes and by the uncertainties of the future. The people who have met these tests and have conquered them are those who no longer have fear or uncertainty. They can always win any fight against adversity and uncertainty.

Manzanar has been a testing ground that has tried the hearts and minds of all its people. Those who have lost heart are now taking their places with a group that does not favor the American way of fighting on against hardships in the hope of a happier future. They are giving up and turning back to the land of their fathers.

But those who have met the test, who have won the fight to make a happier home here, are now ready to go on to permanent homes and to their full place in the American way of living.

When Manzanar is again a desert, it will be said that here people of Japanese ancestry proved their pioneering spirit and from here many thousands went out to join other pioneering people to build better homes and a stronger America.

RALPH P. MERRITT,  
Project Director.



With the lush foliage of Baird's Creek in the background and the wind blown summer clouds above, Alyce and Yuichi Hirata stand together on a bridge of logs. This area has been designated as an area for recreational use.

**Memories of Manzanar**

Gateway to freedom: Police

**Figure 36: Newspaper clipping from *Manzanar Free Press Pictorial Edition*, September, 1943. Honnold/Mudd Special Collections, Claremont University Consortium.**

**CHAPTER 5:**  
**PHOTOGRAPHIC LEGACIES**

*Power inhabits the very grain of photography's existence as a modern Western event.-*  
Geoffrey Batchen<sup>200</sup>

The broad sweep of history analyzed in this thesis has attempted to prove that photography's connotation with historical truth has erased countless marginalized narratives over the course of its existence in favor of hegemonic ideologies of domination. Landscape images from the American West serve as a keystone example of the camera as a tool for exerting colonialist control over land and people. The narratives that were constructed and disseminated through photography about the West were perpetuated through the 20<sup>th</sup> century in regions like the Owens Valley to provide a framework for American identity in the Western landscape. These standards were imposed upon non-white people who grappled for autonomy over their environments; they either ostracized and thereby disempowered them from their lands, or assimilated and incorporated them into white American narratives of control over an environment into which they were forcibly placed.

However, in an expanded version of this work, I would choose to focus more upon the conflicting narratives present in recollections of Manzanar. With the understanding that the camera has historically acted as a colonizing tool, we can begin to look more critically at the intersections of Japanese, Japanese-American and white American politics, methods of representation and relationship with the environment of the Owens Valley. This would require more extensive field work and in-depth research, since most topical histories of Manzanar remember it through an Americanizing lens.

Finally, in re-examining narratives we construct about the past, it is important to recognize that this process of this visual colonization did not stop at World War II. The way in which people are represented in relation to their environment continues to perpetuate narratives of control. What differs is the environments which we seek to control, which have expanded from the American Frontier to international landscapes thanks to the broadening of expansionist goals through globalization. Our ability to obtain images of nearly every place in the world ostensibly provides us with the knowledge and power to dictate how these spaces ought to be used and who ought to control them. But if the history of Western landscape photography teaches us anything, it is that we need to look critically at the subjective narrative underlying popular images in order to understand how these documents will define our socio-environmental legacy for generations to come.

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<sup>200</sup> Hirabayashi, *Japanese American Resettlement*, 172.

### Photograph Citations

Images are used with permission where noted, and otherwise deemed appropriate for inclusion per a fair analysis.

**Figure 1:** Moran, Thomas, *Mountain of the Holy Cross*, 1875, oil on canvas. Museum of the American West, Autry National Center. Los Angeles.

**Figure 2:** Jackson, William Henry, *Mount of the Holy Cross*, 1873, albumen print. Web.

**Figure 3:** Lange, Dorothea, "Destitute peapickers in California: a 32 year old mother of seven children", 1936, silver gelatin print. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington D.C. Web.

**Figure 4:** "Jones Great Pantoscope of California," 1852. Scanned from Sandweiss, Martha, *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002): 50. Print.

**Figure 5:** Gardner, Alexander, "Canada de las Uvas, or Tejon Pass in Sierra Nevada California, 1,690 miles west of Missouri River," 1868, albumen print. Boston Public Library. Web.

**Figure 6:** Russell, Andrew J. "Hall's Cut" *The Great West Illustrated in a Series of Photographic Views Across the Continent; Taken along the Line of the Union Pacific Railroad West from Omaha, Nebraska* (New York: Authority of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, 1869). Boston Public Library. Web.

**Figure 7:** Russell, Andrew J. "Devil's Gate, Dale Creek Canon" *The Great West Illustrated in a Series of Photographic Views Across the Continent; Taken along the Line of the Union Pacific Railroad West from Omaha, Nebraska* (New York: Authority of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, 1869). Boston Public Library. Web.

**Figure 8:** *Cape Horn, Columbia River, Oregon*, negative 1867; print about 1881 - 1883, Albumen silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

**Figure 9:** O'Sullivan, Timothy, "'Black Canon, Colorado River, From Camp 8, Looking Above," Albumen silver print, 1871. Scanned from Sandweiss, Martha, *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002): 188. Print.

**Figure 10:** Russell, Andrew J. "East Meets West at the Laying of the Last Rail," Albumen silver print, 1869. Scanned from Sandweiss, Martha, *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002): 160. Print.

**Figure 11:** Gardner, Alexander "Ancient Pueblo Town of Zuni, Western New Mexico," Albumen print, 1867. Boston Public Library. Web.

**Figure 12:** Forbes, Andrew. "Lone Pine, Cal." Courtesy of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

**Figure 13:** Forbes, Andrew. Image courtesy of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

**Figure 14:** Copied from Inyo County, California *Beautiful Owens Valley* (Bishop: The Inyo County Register, 1915): 12

**Figure 15:** Forbes, Andrew, "South Lake Bishop, Cal." Courtesy of Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History

**Figure 16:** Forbes, Andrew, "Mother and Child Piute." Courtesy of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

**Figure 17:** Forbes, Andrew. "Captain John, Last Chief of the Piutes." Courtesy of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

**Figure 18:** "Artesian well near L.A. Aqueduct. This is the best well but has a small flow. April 18, 1912." Fred C. Finkle papers, Water Resources Collection. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.

**Figure 19:** "View of Fairmont Dam looking westerly. L.A. Aqueduct. April 14, 1912." Fred C. Finkle papers, Water Resources Collection. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.

**Figure 20:** "Completed L.A. aqueduct looking south from bridge between Independence and Citrus. April 18, 1912." Fred C. Finkle papers, Water Resources Collection. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium.

**Figure 21:** "This is the Enemy," United States War Department, United States National Archives. Web.

**Figure 22:** Stewart, Francis "Memorial Day services at Manzanar, a War Relocation Authority center where evacuees of Japanese ancestry will spend the duration. American Legion members and Boy Scouts participated in the services," 1942. University of California, Berkeley. Online Archive of California. Web.

**Figure 23:** Albers, Clem, "Manzanar Calif--Close-up of geta stilt-like sandals which are especially useful in dust. These are made by evacuee craftsmen in this War Relocation Authority center," 1942. University of California, Berkeley. Online Archive of California. Web.

**Figure 24:** Miyatake, Toyo. *Manzanar Free Press Pictorial Edition: IV*, no.1 (September 10, 1943): 16. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium. April 27, 2014.

**Figure 25:** "A view of the garden strip arranged by William Katsuki, former landscape gardener from Southern California, alongside his home in the barracks at this War Relocation Authority center for evacuees of Japanese ancestry," 1942. University of California, Berkeley. Online Archive of California. Web.

**Figure 26:** Adams, Ansel, "Pool in pleasure park, Manzanar Relocation Center, Calif," Gelatin silver print, 1943. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. Web.

**Figure 27:** Adams, Ansel, "Farm, farm workers, Mt. Williamson in background, Manzanar Relocation Center," Gelatin silver print, 1943. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. Web.

**Figure 28:** Albers, Clem, "Evacuees of Japanese ancestry arrive here by train and await buses for Manzanar, now a War Relocation Authority center." 1942. University of California, Berkeley. Online Archive of California. Web.

**Figure 29:** Albers, Clem "Pruning trees at this War Relocation Authority Center, where 10,000 evacuees of Japanese ancestry are spending the duration, while an M.P. is standing guard in the foreground," 1942. University of California, Berkeley. Online Archive of California. Web.

**Figure 30:** Albers, Clem, "Persons of Japanese ancestry being helped from the train by MP's upon their arrival at the Manzanar Relocation Center," April 1, 1942. University of California, Berkeley. Online Archive of California. Web.

**Figure 31:** Lange, Dorothea, "Grandfather of Japanese ancestry teaching his little grandson to walk at the War Relocation Authority center for evacuees," 1942. University of California, Berkeley. Online Archive of California. Web.

**Figure 32:** Lange, Dorothea, "This evacuee is foreman of the Hobby Gardens project at this War Relocation Authority center," 1942. University of California, Berkeley. Online Archive of California. Web.

**Figure 33:** Adams, Ansel, "Manzanar street scene, winter, Manzanar Relocation Center," 1943. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. Web.

**Figure 34:** Adams, Ansel, "Tom Kobayashi, Manzanar Relocation Center," Gelatin silver print, 1943. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. Web.



**Figure 35:** Miyatake, Toyo. *Manzanar Free Press Pictorial Edition: IV no. 1* (September 10, 1943): 19. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium. April 27, 2014.

**Figure 36:** Miyatake, Toyo. *Manzanar Free Press Pictorial Edition: IV no. 1* (September 10, 1943): 2. Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium. April 27, 2014.

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