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MOUNT RAINIER AND THE SEATTLE CAMERA CLUB

(PART 8, PAGES 141 – 172)

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MOUNT RAINIER AND THE SEATTLE CAMERA CLUB

I have visited Mount Rainier, my lover, more than 190 times.
I cannot leave Seattle when I think of the beautiful views
of Mount Rainier.

—Iwao Matsushita

Introduction

In late 1924—a time when Asians faced prejudice and, sometimes, open hostility on the West Coast—a group of Japanese Americans gathered in Seattle to found the city’s first photography club. The Seattle Camera Club, with headquarters in the Empire Hotel at 422 1/2 Main Street, held its first meeting in the Gyokken Café. In part, the club was formed as a venue for showing the members’ photographic work. At the time, the only other “gallery space” was a salon, held in Seattle’s upscale department store, Frederick and Nelson. Dues were set at .50¢. The 39 charter members were all Japanese (Lee 24).

In time, the Seattle Camera Club grew to 58 members, including five non-Asians. The club maintained a reading room at the Empire Hotel, with exhibition catalogs, books, bulletins, and magazines, and met once a month at the Gyokken Café. Members were required to bring one or two pictures to the meeting for critique. In addition to the meetings, club members frequently went on photo excursions together, traveling to places like Mount Rainier and Mount Baker. These mountains, especially Rainier, became a favorite subject of the photographers (Lee 24, 27).

The club existed for fewer than six years. During that time, it was enormously successful, hosting an annual international exhibition and winning a number of highly-competitive awards. Its bilingual journal *Notan* (“dark and light”) was edited by Dr. Kyo Koike—a Seattle physician serving the Japanese immigrant community (Zabilski 77; Bromberg 2).

Kyo Koike¹

Dr. Koike was the Seattle Camera Club’s foremost figure. A fine arts enthusiast, he was the most prolific and successful photographer in the group and its chief spokesperson. Koike was among the first officers and was the editor and primary author of its journal, *Notan* (Bromberg 2; Lee 25).

Kyo Koike immigrated to the United States from Japan at the age of 39, arriving in Seattle in 1917. He brought with him a medical degree and years of experience employing Western medical practices. He established both his practice and his residence (and later the Seattle Camera Club) in the Empire Hotel Building at 422 1/2 Main Street, in the heart of Japantown. His office hours

¹ Pronounced somewhere between koy-E-kay and KOY-KAY; the middle “e” sound is barely audible.

were from 9AM to 8PM and, in 1920, he was one of nineteen Issei physicians and surgeons serving the Japanese population of Seattle (Fiset 15; *Unsung Artist*).

An avid photographer and poet, Koike emerged as a leader in the Seattle arts community. In addition to co-organizing the Seattle Camera Club, in 1934 Koike helped to establish two Seattle poetry clubs, one of which was the haiku society “Rainier *Ginsha*.”² Writing under the name *Banjin*, Koike participated in the society as both a teacher and a poet. Rainier *Ginsha* is in operation today and its members still commemorate the anniversary of Koike’s death. Koike was also an amateur naturalist—he collected and classified wild flowers—and an avid hiker, spending dozens of hours in the Cascades each month (Zabilski 73; Fiset 15–17).

Despite his Renaissance-like interests, Dr. Koike is remembered today primarily as a photographer. In “Why I Am a Pictorial³ Photographer” (*Photo-Era Magazine*, September 1928), Koike writes of his youthful experiments with photography, using a German-made camera “without any purpose in view.” He took up the hobby in earnest ten or fifteen years later, after coming to America:

A friend of mine gave me, as a souvenir, a 3-A Eastman Kodak fitted with rapid rectilinear lens. It was a fire-lighter to rekindle the extinct ambition of my heart and to make me a photomaniac again.
—Kyo Koike, 1928 (123)

Koike’s photographs were first shown in Seattle in 1920, when they were displayed at the Frederick and Nelson Salon, and nationally in 1922, when they were printed in *Photo-Era Magazine*. He soon became active in the national pictorialist community. In the 1920s and 1930s, his photographs were shown—and sometimes honored—in Madrid, Japan, Uruguay, Monaco, Budapest, Amsterdam, Warsaw, and San Francisco. In 1927–1928, 36 salons displayed his work and in 1929 he was named the most exhibited pictorialist in the world. In addition to being a member of the Associated Camera Clubs of America, he was inducted into the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, one of the oldest photographic societies in the world. At the time, he was the society’s only Japanese member (*Unsung Artist*; Lee 25).

Although Koike’s choice of natural subjects and use of soft-focus identify him as a pictorialist, he was a modernist in other respects, advocating purely photographic techniques and visualization: composing the shot in one’s mind before releasing the shutter. He worked at his craft endlessly. A monthly feature in the American photography journal *Camera Craft* was the inclusion of a pictorial contest, garnering submissions from photographers around the country. A quick glance through the 1926 volume reveals that Dr. Koike submitted his work every single month (Zabilski 74; *Camera Craft* 1926).

In a 1929 letter sent to Warsaw, with fifty prints for a one-man exhibition, Koike wrote:

2 A *ginsha* is the Japanese equivalent of a European “salon,” in which people would gather for intellectual and artistic discussions and to read and write poetry.

3 Pictorialism was popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and was a form of artistic photography. The term is used to describe photographs in which the actual scene depicted is of less importance than the artistic or emotional quality of the image. Pictorialists often used manipulative techniques—playing with focus, using gum bichromate during processing, and so on—to achieve a more artistic effect.

I am Japanese and a surgeon by profession. I have lived in America for years, but I came here from Japan. Naturally, my making of pictures is based on oriental ideas. . . . Why should we drop Japanese ideas which our ancestors originated of themselves and left to us? Of course we should not try to imitate their forms, but we should not mind inheriting their ideas. I am not so narrow minded as to reject foreign influences, but rather, I am trying to assimilate them. —Kyo Koike, 1929 (UWA 10/6/05 Fax 5)

*Iwao and Hanaye Matsushita*⁴

Iwao Matsushita, at the age of 27, and Hanaye Tamura, 21, were two of 325 passengers on board the ship S.S. Suwa Maru, arriving in Seattle on the drizzly morning of September 3, 1919. They had been married for seven months. Iwao had come on a student visa to study English language and literature; the couple planned to make Seattle their home for as long as the next five years. They had with them \$450 in cash, enough to support them for a few days or possibly weeks while they settled in (Fiset 3–4).

Iwao was born on January 10, 1892, the third of five children, in Hiroshima prefecture on the Island of Honshu. Hanaye was also born on Honshu, but six years later—March 9, 1898—and in Okayama prefecture. Both were raised in the protestant tradition and were brought together through an arranged marriage on January 22, 1919. Roger Daniels, in the foreword to *Imprisoned Apart*, wrote that Hanaye and Iwao, both Christian and of middle class economic status, were “far from typical of their generation of Japanese immigrants” (Fiset 4–6, xii).

The couple journeyed to America to further Iwao’s prospects as a teacher in Japan. Why they chose Seattle as a home base is somewhat unclear, but it may have had something to do with the presence of Dr. Kyo Koike—an old friend of the Tamura family, known affectionately by Hanaye as “uncle”—and Koike’s relative Katuichi Katayama, who had been settled in Seattle for some time. Iwao and Hanaye had no intention of staying permanently (Fiset 6, 9).

Dr. Koike introduced Iwao Matsushita to photography and to what would become both men’s favorite photographic subject, Mount Rainier—the peak that Fiset describes as Matsushita’s “muse.”⁵ During the couple’s first few weeks in America, while they were still staying with Katayama, Koike led Iwao on his first outing to the mountain. Like Koike, Matsushita was a charter member of the Seattle Camera Club and, although he was not as skilled a photographer as his mentor, by 1927 six of his images hung in four salons in the U.S. and the U.K. (Fiset 17).

Through connections in the Japanese community—and possibly with the help of Katayama or Dr. Koike—Iwao secured a white-collar job, working at Mitsui and Company, a Tokyo-based trading firm. Through the years he progressed from company clerk to cashier to secretary. Eventually he became involved with the company’s overall affairs, with an escalating salary and yearly raises and bonuses (Fiset 12).

Like many *Issēi* (1st generation) Japanese women, Hanaye did not work outside the home, other than a brief stint at the Chester Lodging House early in their Seattle history. By all accounts,

⁴ Pronounced MAT-SUSH-TAH.

⁵ The Matsushitas’ first home in America, a rental at 1032 Main Street, faced southward, toward Mount Rainier (Fiset 10–11)

Hanaye was a character—a free spirit in a time when other *Issei* women were subdued. She was, for instance, not afraid to be athletic in front of men. She dressed in Western clothing, typically sporting a hat—often a flamboyant hat, at that. One acquaintance remembered her as a cigarette smoker, a fact borne out by her internment correspondence with Iwao (Fiset 17, 20).

The Seattle Camera Club

Dr. Koike let the wider photographic world know about the Seattle Camera Club as soon as it was established. In 1925, he wrote a piece introducing the club for *Photo-Era Magazine*, the national journal for serious photographers.

We waited patiently for a long time, thinking that some Americans might organize a society for the friends of photography, but no light appeared on the dark sea. At last we Japanese determined to establish one by ourselves, and the result is the Seattle Camera Club. —Kyo Koike (SCC 185)

The members of the Seattle Camera Club subscribed primarily to the early 20th century photographic movement known as pictorialism, based on the idea that photography should emulate the painting and etching of the time. Among the methods used by pictorialists were soft focus, special filters and lens coatings, heavy manipulation in the dark room, and exotic printing processes. Most of the photos were black and white or sepia (encyclopedia.laborlawtalk.com).

The majority of club members were *Issei* Japanese. Among these, most were bachelors who spent their Sundays snapping pictures on Rainier and elsewhere. Shelly Sang-Hee Lee contends that they were considered eccentric in the eyes of the Seattle Japanese community, partly because many had never married or had children (Lee 25).

Members of the club were successful from the start, conscientiously submitting images to competitions and salons across America and in Europe. Their work was displayed in cities including Fort Wayne, Buffalo, Chicago, LA, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, New York, Boston, Paris, London, Antwerp, and Montevideo. In 1925, members displayed 367 prints in salons around the world. At a 1926 salon in Fort Dearborn, Kyo Koike and Hideo Onshi exhibited 50 photographs each (Lee 26). That same year, when the editors of *Photo-Era Magazine* began awarding an annual trophy to the American or Canadian club whose members won the most awards in its monthly competitions, the Seattle Camera Club, whose Japanese pictorialists “said little but worked much,” earned the top prize: An engraved silver cup (Lee 26, 27; *Camera Craft* 1926).

In 1928, the American Annual of Photography reported that, throughout the year, there had been “762 prints hung that were by Japanese photographers in the three [Pacific] states in contrast to 23 by non-Japanese photographers from the same region” (Bromberg 8).

Promoting Seattle

A primary and often stated goal of the club was to turn Seattle into a vibrant artistic center. Indeed, Koike and others often felt compelled to “show off” the splendors of the city, especially its natural features:

The city of Seattle is the beloved child of nature. You see there are many snow-capped high mountains, numerous beautiful lakes and rivers in the vicinity. They show us various forms of beauty according to the change of season all the year round.

. . . Living in Seattle we have the privilege, not duty, to introduce this splendid scenery to outsiders by photographic means. When you show your pretty photographic products to friends out of town, think how deeply they will be impressed. —Kyo Koike (UWA 10/6/05 Fax 6)

One of the ways in which the club achieved notoriety for the city—along with the goal of showing their members' work—was by hosting its own annual exhibition. Writing in *Notan* just before the third annual show, in the spring of 1927, Koike declared:

The contributors and others whom we urged to send their products will remember the name of Seattle forever. Yes, the leading people in photographic art will never forget the name of Seattle. We will kill two birds with one stone. —Kyo Koike (Lee 28)

The first exhibition was held in 1925. Thirty-four photographers contributed works from Seattle, Portland, Whitefish, Montana, and Effingham Illinois. After the first year, the club began accepting international entries. The Second Seattle Exhibition of Pictorialist Photography was held in May 1926. Interest had grown substantially, with 428 prints submitted from the U.S., Scotland, Canada, England, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Japan, and Java. By the Fourth International Exhibition, held in 1928, the show had become one of the largest pictorial salons in the world. Two hundred and thirty-six photographers from 24 countries submitted 1,077 prints to be judged. That year, the editors of *Camera Craft* declared that Seattle was now the “Northwest American center of photography,” thanks to the efforts of the Japanese pictorialists in the Seattle Camera Club (Lee 28; Bromberg 7–8).

Outreach to the Wider Seattle Community

In his 1925 *Photo-Era Magazine* article introducing the club, Dr. Koike outlined the activities of its members and another of its primary goals: Inclusiveness.

We hold a monthly meeting to exhibit the work of members, and to discuss photographic matters. . . . We will publish our official monthly bulletin named “Notan,” the contents being not only photographic subjects but art and letters. Most of the contributors are Japanese, but there is no limitation and our gate is always wide-open for everybody. —Kyo Koike (SCC 185)

Although the club consistently welcomed—even challenged—Caucasian photographers to join, by and large Seattle's white photography community ignored their invitations. “At present,” Koike wrote in 1925, “our membership is a little more than fifty, five of them being Americans.” A few prominent non-Japanese members included Ella McBride, Charles Musgrave, H. G. McManus, and R. M. Lewis. Other than these few, the non-Japanese participants in the club's seven annual international salons were rarely locals (SCC 185–186; Zabilski 77).

Despite their lack of interest, Koike continued to address his Caucasian counterparts, inviting them to join the Seattle Camera Club, but without much success.

Our members have tried hard and taken chances. Now we have been able to put the name of Seattle on the map of the world's pictorial photographic field . . . Fellow photographers . . . in Seattle: please think about what I have said and plan to join us, or at least to visit our club room . . . The latch string is always out to you. —Kyo Koike (Bromberg 7)

Facing Racial Discrimination in the Photographic Community

Japanese photographers were frequently forced to defend themselves against critics who did not look upon them as Americans. One critic, New York photographer Nicholas Haz, argued that Japanese photographers living in the United States should not be placed in the American category during juried exhibits: “Americans are fully able to supply enough good prints to make up an annual . . . without much Japanese help.” Dr. Koike replied to Haz in *Notan*, defending his community's right to participate in American salons and exhibit work in the American category; after all, he argued, they lived in the United States.

We are not allowed to become American citizens by law, but we may live in America just the same. What trouble could be caused by the difference of nationality in the realm of pictorial photography, I cannot understand. —Kyo Koike (Lee 29)

After pointing out that Haz himself was an immigrant from Eastern Europe, Dr. Koike continued:

We Japanese are also immigrants. [Haz] may be an American citizen at present, but he is not a native American. . . . Is the citizenship paper worth so much in the pictorial field of America? He is allowed to become an American citizen, but a Japanese cannot by law. What difference does it make to the field of American photography when both he and we live in America on equal terms? —Kyo Koike (Lee 329)

Shelly Sang-Hee Lee argues that the primary distinction Haz was making, though unstated, was based on race. Haz claimed Americanness because he was white; Koike was not (Lee 30).

In a similar vein, Japanese artists were frequently thought to possess a certain “Oriental” quality that allowed them to create works that were unique unto themselves. In a review of the 1926 Paris International Salon, an editor of *American Photography* commented:

The Japanese of Seattle . . . have discovered in the camera one of the most potent instruments for revealing beauties of Nature, which, apparently, only a native of Japan can see. (Lee 30)

Kyo Koike did little to discourage these sentiments, but encouraged Japanese photographers to be cultural ambassadors, building bridges between East and West.

Now we are all Japanese living in America. You see it is clear what the members of the Seattle Camera Club should do for the advancement of photographic art. Yes, we must be the best interpreters for both nations, because we are not free of Japanese ideas, and yet at the same time we understand Western ways. We should not make our pictures aimlessly, but must try hard to combine both ideas, in other words stick to our peculiar point of view. To add something new and valuable to the photographic circle is not a bad plan, I suppose. —Kyo Koike (SCC 188)

The style of the members of the club, who focused primarily on pictorialism, was indeed unique to their circumstances as Japanese immigrants living in Seattle. Critic Jean Chantavoine, in his review of the 1927 Paris Salon, said their style was “a kind of paradox, born of the mixture of races which America owes to immigration,” evoking “the traditions and above all the esthetic principles of Japanese art” (Lee 24).

Demise of the Club

By 1928, the club, despite its phenomenal success, was losing members. In October 1929, the club held its last meeting; the reasons cited in *Notan* were “nonactivities and financial difficulties of most of our members.” The hardships of the Great Depression forced many members—working in low paying jobs and hit hard by the recession—to drop photography as a hobby. This, combined with a general loss of interest in pictorialism, made it impossible for the club to continue running on its reduced membership dues. Some members continued to exhibit work, including Dr. Koike, who showed work in the United States and abroad as late as November 1941 (Lee 32; Bromberg 8–9).

Trips to the Mountain

In an article entitled “My Photographic Trip,” written for *Miniature Camera* in April 1934, Koike wrote of his primary subject matter, nature:

For over ten years pictorial photography has been my hobby . . . my favorite subject being landscapes in general. All the year round on every Sunday and holiday of the year I go hunting with my camera, unmindful of weather conditions. —Kyo Koike, “My Photographic Trip” (129)

In the same publication, he described one such trip to Rainier:

Late in August, 1933, we visited St. Andrew’s Park, Mount Rainier National Park. The day was clear, with a bit of floating white clouds in the sky. I stood by an aged pine tree⁶ and looked over toward the mountain chain far away. I was fascinated by the view and my imagination seemed limitless facing such a natural wonder. —Kyo Koike, “My Photographic Trip” (131)

Koike gave advice to budding photographers on the best ways to approach the “holy mountain”:

6 Koike is describing his work *Tree Silhouette*.

You know Mt. Rainier is one of the best national parks. . . . I will tell you how to observe the holy mountain which old Indians worshipped as a god. By auto you will easily reach the front entrance of the park and then to Paradise Valley passing by Longmire; but the place is too popular for the average photographer. Go to Reflection Lake, cross over Mazama Ridge and perhaps you will find something attractive; or hike to Indian Henry's Hunting Ground, leaving your car at Longmire, and then an inspiration will come to you. If you wish to see the great mountain from another point, visit the White River Camp, from where you may go to either Yakima Park, Glacier Basin or Summerland. Still one more trail should lead you from Fairfax to Carbon River.

The harder a trip, the better [the] pictures. —Kyo Koike (SCC 182)

Through the 1930s and the Great Depression, Koike and Matsushita were able to continue visiting Mount Rainier, thanks to their professional salaries. Koike made over 100 recorded “working visits” to the mountain; Matsushita later recalled 190 trips to his spiritual source. Hanaye accompanied him on each of these, donning a backpack in the summer and skis in winter (Bromberg 6; Fiset 24–25).

The University of Washington Archives in Seattle holds a series of journals written by Matsushita—one each from 1931 and 1933, two others from 1934—recording hiking trips the group took to Mount Rainier. The journals include whimsical drawings: animals and wildflowers, vistas with mountains identified, people skiing, and portraits. The journals are each between 100 and 400 pages in length and are written in Japanese.

Matsushita's 1931 journal begins in late summer, but recalls a trip to the mountain in April:

The rains are here and the end of summer is near. Soon the days of enjoying mountain hikes and long drives will be over.

. . . I am writing this [entry] for the purposes of keeping a journal—an expression of longing for the mountains. I can't wait to go hiking again. One can get passes to enter Mt. Rainier National Park. They are good for up to a year and one can go as many times as one likes. The roads are well paved.

[There were three of us—my wife, Dr. Koike, and myself—on the climb in April.]⁷ We set off at 9:45 a.m. and arrived at the park in three hours; there was hardly any traffic. Spring was still ahead so visitors were few. . . . It is a bit cold for us so we eat our sandwiches and drink our coffee in our car. Dr. Koike tried to light a fire under a stove made of steel but it wouldn't start. He gave up after several attempts; there was too much moisture in the air.

We could not get a glimpse of Mt. Rainier; that day the clouds were low. The climax was seeing 3-4 wild deer; it is unusual to encounter deer at Longmire once climbing season begins. I didn't even have time to take my camera out [before] they fled into the depths of the forest. There were also chipmunks here and there. We found a warm spring. I dipped my hand in it. . . . It was not quite into the season yet so the road was not open beyond [Longmire]. —Iwao Matsushita, 1931 (*1931 Journal* 1–3)

In July Matsushita reports on the opening of a new road through the park:

7 This sentence is taken from earlier in the passage.

The new road to the northeast of Mt. Rainier opened on July 18. . . . This expensive new 3-km road was built to enjoy the views while driving to Yakima Park [The view of] Mt. Rainier that can be seen from this direction is like the backside of Mt. Fuji, which is grander than the front side; there is a masculine quality to the view from the south side.

We saw a lot of slow cars that were emitting steam; perhaps it was because of the steep grade of the new road, or perhaps it was because of the [long stretch of] gravel. Our Ford was just fine and we kept going speedily

Looking back we see Mt. Adams, white in the distance. We stop the car and I take my camera out Here we are driving along with no effort at all, the same way we used to hike with much sweat. The human body is an amazing thing, if you think about all that climbing. —Iwao Matsushita, July 19 (1931 *Journal* 10–12)

After parking the car, the Matsushitas, Dr. Koike, and Mr. Nakatani take a new trail up the mountain:

Our goal is to reach Pinnacle Peak, the highest peak of the Tatoosh range, and head towards the glacier in search of the newly built trail that leads to the peak.

This trail crosses the old trail going up to Pinnacle Peak, and zigzags on its flank so that travel by horse is possible. At Timberline we see lots of mountain plants by the riverside, such as Indian Paintbrush and Lupine, with beautiful red, blue, and purple blooms. The sight makes one think that fairies might come to dance in these flower fields. Seeing this kind of beauty is not always possible.

There are fewer and fewer trees as we climb further and they are much smaller than those below. We must move through the rockslide that keeps falling from the top of Pinnacle Peak with utmost care.

We come to Saddle, about 2 km away from Reflections Lake in between Pinnacle Peak and Plumber Peak. The new trail ends here. We see a view of the other side of Tatoosh that you can't see from Paradise.

Beyond these high valleys you can see the craggy white mountains, whose peaks are showing through a thick fog. It is view worthy of a *sumi-e* painting. Although I took out my treasured telephoto lens to photograph, the fog was too dense

Looking to the north, you can see Mt. Rainier, appearing majestically—like our king of mountains, Mt. Fuji.

I sit on a patch of heather. As I eat my pack lunch, I look at the peaks of the Tatoosh range—from Pinnacle Peak to Castle and Unicorn to the east from behind me. I marvel at the speed with which clouds are changing their shape. I crouch by a stream fed by the remaining snow to enjoy a cold drink of water and open up my sushi. —Iwao Matsushita, July 19 (1931 *Journal* 18–21)

Throughout the journals, familiar activities are described in detail: hiking routes in Rainier; eating packed sushi lunches by the side of a mountain stream and sampling its fresh, cold water; drinking coffee on the mountain (UWA 10/7/05 6). Trips were routinely scheduled for Sunday, the only day off for most of the men; Matsushita describes the anticipation he experienced before such adventures:

When the weekend comes around I get restless. At night I bring maps of Mt. Rainier [into bed with me] and fall asleep looking at them. Even when it's time to depart for a trip, I cannot stay in bed any longer and get up before anyone else . . . preparing for the departure. —Iwao Matsushita, August 9 (1931 *Journal* 24)

A week later, on another excursion, Matsushita talks of pursuing Mt. Rainier, “hiding behind the trees”:

When Mother Mountain finally does reveal herself, the photographers snap into action: “We all take our cameras out and thus begins the simultaneous shooting—the ‘shutter attack’ of the mountain by all of us”

. . . A little further on and we come to a point where the river currents are stronger. Here we open up our sushi lunches. I tasted the water. It was cold and had a very good taste. The best part about high-altitude climbing—after getting hot and tired from the hike—are the mountain waters which you can drink. This is what they must mean when they say, “One drop is worth a thousand coins.” —Iwao Matsushita, August 16 (1931 *Journal* 32, 36)

In the winter of 1933-34, the Matsushitas learned to ski, extending their enjoyment of Mount Rainier into another season. Iwao described their first excursion of 1934 in his travel journal for the year, a book he titled *Longing For the Mountains*:

Dr. Koike, my wife, and I depart at 7:15 and arrive at the park around 10 AM. We can finally see the blue sky and, as we approach the park, Mt. Rainier. Every time I see Mt. Rainier's peak I think of how lovely it is.

. . . In and out of the cars near us there are young men and women enjoying their sandwiches and having snow fights. We also eat our sandwiches. Several young men and women pass in front of us with skis on their shoulders...

We set out at around 11 on the familiar mountain trails with a slow and steady pace on the hard and packed snow and arrive at Paradise Park in an hour. We see two unaccompanied women struggling to put their ski shoes onto their skis for a while. Their ski gear is so brightly colored. When finally they succeed, they fearfully slide to flat areas, clinging to their poles for dear life. I think to myself, “Why not walk, if it is so scary?” There are some lady skiers, quite conscious of how they look, who are falling down right amongst the other skiers. It seems like there are quite a lot of beginner skiers. I see skiers who slide from a high point but don't know how to stop and bump into other skiers. My, it's dangerous out here!!

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To watch a skiing party.
Jack said, “No,”
But Jill said “Oh,
Let's try it once,” the smarty.
Jack and Jill came down the hill

But made a two-point landing.
And now, cruel fate,
'Tis sad to state
They eat their meals while standing.

There are too many amateur skiers here—it makes me very nervous to use my camera here. . . We keep skiing, sometimes falling, with a mix of laughter and tears but always on the move. We finally sit down after a while and chat. I take some photos . . .

Everyone here is having a good old time and no one had a reason to frown, like a paradise of our own world and time. Looking up . . . I feel as though the great snowy mountain . . . were an affectionate mother to all the people playing on her slopes. —Iwao Matsushita, January 28 (1934 *Journal I 11-10*)

On February 28, Iwao and Dr. Koike continue their tuition on the mountain:

I had the usual ham sandwich and boiled egg for lunch, put on my ski boots and carried my backpack—now quite heavy because I put a small camera in it—on my back, put my skies on my shoulder, and climbed up the snowy trail . . .

There are kids climbing excitedly. I see a woman shrieking while she skis. We get to the flat part of Paradise Park in about 30 minutes. There are a lot of amateur skiers out practicing already. We pick a hill off to the left and set our belongings down and ready our boots and skis for skiing.

Looking up you can see that the peaks of Mt. Rainier are covered in snow up to level 78. You can see rocks that have fallen on the snow; this scene lets me embrace the mountain in the summer.

. . . I stand with my skis on and find that I can slide really well. For the amateur skier like me there is the fear of sliding a little too much! . . . I can feel that my skiing is improving compared to the previous time I practiced. It does take little effort to fall however!

I fell 23 times but oddly enough this didn't deter me; I was energized. —Iwao Matsushita, February 28 (1934 *Journal I 47-49*).

In April, Iwao described a typical Sunday in the Matsushita household:

Sunday is a day people sleep in, but in our house we always get up early. Today I get out of bed around 5. We set off at 6:30 and drive in the rain on Tacoma Ave., smooth like linoleum. Mt. Rainier's peak is covered in fog. We arrive at the park entrance at around 10 am; [we] use [our] pass [to enter]. —Iwao Matsushita, April 19 (1934 *Journal I 153*)

After another day of skiing and companionship, the Matsushitas, Dr. Koike, and their friends wind their way back down the mountain:

We return to the parking lot, clean our muddy boots with melting snow, and have donuts, coffee, and dessert after our meal and get ready for departure.

. . . There are only a few more than 10 cars parked here. Skiing season is almost over, and it's a bit early for hiking. I feel a kind of sadness about this in-between time.

We leave at 4:15. Near National my speed went beyond 50, and we hear sirens and are taken by surprise, looking around to see what is going on.

"What's going on?" my wife asks.

"It is a warning to not speed; we have exceeded the 50 [mph speed limit]," I reply.

We all laugh. We sing skiing songs on the way home, having a good time. We drive along at a speed of 35/40 and get home at 7; it is still bright outside. We eat a nice meal out and celebrate our first outing in our car. —Iwao Matsushita, April 19 (1934 *Journal I* 166–169)

Throughout these trips, Matsushita is frequently struck by the beauty of Mount Rainier:

I take out my camera and go to the hill on the right-hand side. [I] gaze at Mt. Rainier to my heart's content, always a beautiful sight no matter how many times I see it. —Iwao Matsushita, May 13 (1934 *Journal I* 217)

Beliefs about Mountains

The Matsushitas' and Koike's conception of Mount Rainier differed greatly from that of their western counterparts and was a natural outgrowth of their cultural heritage. In Japan's two major religions, Shinto and Buddhism, mountains are regarded as sacred. In Shinto, the native tradition of Japan, natural features—trees, lakes, streams, and so on—are considered the dwelling places of *kami*: spirits that influence human affairs and respond to human prayers and ritual. Kami are thought to be especially concentrated in mountains. In Buddhism, introduced to Japan in the sixth century CE, mountain climbing was considered a metaphor for the spiritual journey upwards toward enlightenment (Mount Fuji 1).

The most sacred mountain of Japan is Mount Fuji, worshipped in the ninth century CE as a fire god by the indigenous Ainu. Fuji was later regarded as the dwelling of the Shinto deity *Konohana Sakuya Hime*, "Goddess of the Flowering Trees." Buddhists called its summit "zenjo," a term describing the perfect meditative state. Beginning in the 18th century, pilgrimages around and to the top of Mount Fuji became an annual event, with thousands of people participating. Those who could not make the climb used sand taken from the mountain to create miniature Fujis in their home gardens and shrines (Mount Fuji 2).

The power ascribed to mountains and those who climb them helps explain the passion that Japanese people have for modern mountaineering. Today, as in the earlier twentieth many and before, thousands of Japanese climbers take commuter trains out of Tokyo to hike over every peak in the Japanese Alps. During one season, after it reopened its peaks to climbing in 1969, the Nepali government reported that, of the thirteen expeditions applying for permits to climb, eleven were Japanese (Bernbaum 7).

This passion for mountaineering accompanied the Japanese immigrants to America in the early 20th century. Koike's favorite photographic subject was Mount Rainier, in part because its

snowcap reminded him of Mount Fuji.⁸ In his articles and letters, he referred to Rainier as “our holy mountain” (Lee 25).

Koike’s feelings about the mountain informed his choice of photography subjects. In his September 1928 article for *Photo-Era Magazine*, Koike wrote:

I like nature much more than I do human figures. My subjects, therefore, are mostly landscapes, with or without figures. . . . I am not a mountaineer, but I like mountains lifting high up through the sky, and have had many chances to make mountain pictures . . . but I am without doubt an amateur photographer of nature. —Kyo Koike (“Why I Am a Pictorial Photographer” 123)

He compared the taking of photographs to the writing of poems:

Pictorial photography should not be an imitation of paintings, but it should contain a feeling similar to that of a poem. I am not necessarily eager to make something new, but I intend to make it good always. Pictorial photography should be not only a temporary pastime, but it should have permanent vitality. Any photography without meaning is only a corpse without soul. —Kyo Koike (“Why I Am a Pictorial Photographer” 124)

The role of the photographer and the poet were the same for Koike; both evoked for the reader a sense of beauty and atmosphere that the artist himself had felt (Zabitski 75).

Dr. Koike wrote a book called *Study of Mountain Photography*, a copy of which is in the University of Washington Archives. In the book, he refers to himself as being in a “master-servant” relationship to the mountain:

[My] mountain photography is artistic photography whose theme has an inherent and intimate ‘master-servant’ relationship to the mountain. . . . Rather than abstractly photographing the mountain, it is about how I can create art with what I have drawn from [the mountain], endeavoring to capture its poetic beauty on film. —Kyo Koike (*Mountain Photography* 5)

The majority of chapters are on the technical aspects of nature photography — how to deal with rivers, snow, climate, and so on. However, a few passages yield some insight into his attitude toward mountains. In these sections, Koike states that his goal has always been to focus on the true beauty of the subject, the mountain, and not on what he calls “commercial” or “scientific” photography:

There is the type of mountain photography that deals with the geological and topographical features of a mountain, as well as its flora and fauna, for the purposes of recording them scientifically; and there is the type of mountain photography that is commercial, as seen in postcards, that covers

⁸ The comparison of Rainier to Fuji is a common sentiment among Japanese residents of the Seattle area, who refer to the mountain as “Tacoma-Fuji,” a combination of the name of their sacred peak in Japan and the name given Rainier by a local Native American group, which also reveres the peak (Bernbaum correspondence 11/5/05).

scenic photography of the countryside and mountains. In this book, we wish to focus on mountain photography for what it is: A form of artistic photography that captures the poetic beauty of the mountain as faithfully as is possible. —Kyo Koike (*Mountain Photography* 3)

“What is mountain photography?” asks Dr. Koike. Again revealing his spiritual, some might say romantic, perception of the mountain, he writes of poetry and beauty and of his desire to create art out of photographing something real.

The most important point in mountain photography is the expression of [?]⁹ and one’s emotions. We shouldn’t just record the structure of the mountain; we should immediately be touching the clouds and cultivating a sense of presence. —Kyo Koike (*Mountain Photography* 5)¹⁰

He quotes John Noel, photographer of the 1921 and 1924 Everest expeditions:

“What is mountain photography?” I reflect again.

John Noel . . . [who] attempted two climbs on Mt. Everest describes his experiences as such: “In the peaks high and far from civilization, my first task in photography was to express the sacredness of the faint but splendidly captivating [westward] mountains. These impressive, grand mountains have a mystical character hard to describe, and it is this character that makes one venerate the mountain . . . and even call it the Holy Mother of this inviolable and sacred world. It is needless to say that it is this impression that makes the disturbances of the world seem so far away. In my experiences of going through the pure snowfields of Everest, in my final struggles against the threats of the mountain, in finally achieving my victory despite countless hesitations about summiting, and in man’s crawls and squirms in the face of this powerful, beautiful, authoritative, and indestructible impression, I wished in my thoughts only to continue striving until all my senses were exhausted.”

Speaking from my own experiences I can see how Mr. Noel was inspired by the mountains. —Kyo Koike (*Mountain Photography* 5)

Iwao Matsushita felt a spiritual connection with nature, as well. In a letter to a friend, he talks about Rainier and nature in general:

Love of the sea is a disquieting passion, lacking in comfort and mutual confidence. The sea is too big for loving and too uncertain. It will not fit into our thought. The mountain, on the other hand, is voiceless and imperturbable, and its very loftiness sometimes makes us the more lonely.

When I invite a friend with me to share my orisons, or wander alone to indulge the luxury of unlaborious thoughts, my feet turn to the bank of a river, for there the musings of solitude find a friendly accompaniment, and human intercourse is purified by the murmuring water. It is by a river that I would choose to make love, and to revive old friendships, to play with the children, to escape

9 Brackets indicate archaic kanji characters that translator Izumi Woods was unable to decipher.

10 Originally written by Koike for *American Photography Annual*, 1931.

from vain, selfish desires, and to cleanse my mind from all the false and foolish things that mar the joy of living. —Iwao Matsushita (Journal 50)

Matsushita loved the mountain so dearly that he chose it over career advancement. By 1940, he had become a wealthy man. His salary was \$530/month and he had accumulated \$12,000 in Seattle branches of Japanese banks and \$10,000 in U.S. bank accounts. He was so valued by the company that he was offered a transfer to the home office in Tokyo. Instead of accepting the offer, however, on August 31 of that year he submitted his resignation, citing his original purpose for coming to Seattle: pursuing a degree in English literature and language at the University of Washington. In actuality, Matsushita never planned to enroll at the University of Washington, since he was no longer interested in going back to Japan to teach. The real reason came later in his resignation letter:

I enjoy my life in Seattle. I have so many happy memories with nice people—both Japanese and Americans. Especially I enjoy photography and mountain climbing. I have visited Mt. Rainier, my lover, more than 190 times. I cannot leave Seattle when I think of the beautiful views of Mount Rainier. —Iwao Matsushita to Mitsui and Company, 8/31/1940 (Fiset 24)

Internment: Finding Solace in Mountains and Memories of Them

With the outbreak of World War II, former members of the Seattle Camera Club suffered a major artistic blow, in addition to their ultimate evacuation and internment. One of the first actions taken by the Justice Department after the attack on Pearl Harbor was to order members of enemy alien groups to surrender their radios, cameras, and other equipment that could be used for espionage. Kyo Koike was one of the 1200 Japanese to comply with the order. He arrived at the Seattle Police Department on December 9th and duly turned in his Kodak and a pocket camera, along with a pair of binoculars (Lee 33).¹¹

Unbeknownst to Koike and the Matsushitas, the United States government had been compiling statistics about Japanese whom they considered potential threats to security—those working for Japanese companies, belonging to Japanese American clubs, or strongly interested in promoting Japanese culture and arts. Although there is no evidence that Matsushita was ever under direct surveillance, his name was undoubtedly added to the list because of his professional ties to Japanese trade (Fiset 29).

On the evening of December 7, 1941, just hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor, FBI agents arrived at the Matsushitas' door. The agents arrested Iwao and took him to the Seattle immigration station on Airport Way, less than three miles from his home. Iwao—along with other detainees—spent eighteen days in the station's jail, during which time he was allowed a visit from Hanaye once each week, limited to ten minutes of English-only conversation. It was the first time they had been separated since their marriage, 19 years earlier (Fiset 31–32, 36).

¹¹ Fiset marks the date as Dec. 28th (280). A photograph of Koike handing in his cameras, with the caption "Doctor Complies," appeared in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* on Dec. 9 (Dec. 29?), 1941 (Lee 32; see also note 52 in Lee for the source of my apprehension about these dates).

In late December, Iwao was moved from Seattle to an Immigration and Naturalization Service facility in Fort Missoula, Montana, the former Northwest Regional Headquarters for the CCC. He was interned as an enemy alien by the INS, not—like most Japanese—under the authority of Executive Order 9066. While there, he became head instructor of English and American History. His courses were extremely popular, with often more than 100 students in the class. Iwao kept busy during his off-hours by reading and corresponding with Hanaye and friends, especially Dr. Koike, with whom he exchanged more than 70 letters, written in Japanese and English. In March of 1943 he was elected “mayor” of the camp, a post he held until October of that year (Fiset 40, 44, xi–xii, 53–54).

Hanaye spent the first months of 1942 alone in their Seattle home. Under Executive Order 9066, she was taken first to the fairgrounds at Puyallup, WA, and then to the internment camp at Minidoka, ID (Fiset xi–xii).

Although Dr. Koike’s residence was beyond the boundary of Seattle’s evacuation area, he volunteered to be among the group being shipped out in advance of the larger evacuation, scheduled for April 30, in order to oversee preparations for opening the camp hospital. Rather than stay behind for two additional days, Hanaye decided to accompany Koike in the advance group. On April 28, they were taken to the Puyallup center, forty miles south of Seattle. Because of Koike’s status, the two were assigned a relatively comfortable room that would otherwise have been shared by four people (Bromberg 9; Fiset 63).

Throughout their first spring in Puyallup, Hanaye rarely wrote to Iwao, causing him to worry about her physical state. She finally wrote on July 2, assuring him that she was fine, if a bit nervous and unsure of their future. She reported that Dr. Koike, when not praying, working, or helping her with chores, “walks around in a daze.” She gave him the nickname “Balloon” (Fiset 65).

In correspondence, Koike and the Matsushitas often referred to their trips to Mount Rainier, memories of which sustained them during this difficult time.

Jan. 8, 1943

Dear Doc,

. . . I wish I could show you by some means the beautiful scenery of surrounding mountains here in Missoula. The snow slopes of Mt. Mitten just in front of our noses glisten in the sunshine. Last year we saw a few skiers on these slopes, + how I wished I could have enjoyed it just as I had done on Rainier.

Yours truly,

I. Matsushita (UWA 10/10/05 Fax 13)

In her first two letters from Puyallup, Hanaye compares the experience of this new “camp” to camping on Rainier, their “holy” mountain:

April 29, 1942

Puyallup Assembly Center

Dear Husband:

We came here to Puyallup about 11 am yesterday, April 28, as one of advanced party . . .

. . . We are expecting Mr. & Mrs. Kashima, our mountain friends,¹² to be the nearest neighbor, but they do not arrive yet. They will arrive here within a few days.

I am a little too much tired, but I am sure I can live here all right. Just imagine a mountain camp. When the sky is clear, we will see our holy Mt. Rainier, I suppose.

. . . I will write you again very soon.

Lovingly yours, Hanaye Matsushita (Fiset 142–143)

May 6, 1942

Dear Husband,

After severe rain, the sky became clear and we saw Mt. Rainier over the hill yesterday for the first time. Camp in name is just the same, but our feeling absolutely differ from the mountain's.

. . . The room is becoming dark and I will put light soon. Good sleep, dear.

Lovingly yours, Hanaye Matsushita (Fiset 144)

After being moved to Minidoka, she wrote again to Iwao of their mountain:

Sept. 27, 1942

My dear husband:

I received your letter and postcard and am glad to see that you had a good time hiking. How envious I am of the box lunch they made for you.

. . . Thanks to America, this camp is daily becoming an easier place to live. There will actually be a day when you'll be released and we'll be able to rest peacefully. Once in a while I dream [about] running around the base of Mount Rainier. Remember the times we hiked through the mountains together? It all seems like a dream . . .

Hana (Fiset 180–181)

Dr. Koike was busy at the Puyallup Relocation Center, just outside of Seattle, from day one, dealing with everything from emergencies—including a measles epidemic caused by the overcrowded conditions—to the regular medical needs of the community. In one particularly moving letter, the doctor describes accompanying a group of expectant mothers to the hospital in Tacoma (Fiset 65):

June 9, 1942

Puyallup

Mr. I Matsushita

Dormitory #24

Fort Missoula

Missoula, Montana

¹² In letters to Iwao, Hanaye refers to people in the camp who had accompanied them on their many trip to Mount Rainier as “mountain friends.”

Dear Sir:¹³

Since we came here, more than a month has passed already, but I am still busy day and night. Our hospital quarter is located in the Fair grounds. The medical services are not perfect yet, but we must try our best for the Japanese evacuees to keep them healthy and well

Taking the expectant mothers or patients to the Tacoma General Hospital from time to time, I have had a few chances to see outside sceneries. The other day morning mist was rather deep, but with sunshine. Far to the east, I looked up at Mt. Rainier clearly. Recalling the past to memory, I was heartily impressed. Miss Natsuko Yamaguchi, the nurse, asked the driver: "If you take me to the mountain, I will give you anything you want." We laughed together, but I felt lonesome without you. On the way, I saw an old woman, taking care of a few cows, in her front garden. . . . I pitied myself, not having my Kodak, for the first time since I turned it in to the police court.

It is rumored that our next move is very near, but nobody know(s) the reality. Anyway, our daily life is like the floating cloud, moving aimlessly in the mercy of various winds. —Kyo Koike (UWA 10/6/05 FAX 16)

On June 18, Koike again traveled to Tacoma. Four days later he wrote to Matsushita:

The evening sun through the clouds on the sky was bright and beautiful. . . . I didn't see our holy mountain, but on the return way I desired to be free, looking down [on] the electric lights of the City of Tacoma.

—Kyo Koike (UWA 10/6/05 Fax 17)

Koike again referred to "our holy mountain" in an August 15, 1942, letter to Matsushita (UWA 10/6/05 Fax 18–19).

Hanaye was relocated to Minidoka camp in southwestern Idaho on that same day, August 15, 1942. A "Montana widow," she shared bachelor quarters with two other women. When Koike arrived on September 5, he moved into quarters near the hospital. With additional physicians at Minidoka, Koike's responsibilities were limited to ear, nose, and throat, and he no longer had to deal with night call duty. Consequently, he had more time to read, write, and cultivate hobbies—stamp and wildflower collecting and carving walking sticks. In a letter to Iwao, sent from Minidoka that September, Koike writes about reinstating the haiku group "Rainier Ginsha," he'd founded in Seattle. Many members had been interned at Minidoka, along with members of the "Hood Ginsha" (Fiset 66–69, UWA 10/6/05 Fax 18–19).

After the move to Minidoka, far from Rainier, Koike began seeking solace in memories of the mountain and books about other peaks. In a December 1942 letter to Matsushita, he includes a brief book report on *The Friendly Mountains*, by Roderick Peattie, and writes of his desire to climb the book's subject: mountains of New England. Koike laments the absence of his friend, Matsushita: "Here," he says, "is nobody to talk about mountains together" (UWA 10/6/05 Fax 21).

In early March, 1943, Koike found someone with whom to share reminiscences of his holy mountain. Mount Rainier ranger and naturalist F. W. Schmoe, who had worked in the park as a

13 This formal salutation was Koike's standard way of addressing Matsushita in the letters.

mountain guide for ten years, visited Minidoka and showed his own movies. Koike remembered Schmoe from the park and had recently read his book *Wilderness Tales*. Schmoe stayed in the room next to Koike, but there is no indication as to whether Koike himself had anything to do with arranging the visit. He was certainly very happy to have an opportunity to see Schmoe's movies and hear his tales about the park.

March 10, 1943

Dear Sir:

The other night Mr. Schmoe showed us his own movies. Ski on Mt. Rainier, volcano scene of Hawaii, Alaskan voyage, and life of deep sea creatures. Everybody charmed with interest. He said he stayed at Mt. Rainier National Park more than ten years.

—Kyo Koike (UWA 10/6/05 Fax 22)

In addition to finding some comfort in their memories of Mount Rainier, the former members of the Seattle Camera Club took solace in the mountains surrounding their camp “homes.”

June 26, 1942

Dear Doc,

. . . According to your letter all other camp sites must be very monotonous when we value them by the mountains. I think I'm very lucky to have such beautiful mountains here, and they are green and snow-capped, too. I always wish I could hike the trails which I can see leading upward . . .

Yours sincerely,

Iwao Matsushita (UWA 10/6/05 Fax 4)

Restrictions in Iwao's camp grew increasingly lax as it became clear that the Japanese men were no threat. As a result they were eventually permitted to enjoy the surrounding mountains. Iwao described hiking adventures into the high country in letters to Hanaye and Koike, recalling similar trips to Rainier.

Sept 21, 1942

Dear Doc,

. . . Yesterday we were taken out to the nearby mountain picnic ground. Organizing a climbing party, I stood on the top of a peak around 8,000 feet high. What a grand and glorious feeling after 10 months' stay on the level ground. The sky was spotless + we could look down over our own campground, the town itself, + snowy ranges of probably Glacier National Park could be seen from the top . . . (UWA 10/10/05 Fax 11)

Iwao wrote of the experience in more detail to Hanaye:

Sept. 20, 1942

(Chronicle of a mountain hike)

Dear Hanaye,

At 10 a.m. on September 20, a number of us Japanese were loaded on one of two military trucks. We traveled along the familiar Missoula River and wound our way westward past apple orchards and white-barked aspen forests. . . . The trucks [came] to a stop about thirty minutes after we'd left the camp. We then hiked for more than a mile over an abandoned road, and arrived at a plateau

We brewed tea and feasted on rice balls, *umani*,¹⁴ pie, cake, and boiled eggs. We offered the two guards sandwiches.

We organized a party of fifteen or sixteen climbers and started up the trail around twelve o'clock. We slid along as we climbed with our spikeless GI shoes and resorted to applying sidesteps used by skiers. Fallen leaves, moss covered old trees, deer and bear droppings reminded me of my long ago climb of Mount Rainier. . . . When we finally reached the 8,000-foot elevation, there were only eight of us left. It was many long hours of tough climbing, but I can't begin to describe the feeling as we surveyed the town of Missoula, our nostalgic camp, and the winding Missoula River from the summit. We were blessed with perfect mountain climbing weather, and some were moved to say, "I've added ten years to my life." After viewing the snows of Glacier Park, we began our descent

We left at 1:30 p.m. and returned to the camp past three o'clock. I am filled with gratitude that we were accorded such treatment, even as prisoners. —Iwao Matsushita (Fiset 177–178)

The men traveled again to the mountains in October:

Oct. 12, 1942

My dear wife,

To Blue Mountain Lookout

(10 miles' hiking)

Leaving our barracks at 9 Saturday morning, we arrived at the same base camp, as we went before, at 10:30, after walking around one mile on an old, abandoned auto road.

. . . Two hours' laborious climbing took us to the rounded ridge of Blue Mountain. The top was almost devoid of trees, and the tower was twice as high as that of Mt. Rainier.

. . . The scenery all around us was really beyond human description. Fourteen fellow alpinists shouted "*Banzai!*"¹⁵ three times, loud enough to move heaven and earth, facing our beloved, majestic Mt. Lolo, which stood before us like a giant, with patches of snow in its cirque.

. . . Nothing on earth could surpass this grand and glorious feeling we had on this lofty top of Blue Mountain

Yours ever, Iwao Matsushita (Fiset 188)

Iwao included haiku about the trips in his letters (Fiset 58–59):

Resting on a rock
beside a stream
on the summer mountain.

14 Bamboo shoots, fish cake, and potato.

15 Japanese patriotic cheer translating roughly as "Hooray!" or "Long life!"

Today's snow
glistening
in the morning sun.

After numerous hearings and continued delays, Iwao's parole—to Minidoka—was finally granted by the California attorney general on December 18, 1943. He was notified on January 2, 1944, and four days later—after two years and thirty days in captivity apart from his wife—Iwao sent his final communication to her, a telegram which read: "Leaving here 10th, Monday afternoon. Arriving Twin Falls, Tuesday noon or afternoon." The couple reunited at Minidoka on the afternoon of January 11, 1944. He moved into her room on Block 2, Barrack 12, and they spent the next twenty months together, in close proximity to their mountain friend and "uncle," Dr. Koike (Fiset 79, 81).

Dr. Koike's Final Days

Following his release from Minidoka, Dr. Koike reopened his medical office and took up his camera again. Despite assistance from Matsushita—whose friendship sustained him in the post-war period—he was never able to regain his strength or his passion for photography. On March 31, 1947, while picking spring fern shoots, he collapsed and died of a cerebral hemorrhage. Matsushita buried his ashes at the base of a large tree on Mountain Rainier (Fiset 90–92).

The Matsushitas' Final Days

Although, like other Japanese in the camps, Hanaye and Iwao were given the opportunity to relocate outside the Pacific Northwest, they chose to remain at Minidoka until Seattle reopened. On January 3, 1945, Nissei could return to the coast. In July, Iwao's application to help with the resettlement of Japanese to Seattle was approved and he boarded a train at the Twin Falls depot on August 7. He found a rental house at 1919 Jackson Street and sent for Hanaye. She left Minidoka on October 2, 1945. The home would be her last (Zabilski 78; Fiset 83–85, 89).

In the summer of 1948, Iwao entered the undergraduate program in Far Eastern Studies at the University of Washington. He graduated with honors in 1951 and, a year later, was offered and accepted an appointment in the Far Eastern Library as a subject specialist. He held the post until his retirement in 1962, at the age of 70. Once citizenship was open to the Japanese, he applied for and received his certificate of naturalization on March 22, 1954 (Fiset 90–92).

Hanaye never quite recovered from the interment experience and was continuously afflicted by poor nerves and failing health. Years later she was diagnosed with cancer, possibly linked to a suppressed immune system. Hanaye died February 3, 1965, at the age of 66 (Fiset 93–94).

After Hanaye's death, Matsushita married Gin Kunishige, the widow of another Seattle Camera Club member, Frank Kunishige. In 1969, Matsushita and ten others were awarded the Sixth Class of Order of Sacred Treasure from the Japanese government for his service to the Japanese American community. Iwao Matsushita died in a Seattle rest home on December 17, 1979. The official cause given was "old age" (Fiset 95, 97).

* * * * *

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IMPRISONED APART A BOOK REPORT

Foreword

Roger Daniels

pp xi–xii

Iwao Matsushita¹ was interned as an enemy alien by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, not—like most Japanese—under the authority of Executive Order 9066. He was taken from his home shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and brought to an INS facility in Fort Missoula, Montana. His wife Hanaye spent months alone in their Seattle home and, under Executive Order 9066, was then taken first to the fairgrounds at Puyallup, WA, and then to the internment camp at Minidoka, Idaho. It was the first time they'd been apart since their marriage, 19 years earlier.

Roger Daniels, author of the book's foreword, calls Hanaye and Iwao, both Christian and of middle class economic status, “far from typical of their generation of Japanese immigrants.”

Chapter 1: Establishing Roots

pp. 3–9

Iwao Matsushita, age 27, and Hanaye Tamura, 21, were two of 325 passengers on board the ship S.S. Suwa Maru, arriving in Seattle on the drizzly morning of September 3, 1919. They had been married for seven months. Iwao had come on a student visa to study English language and literature; the couple planned to make Seattle their home for as long as the next five years. They had with them \$450 in cash, enough to support them while they settled in.

Iwao was born on January 10, 1892, the third of five children, in Hiroshima prefecture on the Island of Honshu. Hanaye was also born on Honshu, but six years later—March 9, 1898—and in Okayama prefecture. Both were raised in the protestant tradition and were brought together through an arranged marriage on January 22, 1919.

The couple journeyed to America to further Iwao's prospects as a teacher in Japan. The reason behind their choice of Seattle as a home base is somewhat unclear, but it probably had something to do with the presence of Dr. Kyo Koike²—an old friend of the Tamura family, known affectionately by Hanaye as “uncle”—and Katuichi Katayama, a relative of Koike's who had been established in Seattle for some time. Iwao and Hanaye had no intention of staying permanently.

pp. 10–11

Following a brief stay with the Katayama family, the Matsushitas moved into their first home in America, a rental at 1032 Main Street. The house faced southward, toward Mount Rainier, the peak that would soon play a major role in their lives. Iwao worked as a cook in a Japanese-run restaurant.

¹ Pronounced MAT-SUSH-TAH.

² Pronounced slightly between KOY-kay and ko-EE-kay.

By January 7, 1920, the couple had become live-in managers of the Chester Lodging House at 1322 Old Fifth Avenue (Fifth-and-a-Half Street). This occupation, however, was short-lived, and by the spring they had left the hotel business. Iwao had still not enrolled at the University of Washington to study English, although he did take classes there informally. For whatever reason, the couple's return to Japan was postponed.

p. 12

Through connections in the Japanese community—and possibly with the help of Katayama or Dr. Koike—Iwao secured a white-collar job, working at Mitsui and Company, a Tokyo-based trading firm. Through the years he progressed from company clerk to cashier to secretary. Eventually he became involved with the company's overall affairs, with an escalating salary and yearly raises and bonuses. After her initial experience at the Chester Lodging House, Hanaye never again worked out of the home.

pp. 15–17

Dr. Kyo Koike preceded the Matsushitas in Seattle by two years, arriving in 1917. He was eleven years older than Iwao, making him roughly 36 when he came to America. He brought with him a medical degree and years of experience employing Western medical practices. He established both his practice and his residence in the Empire Hotel Building at 422 1/2 Main Street, in the heart of Japantown. His office hours were from 9 AM to 8 PM and, in 1920, he was one of nineteen Issei physicians and surgeons serving the Japanese population of Seattle.

An avid photographer and poet, Koike emerged as a leader in the Seattle arts community. In late 1923, he co-organized the Seattle Camera Club and in 1934, founded the haiku society “Rainier *Ginsha*.³” Shortly after his arrival in the United States, Koike had acquired a Kodak camera. Within a few years, his images—primarily pictorial photography⁴—were being shown in galleries and reproduced in magazines nationwide. At his artistic peak, Koike was inducted in the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain. Koike and other Issei photographers took to pictorialism naturally, having been steeped in Japanese artistic traditions. Koike once said to his colleagues, “We must be the best interpreters for both nations because we are not free of Japanese ideas, and yet at the same time we understand the Western ways.”

Koike introduced Iwao Matsushita to photography and to what would become both men's favorite photographic subject, Mount Rainier, which Fiset describes as Matsushita's “muse.” During the couple's first few weeks in America, while they were still staying with Katayama, Koike led Iwao on his first outing to the mountain. He was a charter member of the Seattle Camera Club and, although he was not as skilled a photographer as his mentor, by 1927, six of his images hung in four salons in the U.S. and the U.K.

3 A *ginsha* is the Japanese equivalent of a European “salon,” fashionable during the day, in which people would gather for intellectual and artistic discussions and to read and write poetry.

4 Pictorialism was popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and was a form of artistic photography. The term is used to describe photographs in which the actual scene depicted is of less importance than the artistic or emotional quality of the image. Pictorialists often used manipulative techniques—playing with focus, using gum bichromate during processing, and so on—to achieve a more artistic effect.

p. 19

The Seattle Camera Club was in existence for just six years, disbanding with the onset of the Great Depression.

p. 20

In 1925, the Matsushitas moved farther from Japantown, renting a clapboard house on 29th Avenue South. Two years later they moved to the house they would rent until their interment: a small brick bungalow at 905 24th Avenue South.

Hanaye was different from other Issei women of the day in that she was not afraid to be athletic in front of men. She dressed in Western clothing, typically sporting a hat—often a flamboyant hat, at that. One acquaintance remembered her as a cigarette smoker.

p. 21

For a short time in 1927, Matsushita taught Japanese language courses through the University of Washington's extension service.

pp. 24–25

Through the 1930s and the Great Depression, Koike and Matsushita were able to continue their trips to the “holy mountain” Rainier, thanks to their professional salaries. Koike made over 100 recorded “working visits” to the mountain; Matsushita later recalled 190 trips to his spiritual source. Hanaye accompanied him on each trip, donning a backpack in the summer and skis in winter.

By 1940, Matsushita was a wealthy man. His salary was \$530/month and he had accumulated \$12,000 in Seattle branches of Japanese banks and \$10,000 in U.S. bank accounts. He was so valued by the company that he was offered a transfer to the home office in Tokyo. Instead of accepting the offer, however, on August 31 of that year he submitted his resignation, citing his original purpose for coming to Seattle: pursuing a degree in English literature and language at the University of Washington. He continued:

I enjoy my life in Seattle. I have so many happy memories with nice people—both Japanese and Americans. Especially I enjoy photography and mountain climbing. I have visited Mt. Rainier, my lover, more than 190 times. I cannot leave Seattle when I think of the beautiful views of Mount Rainier. —Iwao Matsushita to Mitsui and Company, 8/31/1940 (Fiset 24)

Chapter 2: Listening to the Sound of Shoes

pp. 27–29

In actuality, Matsushita had not planned to enroll at the University of Washington, since he was no longer interested in going back to Japan to teach. He took a job at a much lower salary—just \$150/month—at the Seattle Japanese Chamber of Commerce, compiling trade statistics for the American public. In the meantime, the United States government was compiling statistics about Matsushita and other Japanese whom they considered potential threats to security—those

working for Japanese companies, belonging to Japanese American clubs, or strongly interested in promoting Japanese culture and arts. Although there is no evidence that Matsushita was ever under direct surveillance, his name was undoubtedly added to the list because of his professional ties to Japanese trade.

pp. 31–32, 36

On the evening of December 7, 1941, just hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor, FBI agents arrived at the Matsushitas' door. They arrested Iwao and took him to the jail at the Seattle immigration station on Airport Way, less than three miles from his home. Neither he nor Hanaye knew his ultimate fate.

Iwao spent eighteen days in the station, during which time he was allowed a visit from Hanaye once each week, limited to ten minutes of English-only conversation. In his last letter to Hanaye from there, dated December 26, Iwao wrote, "We are leaving Saturday morning for probably Montana." His assumption was correct. The following day, Matsushita was taken by train, along with other Issei, to Fort Missoula.

Chapter 3: Incarceration

P. 44

Iwao Matsushita arrived at Fort Missoula on Sunday, December 28th. He worked as a waiter in the dining room and helped out in the laundry room as part of his duties under the camp's self-government.

pp. 47–48

Matsushita went before the Washington board set up to judge the loyalty of enemy aliens during the second week of February 1942. After asking pertinent questions, the members recommended parole without bond. If the attorney general agreed, he would be free to reunite with Hanaye. Inexplicably, a decision in Iwao's case was not issued for nine months, during which time he remained in custody.

Chapter 4: Stone Fever

PP. 53–54

While incarcerated at Fort Missoula, Matsushita became head instructor of U.S. history and English classes. His courses were extremely popular and often more than 100 students attended the one-hour, three-days-a-week class. He kept busy by reading and corresponding with Hanaye and friends, especially Dr. Koike, with whom he exchanged more than 70 letters. In March of 1943 he was elected mayor of the camp, a post he held until October of that year.

pp. 58–59

Restrictions in the camp grew increasingly lax as it became clear that the Japanese men were no threat. As a result they were eventually permitted to enjoy the surrounding mountains. Iwao described hiking adventures into the high country in letters to Hanaye, recalling similar trips to Rainier. He frequently included haiku about the trips in his letters:

Resting on a rock
beside a stream
on the summer mountain.

Today's snow
glistening
in the morning sun.

p. 63

Although Dr. Koike's house was beyond the boundary of Seattle's evacuation area, he volunteered to be among the group being shipped out in advance of the larger evacuation, scheduled for April 30, in order to oversee preparations for opening the camp hospital. Rather than stay behind for two additional days, Hanaye decided to accompany Koike in the advance group. On April 28, they were taken to the Puyallup center, forty miles south of Seattle. Because of Koike's status, the two were assigned a relatively comfortable room that would otherwise have been shared by four people.

p. 65

Koike was busy in the camp from day one; at one point he had to cope with a measles epidemic caused by the overcrowded conditions. In addition to such emergencies, he attended to the regular medical needs of the community. Writing to his friend Matsushita, he related the events of a trip to the Tacoma General Hospital with expectant mothers:

The other day morning mist was rather deep, but with sunshine. Far to the east, I looked up at Mt. Rainier clearly. Recalling the past to my memory, I was heartily impressed The nurse asked the driver: "If you take me to the mountain, I will give you anything you want." On the way, I saw an old woman, taking care of a few cows, in her front garden. It was really a pictorial subject. I pitied myself, not having my Kodak for the first time since I turned it [over] to the police court. —Kyo Koike to Iwao Matsushita, 6/9/1942⁵

Koike had surrendered his camera to Seattle authorities on December 28, 1941.

Throughout their first spring in Puyallup, Hanaye rarely wrote to Iwao, causing him to worry about her physical state. She finally wrote on July 2, assuring him that she was fine, if a bit nervous and unsure of their future. She reported that Koike, when not praying, working, or helping her with chores, "walks around in a daze." She gave him the nickname "Balloon."

pp. 66–67

Hanaye was relocated to Minidoka camp in southwestern Idaho on August 15, 1942. A "Montana widow," she shared bachelor quarters with two other women. When Koike arrived on September 5, he was assigned to room with Hanaye, but moved to quarters near the hospital.

5 Box 15, Matsushita Papers, University of Washington Archives.

pp. 68–69

With additional physicians at Minidoka, Koike's responsibilities were limited to ear, nose, and throat, and he no longer had to deal with night call duty. Consequently, he had more time to read, write, and cultivate hobbies—stamp and wildflower collecting and carving walking sticks. By August 20, Hanaye was exhibiting signs of serious depression. She wrote to Iwao of her desire to kill herself. Ten days later, she was in better spirits, perhaps because she had adjusted to her new surroundings.

On December 7, 1942, exactly one year after his arrest, Matsushita learned his fate: He would be interned. The attorney general had concerns about his long-term professional association with Matsui and Company and overruled the hearing board's recommendation of parole without bond.

pp. 70–73

Iwao applied for a rehearing, not so that he could be freed, but so he could be reunited with Hanaye at Minidoka. For this, he needed to acquire letters of support from Hanaye and from Caucasian friends. Hanaye, because of her bouts with nervousness and depression, was unable to carry through on her part until late April, finally putting together her own letter and sending it, along with the others she had gathered, to the Attorney's Office in Seattle. After her January 26, 1943 letter, she stopped writing to Iwao altogether and had no contact with him for six months.

p. 75

On July 23, Hanaye finally wrote to Iwao saying she had “undergone various difficulties but am finally settled.” She mentioned an inability to sleep and blurry vision due to “nerves problem.”

p. 79

After continued delay, the attorney general finally granted Iwao's parole on December 18, 1943. He was notified on January 2, 1944, and four days later, after two years and thirty days in captivity apart from his wife, Iwao sent his final communication to her, a telegram which read: “Leaving here 10th, Monday afternoon. Arriving Twin Falls, Tuesday noon or afternoon.”

Chapter 5: Fields Under Snow

p. 81

The couple reunited at Minidoka on the afternoon of January 11, 1944. He moved into her room on Block 2, Barrack 12. They spent the next twenty months together until he left to help resettle the returning Japanese in Seattle.

pp. 83–85

Although, like other Japanese in the camps, Hanaye and Iwao were given the opportunity to relocate outside the Pacific Northwest, they chose to remain at Minidoka until Seattle reopened. On January 3, 1945, Nisei could return to the coast. In July, Iwao's application to help with the

resettlement of Japanese in Seattle was approved and he boarded a train at the Twin Falls depot on August 7.

p. 89

After Iwao had found a rental house at 1919 Jackson Street, he sent for Hanaye. She left Minidoka on October 2, 1945. The home would be her last.

pp. 90–92

Following his release from Minidoka, Dr. Koike reopened his medical office in Seattle and, although he did pick up a camera again, he never regained his enthusiasm or energy for taking photos. On March 31, 1947, while picking spring fern shoots, he collapsed and died of a cerebral hemorrhage. Matsushita buried his ashes at the base of a large tree on Mountain Rainier.

In 1946, Matsushita accepted a position in the Department of Oriental Studies as an associate teaching Japanese language. His prorated annual salary was \$2,016, less than what he'd made in four months working for Mitsui and Company. In the summer of 1948, he entered the undergraduate program in Far Eastern Studies at the University of Washington. He graduated with honors in 1951. After another year of teaching, he was offered and accepted an appointment in the Far Eastern Library as a subject specialist. He held the post until his retirement in 1962, at the age of 70. Once citizenship was open to the Japanese, he applied for and received his certificate of naturalization on March 22, 1954. In 1956, the Seattle Japanese Language School reopened its doors. That September, Matsushita became the school's new principal, a voluntary post he held until 1974.

pp. 93–94

Hanaye never quite recovered from the interment experience and was continuously afflicted by poor nerves and failing health. Years later she was diagnosed with cancer, possibly linked to a suppressed immune system. Hanaye died February 3, 1965, at the age of 66.

p. 95

On March 27, 1967, Iwao Matsushita married Gin Kunishige, the widow of another Issei photographer and former Seattle Camera Club member, Frank Kunishige. In 1969, he and ten others were awarded the Sixth Class of Order of Sacred Treasure from the Japanese government for his service to the Japanese American community. After stepping down from the language school, he was awarded the Fifth Class Order of Sacred Treasure.

p. 97

In 1978, Gin—unable to care for an aging man on her own—moved Matsushita to the Keiro Nursing Home, a facility serving the older Japanese population. He remained in the home for a year until his death from old age on December 17, 1979. Gin died two years later, in 1981.

Chapter 6: Censored

p. 110

Fiset refers to some of the Matsushitas friends as “mountain friends” who had accompanied them on their many trip to Mount Rainier.

Chapter 7: The Letters

Chapter seven reproduces the entire series of letters between Hanaye and Iwao during their years apart. The following excerpts specifically mention Mount Rainier or their attitude towards mountains near the camps.

p. 119

Jan. 14, 1942

My dear wife,

. . . Last Sunday I saw a few children ski on the golf course just outside the enclosure & that night I dreamed that I skied on Mt. Rainier. . . .

Your husband Iwao Matsushita

pp. 142–143

April 29, 1942

Puyallup Assembly Center

Dear Husband:

We came here to Puyallup about 11 am yesterday, April 28, as one of advanced party

. . . We are expecting Mr. + Mrs. Kashima, our mountain friends, to be the nearest neighbor, but they does not arrive yet. They will arrive here within a few days.

I am a little too much tired, but I am sure I can live here all right. Just imagine a mountain camp. When the sky is clear, we will see our holy Mt. Rainier, I suppose.

. . . I will write you again very soon.

Lovingly yours, Hanaye Matsushita

p. 144

May 6, 1942

Dear Husband,

. . . After severe rain, the sky became clear and we saw Mt. Rainier over the hill yesterday for the first time. Camp in name is just the same, but our feeling absolutely differ from the mountain's.

. . . The room is becoming dark and I will put light soon. Good sleep, dear.

Lovingly yours, Hanaye Matsushita

p. 145

May 13, 1942

Dear Hanaye,

A few days ago we had a typical Montana electrical storm. It reminded me of the fearsome thunderstorm we encountered on the highway on the way to Glacier Park in 1940. Do you remember it?

. . . To the west of this camp is a mountain called Lolo Mountain, soaring to a height of perhaps eight or nine thousand feet. It is still cloaked in snow that glitters when it's bathed in rays of the

morning sun. To the north is a Mount Fuji-like spire called Squaw Peak. This peak appears to be quite high because I can see it glisten white. I frequently recall beloved Mount Rainier. Though the mountains here are different in that they are gently undulating, there's no question that we're blessed by the beauty of the scenery which soothes my soul . . .

Sayonara, Iwao

pp. 175–176

Sept. 19, 1942

My dear Wife,

. . . Yesterday Lolo Mountain glistened with new snow in the morning sun. The same white mountain welcomed us this morning. When we had the first snowfall a few weeks ago on Lolo, it didn't stay long, but this time it seems to stay, because the air is pretty chilly even on this camp ground. To this Lolo Mountain, which proved to be our shrine, we will be taken tomorrow carrying picnic lunch with us. Some hope to find mushrooms, remembering last autumn in the forest near Mt. Rainier.

. . . Yours ever Iwao Matsushita

pp. 177–178

Sept. 20, 1942

(Chronicle of a mountain hike)

Dear Hanaye,

At 10 a.m. on September 20, a number of us Japanese were loaded on one of two military trucks. We traveled along the familiar Missoula River and wound our way westward past apple orchards and white-barked aspen forests. . . . The trucks [came] to a stop about thirty minutes after we'd left the camp. We then hiked for more than a mile over an abandoned road, and arrived at a plateau . . .

We brewed tea and feasted on rice balls, *umani*,⁶ pie, cake, and boiled eggs. We offered the two guards sandwiches.

We organized a party of fifteen or sixteen climbers and started up the trail around twelve o'clock. We slid along as we climbed with our spikeless GI shoes and resorted to applying sidesteps used by skiers. Fallen leaves, moss covered old trees, deer and bear droppings reminded me of my long ago climb of Mount Rainier. . . . When we finally reached the 8,000-foot elevation, there were only eight of us left. It was many long hours of tough climbing, but I can't begin to describe the feeling as we surveyed the town of Missoula, our nostalgic camp, and the winding Missoula River from the summit. We were blessed with perfect mountain climbing weather, and some were moved to say, "I've added ten years to my life." After viewing the snows of Glacier Park, we began our descent . . .

We left at 1:30 p.m. and returned to the camp past three o'clock. I am filled with gratitude that we were accorded such treatment, even as prisoners.

pp. 180–181

Sept. 27, 1942

6 Bamboo shoots, fish cake, and potato.

My dear husband:

I received your letter and postcard and am glad to see that you had a good time hiking. How envious I am of the box lunch they made for you.

. . . Thanks to America, this camp is daily becoming an easier place to live. There will actually be a day when you'll be released and we'll be able to rest peacefully. Once in a while I dream [about] running around the base of Mount Rainier. Remember the times we hiked through the mountains together? It all seems like a dream . . .

Hana

p. 188

Oct. 12, 1942

My dear wife,

To Blue Mountain Lookout

(10 miles' hiking)

Leaving our barracks at 9 Saturday morning, we arrived at the same base camp, as we went before, at 10:30, after walking around one mile on an old, abandoned auto road.

. . . Two hours' laborious climbing took us to the rounded ridge of Blue Mountain. The top was almost devoid of trees, and the tower was twice as high as that of Mt. Rainier. . . . The scenery all around us was really beyond human description. Fourteen fellow alpinists shouted "*Banzai!*"⁷ three times, loud enough to move heaven and earth, facing our beloved, majestic Mt. Lolo, which stood before us like a giant, with patches of snow in its cirque.

. . . Nothing on earth could surpass this grand and glorious feeling we had on this lofty top of Blue Mountain . . .

Yours ever, Iwao Matsushita

Notes

p. 280

Koike surrendered his Kodak and a pocket camera to Seattle police on December 28, 1941.

7 Japanese patriotic cheer translating roughly as "Hooray!" or "Long life!"