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The Japanese in Multiracial Peru, 1899-1942

A dissertation submitted in partial  
satisfaction of the requirements for  
the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Stephanie Carol Moore

Committee in charge:

Professor Christine Hunefeldt, Chair  
Professor Michael Monteon  
Professor Nayan Shah  
Professor Eric Van Young  
Professor Lisa Yoneyama

2009

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The dissertation of Stephanie Carol Moore is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2009

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Map of Peru



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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Japanese in Multiracial Peru

by

Stephanie Carol Moore

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, San Diego, 2009

Professor Christine Hunefeldt, Chair

This study analyzes the integration of the Japanese into the politics of race and nation in Peru during the period from 1899 to 1942. The first generation of Japanese immigrants arrived in Peru at the apex of debates on national racial identity and popular challenges to the white oligarchy's exclusive hold on national political and economic power. This dissertation examines how not only elites, but also working- and middle-class movements advocated the exclusion of the Japanese as a way of staking their claims on the nation. In this study, I argue that Peru's marginalization of the Japanese sprang from racist structures developed in the colonial and liberal

republican eras as well as from global eugenic ideologies and discourses of “yellow peril” that had penetrated Peru. The Japanese were seen through Orientalist eyes, conceptualized and homogenized as a race that acted as a single organism and that would bring only detriment to the Peruvian racial “whitening” project. Eugenics conflated women with their reproduction, leading “racial science” advocates to portray Japanese women in Peru as the nation’s ultimate danger and accuse them of attempting to conquer Peru “through their wombs.”

The Japanese men and women who settled in Peru, however, were also actors in their Peruvian communities. Many Japanese laborers, largely Okinawan, were participants in rural labor movements in Peru. Policymakers, hacienda owners, and local power holders, however, undermined class-based challenges to their authority by demonizing the Japanese as a cultural, racial, and political threat to the Peruvian nation. In stepping out of their rung on the racial hierarchy, the Japanese shop keepers also provoked resentment both among their fellow Peruvian business owners and elements within the urban labor movement. The deeper the Japanese Peruvians sank their roots into Peru, the more shrill became the accusations that they were “inassimilable.” Finally, opportunistic politicians played upon the Peruvian elites’ deepest fears by accusing the Japanese immigrants of joining with Peru’s indigenous people to launch a race war.

## Introduction

This is a study of race and nation building in Peru, where exclusions and erasures share the stage with inclusions and inscriptions. The Japanese are the epicenter of this tale, their importance in this history stemming from their location in the crosshairs of multiple ideological, geographical, and temporal conjunctures. Lenses are changed repeatedly in this story, the wide angle necessary to capture the global movements of liberalism, modernity, eugenics, white supremacy, and yellow peril, with attention to their manifestations in the Americas, including the United States and its powerful influence in the region. *Indigenismo* and *mestizaje*, racialized conceptions of identity in Latin America, also make their appearance. However transnational the contours of this story may be, it remains anchored in Peru in recognition of the inordinate power the nation-state exercises over those who settle within its borders.<sup>1</sup> As such, Peruvian policymakers and elites are allowed their say in this account, for they held the lion's share of the state power during the period under study, but middling and working class groups staking their claim on the nation via the Japanese also join the discussion: rural and urban union organizers (formal and informal), middle-class business owners, local town council members, and administrative officials. The formation of a nation-state requires not only official

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<sup>1</sup> Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires : Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 6. Azuma's study of transnationalism among Japanese Americans emphasizes that in spite of the immigrants' strong ties to Japan, "their bodies were anchored in America, their interests rooted in its socioeconomic structure, and their activities disciplined by its political system." Also see Erika Lee, "The "Yellow Peril" And Asian Exclusion in the Americas," *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (2007): 539-40.

ideologies but everyday practices, and one of those practices is the micro-level negotiation of the meaning of race.<sup>2</sup>

The cast of characters in this story is what we would describe as “racially diverse,” and the Japanese Peruvians are subjects as well as objects. In Matthew Frye Jacobsen’s terminology the object of analysis is the process and context in which races are fabricated.<sup>3</sup> This study analyzes how and why certain images of the Japanese were created, and what was their effect. In Peru, the debate over the Japanese Peruvians was an essential site for struggles over the racialized, and often gendered, identity of the nation. The clash of pro-Indian indigenismo and “whitening” mestizaje, both framed by eugenic understandings of race, in the 1920s and 1930s contributed to a hyper-focus on the Peruvian Japanese. This internal, or regional, clash of ideologies was complemented by global discourses of the “yellow peril.” While these phenomena were, in part, products of the era, their confluence was also generated by the long roots of racialized power in Peru stretching back to the colonial period. This power was reconfigured in the republican period through Western ideologies of liberalism, modernity, racial science, and Orientalism.<sup>4</sup> Peruvian intellectuals and officials essentialized the Japanese to serve their nation-building

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas C. Holt, "Marking: Race, Race-Making, and the Writing of History," *American Historical Review* 100, no. 1 (1995): 7-14; G. M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent, *Everyday Forms of State Formation : Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 18-23.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Frye Jacobson and American Council of Learned Societies., *Whiteness of a Different Color European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*, 1st Harvard University Press pbk. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 1-9.

<sup>4</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).



projects, particularly omitting the class-based alliances formed between Peruvians and Japanese immigrants that undermined their power.<sup>5</sup> The Japanese were excluded not only by immigration laws, but also through the elimination of alternative versions of who they were.

### Race and Nation

While race has been at the forefront of discussions on nation formation in Latin America for some time, this dissertation follows in the footsteps of recent scholarship that argues that nation and racial constructions are inter-related.<sup>6</sup> “Construction” is the literature’s term to highlight that races and nations were created, negotiated, dismantled, and transformed by multiple sets of actors operating within different constellations of power. While critical race theory is credited with producing the shift in consideration of race, Latin American scholars largely cite Benedict Anderson for pushing the analysis of the nation in a similar direction.<sup>7</sup> Just as Anderson conceptualizes nations as “imagined communities,” race is likewise imagined rather

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<sup>5</sup> Moon-Ho Jung similarly finds that the Chinese coolies’ labor struggles in nineteenth-century Louisiana “made them increasingly invisible.” Moon-Ho Jung, *Coolies and Cane : Race, Labor, and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 8.

<sup>6</sup> Nancy P. Appelbaum, Anne S. Macpherson, and Karin Alejandra Roseblatt, *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 1-3.

<sup>7</sup> For the influence of critical race theory, see Nancy P. Appelbaum, "Post-Revisionist Scholarship on Race," *Latin American Research Review* 40, no. 3 (2005): 206-7. On Anderson, see Thomas Holt, "Forward," in *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, ed. Nancy P. Appelbaum, Anne S. Macpherson, and Karin Alejandra Roseblatt (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). While many scholars consider Anderson provocative, his analysis of Latin American independence has been criticized from a number of different perspectives. See Brooke Larson, *Trials of Nation Making : Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13-14. and Rebecca Earle, *The Return of the Native : Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 11.

than being indisputably anchored to, for instance, physical characteristics. Scholars of Latin America, however, have long questioned racial conceptions based solely upon phenotype. On one hand, the mixed-raced populations in the Americas confounded classification systems based upon solely physical characteristics. They laid bare the human hand of classification, such as the classic example of the Spanish colonial government's seemingly desperate attempt to classify its mixed-race populations through its *casta* paintings detailing multiple racial mixtures. Other examples abound: Indians changed their dress to be classified as mestizos in order to avoid tribute payment; "pureza de sangre" (meaning pure Christian Spanish blood) could be proven through the proper social connections; and "whiteness" was often equated with moral decency, known as the *gente decente*, especially among those lacking the family name to claim Spanish ancestry.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, Latin American scholars came to agree by the 1970s that race in Latin America could not be understood as the "genetic composition of individuals" but instead "based upon a combination of cultural, social, and somatic considerations."<sup>9</sup> While some scholars have dispensed with the inclusion of phenotype in the consideration of race, others argue that "race is not just a

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<sup>8</sup> On passing, see Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets : Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999). On *gente decente*, see Stuart F. Voss, *Latin America in the Middle Period, 1750-1929, Latin American Silhouettes* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2002), 79-82.

<sup>9</sup> Magnus Mörner, Cornell University. Latin American Studies Program, and Columbia University. Institute of Latin American Studies, *Race and Class in Latin America* (New York,: Columbia University Press, 1970), 3. For more contemporary discussions of race and culture, see Peter Wade, "Afterword," in *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, ed. Nancy P. Appelbaum, Anne S. MacPherson, and Karin Alejandra Roseblatt (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). and Marisol De la Cadena, *Indígenas Mestizos : Raza Y Cultura En El Cusco*, 1. ed., *Urbanización, Migraciones Y Cambios En La Sociedad Peruana* (Lima: IEP Ediciones, 2004), 2-13.

conception; it is also a perception.”<sup>10</sup> However, if race is in the eye of the beholder, the challenge is to understand the system of meaning behind any classification of physical characteristics.<sup>11</sup> In this context, one question is whether or not Peruvians distinguished between the Chinese and Japanese in their country, and so applied, with little thought, negative attitudes about the Chinese against the Japanese. Although there were certain circumstances when physical appearance played a role (looting and physical attacks in the context of those riots), most social commentators’ opinions of the Chinese and Japanese were informed by racial ideologies that, depending on the historical moment, conflated or distinguished the Chinese and the Japanese in Peru.

### Nation and Race

The early republic denied citizenship to the majority non-white population, it has long been assumed, as a result of its colonial heritage. However more recent scholarship argues that exclusive notions of citizenship also developed from liberal philosophy and the doctrine’s application in Latin America.<sup>12</sup> Responding to the siren

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<sup>10</sup> Jacobson and American Council of Learned Societies., *Whiteness of a Different Color European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*, 9. On Peru, see Louis C. Faron, *From Conquest to Agrarian Reform : Ethnicity, Ecology, and Economy in the Chancay Valley, Peru: 1533 to 1964* (Pittsburgh: Dept. of Anthropology University of Pittsburgh, 1985), 1-10.

<sup>11</sup> Jacobson and American Council of Learned Societies., *Whiteness of a Different Color European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*, 9; Peter Wade, *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America, Critical Studies on Latin America* (London ; Chicago, Ill.: Pluto Press, 1997), 15.

<sup>12</sup> Brooke Larson writes, “Yet unlike most examinations of colonial legacies, the historian’s grasp of liberalism’s multiple legacies for post-1910, or post-1930, Latin America is usually more tenuous.” Larson, *Trials of Nation Making : Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*, 16. Other scholarship that highlights the contradictions of liberal philosophy include: Thomas C. Holt and American Council of Learned Societies., *The Problem of Freedom Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938, Johns Hopkins Studies in Atlantic History and Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), xix; Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides : Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 7-8.

call of Western modernity, Latin American Creoles wrote constitutions championing equality and proceeded to exclude from citizenship women, the illiterate, and those without property. While no race was specified, citizenship was overwhelmingly the privilege of upper-class men claiming a Spanish ancestry, a miniscule minority in Latin America. Liberalism's doctrines promoted attempts to join the elite group that enjoyed citizenship, now defined by its exclusiveness. What Moon-Ho emphasizes in his work on the Chinese coolies in the southern United States during the Age of Emancipation is the effectiveness of racism – in her case, against the Chinese – in re-establishing the national myth of equality when the contradictions of the liberal nation lie exposed.<sup>13</sup> Along these lines, I argue that the Japanese and the Chinese were targeted by union leaders, middle class mestizos, and political leaders not out of irrational racism or strictly utilitarian political or economic motives. Rather, the demonization of Asians was a vehicle for asserting their claims for inclusion in the nation. Policymakers both fomented and responded to anti-Asian sentiment as a way of essentializing the myth of an egalitarian nation that included all “Peruvians” regardless of race, class, or gender. In each creation of an image, however, other versions of reality had to be eliminated or ignored. Cooperative relationships between Japanese and Peruvian community members were repeatedly erased in constructing the Japanese Peruvians as racial entities ineligible for inclusion in the Peruvian nation.

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<sup>13</sup> Jung, *Coolies and Cane : Race, Labor, and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation*, 5-9. Lisa Lowe argues that liberal humanism is responsible for the “absenting of Asians in the making of the Americas.” Lisa Lowe, “The Intimacies of Four Continents,” in *Haunted by Empire : Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 206.

Latin America's particular struggles around national identity, particularly *indigenismo* and *mestizaje*, also gave the Japanese in Peru importance far beyond what their numbers might suggest.<sup>14</sup> While the scholarship on Latin America largely supports the notion that "indigenismo in the 1920s gave way in the 1930s to the celebration of the mestizo," several scholars highlight Peru as the exception to the identified trend found most prominently in Mexico.<sup>15</sup> Instead, Peruvian intellectuals were polarized on the racial question, with one element aligned with Hispanization and the other celebrating Peru's indigenous people and advocating that they remain biologically and culturally separate from the negatively portrayed mestizo. Geographically, the separatist *indigenismo* was located in Cuzco while Hispanization was propagated from Lima.<sup>16</sup> Sarah Chambers does allow for the possibility that there was a limited "whitening version of *mestizaje*" in Peru with a true objective of Hispanization.<sup>17</sup> In short, while the racial identity of the nation was a central preoccupation of many elites as well as popular thinkers, it remained unsettled. In the absence of a positive nationalism, this study demonstrates popular and elite social

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<sup>14</sup> *Indigenismo* has multiple variants but can generally be understood as the glorification of the indigenous past. *Mestizaje* is used to indicate both biological and cultural mixing.

<sup>15</sup> Earle, *The Return of the Native : Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930*, 205. Earle also argues that Peru does not fit the Mexican model.

<sup>16</sup> De la Cadena, *Indígenas Mestizos : Raza Y Cultura En El Cusco*, 20-29; Earle, *The Return of the Native : Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930*, 185-212; María Elena García, *Making Indigenous Citizens : Identities, Education, and Multicultural Development in Peru* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005), 64; Larson, *Trials of Nation Making : Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*, 16-17.

<sup>17</sup> Sarah C. Chambers, "Little Middle Ground: The Instability of a Mestizo Identity in the Andes, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, ed. Nancy P. Appelbaum, Anne S. MacPherson, and Karin Alejandra Roseblatt (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 48.

commentators frequently elided the question, or left the answer vague, by instead talking about everything *peruanidad* (“Peruvian-ness”) was not, specifically its antithesis: the Japanese, the Chinese, or Asians generally. Jeffrey Lesser identifies a similar phenomenon in Brazil in the 1930s under Getulio Vargas, drawing upon Roberto Schwarz’s concept of “‘Nationalism by Elimination,’ that is, a tendency to define an authentic Brazilian culture by denying the viability of supposedly foreign elements.”<sup>18</sup> In discussing the deportation of the Chinese from Sonora, Mexico in 1931-32, Gerardo Rénique also finds that the Chinese filled a void, acting as a “safe outlet for the otherwise denied or muted racialism inscribed in the official indigenista racial orthodoxy.”<sup>19</sup>

### Economic

Most studies of the Japanese in Peru find that economic competition was one of the principal factors fueling anti-Japanese sentiment.<sup>20</sup> This study looks at the Japanese in their different economic roles – as plantation laborers, as sharecroppers, and as small business owners. Economic competition, however, did not create anti-

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<sup>18</sup> Jeffrey Lesser, "Immigration and Shifting Concepts of National Identity in Brazil During the Vargas Era," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 31, no. 2 (1994): 25.

<sup>19</sup> Gerardo Rénique, "Race, Region, and Nation: Sonora’s Anti-Chinese Racism and Mexico’s Postrevolutionary Nationalism, 1920s-1930s," in *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, ed. Nancy P. Appelbaum, Anne S. MacPherson, and Karin Alejandra Roseblatt (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 211-12.

<sup>20</sup> Mary Nancy Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad* (Peru: Asociación Peruano Japonesa del Perú, 1997); C. Harvey Gardiner, *Pawns in a Triangle of Hate : The Peruvian Japanese and the United States* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981); Amelia Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú* (Lima, Peru: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, 1999).

Japanese sentiment; rather, racism structured how many Peruvians perceived the economic competition of the Japanese. Robert G. Lee, discussing the case of Asians in United States culture, argues that economic analysis alone cannot explain “the development or functioning of specific racial images.”<sup>21</sup> The same is true in Peru. The Japanese were challenged because they did not fit Peru’s established racial hierarchies.

### Yellow Peril

Given the coincidence between the dates of Japanese immigration to Peru and the rise of Japan as a military power (1899 to World War II), the most straightforward version of the “yellow peril” in Peru was generated by Japanese imperialism. In fact, the few authors who address the “yellow peril” in Peru place its arrival in the 1930s when the “Japanese infiltration” press campaigns began to make references to Japan’s invasion of Manchuria in 1937.<sup>22</sup> While Peruvian fears of Japanese invasion are generally dismissed as irrational, there is little analysis of race in these discussions.<sup>23</sup> A broader and deeper understanding of the “yellow peril,” however, reveals that it

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<sup>21</sup> Erika Lee, "Orientalisms in the Americas: A Hemispheric Approach to Asian American History," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 8, no. 3 (2005): 5-6.

<sup>22</sup> J. F. Normano and Antonello Gerbi, *The Japanese in South America; an Introductory Survey with Special Reference to Peru* (New York,: The John Day company, 1943), 77-78. See James Tigner, who cites Peruvian historian Francisco García Calderón’s “yellow peril” alarmism following the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, but qualifies it as unique in Latin America. James Lawrence Tigner, *The Okinawans in Latin America : Investigations of Okinawan Communities in Latin America, with Exploration of Settlement Possibilities, Siri Report ; No. 7* (Washington, D.C.: Pacific Science Board National Research Council, 1954), 22-23.

<sup>23</sup> C. Harvey Gardiner, *The Japanese and Peru, 1873-1973*, 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 71.

began in Peru long before 1930s and that it ran through popular as well as elite thought. Gary Okihiro argues that “yellow peril” was not generated solely as a reaction to Asian challenges to Europe, but was also a fear born of European and North American imperial conquests of nonwhite populations.<sup>24</sup> English-Australian historian Charles H. Pearson, for instance, wrote in 1893 that white colonization would eventually provoke nonwhites to challenge white supremacy, with Asians leading the challenge.<sup>25</sup> Peru had never been an imperial power, but its white ruling class was susceptible to these notions because they had long held similar fears about the indigenous peoples within their own borders. The most palpable of “yellow peril” images were of the masses of Mongol “hordes,” the juggernaut destroying everything in its path.<sup>26</sup> “Yellow peril” threats were not exclusively on the battlefield. Robert G. Lee writes that Lothrop Stoddard, leader of the United States eugenics movement, believed the greatest peril was miscegenation, a “vehicle for the Asiatic swamping of white civilization and, ultimately, for the total absorption of the white race.”<sup>27</sup> While many of these discourses resonated in Peru, the Peruvian version of “yellow peril” took on its own particular characteristics.

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<sup>24</sup> Gary Y. Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams : Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 120.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 118, 29-30.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>27</sup> Robert G. Lee, *Orientalism : Asian Americans in Popular Culture, Asian American History and Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 136-37.



## The Unassimilated Literature

The scholarship on Asians in Latin America (ALA) remains largely segregated from Latin American history – “unassimilated” one might say. Latin American historian Evelyn Hu-Dehart, who has written extensively on the Chinese in Latin America, asserts that Asians exist only on the edges of Latin American and Caribbean studies.<sup>28</sup> While there are multiple reasons for this occurrence, the problem lies in that ALA literature has only minimally engaged the theoretical themes considered crucial to Latin American history, the most noticeable of which is race.<sup>29</sup> In the case of Peru, for instance, the foundational histories on the Japanese Peruvians by C. Harvey Gardiner, Mary Fukumoto, and Amelia Morimoto provide provocative indicators of how important the racialization of the Japanese was to Peruvian society.<sup>30</sup> Yet rather

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<sup>28</sup> Evelyn Hu-DeHart, “From Area Studies to Ethnic Studies: The Study of the Chinese Diaspora in Latin America,” in Shirley Hune and Association for Asian American Studies. Meeting, *Asian Americans : Comparative and Global Perspectives* (Pullman, Wash.: Washington State University Press, 1991), 6-7.

<sup>29</sup> The notable exceptions to this statement are books and articles by Hu-DeHart and Jeffrey Lesser, including Evelyn Hu-DeHart, “Racism and Anti-Chinese Persecution in Sonora, Mexico,” *Amerasia* 9, no. 2 (1982); Jeff Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity : Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil* (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999). Recent work by Gerardo Rénique similarly engages race. See Rénique, “Race, Region, and Nation: Sonora’s Anti-Chinese Racism and Mexico’s Postrevolutionary Nationalism, 1920s-1930s.” While Daniel Masterson contextualizes the Japanese immigrant experience within Latin American history, he also separates the Japanese from the larger society to a certain degree by using immigrants’ “sojourner mentality” as the theoretical focus of his book. See Daniel M. Masterson and Sayaka Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

<sup>30</sup> Humberto Rodríguez Pastor’s work on the Chinese in Peru similarly demonstrates the racialization of the Chinese. See Humberto Rodríguez Pastor, *Herederos Del Dragón : Historia De La Comunidad China En El Perú* (Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, 2000); Humberto Rodríguez Pastor, *Hijos Del Celeste Imperio En El Perú (1850-1900) : Migración, Agricultura, Mentalidad Y Explotación* (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Apoyo Agrario, 1989). I have relied extensively on Morimoto, Fukumoto, and Gardiner’s works in this project. Morimoto’s original research from the San Nicolás plantation sent me looking for “unruly” Japanese who did not fit the image typically promulgated. Fukumoto’s extensive coverage of Peruvian intellectuals’ commentary on the Chinese and the Japanese pointed me in fruitful directions. Gardiner’s impressive documentation provided a starting point for several lines of inquiry pursued in this study.

than incorporating the Asians into a critical analysis of race in Peru or Latin America, later scholarship has been trapped on the “assimilation” or “integration” treadmill. The critical focus has been almost exclusively on the “ethnic” community rather than the society at large, which yields important insights but generally leaves us uninformed about Asians and race in Latin American society.<sup>31</sup> It is important to deconstruct the racialization of Asians during the first half of the twentieth century for it allows us to avoid parroting the logic of exclusion when our task is to analyze such logic. The topic of assimilation is, in fact, an area which has a direct relationship to the racialization of the Japanese during the 1920s and 1930s. C. Harvey Gardiner’s 1979 tour de force *The Japanese in Peru, 1873-1973* described the Japanese Peruvians as “un-Peruvian” and isolationist, factors which he argues inhibited their transition into Peruvian culture.<sup>32</sup> Gardiner certainly noted the discrimination from the Peruvian side, yet the basic formulation of “cultural collision” stood and was echoed in the literature that followed. Gardiner, however, did note the seeming contradiction in those who excoriated the Japanese for their isolationism during the 1930s:

On occasion the physical and cultural separatism of the Japanese was condemned, the reader being left to conclude that the Japanese problem would disappear if only they would mingle and intermarry with Peruvians. However, this view, in turn, won the criticism of those who

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<sup>31</sup> Stephen I. Thompson, "Assimilation and Nonassimilation of Asian-Americans and Asian Peruvians," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 4 (1979); Juan Tokeshi and Mary Fukumoto, "Integración De Los Nikkei a La Nacionalidad Peruana: 87 Años Después," in *Primer Seminario Sobre Poblaciones Inmigrantes: Actas* (Lima, Peru: Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, 1988); Bernard Wong, "A Comparative Study of the Assimilation of the Chinese in New York City and Lima, Peru," in *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*, ed. Jorge I. Domínguez (New York: Garland Pub., 1994). These works, however, have other important insights on the maintenance and formation of ethnic communities.

<sup>32</sup> Gardiner, *The Japanese and Peru, 1873-1973*, 72.

insisted the miscegenation involving the Japanese would inevitably lead to the deterioration of the Peruvian nation. For the Japanese there was neither social pattern nor economic role that pleased these Peruvians.<sup>33</sup>

The only conclusions that can be drawn is that the Peruvians were irrational or hypocrites. However, if we analyze “assimilation” within the Latin American context of scientific racism that was widely accepted during the first half of the twentieth century, we find that “assimilation” was also used to mean biological or cultural “whitening”; hence the reference to the “deterioration” of Peru. The complaints of isolationism, on the other hand, cannot be understood unless we unpack them with an eye on “yellow peril” discourses of the era, especially in terms of the Japanese. Independent Japanese communities in Peru were a concern not because they refused to assimilate but because alarmists believed that Japanese communities were military cells intent on overthrowing the Peruvian government.

The case of the Japanese in Peru illustrates how racism is constructed at the local, the national, and the transnational plane. Scholars have long considered the nineteenth- and twentieth-century global discourses on scientific racism important to Latin American racial formations.<sup>34</sup> Recent scholarship by Nancy Leys Stepan and Alexandra Minna Stern allows us to refine our understanding of Latin American eugenic movements, and in particular the role of gender in those policies and

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>34</sup> For example, see Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought* (Durham: Duke University Press, [1974] 1993), 173-204.

debates.<sup>35</sup> This literature helps us grasp the elite and popular understandings of eugenics that informed Peruvian perceptions of Asians.

### Asians in the Americas

This dissertation is also part of a growing body of literature on “Asians in the Americas.” While Asians in Latin America (ALA) literature has not yet claimed its place in Latin American scholarship, Asian American studies began expanding its geographical range to include ALAs twenty years ago when UCLA’s Asian American Studies Center published an *Amerasia* issue on the subject.<sup>36</sup> Asian American scholars have also led the way in publishing several edited volumes on the “diaspora” which have included scholarship on ALAs.<sup>37</sup> This dissertation, however, fits most appropriately within what Asian American scholars are calling “transnational history,” and particularly resonates with Erika Lee’s exploration of the “globality of race” as it

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<sup>35</sup> Nancy Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Alexandra Stern, *Eugenic Nation : Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America, American Crossroads* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). Other helpful works include: Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire : Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico, American Crossroads ; 11* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Asunción Lavrín and Centro de Investigaciones Diego Barros Arana, *Mujeres, Feminismo Y Cambio Social En Argentina, Chile Y Uruguay, 1890-1940, Colección Sociedad Y Cultura ; 39* (Santiago de Chile: Dirección de Bibliotecas Archivos y Museos Centro de Investigaciones Diego Barros Arana, 2005).

<sup>36</sup> *Amerasia Journal* 15, no. 2 (1989). *Amerasia* published another issue dedicated to Asians in the Americas in 2002. See *Amerasia Journal* 28, no. 2 (2002).

<sup>37</sup> Nobuko Adachi, *Japanese Diasporas : Unsung Pasts, Conflicting Presents, and Uncertain Futures, Routledge Studies in Asia's Transformations* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2006); Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, Akemi Kikumura-Yano, and James A. Hirabayashi, *New Worlds, New Lives : Globalization and People of Japanese Descent in the Americas and from Latin America in Japan, Asian America* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2002); Ronald Y. Nakasone, *Okinawan Diaspora* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002).

relates to Asian exclusion or Orientalism.<sup>38</sup> Peru incorporated an anti-Asian and, therefore, anti-Japanese view, in part, because they embraced the North American and European literature that characterized Asians as a racial and cultural threat to Western civilization.

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<sup>38</sup> Lee, "The "Yellow Peril" And Asian Exclusion in the Americas," 544-45. Lee notes that utilizes Howard Winant's "world racial system" of white supremacy to demonstrate how race was a central driving force in the development of the modern world." See Howard Winant, *The World Is a Ghetto : Race and Democracy since World War II*, 1st ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2001). For a discussion of transnational Asian American history, see Azuma, *Between Two Empires : Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*, 4-7; David Iglar, "Commentary: Re-Orienting Asian American History through Transnational and International Scales," *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (2007): 611-14; Erika and Shibusawa Lee, Naoko, "Guest Editors' Introduction: What Is Transnational Asian American History? Recent Trends and Challenges," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 8, no. 3 (2005): 235-37.

## Chapter One

### The Historical and Hemispheric Context of Japanese Immigration to Peru: Independence to 1920s

Between 1899 and 1919, 14,492 Japanese men and 1,974 women traveled to Peru, the majority contracted by plantation owners to work in Peru's central and northern coastal sugar regions.<sup>39</sup> Filling the void left by Chinese coolies and African slave laborers before them, the Japanese immigrants were inserted as laborers into the burgeoning Peruvian sugar industry. Japan's leaders were consumed by efforts to become a world power. The nation's modernization and militarization program intensified the economic distress of its subjects and transformed many into emigrants. The introduction of the Japanese into Peru, however, carried meaning far beyond that of a commercial transaction. Across the Western Hemisphere, Asian immigration was under attack by intellectuals committed to eugenics and who believed in the importance of a certain "racial stock" for their nations. The first Asian exclusion policies in the West were enacted by the United States against the Chinese in 1882, the Japanese in 1907-8, and Asians in 1924. The United States' closing of its doors to Asian immigrants both redirected migration flows to Latin America and lent credibility to arguments against Asian immigration being voiced in Latin America.

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<sup>39</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 72. Morimoto's statistics are based upon data published by Luis Ito and Ricardo Goya and translated by Ch. Saito in the Japanese-language section of *Inmigración Japonesa al Perú* (Lima: Editorial Perú Shimpo S.A., 1974), pp. 1-204. According to these same statistics, 226 children also emigrated from Japan to Peru.

In Peru, the national identity crisis occasioned by Peru's loss in the War of Pacific (1879-1885) left politicians and intellectuals struggling to formulate a plan for national regeneration. In the considering the role of the nation's citizens, an ongoing topic of debate since independence in 1821, race was judged to be of vital importance to the future of the nation. Peruvian intellectuals represented multiple strains of thought on how the nation should be developed, many advocating "whitening" through European immigration while others insisted on the incorporation of indigenous Peruvians. In the midst of these discussions, coastal agricultural exporters organized the immigration of Japanese workers to meet their labor needs on their booming sugar plantations. The Japanese immigrants set off a firestorm of protest among Peru's intellectuals and officials. The Chinese were never far from the discussion as commentators revived their denigrating characterizations of the country's Chinese brought in the nineteenth century to work as "coolies" (indentured laborers). While the debates were attentive to Peru's reality, they were also infused with the ideas of scientific racial theories and the discourses of yellow peril that circulated internationally.

### **1.1 Japanese Emigration**

After over 200 hundred years of relative isolation under the Tokugawa Shogunate, Japan's Meiji 'Restoration' of 1868 was at its core an ambitious program to transform the country into a world economic and military power, largely a response to Western encroachments into Asia. With the goal of creating a "rich nation, strong

military” (*fukoku kyohei*) via rapid industrialization, the Meiji state (1868-1912) funded Japanese modernization through land taxes imposed on its majority rural population, resulting in numerous small farmers losing their land. The expansion of the industrial sector, however, was insufficient to absorb the displaced farmers. Meiji-era healthcare advances contributed to a population boom that further exacerbated the strain on resources. The subsequent Taisho (1912-1925) and Showa (began in 1925) governments followed similar policies until Japan’s defeat in World War II. Japan’s increasing ties to the global capitalist market also introduced instability into the economy, leaving Japanese farmers and workers to suffer through food shortages and a rising cost of living.<sup>40</sup> Nowhere was the crisis more acute than the province of Okinawa, which had been forcibly annexed by Japan in 1879. Japan heavily taxed the new prefecture and increased sugar cultivation on the island, a cash crop which benefited the central government at the expense of the Okinawans’ subsistence economy.<sup>41</sup>

As a corollary to the country’s economic reorganization, the Meiji government legalized emigration in 1885. Faced with a growing and increasingly impoverished population, especially in its rural areas, the Japanese government saw emigration as a

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<sup>40</sup> Sheldon M. Garon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

<sup>41</sup> Tigner, *The Okinawans in Latin America : Investigations of Okinawan Communities in Latin America, with Exploration of Settlement Possibilities*, 95; Wesley Ueunten, "Japanese Latin American Internment from an Okinawan Perspective," in *Strangers from a Different Shore : A History of Asian Americans*, ed. Ronald T. Takaki (Boston: Little Brown, 1998).



political escape valve.<sup>42</sup> The government cleared the path for emigration to the Americas through diplomatic negotiations and in many respects directed the Japanese emigration companies that negotiated contracts with Latin American and United States agricultural interests soliciting laborers. In 1885, the first 945 Japanese emigrants left Japan, contracted to labor on the Hawaiian sugar plantations.<sup>43</sup>

## 1.2 Japanese Immigration to the Western Hemisphere

From 1868 to the beginning of World War II, 744,120 Japanese emigrated from their homeland. Almost 90% of them went to Hawai'i (annexed by the United States in 1900) and the Pacific Coast of the United States between 1885 and 1908, and the majority were men employed as agricultural laborers.<sup>44</sup> At the turn-of-the-century, the Japanese attracted negative attention in California because of their growing numbers and their acquisition of farmland in that state. Yellow peril alarmists characterized Japanese immigrants as the first step in a Japanese plan to conquer the United States. In response to the rising anti-Japanese tide in California, Japan attempted to head off exclusionary legislation by negotiating the Gentlemen's

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<sup>42</sup> Toake Endoh, "Shedding the Unwanted : Japan's Emigration Policy in a Historical Perspective" (Thesis Ph D --Columbia University, 2000), 128.

<sup>43</sup> Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Japanese Emigration, Past and Present" (Tokyo, 1951), p. 2 as cited in Tigner, *The Okinawans in Latin America : Investigations of Okinawan Communities in Latin America, with Exploration of Settlement Possibilities*, 4.. Tigner notes that some exploratory migration occurred before 1885, including 149 Japanese laborers in Hawaii in 1868, and Daniel Masterson writes that fewer than a thousand Japanese went overseas b/t 1868 and 1880. See Masterson and Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 9.

<sup>44</sup> Leonard Dinnerstein and David M. Reimers, *Ethnic Americans : A History of Immigration*, 4th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 65-66, 77.

Agreement of 1907-8 in which Japan pledged not to issue exit visas for Japanese laborers bound for the United States.<sup>45</sup>

Anti-Asian agitation and yellow peril furor, however, preceded the arrival of the Japanese. Chinese laborers, the vast majority of whom were men, arrived in the United States during the gold rush and by 1880 numbered 105,465, with 90 per cent residing on the Pacific Coast. With the completion of their work on the coastal railroads in the mid-1870s, the Chinese immigrants began to compete for unskilled positions with the white laborers who considered the Chinese “culturally and racially inferior.”<sup>46</sup> Supported by labor unions and capitalized upon by politicians, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed on May 6, 1882, the first racially restrictive immigration law in United States history.<sup>47</sup>

Nativist organizations like the Native Sons of the Golden West, the majority of whose members were from California opposed all Asian immigration and grew in strength during the 1920s. California labor unions also clamored against Asian immigration to reduce labor competition. The Japanese community on the Pacific Coast continued to grow during the first decades as the Chinese community dwindled,

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<sup>45</sup> See Ibid; Izumi Hirobe and ebrary Inc., *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice Modifying the Exclusion Clause of the 1924 Immigration Act, Asian America* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001).

<sup>46</sup> Xiaohua Ma, "The Sino-American Alliance During World War Ii and the Lifting of the Chinese Exclusion Acts," *American Studies International* 38, no. 2 (2000): 1. Also see Sucheng Chan, *Entry Denied : Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991).

<sup>47</sup> Both Xiaohua Ma & Sucheng Chan write that there was a crack left open in the policy for the entry of Chinese merchants and their spouses. Spouses of laborers, however, were barred and Chinese women were frequently accused of being prostitutes and were denied entry into the United States on that basis, a subject elaborated upon in Chan's article "The Exclusion of Chinese Women, 1870-1943," in Chan, *Entry Denied : Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943*. Also see Ma, "The Sino-American Alliance During World War Ii and the Lifting of the Chinese Exclusion Acts."

largely because the wives of Japanese immigrants were allowed to enter until 1920.<sup>48</sup> Consequently, the Japanese soon became the primary target of the anti-Asian groups who were joined by farming organizations such as the State Grange (of California) that resented the independent Japanese small farmers.<sup>49</sup> In 1913, the California legislature prohibited aliens ineligible for citizenship (Asians were ineligible) from purchasing land, although this law was often skirted by placing United States-born Japanese children on land titles.<sup>50</sup> The anti-Japanese cause was taken up by California senators and in 1924, all “aliens ineligible for citizenship” were prohibited from immigrating to the United States, consequently barring all Asian immigration to the United States. Mae Ngai’s research on the 1924 Immigrant Act also highlights that the Act responded to a both a “*global* racial and national hierarchy that favored some immigrants [free whites] over others.”<sup>51</sup> Although the Japanese government had begun re-orienting immigration to South America after 1907, renewed efforts were made on the heels of the passage of the 1924 Immigrant Act.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> In 1920, the Japanese government responded to agitation against Japanese picture brides arriving on the Pacific Coast by suspending the issuance of visas to Japanese wives seeking to travel to the United States. See Yuji Ichioka, "Amerika Nadeshiko: Japanese Immigrant Women in the United States, 1900-1924,," *Pacific Historical Review* 44 (1980).

<sup>49</sup> Izumi Hirobe, *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice Modifying the Exclusion Clause of the 1924 Immigration Act*, *Asian America* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001), 6. Also see Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice : The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

<sup>50</sup> Japanese were ineligible for citizenship according to a provision of the United States naturalization laws which limited citizenship to “free whites” and descendants of Africans.

<sup>51</sup> Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects : Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 3.

<sup>52</sup> For an overview of Japanese in the Americas, see Akemi Kikumura-Yano, ed., *Encyclopedia of Japanese Descendants in the Americas : An Illustrated History of the Nikkei* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002); Masterson and Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*; James L.

Although Latin American countries had been plagued by labor shortages since independence, the situation became acute for countries that relied upon slave labor when slavery was abolished by the mid-nineteenth century in most of Spanish America.<sup>53</sup> Peru, Mexico, and Cuba aggressively sought laborers for railroad construction, agriculture, and mining in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>54</sup> Although Latin American governments attempted to foster European immigration in an effort to “whiten” their population, the agricultural export and mining sectors’ labor needs remained unfulfilled in most countries.<sup>55</sup> In the mid-nineteenth century, many Latin American countries turned to Chinese coolies, forcing them to work under oppressive conditions as bonded laborers. Brazil was the exception to this pattern, given its late abolition of slavery in 1888 and its somewhat successful subsidized immigration program for Italian immigrants which began in the late nineteenth century and operated until 1902.<sup>56</sup> Both the Chinese and international press publicized the inhumane treatment of the Chinese coolies and advocated the cessation of the coolie trade as early as the 1860s. Responding to this pressure, the Chinese government took measures to end the trafficking in Chinese workers by executing labor contractors and

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Tigner, "Japanese Immigration into Latin America: A Survey," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 23, no. 4 (1981); Toshio Yanaguida and Ma Dolores Rodríguez del Alisal, *Japoneses En América* (Madrid: Editorial MAPFRE, 1992).

<sup>53</sup> Slavery was not abolished in Cuba until 1886.

<sup>54</sup> Peru also sought laborers to collect guano, its most profitable export in the mid-nineteenth century.

<sup>55</sup> Argentina and Brazil were the Latin American countries most successful in attracting European immigration.

<sup>56</sup> Masterson and Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 25.

closing coolie trade ports.<sup>57</sup> In Peru, a coalition of the anti-slavery and anti-Chinese congressmen had achieved a brief suspension of the coolie trade from 1856-1861, but the planters secured a reversal of that decision.<sup>58</sup> By the time China was able to effectively halt the coolie trade in 1874, 100,000 Chinese coolies had been brought to Peru to labor on its plantations and on the guano islands.<sup>59</sup>

Following the cessation of the coolie trade, Mexico and Peru were the first Latin American countries to turn to Japanese contract laborers to meet their labor needs with 10,958 entering Mexico and 6,315 entering Peru between 1899 and 1908.<sup>60</sup> With the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907-1908, the United States applied diplomatic pressure to Mexico to limit its Japanese immigration to prevent transmigration to the United States, and immigration to Mexico dropped significantly after 1908. Beginning in 1908, Brazil began accepting Japanese contract laborers for its coffee plantations, in spite of an 1890 constitutional ban on the immigration of Asian and African workers.<sup>61</sup> However, it was World War I and its accompanying economic boom in Latin America that brought an even greater demand for agricultural workers, now even more unattainable in Europe, and drew massive numbers of Japanese

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<sup>57</sup> The British government assisted in closing the port of Hong Kong to coolie traffickers and pressured the Portuguese government to do the same in Macao.

<sup>58</sup> Michael J. Gonzales, *Plantation Agriculture and Social Control in Northern Peru, 1875-1933*, 1st ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), 88-89.

<sup>59</sup> Rodríguez Pastor, *Hijos Del Celeste Imperio En El Perú (1850-1900) : Migración, Agricultura, Mentalidad Y Explotación*, 25. The Chinese government permitted the immigration of free (non-contracted) Chinese.

<sup>60</sup> Gaimusho Ryoji Iiju-bu, *Waga kokumin no kaigai hatten: Iiju hyakunen no ayumi*, Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1971, pp. 137-147 as cited in Masterson and Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 27.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 34, 24.

immigrants to Latin America. While small numbers of Japanese immigrated to Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, and Panama in the 1908 to 1925 period, 40,000 Japanese were sent to work on Brazilian coffee *fazendas* or were incorporated into agricultural colonies, followed by another 150,000 from 1925 to 1941.<sup>62</sup> While Brazil's large agricultural export sector fostered the initial flows of Japanese immigrants, the Brazilian government's efforts to colonize its extensive uncultivated lands also contributed to its accommodation of the Japanese. Japan-based emigration companies, under the direction of the Japanese government, financially invested in the colonies and Brazil provided the land. The Japanese agricultural colonies' high rates of productivity earned them the support of policymakers who were able to facilitate a steady flow of Japanese immigrants to Brazil until 1934.<sup>63</sup> This practice stood in sharp contrast to Peru where the government passed a law in 1893 to provide support only to white colonizers and the Japanese government made little effort to set up agricultural colonies.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> James L. Tigner, "Japanese Immigration into Latin America: A Survey," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 23, no. 4 (1981): 462, 59-60, 70, 63-64, 67-68. According to Tigner, Central American and Caribbean countries, in addition to Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador, established significant barriers to Asian immigration such that only a small number of Japanese immigrated to those regions. Paraguay's 1903 prohibition on persons of the "yellow race" was lifted in 1924, but there was no Asian immigration until 1935.

<sup>63</sup> Masterson and Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 42, 73-82.

<sup>64</sup> Carlos Contreras and Marcos Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 3. ed., *Serie Estudios Históricos* (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú : Universidad del Pacífico Centro de Investigación : IEP, 2004), 185.

### 1.3 Early Japanese Immigration to Peru

Japanese immigration to Peru can be divided into two periods: “contract immigration” from 1899 to 1923, and “yobiyose” or “sponsored immigration” from 1924 to 1936.<sup>65</sup> This chapter will cover most of the contract immigration period while sponsored immigration will be addressed in subsequent chapters. Although, as in other Latin American countries, the Japanese government played an active role in organizing emigration during both periods, the two immigration periods differ in several important respects. First, almost all the Japanese immigrants who entered Peru between 1899 and 1923 were under contract to work on coastal sugar plantations with a limited number sent to rubber farms in the Amazon until 1908. In the post-1923 period, Japanese immigrants were under no contract obligation and their ability to immigrate to Peru depended upon their sponsorship by a family member or friend. Second, the vast majority of immigrants up until 1923 were men, while women immigrating as wives of picture brides (shashin kekkon) dominated the immigrant flows from 1923 to 1936.

The Meiji government continued to support the emigration of its subjects to Peru to alleviate the economic pressure that frequently burst into social protest. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, Japan’s industrial economy was growing but still under strain from its war expenditures, initially as a result of the Russian-Japanese War of 1904-5. Japan experienced an economic apex from 1914-

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<sup>65</sup> For an overview of Japanese immigration to Peru, see Mary Nancy Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad* (Peru: Asociación Peruano Japonesa del Perú, 1997); C. Harvey Gardiner, *The Japanese and Peru, 1873-1973*, 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975); Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*.

1917, but a subsequent crash of the economy caused food shortages and sparked the “rice riots” in 1918. The 1923 earthquake and its fires in Tokyo and Yokohama further rocked the Japanese economy, acting as an incentive to migration.<sup>66</sup>

Although Japanese-Peruvian relations were officially initiated in 1873 when the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation was signed, Japanese immigration to Peru did not begin until more than twenty years later. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Peru’s economy was growing and diversifying, characterized primarily by raw material exports and direct foreign – especially United States and British – investment.<sup>67</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century, sugar plantations owned primarily by European immigrants or their descendants expanded throughout the northern coastal region from Ica to Piura, modernizing their operations and increasing their holdings and production. World sugar and cotton prices began to rise during this same period. Although the sugar plantations were expanding, they could no longer rely upon Chinese coolie labor, nor were there enough native workers on the coast to meet their labor needs.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Sheldon M. Garon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

<sup>67</sup> For an overview of the modern history of Peru, see Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*; Christine Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru* (New York: Facts on File, 2004); Peter F. Klarén, *Peru : Society and Nationhood in the Andes, Latin American Histories* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Rosemary Thorp and Geoffrey Bertram, *Peru, 1890-1977 : Growth and Policy in an Open Economy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).

<sup>68</sup> The *enganche* system of coercing Indians to work through debt peonage was re-instituted in the late nineteenth century, but was insufficient to meet the labor requirements of the plantations, especially because the Indians often fled the harsh working conditions.



In 1898, Augusto B. Leguía, manager of the British Sugar Company in Peru and future president, proposed to the Japan-based Morioka Emigration Company mission in Brazil that contract laborers be sent to work on Peruvian sugar plantations. Morioka petitioned the Japanese Foreign Affairs office and Leguía lobbied the congressional commission on immigration, and a presidential decree authorized Japanese immigration later that year. On April 3, 1899, the Morioka Emigration Company's ship arrived with the first Japanese immigrants to Peru: 790 men contracted to work on the sugar plantations. Between 1899 and 1909, an average of nearly 600 Japanese traveled to Peru each year. By 1909, 6,065 Japanese men and 230 Japanese women had migrated to Peru to work on the sugar and rubber plantations. Of those 6295 immigrants, 481 died, 414 returned to Japan, and 242 immigrated to other countries such as Bolivia.<sup>69</sup>

The Japanese migrations to the Americas represented a new pattern in what the Japanese termed *dekasegi* (temporary migrant workers), in that men far outnumbered women. Since 1773, Japanese women and girls (usually unmarried daughters) had been the family's primary *dekasegi*, migrating within Japan to supplement family income through remittances, a trend that accelerated with the development of silk and textile factories in the nineteenth century.<sup>70</sup> Men, however, were more highly valued

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<sup>69</sup> Toraji Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 2," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 31, no. 4 (1951): 651-52. A small number of the Japanese immigrants were free laborers. Toraji Irie's article cited here was translated by William Himel from Irie's book *History of Japanese Overseas* [*Hojin Kaigai Hattenshi*, Tokyo: Iida Shoten, 1942, 2 vols.]. Irie based his book on his study of the Japanese in Peru that he conducted as part of a Commission organized by the Japanese Foreign Office.

<sup>70</sup> Hayami, Akira, "Rural Migration and Fertility in Tokugawa Japan: The Village of Nishijo, 1773-1868," in Susan B. Hanley et al., *Family and Population in East Asian History* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985), 115.

as agricultural laborers than women, although women also worked on the plantations.<sup>71</sup> There is evidence, however, that some plantation managers saw an economical value in Japanese women because they were believed to ‘domesticate’ the Japanese men and make them more stable workers, less likely to protest and flee their substandard working conditions.<sup>72</sup>

The changes occurring in Japanese society during the first decades of the twentieth century also explains Japanese men’s greater propensity to migrate. As farmers lost their lands, their first sons’ patrilineal inheritance evaporated. As sons’ ties to the land were loosened, many men were encouraged to seek their fortunes outside Japan, in countries like Peru. Japanese emigration companies promoted emigration by promising good wages and describing Peru as “noted for good health.”<sup>73</sup> Japan’s increasing international belligerence meant that more and more men were sought for recruitment into the Japanese armed forces, and migration was a way to escape military service. Seiki Nakasato remembers the Japanese Ministry of War’s recruiting officer arriving in Okinawa in 1932 to recruit young men for the war in Manchuria. The 19-year-old man “did not like the idea of killing people,” and therefore decided to migrate to Peru, following in the footsteps of his father who had

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<sup>71</sup> Doris Moromisato, ed., *Testimonios De Vida Y Homenaje Al Vigésimo Aniversario De Vida Institucional (1979-1999)* (Lima, Peru: Okinawa Shi Kyoyukai del Peru, 1999), 222, 52. Kamekichi Shimabuku recounts that men on sugar plantations in Cañete earned 1.20 soles per day in 1919, while women earned only 80 cents. Yasu Nakamatsu recalls that in the late 1920s, cotton plantation owners paid women 1.20 soles and men 1.80 soles. Men were usually paid at a slightly higher rate than women.

<sup>72</sup> Toraji Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 3 (Conclusion)," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 32, no. 1 (1952): 81.

<sup>73</sup> Excerpt from Japanese emigration advertisement, undated, as cited in Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 2," 653.

recently, and “successfully,” returned from Peru.<sup>74</sup> Demobilized soldiers who found themselves unemployed in Japan also contributed to the flow of male migrants to Peru.

The first Japanese women migrated to Peru in 1903 on the second Morioka immigrant shipment to Peru which included 98 women under contract with the plantations and ten free workers.<sup>75</sup> Most married men traveled alone because their families did not have the financial resources to pay for a wife’s passage, and the agreement between couples was generally that the husband would be returning within five years or less.<sup>76</sup> Kame Kina, interviewed by James L. Tigner in 1954, was one of a minority of married men who traveled to Peru accompanied by his wife, both of whom were contracted at 1.20 soles de oro/day to work in agriculture. In spite of going into debt to pay for two discounted passages, the arrangement proved beneficial because, according to Kina, they could take care of each other when ill, earn more money in a shorter period of time, and he could “work on Sunday, thereby getting an extra day’s pay, while his wife did the washing, cleaning, and shopping.”<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> “History of Mr. Seiki Nakasato” in Moromisato, ed., *Testimonios De Vida Y Homenaje Al Vigésimo Aniversario De Vida Institucional (1979-1999)*, 218.

<sup>75</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 72.

<sup>76</sup> Tigner, *The Okinawans in Latin America : Investigations of Okinawan Communities in Latin America, with Exploration of Settlement Possibilities*, 600-03. There was neither standard pay contract nor a standardized contract across all the plantations and the contracts were continually renegotiated. Hence, there is variation in the pay rates and travel allowances quoted in the different sources.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 603.

#### 1.4 Asians and Peru's Racial, Gender, and Class Hierarchies

The Peruvian agricultural export economy continued to grow during the first two decades of the twentieth century, booming during World War I (1914-1918) when commodity prices shot up. The Peruvian export-based oligarchy maintained its hold on national power, in spite of challenges from the middle and working classes, and continued to contract Japanese laborers. By 1919, 16,466 Japanese immigrants had landed in Peru, 39% of those during the WWI years.<sup>78</sup> Although the national government continued to support the agricultural exporters' claims that the national economy would suffer without access to immigration labor, competing currents of thought battled for precedence in structuring immigration policies toward the Japanese. While the Japanese occupied center stage in the early twentieth century, the characterization of the Chinese in the nineteenth century was intimately connected to the debates over Japanese immigration. The particular history of Peru as well as international racial discourses joined and separated the conception of the Chinese and the Japanese in Peru.

Peru's colonial caste system laid the foundation for the country's enduring system of racial domination. Spanish colonial rule was based upon a hierarchy that codified the superiority of the Spanish over Indians, Africans and mixed-race populations, as well as of men over women.<sup>79</sup> Just as the caste system served the

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<sup>78</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 72.

<sup>79</sup> Klarén, *Peru : Society and Nationhood in the Andes*, 134, 37; Brooke Larson, *Trials of Nation Making : Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 14; Nelson Manrique, *La Piel Y La Pluma : Escritos Sobre Literatura, Etnicidad Y Racismo* (Lima: CiDiAG : Sur Casa de Estudios del Socialismo, 1999), 13-15.

Spanish colonizers, so the racial hierarchy served the Creole<sup>80</sup> elite as a tool of social domination following independence. In spite of the Creole leaders' liberal rhetoric that all Peruvians were equal in the new nation, full citizenship rights were withheld from the vast majority of the population – women, the illiterate (effectively excluding the majority of Indians), slaves, and those without property – until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>81</sup> However, while Peru's colonial legacy influenced its race-based social hierarchy, notions of race were far from fixed and the mixed races (primarily mestizos and mulattos) in the Americas were already posing a particular challenge to classification systems during the late colonial period when “passing” as white became more and more commonplace.<sup>82</sup> Asians – primarily from China and Japan – who did not have a place in any colonial formulation would provide a new challenge, and at the same time they became part of an old problem for the white minority that held the reins of power: how to keep the majority non-white, non-elite population in a subordinate position, yet serve the new nation to meet the needs of the oligarchy.

Early leaders of the Latin American republics promoted a “whitened civilization ideal of nationhood” and actively pursued European immigration as an

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<sup>80</sup> Creole, or *criollo* in Spanish, is used in this context to indicate Spaniards born in the Spanish colonies.

<sup>81</sup> Illiterate men who held property were allowed to participate in indirect elections between 1849 and 1895. Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 112.

<sup>82</sup> Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets : Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America*. Also see Chambers, "Little Middle Ground: The Instability of a Mestizo Identity in the Andes, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," 33. Chambers also notes that beginning in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, “white” (blanco) was increasingly used instead of Spaniard. “Mestizo” generally referred to people considered to be of mixed races, especially, but not exclusively, white and Indian. “Mulatto” (*mulato*) generally referred to a person considered to be of white and black African ancestry. However, as the “passing” example demonstrates, the mixed-race categories were particularly flexible and responsive to society's valuation of additional social and cultural attributes.

essential strategy to achieve their goal.<sup>83</sup> Such an ideal was not intellectual musing; rather, it provided the social underpinnings for the racial hierarchy which maintained a white, oligarchic, male minority at the pinnacle of power at the same time it politically, socially and economically marginalized Peru's indigenous groups, mestizos, Afro-Peruvians, and Asians. The explosion of social Darwinism and its variants onto the international scene in the mid-nineteenth century provided Peruvian elite intellectuals the guise of science in charting and justifying racist policies designed to maintain the ruling white elite's power. The "racial science" of the nineteenth century, in turn, formed the basis for the systemization of eugenics in twentieth-century Peru.<sup>84</sup> Drawing selectively upon European theorists, Peruvian intellectuals advocating the application of racial science classified the Peruvian population in accordance with a conception of race based on largely on phenotype, although these classifications were flexible and adapted to changing historical circumstances, especially when it came to people of their own background – upper-class person of mixed-ancestry who were considered white.<sup>85</sup> Races were categorized

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<sup>83</sup> Appelbaum, Macpherson, and Roseblatt, *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, 6. For studies on European immigration to Peru, see Giovanni Bonfiglio, *Los Italianos En La Sociedad Peruana : Una Visión Histórica* (Lima: Asociación Italianos del Perú, 1993); Boris Fausto, *Fazer a América : A Imigração Em Massa Para a América Latina* (São Paulo, Brasília: Edusp : Memorial ; Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, 1999). Also see articles by Giovanni Bonfiglio, Christine Hunefeldt, Julia Alfaro, Brenda Harriman, and Zivana Messeldzic vda. De Pereyra in "Primer Seminario Sobre Poblaciones Inmigrantes : Actas" (Lima, Peru, 1988); "Primer Seminario Sobre Poblaciones Inmigrantes : Actas" (Lima, Peru, 1987).

<sup>84</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 4-11, 40-41. Nancy Leys Stepan emphasizes that science is by no means neutral; rather, it is shaped by societal factors and interpreted according to social and economic factors.

<sup>85</sup> In addition to ideas originating with the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species* in 1859, nineteenth-century "racial science" had its roots in the European Enlightenment. Nicholas Hudson traces racialization to eighteenth-century Europe when travel writers began to generalize

according to “biotypology” and believed to have biologically intrinsic and immutable features. Peruvian advocates of social Darwinism argued that human history was like natural history, a reading of which showed that the white race had triumphed economically and politically in the world, indicating it was the fittest. Peru’s Indians and blacks, therefore, were considered inferior races because they were conquered peoples. Following their logic, Peru’s “backwards” state was blamed upon the Indian majority, and Afro-Peruvians, as well as the preponderance of Indian and black blood in Peru’s mestizos and mulattos.

Most Peruvians with political influence believed the solution to Peru’s racial conundrum lay in fostering white immigration to Peru. In 1897, Clemente Palma, writer and son of Ricardo Palma, called upon Peruvian political leaders to “sustain the virility and health of the country with the same attention as cattle farmers: guarding and toiling over the selection of races.”<sup>86</sup> However, according to Dr. Luis Pesce’s 1906 analysis published under the auspices of the Peruvian Ministry of Development, Europeans had consistently chosen to immigrate to the United States, Brazil, and Argentina because Peru’s infrastructure and compensation were inadequate to attract

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human characteristics based upon phenotype rather than identifying nations according to socio-political descriptors. These “scattered misconceptions and antagonisms” were then developed into a biological doctrine by European scholars justifying the European “conviction in the radical inferiority of certain visibly different groups.” Nancy Appelbaum cites Gustave LeBon, Cesare Lombroso, Hippolyte Taine, Count Arthur de Gobineau, and Herbert Spencer as the primary theorists affecting Latin American eugenic thought during this period. See Appelbaum, Macpherson, and Roseblatt, *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, 6; Nicholas Hudson, “From “Nation” to “Race”: The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth Century Thought,” *Eighteenth Century Studies* 29, no. 3 (1996): 252.

<sup>86</sup> Clemente Palma, *Dos Tesis* (Lima,: Imp. Torres Aguirre, 1897), 6.

them.<sup>87</sup> The results were even more dismal when Peru attempted to bring in European laborers (primarily Italians) at mid-century to address the labor shortages. In regard to Italian immigrants working on Peruvian labor plantations, the Italian Foreign Ministry wrote in its Emigration Bulletin that such an arrangement was “impossible” because European immigrants required land and capital and would not labor like “workers of the yellow or black race, who are accustomed to the lowest jobs, are happy with the slightest mercy, and resign themselves to receive poor housing and insufficient food.”<sup>88</sup> In reality, it was only through coercion (physical force, debt peonage, and desperation) that any worker – black, indigenous, or ‘yellow’ – tolerated the inhumane working conditions on the sugar plantations, and flight was commonplace. When Chinese coolies were consequently tapped as a source of labor and began arriving in Peru as early as 1840 to work on the sugar plantations, as well as the guano islands and the railroads, opponents of Asian immigration were forced to accept this “necessary evil.” In *Proyecto de Inmigración al Perú* published by the Imprenta del Estado in 1871, Liberal leader Pedro Gálvez insisted that Chinese immigration should continue to be seriously considered as an option for Peru because “they make a place

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<sup>87</sup> Luis Pesce, *Indígenas É Inmigrantes* (Lima: Impr. de "La Opinion nacional,, 1906), 127-28. Also see Juan de Arona, *La Inmigración En El Perú, Monografía Histórico-Crítica* (Lima,: Impr. del Universo de C. Prince, 1891).

<sup>88</sup> Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Bollettino dell'Emigrazione*, “La colonizzazione e gli italiani nel Peru,” by B. Borea, Capitano di Vascello nella R., written in 1903 and published in 1904, as cited in Pesce, *Indígenas É Inmigrantes*, 129.



for themselves through their hard work” in spite of the fact they are not the preferred immigrant “because of their race and lack of cleanliness.”<sup>89</sup>

In 1872, the Civilista party’s candidate Manuel Pardo was elected to the presidency, allowing the coastal oligarchy to take the reins of power from the military rulers and their gamonal (provincial landowner) supporters. Pardo set the pattern for Peruvian immigration politics that would continue until the 1930s. While allowing sufficient Chinese immigration to meet the agricultural industry’s needs, Pardo concurrently promoted 1873 legislation to foment European immigration, the precursor of the 1893 Immigration Law offering incentives to white immigrants to come to Peru.<sup>90</sup> It was in the shadow of Peru’s loss in the War of the Pacific (1879-1885), however, that Peruvian policymakers and intellectuals began more seriously to struggle with the importance of Peruvian citizenry to a strong and prosperous nation.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Gálvez, Pedro, *Proyecto de Inmigración a Perú*, Lima: 1871, p. 61 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 83. Mary Fukumoto provides extensive excerpts from intellectuals’ writings on Asian immigration at the turn of the century.

<sup>90</sup> Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 185. The 1893 law offered ship passage, three months support, land, seed, and a five-year tax amnesty for whites willing to come to Peru. The 1893 law, like that passed in 1873, produced few results.

<sup>91</sup> Efraín Kristal, *Una Visión Urbana De Los Andes : Génesis Y Desarrollo Del Indigenismo En El Perú, 1848-1930*, 1. ed., *Serie Tiempo De Historia ; 8* (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Apoyo Agrario, 1991), 99-104. The *Civilistas* blamed Peru’s loss on the lack of national unity, post-war president Andres Cáceres attributed the loss to self-serving capitalists and public servants and the lack of integration in Peru, and writer Ricardo Palma blamed both the *Civilistas* and cowardly Indians who were “without any sense of Patriotism.” As to the Chinese immigrants living in Peru during the War of the Pacific, on January 15, 1881, two days prior to Chilean troops entering Lima, approximately 300 Chinese were killed by Peruvian mobs based upon rumors that the Chinese had joined Chile against Peru. That same year, with Chilean troops in Pisco, blacks and *cholos* (Indians living in a *criollo* cultural milieu) killed about 1000 Chinese in Cañete when attacking haciendas and their white owners. The Chinese workers were accused of undermining wages. See Rodríguez Pastor, *Hijos Del Celeste Imperio En El Perú (1850-1900) : Migración, Agricultura, Mentalidad Y Explotación*, 232-34.

Manuel González Prada, a leader of the anti-oligarchic and pro-industrialist political movement which grew in the aftermath of the War of the Pacific, saw European immigration as a “purifying force” necessary to overcome the negative attributes of Indians found in the Peruvian population.<sup>92</sup> Pedro Paz Soldán y Unanue, writing under the pseudonym Juan de Arona, considered European immigration nothing less than Peru’s “salvation”:

European immigration, that generally is a question of laborers, of increasing the population and bettering the race, has become for us...a question of the highest political importance and nothing less than our national salvation. Only when it is felt in the public scale the direct or indirect weight of a formidable European population settled here, only then will the endemic malaise begin to lift, that which is being generated via dissolution and that will be our death if we do not inoculate ourselves with new elements.<sup>93</sup>

As for the Chinese, Peruvian intellectuals generally heaped only scorn on these immigrants. Manuel Gonzalez Prada characterized the Chinese as “degenerate” or “feeble,” a “vicious germ and decrepit.”<sup>94</sup> Clemente Palma wrote in 1897 that the

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<sup>92</sup> Kristal, *Una Visión Urbana De Los Andes : Génesis Y Desarrollo Del Indigenismo En El Perú, 1848-1930*, 108,12. Efraín Kristal clarifies, however, that González Prada, a precursor of *indigenismo* in Peru, did not blame Peru’s loss in the War of the Pacific on any “racial flaw” in the Indians, nor did he blame the Indians alone for the loss. Rather, González Prada criticized the white *gamonales* (hacienda owners) for keeping the Indians in “ignorance and servility,” hence breeding Indian resentment to exploitation rather than cultivating loyalty to the nation, the latter of which González Prada believed could be achieved via education and rapid integration into the Peruvian economy as workers and small property owners.

<sup>93</sup> Arona, *La Inmigración En El Perú, Monografía Histórico-Crítica*, 30-31. Original Spanish: *La inmigración europea, que para la generalidad es cuestión de brazos, de aumento de población y de mejoramiento de la raza, se ha hecho para nosotros, después del estancamiento y aun retroceso que ha seguido a la guerra, cuestión de alta política y nada menos que de salvación nacional. Solo cuando se sienta en la balanza pública el peso directo o indirecto de una formidable población europea aquí radicada, solo entonces comenzará a modificarse el endémico malestar que va generando en disolución y que será la muerte si no nos inoculamos elementos nuevos.*

<sup>94</sup> Rodríguez Pastor, *Hijos Del Celeste Imperio En El Perú (1850-1900) : Migración, Agricultura, Mentalidad Y Explotación*, 235.

Chinese were a “degenerate and dirty” race “given to vice” and the Chinese who were sent to Peru were the most “degenerate” and came from the “inferior castes” of China.<sup>95</sup> Hildebrando Fuentes, writer and later Prefect of the department of Loreto, protested Asian immigration in 1892:

Those who desire Asian immigration support it if it will lead a gentleman’s hacienda or farm to prosper; [as] if we will gain incomparable domestic service and small businesses throughout our countryside, but do not consider that it will also bring a feeble and blood-sucking race to Peru, one with no great social aspirations. So then these spokesmen surrender the nation for an hacienda: their prosperity over the national good.<sup>96</sup>

Standard Darwinian parlance used “degeneracy” to categorize races as “weak” and “diseased” and therefore to be segregated from the general population in order to avoid “contamination.”<sup>97</sup> In Peru, intellectuals warned against unions between Chinese men and Indian women. Luis N. Brayce y Cotes wrote in 1899 that the Chinese in Peru created “a new mixture that was quite inferior, primarily physically, that due to its own weakness tended to disappear before completing developing.”<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Palma, *Dos Tesis*, 30,36.

<sup>96</sup> Hildebrando Fuentes, *La Inmigración en el Perú*, Lima: Imprenta del Estado, 1892, p. 15 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 81. Original Spanish: *Los que quieren la inmigración asiática se fijan en que con ella prosperará la hacienda o el fundo de determinado señor; que tendremos inmejorable servicio doméstico e industrias menudas por doquiera del territorio, pero no ven que introducirán con ella, una raza al Perú endeble, vampírica que no tiene grandes aspiraciones sociales. Entonces esos defensores sacrifican la patria a la hacienda: el bien nacional a la relativa comodidad.*

<sup>97</sup> Alexandra Stern, *Eugenic Nation : Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America, American Crossroads ; 17.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 13.

<sup>98</sup> Luis N. Brayce y Cotes, *Resumen Histórico acerca del Desarrollo de la Inmigración en el Perú*, Bachelor’s Thesis, University of San Marcos, Lima: Librería e Imprenta de E. Moreno, 1899, p. 14, as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 80.

Similar racist notions regarding Chinese immigrants could be found in other parts of Latin America, particularly Mexico during the same period.<sup>99</sup> Benigno Trigo argues that nineteenth-century Puerto Rican texts and paintings reveal a fear of freed black, male slaves' supposedly degenerate blood contaminating jíbara peasant women, physically weakening her, and by association, the white race.<sup>100</sup>

The Japanese arriving at the turn of the century were categorized by many commentators as another “yellow race” and seen in similar terms. Both the Chinese and Japanese were accused of morally and racially contaminating Peru. Peruvian writer Felipe M. Boisset advised Asians to not “bother the countries that are superior to you ethically and ethnically, and do not degenerate those who teach you an evolution more in concordance with the destiny of man.” Boisset goes on to accuse the Chinese of “indecent houses of prostitutes, gambling parlors where the paca piun and Chinese luck have sharpened the skill of our criollos (coastal mixed-race Peruvians) for petty theft and crimes, the opium houses, and so many other iniquities in regard to private and public morality.” As to the Japanese, Boisset writes, “We can say as much, although on a lesser scale, about the Japanese: they are the antithesis of the ideal that we pursue.”<sup>101</sup> Clemente Palma, drawing upon the language of

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<sup>99</sup> See Hu-DeHart, "Racism and Anti-Chinese Persecution in Sonora, Mexico."; Rénique, "Race, Region, and Nation: Sonora's Anti-Chinese Racism and Mexico's Postrevolutionary Nationalism, 1920s-1930s."

<sup>100</sup> Benigno Trigo, *Subjects of Crisis: Race and Gender as Disease in Latin America* (Hanover, NH: University of New England for the Wesleyan University Press, 2000), 7.

<sup>101</sup> Felipe M. Boisset, *El Problema Racial en el Perú (o el peligro de la raza amarilla)*, Lima: Empresa Tipográfica Union, 1919, pp. 20, 22, 28 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 88-89.

“hygiene” central to eugenic conceptions of race, wrote of Japanese immigration in 1899:

Peruvians discuss the recent Japanese immigration as a question of social hygiene, of national health, more than a question of commercial convenience. For some men, at least, the dirty current that comes to us from Asia means the future wellbeing of the country, economic health, the glorious resurrection of moribund industry; but others, the rest, those that are not businessmen, those of us whose view is not obfuscated by the prestige of a private business operation, see in Japanese immigration a sociological crime carried out in the shadow of the Constitution and laws, by shortsighted businessmen who are ignorant of the biological laws that, fatally, determine the evolution of people. [...] No country, even moderately aware of the meaning of national dignity, has resolved its lack of population in its country with the Asian immigration.<sup>102</sup>

While Palma and other critics of Japanese immigration drew upon the yellow peril language of seemingly endless “waves” or “currents” of Asians, some Japanese immigrants were decoupled from the Chinese in one respect: yellow peril as political conquest. According to James L. Tigner, Peru was the only Latin American country where the United States hysteria over the yellow peril – a belief that Japanese immigration operated as the vanguard of Japanese designs to conquer the Americas – took hold before the outbreak of World War II.<sup>103</sup> Francisco García Calderón, writer and diplomat, was one of the few to voice such fears over Japanese designs on the Americas. García Calderón wrote in 1913, eight years after Japan’s triumph over Russia that the Japanese immigrant was an “emissary of imperialist design.”<sup>104</sup> He

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<sup>102</sup> Palma, Clemente, *El Comercio*, Lima, May 5, 1899, p. 3 as cited in *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>103</sup> Tigner, *The Okinawans in Latin America : Investigations of Okinawan Communities in Latin America, with Exploration of Settlement Possibilities*, 22-23.

<sup>104</sup> Francisco García Calderón, Raymond Poincaré, and Bernard Miall, *Latin America: Its Rise and Progress, The South American Series* (New York: C. Scribner's sons; T. F. Unwing, 1913), 324.

was premature; his allegations of Japanese military designs on Peru did not become widespread until the 1930s.

### 1.5 Peruvian Eugenics and Indigenismo

The first decades of the Japanese immigration coincided with the arrival of eugenics in Latin America. The first Latin American eugenics organization was formed in 1918 and Carlos Enrique Paz Soldán, a medical doctor and leader of eugenic thought in Peru, joined the São Paulo Eugenics Society as a corresponding member. While Peru did not formally establish its own organization until the 1930s, eugenic ideas penetrated Peruvian intellectual and popular thought.<sup>105</sup> Paz Soldán was virulently anti-Japanese and used the eugenics conferences to push his anti-Japanese agenda. In 1919, he published an article expressing his disgust at the ceaseless anchoring of “infected Japanese ships” in Callao, and issued a call to his countrymen, “Avoid these human dregs, that this scum comes as immigrants and an extraordinary step will have been taken in defending the national race.”<sup>106</sup>

According to Nancy Leys Stepan, Latin American eugenics in the early twentieth century revolved around issues of gender and race and can be understood as, “The desire to “imagine” the nation in biological terms, to “purify” the reproduction of

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<sup>105</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 47-48.; Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 185.

<sup>106</sup> *El Comercio*, December 10, 1919, as cited in Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 229. Original Spanish: *Evítense que estos despojos humanos, estos menos valores vengan en la condicion de inmigrantes y se habrá dado un paso trascendental en la defensa de la raza nacional.*

populations to fit hereditary norms, to regulate the flow of peoples across national boundaries, to define in novel terms who could belong to the nation and who could not...”<sup>107</sup> While Latin American eugenicists believed in a biological hierarchy of races, they were generally unwilling to accept the view held by the European and United States eugenics community that Latin America was an irremediable eugenics failure because of its tropical climate and the “degeneracy” caused by the mixing of races. Latin American policymakers, therefore, embraced a neo-Lamarckian version of eugenics which argued that heredity could be improved through the proper environmental conditions and social interventions. As such, they sought “racial rehabilitation not only through control of reproduction championed by eugenicists in the United States but also through control of social milieu” (e.g. hygiene, sanitation, education).<sup>108</sup> Latin Americans, however, generally resisted measures they considered invasive such as birth control, sterilization, and abortion, all used in the United States and Europe to control reproduction of unwanted populations.<sup>109</sup> While the Catholic Church’s influence in Latin America was primarily responsible for such resistance, Latin American countries were numerically dominated by mixed-race and indigenous

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<sup>107</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 105. Stepan writes that these notions gained power specifically during the 1920s and 1930s, but similar ideas were certainly circulating in Peru by the beginning of the twentieth century.

<sup>108</sup> Appelbaum, Macpherson, and Roseblatt, *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, 5. According to Leys Stepan, French biologist Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet, the chevalier de Lamarck hypothesized that the “changes induced in a living organism from the outside could be handed on to future generations.” See Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 67-68.

<sup>109</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 133-34. Leys Stepan writes that the United States involuntarily sterilized over 70,000 people for eugenics purposes and “possessed the most extensive and extreme eugenic legislation in the world outside of Nazi Germany...”

populations making control of the majority's reproduction an impractical path to achieving "whiteness." Instead, according to Leys Stepan, the eugenics movements in countries like Mexico and Brazil advocated "constructive miscegenation."<sup>110</sup> In Mexico, this took the form of the "cosmic race" – a melding of the "best" aspects of the White European, Native American, and Black African to form a superior race.<sup>111</sup> Brazilian social thinkers during the first decades of the twentieth century, on the other hand, initially advocated "whitening" via miscegenation on the theory that "crosses between mulattos and whites favored a steady whitening because of whites' biological superiority and because mulattos preferred partners whiter than themselves."<sup>112</sup> Influential thinkers like sociologist Gilberto Freyre argued that Brazil's "racial democracy" – or its tropical racial mixing – produced people "of increasing ethnic and eugenic soundness."<sup>113</sup>

In Peru, the debate was more polarized and there was little consensus around *mestizaje*, or the biological and cultural mixing of races, as the solution to the Peruvian identity crises. Calls for more European immigration and "whitening" tended to originate on the coast, while they encountered strong opposition from the Peruvian *indigenista* movement, primarily its Cuzco branch.<sup>114</sup> Medical doctor Luis

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 169-70.

<sup>111</sup> Jose Vasconcelos, a Mexican philosopher, wrote the *La Raza Cós mica* which was published in 1925.

<sup>112</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 155. Also see Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought*

<sup>113</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 167.

<sup>114</sup> Chambers, "Little Middle Ground: The Instability of a Mestizo Identity in the Andes, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," 32; Marisol De la Cadena, *Indígenas Mestizos : Raza Y Cultura En El Cusco*, 1.



Pesce represented the coastal perspective when he wrote that indigenous people's "social and ethnic" betterment could be achieved by mixing with white immigrants who by

...crossing their blood with that of the indigenous, will transmit their ideas, feelings and customs, and make disappear the great heterogeneity of races and castes, this deformity of habits and interests, that so jeopardize the physical and moral hygiene, and social advancement in this country.<sup>115</sup>

Much of early indigenista thought was developed in literary movements that began in the late nineteenth century under the auspices of Manuel González Prada's *Club Literario*, and works by members such as Clorinda Matto de Turner. In 1906, Joaquin Capelo, a positivist intellectual, and writers Pedro Zulen and Dora Mayer formed the *Asociación Pro Indígena* which attempted to organize Indians and functioned until 1916.<sup>116</sup> Although indigenismo had multiple variants, in Peru it was generally an elite movement, rather than a project originating from the Indians, which sought to end the gamonales' abuse of Indians, break Indians' dependent ties to the hacienda, and "civilize" Indians through education. Cuzqueño indigenista Luis Valcarcel, who became most prominent in the 1930s, was mestizaje's greatest critic,

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ed., *Urbanización, Migraciones Y Cambios En La Sociedad Peruana* (Lima: IEP Ediciones, 2004), 20-29; Rebecca Earle, *The Return of the Native : Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 185-212; Larson, *Trials of Nation Making : Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*, 15. Sarah Chambers writes that in the Andean nations, "positive discourses of mestizaje (race mixing) have been relatively weak and received official state sanction only in the middle of the twentieth century, if at all." She adds, "Instead, for much of the region's colonial and republican history, racial ideologies have recognized diversity but emphasized division between Spanish and indigenous cultures, usually depicting the latter as uncivilized and backward."

<sup>115</sup> Pesce, *Indígenas É Inmigrantes*, 44.

<sup>116</sup> Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 230.

arguing that it was “sterile” and “regressive” and would negatively impact Peruvian Indians.<sup>117</sup> Indigenistas, however, generally accepted the biological precepts of eugenics even if they interpreted them in a different fashion than those who advocated whitening.<sup>118</sup>

Indigenismo, however, was also a paternalistic modernization project designed to integrate Indians into the nation and to turn them into free market laborers who would serve the needs of Peru’s export economy and nascent industry.<sup>119</sup> Some indigenistas opposed Asian immigration, believing that the Chinese and Japanese were taking work best given to Indians. Although their position was rife with contradictions – primarily in the sense that most Indians resisted working under the substandard conditions found on the coastal plantations – indigenistas worried that if Asian immigration sated Peru’s labor needs, the Indian population would continue to be superfluous to the Peruvian nation. Writing in *La Prensa* in 1906, Dora Mayer lamented:

If this obsession with importing Asians were to continue out of desire to have abundant manpower, we could not allow the Mongols to overwhelm the indigenous population of our country. In face of the torrent of Chinese and Japanese arriving here, who will take on the task of regenerating the Peruvian Indian? And even so it would be strange that a father take the life of his children to give it to stranger; it would be sad if the Malaysian demanded concessions from our landowners that the indigenous have never obtained.

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<sup>117</sup> Kristal, *Una Visión Urbana De Los Andes : Génesis Y Desarrollo Del Indigenismo En El Perú, 1848-1930*, 74-76. Valcarcel was more open to mestizaje beginning in the 1950s.

<sup>118</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 146-47.

<sup>119</sup> See Kristal, *Una Visión Urbana De Los Andes : Génesis Y Desarrollo Del Indigenismo En El Perú, 1848-1930*; Manrique, *La Piel Y La Pluma : Escritos Sobre Literatura, Etnicidad Y Racismo*. *Indigenismo* continued into the mid-twentieth century and developed numerous variants.

Mayer's position on Asian immigration initially varied little from nineteenth-century eugenic thought:

The Peruvian does not want to see the Asian substitute the indigenous person, one must oppose all the projects that are born necessitating a sudden invasion of strange people inferior to the country; accepting the norm of ethnic dissolution is even more dangerous for the nation than the underdevelopment of communications or industry. Only the urge to progress too soon puts us at the mercy of a bad colonization. There is no motive that obliges us to exploit the riches of this country as fast as possible; the nation is made with a good population and not with great wealth.<sup>120</sup>

On the other hand, Luis Pesce, a medical doctor and member of the Geographic Society of Lima, argued that same year that since Peru could not afford to wait for Indians to migrate from the highlands in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of the export economy, the country could not be as particular about the race of its immigrants – i.e., expecting massive white European immigration – as could countries like the United States.<sup>121</sup> In *Indígenas é Inmigrantes*, published by the Ministry of the Development department responsible for immigration policy, Pesce proposed that Asian immigration be permitted as a stop-gap measure while Indian migration from

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<sup>120</sup> Mayer, Dora, "Apuntes sobre un estudio de inmigración," *La Prensa*, Lima, May 1, 1906, p. 1 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 86-87. Original Spanish: *Sí...por motivo de su abundancia mu scular, continuase el afán de importar asiáticos no podríamos consentir en que la población autóctona del país fuese ahogada por una inundación de mongoles. Guiado el torrente de chinos y japoneses por aquí, ¿quién se daría el trabajo de regenerar al indio peruano? Y sin embargo sería raro que un padre quitase la vida a sus hijos para dárselos a extraños: sería triste que el malayo exigiese concesiones a nuestros propietarios que el indígena jamás hubiese obtenido. El peruano no desea ver que el asiático sustituya al indígena, tiene que oponerse a todas las obras que nacen necesaria una invasión repentina de gente extraña e inferior al país, aceptando por norma la disolución étnica es aun mas peligrosa para la nación que el atraso en las comunicaciones o industrias. Solo el afán de progresar demasiado pronto nos pone a merced de una mala colonización. Ningún motivo nos obliga a explotar las riquezas del país con mayor rapidez posible, se hace patria con una buena población y no con mucha riqueza.*

<sup>121</sup> Pesce, *Indígenas É Inmigrantes*, 137.

unproductive to productive zones (i.e. the coast) was being arranged. Pesce lauded the benefits of Indian migration to the plantations: they were obligated to stay there during the period of their contract, were cheaper than the coastal peons, and were “robust, resistant, submissive and susceptible to education, progress, and acclimatization.” While he advocated improved treatment of the Indians on the coastal plantations, he also saw his proposal as ideal because Indians could be instructed in hygiene, which would help them avert diseases and consequently increase their population to meet Peru’s labor needs.<sup>122</sup>

By the late 1910s, however, some indigenistas such as Mayer seemed to have done a complete about-face. When anti-Asian articles began to appear in 1918 in *El Tiempo*, a newspaper that fomented Anti-Asian sentiment in Peru, the indigenista weekly *La Crítica* edited by Dora Mayer and anarchist Miguelina Acosta Cárdenas criticized writers such as Origi Galli for classifying Asians as inferior and “degenerate” without any basis in fact.<sup>123</sup> Instead, they characterized the Chinese as “hardworking and honorable; intelligent and progressive when permitted by the situation.” Finally, the front-page *La Crítica* ridiculed *El Tiempo* for writing against Chinese owning land when it was the “whites” (English, Germans, Italians and North Americans) who “pervert[ed]” the Peruvian government, obtaining favorable land concessions and foisting the financial burden onto the poor. *La Crítica* writes that furthermore:

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 21-32.

<sup>123</sup> "El Odio Al Extranjero," *La Crítica*, February 3, 1918.

We have the misfortune of offending the person that does not offend us, or rejecting the person that is of use to us and denigrating a race that is closer to us in color and past, with which we could be amalgamated to form a resistance to the imperious white race that tomorrow will try to enslave all of us together so that we carry out the most menial jobs that serve as the foundation of its fortune and its autocracy.<sup>124</sup>

Some authors have argued that Mayers changed her position on Asians as result of her romantic relationship with Pedro Zulen which began in 1911, the same year that her anti-Asian rhetoric dropped off.<sup>125</sup> Zulen was the son of a Chinese father and criolla mother. Mayer, as previously noted, was collaborating with Zulen as early as 1906. Rather, the articles in *La Crítica* published in 1918, suggest a political evolution in indigenista thought from the turn-of-the-century. In “Pro-Indígena,” *La Crítica* argued against the system previously promoted by indigenistas such as Mayer of coercing Indians from their highland home regions to work on the coast and other areas (*enganche*). Instead, the article argued that the relocation of the indigenous people “would never appreciably change the psychological conditions of the indigenous race.”<sup>126</sup> If indigenistas no longer believed in Indian insertion into the coastal export economy, their reason to oppose to Asians likewise disappeared. Finally, *La Crítica*’s criticism of the United States and Europe’s role in the region reflected the anti-imperialist positions of leftists like José Carlos Mariátegui and the

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<sup>124</sup> "Pro-Indígena," *La Crítica*, July 28, 1918. Original Spanish: *Tenemos la desgracia, de ofender al que no nos ofende, de rechazar al que puede servirnos y de desprestigiar a una raza que mas parecida a la nuestra en color y en suerte, podría ser amalgamada con ella para formar una resistencia contra la raza blanca imperiosa que mañana tratará de esclavizarnos a todos juntos para que le ejecutemos los oficios bajos que pongan la piedra fundamental de su fortuna y su autocracia.*

<sup>125</sup> Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 100.

<sup>126</sup> "Pro-Indígena."

APRA<sup>127</sup> party's Victor Raul Haya de la Torre whose influence was steadily increasing during the 1920s. While conservative newspapers like *El Comercio* and *La Prensa* occasionally ran positive articles on Japanese modernity or culture, Dora Mayer and Miguelina Acosta Cárdenas, also an anarchist, were two of the few Peruvians who published pro-Asian commentary from a racial perspective.

### 1.6 Gender and Miscegenation

Peruvian bio-racial discourses masculinized white races – “virile” German blood – and Peruvian women, as the embodiment of the nation, were expected to receive them with open arms.<sup>128</sup> The “yellow race,” on the other hand, was portrayed as “weak” and “repulsive,” damaging to the national body.<sup>129</sup> Although Asian men were represented as weak and diseased, they were also characterized as having a dangerous or “vampiric” alter-ego: yellow peril. No laws banned inter-racial sex but the Peruvian government as well as members of the export elite were concerned about Asian men's access to Peruvian women. In a debate over a 1905 Peruvian Senate bill to restrict mass Asian immigration to Peru, the National Agrarian Society (SNA) took the position of allowing immigration, but controlling the immigrants' sexual access to Peruvian women.<sup>130</sup> Explaining the SNA's position, Alejandro Garland argued that

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<sup>127</sup> Alliance for Popular Revolution in America (*Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*)

<sup>128</sup> Palma, *Dos Tesis*, 6.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>130</sup> Pesce, *Indígenas É Inmigrantes*, 119-20. Originally published in *Agricultor Peruano* on September 16, 1905. Original Spanish: *Pues, esos elementos [nuevos y vigorosos], cruzando su sangre con la de los aborígenes, les transmiten ideas, sentimientos y costumbres, y hacen desaparecer esa gran*

Asian immigration should proceed but be regulated, “balancing as much as possible the economic with the ethnic interest of Peru...” To this end, Garland advocated the segregation of Asian workers from the general population by prohibiting their residing in towns where they could “mix freely” with the Peruvian population.<sup>131</sup> Edmundo N. de Habich, Head of the Immigration Section of the Ministry of Development, suggested that measures be adopted “to ensure that there is as little mixing as possible between Asians and natives.”<sup>132</sup> While the 1905 legislation was not passed, the debate reveals that miscegenation was prominent in policymakers’ minds and that policymakers attempted to physically confine Asian men’s sexuality.

Despite such attitudes, relationships between Asians and Peruvians, relationships between Asian men and Peruvian women were commonplace. Given that Chinese immigrants were almost exclusively male, many Chinese men and Peruvian women – usually cholos<sup>133</sup> or Indians – cohabitated or married. In the first decades, Japanese men also had little choice; they could cohabit with native women or go without intimacy. Although no reliable national statistics exist on Japanese-

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*heterogeneidad de razas y casta, esa disformidad de hábitos e intereses, que tanto perjudican la higienización física y moral, y el adelanto social en este país.*

<sup>131</sup> Garland, Alejandro, *Reseña Industrial del Perú*, Lima: Imprenta la Industria, 1905, as cited in *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>132</sup> “Letter from Edward N. de Habich to the Director of the Ministry of Development,” 22 September 1905, as cited in *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>133</sup> “Cholo” was used in the Andes to describe highland Indians who had separated from their indigenous communities and settled in the coastal regions. It generally implies some degree of acculturation to coastal culture. See Peter F. Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932* (Austin,: Published for the Institute of Latin American Studies by the University of Texas Press, 1973), 37. Brooke Larson defines cholos as “racially transgressive Indians.” See Larson, *Trials of Nation Making : Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*, 69.

Peruvian unions during this period, Luis Rocca Torres' study of the northern coastal province of Lambayeque finds that two-thirds of all Japanese immigrant men in the Lambayeque from 1910 to 1940 married Peruvian women. The vast majority of mixed unions were Japanese men with Peruvian women of the lower socio-economic classes – primarily indigenous or mestiza or chola – while a white or mestiza upper-class Peruvian woman marrying a Japanese man was rare until well after World War II.<sup>134</sup> This is not surprising given a national, patriarchal vigilance over the wombs of white, upper-class Peruvian women. Much less concern was given to Indian, blacks, mulattas, or even lower-class mestizas.<sup>135</sup>

While the Catholic Church influenced national policies, “practical” eugenics was practiced at the local level. A Japanese government report prepared during the first years of Japanese immigration stated that on the plantations “...adultery was comparatively widespread because the number of married [Japanese] men was small (less than 70 out of 800 at Cañete) and because prostitutes were sneaked in from towns only about once a year. The supervisors tried hard to correct the situation and [Japanese male] offenders were put in jail...and persistent offenders were driven off the plantations.” The report adds that Peruvian women who had sexual relations with Japanese men “had their hair cut off.” To correct what the Japanese government official describes as “evils,” Peruvian plantation managers attempted to attract married

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<sup>134</sup> Luis Rocca Torres, *Japoneses Bajo El Sol De Lambayeque* (Lima, Peru: Universidad Nacional "Pedro Ruiz Gallo ", 1997), 383-4. Evidence for Lima suggests that intermarriage in the capital city and nearby provinces was significantly lower.

<sup>135</sup> Maria Patricia. Oliart, "Images of Gender and Race: The View from above in Turn-of-the-Century Lima" (Master's, University of Texas, 1994), 173.



Japanese couples by contracting Japanese women for 30 yen and men for 20 yen – a change from the traditional practice of paying men more than women for agricultural labor – on the premise that “married couples are obviously more stable and hardworking.”<sup>136</sup> In this regard, plantation officials contracted Japanese women both to curtail miscegenation and to “domesticate” the Japanese men who both frequently participated in labor protests, drank, and gambled.

As a result of these policies, women were drawn to Peru beginning in 1903 but in larger numbers after 1910. Whereas women comprised a yearly average of just 2.9% of the Japanese immigrants between 1899 and 1910, that figure jumps to a yearly average of 14.3% between 1911 and 1923. By 1924, there were an estimated 2,000 women in Peru, the majority of who were married to Japanese men.<sup>137</sup> While Peruvian policymakers and plantation owners were attempting suppress relations between Japanese men and Peruvian women, Lima’s popular culture was presenting its version of the Japanese woman. Japanese immigrants had just begun to migrate to Lima when the songs “El Tonkin” and “La Japonesa” circulated through Lima in the mid-1910s. (See below.) In both of the songs, the Japanese woman is an object of “frenzied” desire, to use the word that appears in both songs.<sup>138</sup> Yet in both songs she is also inaccessible, clearly in the “El Tonkin” because she is with a Japanese man,

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<sup>136</sup> “General Situation of Remittances, etc. of Japanese Immigrants in Peru, S.A.” as cited in Irie, “History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 3 (Conclusion),” 8. The document is undated, but the context indicates it was during the first years of Japanese immigration to Peru.

<sup>137</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 72.

<sup>138</sup> “El Cancionero de Lima,” mid-1910s as cited in Humberto Rodríguez Pastor, *Lo Japonés En Polkas Criollas De Antaño* (Discover Nikkei, www.discovernikkei.org, 2007). The complete text of the song is reproduced in Rodríguez Pastor’s article.

which seems to inspire a possessive anger. The term “engañar” in Spanish also refers to sexual betrayal and the claim that “no one fools me” implies a latent threat of betrayal. “La Japonesa” is more schizophrenic, but desire also turns dark and she is accused of having an “ugly heart.” The songs seem to suggest, beyond the hyper-erotization of the Japanese woman, that her inaccessibility to Peruvian men was an insult to their masculinity. Looked at in another way, Japanese women’s unavailability to Peruvian men violated the norms of the gender-racial hierarchy which gave men higher on the racial pyramid access to women below them. Twenty years later, the “scornful” Japanese women would develop into a threat to the entire nation.

<p>El Tonkin (Polka de moda)</p> <p>Cuando yo me paseaba por el parque ingles tu amor me despreciaba por un japonés, a mi no me engaña nadie ni nadie me engañará desde Tonkín me voy a Palanquín. ... Japonesa sí, te quiero con amor y frenesí ...</p>	<p>El Tonkin (Popular Polka)</p> <p>When I would go out walking through the English park your love scorned me for a Japanese man, nobody fools me nobody will fool me from Tonkin I’ll go to Palanquin .... Japanese woman yes, I desire you with love and frenzy ...</p>
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<p>La Japonesa (polka, M.O. Lozano y música de Bocanegra)</p> <p>II Japonesa, si, si, si si consigo tus amores ardiente frenesí ... si quieres buscarte un amante que tenga expeditos</p>	<p>The Japanese woman (polka, M.O. Lozano and music by Bocanegra)</p> <p>II Japanese woman, yes, yes, yes If I win your loving burning frenzy ... if you want to look for a lover who has at the ready</p>
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los goces esenciales para amar	the essential pleasures for loving
IV	IV
Japonesa tú no lloras por mi amor sentirás que yo no lloro por tu amor cuando más libre estoy, mucho mejor si has de sufrir dame tu corazón que es más feo que un filón quíereme, quíereme, quíereme, no	Japanese woman you don't cry for my love you'll feel that I don't cry for your love when I'm freer, it will be better if you must suffer give me your heart that's uglier than a lode love me, love me, love me, no

### 1.7 Conclusion

Peruvian debates on the newly arriving Japanese during the first decades of the twentieth century were imbued with developing eugenic thought from Europe and the United States, but were also highly referenced to Peru's own history of racial exclusion. As an early republic, Peru had sought white European immigration while marginalizing its indigenous majority, its Afro-Peruvians, and much of its mixed-race population. Racial science was a tool in the hand of the person that held it and in Peru, lent legitimacy to those who opposed Asian immigration. The Japanese state had little influence in Peru and the Peruvian government's attitude was, to appropriate Brooke Larson, to "simultaneously incorporate and marginalize."<sup>139</sup> The Japanese, like the Chinese before them, were incorporated and marginalized.

Early immigration debates began to shape the Japanese image even prior to their arrival on Peruvian shores. The Chinese in Peru, however, were not responsible for the racialized slots in which the Japanese would be placed, but rather were targeted

<sup>139</sup> Larson, *Trials of Nation Making : Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*, 15.

by the same forces. Instead, the racial science of white supremacy constructed them as inferior, social Darwinism and tropical medicine accused them of bringing degeneracy and yellow peril deemed them all-consuming. In the midst of these transecting gendered discourses, miscegenation was socially proscribed, yet the Japanese woman who withheld herself from a Peruvian man could be seen as suspect. On the sugar plantation, the Japanese immigrants would find themselves in the midst of new battles, often for their own survival. Although they began to establish personal relationships with Peruvians, their most difficult battle continued to be with those whose ideology so colored their vision that they only saw “yellow.”

## Chapter Two

### Japanese Workers on Peru's Sugar Plantations, 1899-1923

As Peruvian intellectuals and policy-makers in the first decades of the twentieth century continued to debate whether Japanese laborers were an economic necessity or spelled racial doom, Japanese immigrants cut sugar cane and prepared the fields for planting alongside a diverse slice of Peruvian society: indigenous highland Indians, Indian-descent migrants who had settled on the coast (referred to as *cholos*), a lesser number of Afro-Peruvians, and a sprinkling of Chinese Peruvians.<sup>140</sup> They labored under the orders of *mestizo* managers, at times rebelling and drawing the attention of the Peruvian and European plantation owners of the upper racial and socioeconomic strata. Between 1899 and 1923, nearly 1000 Japanese immigrants arrived on Peru's shores each year and were distributed among 54 coastal plantations that were the backbone of Peru's sugar export sector. Japanese immigration spiked (2,448) in 1908 following Japan's Gentlemen's Agreement with the United States and again in the aftermath of WWI when Japan slid into economic crisis. While men vastly outnumbered women during this immigration period, Japanese women were contracted with their husbands in increasing numbers beginning in 1913. Between

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<sup>140</sup> Racial terminology specific to this chapter: The letters from the English-owned British Sugar Company are in English and the San Nicolás and Cayaltí documents are in Spanish, although the English reports also used the Peruvian designations "*serrano*" and "*cholo*." "*Serrano*" indicates a highland Indian most of who were seasonal workers on the plantations. "*Cholo*," as discussed in the previous chapter, describes a person of indigenous ancestry who has settled on the coast. The term "native" is ambiguous but seems to indicate Peruvian workers generally. The Cayaltí letters use a more general "*gente del país*" as a catch-all category for workers from Peru as opposed to Japan. The reports seem to clearly delineate between the Chinese and Japanese workers and there is no use of the term "Asian" or "asiático."

1913 and 1919, after which contract immigration slowed significantly, an average of just over 200 women immigrated to Peru's plantations each year.<sup>141</sup> Although the vast majority of Japanese saw their residence in Peru as temporary and believed they would return to Japan, instead they became the immigrant group most likely to remain in Peru.<sup>142</sup>

On the plantations, the Japanese were drawn into the Peruvian rural working classes' challenges to the grower oligarchy's exclusive right to control the country's destiny. The plantation managers reacted to the Japanese workers' claims by drawing upon global Orientalism, portraying the Japanese as both indistinguishable and menacing. The white elite growers also condemned the Japanese workers as "immoral," asserting their racial superiority over the Japanese much in the same way they justified their racial oppression of indigenous Peruvians. The Japanese government officials in Peru, however, assessed in equally harsh terms the Okinawans and rural Japanese who comprised the majority of plantation workers. Officials believed the Japanese immigrant workers undermined the image of Japan as a modern nation equal to the white supremacist Western nations.

Denigrated by both Japanese officials and the growers, the Japanese workers eventually gravitated towards their Peruvian counterparts with whom they shared a seemingly similar fate. Realizing the potential threat a Peruvian-Japanese workers' alliance presented to their exclusive power, the plantation growers attempted to divide

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<sup>141</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 72,77-78. Morimoto's statistics are based upon data published by Luis Ito and Ricardo Goya in the Japanese-language section of *Immigración Japonesa al Perú* (Lima: Editorial Perú Shimpo S.A., 1974), pp. 1-204.

<sup>142</sup> Masterson and Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 52.

the workers by casting the Japanese as undesirable and unacceptable to the Peruvian nation. Many of the hacendados' portrayals of the Japanese immigrants reverberated at the national level, and endured. The Peruvian and Japanese plantation workers, however, were not privy to such forums, limiting the range and strength of their potential contributions not only in developing the meaning of "Japanese" in Peruvian society, but also in formulating the policies that would flow from such characterizations.

## 2.1 Overview of the Sugar Plantations

At the turn of the century, Peru's sugar industry and the men that commanded it were reaching the pinnacle of their power. With sugar rating as Peru's top export during most of the period from 1899 to 1923, the "barons" of the sugar industry converted their economic power into political power, dominating national and regional politics via the *Partido Civil*. The *Partido Civil* that controlled the national government during most of the period from 1900 to 1919 promoted commodity exports and attempted to attract foreign investment and immigration, preferably European, in service of the agricultural export industries.<sup>143</sup> The men of "Big Sugar" were powerful players, molding government policies to serve their individual and class interests, and directly participating in the national government.<sup>144</sup> José Pardo y

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<sup>143</sup> Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 197, 203-12. Statistics are based upon the *Extracto Estadístico del Perú, 1936-1937*. See also Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 171.

<sup>144</sup> Klarén, *Peru : Society and Nationhood in the Andes*, 211-13.

Barreda, heir to the Tumán sugar estate in the department of Lambayeque, occupied the presidency from 1904 to 1908 and 1915 to 1919. Antero Aspíllaga, whose family owned the sugar estate Cayaltí in the same department, served in Congress, as the mayor of Lima, and won the presidential office in 1912, although the election was nullified.<sup>145</sup> Although not from an elite family, Augusto B. Leguía, president from 1908 to 1912 and 1919 to 1930, was the manager of the British Sugar Company in Cañete prior to his presidencies and maintained strong ties with the industry after being elected.

European immigrants and their descendants figured prominently among the sugar estate owners. Significant British capital was invested in Peru, with the British Sugar Company (BSC) controlling most of the Cañete Valley by 1916. Although the plantations were originally purchased by Henry Swayne, a Peruvian of British descent, prior to the War of the Pacific, the estates were taken over by British commercial agents in 1900 in settlement of the Swayne family's debts.<sup>146</sup> In the Chicama Valley, the center of the sugar industry in the department of La Libertad, the Larco Herrera and Gildemeister families and W.R. Grace and Company, a United States merchant firm with a long history in Peru, controlled virtually all sugar production in the region. As of 1913, the Larco Herreras, descendants of Italian immigrants who settled in Peru in the mid-nineteenth century, owned the sugar plantations Chiclín, Chiquitoy, and

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<sup>145</sup> Rocca Torres, *Japoneses Bajo El Sol De Lambayeque*, 30.

<sup>146</sup> Bill Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919" (Univ. of East Anglia, 1976), 53a; Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 73. The BSC's plantations included Casa Blanca, Santa Barbara, San Jacinto, La Quebrada, and in 1916, San José and Sute were added.



Roma, while descendants of Juan Gildemeister, a German immigrant who had arrived in Peru in the mid-nineteenth century, owned Casa Grande.<sup>147</sup> The Chicama Valley sugar kings joined families like the Pardos and Aspíllagas to form the Peruvian oligarchy, using their wealth and influence to ensure that the national and municipal governments were receptive to their needs. For instance, Peter Klaren writes that in 1915 the Gildemeister Sociedad Agrícola Casa Grande Ltda. obtained a concession to re-open the Chicama Valley port of Malabrigo and build a railroad between Casa Grande and the port, a terrific boon to the plantation's diversified operations. In spite of the vociferous opposition of La Libertad's elite merchants and small-scale sugar producers, President Oscar R. Benavides granted the concession to Casa Grande. Casa Grande had made a loan of 440,000 pounds sterling to the government just five months before.<sup>148</sup>

## 2.2 Japanese on the Sugar Plantations

Unable to secure sufficient workers among Peru's coastal settlers – Chinese Peruvians, Afro-Peruvians, and cholos – the sugar oligarchy actively pursued Japanese contract laborers. Between 1899 and 1909, 6,295 Japanese were incorporated into the plantations' workforce with another 11,963 added between 1909 and 1923. The number of Japanese women increased nearly ten-fold between 1909 and 1923, from

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<sup>147</sup> Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919", 43a. In 1910, Casa Grande merged with a German syndicate according to Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932*, 15.

<sup>148</sup> Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932*, 70-73.

230 to 2,145. The majority of the Japanese workers were distributed among sugar plantations and to a growing degree on cotton plantations after WWI. The central coast's sugar plantations absorbed 78 per cent of the Japanese immigrants, with nearly 33% of these distributed among the Cañete Valley plantations of the British Sugar Company (BSC). The northern coastal sugar estates centered in the departments of La Libertad and Lambayeque received the majority of the remaining immigrants.<sup>149</sup> According to available data, the Japanese were never a majority of the workforce on any one plantation, but they were a significant percentage of the workers on the central coast. In the BSC's Cañete estates which employed the largest number of Japanese workers, figures for 1916 and 1918 indicate that the Japanese represented between 28% to 38% percent of the total workforce. The workforce on the plantations, according to the BSC's manager Ronald Gordon's remembrances, broke down in the following fashion: "400 serranos, 200 'local cholos and halfbreeds', 200 negros from San Luis and 300 Japanese on two or three year contracts."<sup>150</sup> In the pre-war period, the serranos (highland Quechua Indians) who composed the majority of the plantation work force were temporary seasonal workers, supplemented on some plantations with a lesser number of Afro-Peruvians and Chinese laborers in addition to the Japanese. Both the indigenous serranos and many of the Chinese laborers were brought to the plantations by *enganche*, a method that utilized labor brokers and indebtedness to

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<sup>149</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 73, 77-78.

<sup>150</sup> Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919", 87-89a, 273. Letter from Gordon to Houghton, June 7, 1916.

coerce workers onto the plantations.<sup>151</sup> In the early 1900s, only a minority of the workers were considered cholos, a term often used to describe Indians who had separated from their indigenous communities and become acculturated and settled in the coastal regions. By the 1910s, however, the number of “cholos and halfbreeds” settling on the coastal plantations was growing.<sup>152</sup>

Although the Japanese came as contracted laborers, there exist some parallels between the *enganchadores* and the emigration companies. Like the *enganchadores*, they profited based upon the number of workers they could bring to the plantations. To achieve that goal, they employed misrepresentations similar to those of the *enganchadores*, exaggerating the quick fortunes to be made in Peru. Once the Japanese were on the plantations, the emigration company attempted to smooth over conflicts between the plantations and the Japanese workers, as their profit margin depended upon keeping the workers on the plantations for the duration of the contract. The Japanese contract workers, however, were not indebted to the emigration company.<sup>153</sup> Because the emigration companies operated with the consent and under the auspices of the Japanese government, emigration company representatives in Peru were also charged with ensuring a minimum standard of wellbeing for the imperial

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<sup>151</sup> For more on *enganche* of the Chinese living in Peru, see Gonzales, *Plantation Agriculture and Social Control in Northern Peru, 1875-1933*, 89-95.

<sup>152</sup> Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919", 87-89a; Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932*, 37.

<sup>153</sup> Toraji Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 31, no. 3 (1951): 443. A portion of the immigrant workers' wages, however, was remitted to the company for the worker's "return trip," giving the emigration company some leverage over the workers.

government's subjects and resolving conflicts that arose. Sensitive to the West's assertion of white superiority over non-white Japan, the Japanese government was intent on ensuring its subjects were neither perceived as low-status "coolies" nor as foreign troublemakers, but as modern, dignified, and law-abiding representatives of the imperial government.<sup>154</sup>

Just months after their arrival, the Japanese immigrants on the Peruvian-owned San Nicolás plantation staged a strike that, in many ways, revealed the relationships that would develop between the Japanese workers, the Peruvian workers, the growers, and the Japanese government and emigration companies over the next twenty years, and would resonate throughout Peruvian society for several more decades. On April 24, 1899, 150 Japanese workers originally from Yamaguchi province held a "united work stoppage" to demand that the San Nicolás plantation compensate them in cash rather than company store coupons. In spite of plantation contracts stipulating cash payment, the plantations frequently attempted to tighten their control of Japanese labor by unilaterally switching to payment in scrip.<sup>155</sup> The San Nicolás plantation was

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<sup>154</sup> Masato Masukawa, "The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II" (Thesis Ph D --UCLA 2000), 91. For more discussion on the Japanese positioning as modern and "white," see Azuma, *Between Two Empires : Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*. On white supremacy, see Gerald Horne, *Race War : White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

<sup>155</sup> "Report from Tanaka to Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs," 1899 as cited in Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1," 444-46; Masukawa, "The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II, 328-29. Both Irie and Masukawa reproduce excerpts from Morioka Emigration Company official Tanaka's reports that were made to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Masukawa, however, takes issue with the HAHR translation of Irie, which is also an edited version Irie's 1942 work, *History of the Development of Nationals Overseas (Hojin Kaigai Hattenshi)*. See p. 74-75, Masukawa. Hence, I will use the two works in conjunction with a cautionary eye, given that we are reading excerpts from a translated work.

located in Supe, department of Lima, and owned by the Peruvian Laos family. The plantation officials responded by arming themselves, and the “natives closed their doors”.<sup>156</sup> The plantation manager obtained eighteen soldiers from the subprefecture who were posted on the plantation for “moral effect” and the Japanese soon returned to work.<sup>157</sup> Morioka emigration company agent Teikichi Tanaka was called to the scene, and the plantation manager complained:

The Japanese get angry even over trivial things. They are lazy in their work, and they neither respect regulations nor obey orders. They look down upon the Japanese supervisors, and look at the hacienda officials as if they were dogs or horses. When it comes to their uniting themselves and making demands on the supervisor, that is a true act of insurrection and there are no other words to describe it. If we do not punish [them] for this now, that will leave a bad example for the natives on the hacienda.<sup>158</sup>

Tanaka further reported that the Peruvian plantation owners overreacted to the Japanese walk-out because of a rumor that the “Morioka Company had brought 800 soldiers disguised as farmers who were planning to start a fight at an opportune time.” Although 25 Japanese workers led the work action, Tanaka blamed five workers “from Hawaii who had been troublesome” and convinced the plantation manager that the issue would be resolved by expelling the five alleged instigators. Tanaka reported to

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<sup>156</sup> “Report from Tanaka to Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” 1899 as cited in Masukawa, “The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II”, 328-29. Irie, “History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1,” 446.

<sup>157</sup> “San Nicolás Reports,” 26 April 1899, Archivo Fuero Agrónomo, as cited in Amelia Morimoto, *Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En El Perú* (Lima: Taller de Estudios Andinos Universidad Nacional Agraria Departamento de Ciencias Humanas, 1979), 28.

<sup>158</sup> “Report from Tanaka to Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” 1899, as cited in Irie, “History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1,” 444-46; Masukawa, “The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II”, 328-29.

the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs that he “preached to the entire *imin* (Japanese immigrant workers) so as to discipline them for the future” and “we finally settled the situation in peace.”<sup>159</sup> However, just months later, on June 9, 1899, a second strike erupted at San Nicolás. Mr. Pomar, the plantation manager, once again armed his 24 men to return the Japanese to work. Pomar ordered the Japanese workers to leave the plantation if not satisfied with their situation and surrounded them with armed officials and natives, forcing 114 Japanese immigrants to leave. In his report to supervisors, he reiterated his complaints about the Japanese, that it was impossible to get them to work, that they had a “complete lack of respect for their [Peruvian] supervisors,” and “no respect at all for their [Japanese] supervisor (who has been just a toy for them).” The manager expressed further frustration and dismay that when he asked the Japanese why they had ceased working “right in front of me today with such haughtiness and insolence,” they replied that they “felt offended because five of their friends had been sent to Lima.”<sup>160</sup>

Some authors have analyzed the plantation conflicts from a materialistic perspective, arguing that the “modern” Japanese workers chafed at the feudalistic practices of the Peruvian plantations.<sup>161</sup> However, I would emphasize that the San

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<sup>159</sup> “Report from Tanaka to Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” 1899, as cited in Irie, “History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1,” 444-46; Masukawa, “The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II”, 328-29.

<sup>160</sup> “San Nicolás Reports,” 6 September 1899, Archivo Fuero Agrónomo as cited in Morimoto, *Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En El Perú*, 28-29. “Report from Tanaka to Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” 1899 as cited in Irie, “History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1,” 446.

<sup>161</sup> César Fonseca Martel, *Sindicatos Agrarios Del Valle De Chancay*, ed. José Matos Mar, vol. 8, *Estudios Del Valle De Chancay* (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1969), 24-28; Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 58.

Nicolás strike highlights how the plantation owners' reactions were also structured by the rigid *racial* hierarchies on Peru's plantations and framed by yellow peril alarmism. In other words, Pomar's exaggerated reaction was also a function of the fact that he considered the Japanese racially subordinate to him, as he considered the other racially "inferior" workers on his plantation. Hence, in asserting their rights, the Japanese transgressed against their racial superiors, bringing forth charges of "haughtiness and insolence." The 150 Japanese workers' labor action was labeled as a dangerous threat to both the plantation and the sovereignty of the nation. The Japanese immigrants were portrayed as devious, "disguised" as farmers but whose true mission was to overthrow the system that formed the basis of the white oligarchy's hold on power. However, to bring the issue full circle, the Peruvian oligarchy was acutely aware that the true challenge to its hold on power resided firmly within Peru's excluded non-white majority. In this regard, the plantation owners were also well served by a discourse that dichotomized the "bad" Japanese (for example, as invaders) and "good" Peruvians, creating divisions along racial lines to avoid class unity that could be directed at the grower from "native workers." Any potential allies of Peru's indigenous population or working class, whether directly by alliance or indirectly by exposing the traditional system's weaknesses, needed to be suppressed and discredited. The plantations, however, could not afford to reject the Japanese outright, and San Nicolás soon contracted more Japanese workers. Consequently, the Japanese took their place in the Peruvian state's balancing act of including them for their labor, while denying them the right to make any claims on the nation. The Japanese

emigration companies, for their part, rendered service to a government more concerned with the modern image of Japanese nation than with protecting the interests of their citizenry.

### 2.3 Plantation Modernity and the Japanese Immigrants

In the early twentieth century, the indigenistas and progressive civilistas unleashed their pro-modernization, humanistic ire upon the highland gamonales who they accused of keeping Peru's highland indigenous population in a backward state and contributing little to the national economy with their feudalistic haciendas.<sup>162</sup> The coastal plantations, on the other hand, were lauded as a modernizing influence, based upon free, wage labor, and integrated into the international economy, as well as a primary source of revenue for Peru. The reality of Peruvian modernity, however, was a mode of production based upon coerced labor and physical repression. When the Japanese responded to the plantations' violations of their contractual agreements by fleeing the plantation, the plantation managers exercised their control over the workers by applying physical force. The San Nicolás plantation reported, for instance, on two Japanese workers who had escaped the plantation and had recently been recaptured

I've had them in irons for two days and I've proceeded as such because this is the measure we take with the criollo workers that escape, scorning whatever contractual commitment they may have with the hacienda.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Kristal, *Una Visión Urbana De Los Andes : Génesis Y Desarrollo Del Indigenismo En El Perú, 1848-1930*; Nelson Manrique, *La Piel Y La Pluma : Escritos Sobre Literatura, Etnicidad Y Racismo* (Lima: CiDiAG : Sur Casa de Estudios del Socialismo, 1999).

<sup>163</sup> "San Nicolás Reports," September 17, 1908, AFA, as cited in Morimoto, *Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En El Perú*, 47. "Criollo" in this context indicates a Peruvian coastal resident, not someone of Spanish descent.



Peruvian coastal plantations, however, were not a holdover from a slave or feudalistic past, but instead represented the coastal oligarchy's vision for the future of Peruvian society. Peruvian intellectuals and policymakers struggled with how to manage their diverse racial populations – essential cogs in the modernization project of Peru – while maintaining upper-class white Peruvians in the seat of power. The coastal plantations in the early nineteenth century were a testing ground, gathering highland Indians, coastal negros, mestizos, and later, cholos of the lower classes, a sprinkling of Chinese Peruvians, and finally, Japanese immigrants.

The Japanese laborers proved challenging to the plantation management, protesting collectively, quickly and frequently the growers' breaches of contracts, shorting of wages, physical punishment and cruelty, and unsanitary working conditions including the lack of toilets and medical doctors. The laborers suffered high levels of illness and death.<sup>164</sup> According to statistics compiled by Toraji Irie, as of November 1900, 102 of the 761 Japanese immigrants to Peru had died.<sup>165</sup> Japanese immigrants were inadvertently assisted in their labor organizing by the Japanese emigration company's practice of maintaining groups from different Japanese prefectures intact as the workers were distributed among the plantations, i.e., the British Sugar Company's Santa Bárbara plantation in Cañete received 176 Japanese

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<sup>164</sup> Masukawa, "The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II", 328-32.

<sup>165</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 2," 651. These figures also include the small number of Japanese in Bolivia.

workers all from the Niigata Prefecture in April of 1899.<sup>166</sup> Hence, Japanese workers' sense of community was facilitated by bonds of regional origin. While the Japanese were temporary workers like the *serranos*, they labored year-round instead of seasonally, under 4-year contracts although the contracts were later reduced to 2 years.<sup>167</sup> These two factors likely combined to facilitate Japanese immigrants' ability to quickly stage protests. Additionally, the Japanese modernization project which displaced Japanese farmers and fed Japanese emigration flows also provoked increasingly organized movements among both men and women in rural Japan. Given the Japanese government's efforts to promote emigration from its areas of greatest social unrest, the Peruvian plantations may have been receiving mainland Japanese or Okinawan immigrants already skilled in organized protests.<sup>168</sup>

Wages figured prominently in the battles between the Japanese and the plantations, generally revolving around whether to pay a wage or piece rate (according to the amount of work accomplished).<sup>169</sup> The early Japanese immigrants were generally contracted for a wage based upon a 10-hour day.<sup>170</sup> Piece-rate, however, known as *tarea* in Spanish, was the typical method of payment for the rest of the workforce on the plantations. Piece-rate not only allowed the plantations to pay

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<sup>166</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 56.

<sup>167</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1," 443; Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 70.

<sup>168</sup> Endoh, "Shedding the Unwanted : Japan's Emigration Policy in a Historical Perspective"; Garon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan*; Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan*.

<sup>169</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 79.

<sup>170</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1," 443.

laborers less for more work, but also gave them greater control over the workers as plantation managers ran the scales and maintained the accounting registers.

According to Bill Albert, the plantations on the north coast where the Japanese represented only a small percentage of the total work force were largely successful in changing Japanese remuneration to piece-rate.<sup>171</sup> However, in the Cañete valley where the Japanese numbered more and were in a stronger position due to a continual worker shortage, they were able to resist the imposition of piece-rate. The BSC's manager Ronald Gordon wrote in 1914

I am sure that as long as we have to depend on the Japanese in the cut it will not be possible to introduce a system of cutting the cane by tarea as is done in the north – if all the cutters were serranos this would be possible and might give very good results, but the enganchadores tell us there are not cutters, and that they must be taught here so it will be a good many years before it can be thought of.<sup>172</sup>

As discussed in the previous chapter, plantation owners requested that more Japanese women accompany their husbands to Peru and domesticate Japanese men. This was a mistake. Instead, Japanese women's wages became an additional point of contention between the workers and the hacendados. When BSC plantation manager Ronald Gordon pushed for a reduction in women's wages from \$1.20 to 80 cents for an 8-hour day in 1914, the Japanese women and men on the BSC estates resisted. According to Ronald Gordon's letters to Edward Houghton, his superior in Lima, Japanese women's daily wages were "out of all proportion to the work done" and

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<sup>171</sup> Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919", 272. Albert cites *Cayalti Mss*, Cartas Reservadas, Cayalti-Lima, September 1914 which shows that the Japanese workers had been converted to the tarea system and were earning the same pay as Peruvian workers.

<sup>172</sup> "Letter from Gordon to Houghton," 7 October 1915, reproduced in *Ibid.*, 42.

insisted that the contract with the Morioka company indicated that “as women will not be able to work such long hours as men on account of their domestic duties and that it is agreed that their remuneration shall be according to work done or the time taken.”<sup>173</sup> In the end, Gordon agreed to a compromise and paid the women the \$1.20 per diem they demanded, but in exchange for an extra half tarea.<sup>174</sup>

The Japanese protests, similar to the San Nicolás incident, also produced Orientalist images of menace and deceit: the Japanese as sly provocateurs. Aspíllaga, for instance, wrote in 1909 that his plantation manager Calor Gutiérrez feared that the Japanese who had been on strike 10 to 12 days would provoke a conflict with the Peruvian *peones* just so they “would have a reason to complain, saying that they had been attacked” by Peruvians. Hence, he stationed guards around the Japanese barracks to prevent an attack.<sup>175</sup> The plantations also responded to the Japanese propensity for protest by denigrating the Japanese workers. The plantation managers asserted their superiority by accusing the Japanese of moral shortcomings, characterizing them as “lazy” and “drunks” – not unlike how they portrayed their Indian and cholo workers. Victor E. Aspíllaga’s 1909 visit to the Aspíllaga family’s Pomalca plantation en Cayaltí inspired him to write the Lima office regarding the 224

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<sup>173</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 4 December 1914, reproduced in *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>174</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 4 March 1916, as reproduced in *Ibid.*, 74. In a subsequent letter to Houghton on June 7, 1916, Gordon indicated that the Japanese women’s triumph was short-lived as they found it difficult to work the extra half day and consequently their wages were generally only 80 cents as Gordon desired. Albert, “An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919”, 87-88.

<sup>175</sup> “Letter from Aspíllaga to Lima Office,” 24 January 1909, as reproduced in Pablo Macera, *Cayaltí, 1875-1920 : Organización Del Trabajo En Una Plantación Azucarera Del Perú* (Lima: Centro de Documentación Agraria, Seminario de Historia Rural Andina, 1973), 218.

Japanese workers (220 men, 4 women) whom he described as “lazy as can be.”<sup>176</sup>

Aspíllaga wrote of the Japanese at the Cayaltí plantation in 1909:

They are the most immoral [people]. The day we were in the barracks, there were 80 that had not gone to work, they were practically naked and that is the way they walked around in front of the hacendado, and they came out the front door, in one of the barracks there were fifteen drunk ones, and with this you will see that they look at the hacendado with the highest disregard, and for this there needs to be yank on the ear to not lose any more moral control.<sup>177</sup>

Rather than allowing for the high rates of infirmity among the recently arrived immigrants, the plantation managers characterized their work pace, as well as different cultural practices, as one of many moral failures.<sup>178</sup> There is also significant evidence to indicate, however, that the Japanese resisted overwork by working more slowly, especially where they were paid by the day rather than piece-rate.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> “Letter from Aspíllaga to Lima Office,” 24 January 1909, as reproduced in Ibid. Cayaltí representatives lauded Peruvian workers by writing in 1899, “...*no hay nada como nuestros peones de Bambamarca con borrachera y todo.*” [...there’s nobody like our peons from Bambamarca in spite of their drunkenness and everything else.”] See “Letter from Aspíllaga to Lima Office,” 29 April 1899, Macera, *Cayaltí, 1875-1920 : Organización Del Trabajo En Una Plantación Azucarera Del Perú*, 196.

<sup>177</sup> “Letter Aspíllaga to Lima Office,” 24 January 1909, as reproduced in Macera, *Cayaltí, 1875-1920 : Organización Del Trabajo En Una Plantación Azucarera Del Perú*, 218.

<sup>178</sup> Morimoto, *Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En El Perú*, 29. 1899 reports from the San Nicolás plantations indicated that 50 to 60 Japanese were ill on a daily basis and that “they have been horribly attacked by malaria.”

<sup>179</sup> Masukawa, “The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II”, 329-30. In 1899, Tanaka was summoned to Hacienda Cayaltí because “the labor [achievements] of the Japanese do not reach one third of those of the natives, whereas their salaries are even higher.” According to Tanaka’s investigation, “it was true that the *imin* [Japanese workers] united to average down their labor, and it was clear that each one was not doing one’s best.” Tanaka was unable to negotiate a solution as the Japanese workers “consider it natural to get the monthly salary of 2 pounds sterling and 10 shillings as stated in the contract so long as they work for 10 hrs./day regardless of how much work they accomplish, and they are strongly united [on this point].” The Cayaltí plantation returned the entire Japanese labor force to the Morioka Company.

The Japanese government, however, judged the immigrants in equally harsh terms.<sup>180</sup> In 1903, Japanese Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs Imamura characterized many Japanese workers as “bums,” “gamblers,” and “delinquents” who “lead parasitic lives” and were “agitating other laborers.”<sup>181</sup> After Japanese workers led a violent 8-day strike on the British Sugar Company’s Cañete plantations in 1903, Imamura made a field inspection of the BSC’s estates in February 1904, expressing dismay at what he termed the undisciplined and undignified behavior of the Japanese workers:

Strikes are frequently staged, gambling is in fashion, and they walk around wearing unseemly Japanese clothes. Or even when someone wanders around naked outdoors, no one tries to inhibit this [behavior]. Discipline is completely lacking, and the *imin* (immigrant workers) are left to do what ever they please.<sup>182</sup>

Imamura’s portrayal came from a class cleavage between himself and the *imin* and from his concern that the immigrants’ did not project a modern image of their native land. The Japanese, for instance, should have been wearing Western dress, not “unseemly Japanese clothes.”<sup>183</sup> The Japanese immigrants, however, were largely from rural Japan and Okinawa and did not share the upper-class consular corps’

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<sup>180</sup> Japanese officials’ designations (Masato Masukawa translations): “*imin*” referred to Japanese immigrant laborers under contract, “*kyu-min*” to Japanese immigrant workers no longer under contract; “*dojin*” to the “native Peruvians” and “*kokujin*” to “blacks.” In his dissertation, Masukawa includes a longer discussion of the term “*imin*.” Ibid., 104.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 100, 29.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 128. On the strikes, Albert cites *El Comercio*, Sept. 21, 1903, Sept. 23, 1903, and Sept. 26, 1903, and implies the participation of Peruvians and Japanese alike. See Albert, “An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919”, 105a.

<sup>183</sup> See similar issues related to the Japanese community in the United States in Azuma, *Between Two Empires : Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*.

cultural norms. According to Nobuko Adachi, Japanese officials frequently blamed Japanese labor unrest on the Okinawans, accusing them of undermining the image that the Japanese government was attempting to project worldwide.<sup>184</sup>

Imamura's reports also indicate that the Japanese workers in Peru were increasingly establishing themselves as both beyond the authority of the Japanese state and separate from the Japanese nation. Imamura, for instance, wrote that the Japanese were not sending money home to their families, depriving the Japanese economy of a source of income. Imamura blamed the emigration companies for losing control of the immigrants, a result of poor supervision by the emigration companies.<sup>185</sup> Japanese workers frequently ignored or turned against the supervisors. An example of this was the BSC Japanese workers' refusal to recognize the authority of Takei, the Japanese emigration company representative employed by the plantation, due to the misrepresentations he made to the Japanese women workers on the issues of their wages. Gordon was outraged, and informed the Japanese workers that unilaterally refusing to deal with Takei was "an act of unwarranted interference in the management of the estate." Gordon directed particular wrath at the Japanese Society, threatening to disband the Society "as instead of keeping the people quiet they were only aggravating matters with their stupidity." Under this threat, and given that the dispute had been settled, the Japanese workers backed down and Takei was reinstated. When Takei left the BSC estates for Japan one year later, Gordon lamented his

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<sup>184</sup> Adachi, *Japanese Diasporas : Unsung Pasts, Conflicting Presents, and Uncertain Futures*, 16.

<sup>185</sup> Masukawa, "The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II", 127, 29.

departure because he “has done a lot to keep the Jap Colony in order during the last 2 years.”<sup>186</sup>

The *kyu-min* (workers free of any emigration contract) led the increasingly militant Japanese plantation workers. Masato Masukawa writes that the *kyu-min* operated “informally as power brokers” between the *imin* and both the emigration company and the plantation and as cultural intermediaries on the *imin*’s behalf with Peruvian society.<sup>187</sup> As rural labor in Peru became increasingly organized, the *kyu-min* became a bridge between the Japanese workers and the Peruvian workers. Not surprisingly, five years after Imamura’s visit, the Japanese led another workers’ strike on the BSC’s San Jacinto plantation.<sup>188</sup>

#### 2.4 Japanese and Peruvian Plantation Workers

Unfortunately, there exists scant information on the day-to-day relations between the Japanese immigrants and the Peruvian workers on the coastal plantations, in large part because our primary sources are the reports of plantation and Japanese government officials who were generally uninterested in worker-to-worker relations unless they affected the productivity of the plantation. It has been assumed that

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<sup>186</sup> “Letters from Gordon to Houghton,” 4 March 1916 and 7 August 1917, as reproduced in Albert, “An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919”, 148.

<sup>187</sup> Masukawa, “The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II”, 128.

<sup>188</sup> Albert, “An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919”, 105a. Albert cites *El Comercio*, Sept. 10, 1909. Albert also mentions a 1908 strike on the Paramonga plantation, but it is unclear if the Japanese were involved in that strike.



distinct cultural practices and languages, as well as differing labor conditions, created division among the plantation workers. Ronald Gordon, for instance, writes in his memoirs that the Peruvians on the British Sugar Company estates protested the Japanese men and women bathing nude in the irrigation channel.<sup>189</sup> While the paucity of information precludes any definitive conclusions, collected remembrances of Japanese Peruvians indicate the porous nature of cultural divides. For instance, in spite of the fact that Matusi Tsumo spoke only broken Spanish, her daughter Angélica Shizuka recounts that Tsumo's New Year's dinner brought Peruvians and Japanese together on the plantation where they lived in the late 1900s:

She used to make so much Japanese food and invite everybody. Everybody [Peruvian and Japanese] come. Peruvian[s], so they say, 'Luz, qué cosa es?' And then tsukemono no [about pickled vegetables]. They say 'okoko.' 'Oh, okoko, good.' And then gobo [burdock root]. They like it. 'Wow, this is good. Qué cosa es?' But everything Japanese food, she make it and they like it.<sup>190</sup>

Other data, however, indicates that early labor relations between the Japanese and Peruvian plantation workers were rocky and Japanese and Peruvian workers physically clashed at least once in 1904 on the Santa Clara plantation.<sup>191</sup> While there is little data on the conflicts, the Peruvians apparently resented the higher pay and

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<sup>189</sup> Ronald Gordon, "The Good Old Days: A Japanese Colony in Peru," *Andean Airmail and Peruvian Times* (1973): 7.

<sup>190</sup> "Angélica Shizuka de Higashide," 1994, Documents of the Japanese Peruvian Section, Japanese American National Museum.

<sup>191</sup> Peter H. Blanchard, *The Peruvian Working Class Movement: 1883-1919*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1974, pp. 317-318 as cited in Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919", 105a.

better housing of the Japanese.<sup>192</sup> BSC's Gordon, for instance, predicted trouble from Peruvian men if they realized that they were being paid less than a Japanese woman:

This latter course might in the future, say 4 or 5 years hence, bring about difficulties with the native labourers who day by day are becoming more careful of their rights, and if they once realize that a Peruvian Lampero (especially a serrano) who works a tarea, which corresponds on the average to 7 hours and sometimes 8 for \$1.00, is only getting the same money as a Japanese woman who does about one quarter of the work and earns \$1.00 or \$1.20, there is certain to be trouble, the more especially when one considers the good houses, baths, schools and other facilities offered to the Japanese, while, it must be admitted, that the serrano gets what is left over.<sup>193</sup>

The Japanese were initially housed in substandard quarters that lacked latrines and other amenities, but eventually secured improvements.<sup>194</sup> The hacendados also separated the quarters of the Peruvian and Japanese workers, attempting to inhibit cohesion among the workers. Bill Albert writes that the hacendados did not want the “greater militancy of the Japanese to ‘infect’ the local workers.”<sup>195</sup> Amelia Morimoto finds that Japanese wages deteriorated over time as the plantations succeeded in

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<sup>192</sup> Gardiner, *The Japanese and Peru, 1873-1973*, 79; Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 61-62.

<sup>193</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 22 December 1915, as reproduced in Albert, “An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919”, 46-47.

<sup>194</sup> For instance, in his review of the British-owned plantation Lurifico located on the northern coast, Morioka agent Tanaka wrote that the plantation failed to provide the Japanese workers toilets as promised in the contract. As a consequence, a Japanese worker urinated in public and the plantation manager Jones had the Japanese worker whipped as well as jailed the person who tried to help the Japanese man. Although Masukawa's translation does not indicate explicitly that the person who tried to help the Japanese man was Peruvian, I am assuming such because *imin* is used consistently to indicate a Japanese worker. Masukawa, “The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II”, 331. Also see “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 22 December 1915, as reproduced in Albert, “An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919”, 46-47.

<sup>195</sup> Albert, “An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919”, 105a.

imposing a piece-rate (*tarea*) system, largely equalizing Japanese pay with that of Peruvian plantation workers and clearing the way for greater cooperation between the two groups.<sup>196</sup>

Gordon's worry about "native laborers" was a recognition of national developments in rural labor organizing. While rural labor unions did not form until the 1920s, plantation-by-plantation labor actions spread throughout the central and northern coastal valleys in the aftermath of WWI. The plantation workers on the central and northern coast, like urban laborers, experienced the "ruinous price-wage squeeze" resulting from the war boom, provoking them to seek higher wages.<sup>197</sup> In 1917, a rural labor strike erupted in Huacho (Department of Lima) and workers were massacred.<sup>198</sup> The Chicama Valley plantations were convulsed in labor unrest from 1917 to 1921. The 1921 strike was the culmination of a series of protests across the Chicama Valley's plantations, lasting nearly a year and spreading throughout the area's plantations until it was suppressed by President Leguía's federal troops.<sup>199</sup>

The Cañete Valley experienced similar labor unrest during the WWI. Japanese workers were much more visible in the Cañete protests; in the Chicama Valley, they

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<sup>196</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 79-80.

<sup>197</sup> Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932*, 96.

<sup>198</sup> Carolina Carlessi, *Mujeres En El Origen Del Movimiento Sindical : Crónica De Una Lucha Huacho, 1916-1917* (Lima, Perú: Ediciones Lilith ; TAREA, 1984).

<sup>199</sup> Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932*, 40-49.

represented just a small minority of the labor force.<sup>200</sup> In 1917, Gordon wrote Houghton that he believed a strike for higher wages was imminent on their Cañete estates, and he attempted to avoid raising wages and to avert the strike by subsidizing food products.<sup>201</sup> The Japanese were mentioned prominently as considering a strike, and Gordon informed Houghton that he was cutting rice prices to well below cost in an effort to head off a labor action by the Japanese workers.<sup>202</sup> In 1918, Gordon suggested that Japanese contracts be made “as short as possible” (as short as three months). Gordon believed that the days of the plantation facilely manipulating workers were over. He advocated shorter contracts not only because they might attract more Japanese, but also

2. In these days of more wages and intelligent workmen, precedents will be less easily established and any temporary measures taken to keep workpeople contented would be more easily obliterated.
3. The constant and frequent replacing of men and women would avoid to a great extent the possibility of cliques and consequent ruses for the betterment of conditions. With short contracts they would have no time to study matters properly.<sup>203</sup>

The Japanese and Peruvian workers made claims and struck separately on many occasions, yet formed a symbiotic relationship; benefits to one eventually had to be given to the other. By the time of the 8-hour-day labor campaign in 1919, the parallel

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<sup>200</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 73. According to Morimoto’s statistics, the Japanese were just 5% of the workers on the Chicama Valley Chiclín plantation.

<sup>201</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 11 June 1917, as reproduced in Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919", 139.

<sup>202</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 26 July 1917, as reproduced in *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>203</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 15 February 1918, as reproduced in *Ibid.*, 163.

labor actions staged by Japanese and Peruvian workers finally developed into cooperative action.<sup>204</sup>

On January 13, 1919, workers in Lima and Callao staged a general strike to obtain an eight-hour day, and two days later President José Pardo y Barreda granted, in large measure, their demands. Inspired by Lima-Callao workers' success and building upon their own pending claims, plantation workers up and down the coast launched their own strikes for higher wages based upon an 8-hour day and were largely successful.<sup>205</sup> The BSC estates were similarly convulsed by the protests, according to Gordon's February 13, 1919 letter which noted "Every section of the works in the field and factory have either been on strike or have made demands...Add to this (eleven) cane fires, grippe, change to eight hour days and you have the explanation of the rotten results recently."<sup>206</sup> On the BSC and the San Nicolás plantations, Japanese workers joined Peruvians to stake out higher wages and overtime based upon the implementation of the 8-hour day.<sup>207</sup> While the Peruvian and Japanese cutters presented their claims separately to the BSC, they launched a

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 105a. Alberts makes reference to Japanese-led strikes on the BSC plantations in 1903 and 1909, implying that there was Peruvian participation in those earlier strikes.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 197. Alberts specifically notes the Lambayeque and La Libertad Chicama Valley estates, in addition to Cañete Valley.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid., 220-21. While Afro-peruvians on the Cañete estates are not frequently mentioned, Gordon's February 13, 1919 letter to Houghton indicates that "a nigger" was seen setting fire to the cane, indicating involvement in the labor protests of the period.

<sup>207</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 80-81.

cooperative strike when their demands were not met.<sup>208</sup> Gordon broke the strike by offering the Japanese and Peruvian workers separate contracts written in a way that each group would believe it was receiving more pay than the other. In this way, Gordon hoped that “the Peruvian can draw no comparisons that are not favourable and the Japanese will have no incentive to again join the Peruvians in strikes.”<sup>209</sup>

While Gordon attempted to break Japanese-Peruvian alliances by treating the Japanese workers as a single group, the Japanese workers were also divided between free Japanese workers who were no longer under contract (*kyu-min*) and the new contracted workers (*imin*).<sup>210</sup> Gordon had complained of this problem earlier in the year, writing to Houghton about Casa Blanca on February 26, 1919:

I hope when the new Japs arrive there will be less chance of strikes. What has happened is that there have been no arrivals of new blood for some time and the old lot have been winnowed and sifted down, till we have the Peruvianised Japs left and owners of tambos [basic good stores], peluqueros [barbers], etc. who appear to me to be the ones who make the most noise.<sup>211</sup>

Most striking in Gordon’s letter is the characterization of the Japanese as “Peruvianised.” Gordon characterized the Japanese workers who had settled on the plantations as similar to Peruvians, meaning that they had acclimated to their Peruvian

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<sup>208</sup> Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919", 220-21. Letter from Gordon to Houghton, February 13, 1919.

<sup>209</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 18 July 1919, as reproduced in *Ibid.*, 255-56.

<sup>210</sup> By the end of the contract period in 1923, all of the Japanese workers were free laborers. Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 81, 83.

<sup>211</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton, 26 February 1919, as reproduced in Albert, "An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919", 222.

reality and on this basis had become skilled opponents of the plantation owners. This process began within years of the Japanese plantation workers arriving in Peru, as Japanese consular representative Imamura complained in his 1904 report. Gordon, however, was also alluding to the increasingly organized rural workers' movement in Peru and the Japanese free workers' integration into that movement. The kyu-min's ability to culturally cross between the Peruvian workers and the imin, however, represented their greatest threat to the plantation system.

Five months later, Gordon wrote that on Casa Blanca the "old" Japanese (free workers) no longer under a Morioka-negotiated contract were demanding the same wage as the newly arriving Japanese, as well as a 20-cent reserve on top of their daily wage. While not yet on strike, Gordon wrote that they were engaging in "passive resistance and stopping away from work – with many meetings." He added, "They are a hopeless crowd to deal with." Although the Morioka company representative called the free Japanese workers' claim "preposterous," the workers pushed forward, indicating greater self-confidence. Gordon's February 26 letter also indicated that the workers' independence now established alternative sources of income, specifically as owners of small businesses such as "tambos" (small stores) and barbershops. Gordon wrote that he feared the newly contracted Japanese workers would use any increase to the older workers as a precedent on which basis they could argue for a higher wage.

Gordon added:

Logically, there is no reason why the older Japs should be paid more than the new ones – on the contrary they are more expert at every kind

of work and are accustomed to local conditions and therefore can earn more money. They, however, do not see things in the same light.<sup>212</sup>

Whereas in 1899 the Japanese plantation workers were firmly divided into “Japanese” and “Peruvians” broken down into serranos, cholos, and negros, the reality in 1919 was quite different. Coastal plantation workers, Japanese and Peruvians alike, were organizing and demanding their rights, and the Japanese plantation workers were counted among the emerging rural proletariat. If a “cholo” could be described as an indigenous migrant who had acculturated,” the “old” Japanese workers on the plantation fit a similar pattern. While they certainly maintained many of their customs and their language, they had become accustomed to their new lives on the Peruvian plantations, responding to local and national realities.

## 2.5 Conclusion

In 1923, the Japanese emigration companies and Japanese government came to a mutual agreement with the plantations to cease contract migration. The coastal plantations had become more successful in securing a native labor force, either through *enganche* or the increasing settlement of highland Quechuas on the plantations, and the wages were insufficient to encourage enough Japanese to travel

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<sup>212</sup> “Letter from Gordon to Houghton,” 23 July 1919, as reproduced in *Ibid.*, 256-57. A September 25, 1918 letter from Gordon to Houghton also indicated that the Japanese sometimes split upon lines of age. Gordon wrote that several “younger Japanese voted for going on strike for higher wages,” but that the older Japanese convinced them that the timing was not right. Koidzumi, the emigration company supervisor employed on the plantation, arranged to get rid of some of the workers advocating a strike. Gordon added, “I did not wish to appear to take too much interest in the matter and Koidzumi was the one who arranged everything alright.” See Albert, “An Essay on the Peruvian Sugar Industry, 1880-1922 and the Letters of Ronald Gordon, Administrator of the British Sugar Company in the Cañete Valley, 1914-1919”, 188-89. “Older” in this letter refers to age.



across the ocean.<sup>213</sup> The number of Japanese men and women on the plantations decreased, however, while the number of Japanese opening small shops in towns and share-cropping (yanaconas) on cotton plantations increased.<sup>214</sup>

As the Japanese dispersed throughout Peru during the ensuing decades, many of the growers' views of the Japanese wound their way through public discussion. Japanese immigrants' challenges, even inadvertent, to the established racial and social order provoked claims of Japanese immorality, insolence, and, in the final instance, danger just as they had on the plantations. In the 1930s, the Peruvian press and politicians repeatedly accused the Japanese Peruvian community of "separatism," yet ignored the Peruvian and Japanese plantation workers' collectivism that the growers had attempted to suppress in previous decades. Peru's ruling elite, however, had no intention of creating a nation of equals. Instead, they were well served by the discourses that divided and the histories that erased alternative Peruvian realities. While the vast majority of the Japanese left the plantations before rural unions developed, those that became yanaconas found themselves in the midst of new labor struggles on the cotton plantations.

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<sup>213</sup> Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932*, 87.

<sup>214</sup> Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 83.

### Chapter Three

#### Conflict and Collaboration: Yanaconas in the Chancay Valley

By 1924, cotton had definitively replaced sugar as Peru's most important agricultural export and no region was more synonymous with cotton than the Chancay Valley, located approximately 60 miles north of the capital city of Lima.<sup>215</sup> The region was, in many ways, representative of the Peruvian coastal agricultural communities. The white *hacendados* (hacienda owners), many hailing from colonial Spanish families, were largely absentee owners who lived in Lima where they moved among Peru's elite political and social circles.<sup>216</sup> To manage their estates and provide them with an income, the hacendados almost exclusively relied upon Japanese and Chinese Peruvian renters by the 1920s. Their haciendas were worked by *yanaconas*, a labor classification most akin to sharecroppers, supplemented by *braceros* (wage laborers). Prior to mechanization in the 1940s, the *yanaconas* were nothing less than the backbone of Peruvian cotton production. While many *yanaconas*, typically cholos,

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<sup>215</sup> *Extracto Estadístico del Perú, 1936-1937*, as cited in Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 212; José Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 1. ed. (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1976), 82-83; Sociedad Nacional Agraria, *Cómo Se Produce El Algodón En El Perú. La Pequeña Agricultura Y El Algodón* (Lima, Perú: Empresa Periodística s.a., 1935), 4-6. Cotton represented Peru's second most valuable export, surpassed only by petroleum and its derivative products in the late 1920s. By 1934, 39% of all cultivated coastal lands were producing cotton, representing 63.78% of Peru's fishing-agriculture exports and 26.82% of exports overall. By the beginning of the 1930s, the Chancay Valley was producing 414,626 quintales of cotton and had 11,600 hectares under cultivation.

<sup>216</sup> By 1930, only two families of the Valley's traditional elite remained in the Valley: the del Solar (Esquivel) and Graña (Huando) families. Faron, *From Conquest to Agrarian Reform : Ethnicity, Ecology, and Economy in the Chancay Valley, Peru: 1533 to 1964*, 46-51; José Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1967), 348-49.

claimed generational ties to the haciendas, the burgeoning cotton industry also attracted Japanese workers from the sugar plantations as well as new immigrants.<sup>217</sup> During the 1920s, the haciendas expanded and flourished based both upon the renters' improvements and the yanaconas' labor, providing hacendados with a healthy income which they reinvested in their diversified holdings.

While the Chancay Valley had experienced intermittent labor unrest in the 1920s, rural unionization lagged behind that in urban centers and agricultural workers remained largely unorganized. The 1930s economic depression, however, provided the impulse for Valley yanaconas to launch their first serious challenge to the exploitative labor system on the cotton haciendas. However, not only were the coastal hacendados forced to defend themselves against workers' claims, they were also under attack in the political arena following convulsions at the national level. In August 1930, President Augusto Leguía, dictator for eleven years and advocate for the agricultural export sector, was overthrown by General Luis Sánchez Cerro. While the populist Sánchez Cerro proved to be a protector of the hacendados and a fervent opponent of organized labor, the Constitutional Congress that was organized following his election in 1931 attempted to pass legislation to reform the yanacona system on the haciendas.

Rocked back on their heels, hacendados turned to their powerful organization, the National Agrarian Society (SNA, *Sociedad Nacional Agraria*), to defend their

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<sup>217</sup> Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay*, 349. Matos Mar describes the yanaconas of the era as "cholos costeños, chinos, japoneses or negros and to a lesser degree, migrant serranos." He notes that yanaconas "spoke Spanish, generally had attended elementary school and were in a certain way "integrated" into the urban culture." See Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 48.

interests and the exclusivist national political system that had been cracked open by the increasingly organized working class.<sup>218</sup> Sensitive to the changing times, the hacendados realized that they could no longer simply rely upon their influence over Peru's highest political officials, but instead they would have to wage their campaign in the public arena. The SNA strategy, straightforward in some respects, was to reinvent the image of the coastal hacienda system. Oppressive hacendados were recast as benevolent agricultural enterprises dedicated to assisting the newly christened "small-scale farmers" ("yanaconas") in their "independent" farming efforts. The SNA, in other words, stripped the haciendas of their boiling class conflict. In its place, the SNA proffered a new image of the cotton haciendas, one in which race reigned supreme, but not the reality of white hacendados profiting from the labor of cholos, Afro-Peruvians, Indians, Chinese Peruvians and Japanese immigrants. Instead, the white hacendados and the cholo "farmers" were mythically united as raceless and classless "Peruvians" in opposition to a race described as foreign, dangerous, and intent on colonizing Peru. Both capitalizing upon and legitimating the yellow peril doctrine imported from the West, the SNA launched its "Japanese Infiltration" campaign in agricultural exporter Pedro Beltrán's newspaper *La Prensa*.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> The Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA, Alliance for Popular Revolution in America) party's strong showing in the 1931 elections, in spite of the Peruvian oligarchy's support of Sánchez Cerro, was further evidence that the working class was gaining political strength.

<sup>219</sup> The *La Prensa* campaign was first initiated in 1934, but was expanded in 1937.

### 3.1 The Japanese in the Chancay Valley

During the last ten years, this valley and the Chancay Valley have been “japan-izing” so densely, that one could say without question that agriculture and commerce in these valleys are almost exclusively Japanese.

Pedro González M., *La Prensa*, September 2, 1937<sup>220</sup>

Following the post-WWI crash of the sugar market, Peru’s plantations suspended their contracting of Japanese laborers in 1923. While many Japanese plantation workers migrated to Peru’s coastal cities, others tried their hand as yanacónas on cotton haciendas. In spite of the cessation of contract immigration, Japanese immigrants sponsored by relatives or friends continued to flow into Peru until the mid-1930s, such that the Japanese population in Peru reached a peak of 21,127 in 1934 according to Japanese government reports. Nearly 27% of the Japanese immigrants worked in agriculture, primarily cotton, and relied heavily upon the labor of the entire family. The 1934 reports indicate, for instance, that 3771 family members labored alongside 1899 Japanese men.<sup>221</sup> The fertile Chancay Valley was the preferred destination of the Japanese farmers and by 1937 an estimated 4000

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<sup>220</sup> As cited in Víctor J. Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral* (Cuzco, Perú: Talleres tipográficos de H. G. Rozas sucesores, 1939), 146. Original Spanish: *En los últimos 10 años este valle i el de Chancay han ido “japonizándose” en forma tan densa, que, puede decirse sin hacer frases, que la agricultura i el comercio de estos valles son casi exclusivamente japoneses.*

<sup>221</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 3 (Conclusion)," 74-75. Irie cites from the Japanese government’s *Emigration Report*, Vol. III, No. 2, 1934. Cotton growers, according to that report, represented 1136 of the 1899 Japanese farmers in Peru. Irie’s data from the Overseas Ministry’s Report *Peruvian Agriculture and the Japanese* indicates that in 1929, 1,620 Japanese immigrants (heads of household) were independent farmers (of which the majority were yanacónas), hence representing the vast majority of agricultural workers reported in 1934.

Japanese, over two-thirds from the province of Okinawa, lived in the valley.<sup>222</sup> While the Japanese were overrepresented both in the yanacona workforce and commerce, numerically they represented less than 4% of the total population of the Chancay province.<sup>223</sup> Yet in yellow peril terms, even small numbers of Asians were likened to a military charge.<sup>224</sup> Pedro González, cited above, wrote that in the Chancay Valley's principal city, Huaral, "one cannot help but feel in a foreign country where a profusion of Japanese flags fly..."<sup>225</sup> Author Antonello Gerbi, however, offered a different view after he visited Huaral, "Not a Japanese flag was in sight; not even Japanese inscriptions were to be seen; and the people, though many of them were evidently of Japanese origin, were not to be distinguished, by their dress or occupation, from true Peruvians."<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940* (Lima: 1944). The 1940 census lists the "yellow" population at 2987 men and 1707 women for a total of 4964. While there is evidence that the Chinese had also settled in the Chancay Valley, few Chinese women immigrated so we can draw the conclusion that almost all of the 1707 women were Japanese. In the Department of Lima, Japanese men represented 58% of the Asian population compared to 42% Chinese. By applying this percentage, we can arrive at the estimate of 1732 Japanese men and 1650 Japanese women for a total of 3432. However, given that Peru lost more Japanese immigrants than it gained between 1934 and 1940, I arrive at the slightly higher number of 4000 Japanese. The data on Okinawans is from James L. Tigner, "The Ryukyuan in Peru, 1906-1952," *Americas* 35, no. 1 (1978): 30. The information on Japanese cotton farmers is found in Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 3 (Conclusion)," 74-75. Irie cites from the Japanese government *Emigration Report*, Vol. III, No. 2, 1934.

<sup>223</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*.

<sup>224</sup> For instance Guillermo Salinas Cossío refers to the "avance japonés," ("Japanese advance") terminology typical throughout the period. *La Prensa*, August, 21, 1937, as cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 140-41.

<sup>225</sup> *La Prensa*, 2 September 1937, as cited in *Ibid.*, 146-47.

<sup>226</sup> Normano and Gerbi, *The Japanese in South America; an Introductory Survey with Special Reference to Peru*, 88. The date of Gerbi's visit to Huaral is unclear, but it was after 1937 and before the cessation of relations between Peru and Japan in January 1942.

In the Chancay Valley haciendas, the Japanese lived on small chacras near Peruvian yanaconas, primarily cholos, many whose families had worked on their respective haciendas for multiple generations. By tradition, the right to yanaconaje was handed down from generation to generation, a “bien patrimonial.” Japanese immigrants, on the other hand, had no right to land and only their labor to offer. Like most immigrants, many Japanese in the Valley were willing to make great sacrifices in an effort to earn money to send to family members in Japan, to build a nest egg in the hopes of returning to Japan, or to achieve their dreams of success in Peru that prompted their original migration. As such, Japanese immigrants were prime candidates for yanaconaje, particularly the work of clearing land in exchange for the right to farm it and gained fame for transforming swamplands into fields of cotton.<sup>227</sup> By 1934, Japanese yanaconas were farming over 7000 hectares or close to half of the Chancay Valley’s arable lands.<sup>228</sup>

While the vast majority of Japanese in the Chancay Valley labored as *yanaconas* on the cotton haciendas, a prosperous minority leased haciendas from their Peruvian owners. The Japanese, in many cases, took over leases previously held by Chinese companies such as Pow Lung and Company, Wing On Chong, Tay

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<sup>227</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 43-44, 83, 86. Matos Mar writes that Asians “bettered the cultivation techniques,” and that they obtained impressive harvests due to their “careful attention and perseverance.” See José Matos Mar, *Dominación Y Cambios En El Perú Rural; La Micro-Región Del Valle De Chancay* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1969), 347. Faron writes that the “stereotyped idea that Japanese work harder than anyone else” continued in force into the 1950s and 1960s when he was conducting his field research on La Huaca. See Faron, *From Conquest to Agrarian Reform : Ethnicity, Ecology, and Economy in the Chancay Valley, Peru: 1533 to 1964*, 72.

<sup>228</sup> [Japanese Government] *Emigration Reports*, 1934, Vol. VIII, No. 2, as cited in Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 3 (Conclusion)," 75; Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 95-96.

Hermanos, and affluent merchant Santiago Escudero Whu.<sup>229</sup> By 1934, three Japanese companies were renting seven of the 21 Chancay Valley haciendas while Chinese commercial interests retained the rental contract for four haciendas. The Japanese company Perú Menka Kabushiki Kaisha (PMKK) rented Palpa, one of the largest Chancay Valley haciendas, from Benjamin Vizquerra from 1926 to 1942. PMKK had been formed with capital from investors in Japan. Sociedad Agrícola Retes Limitada leased the Retes and García-Alonso haciendas from the del Solar family and, like PMKK, drew its capital from Japan. Nikumatsu Okada, however, was the Japanese renter who became synonymous with Japanese power in the Chancay Valley prior to World War II.<sup>230</sup>

### 3.2 The Legend of Nikumatsu Okada

We trustingly brought the Japanese who, like telescopes, have small eyes but can see a great distance, and we began to feel surprise upon seeing them systematically abandon the haciendas that had contracted them as peons...At the next level, they establish...small stores...In the final stage they return to the haciendas but they are no longer there to obey as peons, but to command as yanaconas, as large-scale renters and even as owners. All of this evolutionary strategy implies a constant growth in a community admirably organized, mutually supportive, and hermetic...that has an evident dominating and all-absorbing spirit and

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<sup>229</sup> Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay*, 347. Humberto Rodríguez Pastor writes that by 1924 the Chinese immigrants in Peru had established themselves as an “agricultural bourgeoisie” and “controlled several thousands of fanegadas and workers.” See Rodríguez Pastor, *Herederos Del Dragón : Historia De La Comunidad China En El Perú*, 201.

<sup>230</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 3 (Conclusion)," 73; Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay*, 347-49, 86; Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 89; Humberto Rodríguez Pastor, *Caqui: Estudio De Una Hacienda Costeña, Estudio Del Valle De Chancay #9* (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1969), 99, 106. The number of haciendas in the Chancay Valley in the 1901-1942 period varied between 20 and 21 due to the mergers and divisions of the haciendas occurring during this period.



that is taking possession of the agricultural fields and even the ownership of the land so closely linked to sovereignty....

*La Prensa* editorial, September 2, 1937<sup>231</sup>

Whereas the González quote in the previous section drew upon yellow peril discourses that presented Asians as an overwhelming presence wherever they appeared, the editorial above draws more specifically upon the rhetoric of Japanese political conquest through subterfuge and deceit. The racist double entendre of the telescope is not only a military metaphor, but also presents the Japanese as wily and exploitative of Peruvian trust and innocence. While seemingly laced with praise – “a community admirably organized, mutually supportive, and hermetic” – it quickly becomes clear that the language indicates a community organized like the military operation, an outside force dangerous to the “sovereignty” of Peru. While the editorial makes no reference to race, per se, as do other articles in the series, the description of the Japanese as possessing a “domineering and all-absorbing spirit” is used instead. According to Marisol de la Cadena, Limeños during this period often used “spirit” in place of race in attention to what they judged to be the essential morality of a

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<sup>231</sup> As cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 145-46. Original Spanish: *Trajimos confiadamente a los japoneses, que, como los telescopios, tienen oculares pequeños pero de grande alcance, i comenzamos por experimentar la sorpresa de verlos abandonar sistemáticamente las haciendas que los contrataron como peones ...En un nuevo esfuerzo, establecen...pequeñas tiendas...Por ultimo vuelven a las haciendas pero ya no a obedecer en calidad de peones, sino a mandar en carácter de yanacones, de grandes arrendatarios y aun de propietarios. Toda esa estratégica evolución implica el constante incremento de una colonia admirablemente organizada, solidaria y hermética...que tiene evidente espíritu dominador i absorbente i que va posesionando del campo de la agricultura i hasta de la propiedad del suelo; estrechamente vinculado a la soberanía...*

people.<sup>232</sup> The essence of the Japanese, according to the editorial, would conquer and consume all in its path.

In the Chancay Valley, most of the Japanese were struggling *yanaconas* *unlike* the picture painted by the editorial. However, if the editor had anyone in mind, it was Nikumatsu Okada. Bustled off the Sakura Maru ship in 1899, Okada was initially just one of the hundreds of Japanese immigrants swinging machetes and sweating over *lampas*<sup>233</sup> on Peru's northern sugar plantations.<sup>234</sup> Within a decade, Okada, like many of his compatriots, had abandoned the exhausting labor on the plantations. Rather than return to Japan, or join the Japanese immigrants recruited to work on the Amazonian rubber plantations, Okada found his way in 1909 to the Chancay Valley where most Japanese workers of the region had concentrated on the sugar hacienda of Amador del Solar, former Peruvian ambassador to Japan. Okada, however, instead settled on the Palpa hacienda, property of the Sociedad Agrícola de Palpa y Ferrocarril Muelle de Chancay. Working as an irrigator (*regador*), however, Okada made little progress in improving his status and his financial situation at a daily wage of one sol. Yet through a partnership with Hatsusaburo Motonishi, who like Okada hailed from Japan's Hiroshima province, Okada broke into commerce, opening a butcher shop in Huaral in 1910. On the hacienda Palpa where he continued to work, Okada was soon granted the *tambo* (hacienda store) concession as well as lent plots for the cultivation

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<sup>232</sup> De la Cadena, *Indígenas Mestizos : Raza Y Cultura En El Cusco*, 19.

<sup>233</sup> Lampa is a Quechua word used for "hoe" used in Peru.

<sup>234</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 3 (Conclusion)," 75; Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay*, 348-49.

of cotton on Palpa, both potential sources for increasing income well above the daily wage of laborers.<sup>235</sup> In 1923, Okada signed his first contract with the las Casas family for the rental of La Huaca, becoming the first Japanese renter in the Valley.<sup>236</sup> Okada invested heavily in improvements on La Huaca, an overgrown property filled with swamps, in an effort to cultivate cotton on lands that heretofore had lain fallow.<sup>237</sup> La Huaca's state was characteristic of the condition of the haciendas in the Chancay Valley, given that less than twenty years earlier, over two-thirds of potentially cultivatable land in the Chancay Valley was not utilized.<sup>238</sup> The arrival of renters such as Okada was "almost providential" for absentee hacienda owners, in the words of Matos Mar, representing their best hope for bringing new lands under cultivation and thereby increasing their production and profit during the cotton era.<sup>239</sup> At the end of each rental period, the hacendados were returned an estate with significantly more lands under production, for which they had not paid a cent, and consequently allowed

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<sup>235</sup> Jesús Buitron Vda. de Kafiti, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú: Participación De Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En La Agricultura De Huaral*, 1899-1999 (Peru: 1999), 7; Julio Cotler, "Pautas De Cambio En La Sociedad Rural," in *Dominación Y Cambios En El Perú Rural; La Micro-Región Del Valle De Chancay*, ed. José Matos Mar (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1969), 228; Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 87-89.

<sup>236</sup> Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay*, 348-49. The las Casas family had owned and managed the hacienda La Huaca since 1836. See Faron, *From Conquest to Agrarian Reform : Ethnicity, Ecology, and Economy in the Chancay Valley, Peru: 1533 to 1964*, 46.

<sup>237</sup> Although Okada had increased his wealth by acquiring several businesses in Huaral, Matos Mar believes that Okada would not have been able to make the "great leap" to leasing haciendas without outside capital either from Japanese investors based in Japan or Lima. Matos Mar also mentions the possibility that Okada was assisted by the Japanese immigrant community's *tanamoshi*, a revolving credit organization. The source of Okada's capital, however, remains unknown. Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 84-86.

<sup>238</sup> Faron, *From Conquest to Agrarian Reform : Ethnicity, Ecology, and Economy in the Chancay Valley, Peru: 1533 to 1964*, 39.

<sup>239</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 82.

them to charge a higher rent in the next period.<sup>240</sup> Okada was also able to break into the rental of haciendas by acquiring contracts from anxious owners during the Valley's economy's darkest moments, and subsequently profiting from those contracts as international cotton prices recovered and rose during the typical five- to ten-year rental period. In 1925, floods devastated Valley agriculture, paving the way for Okada to add the Mujica-Gallo family's hacienda Caqui to his leased holdings the following year.<sup>241</sup> In 1931 and 1932 – Peru's worst years of economic depression – Okada again moved to expand his holdings, taking on rental contracts at Miraflores in 1931 and in Jesús del Valle and Jecuán the following year.<sup>242</sup> By 1942, Okada's company Negociación Agrícola N. Okada was renting 3,787 hectares (9358 acres), which represented 25% of all land cultivated by the haciendas in the Chancay Valley.<sup>243</sup> Okada also extended his economic dominion into industrial activities related to cotton, opening gins on Jesús del Valle and La Huaca, and consequently consolidating his industrial operations (including a company which manufactured cotton oil) under the Sociedad Industrial Japonesa during the 1930s.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanacunas del fundo "Jecuan" del Valle Huaral contra Jose Mehasima y Nikumatsu Okada, conductores de dicho fondo sobre abuso," 18 November 1932, Legajo 6, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #118, AGN; Rodríguez Pastor, *Caqui: Estudio De Una Hacienda Costeña*, 105.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-05. Humberto Rodríguez notes that Okada had been renting a portion of La Huaca since 1923, but began renting the entire hacienda in 1926.

<sup>242</sup> Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay*, 348-49.

<sup>243</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 3 (Conclusion)," 75; Matos Mar, *Yanacunaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 82, 87.

<sup>244</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanacunaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 94-96. Matos Mar also notes that Okada controlled a large portion of the wholesale grocery business in Huaral.

### 3.3 Chancay Valley Hacienda Owners

The Japanese colony's monopolization of our means of production, primarily agricultural, that is under way represents a grave danger and involves the future of our nationality.

Contralmirante J.E. de Mora, President of the *Asociación Nacional Pro-Marina*, *La Prensa*, August 29, 1937<sup>245</sup>

The vast majority of the contributors to the 1937 “Japanese Infiltration” campaign lamented the Japanese “monopoly” over Peruvian agriculture, an essential sector of the Peruvian economy. Not only was this point emphasized by popular commentators, but also in articles by elite leaders of the SNA like Carlos Moreyra y Paz Soldán and the campaign's patron, Guillermo Salinas Cossío.<sup>246</sup> The Japanese companies, however, were all renters, owning no land in the Chancay Valley. The 21 Chancay Valley haciendas were owned by Peruvians, with the exception of the Italian owners Piaggio and Boggio, and all but three owners were leasing their haciendas to Japanese or Chinese enterprises by the 1930s. In fact, some of the Valley's most important hacendados – Salvador del Solar, Benjamín Vizquerra, Manuel Mujica, and the las Casas family – leased their estates to the Japanese in the 1930s.<sup>247</sup> The “Japanese Infiltration” articles, however, never criticized the Valley's hacienda owners for turning entire haciendas over to the Japanese who they accused of holding

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<sup>245</sup> As cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 144. Original Spanish: *Son muy graves los peligros que envuelve para el futuro de la nacionalidad el acaparamiento que la colonia japonesa lleva a cabo, de nuestros medios de producción, principalmente los agrícolas.*

<sup>246</sup> *La Prensa*, August 21 and 29, 1937, as cited in *Ibid.*, 140-45.

<sup>247</sup> Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay*, 347-9, 75-82; Rodríguez Pastor, *Caqui: Estudio De Una Hacienda Costeña*, 106. The del Solar family continued to directly manage their hacienda Esquivel while renting García-Alonso and Retes.

Peru's sovereignty in their hands. Critics of Japanese immigration at the turn-of-the-century had excoriated the sugar hacendados for, in their words, compromising Peru's social and racial development in pursuit of profit. The authors of the 1937 articles warned of a much more dangerous threat to the Peruvian nation, yet no one asked the question of why the Peruvian hacendados were renting to the Japanese.

The Valley hacendados were renting their haciendas for the simple reason that leasing provided them the greatest profit at the least risk. Most of the hacienda owners hailed from the Lima-based Peruvian oligarchy and had purchased the haciendas in the early twentieth century to use them as collateral to secure foreign credit for more profitable ventures such as mining, banks, and industry.<sup>248</sup> The vagaries of agriculture also made a dependable rent, sufficient to cover their debt service, more attractive to the absentee landlords than investing in their haciendas. In spite of the cotton boom, the value of Chancay Valley cotton experienced significant fluctuations throughout the 1920s, falling precipitously between 1927 and 1931.<sup>249</sup> In 1925, floods in the Chancay Valley wreaked havoc on cotton production.<sup>250</sup>

The *La Prensa* campaign, however, cast no aspersions on the Valley hacendados – several of whom held offices in the SNA such as Mujica and del Solar – precisely because the SNA controlled the campaign. Not only did former SNA president Guillermo Salinas Cossío manage the campaign, but *La Prensa* was

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<sup>248</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 71.

<sup>249</sup> Sociedad Nacional Agraria, *Cómo Se Produce El Algodón En El Perú. La Pequeña Agricultura Y El Algodón*, 9-10.

<sup>250</sup> Rodríguez Pastor, *Caqui: Estudio De Una Hacienda Costeña*, 104.

published by Pedro Beltrán, president of the SNA during the early 1930s. While the newspaper campaign furiously attacked the Japanese, the SNA had not demonstrated any particular animosity to the Japanese prior to an earlier series of articles in 1934 articles. In fact, Okada was an at-large member, as were other Japanese renters in the Valley such as José Miashima, the PMKK, and Sociedad Agrícola Retes. Ichitaro Morimoto, an important Japanese Peruvian businessman and recognized leader in the Japanese community, served on the SNA's Governing Board during the early 1930s.<sup>251</sup> From where did the SNA's impetus to attack the Japanese arise? Orazio Ciccarelli argues that *La Prensa* campaigns were waged by the SNA to pressure the Oscar Benavides government (1933-1939) to enact quotas on Japanese textiles. While textiles were of little importance to the SNA, Peru's sugar markets were and the British government – Peru's largest importer of textiles – had threatened to reduce its purchases of Peruvian sugar unless textile trade with the Japanese was restricted.<sup>252</sup> While Ciccarelli's argument is perhaps plausible in regard to the 1934 campaign, *La Prensa*'s anti-Japanese campaign continued even after trade restrictions were implemented in 1934. Additionally, if the SNA wanted to argue in favor of trade restrictions against Japan, the yellow peril scare could just as easily be conjured up

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<sup>251</sup> Sociedad Nacional Agraria, "Memoria Que La Junta Directiva De La Sociedad Nacional Agraria Presenta a La Asamblea General Ordinaria," (Lima, Perú: Librería e Imprenta Gil, 1929-1931). Also see issues from 1932-1945 of the series. Morimoto is listed in the *Memorias* as a boardmember from 1930-1933, but his tenure may have begun in the 1920s. The *Memorias* for years prior to 1930 were unavailable so I was unable to confirm prior years of service on the Board. For more information on Morimoto, see Comisión Conmemorativo, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú, 1899-1999* (Lima, Perú: Asociación Peruana Japonesa, Agencia de Cooperación Internacional del Japón, 1999).

<sup>252</sup> Orazio Ciccarelli, "Peru's Anti-Japanese Campaign in the 1930s: Economic Dependency and Abortive Nationalism," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 9, no. 1 (1982).

against Japanese imports.<sup>253</sup> Why focus so intensely on the alleged Japanese control of agricultural lands and the displacement of Peruvian workers by the Japanese? I would argue, instead, that the SNA's overriding objective was both to stave off any political attacks on its profitable labor system and to undermine the class-based yanacona movements that were already threatening the hacendados' dominion.

### 3.4 Yanacona Protests in the Chancay Valley

Although the term "yanacona" harkens back to Inca Empire, its post-colonial version is most similar to tenant farming. Yanaconas worked small plots of land owned by the hacendados and paid their rent with a portion of the harvest. While yanaconaje was preferable to miserably remunerated work as a *bracero* (wage workers), the hacendados' control over pricing, weighing, and provision of all inputs gave the hacendado an inordinate amount of power over the yanaconas. Yanaconas repeatedly accused the hacendados of extracting additional profit by overcharging them for inputs and forbidding their purchasing guano, seeds, etc. from a third party. Contracts required that yanaconas sell to the hacienda the cotton harvested above and beyond their rent, allowing the hacendado to profit on the yanaconas' cotton by paying lower than market price. The hacendado could quickly resolve labor complaints by withholding water, guano, or other inputs that the yanaconas needed.<sup>254</sup> Perhaps most

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<sup>253</sup> The Lima Chamber of Commerce occasionally reprinted articles on commercial "yellow peril" written by United States writers such as Wallace B. Donham, Dean of the Harvard Business School. See Cámara de Comercio de Lima, "El Japón Avanza," *Boletín* 6, no. 75 (1935): 443-47.

<sup>254</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 41, 97-98.



importantly, the system also carried an incentive for the yanacóna family to invest the maximum amount of time and energy to produce the best harvest, as this was the only way to earn an income after rent and other charges were deducted. In the 1930s, the hacendados firmly believed that their estates' economic viability was intimately tied to their control of the labor of yanacónas. In support of this notion, Rodríguez Pastor notes in his study of the hacienda Caqui that it was most productive during the years 1930-35 when 94% of the land under production was farmed by yanacónas, the most intensive use of yanacónas over the history of Caqui.<sup>255</sup>

The yanacónas, however, were not ignorant of the exploitative mechanisms inherent in the labor system. To combat the abuses, at the close of the 1920s yanacónas formed the *Federación General de Yanacónas del Perú* which counted 20,000 members nationwide.<sup>256</sup> In the Chancay Valley, the yanacónas' first strike was organized in 1920 on the Esquivel and Retes haciendas in protest of del Solar paying yanacónas one-fifth of the market price for their cotton. The hacienda administration evicted the striking yanacónas who refused to accept their unilateral conditions. While the displaced yanacónas were never re-instated, the strike prompted the Leguía government to sign legislation providing yanacónas the right to arbitration, the appointment of a third party to review the haciendas' records pertaining to payment of

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<sup>255</sup> Rodríguez Pastor, *Caqui: Estudio De Una Hacienda Costeña*, 257-58. Rodríguez Pastor hypothesizes that this increased production was at least partially a function of the "individual interest" that the yanacónas had in production.

<sup>256</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanacónaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 46.

yanaconas, and compensation to yanaconas in case of eviction.<sup>257</sup> While this legislation was only marginally utilized by yanaconas in the 1920s, it formed the basis of the claims filed by yanaconas in the 1930s.

When cotton prices crashed on the world market in 1930, hacendados in the Chancay Valley increased the charges they passed on to the yanaconas sending them deep into debt. In October 1930, the *Federación de Yanaconas y Trabajadores del Valle de Chancay* was founded with affiliate unions on the 18 haciendas and 3 most important fundos in the Valley.<sup>258</sup> On October 14, 1930, the Sindicato de Hacienda Retes, an affiliate of the Sindicato de Yanaconas and Braceros del Valle de Chancay, led the charge by presenting the Japanese-owned Sociedad Agrícola “Retes” Ltda. with a series of demands including a just price for excess cotton, a reduction in the elevated price the hacienda charged the yanaconas for guano, a reduction in rent (noting that they were only earning 1.5 soles per day after 12 to 14 hours of work), a review of the company’s records and union-monitoring of the cotton weighing, and the establishment of a school. The yanaconas and braceros at the hacienda García-Alonso, which like Retes was owned by the del Solar family and rented to the

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 75-76. Prices had skyrocketed during World War I, meaning the price for the yanaconas’ excess cotton established years earlier by the hacendado was by 1920 far below market value.

<sup>258</sup> José Manuel Mejía, Rosa Díaz Suárez, and José Matos Mar, *Sindicalismo Y Reforma Agraria En El Valle De Chancay*, 1. ed. (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1975), 42-46. Although anarchists from Lima had assisted in organizing the labor federation, communists associated with Confederación General de Trabajadores del Perú (CGTP) were also organizing yanaconas and braceros in the Valley. The yanaconas and workers, for their part, were largely unaffiliated politically and their mass participation was motivated by their desire to better their immediate working conditions. While APRA, for its part, was an important force nationally by 1930, it would not become directly involved in organizing rural workers in the Chancay Valley until 1945. Also see Fonseca Martel, *Sindicatos Agrarios Del Valle De Chancay*, 74.

Sociedad Agrícola Retes, followed suit.<sup>259</sup> Within weeks, the Chancay Valley union federation had delivered similar demand letters to virtually every hacienda in the Chancay Valley, prompting several hacendados – Peruvian and Japanese – to jointly solicit the intervention of the Director of the Agriculture to resolve the conflicts that they sensed would soon explode. In their October 27 letter, owners Salvador del Solar (Esquivel), Antonio Graña (Huando), and Miguel Echenique (Jesús del Valle) joined Japanese rental companies Perú Menka Kaisha (PMKK)<sup>260</sup> and Sociedad Agrícola “Retes” Ltda. in informing the Director of Agriculture that they, like the workers, had “*solidarizado* (joined together) with the objective of achieving the best resolution of the present conflict” and requested that a commission be appointed to that end.<sup>261</sup>

Three days later, Nikumatsu Okada’s representative Santiago Allemant together with the PMKK’s Genkichi Fujisawa informed the Department of Labor that the yanaconas and braceros on Caqui and Palpa, in conjunction with the Chancay Valley union federation, had days earlier presented their demands. The *Sindicato Cultural de Yanacones y Braceros de Caqui* informed the hacienda that if their demands were not satisfactorily resolved within 24 hours, “the conflict would be become more

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<sup>259</sup> “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por el Sindicato de Yanaconas y Braceros del Valle de Chancay contra los propietarios de las haciendas “Retes” y “García Alonso” sobre pliego de reclamos,” 14 October 1930, Legajo 4, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #83, AGN.

<sup>260</sup> Perú Menka Kabushiki Kaisha is also known as the Compañía Algodonera del Peru Limitada.

<sup>261</sup> “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los Yanaconas y Braceros de las haciendas Huando Retes (Chancay) contra los propietarios de las mismas sobre pliego de reclamos,” 27 October 1930, Legajo 4, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #84, AGN.

serious.”<sup>262</sup> On October 31, a general strike spread throughout the Chancay Valley, bringing the haciendas to a standstill. By November 2, the strike on most haciendas was ended only when the government appointed an arbitrator to negotiate agreements between the union federation and the hacienda administrators.<sup>263</sup> While braceros did achieve a small raise and yanaconas secured a moderately improved price for their excess cotton through the government-sponsored negotiations, the workers active in the labor actions paid the price as hacendados persecuted and evicted numerous yanacona and bracero families involved in the claims.<sup>264</sup>

Just months after the 1930 strike, the government declared a state of emergency in the departments of Lima and Junín in response to the violent labor protests in at the Cerro de Pasco Copper Corporation, an action which spelled the demise of the Chancay Valley labor federation. In September 1931, braceros and yanaconas made another attempt to unionize, this time working with the communists

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<sup>262</sup> “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los Yanaconos y Braceros del fundo “Caqui” cuando el Sindicato Cultural de Yanaconos de dicho hacienda y presentando pliego de reclamos,” 27 October 1930, Legajo 4, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #85, AGN.

<sup>263</sup> Mejía, Díaz Suárez, and Matos Mar, *Sindicalismo Y Reforma Agraria En El Valle De Chancay*, 46. Five hacendados, including Antonio Graña (Huando) and Humberto Piaggio (Cuyo and Hornillos), refused to participate in the negotiations and the strikes continued on their plantations. Graña, in spite of previously requesting government intervention, boycotted the negotiations and instead attempted to break the strike on Huando by calling in law enforcement to guarantee that his strikebreakers could work unimpeded. The less prominent haciendas Huayán, Las Salinas, and Galeano also declined to participate in the negotiated agreements. In the end, Graña and the representatives of the Sindicato de Yanaconos y Braceros signed the agreement in the Sección de Trabajo del Ministerio de Fomento on November 20, 1930. See “Expediente...Huando Retes (Chancay),” 27 October 1930, Legajo 4, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #84, AGN. Humberto Piaggio also signed a separate agreement with representatives of the Sindicato de Yanaconas y Braceros de Cuyo on November 13, 1930. See “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanaconos de hacienda “Cuyo,” Chancay, contra Humberto Piaggio, propietario de la hacienda sobre cumplimiento de pliego de reclamos,” 13 October 1930, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #92, AGN.

<sup>264</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 76.

to form the *Federación Sindical de Obreros y Yanaconas del Valle de Chancay*. When the federation's affiliates struck, the hacendados, acting in conjunction with public authorities, violently suppressed the strike and expelled the yanaconas and workers.<sup>265</sup> The hacendados' problems, however, were far from over. In 1931, Congressman Hildebrando Castro Pozo, a socialist, took up yanaconaje's cause, securing the passage of a bill establishing protections for yanaconaje. The bill was passed by the Constitutional Congress in 1932 over the SNA's vehement opposition. The hacendados, however, were able to use their influence with President Oscar Benavides, appointed following the assassination of Sánchez Cerro in 1933, to secure a veto of the bill.<sup>266</sup>

The hacendados, however, had seen the writing on the wall. In fact, when SNA President Pedro Beltrán argued against the legislation in 1933, he emphasized that something needed to be done to avoid the "dangerous" laws in the future.<sup>267</sup> While the strikes had been repressed with violence and the collaboration of local authorities, the traditional hierarchies could no longer be counted upon to maintain order on the haciendas. César Fonseca Martel credits the Japanese yanaconas with dismantling paternalistic relationships that undermined labor organizing on the

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<sup>265</sup> Mejía, Díaz Suárez, and Matos Mar, *Sindicalismo Y Reforma Agraria En El Valle De Chancay*, 47-48. Mejía specifically mentions that Wing On Chow expelled workers and Caquí (managed by Okada) evicted seven yanaconas.

<sup>266</sup> "Letter from Pedro Beltrán to President Oscar Benavides," 7 October 1933, reproduced in Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 77-81; Sociedad Nacional Agraria, "Memoria Que La Junta Directiva De La Sociedad Nacional Agraria Presenta a La Asamblea General Ordinaria," (Lima, Perú: Librería e Imprenta Gil, 1932-1933, 1933-1934), 305-10.

<sup>267</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 78.

Chancay Valley haciendas. He argues that the Japanese yanacónas saw their work in “rational” terms as opposed to their Peruvian counterparts who had been inculcated in “traditional norms of personal relationships.” An elderly Japanese man told Fonseca Martel that the Peruvians considered Okada a generous man for giving them a good meal now and then, while the Japanese were not satisfied with anything less than their own piece of the pie.<sup>268</sup> While I would contest Fonseca Martel’s sweeping characterization of the Peruvian yanacónas given their participation and leadership in the 1930-31 strikes, the Japanese yanacónas, much like the Japanese sugar laborers of the previous decades, repeatedly demonstrated their propensity to protest during the 1930s. Given that the Japanese yanacónas on some haciendas represented as much as 65% of the labor force, the hacendados were faced with a doubly difficult problem.<sup>269</sup> Not only were cholo yanacónas attacking the hacienda system, they were joined by their Japanese counterparts.

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<sup>268</sup> Fonseca Martel, *Sindicatos Agrarios Del Valle De Chancay*, 24-28. Fonseca Martel’s informant told him, “Okada buena gente pa’ peruano. ¿Pero pa’ paisano?”

<sup>269</sup> Based upon assessment of data contained in Expedientes Laborales and Tribunal Arbitral, 1920-1937 (the file includes no cases after 1937), Ministerio de Fomento, AGN. However, this cannot be assumed to be a Valley average because some haciendas such as that of Antonio Graña did not employ any Japanese yanacónas.

### 3.5 “*Tanto Peruanos como Japoneses*”<sup>270</sup>

Following the repression of the 1930-31 strikes, Chancay Valley yanaconas redirected their efforts and challenged the hacendados in the legal arena by filing complaints with the Labor Department. Between 1931 and 1933, nine labor grievances were filed against Chancay Valley haciendas. In case after case, the Japanese and Peruvian yanaconas organized cooperatively against the hacendados, accusing both the Peruvian hacendados and Japanese renters of violating their rights under Peruvian law.<sup>271</sup> Among the Japanese, the Okinawans who represented the majority of Japanese yanaconas in the Valley were frequently on the front lines of the protest. In April 1931, for instance, the *Sindicato de Yanaconas y Braceros de la hacienda Palpa* protested PMKK’s efforts to change the contracts secured in the aftermath of the 1930 strikes. Signing alongside union representative José Grau F. were two Okinawan Japanese yanaconas, Yoqui Kameyo and Kamegoro Ishiki, with Kameyo signing the letter in Japanese kanji.<sup>272</sup> Ishiki and Kameyo joined four

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<sup>270</sup> On March 26, 1933, the Jecuan yanaconas gave power-of-attorney to attorney Isabel Carrera viuda de Mejía to represent them in their labor claim against Nikumatsu Okada and José Miashima, noting that it was on behalf of the Japanese as much as Peruvians (“tanto peruanos como japoneses). See “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanaconas del fundo “Jecuan” del Valle Huaral contra Jose Mehasima y Nikumatsu Okada, conductores de dicho fondo sobre abuso,” 18 November 1932, Legajo 6, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #118, AGN.

<sup>271</sup> The cases were brought against the managers of the haciendas who were not necessarily the owners. Palpa (managed by PMKK), Esquivel (del Solar), Chancayllo (Santiago Escudero Whu and José Kenchan), Pasamayo (José Miashima, Tay Hermanos), Jecuan (Okada), La Huaca (Okada), and Jesús del Valle (Okada). Expedientes Laborales and Tribunal Arbitral, 1920-1937 (the file includes no cases after 1937), Ministerio de Fomento, AGN. While there was a proliferation of complaints against Chancay Valley haciendas beginning in late 1930 in conjunction with the strikes, the yanaconas and braceros filed no further cases after the installation of Oscar R. Benavides in 1933.

<sup>272</sup> To determine which yanaconas were “Japanese,” “Okinawan,” or “Peruvian,” I have relied upon an assessment of their surnames if there is no information identifying nationality in the documentation. Some of the Japanese/Okinawans may have been Peruvian citizens by birth or nationality, but immigration and naturalization statistics suggest that would be a minority in the 1930s. Because Okinawans’ first language was Okinawan rather than Japanese, their surnames are generally

Peruvian yanacunas and braceros in carrying forward the case against the PMKK.<sup>273</sup>

In spirited language, the Palpa representatives protested both the expulsion of 59 braceros and their families and the PMKK's attempt to violate the collectively negotiated contracts which they described as evidence of the PMKK's "desire to reduce us to the condition of slaves from which we have partially liberated ourselves."<sup>274</sup>

In November of the following year, Japanese yanacuna leaders Ushiyo Moria and Tayosaburo Yaguinuma joined with Peruvian representatives Aurelio Kong Requena, Pedro Canales, and Enrique de Osambela to file a complaint with the Department of Labor demanding that Okada pay the yanacunas 14,000 soles de oro owed to them by the Jecuan hacienda's previous Japanese renter, José Miashima. The Zavala de González family had awarded the lease to Okada after Miashima fell behind

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recognizable as such in spite of many Okinawans converting their names to a version more easily pronounced in Japanese. Another complication is added when we take into account that the Okinawans and Japanese were not working with standardized roman-ji when writing their names in the Roman alphabet, so the Japanese or Okinawans may write their own names several different ways. Finally, oftentimes the claimant was orally declaring his (or her) name for the Peruvian notary or official who transposed what was heard into sounds recognizable to a Spanish speaker. I use the name that appears most consistently in the documentation, but those accustomed to reading roman-ji in English-language works may find the names quite irregular. I have consulted extensively with Wesley Ueuenten, scholar of Okinawa and Japan and speaker of both Okinawan and Japanese, to distinguish between the Okinawan and Japanese names.

<sup>273</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por el Sindicato de Yanacunas y Braceros de la hacienda Palpa a la Sociedad Agrícola "Perú Menka Kabushiki Kaisha" contra los propietarios por disconformidad en punto acordado en pliego de reclamos sobre uso de utilidades," 21 March 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #98, AGN.

<sup>274</sup> Letter from yanacunas and braceros of Palpa to the Labor Department," 10 July 1931, in "Expediente ...de la hacienda Palpa," Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #98, AGN. In this document, Yoqui Kameyo is typewritten as Yeji Kamesu.



on his rental payments.<sup>275</sup> However, rather than paying the yanaconas, Okada prioritized monies owed to hacendado Salvador del Solar (Esquivel) who had provided loans to the Jecuan yanaconas during the previous year's agricultural campaign.<sup>276</sup> Six months later, the Jecuan yanaconas were back before the Department of Labor accusing Okada of withholding the inputs needing for planting, such as guano and seeds, in order to force them to sign new contracts to override the contracts they had signed with Miashima.<sup>277</sup>

Just before a decision was issued in the Jecuan case in May 1933, Okada was on the defensive once again, this time responding to labor claims brought by yanaconas on La Huaca and Jesús del Valle. Although the yanaconas no longer had a union, they protested Okada's failure to comply with collective agreements signed in

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<sup>275</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanaconas del fundo "Jecuan" del Valle Huaral contra Jose Mehasima y Nikumatsu Okada, conductores de dicho fondo sobre abuso," 18 November 1932, Legajo 6, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #118, AGN.

<sup>276</sup> "Expediente...del fundo Jecuan," 18 November 1932, Legajo 6, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #118, AGN. While the owners and financial institutions were best protected and the yanaconas were most vulnerable, the renters also took on significant risk as evidenced by Miashima's precarious financial state while attempting to rent both Jecuan and Pasamayo. In the November 29, 1932 hearing, Okada claimed that he had not received any capital from Miashima because the Banco Italiano's lien on Miashima's assets on the hacienda exceeded their value. For this reason, among others including his lack of legal obligation, Okada refused to pay the yanaconas anything for their capital investment.

<sup>277</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por Isabel Carrera vda de Mejia por yanacones de la hacienda Jecuan contra Nikomatsu Okada por varios conceptos," 20 November 1933, Legajo 8, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #147, AGN. Carrera also argued on behalf of the yanaconas in a December 20, 1933 letter to the Labor Department that Okada had ordered hacienda administrators to destroy bridges leading to the yanaconas' plots on the hacienda in an effort to obstruct the Cia. Administradora del Guano from delivering to the yanaconas who had contracted directly with the company rather than through Okada. The Ministry of Development found the complaint to be without foundation on December 23, 1933.

the aftermath of the 1930-1931 strikes.<sup>278</sup> In August 1932, Okada took advantage of the dissolution of the Chancay Valley's yanacona unions to sign individual contracts with the yanacunas on his haciendas. While the process was presided over by Huaral's Gobernador Teodoro Sánchez, the yanacunas alleged that Sánchez pressured yanacunas on Okada's behalf to sign the proffered contracts.<sup>279</sup> Demonstrating their particular vulnerability, the Japanese yanacunas participating in the May 1933 complaint requested that their individual contracts with Okada be declared null and void because, in the words of their attorney Isabel Carrera de Mejía, "not knowing how to read or write or understand the Spanish language, they have been rendered absolutely incapable of freely exercising their will."<sup>280</sup> The issues in the La Huaca and Jesús del Valle's May 1933 labor grievances were many of the same unresolved issues that had plagued yanacuna prior to the economic depression: overcharging rent for inferior lands, basing rent upon inflated plot sizes, charging an over-market price for guano, firing any worker who complained, overcharging interest on cash loans used to purchase inputs, underweighing cotton received and overweighing guano provided, and providing neither schools (in violation of agreements and recent Executive Decree) nor a doctor or clinic on the hacienda. The yanacunas also accused Okada of deceptive pricing practices and Carrera questioned the legality of his opposing a

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<sup>278</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por las yanacunas de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca contra Nikomatsu Okada por varios conceptos," 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN.

<sup>279</sup> "Expediente ...de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca," 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, p. 3.

<sup>280</sup> "Expediente ...de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca," 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, p. 76.

monthly “tax” of 10 cents/fanegada.<sup>281</sup> While his monthly tax was unusual, Okada’s practices were typical of the way hacendados maintained their profitability at the expense of the yanacunas.<sup>282</sup>

On La Huaca, the Okinawan Japanese yanacunas led the charge against Okada, with 29 Japanese (all Okinawan), 1 Japanese Peruvian (Yodo or Pablo Susuki Paredes), and 8 Peruvians supporting the complaint against Okada while 19 Peruvians and 16 Japanese declined to support the effort.<sup>283</sup> The La Huaca case highlights the importance of the Japanese yanacunas in labor claims, given that they comprised 64% of the yanacunas on La Huaca. On Jesús del Valle, however, where Japanese accounted for nearly 65% of the yanacunas, only 15 Peruvians filed a complaint against Okada while all 60 Japanese yanacunas, in conjunction with 18 Peruvians, declined to join the complaint against Okada.<sup>284</sup> The fact that only one out of every six yanacunas on Jesús del Valle participated in the complaint might be reflective not only of the generalized atmosphere of fear following the 1930-31 strikes, but also of the particular circumstances on Jesús del Valle and its neighboring hacienda, La Huaca. On June 10, union representatives Dario Shimada (Japanese) and Manuel

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<sup>281</sup> “Expediente ...de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca,” 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, pp. 3-5, 25-26.

<sup>282</sup> “Expediente ...de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca,” 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, pp. 77.

<sup>283</sup> “Letter from Carrera to Arbitration Court,” 20 Julio 1933, in “Expediente ... de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca,” 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, p. 79. Carrera argued before the Tribunal Arbitral that the remaining Japanese yanacunas who abstained from joining the complaint should not be included because they were also “employees” of Okada and lacked “sufficient independence to exercise their rights.”

<sup>284</sup> “Expediente ... de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca,” 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN.

Mejía attempted to monitor the weighing of the cotton on La Huaca, but Allemant refused to recognize their authority.<sup>285</sup> When the yanaconas declined to turn over to Allemant their cotton for weighing, he called in the Civil Guard of Huaral which forcibly removed the cotton from the yanaconas' homes and arrested Manuel Mejía for inciting a riot.<sup>286</sup> Carrera accused the Civil Guard of operating "as agents at the disposition of the *gamonal*, don Okada."<sup>287</sup> "Gamonal" was a Peruvian term typically reserved for the highland hacendados who oppressed their indigenous workers, not in reference to the supposedly modern coastal hacendados. In October 1933, the Guardia Civil of Huaral, again at the behest of Allemant, jailed all of the remaining yanacona complainants.<sup>288</sup> Okada's attorney Diómedes Arias Schreiber, one of Peru's most elite jurists, argued that the Civil Guard had acted because Higa (an Okinawan

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<sup>285</sup> "Statement of Carrera to Labor Department," 12 June 1933, "Expediente ... de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca," Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, pp. 9-15 42. While no Japanese yanaconas signed the complaint against Okada, the Peruvian yanaconas granted power-of-attorney to Dario Shimada, a Japanese Peruvian man and member of the Sindicato de Yanaconas, to monitor the weighing of their cotton on their behalf. Carrera described Shimada as a yanacona from Jesús del Valle, but Arias Schreiber challenged that he was out outsider. The Peruvian yanaconas likely accepted Shimada based upon Carrera's recommendation (the second monitor was Carrera's son), but Shimada's role in the case is indicative of a certain level of trust between Japanese and Peruvians organizing in the Valley.

<sup>286</sup> "Statement of Huaral Civil Guard Commander Arturo Diaz [second surname illegible]," 23 June 1933, "Expediente ... de la hacienda Jesús del Valle y La Huaca," Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, p. 45.

<sup>287</sup> "Statement of Carrera to Labor Department," 12 June 1933, "Expediente ... de la hacienda Jesús del Valle y La Huaca," Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, pp. 12-15, 42. Carrera also added that Allemant had free access to the police station where Mejía was taken. According to Carrera, Allemant tried to bribe Mejía and when that failed, he had him jailed. Carrera notes the Subprefect later had him released because he realized that the law had been abused.

<sup>288</sup> "Statement of Carrera to Arbitration Court," 3 Oct 1933, "Expediente ... de la hacienda Jesús del Valle y La Huaca," Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, p. 334

Japanese yanacona from La Huaca) was “pressuring” Jesús del Valle and la Huaca yanaconas to retract their letters in opposition to the yanaconas claim.<sup>289</sup>

While the Peruvian and Japanese yanaconas united around a myriad of issues, the one that seemed to draw them together like no other was Nikumatsu Okada.<sup>290</sup> In a December 1932 letter, 86 yanaconas including 31 Japanese wrote to the Labor Department to express, in their words:

...the displeasure that it brings us the news that Mr. Nikomatsu Okada will be the new renter on this hacienda. We base our displeasure on the experience that this Valley has had with the tyrannical and all-absorbing system that Mr. Okada employs with his yanaconas and braceros on the haciendas...that he conducts, and it would be one more aggravating factor and a true calamity if he were to come into this hacienda on which we have always lived in complete harmony.<sup>291</sup>

This letter as well as the multiple labor complaints filed against Okada directly contradict José Matos Mar’s portrayal of the Chancay Valley Japanese as united by “ethnic identification.” Matos Mar writes

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<sup>289</sup> “Statement of Arias Schreiber to Arbitration Court,” 3 Oct 1933, “Expediente ... de la hacienda Jesús del Valle y La Huaca,” Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, p. 334

<sup>290</sup> The 1933 Jesús del Valle case was the only case in which the Japanese yanaconas, in addition to many Peruvians, refused to file claims against Okada.

<sup>291</sup> “Letter from yanaconas to Labor Department,” 2 December 1932, in “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanaconas del fundo "Jecuan" del Valle Huaral contra Jose Mehasima y Nikumatsu Okada, conductores de dicho fondo sobre abuso,” Legajo 6, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #118, AGN. While the letter utilizes yellow peril language similar to the *La Prensa* campaigns, the yanaconas assigned these characteristics specifically to Okada while representing their relationship with their former Japanese manager, Miashima, as harmonious. According to a November 22, 1932 letter from the yanaconas to the Labor Department, the hacienda had 59 yanaconas. The 86 signators of December 2 letter likely include multiple family members who farm a single plot, as it is signed by both men and women and numerous people with the same surname. Original Spanish: *el desagrado que nos produce la noticia que tenemos de que D. Nikomatsu Okada sea el nuevo arrendatario de esta hacienda, fundándose nuestro desagrado a la experiencia que ya se tiene en este Valle del sistema tiránico y absorbente que dicho Sr. Okada emplea con sus yanaconas y braceros en los fundos ...que él conduce, y sería un agravante más y una verdadera calamidad el que se introdujere en este fundo en el que siempre hemos vivido en completa armonía.*

The yanaconaje system's boom was fundamentally due to the work ethic of the Japanese immigrants. The Japanese hacendados managed to associate the yanacona's interest with that of the hacienda, hence convincing the yanaconas to not hesitate in expending effort far beyond what they would have as simple employees. The ethnic identification allowed this effort to flow not from any pressure, but rather the conviction that greater production favored both parties. This identification was complemented by other cultural and social mechanisms: mutual aid societies, clubs, schools, parties, etc., in large part sponsored by Okada.<sup>292</sup>

The evidence, however, demonstrates that Japanese yanaconas were more likely to form class-based alliances with their fellow Peruvian yanaconas than to form an alliance based upon ethnicity with the Japanese managers.<sup>293</sup> This can be explained both by class and ethnic differences within the Japanese community in Peru. First, the Japanese immigrants who immigrated to Peru left a country embroiled in both rural and urban class conflicts.<sup>294</sup> In fact, Toake Endoh argues that during the 1920s and the 1930s the Japanese government encouraged emigration from its rural regions that were home to the most radical social movements in an effort to alleviate social unrest and protest. The majority of Japanese emigration during the 1920s and 1930s was directed to Brazil and Peru.<sup>295</sup> In Peru, class conflicts within the Japanese community surfaced nearly as soon as immigration began, perhaps most notably when the majority of

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<sup>292</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 102.

<sup>293</sup> Additionally, the yanacona system, in and of itself, promotes the identification of the yanacona with the hacendado. See previous section on yanaconaje.

<sup>294</sup> Garon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan*.

<sup>295</sup> Endoh, "Shedding the Unwanted : Japan's Emigration Policy in a Historical Perspective". Endoh specifically mentions the prominence of the Communist-affiliated National Peasants Association (Zenkoku Nomin Kumiai) in the regions targeted for emigration.

Japanese immigrants boycotted the first national Japanese association on the basis it was a “gentlemen’s club” and did not represent them.<sup>296</sup>

The Japanese in Peru were also divided between Okinawan and mainland Japanese. Not only had Okinawa been colonized by the Japanese in the late nineteenth century, many mainland Japanese in Peru discriminated against the Okinawans and refused to associate with them.<sup>297</sup> The mainland Japanese-Okinawan division is most clearly evident in the Chancay Valley when comparing the hacienda management to the yanacunas. While the vast majority of yanacunas filing the labor complaints were of Okinawan descent, all of the Chancay Valley renters and administrators were from mainland Japan, including Nikomatsu Okada, José Miashima, Sociedad Agrícola de la Hacienda Retes’ managers Yamamoto and Carlos Ichitaro Matzuda, and the PMKK’s Genkichi Fujisawa.<sup>298</sup> In this way, the racial hierarchy on the haciendas replicated the Japanese structure with Okinawans subordinated to the authority of the mainland Japanese administrators. In fact, the Japanese administrators integrated Peruvian personnel while excluding Okinawans. Okada, for example, placed his greatest trust in his general manager, Santiago Allemant, a Peruvian criollo with whom he had work on the Palpa hacienda. Okada’s management staff, like other Japanese-managed haciendas, relied upon a combination of Peruvians and mainland Japanese, but seldom

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<sup>296</sup> Tigner, "The Ryukyuan in Peru, 1906-1952," 36.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.: 37. Also see Ueunten, "Japanese Latin American Internment from an Okinawan Perspective."

<sup>298</sup> "Expedientes Laborales," Ministerio de Fomento, case numbers #77, #83, #85, #98, #107, #118, #147 and "Expedientes Laborales," Ministerio de Fomento, Arbitration Court, case numbers #4 and #5, AGN. Also see Buitron Vda. de Kafiti, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú: Participación De Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En La Agricultura De Huaral*, 1899-1999, 30.

Okinawan. On Caqui, for instance, Okada hired a Japanese administrator and cashier, but the rest of his personnel were Peruvians, some former yanacunas with a long-term association with the hacienda.<sup>299</sup>

While the Japanese administrators in the Valley might have been expected to more easily manage their compatriots in the labor disputes, the reality proved quite different. Just the same, the Japanese and Chinese renters were counted upon to handle the crises, while the absentee owners collected their rent. It would be naïve, however, to suggest, for instance, that Manuel Mujica, Okada's landlord on Caqui, was not cognizant of how closely tied his return on investment was to Okada successfully managing his hacienda and its yanacunas. Additionally, while most hacendados were absentee, Salvador del Solar and Antón Huando both directly managed their estates and they, like Mujica, all held important positions on the SNA. The hacendados were collectively aware of the danger that Japanese – Peruvian labor alliances presented to the Valley labor system. Not only would further labor discord undermine control and profits on the hacienda, it also carried the potential to stir public opinion against the coastal hacendados and provoke the enactment of

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<sup>299</sup> Rodríguez Pastor, *Caqui: Estudio De Una Hacienda Costeña*, 106. Rodríguez Pastor identifies the administrator as Z. [Zenkishe] Oda and the cashier as N. Nazu. Two Peruvian employees mentioned are T. Guardamino and Carlos Diaz. The Huaral *Centenario* book mentions a management mix similar to that reported for Caqui on Okada's other haciendas: La Huaca, Japanese administrator José Motonishi and cashier Armando Higashi and Peruvian assistants Florencio Mora, Nicanor Vega, Teófilo Colán and Julio Benavides; Jesús del Valle, Japanese administrator/cashier S. Kaneko and Peruvian assistants Federico Gremashi, P. Grados and Ignacio Champa; Miraflores, Japanese administrator/cashier Armando Nagao and Peruvian assistants Antonio Velarde M. and José L. Romero; Caquí, lists additional Peruvian assistants Víctor González and H. González and Japanese assistant H. Saito. See Buitron Vda. de Kafiti, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú: Participación De Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En La Agricultura De Huaral*, 1899-1999, 20-21.



legislation contrary to their interests. The SNA's next step was to remake the image of the cotton haciendas at the national level.

### 3.6 The Classless Hacienda

In 1935, the SNA published *How Cotton is Produced in Peru: Small-scale Agriculture and Cotton*, a series of articles that were also printed in *La Prensa*. The subtitle in the SNA's publication was revelatory of the major shift the SNA hoped to achieve through its campaign. Specifically, they hoped to recast the yanacunas as "small farmers." Through this sleight of hand, exploitative labor relations disappeared and in their place appeared "independent farmers" and benevolent "farm managers," such as Salvador del Solar of the hacienda Esquivel. The unnamed author of *How Cotton is Produced*, for instance, reported that on del Solar's hacienda, yanacunas were treated well and lent money for medical treatment – without interest – if they were ill, such that "it is easy to understand why all of them [yanacunas] are satisfied with their relationships with the hacienda."<sup>300</sup>

The SNA wrote that its goal was not "a technical study or economic research...but rather to show the human side of cotton produced by small-scale agriculture." The publication was no small feat, lending credence to the notion that the preservation of yanacunaje was an important issue for the SNA. *How Cotton is Produced* included upwards of 100 vignettes based upon personal interviews with small farmers, complete with photos from all of Peru's 30 cotton-growing valleys in

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<sup>300</sup> Sociedad Nacional Agraria, *Cómo Se Produce El Algodón En El Perú. La Pequeña Agricultura Y El Algodón*, 40-41.

the departments of Ancash, Arequipa, Ica, Lima, and Piura. While the Peruvian yanaconas were not the target audience for *How Cotton Is Produced*, the SNA's interviews with the yanaconas up and down Peru's coast served as an opportunity to undermine the class-based alliances that were forming in areas outside of the Chancay Valley as well.<sup>301</sup>

Behind the cover of the humble small farmers, the SNA advocated for leaving the yanaconaje system untouched and, through the voice of the yanaconas, argued that the real danger was not hacendados but the Japanese. The SNA also used the publication to argue for tax reductions under the guise that they were a burden the small producer.<sup>302</sup> The stories followed a uniform format and primarily covered four topics: 1) The generosity of the Peruvian hacendados 2) Japanese renters and yanaconas acting in detriment to the Peruvian small farmer 3) How happy the small farmers were with yanaconaje (as long as they were on a Peruvian-owned hacienda) and 4) The guano providers' extortionary practices. While the latter was a thinly veiled effort by the hacendados to maintain their profitable control over the provision of guano and other inputs, the first three are illustrative of the classless rescripting of the Peruvian cotton hacienda system that the SNA hoped to effect: the SNA and Peruvian hacienda owners protected the Peruvian small farmer who benefited under

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<sup>301</sup> See "Expediente relativo a los reguidos entre el arrendatario del fundo "San Rafael" (Casma) M. Kanashiro y los yanaconos del mismo," 19 February 1937, Legajo 14, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, #224, AGN. Seventy-one yanaconas (including 16 Japanese) filed a complaint against Japanese (Okinawan) renter Manuel Kanashiro, accusing him of attempting to unilaterally change the conditions of their contract. The property was owned by Manuel Mujica's Sociedad Agrícola Perú Limitada.

<sup>302</sup> Sociedad Nacional Agraria, *Cómo Se Produce El Algodón En El Perú. La Pequeña Agricultura Y El Algodón*, XIX-XXI.

the yanaconaje system, while the Japanese renters and yanaconas were responsible for the hardships of the Peruvian small farmers.<sup>303</sup> The attack on the Japanese began in the Chancay/Huaral Valley:

First, it is necessary to call attention to the fact that the great majority of haciendas in the valley are exploited by Japanese firms, leaving few for Peruvians. This is important because it can be generally observed that they [the Japanese firms] give preference to their fellow Japanese when lending out the lands for exploitation. The result is that today 80% of the yanaconas are Japanese while only 20% are Peruvian, and the former enjoy greater advantages. This situation is prejudicial not only to the interest of the small farmer, but also to the interest of the country which is not favored by the “de-nationalization” of its land and of its agricultural production.<sup>304</sup>

The SNA author/interviewer was the interpreter of the farmers’ feelings and opinions, writing of a yanacona from the Surco Valley (Lima), “We note that Mr. Juan Mendieta is slightly disgusted by the expansion of the Japanese yanaconas, who have now occupied the lot of his neighbor.”<sup>305</sup> Lorenzo Martínez, yanacona on the Villa hacienda (Lima), “manifests that he is uncomfortable with the increase of the Japanese yanaconas, who have steadily replaces the Peruvians.” Martínez, however, emphasized that he had resisted the Japanese yanaconas’ attempts to buy the rights to

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<sup>303</sup> Ibid., 12. The author went so far as to write that the small producers were willing to talk with the SNA because they realized it represented “their class.”

<sup>304</sup> Ibid., 40. Original Spanish: *Ante todo, es necesario llamar la atención hacia el hecho de que una gran mayoría de las haciendas del valle es explotada por firmas japonesa, siendo pocas las peruanas. La importancia que esto tiene puede apreciarse por la aseveración general de que ellas dan preferencia a sus connacionales para otorgarles la explotación de las tierras, de lo que resulta que hoy en día hay aproximadamente, un 80% de yanaconas japonesas en comparación con sólo el 20% de peruanos, gozando, además, los primeros, de mayores ventajas. Esta situación es perjudicial, no sólo para los intereses de los pequeños agricultores, sino también para el mismo país, al cual no le conviene esta desnacionalización de su suelo y de su producción agrícola.*

<sup>305</sup> Ibid., 50.

farm his land, regardless of the exorbitant price they offered him, “because of his love of the land.”<sup>306</sup> Martínez, like many of the photos’ subjects, was portrayed alongside his children on his chacra (small farming plot). While many of the farmers, almost all with pronounced indigenous features, were dressed in their finest clothes, Martínez wore a wide-brimmed hat and his pants were secured with thick twine. The Japanese, unphotographed, were caricatured as threatening, part of a “Japanese invasion,” their pockets laden with the soles they were willing to pay for these simple farmers’ land.<sup>307</sup>

Given that the SNA was attempting to undermine claims that the hacendados took advantage of yanaconas, both their campaign in *How Cotton Is Produced* and again in *La Prensa* recast the issue by alleging that the Japanese were responsible for displacing Peruvian yanaconas. For instance, Pedro González M. wrote in September 1937:

The Japanese have created a difficult situation for our campesino (peasant) through their monopolization of the productive lands and their systematic eviction of the Peruvian yanacona from the Huaral Valley, whom they have replaced with those of their race.<sup>308</sup>

The Japanese renters such as Okada were certainly guilty of evicting Peruvian yanaconas. In September 1930, nine Peruvian yanaconas on Caqui filed a complaint against Okada with the Department of Labor accusing Okada of withholding payment

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., 46-50, 250.

<sup>308</sup> *La Prensa*, September 2, 1937, as cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 146. Original Spanish: *El acaparamiento de las tierras de cultivo por los japoneses que han venido desalojando sistemáticamente del valle de Huaral al yanacona peruano, reemplazandolo por los su raza, ha creado en esta forma una situación difícil a nuestro campesino.*

in an attempt to force them off their land and turn it over to Japanese yanacónas.<sup>309</sup>

When Okada's manager Allemant moved to evict the nine men, the yanacónas made a futile attempt to convince the Ministry of Government to intervene, arguing that losing their livelihoods would run counter to Sánchez Cerro's attempts to reduce unemployment, writing, "...it is a shameful that on our own land and in a time of national crisis, foreigners are preferred [over Peruvians] in spite of the damage done to Peruvians."<sup>310</sup>

Yet Okada was not the only Valley hacendados evicting and firing Peruvians. Emboldened by Sánchez Cerro's overthrow of Leguía, over 100 Peruvian yanacónas supported by Unificación de Yanacónes y Braceros de la Hacienda Huando wrote to the newly installed president in November 1930 accusing Peruvian hacendado Antonio Graña of illegally evicting them from their land on Huando in 1924.<sup>311</sup> More importantly, during the 1930-31 strikes, numerous hacendados evicted union leaders and yanacónas involved in the strikes. In the aftermath of the 1930 strikes, hacendados similarly demonstrated little tolerance for dissent. On Esquivel, the Unión de Braceros y Yanacónes complained to the Labor Department on April 8, 1931, that not only was Salvador del Solar (featured in *How Cotton is Produced* as a model

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<sup>309</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanacónas de la Hacienda "Caqui" contra Nicomaksu Okada, arrendatario sobre pago del precios de algodón," 18 September 1930, Legajo 4, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #77, AGN.

<sup>310</sup> "Expediente ... de la Hacienda Caqui" 18 September 1930, Legajo 4, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #77, AGN. Original Spanish: *Es decir que como un escarnio en nuestro propio suelo se prefiere en las horas de crisis nacional a los elementos extranjeros en daño y perjuicio de los elementos nacionales.*

<sup>311</sup> "Letter from Lima Prefect to Director de Government," 10 November 1930, Ministerio del Interior, Prefecturas, Lima, File #297, AGN. Graña, however, did not turn over their land to Japanese yanacónas.

hacendado) renegeing on the agreements he had signed to end the previous year's strike, the managers were also firing anyone who dared complain, particularly long-term workers who quickly replaced with newcomers.<sup>312</sup> In short, “displacing” Peruvian workers was a standard labor control tactic utilized by hacendados throughout the Valley. However, the Japanese were the only guilty parties in the SNA's racialized version of reality, much like the Chinese butchers in Lima in 1919.

As for the Japanese yanacunas, they numbered as high as 65% on some of Okada's haciendas as discussed in the previous section, in contrast to Antonio Graña (Huando) who had no Japanese yanacunas on his hacienda Huando. Graña, however, was the exception among the Valley's hacendados. The del Solar family (Esquivel) brought the first Japanese workers to the Chancay Valley in the 1900s. Esquivel, in fact, was home to a thriving Japanese community, establishing a Japanese school in 1924, and acted as a magnet for Japanese migrations when the hacienda transitioned to cotton production.<sup>313</sup> For that reason, the Sociedad Japonesa had a close relationship with the del Solar family. Salvador del Solar, for instance, and Okada's daughter were the godparents of the Japanese school in Huaral. The Japanese community of Huaral also erected a monument to Salvador del Solar's father, Amador, in honor of his

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<sup>312</sup> “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanacunas y bracero de la Hacienda “Esquivel” contra los propietarios de dicha hacienda sobre pliego de reclamos,” concluded 5 May 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #101, AGN. On April 14, 1931, the parties agreed to a Labor Department inspection because del Solar denied all the union's allegations. Although the case was indicated concluded by May 5, 1931, no resolution was indicated in the file.

<sup>313</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanacunaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 86, 90. Matos Mar writes that the Esquivel administrator's [Japanese] god-son was instrumental in the “massive establishment of his compatriots” on the hacienda.

support of the Japanese immigrants in the Chancay Valley. In April 1937, the SNA joined the Sociedad Japonesa in the inauguration of the monument on Esquivel.<sup>314</sup>

Overall, the Chancay Valley haciendas relied on significant numbers of Japanese yanaconas, regardless of the nationality of their administrators. Under the direction of Peruvian owner Miguel Echenique and his manager Mujica, Jesus del Valle's Japanese yanaconas numbered close to 65% of the total yanaconas when Okada began renting the hacienda in 1932.<sup>315</sup> While Japanese renter José Miashima largely relied upon Japanese yanaconas on hacienda Jecuan, on Pasamayo only three of the 76 yanaconas were Japanese.<sup>316</sup> In general, the Valley experienced significant population changes in the 1920s and 1930s due not only to the influx of the Japanese, but also because cholo farmers from other regions migrated to the Valley in the hopes benefiting from the cotton boom. In 1933, Hacienda Jecuan reflected the changing

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<sup>314</sup> Buitron Vda. de Kafiti, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú: Participación De Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En La Agricultura De Huaral*, 1899-1999, 7,23; Sociedad Nacional Agraria, "Memoria Que La Junta Directiva De La Sociedad Nacional Agraria Presenta a La Asamblea General Ordinaria," (Lima, Perú: Librería e Imprenta Gil, 1936-1937), 28-29.

<sup>315</sup> "Expediente ...de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca," 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN. Note: Mujica's first name is illegible, but it is not the previously discussed Manuel Mujica. While these figures originate from 1933, one year after Okada acquired the rental of Jesus del Valle, it is highly unlikely that Okada initiated a massive replacement of Peruvian yanaconas with Japanese not only because any major changes would have disrupted production, but also because a labor complaint was brought by 15 Peruvians and they made no mention of such an occurrence, in spite of 60 Japanese yanaconas (and 18 Peruvians) opposing their complaint and siding with Okada.

<sup>316</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por las yanaconas de la hacienda Pasamayo contra José Mechima, conductor de dicha hacienda sobre cumplimiento de pliego de reclamos," 12 May 1931, Ministerio de Fomento, Expediente Laborales, Case #107, AGN; "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanaconas del fundo "Jecuan" del Valle de Huaral contra José Mehasima y Nikumatsu Okada, conductores de dicho fundo sobre abuso," 18 November 1932, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #118, AGN; "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por Isabel Carrera vda. De Mejía por yanacones de la hacienda Jecuan contra Nikumatsu Okada por varios conceptos," 20 November 1933, Legajo 8, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #147, AGN. The rental contract passed from Miashima to Okada in 1932. Ramón Geng was the previous renter from 1929 to 1932.

demographics of the Valley. Out of the 36 yanaconas filing a labor complaint Miashima and Okada, only 12 were Peruvian while 24 were Japanese. Of the 12 Peruvian men, only two were natives of the Chancay Valley. The remaining 10 Peruvians were natives of locales as near as Callao and as distant as Arica, with three men originating from the department of Ayacucho. Of the 24 Japanese claimants, over half were Okinawan.<sup>317</sup>

### 3.7 Alliances and Divisions

But when, as is the case with the Japanese colony, we witness a monopolization that displaces us and denies our people [*pueblo*] the possibilities that the land provides, the problem loses its normal aspect to become a problem of public importance.<sup>318</sup>

Carlos Moreyra y Paz Soldan, *La Prensa*, 1937

While SNA leader Moreyra y Paz Soldan had not been displaced by anyone, he used the collective rhetoric of “us” in his entry into the 1937 *La Prensa* campaign to close the distance between him – an affluent, white member of the Peruvian elite – and the cholo yanaconas eking out a living. Including himself alongside the unemployed Peruvian farmers and united under the mantel of “our [Peruvian] people,” Moreyra y

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<sup>317</sup> “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanaconas del fundo “Jecuan” del Valle de Huaral contra José Mehasima y Nikumatsu Okada, conductores de dicho fundo sobre abuso,” 18 November 1932, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #118, AGN; “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por Isabel Carrera vda. De Mejía por yanacones de la hacienda Jecuan contra Nikumatsu Okada por varios conceptos,” 20 November 1933, Legajo 8, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #147, AGN. It should be noted that out of a total of 59 yanaconas on the hacienda, there was only data on the 36 complainants upon whom this analysis was based.

<sup>318</sup> *La Prensa*, August 29, 1937, as cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 144. Original Spanish: *Pero cuando, como en el caso de la colonia japonesa, presenciamos un acaparamiento que nos desplaza, cerrando para nuestro pueblo, las posibilidades que el suelo brinda, el problema pierde su aspecto normal para convertirse en un problema de orden publico...*



Paz Soldan attempted to erase not only the reality of Japanese and Peruvian yanacunas organizing cooperatively, but also the intertwined relationships of Japanese renters and Peruvian hacendados. Antonio Graña's declaration of "solidarity" among the hacendados during the 1930s strikes was not a unique event. When Okada was accused by yanacunas on La Huaca and Jesus del Valle of underpaying them for their cotton, not only did T. Yishii of PMKK (Palpa) and Carlos Matzuda of Sociedad Agrícola "Retes" submit letters of support, so did Humberto Piaggio, owner of the Cuyo and Hornillos haciendas, and Salvador del Solar (Esquivel).<sup>319</sup> Given that by 1934 Okada was managing haciendas covering 25% of the cultivated land in the valley, the rent and conditions in his contracts, as well as the price of cotton, set the standards for the rest of the valley.<sup>320</sup> In hard-fought battles with the yanacuna unions, Okada repeatedly defended the hacendados' control over the conditions of yanacunaje not only to his own benefit, but also to that of all the Valley hacendados.

The SNA's replacement of class-conflict with racial animosity, however, should not lead to the conclusion that the Chancay Valley was a raceless oasis. According to anthropologist Louise Faron's study of the Chancay Valley, the cotton haciendas in the period from 1900 to 1940 were organized along the same socio-racial hierarchies as those found in the remainder of the country. White supremacy was the underlying principle, yet cultural markers allowed for slippage. Faron found that

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<sup>319</sup> "Letter from Yishii to Okada," 17 December 1933; "Letter from Matzuda to Okada," December 1933; "Letter from Ricardo de las Casas for Humberto Piaggio to Okada," 14 December 1933; "Letter from del Solar to Okada," 15 December 1933, in "Expediente ... de la haciendas Jesús del Valle y La Huaca," 15 May 1933, Ministerio de Fomento, Tribunal Arbitral, Expedientes Laborales, Case Numbers #4 and #5, AGN, pp. 488-492.

<sup>320</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanacunaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 82-83.

owners of the Valley haciendas were typically white elites claiming Spanish ancestry and connected to the highest echelons of social stature and political power; the administrators were white or criollo, well educated, and part of respectable society at the local if not national level; the managing employees were likely better educated cholos; and most yanacunas were cholos originally from indigenous communities with a primary education and acculturated to the coastal cultural norms and included some Afro-Peruvians; and the braceros (field hands) were Afro-Peruvians or cholos supplemented seasonally by serranos.<sup>321</sup> The Japanese immigrants, however, broke the mold of being confined to one or two adjacent slots in the hierarchy. The Japanese filled the ranks of yanacunas, numerous haciendas were administered by Japanese managers, and Nikumatsu Okada commanded financial power in the Valley equal to any white hacendado. Okada, however, never held a position on the SNA and he remained largely without influence in national politics. His daughter Isabel married a Peruvian rather than a Japanese man, but did not marry into the Valley elite.<sup>322</sup>

Okada's single venture into national politics was, interestingly, to support Luis Sánchez Cerro who overthrew Leguía in 1930. While Okada's support of Sánchez Cerro may seem surprising because of the president's nationalistic rhetoric and decrees, Sánchez Cerro's anti-labor and pro-business positions were in Okada's

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<sup>321</sup> Faron, *From Conquest to Agrarian Reform : Ethnicity, Ecology, and Economy in the Chancay Valley, Peru: 1533 to 1964*, 42, 59-79. Faron writes that the different groups were "ideally distinguished by bio-ethnic criteria," meaning the use of phenotype in conjunction with characteristic associated with the racial or ethnic group. Matos Mar also lists negros and chinos and, to a lesser degree, serranos, in addition to the later Japanese. See Matos Mar, *Yanacuna Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 48.

<sup>322</sup> Matos Mar, *Las Haciendas Del Valle De Chancay*, 352. Matos Mar writes that Isabel married a criollo who spent her inheritance and abandoned her.

interest as an hacienda renter. In February 1933, Okada was the first signature on a letter to Sánchez Cerro expressing the support of Huaral's "Peruvians as well as foreigners" of the president in managing Peru's conflict with Colombia.<sup>323</sup> A year earlier, Sánchez Cerro had been feted in the Okada mansion in Huaral and joined in the Carnival celebration hosted by Okada, snubbing the Valley's elite representatives, Graña and del Solar.<sup>324</sup> In reflecting on Sánchez Cerro's visit to the Chancay Valley, it is not hard to imagine that the *cholo* president might have felt more at home with Okada, a laborer who rose to manage an agricultural empire, rather than with the white elite of the Chancay Valley with whom he shared little other than nationality. Sánchez Cerro and Okada also shared a racial unacceptability in the eyes of elite Peruvian society. Each was treated politely by high society, Sanchez Cerro only because of his political power and Okada because of his financial standing. In a similar fashion, Okada and Sanchez Cerro were both tolerated, although not accepted, because for the time being, they served the political and economic purposes of the Peruvian elite. In 1941, almost a decade after Sanchez Cerro's assassination in 1933, Okada was at the pinnacle of his power not only financially, but also as close as he could come, as a Japanese man, to belonging to Peru's social elite.

Okada, however, carefully cultivated his position in Valley society, using his wealth to establish himself as a benefactor of the area's most important institutions: the Catholic Church, schools (both the public school and a Japanese school), and the

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<sup>323</sup> "Letter from Huaral community to Luis Sánchez Cerro," February 4, 1933, Ministerio del Interior, Prefecturas, Lima, MI 332, AGN.

<sup>324</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 94.

city of Huaral.<sup>325</sup> While Okada was a member of the Central Japanese Society of Chancay and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce, his involvement was seemingly limited and he only became president of the former in 1941, fourteen years after its founding.<sup>326</sup> Rather than rising as a leader solely in the Japanese community, he became an influential member of Huaral society. This was made evident when Japanese Emperor Hirohito awarded Okada Japan's highest civilian honor in 1941. While the tenor of the *La Prensa* articles suggests that Peruvians would likely protest such an event, instead the highest representatives of its Huaral's institutions organized a series of celebrations in Okada's honor, some attended by as many as 300 people.<sup>327</sup> Enrique de las Casas, Okada's landlord on La Huaca, paid homage to Okada in a speech that framed him very similarly to the way that the coastal hacendados saw themselves – progressive and benevolent:

Step by step with your effort and energy, you have ascended to the solid place that you occupy. For this reason, we gather around you, poor and rich, in this act of faith and friendship, all united in a single feeling, an expression of truthful and sincere understanding.

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Now the townspeople, who owe so much to you for the advancement of commerce and [construction of] public buildings, applaud you. You

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<sup>325</sup> Buitron Vda. de Kafiti, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú: Participación De Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En La Agricultura De Huaral*, 1899-1999, 7, 11, 21; Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 94-95; Rodríguez Pastor, *Caqui: Estudio De Una Hacienda Costeña*, 106-07. Rodríguez Pastor goes so far as to write, "The prestige achieved by Okada had never been reached by any hacendado [in the Chancay Valley], nor has it has it since...In the Valley there remains an echo of his past prestige."

<sup>326</sup> In spite of Okada's tremendous success, the Japanese community seems to have little information collected on Okada and virtually all works cite Matos Mar's books that detail Okada's life. This may be a result of the community destroying documents during World War II out of fear of Peruvian government repression.

<sup>327</sup> Buitron Vda. de Kafiti, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú: Participación De Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En La Agricultura De Huaral*, 1899-1999, 22.

have contributed to the physical, psychic, and intellectual betterment [of Huaral]. You help whoever asks you and is in need of support. With your opportune and valued donations, you have bettered the District day by day. For this and much more, we gather in honor of you, celebrating the happy occasion that dignifies your person.<sup>328</sup>

Matos Mar, however, argues that the hacendados who lived in the Valley were resentful of Okada's status and power and hacendados such as Antonio Graña launched an undercover campaign to convince the SNA to lobby for legislation to undermine the position of the Japanese in the Valley.<sup>329</sup> In 1936, the Benavides administration issued a wide ranging decree, which will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters, capping immigration and restricting the activities of foreigners within Peru. The bill further required that haciendas limit foreigners of any one nationality to 20% on each hacienda, the consequences of which would be serious in the Chancay Valley.<sup>330</sup> Why would the remaining Valley hacendados, equal or more powerful than Graña in the SNA in 1936, lobby for the bill? Most of the hacendados

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<sup>328</sup> Excerpt from "Speech of Enrique de las Casas," 1941, reproduced in *Ibid.* Original Spanish: *Paso a paso con vuestro esfuerzo y energía, habéis ascendido hasta el sólido lugar que ocupáis. Por eso os rodeamos en este acto cariñoso y leal, pobres y ricos, todos unidos en un solo sentir, en un avatar de verdad y de sincera comprensión. ... Ya el pueblo, que tanto os debe en su adelanto en el comercio y ornato, reconocido, os aplaude. Habéis contribuido al mejoramiento psíquico, físico e intelectual. Prestáis ayuda a todo el que llega a vos; en demanda de apoyo. Con vuestras oportunas y valiosas donaciones, habéis acrecentado día a día el mejoramiento general del Distrito. Por todo esto y mucho más, nos encontramos en torno a Ud. celebrando el fausto acontecimiento que dignifica a su persona.*

<sup>329</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 90-94. Faron supports this notion and argues that 1930 regulations limiting ownership on the state-owned La Esperanza agricultural settlement to native-born Peruvians was a way for "local hacendados" to "write some of their prejudices into law" as they had no way to express their "hostility ... toward the successful Japanese...on the local scene." While I do not doubt the intention of excluding the Japanese, it is just as likely that such an initiative would have originated among national politicians who in the first years of the depression were keenly aware of making a public show of privileging Peruvians over foreign residents in government programs. See Faron, *From Conquest to Agrarian Reform : Ethnicity, Ecology, and Economy in the Chancay Valley, Peru: 1533 to 1964*, 113-17.

<sup>330</sup> Oscar Balderrama Tudela, "Legislación De Extranjería," *Normas Legales: Revista Anual de Legislación y Jurisprudencia* 6 (1947): 123-25.

relied upon Japanese renters and yanacónas and legislation restricting their use would disrupt their production just at the moment when production was on an upswing? While the SNA's 1937 campaign had not yet been launched, its other publications seemed to argue for just such restrictions. I would argue, however, that the particularities of the executive decree allowed it to effectively achieve its populist goal – blaming the Japanese for the yanacónas' woes – without undermining the profitability of the hacendados. First, the legislation was directed only at foreign *yanacónas*, and renters such as Okada were not contemplated in the legislation. Second, the hacendados correctly counted upon Benavides, who vetoed the 1933 yanacónaje reform legislation upon the SNA's request, to not enforce the legislation to their detriment. The *Eco del Valle*, for instance, reported in 1937 that only 6 of the 22 haciendas in the Valley had complied with the 20% limit on foreign yanacónas and employees, with the Japanese renters acting as the greatest impediment. Fourteen haciendas in noncompliance meant that the Chancay Valley haciendas, Peruvians and Asians alike, were largely ignoring the decree.<sup>331</sup> In March 1940, Callao Senator Federico Fernandini, proposed a bill requiring that 50% of yanacónas on agricultural enterprises be Peruvian, an admission that the 1936 decree had been completely ineffectual.<sup>332</sup> “Japanese peril,” on the other hand, had served the SNA well.

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<sup>331</sup> *El Eco del Valle*, 24 October 1937, as cited in Matos Mar, *Yanacónaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 91.

<sup>332</sup> Peru, *Diario De Los Debates Del Senado, Legislatura Ordinaria De 1940*, vol. 1 (Lima: Imprenta Torres Aguirre, 1940), 304-97.

Yanaconas were unable to achieve legislative protections until 1947, by which time mechanization reduced their necessity to the cotton haciendas.<sup>333</sup>

The importance of the SNA “Japanese Infiltration” campaign, however, was not only that they used the Japanese as a means to an end. The SNA campaigns fomented racism, but they also legitimated and organized it. For instance, the yanaconas who spoke against the Japanese in the SNA campaign may have felt racial resentment against the Japanese yanaconas. However, the SNA, an influential institution within Peruvian society, elevated select yanaconas’ personal feelings and framed them as patriotic; what may have remained as individual opinions were instead set against a backdrop of saving the nation from a racial menace. In 1936, the Sindicato Retes y García Alonso was formed on in the Chancay Valley and restricted its membership to “Peruvians only.”<sup>334</sup> Twenty years later the Chancay Valley agricultural settlement La Esperanza, Faron found that the cholo families generally considered the Japanese to be “culturally uncongenial, foreigners forever.”<sup>335</sup> Certainly, the SNA campaign was not unilaterally responsible for those perceptions. However, the cooperative labor alliances of the early 1930s suggest a possible path not taken. Not only did the presence of the Japanese and Okinawan Japanese in the labor actions affect individual relationships, their participation also changed the tenor of the labor organizing in the Valley. In contrast to the Lima-based bakery workers’ union

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<sup>333</sup> Matos Mar, *Yanaconaje Y Reforma Agraria En El Peru : El Caso Del Valle De Chancay*, 46.

<sup>334</sup> Mejía, Díaz Suárez, and Matos Mar, *Sindicalismo Y Reforma Agraria En El Valle De Chancay*, 48.

<sup>335</sup> Faron, *From Conquest to Agrarian Reform : Ethnicity, Ecology, and Economy in the Chancay Valley, Peru: 1533 to 1964*, 120.

that will be discussed in the next chapter, the unions that intervened on behalf of the yanacunas did not racialize the conflict or even Okada, the frequent target of their complaints. In fact, they seldom made any appeal based upon nationalism, but rather focused on “capital versus labor” – regardless of nationality – in concordance with the ideology of the anarchist and communist parties with which they were associated.<sup>336</sup> Not surprisingly, these relationships moved the Valley unions and yanacunas a step away from the one-dimensional racial understandings images promulgated in the press. In this way, the Chancay Valley yanacunas developed a subtle countercurrent to the anti-Japanese movement at the national level.

However at the national level, the 1937 “Japanese Infiltration” campaign effectively propagated the image of the Peru’s Japanese immigrants as a seemingly unstoppable force bent upon possessing Peru. Other articles, to be discussed in future chapters, cemented the ties between the “yellow menace” and eugenics. The rhetoric of the 1937 campaign was repeated not only in other publications, but was also parroted by policymakers and public officials, even in small cities distant from Lima. The language of yellow peril became the organizing grammar for discussing the Japanese, with few voices rising to counteract the rhetoric. In 1940, rioters attacked Japanese businesses in Lima and in Huaral and the atmosphere became increasingly ominous for the Japanese in Peru.

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<sup>336</sup> “Letter from The Federación de Yanacunas y Trabajadores del Valle de Huaral to the Labor Department,” December 6, 1932, in “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los yanacunas del fundo “Jecuan” del Valle Huaral contra Jose Mehasima y Nikumatsu Okada, conductores de dicho fondo sobre abuso,” 18 November 1932, Legajo 6, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #118, AGN. The letter was signed by the unions of yanacunas and braceros on Jecuan, Retes, La Esperanza, Huayán, Caqui, Pasamayo, Boza, and San José.



In July 1941, the Sociedad Japonesa donated a fountain to Huaral's central park in celebration of the district's fiftieth anniversary. Unbeknownst to the gathered parties, within a year the Japanese community would be decimated, lands and businesses confiscated, yanaconas evicted, families deported, the Sociedad Japonesa disbanded, and the Japanese school "Escuela Inca" closed following Japan's attack on the United States in December 1941. In July 1941, however, the Sociedad Japonesa's president Armando Higashi spoke of "our dear town of Huaral" and the fountain as the Japanese community's "grain of sand" in contributing to the district of Huaral's progress, a small way of showing appreciation for the "generous hospitality that Peruvians have shown us." After celebrating Esquivel's Amador del Solar for his role in initiating the Japanese immigration to the Chancay Valley, Higashi turned to the future:

Our children will continue the work that we have begun. They, as authentic Peruvians, supported by the laws that govern us, will continue struggling with resolve to achieve better days, contributing, with their efforts, to the greatness of their country, Peru. This is the labor that is up to them to carry out. It is the mission that they must complete. It is the path that we have shown them that they must follow, work for the land that witnessed their birth.<sup>337</sup>

The Japanese community's loyalty to Peru had been repeatedly attacked in the press. Higashi's words, while not necessarily disingenuous, appear designed to respond to such criticism and emphasize their community's strong ties and contributions to

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<sup>337</sup> Excerpt from "Speech by Armando Higashi," July 1941, as reproduced in Buitron Vda. de Kafiti, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú: Participación De Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En La Agricultura De Huaral*, 1899-1999, 23. Original Spanish: *Nuestros hijos serán los continuadores de la obra que hemos iniciado. Ellos, como auténticos peruanos, al amparo de las leyes nos rigen, seguirán luchando con denuedo a la conquista de días mejores, contribuyendo, con su esfuerzo, al engrandecimiento de su patria, el Perú. Esa es la labor que les corresponde realizar. Esa es la misión que tienen que desempeñar. Ese es el camino que les hemos indicado que deben seguir, trabajar por el suelo que los vio nacer.*

Huaral. In seeming resignation to the notion that Japanese who settled in Peru had not gained inclusion into Peruvian society, Higashi spoke of their children, the “authentic Peruvians” and their possibilities for the future. Or, seen in a different way, Higashi was advocating for the Japanese community’s acceptance on the basis of their “authentic Peruvian” children. Peruvian critics and policymakers, however, were already challenging the authenticity of Peru’s newest Peruvians.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

As class struggles begun in the 1910s spread into Peru’s rural areas in the 1930s, Japanese immigrants attempting to gain a foothold in Peruvian society were drawn into the political battles raging in Peru and a myriad of racialized images of Peru’s Japanese were produced and integrated into the public imaginary. The Japanese, largely from Okinawa, who settled into their lives as yanacunas on the Peru’s cotton haciendas soon discovered that regardless of the inordinate amount of labor they invested in their small chacras, they could just as well end up in debt as turning a profit. In this regard, the Japanese yanacunas shared an economic fate similar to the Peruvian cholo yanacunas, and with them they cast their lot to improve their lives. Peruvian and Japanese workers repeatedly formed class-based alliances to challenge both Peruvian and Japanese (and Chinese) capital enterprises’ paternalistic and exploitative systems on the cotton haciendas. Unlike the 1930-31 strikes, the Japanese and Peruvian yanacunas’ labor complaints wending their way through the Labor Department and the Arbitration Courts captured no headlines and generated little public interest. But the hundreds of yanacunas who signed letters, testified

before the Labor Department, and protested in “everyday” ways were no longer nameless to each other.

In spite of the diverse alliances and fissures that shredded narrow conceptions of national origin and racial solidarity, the SNA and the Peruvian press propagated a reductionist tale of foreign domination and exploitation of impoverished Peruvians by a naturally imperialistic race. The story of Peruvians and Japanese workers struggling cooperatively against the powerful cotton hacendados – Peruvian and Japanese– was suppressed by Peru’s press, largely instruments of an export oligarchy. Instead, they rescripted the class conflicts on the haciendas as a battle between “Japanese” attempting to colonize Peru and “Peruvians” attempting to save the nation. Rife with allusions to yellow peril, the SNA campaign cast the Japanese as the racial and political danger beating in the heart of Peru’s fertile agricultural regions, victimizing the Peruvian yanacona. The Peruvian nation, in contrast, was portrayed as both raceless and classless. With each erasure from Peruvian reality, the Japanese in Peru were deprived of another layer of humanness until they were no more than archetypes only vaguely recognizable to the Japanese Peruvians continuing to live their lives while the storm clouds gathered above them.

The variety of roles that the Japanese and Peruvians played in Chancay Valley life during the 1930s was full of transformative potential: Okada, once a poor immigrant farmer, celebrated by the Valley’s criollo elite and visited by the Peruvian cholo president, or Kamegoro Ishiki, an Okinawan yanacona, joining with José Grau, a cholo yanacona, to take on a company funded by powerful Japanese business

interests. Unfortunately for the Japanese Peruvians and Peruvian society, the Japanese were more useful as a threat, as a mask for others' transgressions, as an unnamed fear, than they were as people contributing their "grain of sand."

## **Chapter Four:**

### **The Butcher, The Baker, and the Hatmaker: Working Class Protests against the Japanese Limeños**

While the number of Japanese in Peru's cities was insignificant during the first decade of the 1900s, Japanese immigrants moved to Peru's coastal urban centers beginning in World War I; by 1920 they totaled 4622 (3724 men and 898 women) in the provinces of Lima-Callao.<sup>338</sup> When contract immigration ended in 1924, the new immigrants from Japan – many wives and “picture brides” – were largely integrated into the small business ventures launched by family members and friends who had sponsored them and paid their passage. In a different era, their seemingly innocuous corner stores, bakeries, and barbershops might have provided them a relatively uneventful livelihood. Peru, however, was in the midst of major societal shifts. Not only had the Japanese immigrants streamed into Lima and other coastal cities in search of opportunity, so had Peruvians from other regions such that Lima-Callao provinces grew from 206,806 residents in 1905/1908 to 276,065 in 1920.<sup>339</sup> Although many of these provincial migrants occupied Lima's most humble professions, they fed into a developing working class movement based in Lima which achieved its first success in 1919 with the establishment of the 8-hour day. Unlike the Chancay Valley in the

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<sup>338</sup> Peru, *Resúmenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*, ed. Dirección de Estadística. (Imp. T. Aguirre, 1921). In 1908, the Japanese in the provinces of Lima-Callao numbered 621 (599 men and 22 women). The province of Lima was composed of the following districts: Ancón, Ate, Carabaylo, Chorrillos, Lima, Lurigancho, Lurín, Magdalena del Mar, Magdalena Vieja, Miraflores, Pachacamac, San Miguel, and Surco. Callao was composed of Callao city's first and second districts, Bellavista, and La Punta. Over 95% of the provincial population of Callao and over 90% of the provincial population of Lima was urban.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid. The Callao census was from 1905 and the Lima census from 1908.

1930s, Japanese immigrant workers remained outside the working class movements, initially filling the domestic service positions largely eschewed by Peruvians and working in the informal sector as street vendors, with the many of the later immigrants securing employment in their compatriots' small business enterprises. Only a small minority of Japanese worked in industrial or artisan jobs, the base of the Peruvian labor movement centered in Lima.

The increasingly organized union movement was led initially by the bakers' union "Estrella de Perú" and subsequently by the Federation of Textile Workers (Federación de Trabajadores de Tejidos del Perú). By 1930s, there were 93 bakeries in Lima employing over 900 workers.<sup>340</sup> Estrella del Perú waged a relentless battle against Japanese bakery owners not only for contract violations, but primarily for replacing Peruvian workers with their countrymen and women. What to the Japanese bakery owner was lending a hand to a recently arrived friend or lowering costs by employing relatives to the unemployed Limeño worker was a fall into a precarious economic existence. As the union movement took up the workers' cause and pressed their case in the political arena, the Japanese-owned businesses were framed as venomous capitalists who acted without regard for the Peruvian worker. Just as the Japanese were racially conceptualized in conjunction with Peru's Chinese immigrants as discussed in Chapter 2, so the Japanese Limeños were characterized in similar

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<sup>340</sup> "Letter from Estrella del Perú to Minister of Government," 1 September 1937, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 366, AGN; "Letter from Jorge Gutiérrez (Estrella del Perú) to Arbitration Court," 4 September 1931, "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por la Federación de Panaderos "Estrella del Perú" contra los industriales de panadería. Presentan pliego de reclamos," Legajo 5, 11 May 1931, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #106, AGN.

terms to the Chinese Limeños who had arrived before them. On another level, the Chinese and the Japanese in Lima were also intimately tied to the provision of food through their butcher shops, pulperías, and bakeries. As Limeños struggled to feed their families in the face of a rising cost of living, more often than not Limeños dropped their centavos into an Asian hand that each time seemed to charge them more and give them less.

The 1930s depression brought with it a rising tide of economic nationalism that largely played out against the Chinese and the Japanese small business owners. While Populist Sanchez Cerro's overthrow of Leguía unleashed a spate of xenophobia in reaction to Leguía's pro-foreign investment and credit policies that left the nation deeply in debt, anti-foreign sentiment soon died down except among the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA) and Communist parties.<sup>341</sup> Instead, capital from the United States, Great Britain, Italy, and Germany continued to dominate virtually every sector of the Peruvian economy: corporations, railways, agriculture, mining, petroleum, manufacturing, and banking.<sup>342</sup> While the rhetoric asserted that its goals were "nationalist," the policies of the period were designed to target Asians. In spite of Peru operating under a dictatorship during most of 1930s, the popular (and middle) classes' demands could not be met solely with repression. Consequently, the Peruvian ruling classes, who regained their firm grip on power in 1933 though the governance of General Oscar Benavides, were alert to concessions

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<sup>341</sup> Both of these parties operated clandestinely from 1931 until the early 1940s.

<sup>342</sup> Ciccarelli, "Peru's Anti-Japanese Campaign in the 1930s: Economic Dependency and Abortive Nationalism," 115.

they could make that would not undermine their economic and political power. The union movement, for its part, was not only focused on improving pay and working conditions for its members, but by the 1930s was also increasingly integrated into national political movements. While the organized working class used a variety of strategies to make its bid for inclusion in the nation, advocating the exclusion of the Japanese was one route to earning its nationalist credentials.

#### **4.1 Lima's *Populacho*<sup>343</sup> and *los Chinos*: 1900 - 1920**

As discussed in Chapter 1, Japanese immigrants entering Peru at the turn of the century stepped into a social structure not only marked by Spanish colonial racism, but also conditioned by the republic's ideological denigration of the Chinese brought to Peru as coolies during the nineteenth century. Occupationally, the Japanese followed in the footsteps of the Chinese in Peru not because of cultural affinity (or biological or racial affinity, as would also be repeatedly assumed in the Peruvian press of the period), but because the Peruvian economy opened – and closed – the same labor spaces to the Japanese as to the Chinese.<sup>344</sup> When Peruvian agriculture rebounded at the end of the nineteenth century, a minority of new Chinese immigrants and Chinese coolies' descendants worked in agriculture.<sup>345</sup> Instead, these two groups joined the flow of rural-to-urban migration, settling in cities up and down Peru's coast but

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<sup>343</sup> *Populacho* can be translated as the masses, the rabble, or a mob.

<sup>344</sup> The Peruvian government, for instance, only financed European colonization in Peru, not Asian.

<sup>345</sup> While the 1931 Lima census notes that any person of mixed heritage should be considered "mestizo," birth records of the era often recorded "mestizo" children with a Japanese or Chinese father as "amarillo" (yellow).



primarily in the capital city of Lima. The Peruvians of Chinese descent, many with Indian or *chola* mothers, could be found in professions ranging from street vendor to wealthy merchant, the latter the case of Santiago Escudero Whu. Most, however, owned small retail businesses or labored in the artisan trades. The Chinese immigrants that came as free immigrants following the cessation of the coolie trade in 1874 commanded sufficient wealth to afford the journey and most were found in professions similar to those of the Chinese Peruvians.<sup>346</sup> However several Chinese immigrant merchants who had established businesses with capital from China and Hong Kong had become notably successful by the early twentieth century, among them Wing On Chong and Company and Pow Lung and Company, and counted stores in the majority of the coastal departments' capital cities.<sup>347</sup>

While the Chinese immigrants and especially Chinese Peruvians were found throughout Peru, by 1910 both groups had concentrated in the city of Lima. Lima and its port city Callao were in the midst of transformations that would only become more pronounced in the subsequent decades. Between 1876 and 1908, the Lima-Callao population increased from 155,486 to 206,806 and jumped another 70,000 between 1908 and 1920. The population of Lima-Callao provinces more than doubled between

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<sup>346</sup> Evelyn Hu, "Chinos Comerciantes En El Perú; Breve Y Preliminar Bosquejo Histórico (1869-1924)," in *Primer Seminario Sobre Poblaciones Inmigrantes : Actas* (Lima, Peru: Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, 1988), 127-31; Augusto Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 1. ed. (San Miguel: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2001), 84-85.

<sup>347</sup> Hu, "Chinos Comerciantes En El Perú; Breve Y Preliminar Bosquejo Histórico (1869-1924)," 130-31. Wing On Chong and Company was founded in 1872 and Pow Lung and Company in 1889. Other important Chinese companies included Hop On Way (1893) and Wing On Long and Company (1881). According to Hu's research, almost all the major Chinese businesses of this period (through 1919) were wholesalers both exporting Peruvian products and importing general merchandise from China, Japan, Europe, and the United States which was then distributed through their affiliate retail stores.

1908 and 1931, reaching 444,016.<sup>348</sup> Not only were the sheer numbers startling for the Peruvian white elite centered in Lima, but also was the fact that mestizos – cholos, mulatos, chino-cholos, zambos – were streaming into their city giving it an altogether different hue.<sup>349</sup> Between 1876 and 1931, the percentage of whites in Lima-Callao dropped from 38% to 32.43%.<sup>350</sup> As if this were not bad enough news for Lima’s self-identified white population, in spite of their sincere efforts to promote European immigration since the mid-nineteenth century, Lima’s immigrant population was “yellow” not “whiter” with each passing year.<sup>351</sup> Lima was esteemed by Peruvian elites as the very heart of Peru, representing their best hope for creating a modern Peru in the model of Europe. However by 1920 immigrants of the “yellow race” numbered 7602, almost on par with 7713 immigrants of the “raza blanca.” Whereas in the nineteenth century foreigners could be counted upon to whiten Lima, by 1931 the number of immigrants from Europe, the United States, and Canada numbered only

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<sup>348</sup> Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931* (Lima: Imprenta Torres Aguirre, 1932); Peru, *Resumenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*. The census categories from 1876 through 1931 were divided into the following “races”: white, mestizo, Indian, black, and yellow. In 1940, the categories were the same with the exception that “white” and “mestizo” were combined into one category.

<sup>349</sup> While mestizos went from representing 22.2% of the population in 1876 to 52.45% in 1931, the “raza india” and “negra” both dropped from 22.3 and 9%, respectively, in 1876 to 7.34 and 3.32% in 1931. “Chino-cholo” was a term used to indicate a person of mixed Chinese and coastal Indian (cholo) ancestry. “Zambo” was used to refer to African-Indian racial mixes.

<sup>350</sup> 1931 census takers felt that Lima-Callao was much less white than it looked on paper. They wrote “It is common for mestizos and Indians to report themselves as white, the blacks as brown or dark-skinned, etc.” Original Spanish: *Así es corriente que los mestizos e indios se anoten como blancos, los negros como morenos o trigueños, etc.* Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931*, 92.

<sup>351</sup> In 1876, the provinces of Lima-Callao were 8.6% “yellow race,” (*raza amarilla*). By 1908 that number had dropped to 3%, but climbed to 3.3% by 1920 and 4.39% by 1931. See Ibid; Peru, *Resumenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*.

9629 in Lima-Callao, while Japanese and Chinese immigrants together had reached 15408 and represented 50 % of the foreign population. European immigration in the early twentieth century was led by the Italians, 3853 of whom were living in Lima-Callao in 1931. While the percentage of Chinese and Japanese immigrants and Peruvians of Asian descent accounted for less than 5% of the population in Lima-Callao, they drew attention in excess of their numbers.<sup>352</sup>

As opposed to the provincial migrants of previous eras, Peruvians in early twentieth-century Lima largely rejected service jobs in the homes of the Lima elite and instead sought positions in the artisan trades, as bakers, cobblers, tailors and seamstresses, carpenters, and hat makers as well as lower status jobs such as bricklayers.<sup>353</sup> Industrial positions in the pre-1920 period lagged behind artisan jobs, although the textile industry was in its early stages of development. By 1908, the industrial and artisan trades employed the largest number of workers in Lima, providing jobs to 16% of Lima's workers.<sup>354</sup> The workers in the trades and industry formed the backbone of the union movement that was steadily gaining ground in the first decades of the twentieth century. The "germ of unionism in Peru" was planted in 1887 when the Sociedad de Obreros Panaderos "Estrella del Perú" (Bakery Workers'

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<sup>352</sup> Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931*; Peru, *Resumenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*.

<sup>353</sup> Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 70-76.

<sup>354</sup> The industrial and artisan sector included factory workers, bakery workers, and primarily artisans such as tailors, seamstresses, cobblers, carpenters, hat makers, blacksmiths, cigarette rollers, etc.

Union) was founded.<sup>355</sup> Beginning in the early 1900s, the bakers' union began developing a labor movement based upon the precepts of anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism, ideologies promoted by northern Italian workers who had immigrated to Lima.<sup>356</sup>

In May 1909, the recently formed Workers' Party (*Partido Obrero*), an ally of the Democratic and Liberal parties, called a public meeting to protest Lima mayor Guillermo Billinghurst's failure to provide an adequate number of polling places in recent congressional elections. The political meeting came two months after news began to circulate in March 1909 that 1,050 Chinese would soon be landing in Callao, which in and of itself had provoked numerous outbursts in the capital.<sup>357</sup> In 1908, the Chinese immigrants numbered 7693 in the provinces of Lima-Callao and were almost exclusively male.<sup>358</sup> On May 9, 1909, following candidate and tailor Fidel Cáceres' speech of the improvements he sought to improve the lives of the 800 assembled people, a young, unnamed male worker took the podium and presented his analysis of the working classes' problem:

There's no work for Peruvian laborers but the Chinese are brought in. There's no work, but there are gambling parlors. There's no work but there are fees and taxes. Will we stand by calmly and watch as we are

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<sup>355</sup> Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 49.

<sup>356</sup> Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 174-75.

<sup>357</sup> Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 105-07. In addition to the mainstream press, the author notes that the anarchist paper *Fray K. Bezón* also published inflammatory stories on Chinese immigration such as in March 1907 when it announced "the next landing of 50,000 macacas (monkeys) on our shores." Original Spanish: *el próximo arribo a nuestra playas de 50,000 macacos*. *Fray K. Bezón*, 30 March 1907, p. 3, as cited on p. 107 in Ruiz Zevallos.

<sup>358</sup> Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931*.

thrown out of our country and are substituted by filthy Chinese? Let's be brave. They want to starve us to death but let's exercise our legitimate right to self-defense.<sup>359</sup>

Long marginalized politically and economically by the Peruvian oligarchy, the mestizo, cholo, and black workers were asserting their claim on Peru as “our country.” Yet the young worker who very effectively stirred his fellow struggling Limeños did not point his finger directly at either the political or economic elites for infringing upon the workers’ rights as Peruvians, most of whom did not have the right to vote because they did not own property and some because they were illiterate.<sup>360</sup> Instead, he said, “the Chinese are brought” but did not say by or for whom. In his honor-infused challenge, he incited the mostly male workers against the Chinese, blaming them for their unemployment and accusing them of introducing immorality. After invoking the language that assured Peru’s most oppressed that they were not the lowest, the crowds roved through Lima attacking the Chinese Limeños they encountered on the street and ransacking Asian stores, shouting vivas to Nicolás de

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<sup>359</sup> *La Prensa*, 10 May 1909, p. 1 and *Ilustración Obrera*, 20 Mayo 1909, Año 1, No. 10, Lima, p. 1 as cited in Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 107. Original Spanish: *No hay trabajo para los obreros peruanos y se trae chinos. No hay trabajo, pero hay casas de juego, no hay trabajo pero hay contribuciones e impuestos. ¿Tendremos valor para ver que tranquilamente se nos echa de nuestro país y se nos sustituye por inmundos chinos? Tengamos coraje. Se nos quiere matar de hambre y demos ejercer el derecho de legítima defensa.*

<sup>360</sup> The property requirement was later eliminated from the 1933 constitution.

Piérola (Democratic party)<sup>361</sup> and “Down with the Chinese, the murderers of the people, the thieves of our bread!”<sup>362</sup>

In 1909, the Chinese immigrants continued to be called the “filthy Chinese,” the nineteenth-century racist insult that conjured up images of sickness and disease. The riots of 1909, however, also christened the Chinese as immoral and selfish thieves – and, in the end, murderers – unconcerned with the wellbeing of the people or *pueblo*, the “common people,” a group from which they were excluded in spite of sharing the lower rungs of the economic ladder with the rioters. Given that “*pueblo*” also carries the meaning “Peruvian people,” we see “Chinese” cast as antithetical to everything “Peruvian,” as if either group lent itself to easy definition. The Japanese would likewise be slipped into this polarized conception that had dangerous ramifications for both groups as they attempted to claim their cultural and legal place within Peru. In the short-term, as a result of the May 9 riot and a second on May 17, the Chinese government signed the Porras-Wutingfang (also known as Porras-Wu) accords on August 28, agreeing to voluntarily suspend Chinese immigration to Peru. The Leguía government announced the suspension of Chinese immigration with great fanfare,

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<sup>361</sup> Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 105. While the Piérola and the Democratic Party was a party of one sector of the Peruvian aristocracy, it and other parties whose class affiliations were similar sought support among the growing middle and urban working class sectors.

<sup>362</sup> *La Prensa*, 10 May 1909, p. 1, as cited in *Ibid.*, 106-10. Ruíz Zevallos writes that the riot was widely reported in Lima’s newspapers such as *La Prensa*, *El Comercio*, *El Diario*, and *El Callao*. He also draws upon sources from the Intendente de Policía, Ministro del Interior, AGN. Original Spanish: *Abajo los chinos, asesinos del pueblo, ladrones de nuestro pan!*

although the Porras-Wu agreement continued to allow the immigration of women and children, as well as merchants upon paying a deposit to the Peruvian government.<sup>363</sup>

The popular classes' violent attacks on the Chinese Limeños were reflective of the white elite's historical miserly rationing of dignity, their power making it easier for workers to turn on the Chinese than against those holding the reins. The political elites, for their part, fomented anti-Asian sentiment through the press which they controlled. While not absorbed wholesale by Peruvian society, the racial hierarchy was a hegemonic project and the working classes were not immune. The Chinese were also viciously attacked on multiple occasions in the nineteenth century. In 1881, two days before Chilean troops entered Lima during the War of the Pacific, crowds burned and ransacked Chinese businesses, killing 300 people, on the pretense that the Chinese had supported the Chileans. That same year, a "mob of negros and cholos" in the Cañete Valley in the Department of Lima killed about 1000 Chinese and attacked white-owned haciendas supposedly over the Chinese undermining the Afro-Peruvian laborers' position by working for lower wages.<sup>364</sup>

At first glance the Chinese seem of little importance to workers in the trades and the industrial sector in 1909, numbering only 649 out of 21,044 in 1908 compared to 19,101 Peruvians in Lima. Their presence, however, in certain sectors was more pronounced. Significantly, Chinese accounted for 13.9% of all bakers, 12.1% of all

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<sup>363</sup> Rodríguez Pastor, *Hijos Del Celeste Imperio En El Perú (1850-1900) : Migración, Agricultura, Mentalidad Y Explotación*, 232.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*, 232-34.

pastry makers, and almost 10% of cobblers in 1908.<sup>365</sup> As mentioned, no sector was better organized and more powerful than the bakers represented by Estrella del Perú. In the midst of Estrella del Perú's battles to increase real wages in the face of the rising cost of living, any additional worker was a potential replacement for a member when they went on strike.<sup>366</sup> While there seems to be little evidence that the Chinese acted as strikebreakers or even replaced Peruvian workers, Estrella del Perú's strategy from the beginning was to exclude the Chinese, and later the Japanese, rather than incorporating them into their unions. To achieve their objective, they launched a political battle to obtain legislation to regulate the number of Asians working in bakeries, but they would have to wait until 1932 to secure legislation to that effect. In the meantime, they continued to utilize extralegal means, including "almost daily hostility" against the Chinese and in extreme cases, rioting.<sup>367</sup>

With the 1909 restrictions on Chinese immigration, the provinces of Lima-Callao's Chinese population dropped from 7693 in 1908 to 4432 in 1920. Over 95% of the Chinese Limeños were men. However, what Lima lost in Chinese immigration, it gained in Japanese immigration (3724 men and 898 women). Consequently, by 1920 Lima was slightly more Asian than in 1908, with the percentage of Lima-Callao

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<sup>365</sup> Based upon the 1908 census as cited in Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 90.

<sup>366</sup> One bakery owner (and also master baker) informed the Estrella del Perú that if they went on strike, he would hire Chinese workers, which he did. Federación de Obreros Panificadores "Estrella del Perú," *Libro de Actas 1914-1916*, folio 42 as cited in *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.



considered classified as the “yellow race” rising from 3% in 1908 to 3.3% in 1920.<sup>368</sup> Public ire over the post-World War I economic crisis, however, would largely be played out upon the Chinese although the Japanese were also caught up in the public frenzy. Whereas the image of Chinese workers snatching bread from Peruvian’s “mouth” was propagated during the previous decade, the unabated increase in the prices of food and basic goods placed the Chinese once again in the line of fire, this time in their role as small business owners.

On May 10, 1919, Lima’s newspaper *La Razón* published the following just days prior to massive protests in Lima organized by the *Comité Pro-Abaratamiento de La Subsistencias* (Committee in Favor of the Reduction in Basic Food Prices):

The Chinese business owners that monopolize the majority of meat distribution constitute a vast parasitical organization, fed and fomented by the contributions of the mass of consumers. The profit margin of these Chinese business owners represents a large sum that significantly increases the price of meat.<sup>369</sup>

With Limeños struggling under the weight of low wages and a rising cost of living, the Chinese were accused of adding the second greatest sin to their first (taking jobs): maintaining prices artificially high through monopolies and “parasitical” practices. Once again the Chinese were framed in polar opposition to the “mass of consumers,”

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<sup>368</sup> Peru, *Resúmenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*.

<sup>369</sup> Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 162. Original Spanish: *Los comerciantes chinos que son los que tienen monopolizada la mayor parte del expendio de carne, constituyen un vasto gremio parasitario, alimentado y fomentado por el tributo de la masa de consumidores. La utilidad de estos comerciantes chinos representa una fuerte suma que grava intensamente el precio de carne.*

as if the 3821 Chinese in Lima were not also consumers and equally victimized.<sup>370</sup>

The “Chinese businessmen” were portrayed as a “vast parasitical association” and because of the fact that many Chinese owned butcher shops (54% by 1921), they were assumed to act in concert.<sup>371</sup> Although used metaphorically, “parasitical” resonated with the disease-ridden Chinese image from the nineteenth century, yet this time presented the Chinese in a position of power over Lima’s residents, ready to exploit them for their own personal enrichment.

Augusto Ruíz Zevallos argues that price collusion was a common practice during this period and no single group was guiltier of the practice than any other.<sup>372</sup> The weekly *La Crítica* gave similar commentary in 1918, noting that Chinese wholesale businesses “not to be outdone by the methods used by businesses of other nationalities” were exercising their monopoly over certain necessities and were forcing prices up.<sup>373</sup> The Chinese were an important presence in most business sectors dedicated to the provision of foodstuffs to Limeño consumers: butcher shops, fondas (inexpensive restaurants), market stalls, and pulperías. Pulperías, similar to a corner store, provided Limeños with many of their daily foodstuffs, especially bread. The Chinese were also important in the provision of coal, which while not a food product

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<sup>370</sup> Peru, *Resumenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*.

<sup>371</sup> 1908-1910 business licenses (matrícula de patentes) show that 53% of the butcher shops were owned by Chinese, per *El Peruano* 1909 (volumes 1 and 2) and 1910 (volume 1); for 1921, *Boletín Municipal*, Year XXI, no. 996, 15 February 1921, p. 7493 as cited in Ruiz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 60.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>373</sup> "Galería De Monopólios," *La Crítica*, May 12, 1918.

was essential for cooking food. In fact, in Lima of the 1910s, the milkman was the only provider of basic food needs that you could almost count on *not* being a Chinese immigrant.<sup>374</sup> When the May 1919 protest and general strike led by the anarchist Comité Pro-Abaratamiento de La Subsistencias for price controls degenerated into wide scale ransacking of businesses associated with the provision of food, Chinese businesses in Lima were hit hard.<sup>375</sup>

Yet Ruíz Zevallos questions why the Italians, who equaled the Chinese in commerce and specifically in pulperías, were not targeted to the degree that the Chinese were.<sup>376</sup> The Italians in Lima-Callao numbered 3240 in 1920 and as such, were the third largest immigrant group following the Chinese and Japanese.<sup>377</sup> More importantly, however, was the fact that both the Chinese and the Italians were overrepresented in commerce, such that of the 13,034 Limeños in the commercial sector, 16% were Chinese and 9.4% were Italian.<sup>378</sup> By 1910, 699 and 698 Lima retail businesses were in the hands of Italians and Chinese, respectively. The Chinese

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<sup>374</sup> Ruíz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 89. According to the 1908 Lima Census, there were two Chinese immigrants making milk deliveries out of a total of 95 in that profession.

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid.*, 153-55.

<sup>376</sup> *La Crónica*, 28 May 1919, p. 5-6 as cited in *Ibid.*, 158. Ruíz Zevallos also refers to the gravity of the attacks on Asians, noting that there were six attempts to burn Chinese, as well as Japanese, establishments. He also notes there were more physical attacks on Asians.

<sup>377</sup> Peru, *Resúmenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*.

<sup>378</sup> Perú, Ministro de Fomento, *Censo de la Provincia de Lima*, Lima, Librería e Imprenta La Opinión Nacional, 1915 as cited in Ruíz Zevallos, *La Multitud, Las Subsistencias Y El Trabajo : Lima De 1890 a 1920*, 89.

owned 341 pulperías and encomenderías (general stores) while the Italians owned 268.<sup>379</sup>

**Table 4.1 Selected Professions of Peruvians and Foreigners (Lima 1908)**<sup>380</sup>

Profession	Peruvians	Chinese	Italians	Others	Total
Coal Distributors	20	18	1	5	43
Butchers	193	206	6	3	408
Hotel Owners and Small Restaurants	10	68	2	2	82
Milk Distributors	86	2	2	5	95
Market Women	224	87	-	5	316
Corner Stores and General Stores (Pulperías & Encomenderías)	6	672	638	66	1382

The comparison with the Italians highlights the fact that the attack on the Chinese was not race neutral or simply a consequence of the fact that Chinese were highly involved in food provision. Instead, we see how industry-wide practices which victimized Limeños were racialized and equated with “Chinese” but not with the Italians whose whiteness guaranteed them a different reception. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Peruvian government sought Italian immigration on the basis that they were part of a superior, white race. Once in Peru, the Italians were quickly accepted into society and many married into Peru’s elite families.

<sup>379</sup> Pedro Paulet, *Directorio del Perú*, Lima, Imprenta del Estado, 1910, pp. 474-514, as cited in *Ibid.*, 91. According to Ruíz Zevallos’ study of the Paulet directory, 65 butcher shops are owned by people with Chinese names. As mentioned previously, massive Chinese immigration from the nineteenth century makes it possible that many of these businesses were owned by Peruvian-born citizens with Chinese surnames. This would be the case even if they had Peruvian mothers, as the Hispanic tradition maintains the father’s name while sometimes dropping the mother’s name in everyday use.

<sup>380</sup> Selected information from Perú, Ministro de Fomento, *Censo de la Provincia de Lima*, Lima, Librería e Imprenta La Opinión Nacional, 1915 as cited in *Ibid.*, 89-90.

As the rioting Limeños unleashed their fury on the Chinese, they were guided by a racial ideology that homogenized the Chinese, making the actions of one, finite group (Chinese butchers), equally attributable to any person resembling the rioters' image (including physical) of the Chinese; hence some Japanese businesses were also attacked. Not only did the Italians largely escape attack, Chinese completely uninvolved with food provision were also attacked. In a similar incident in September 1920 that occurred over flour shortages in the coastal city of Chincha Alta located south of Lima, Chinese businesses without any relationship to flour or food were attacked. Seeming almost resigned, Lung Chon Len's representatives explained in his report to the Chinese Ambassador that their company was ransacked not because of any association with the issues of the protest, but because "in all of the Peruvian mobs' explosions, we Chinese citizens are unfortunately the preferred victims."<sup>381</sup> Seemingly, Peruvian society's woes were manifested over and over again in Asian businesses' broken windows and on their looted shelves.

#### **4.2 Alternative Views of Asians in Lima**

While some Limeños burned Chinese stores in the midst of high emotions during the mentioned riots, other poor residents of the city maintained friendly relations with the Chinese as they frequented their restaurants and stores, sought Chinese herbal remedies to cure their ailments, or married into their families. Among

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<sup>381</sup> "Letter from Lung Chon Len and Company to Chinese Ambassador," 18 November 1926, attached to Peru #8284, Record Group 6-11, 1926, ARE. Lung Chon Len and Company wrote to request payment of reparations from the Peruvian government for damages sustained during the 1920 riots in Chincha Alta riots. Original Spanish: *en todas las explosiones del populacho peruano los ciudadanos chinos somos desgraciadamente las victimas propiciatorias.*

the intellectual commentators, indigenistas Dora Mayer and Miguelina Acosta Cárdenas, editors of *La Crítica*, represented a countercurrent to the seemingly sweeping condemnation of Chinese immigration.<sup>382</sup> In 1918, *La Crítica* criticized the national newspaper *El Tiempo* for its anti-Asian articles, although it led one to believe theirs was a minority opinion by noting that *La Crítica* “is not afraid to oppose prejudices generally accepted by the majority which considers them as legitimate principles for thought and action.”<sup>383</sup> The front-page *La Crítica* article ridiculed *El Tiempo* for publishing stories on the unfairness of Chinese businesses succeeding where Peruvian businesses failed, adding with more than a note of irony:

...it certainly cannot be the degenerate men that have achieved such victories in business and the workplace over our Peruvians, [nor can it be] they who have risen in social position and acquired important businesses such as banks and insurance companies, now circumstances that are cited as a motive for alarm.<sup>384</sup>

*La Crítica* decried working class protests against Asian immigration, telling families not to be fooled by the anti-Asian propaganda when in Chinese fondas (small restaurants) and pulperías “our neediest classes...find prices that they never would in an Italian restaurant or encomendería.”<sup>385</sup> *La Crítica* further commented

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<sup>382</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3, Miguelina Acosta Cárdenas was the anarchist attorney who represented yanaconas, including Japanese yanaconas, in their labor claims of the 1930s.

<sup>383</sup> "El Odio Al Extranjero."

<sup>384</sup> Ibid. Original Spanish: ...no son ciertamente los hombres degenerados los que logran hacer una victoriosa competencia en el comercio y el trabajo a nuestros naturales y elevarse en posición social o los altos negocios de la banca y de las compañías de seguros, circunstancias que se citan como motivo de la alarma actual.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid.

Luckily neither the indigenous nor the Chinese and Japanese nor women, all of whom have always been roundly abhorred, have been swept into the sea, nor has it been felt the void that this would leave if such a bad wish were to come true. The worker, who on his walk to work on the cold mornings receives the assistance of the humble Asian business owner and many other pleasures whose low prices are made possible only by the vilified frugality of the yellow man, would then see that the advantages that [the Asian] accrues with his honorable competition against the Peruvian proletariat are returned to [the Peruvian] in a thousand, unappreciated ways that make his life easier.<sup>386</sup>

During the tense struggles of the early 1900s for better pay, Chinese Limeño workers were demonized and excluded from the political apertures claimed by Lima's incipient working class movement. Chinese businesses, in spite of prospering due to the Peruvian poor's patronage, were excoriated by the Lima press which seemingly found a receptive audience among many of Peru's working class residents. As food prices rose, struggling Limeños bit the hand that often fed them, resentful that they depended on Chinese hands, "the filthy Chinese" in all-too-common vernacular, for their basic needs. While *La Crítica's* questioning of how the "degenerate" Chinese could have achieved success in Peru was rhetorical, a rejoinder was already in circulation. In spite of every level of the Peruvian economy considering it standard business practice to exploit the weakest among them in order to extract maximum profit, the "Chinese" as a race were singled out for their immorality. While other

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<sup>386</sup> "Pro-Indígena." Original Spanish: *Por fortuna no se han barrido al mar todavía ni a los indígenas, ni a los chinos y japoneses ni a las mujeres, de quienes siempre se ha abominado impunemente, sin que haber probado aún el vacío que dejarían si el mal deseo se haría realidad. Vería entonces el obrero, que en camino al trabajo en frías mañanas recibe el socorro de la humilde industria asiática y diversos halagos cuya baratura solo hace posible lo vilipendiada frugalidad del hombre amarillo, que las ventajas que éste arranca con su honrada competencia al proletariado nacional, por el otro se las devuelve con mil pequeñas, inapreciables facilidades a la vida.*

businesses and establishments were attacked during the 1919 riots, they were attacked as “Casa Grace” or “Club Nacional,” not as “white” businesses or establishments.<sup>387</sup>

The image of the Asian business owner as innately lacking in morality not only endured, but numerous permutations sprang from it in response to the changing sociopolitical contexts over the ensuing decades.<sup>388</sup> As the Japanese overtook the Chinese in small retail businesses following World War I, Limeño popular culture issued its social commentary on Lima’s newest Asian residents in a polka that circulated during the 1910s.

<b>LOS JAPONESES</b>	<b>THE JAPANESE</b>
Los nipones son los hombres hombres de la situación, porque tienen el negocio de vender el té con el ron.	The Japanese are the men men of the moment because they have the business of selling tea with rum
Pues así como hacen plata, esta gente mal venida manteniéndose en el negocio de vender agua cocida.	Well that’s how they make money these people who never should have come earning a living with the business of selling boiled water.
II Yo japonés te quiero mucho a ti; dame un pan con pescao frito,	II I, Japanese love you so much give me bread with fried fish,

<sup>387</sup> The Chinese were not the only targets, but they were inordinately the victims. In the 1919 protest, centers of elite power such as the Casa Grace, Club Nacional, Club Italiano, and the newspaper central offices of *La Prensa* and *El Comercio* were also attacked. Casa Grace was a large business enterprise owned by United States capital and Club Nacional was a club of Peru’s most elite men.

<sup>388</sup> While I am not suggesting that this image was born in 1919 in Peru (Evelyn Hu has found similar portrayals as early as 1870), I am arguing that this image was solidified during this period. It should also be noted that in the late nineteenth century, Jews in Peru were similarly accused of taking advantage of Peruvians’ vices to make money. See Kristal, *Una Visión Urbana De Los Andes : Génesis Y Desarrollo Del Indigenismo En El Perú, 1848-1930*, 71.



dos centavos de cancha y un poquito de ají.	two cents worth of fried corn and a little hot sauce.
Si tú no hubieras venido desde el Asia a mi nación, nunca habiéramos bebido el famoso “té con ron”.	If you wouldn’t have come from Asia to my nation, we never would have drunk The famous “tea with rum.”
III Como aquí en Lima tenemos de borrachos la mar, el licor lo que corre, nadie deja de chupar.	III Since here in Lima we have a sea of drunks, the liquor that flows, nobody stops drinking.
Los nipones ¡viento en popa! aprovechan la ocasión, como los otros de Europa, con el vino y con el ron.	Japanese: Full speed ahead! take advantage of the occasion like the others from Europe with wine and with rum.

In terms nearly identical to the portrayal of the Chinese of the previous decades, the Japanese business men were cast as preying upon the Limeños, who in this song are presented as the perfect victims given their great fondness for liquor.<sup>389</sup> In this way, the polka is also reminiscent of Felipe Boisset’s accusations of the Chinese gambling and opium houses taking advantage of the criollos’ many vices (see Chapter 1).<sup>390</sup> The Japanese were once again presented in Orientalist terms as wiley and deceitful, offering Limeños inexpensive sustenance with one hand while feeding their addictions with the other. Finally, the song laments Limeños’ dependency on “these people who never should have come.”

<sup>389</sup> “El Cancionero de Lima,” mid-1910s as cited in Rodríguez Pastor, *Lo Japonés En Polkas Criollas De Antaño* ([cited]). The complete text of the song is reproduced in Rodríguez Pastor’s article.

<sup>390</sup> Felipe M. Boisset, *El Problema Racial en el Perú (o el peligro de la raza amarilla)*, Lima: Empresa Tipográfica Union, 1919, pp. 20, 22, 28 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 88-89.

### 4.3 Peruvian Workers and *los Japoneses*

The first Japanese immigrants to Peru received a less than auspicious welcome in Lima's port city of Callao. Initially they were hustled off to the plantations without incident when they arrived in 1899. However, dozens of Japanese men soon fled back to Callao, asking to be returned to Japan upon realizing that the plantations had no intention of complying with the pay and conditions promised to them by the Morioka Emigration Company. The Morioka Company housed them in Callao while attempting to cajole them into returning to the plantations. By early 1900, however, Morioka representative Teikichi Tanaka reported that Peruvian workers were complaining to the Callao government about the presence of the Japanese.<sup>391</sup> Tanaka dismissed Peruvian workers' opposition, saying they had been "egged on by a group of schemers who disliked the existing Peruvian regime." Yet soon thereafter a Peruvian man stabbed a Japanese man in the head on the streets of Callao and when he and his two Japanese companions set upon the attacker, another man fired a gun at the Japanese. The three Japanese men caught the gunman and, together with other Japanese men who joined in the melee, left the gunman "a pitiful sight" according to

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<sup>391</sup> "Report from Tanaka to Emigration Company," 1900, as excerpted in Masukawa, "The Modern State and Nationals Beyond Its Boundaries : Reflections on Japanese Nationals in Peru Who Left Japan before World War II", 331. Tanaka wrote that the workers had "submitted a petition to the government requesting the exclusion of Japanese laborers."

Tanaka.<sup>392</sup> In March 1900, the Japanese were again attacked, this time by approximately 300 Peruvians who threw rocks at the quarters in Callao.<sup>393</sup>

The attacks on the Japanese in Callao are indicative not only of the legitimacy that anti-Asian violence enjoyed, but also how easily the category of “Asian,” generally synonymous with Chinese at the turn-of-the-century, stretched to include the Japanese.<sup>394</sup> The Japanese government officials, for their part, had their own racial ideology which considered the Chinese inferior to the Japanese and was used as the justification for Japan’s colonization of China and other Asian countries. The Japanese government attempted to separate the Japanese immigrant’s image from that of the Chinese in Peru. While many Limeños and other Peruvians would come to know the Japanese and Chinese as distinct communities, the differentiation did not necessarily produce an acceptance of the Japanese. In the words of Peruvian writer Felipe M. Boisset who, after writing about the negative effects of Chinese immigration on Peru, added, “We can say as much, although on a lesser scale, about the Japanese:

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<sup>392</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1," 449. “The term “Asian” has been used for some time in Peru as a synonym for Chinese (*chino*).”

<sup>393</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 2," 649. An anonymous letter signed “an immigrant” was sent to the Japanese Foreign Office saying that 350 Peruvians had attacked their quarters and 15 Japanese had suffered injuries. Ryoji Noda, chancellor of the Mexican legation, investigated the incident and determined that 250 Peruvians had attacked the quarters and no one was injured. Noda may have dismissed the allegations of injury as a pretext of the Japanese workers to secure their return to Japan or because the Japanese officials consistently downplayed Peruvian opposition to Japanese immigration due to the racial implications they found unacceptable, i.e., the Japanese were considered racially inferior.

<sup>394</sup> "El Odio Al Extranjero."

they are the antithesis of the ideal that we pursue.”<sup>395</sup> Yet during the twenty years following the incidents of 1900, the majority of the Japanese whose lives were lived on the sugar plantations existed beyond the public consciousness of the majority of Peruvians.

By 1908, the Japanese had begun to migrate to Peruvian cities although their economic situation was often quite precarious. Of the 621 Japanese living in Lima-Callao, the majority was working as domestic employees and a similar number was unemployed.<sup>396</sup> The Japanese had begun to venture into the barbershop business, many beginning as employees and subsequently opening their own because of the low capital outlay required. A 1909 visit by the secretary of the Japanese consul from Chile, Keiichi Ito, lamented the sorry state of the Japanese in Peru who were “poorly dressed,” working for the Chinese, and selling sweets in the streets.<sup>397</sup> Ito added, “Although ten years have passed since the first group arrived, I must say that, all things considered, they made no success worth of mention. In some respects, things

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<sup>395</sup> Felipe M. Boisset, *El Problema Racial en el Perú (o el peligro de la raza amarilla)*, Lima: Empresa Tipográfica Union, 1919, pp. 20, 22, 28 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*.

<sup>396</sup> Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931*. Also see “Informe de la situación de los inmigrantes japoneses en el Perú” of Secretary Ito of the Japanese Embassy in Chile, after his visit to Peru in July 1909, in Nihonjin Peru-Ijushi Henshiu Inaki, p. 80 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 190-92.

<sup>397</sup> “Informe de la situación de los inmigrantes japoneses en el Perú” del secretario Ito de la embajada japonesa en Chile, after his visit to Peru in July 1909. Cited in Nihonjin Peru-Ijushi Henshiu Inaki, op. cit., p. 80 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 190-92.

have almost ended in failure.”<sup>398</sup> A June 1914 occupational survey by the Japanese Embassy in Chile discovered improvement in the lot of the Japanese, with unemployment having dropped significantly. While the vast majority of the immigrants continued to work in agriculture (2,310 men; 86 women), the second most common area of employment for Japanese immigrants in 1914 was industry. While the numbers were small – 478 men and 27 women – they demonstrate that the some Japanese were industrial laborers.<sup>399</sup>

With the onset of World War I, however, the Japanese finally established their foothold in commerce, primarily by purchasing establishments from Chinese and Italian immigrants and opening up new ones to meet the demand of the urban centers’ growing population. During World War I, Japanese-owned general stores jumped from 4 to 43 and grocery stores from 28 to 200. By 1919, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce formed in 1915 in Lima counted 108 members.<sup>400</sup> In 1930, Japanese Limeños owned 428 bodegas (general stores), 264 coffee shops, 191 barbershops, 148 carpentry shops, 122 restaurants, 122 charcoal distributors, 63 bazares (slightly more upscale general stores), 47 tailor shops, 39 vegetable stands, and 37 hardware

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<sup>398</sup> Japanese Government, *Emigration Report No. 5*, as cited in Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 2," 653.

<sup>399</sup> Information from “Informe de la situación de los inmigrantes japoneses en el Perú” del secretario Ito de la embajada japonesa en Chile, after his visit to Peru in July 1909, in Nihonjin Peru-Ijushi Henshiu Inaki, op. cit., p. 80 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 193.

<sup>400</sup> Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 2," 662-63.

stores.<sup>401</sup> While many Japanese immigrants slowly accumulated capital to begin their small businesses, some also benefited from the Japanese community's revolving credit associations, *tanomoshi*.<sup>402</sup> The large Japanese-owned companies, a minority, generally drew upon capital from investors in Japan.

By 1920, there were 3724 Japanese men and 898 Japanese women living in the provinces of Lima-Callao. Those numbers had risen dramatically by 1931, reaching 9782 (6761 men; 3021 women). The Japanese, however, never surpassed 2% of the total population in Lima because Lima was growing at breakneck speed.<sup>403</sup> That is not to say, however, that Japanese immigration went unnoticed. The 1931 census, for instance, pointed out that the comeback in Asian immigrants in Lima-Callao was the direct result of the growth in Japanese immigration.<sup>404</sup>

As growing numbers of Japanese scraped together enough capital to go into small retail, they entered on a collision course with Lima's incipient urban labor movement. With a few notable exceptions, especially when compared to the United States or Great Britain, most Japanese businesses could barely provide employment for their family, let alone be considered the capitalist enemies of labor. In the area of manufactures, the Japanese owned factories fabricating automobile parts, hats, light

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<sup>401</sup> Peru Shimpo Sha (Editorial Peru Shimpo S.A.), *Japanese Immigration to Peru, 75th Anniversary, 1899-1974*, Japanese section, Lima 1974, 67-68, 93 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 197.

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.*, 194-95.

<sup>403</sup> Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931*; Peru, *Resumenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*.

<sup>404</sup> Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931*, 92.

bulbs, lumber, furniture and a brewery. The first three, including Y.S. Ichikawa, were formed with capital from Japan and all employed Japanese and Peruvians.<sup>405</sup>

However, it was in the artisan businesses – especially bakeries – in Lima that the Japanese business owners incurred the ire of the labor unions of Lima, launching the Japanese into the public arena as enemies of the Peruvian working class. Already in the 1919, Japanese stores were among the collateral damage of the riots during the general strike for affordable subsistence food items. By the 1920s, however, the Japanese business owners would become a primary target in their own right.

Fresh from its 8-hour-day victory one year earlier, the Federación de Obreros Panaderos “Estrella del Perú” negotiated a collective agreement between its members and the collected bakery owners of Lima in October 1920. When the Japanese owner of the “Pampa de Lara” bakery S. Hirabayasi replaced his seven-member staff – all Estrella del Perú members – with Japanese workers on February 4, 1921, the union quickly filed a complaint with the Labor Department. The union alleged that the new workers had not been medically certified and were not registered members of Estrella del Perú, both violations of the 1920 agreement. The Estrella del Perú also “warned” the Labor Department that union members had been replaced by Japanese, in spite of the fact that subject was not contemplated in the aforementioned 1920 agreement. Estrella del Perú threatened a strike unless the issues were resolved.<sup>406</sup> Quickly

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<sup>405</sup> Irie, “History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1,” 73.

<sup>406</sup> “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por la Federación de Obreros Panaderos “Estrella del Perú” contra el dueño de la Panadería “Pampa de Lara”, S. Hirabayasi, sobre retiro de obreros nacionales para sustituirlos por japoneses,” 10 February 1921, Legajo 1, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #13, AGN.

making preparations for a strike, the union's Administrative Committee issued a call to arms to all its members in a February 10 flyer. The Committee described the Pampa de Lara owner as a "haughty and despotic" who had refused to recognize the union's representatives. Calling its members to attend a general assembly on February 12 to discuss the Pampa de Lara case, the Committee continued:

Such a great violation, such a trampling of our association, this unheard of stripping of work from union members, fathers of families, should not go unpunished...[the union] should prepare to launch a general strike, if necessary, to win our rights as union members and to regain the bread which has been torn from the mouths of the union members, replaced by Japanese, this all-consuming and despotic race, that later will attempt to monopolize all of the work.

Compañeros: erasing our differences for the moment, reaching our hands out to our exploited brothers in the face of the Japanese danger [or peril], everyone attend...

Topic of discussion – Is it necessary to launch a general strike to ask for the maximum use of unionized and Peruvian workers in all of the Japanese and Chinese bakeries?<sup>407</sup>

The dispute ended quickly when S. Hirabayasi signed a conciliatory agreement with Federation representatives Javier Sánchez, Virgilio Rachiní, Juan E. Arana y Fernando

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<sup>407</sup> "Al Gremio de Panaderos," 10 February 1912, in "Expediente ... Pampa de Lara," 10 February 1921, Legajo 1, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #13, AGN. Original Spanish: *Tamaño violación, tan grande atropello a nuestra asociación, ese despojo inaudito del trabajo que tenían federados padres de familia no debe quedar impune...debe prepararse para ir a un paro del gremio en general, si necesario es para hacer triunfar nuestros derechos de asociados y conquistar el pan que se les arrebató a los federados reemplazándolos por japoneses que más tarde han de pretender monopolizar todo el trabajo para esa raza absorbente y despótica. Compañeros: borrando divergencias del momento, estrechando nuestras manos de hermanos explotados ante el peligro japonés, concurrir todos... Orden del día -- ¿Es necesario ir al paro gremial para pedir la aceptación máxima de obreros federados y nacionales en todas las panaderías de japoneses o chinos?*



Espinar on February 14 stipulating that 40% of Hirabayasi's workers would be Japanese and 60% Peruvian.<sup>408</sup>

In spite of Hirabayasi employing a mere seven workers, his actions at Pampa de Lara came close to provoking a general strike of bakery workers. Why? In spite of their movement having achieved a modicum of power, the Pampa de Lara case seemed to be a repeat of their problems with the Chinese during the previous decades: Japanese workers were depriving Peruvian workers – “parents of families” – of their livelihood. The Japanese were described as “monopolizing all the work,” similar to the Chinese monopoly over certain sectors.<sup>409</sup> In reality, all foreigners combined owned only 11 bakeries in the city of Lima, while Peruvians owned 19.<sup>410</sup> Different from the Chinese, the Japanese were identified as “an all-absorbing and despotic race” and a “danger” and Hirabayasi particularly was characterized as a “haughty and despotic Japanese man.”<sup>411</sup> While the union was certainly accustomed to encountering “haughty and despotic” business owners among the white Peruvian and European owners, the notion that a Japanese man would feel he had the right to treat Peruvians similarly fed into the offended state of the union members. Peruvian sugar

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<sup>408</sup> “Expediente ... Pampa de Lara,” 10 February 1921, Legajo 1, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #13, AGN.

<sup>409</sup> “Expediente ... Pampa de Lara,” 10 February 1921, Legajo 1, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #13, AGN.

<sup>410</sup> Peru, *Resúmenes Del Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 17 De Diciembre De 1920*. While the nationality of the foreign owners is not indicated in this data, future trends suggest that Italians already outnumbered the Japanese.

<sup>411</sup> “Orgullosa” can be translated as either proud or haughty, but given the negative tone I have chosen the latter.

plantation managers used almost identical language in criticizing protesting Japanese sugar workers' attitude (Chapter 2).

While the conflict at Pampa de Lara played out locally, its referents were global. Peruvians throughout society believed that there was a world racial hierarchy in which Asians had been classified as inferior. The fact that mestizo or cholo workers were in the process of challenging the racial hierarchy in their own country did not necessarily change their ingrained ideas about Asians' low place in the world. The Japanese immigrating to Peru in the early twentieth century had also been educated about their racial place in the world. Japanese subjects were taught that they were superior to all other Asians and were the equals of white Western Europe and the United States, regardless of those regions' beliefs to the contrary.

The union's description of the Japanese as "all-consuming" and the warning of the "Japanese danger" connected directly with the transnational ideology of yellow peril, or the Japanese consuming and overwhelming everything in their midst. The terms "all-absorbing," "despotic," and "dangerous" were the words of choice used in describing the Japanese immigrants in Peru in the anti-Japanese press campaigns of the 1930s. The Chinese were also often swept up in these racial descriptions that carried connotations of aggressivity, in spite of the fact that China was a victim of Japanese military actions. Indeed, in the Pampa de Lara example, the action was framed to target the Japanese *and* Chinese businesses. The Italian-owned bakeries, whether owned by Italian immigrants or their offspring born in Peru, escaped the racialized attacks at least in part because of their classification as desirable "whites."

The Italian anarchist workers may have also contributed to a differentiated view of the Italian bakery owners. Rather than considering the Italian bakery owners' behavior as an inherent racial characteristic, they were classified in the standard parlance as simply oppressive capitalists or petty bourgeoisie, a function of their position in a class-based society rather than of their race,

Estrella del Perú actively advocated not only the exclusion of the Japanese from the workplace, but also from entering the country. For the Estrella del Perú leadership, they were the Japanese race, not fellow workers. The Japanese workers may have reinforced their conflation with their Japanese employers either by remaining passive or allying with the Japanese owner for a variety of motives: a self-interested position to keep their jobs, greater cultural affinity with the Japanese owners than with the Peruvian workers, familial or friendship ties with the owner, or insecurity as immigrants who did not speak Spanish well in a country they did not know well. However, the Chancay Valley yanaconas' activism lends credence to the theory that many Japanese workers may have been reacting to the Peruvian unions' exclusion of them and aggression against them. Also of note, the Japanese working class in Japan was fighting similar struggles to those of the Peruvian laborers. Much like Peru, initially the protests were spontaneous and volatile, provoked by economic hardship and rising food prices during the post-WWI depression. The initial years following WWI were a period of heady development for the Japanese labor movement under the influence of communist, anarchist, and socialists, and the labor protests multiplied exponentially during the 1920s. Japanese women largely employed in the

textile factories joined union-led strikes with the same vigor as their male counterparts, playing their most renowned role in the Toyo Muslin Company strike in 1930 in which they physically fought the company thugs attempting to break the strike and threw rocks at the police. Similar to Peru, the Japanese government repressed the most radical elements of the leftist workers' movements, brutally assassinating anarchists Sakae Osugi and Ito Noe, also a feminist, in 1923. While labor disputes were still common into the 1930s, the Japanese state had largely co-opted the union movement by 1931 by approving limited social reforms and partnering with moderate elements while repressing those seeking systemic changes.<sup>412</sup> Many Peruvian government officials in the administrations of Luis Sánchez Cerro and dictator Oscar Benavides, the latter with fascist leanings, were admirers of the Japanese government's measures for controlling leftists.<sup>413</sup>

#### 4.4 Restricting Japanese Workers

While the Estrella del Perú federation monitored Japanese bakeries and fought to limit the number of Japanese employees, they also sought legislation to achieve this goal as early as 1922. In a June 1922 letter to the Director of the Labor Department, Estrella del Perú president Simon Morales requested the intervention of the

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<sup>412</sup> For analysis of the labor movement in Japan, see Garon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan*; Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan*. For an analysis of Japanese women's working class consciousness, Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno, *Gendering Modern Japanese History, Harvard East Asian Monographs ; 251* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center : distributed by Harvard University Press, 2005); E. Patricia Tsurumi, *Factory Girls : Women in the Thread Mills of Meiji Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990).

<sup>413</sup> "Letter from Foreign Relations to Ministry of Government," 3 October 1935, Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 352, AGN.

Department at a Japanese-owned bakery where the owner had replaced Peruvian operators with Japanese workers. Morales reminded the director of their agreement with the Pampa de Lara bakery to limit Japanese employees to 40%. Morales wrote that union was willing to accept such percentages for the time being, although noted, "...the Federation has presented a memorandum to the Ministry of Foment requesting a general law that limits to ten percent [the number] of foreign workers in any workshop or factory, with the objective of ensuring that this country's workers are not thrown out of work."<sup>414</sup>

The Federation, however, would have to wait for the overthrow of the Leguía government and the onset of the worldwide economic depression in 1930 before obtaining their legislation. While Leguía had achieved the presidency in 1919 by presenting himself as a friend of the middle and working classes, it soon became clear that he would not take any measures that would impinge upon the financial and political interests of the Peruvian oligarchy or influential foreign companies. Leguía had long been associated with Japanese immigration because of his role in securing Japanese laborers for Peruvian agriculture while manager of the British Sugar company. In spite of Leguía's social relationship with Japanese consul Seizaburo

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<sup>414</sup> "Letter from Morales to Director of Labor Department," 24 June 1922, "Expediente relativo a la reclamación presentada por la Federación de Obreros Panaderos "Estrella del Perú" contra el propietario de la panadería de la Avenida España sobre cumplimiento de la jornada de 8 horas y reemplazo de obreros peruanos por japoneses," 28 June 1922, Legajo 3, Ministro de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #57, AGN. In a meeting with the Labor Department and representatives of Estrella del Perú on June 28, 1922, the owner agreed to respect the agreements with the union and promised that not more than 40% of the workforce would be Japanese. Original Spanish: ... *la Federación tiene presentada ante el Ministerio de Fomento un memorial pidiendo una ley de character general, que establezca un diez por ciento de obreros extrangeros en cada taller ó fábrica, á fin de que el obrero del país no se vea arrojado del trabajo...*

Shimizu (1922-1925) and his wife Miyoko Shimizu, Leguía prioritized white immigration, signing a 1922 Executive Decree which offered to pay the travel costs to Peru of “any immigrant of the white race.”<sup>415</sup> The Japanese were not afforded any incentives, but neither were they restricted if the sponsorship requirements were met. Similarly, the Peruvian laws protecting workers in the 1920s did not discriminate against non-citizens. For instance, César Hoshi, a Japanese salesman and collection agent for the Japanese community newspaper *La Crónica de los Andes (Andes Jiho)*, filed a grievance with the Labor Department in 1927. Hoshi demanded that owner Susumu Sakuray indemnify him for firing him without sufficient notice per Law 4916. His claim was never resolved because he left to accompany infirm family members to Japan, but the Labor Department processed his case without comment on his citizenship status.<sup>416</sup>

While the Lima daily *El Tiempo* continued to sporadically publish rants against “yellow” immigration to Peru throughout the mid-1920s, the plight of Peruvian workers faded into the background during this period of relative economic stability. Estrella del Perú’s flurry of cases before the Department of Labor in 1922 dropped off until 1930, although occasional expressions of worker resentment of the Japanese

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<sup>415</sup> Perú, *Memoria de Relaciones Exteriores 1922*, Lima, pp. 113-114 as cited in Gardiner, *The Japanese and Peru, 1873-1973*, 76.. The Japanese government denounced this decree based upon the treaty of 1895. Peru modified the decree, but rescinded the treaty of 1895.

<sup>416</sup> “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por César Hoshi, ciudadano japonés contra la empresa editora “La Crónica de los Andes” sobre indemnización por despido,” 5 May 1927, Legajo 15, Tribunal Arbitral Expediente 918 re: Ley del Empleado, Ministro de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #297, AGN.

occasionally appeared.<sup>417</sup> The Japanese consul Shimizu, for instance, received a letter on May 10, 1924, from Miguel Vilela, self-identified as a “leader of a workers’ group,” requesting that he resolve the problem of “the Japanese occupying all the best houses” such that workers “from here [Peru] cannot find comfortable houses to live in.” Vilela warned Shimizu that the resentful parties might “take revenge for the damage you’ve done to them and they are capable of appearing at your house...”<sup>418</sup>

Colonel Luis Sánchez Cerro’s August 1930 military overthrow of Leguía was greeted with general public euphoria after 11 years of dictatorship. The oligarchy accepted Sánchez Cerro, a *cholo* military officer, initially with reservations, but was soon reassured that he had no intention of undermining their interests in spite of his populist rhetoric. According to Steve Stein, Sánchez Cerro found his base among the marginalized urban poor who saw Sánchez Cerro as a fellow *cholo* and responded positively to his paternalistic persona and the charity he bestowed on Peru’s poorest, especially in Lima. In the midst of economic insecurity, Sánchez Cerro preached morality and nationalism rather than any political or economic re-vamping of the Peruvian system.<sup>419</sup> To this end, he issued a series of executive decrees including a temporary suspension of immigration on September 15, 1930. This decree was altered

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<sup>417</sup> Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, 1921-1937, AGN.

<sup>418</sup> “Letter from Minister Shimizu to Peruvian Minister of Foreign Relations César A. Elguera,” Attachment, 13 May 1924, Record Group 6-18, ARE. In his letter to Elguera, Shimizu describes the content of the letter as “revealing an unreasonable discontent.” Elguera turned the threatening letter over to the Lima Prefecture.

<sup>419</sup> Steve Stein, *Populism in Peru: The Emergence of the Masses and the Politics of Social Control* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980).

the following year to allow immigrants to enter Peru if sponsored and upon payment of a fee.<sup>420</sup>

While the oligarchy hoped that Sánchez Cerro would take a firm hand against the unrest seething in the streets, the first three years of 1930 were nothing less than social mayhem in Peru. De rigeur, nearly 100 Japanese businesses were attacked between 1930 and 1932 as Limeños and others in Peru's provincial cities rioted with the overthrow the Leguía, during the 1931 elections, and in 1932 when a short-lived civil war exploded.<sup>421</sup> During this period, much of the government's attention was focused on battling the populist and left-leaning party, *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana* (APRA). APRA leader Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre had made a strong showing in the 1931 elections and in 1932, APRA launched a military challenge to the Sánchez Cerro government which was quickly and brutally repressed. Sánchez Cerro, however, had also made it clear that he was no friend of labor, nor anarchists, socialists, or communists, and he supported repression over concessions.

When Estrella del Perú filed a industry-wide grievance against the Sociedad de Industriales de Panadería (Society of Bakery Owners) in May 1931, Peru's economic and political panorama had changed significantly from the 1919-1920 era when the

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<sup>420</sup> "Memorandum from Ministry of Foreign Relations to Ministry of Government," 1 October 1931, Record Group 2-0-A, ARE.

<sup>421</sup> Japanese Claims File, 1930-1932, ARE. Multiple foreign legations, including the Chinese, Italian, and United States, presented claims to Peruvian government on behalf of their citizens for damage to properties during this tumultuous period.



union secured its early collective agreements.<sup>422</sup> Revealing its weakened position, Estrella del Perú's grievance filed with the Labor Department in May 1931 was devoid of the ultimatums of the 1920s. The Society of Bakery Owners, represented by Juan B. Mazzi (Lechugal), Arturo Lugón (Barbones), and Tomás Persivale (La Torrecilla), took advantage of the Federation's grievance to attack closed shop provisions contained in a collective agreement signed after the 1919 strike.<sup>423</sup> Estrella del Perú defended its closed shop by insisting that membership in their union was open to all bakery workers regardless of "race, nationality, or religion" and that they had "Japanese, Italians, Chinese, etc." among their 869 members. In fact, they claimed only 30 bakery workers in Lima were not in their union.<sup>424</sup> Despite their claims as to the openness of their union, their grievance demanded that foreign-owned bakeries limit their employment of foreigners to 25% and that 75% of the staff be comprised of "true Peruvians [peruanos natos]." They also added that bakery owners that currently employed Peruvians could not replace them with foreigners.<sup>425</sup> The idea of "true Peruvians" was often used as coded language for a racially and culturally exclusive notion of citizenship which excluded Asians. While the Federation believed they were attacking Japanese bakery owners with this provision, the Society of Bakery Owners

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<sup>422</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por la Federación de Panaderos "Estrella del Perú" contra los industriales de panadería. Presentan pliego de reclamos," 11 May 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #106, AGN.

<sup>423</sup> "Expediente ...contra los industriales de panadería," 11 May 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #106, AGN.

<sup>424</sup> "Letter from Jorge Gutiérrez (Estrella del Perú) to Arbitration Court," 4 September 1931, "Expediente ...contra los industriales de panadería," 11 May 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #106, AGN.

<sup>425</sup> "Expediente ...contra los industriales de panadería," 11 May 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #106, AGN.

was largely composed of foreign bakery owners – Italian and Japanese – and showed little inclination to allow the Federation to dictate the nationality of those they could hire. The final agreement, signed three years later, eliminated the provision. However prior to a final resolution of the Federation’s grievance, the Federation at last achieved legal restrictions on foreigners in the workplace through the Congreso Constituyente.<sup>426</sup>

Following the 1931 elections, a Congreso Constituyente (Constitutional Congress) was convened on December 8, 1931 and charged with rewriting the 1920 constitution as well as enacting legislation until a regular Congress could be elected. The new Peruvian constitution was promulgated on April 9, 1933 and the Congreso Constituyente continued to function as a legislative body until 1936, albeit with limited practical power during the Benavides dictatorship which began following Sánchez Cerro’s assassination in 1933.<sup>427</sup> On April 8, 1932, the Congress passed Law 7505, capping the number of foreign employees in all business and industrial establishments at 20 per cent.<sup>428</sup> Some Congressional representatives had connections to the union movement and specifically the bakery workers’ union, such as indigenista and socialist Hildebrando Castro Pozo. In 1934, Castro Pozo represented the Sociedad “Gremio de Panaderos del Callao” in their negotiations and secured an agreement

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<sup>426</sup> “Expediente ...contra los industriales de panadería,” 11 May 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #106, AGN.

<sup>427</sup> Peru and José Pareja Paz Soldán, *Las Constituciones Del Perú; Exposición, Crítica Y Textos* (Madrid,: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1954), 317-23.

<sup>428</sup> “Personal peruano en las Empresa nacionales y extranjeras y vacaciones,” Peru and Eduardo García Calderón, *Constitución, Códigos Y Leyes Del Peru : Recopilados Y Concordados*, 4a ed. (Lima: Librería e Imprenta Gil, 1942), 2492-93.

expanding the provisions set out in Law 7505.<sup>429</sup> Even for those representatives whose allegiances lay with the elite classes, 1932 Peru was not a propitious moment to be seen as favoring foreign workers over Peruvians. Unemployment was skyrocketing and the social order was in shambles as Apristas challenged the Sánchez Cerro government. The law was passed without debate.<sup>430</sup>

Following the passage of 7505, however, opponents quickly made their views known, requesting changes and exceptions according to their constituencies. Lauding the “eminently nationalist” goal of the legislation, the Chamber of Commerce of Lima, like the Society of National Industries (SNI, Sociedad Nacional de Industrias), requested an exception for foreign technicians, citing a national shortage.<sup>431</sup> The United States Ambassador in Peru, Fred Morris Dearing, was also intimately involved in revising Law 7505, the exceptions to which were established in Law 7735 promulgated on April 5, 1933.<sup>432</sup> Several of Peru’s largest companies, such as the

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<sup>429</sup> “Expediente ...contra los industriales de panadería,” 11 May 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #106, AGN. In January 1934, an agreement was signed between the bakery owners of Callao, represented by Alfredo de Ferrari, Justino Gutiérrez, and Agosto M. Papi, and the Sociedad “Gremio de Panaderos del Callao” represented by attorney Hildebrando Castro Pozo and workers J.M. Díaz Garviso, Herminio Chuga, C. Arias, Ricardo Castillo, Edilberto Paredes, and Pablo L. Martínez. Article 12 of their agreement stipulated that 80% of all personnel must be Peruvian and that they could not fire Peruvian workers to replace them with foreign workers. Castro Pozo was also the author of the bill which sought to provide protections for yanacunas but was vetoed by Benavides in 1934.

<sup>430</sup> Peru, “Diario De Los Debates Del Congreso Constituyente,” (1931-1936), 1974-81. The Commission responsible for the drafting of the law on March 12, 1932 was composed of Congressmen Félix Cosío, Emilio Venero, Luiz Velazco Aragón, C. Chirino Pacheco, and Luis R. Casanova.

<sup>431</sup> “La Ley 7505 Y Los Empleados Extranjeros,” *Boletín de la Cámara de Comercio de Lima* 5, no. 61 (1934): 345-47; Sociedad Nacional de Industrias, “Memoria Que El Presidente De La Sociedad Nacional De Industrias Sr. Augusto Maurer, Presentó a La Junta General Ordinaria,” (Librería e Imprenta Gil, 1933), 1-2.

<sup>432</sup> Peru and García Calderón, *Constitución, Códigos Y Leyes Del Peru : Recopilados Y Concordados*, 2495-96.

International Petroleum Company and the Cerro de Pasco Mining Corporation, were owned by United States companies. After suggesting an extension as did other affected parties, Dearing informed the Peruvian government in January 1933 that law 7505 “has suddenly placed American concerns doing business in Peru and employing Peruvian and foreign personnel in an extremely difficult position and one which it is believed will prove injurious to American and to Peruvian interests as well.”<sup>433</sup> In a personal note on the same day to Foreign Relations’ Pedro Ugarteche, Dearing wrote that after speaking with Ugarteche, he believed that President Sánchez Cerro and the Minister of Development’s proposed modifications were similar to what he would have suggested, although he proposed two minor changes.<sup>434</sup>

The Japanese government’s central objection, on the other hand, was largely dismissed. On May 17, 1932, the Japanese consul S. Kurusu requested that an exception be established for businesses which employed no more than five people, given that the majority of Japanese-owned businesses were very small businesses. Kurusu estimated that 2000 Japanese in Peru could become unemployed if such legislation were implemented and that Japanese-owned business could be bankrupted.<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> “Informal memorandum from Ambassador Fred Morris Dearing to Dr. J.M. Manzanilla,” 26 January 1933, Record Group 6-3, ARE.

<sup>434</sup> “Personal note from Ambassador Dearing to Dr. Pedro Ugarteche,” 26 January 1933, Record Group 6-3, ARE. While the legislature exempted foreigners who had been employed by the same employer for five consecutive years, Dearing suggested ten years instead. This suggestion was reflected in 7735.

<sup>435</sup> “Letter from Consul S. Kurusu to Minister D. Alberto Freundt Rosell,” 17 May 1932, Record Group 6-18, ARE. In a July 5, 1932 “Memorandum to the Ministry of Foreign Relations,” the Japanese consulate reiterated its arguments upon hearing that the decree regulating 7505 would include strict enforcement of the requirement of 80% Peruvian personnel, regardless of the number of employees of

On April 5, 1933, law 7735 was promulgated establishing several exceptions to the application of law 7505, including considering as “Peruvian” any male foreigner married to a Peruvian woman or that had Peruvian children at the time 7505 was promulgated. Law 7735 also exempted any foreigner with a contract prior to 7505 for the length of such contract (if it was filed with a public notary) and any foreigner who had worked ten consecutive years in Peruvian business.<sup>436</sup> While the final two exemptions would likely not assist many Japanese because of the nature of contracting in small businesses and the more recent establishment of most businesses, some Japanese men were married to Peruvian women and many had children born in Peru who were therefore Peruvian citizens. The case of José H. Sato, owner of Lima hardware store called “El Candado,” demonstrates that 7735 was of great assistance to Japanese storeowners. In compliance with Laws 7505/7735, Sato notified the Labor Department on October 1, 1940, that he was hiring Mr. Kaname Nagamori but he remained in compliance with the law.<sup>437</sup> Labor Department A. Castillo confirmed on November 16, 1940 that Sato was in compliance, employing 17 Peruvians and 2 foreigners. Castillo clarified that he classified the following five people as Peruvian in accordance with Law 7735: B. Sato, the owner-manager, because he had two children born in Peru; T. Konno, employee, because he was born in Peru; G. Hinamura,

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the company. As a fallback position, Japan requested that businesses with 3 or fewer be exempted but this request was not accepted.

<sup>436</sup> Peru and García Calderón, *Constitución, Códigos Y Leyes Del Peru : Recopilados Y Concordados*, 2495-96.

<sup>437</sup> “Letter from Sato to Labor Department,” 1 Octubre 1940, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Contratos Colectivos, Case #120, AGN.

employee, born in Peru; Victor Nakahata, employee, born in Peru; and Guillermo Yoshida, worker, married to a Peruvian woman in 1911 with one child born in Peru. While one's birth in Peru made one a citizen according to the Peruvian constitution and was not addressed in 7735, Castillo's clarifications indicate that Peruvians of Japanese descent were often considered foreigners until proof to the contrary was presented.<sup>438</sup>

In August 1933, Sánchez Cerro was assassinated by a member of the APRA party and the Congress replaced him with General Oscar R. Benavides who ruled by fiat until 1939 in spite of the Congress' intention that elections be scheduled. While the Congress continued to function until 1936, Benavides primarily relied upon Executive Decrees to legislate issues. On July 26, 1934, Benavides issued the government's regulatory decree governing the application of 7705 and 7735. On the eve of the Benavides' government's promulgation of the regulatory decree, the Japanese consul once again made his case for the exemption of businesses with fewer than five employees, noting that Japanese businesses relied on family labor and "friends that are satisfied with very little" which was the only way the businesses stayed afloat. He added, "The unemployment crisis not only affects the citizens of Peru but, given the inexorable solidarity when it comes to human issues, it is also felt in the Japanese community ..."<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>438</sup> "Report of Inspección del Trabajo de Lima," 16 November 1940, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Contratos Colectivos, Case #120, AGN.

<sup>439</sup> "Letter from Consul Yoshiatsu Murakami to Minister Solon Polo," 31 June 1934, Record Group 6-18, ARE.

Not surprisingly, neither the Peruvian legislature nor Benavides in his regulatory decree of July 26, 1934 was moved by the damage that might be done to Japanese families in Peru. The regulatory decree, on the other hand, exempted specialized foreign experts, a provision supported by the SNI, the Lima Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Embassy as well as the Japanese consulate. The decree warned that businesses had 30 days to implement the percentages established in 7505 and Regional Labor Inspections would take place immediately and violators would be fined.<sup>440</sup> In spite of the dramatic language, 7505 was riddled with loopholes and what remained was not enforced. In the end, the law seemed little more than an exercise in nationalist political posturing – at its heart directed against the Japanese – in lieu of the Peruvian government making any real progress on the alleviation of unemployment. The Japanese consuls repeatedly expressed dismay at the divergence between the personal assurances provided them by the Peruvian Ministers of Foreign Relations and the laws and decrees that were consequently issued. However, perhaps Minister Freundt Rosell was sincere when he told Ambassador Kurusu that he should not “worry at all about the application of the law.”<sup>441</sup> In February 1935, Estrella del Perú alleged that neither the Labor Department nor the Regional Inspection office was enforcing law 7505 in spite of the Federation having brought multiple infractions to their attention. At the root of the problem, according to the union, was the Labor Department’s support of “capital over workers” such that “the majority of bosses, just

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<sup>440</sup> Reproduced as an attachment to "La Ley 7505 Y Los Empleados Extranjeros," 346.

<sup>441</sup> “Memorandum from the Japanese consulate to the Ministry of Foreign Relations,” 5 July 1932, Record Group 6-18, ARE.

to mock [them], challenge the workers to discuss the issue in the [Labor Department] office...knowing that they [the bosses] will be supported, as occurs with the Japanese bakeries.”<sup>442</sup>

On June 26, 1936, Benavides issued an Executive Decree (DS 1936) which imposed the severest restrictions to date on both Japanese immigration to Peru and the activities of Japanese immigrants in Peru. While the full implications of the decree will be discussed in the following chapters, DS 1936 reinforced the provisions of 7505, noting that “the Peruvian workers and business owners have been suffering from damaging competition.”<sup>443</sup> According to a Japanese government report, 2500 Japanese in Peru lost their jobs as a result of DS 1936.<sup>444</sup> Estrella del Peru, however, insisted that the 7505 changed little because of the exceptions established in 7735, and in a September 1937 letter it called for the repeal of all the exceptions. Sabino Calderón and Alejandro Antón, President and Secretary General of the Federation, respectively, accused the “Japanese subjects” of skillfully sidestepping the laws, noting that “only in the Japanese bakeries were Peruvian workers replaced on Sunday and holidays by employees and women of this nationality [Japanese].”<sup>445</sup>

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<sup>442</sup> “Letter from Bakery Workers’ Union Estrella del Perú to Prefect of Lima,” 8 February 1935, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.12, AGN.

<sup>443</sup> Balderrama Tudela, “Legislación De Extranjería,” 123-25.

<sup>444</sup> Nihonjin Peru-Ijyushi Henshiu Iinkai (Preparatory Commission: Isawa, Minoru; Irie, Toraji; Kawasaki, Eiji; Masuda, Yoshiro; Yokose, Goro and Yodogawa, Masaki), *Peru koku ni okeru nihonjin ijushi (History of Japanese Immigration to Peru)*, Tokyo, 1969, p. 175 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 238.

<sup>445</sup> “Letter from Bakery Workers’ Union Estrella del Perú to Minister of Government,” 1 September 1937, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 366, AGN.



Following the passage of DS 1936, Estrella del Perú joined the campaign to eliminate Japanese businesses from the commercial scene, their activities dovetailing with small business groups which in the recent past they would have classified as “capitalist.” In addition to this and other provisions that will be discussed in the following chapter, DS 1936 established that foreign businesses could own no more than 20% of any industry or commercial enterprise in any province.<sup>446</sup> On this basis, Estrella del Perú began to act as a watchdog, reporting what they perceived as violations of this provision. In their September 1937 letter to the Minister of Government, they reported that a Chinese-owned bakery had been sold to a Japanese man, a violation given that, per their calculations, the Japanese owned 30% (26 out of 93) bakeries in Lima. Federation leaders Calderón and Antón wrote that compared to the 34 Italian bakery owners in Lima who typically respected labor law albeit with a few exceptions, the majority of the 26 Japanese bakery owners violated the laws protecting workers. For the Federation, this was sufficient basis to generalize their attack on the Japanese bakery owners as well as to justify not demanding enforcement of DS 1936 against the Italians who already owned 37% of Lima’s bakeries. For instance, the Federation noted that on September 1, 1937, an Italian-owned bakery was sold to another Italian but requested no action based upon their positive evaluation of Italians.<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>446</sup> Balderrama Tudela, "Legislación De Extranjería," 123-26. In Peru, every department (state) was divided into provinces.

<sup>447</sup> “Letter from Bakery Workers’ Union Estrella del Perú to Minister of Government,” 1 September 1937, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 366, AGN. The remaining 33 bakeries in Lima were owned by Peruvians

In signaling racism as the operating principle in Estrella del Perú's participation in the anti-Japanese campaign, I am not challenging the veracity of Estrella del Perú's complaints of labor law violations in the bakeries owned by Japanese. In fact, there is much to suggest from both the Japanese consulate's position on 7505 and the Japanese immigrant remembrances that many of their businesses relied upon family and friends' labor, a strategy that assisted them in becoming successful by keeping costs down.

While many Japanese who went into business continued to employ Peruvian workers, there is evidence that some Japanese businesses replaced Peruvian workers with fellow Japanese, although it is difficult to assess to what degree.<sup>448</sup> The Peruvian immigration regulations from 1924 to 1936, in fact, may have encouraged this practice as sponsoring relatives were required to prove that the immigrants to Peru would not be a burden.<sup>449</sup> Japanese immigration during the 1920s boomed, outpacing all other immigrant groups including the Italians. By 1931, there were 5160 additional Japanese immigrants in Lima-Callao and virtually all were incorporated into the workforce, many in small family businesses. Not only Japanese immigrant men, but also women – who dominated the Japanese immigrant flows during the period – were

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<sup>448</sup> For instance, in a case which had no union involvement, tailor Luis Martínez accused tailor shop owner F. Nakashima of “favoring people from his country who are Japanese.” While Nakashima, who employed both Peruvians and Japanese, defended himself saying that there was not sufficient work for Martínez, the Labor Department ordered Nakashima to compensate Martínez for having laid him off. See “Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por Luis Martínez contra F. Nakashima, propietario de la sastrería, sobre indemnización,” 10 September 1930, Legajo 45, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #647.

<sup>449</sup> The Peruvian government allowed the Sociedad Central Japonesa (SCJ), the national Japanese community association in Lima with close ties to the Japanese consulate, to screen the Japanese applying to sponsor a relative or acquaintance to Peru.

quickly incorporated into family businesses. Uchida Kama, whose husband called her to Peru in 1931, recounts, “As soon as I arrived in Lima, I went to Sto. Tomás Street where my husband had a sewing factory. My job was to put the tags on, pull off the fuzz and iron.”<sup>450</sup> In the September 1937 letter mentioned earlier in this section, the male-dominated Estrella del Perú union was particularly perturbed by the Japanese bakery owner replacing Peruvian workers not only with Japanese “employees” (understood to mean “men”), but with “women of this nationality [Japanese].”

In employing their countrymen and women, were the Japanese storeowners operating exclusively out of a desire to help their fellow immigrants or to save money by using free family labor? Did they feel a greater cultural affinity with their fellow Japanese, not to mention the facility of language? Or did they, like their Peruvian counterparts in Estrella del Perú, racialize the Peruvian workers – primarily mestizos – and consider them less dependable, less trustworthy, and, in the end, inferior? While there was variance among different storeowners, just as there was variance among the individual Peruvian workers, Japanese bakery owners likely felt some combination of these factors. The Japanese immigrating to Peru during our period of study were educated to consider themselves equal to white Westerners, an ideology that carried corollary denigrations of other racial groups. Seiiche Higashide, a Japanese immigrant to Peru who came from a farming family of modest means, noted that many of the first-generation Japanese immigrant “harbored a strong sense of discrimination” against Peruvians. Contrary to his own opinion that neither were the Japanese superior nor the Peruvians inferior, many of his compatriots felt Peruvians to be

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<sup>450</sup> Asociación Femenina Okinawense del Perú, *20 Años* (Lima: 1998), 82.

people of a “third-rate country” and considered only Peru’s upper-class as their social equals.<sup>451</sup> The Peruvian upper-class, however, looked upon the Japanese as far below them in racial and social terms. Japanese notions of racial superiority during this period were premised upon the achievements of their nation. In a letter to *La Prensa* entitled, “We Refute the Concept that the Yellow Race is Inferior to the White Race,”

*Lima Nippo* Director Akio Banno wrote:

When the yellow race is discussed, the Japanese race is also included...In eighty years, since Japan opened its ports to world commerce and its doors to Western culture, it has covered a distance that other countries would not have covered in the same amount of time. Japan today is one of the first-class world powers not based upon the strength of its army and its navy, but because of its highly developed culture. It would be an offense to the respect that the public owes us to cite ...everything, such as education, the sciences, industry and the arts, that Japan has elevated to its most perfect state known in our era.<sup>452</sup>

Just the same, the claims that the Japanese bakeries were the most egregious violators of workers’ protections should be viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism. The descriptions of Japanese bakeries as the most venal and exploitative were highly reminiscent of the discourses that were widely circulated beginning in the early twentieth century. Also contradicting Estrella del Perú’s accusation against Japanese bakery owners is that of the 13 complaints filed at the Labor Department between 1921 and 1937, only 2 (or 15%) were against Japanese bakeries. This percentage is

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<sup>451</sup> Seiichi Higashide, *Adios to Tears : The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 76.

<sup>452</sup> Akio Banno, "El Mejoramiento De La Raza Y La Inmigración Asiática," *La Prensa*, September 20, 1937.

lower than the overall percentage of bakeries owned by the Japanese at this time, indicating that the Japanese were no worse than others in their industry.<sup>453</sup>

Estrella del Perú continued its campaign against the Japanese bakeries into the 1940s, increasingly identifying itself politically as acting not only in the best interest of Peruvian workers but also on behalf of the Peruvian nation. In July 1938, Estrella del Peru reported that Carlos Cháperi had sold his bakery “Europa” to a Japanese company and called the authorities to stop the sale as it violated DS 1936.<sup>454</sup> In reality, the sale was legal as the purchaser, Ricardo Ryokan Higa, was a naturalized Peruvian citizen.<sup>455</sup> Estrella del Peru’s warnings that the Peruvian workers would be replaced by Japanese “because they always prefer their own” were also unjustified and Higa maintained all of the Peruvian workers who had worked for Cháperi (See Table 4.2). The union’s representatives Calderon and Antón went on to say that the union supported DS 1936 [limiting the number of foreign businesses] because of its

...profoundly nationalist goals, in protecting the ethnic and economic legacy of the nation, and its laudable proposition of stopping the

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<sup>453</sup> The following is a summary of Department of Labor grievances between 1921 and 1937 contained in Expedientes Laborales, Ministerio de Fomento, AGN: Estrella del Peru (EdP) v. S. Hirabayasi, bakery Pampa de Lara (1921); EdP v. Japanese bakery (1922); EdP vs. E. Yzaguirre, O. Quintana, G. Huayapa and J. Siles (1922); EdP v. Association of Bakery Owners, Lima (1922); EdP v. bakery España (1922); Four individuals v. Nicolas Pelosi, bakery “Mundial” (1928); Bakery workers of Callao v. Antonio Montalbetti, bakery “La Nacional” (1930); EdP v. Association of Bakery Owners, Lima (1931); Bakery workers of Chorrillos, Barranco y Miraflores v. Bakery Owners (1933); EdP v. Bakery Owners (1933); EdP v. Bakery Owners of Balnearios; EdP v. Eugenio Lavaggi, bakery “America”; Bakery Workers v. Association of Bakery Owners, Lima/Callao/Balnearios (1936).

<sup>454</sup> “Letter from Estrella del Perú to Minister of Government,” 11 July 1938, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 373, AGN.

<sup>455</sup> “Statement of Ricardo Ryokan Higa,” 27 January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN.

damaging competition that Peruvian workers and business owners  
confront when businesses are sold to foreign capitalists...<sup>456</sup>

In its declaration, the union echoed ideologies such as “ethnic legacy” of Peru which was not only part of the language of DS 1936, but also by the promoters of eugenics who conceived of the Peruvian nation primarily in racial terms and regarded not only the Japanese but the majority of the Estrella del Perú members as racially inferior. Also, in a radical turn away from class, Estrella del Perú aligned itself with “Peruvian business owners” – referred to in the past as their capitalist opponents – against their common enemy: the Japanese. Finally, in spite of the race-neutral nationalism expressed in parts of its letter, the union made no comment on their statistics showing that the percentage of Italian-owned bakeries in Lima had risen since the promulgation of DS 1936 and exceeded both the 20% limit and surpassed the number of Japanese bakeries. Yet Estrella del Perú targeted only the Japanese for allegedly violating the law.<sup>457</sup>

In January 1940, Estrella del Perú convinced the Prefecture of Lima to investigate their allegations that a second bakery workers’ union was operating without authorization of the Labor Department and interfering with “our defensive

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<sup>456</sup> “Letter from Estrella del Perú to Minister of Government,” 11 July 1938, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 373, AGN. Original Spanish: *...finalidad profundamente nacionalista, en previsión del patrimonio étnico i económico de la nación con el laudable propósito de impedir la competencia perjudicial, que contra obreros e industriales nacionales acarrearán estas transferencias a capitalistas extranjero...*

<sup>457</sup> “Letter from Estrella del Perú to Minister of Government,” 11 July 1938, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 373, AGN; “Letter from Estrella del Perú to Minister of Government,” 1 September 1937, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 366, AGN. The percentage of Italian bakeries rose from 37% (34 bakeries out of 93 total) in 1937 to 42% (40 out of 96) in 1938. The percentage of Japanese bakeries, on the other hand, remained relatively constant at 28-29% (rising from 26 bakeries in 1937 to 28 in 1938) while the Peruvian bakeries dropped from 36% to 29% (33 in 1937 to 28 in 1938).

labor against the Japanese advance.”<sup>458</sup> This case sheds light on the union leaders’ racial, rather than legal, conception of who was “Peruvian” and who was “Japanese.” “Estrella del Peru” was not alone in these racialized understandings; they permeated Peruvian society and were fundamental to the Peruvian state, like others countries of the region, casting citizenship in exclusionary racial terms. Estrella del Peru’s accusation primarily concerned a territorial battle with a union, “Bakery Workers Union” (Unión de Obreros Panderos, UOP) which had split from its Federation in 1936. The Japanese bakeries, however, were drawn into the battle because Estrella del Perú accused the UOP of acting in service of Japanese bakery owners because 1) 26 of the 126 total UOP members are Japanese and 2) One of the Japanese UOP members collected money from the Japanese bakery owners to furnish and equip the UOP office. While the Investigative Division of the Lima Prefecture found Estrella del Peru’s accusations to be unfounded, we are less concerned with the truth of the allegation than with the perspective of the multiple parties interviewed by Investigating Officer Jorge Moscoso Barra, as well as the comments by Moscoso and his supervising officer, Horacio Cúprido<sup>459</sup>

First, it quickly becomes clear that Estrella del Perú representatives identified “Japanese” foreigners according to race rather than citizenship status, alleging violations of the law when there were none, as also mentioned previously in Estrella

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<sup>458</sup> “Letter from Estrella del Peru to Lima Prefect,” received 20 January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN.

<sup>459</sup> “Reports and Statements: Investigation of Bakery Workers’ Union,” January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19. “Cúprido” is my best estimation of his last name. His signature is illegible.

del Peru's 1938 letter to the Minister of Government. Estrella del Perú President Pedro La Rosa Díaz identified five Japanese bakeries as "mocking" the law in purchasing bakeries from Italians and Peruvians in violation of the quotas established in DS 1936 (See Table 4.2, marked "EdP").<sup>460</sup> Further investigation, however, revealed that two of the Japanese bakeries in question were owned by naturalized citizens.<sup>461</sup> Moscoso also incorporated two additional "Japanese" bakeries into the investigation that were suspected of violating 7505 (see Table 4.2, marked "Mos.>").<sup>462</sup> Moscoso's investigation, however, determined that Blanca Loli de W.'s sale to Carlos Y. Matsuda Sonora was legal because Matsuda was a naturalized citizen and that a business involving Inho Gushiken Moscoso was legally owned by his wife, Yaduko Busiken Nakandakari.<sup>463</sup>

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<sup>460</sup> "Statement of Pedro La Rosa Díaz," 26 January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN.

<sup>461</sup> "Statement of José K. Nagaigame Masay," 27 January 1940 and "Statement of Ricardo Ryokan Higa," 27 January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN.

<sup>462</sup> "Report from Investigating Officer Moscoso to Assistant Inspector of Investigations," 31 January 1940, and "Traspaso," *El Universal*, 19 January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN.

<sup>463</sup> "Statement of Inho Gushiken," 23 January 1949 and "Statement of Carlos Y. Matsuda Sonora," undated (January 1940?), Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN.



**Table 4.2: 1940 Investigation of Japanese Bakeries, Lima**<sup>464</sup>

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Name or Location of Bakery</b>	<b># of Peruvian Employees</b>	<b># of Japanese Employees</b>	<b>Legal Status of Owner</b>	<b>Complaint</b>
José K. Nagaigame	Los Naranjos	5	1	Naturalized	EdP
Toshio Shimura	El Sol	13	1 (master)	Resident	EdP
Tokukichi Kishimoto	San José	9	3	Resident	EdP
Ricardo Ryokan Higa	Europa	8	0	Naturalized	EdP
Eisuki Yoshimoto	Nueva York	13	2	Resident	EdP
Carlos Matsuda Sonora	Cañete Street	8	2	Naturalized	Mos.
Yaduko Busiken Nakandakari	La Colmena	No data	No data	Naturalized or by Birth	Mos.

In reporting to his supervising officer, Moscoso conceded that his investigation of this “very delicate” matter found that the Japanese bakeries had, by and large, acted in accordance with the law. Not only had the Japanese, some Peruvian citizens, purchased their bakeries in accordance with the law, they were all in compliance with 7505 (See Table 4.2). Moscoso, however, qualified as “alarming” the “advance” of the Japanese businesses in Peru, and reported that his own investigation found that 33% of all bakeries were owned by Japanese, adding that “many Japanese bakery owners are naturalized Peruvians and other have registered their children – born in Peru – as Peruvian citizens to receive the benefits that the law provides them.”<sup>465</sup> The

<sup>464</sup> Compiled with data from statements from the named owners to Investigating Officer Moscoso, January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN. The one exception is Yaduko Busiken Nakandari whose husband Inho Gushiken gave the statement.

<sup>465</sup> “Report from Investigating Officer Moscoso to Assistant Inspector of Investigations,” 30 January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN.

supervising officer in his accompanying report to the Inspector General of Division of Investigations added that

To avoid competition, the Japanese have taken over thirty-three percent of the bakery industry, having taken advantage of the defects of the law, that is to say that the parents or the children have naturalized, and Peruvians and Italians have sold bakeries to them, but it should be noted that they have paid high prices.<sup>466</sup>

The two officers' interpretations of the case, in the absence of any violations of the law, are illustrative of several popular conceptions that appeared in the press and in Peruvian government policies during this period. Similar to the "racial homogenization" discussed earlier in this chapter, both Estrella del Peru and the Peruvian officials assumed that the Japanese – regardless of occupation, class or other factors – operated in unison because they shared a common ethnicity. Consequently, Estrella del Perú believed a union with Japanese workers, regardless of their representing only one-fifth of the membership, operated in service of the Japanese bakeries. While Estrella del Perú had Japanese members, according to its own declarations in 1931, it aggressively sought contracts and legislation that undermined the Japanese bakery workers' ability to secure employment.<sup>467</sup> In September 1936, all of Estrella del Peru's 28 Japanese members split with 54 Peruvians to form the UOP.

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<sup>466</sup> "Report from Assistant Inspector of Investigations to Director of Investigations," 7 February 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN. Original Spanish: *los japoneses para evitar la competencia, valiéndose de los defectos de la ley, se han apoderado del treinta y tres por ciento de la industria panificadora, es decir se han nacionalizado los padres o los hijos, y han traspasado panaderías de nacionales e italianos, pero debe dejarse constancia que han expuesto fuertes capitales.*

<sup>467</sup> "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por la Federación de Panaderos "Estrella del Perú" contra los industriales de panadería. Presentan pliego de reclamos," 11 May 1931, Legajo 5, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #106, AGN.

While the UOP's Peruvian representatives explained that they had separated from Estrella de Perú because it was violating its statutes and getting involved in politics, the Japanese bakery workers were likely looking for a union that did not attempt to deprive them of work based upon their race.<sup>468</sup> At the same time, the Estrella del Perú leadership interpreted the Japanese workers' involvement in the UOP as further proof that the Japanese were not to be trusted.

Both Estrella del Perú and the Peruvian officials saw any significant number of bakeries owned by people of Japanese descent as functioning as a natural monopoly, or as a cartel which worked together to eliminate the competition. The Japanese organizations such as the Association of Japanese Bakers likely helped to foster this idea, but other foreigners had similar associations.<sup>469</sup> Most interesting, however, is the fact that while the Italian bakeries in reality represented the largest percentage of bakery owners, they were instead grouped together with the Peruvians in opposition to the Japanese, and were not accused of monopolizing the industry. Given the long history of considering the Italians racially superior to Asians and seeking their integration into Peruvian society, neither union nor government officials noticed the contradiction in their positions on the two groups both of which were, legally speaking, foreign.<sup>470</sup> The assistant inspector's "proof" that the Japanese were paying exorbitant prices to seize control of the bakeries was largely a myth promulgated by

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<sup>468</sup> "Statement of Jorge R. Gutierrez Gonzales," 26 January 1940 and "Statement of Virgilio Rachumi Torres," 26 January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.11.19, AGN.

<sup>469</sup> Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 195. *Asociación de Panaderos Japoneses*

<sup>470</sup> Many of the owners classified as "Italian" and "Japanese" may have been Peruvian citizens.

the press and is similar to the allegations of Japanese yanacónas overwhelming simple Peruvians with money to steal away their contracts. The purpose of the myth, however, was to cast the Japanese once again as venal creatures that took advantage of Peruvians (and now Italians). To see it any other way would mean that Peruvians (and the adopted Italians) were also violating the law by selling to the Japanese and were perhaps themselves venal and their “souls” were not particularly dedicated to the Peruvian nation. To see the world in such gray hues undermined the nationalist project that elevated Peruvians to a higher moral plane while demonizing the Japanese. Both Peruvian officials also alluded to the final steps in the racially exclusive national project already underway. The Japanese who naturalized only did so for selfish purposes, as they were lacking in a Peruvian soul – which in the end was always a white soul. Even the Japanese children born in Peru were considered part of a Japanese plan to insinuate itself into Peru.

#### **4.5 Ichikawa and the Federation of Peruvian Textile Workers**

While the Japanese owned few major companies in Peru, Y.S. Ichikawa’s hat factory was known throughout Peru, with only select distributors allowed to display the Ichikawa name in their store windows. During the 1930s, the Federation of Peruvian Textile Workers (Federación de Trabajadores de Tejidos del Perú) repeatedly attacked Ichikawa as part of its larger campaign on behalf of textile workers. In addition to its union activities, the Federation was drawn into national Peruvian politics through its association with the APRA party. In spite of its clandestine

existence, APRA's influence within the labor movement grew during the 1930s and the Textile Federation serving as its primary base. Anarco-syndicalism waned during the 1920s giving way to APRA which was able to elbow the Partido Socialista del Perú (PSP) out of the union movement following the death of its leader, José Mariátegui, in 1930. The remnants of the PSP, renamed the Communist party in 1930, denounced APRA's involvement in politics but shared an anti-imperialist platform.<sup>471</sup> While APRA initially denounced the economic imperialism of the United States and Great Britain in Latin America, by the 1930s it had refocused on the military imperialism of Germany, Italy, and Japan. The Communist party, for its part, played a peripheral role in political organizing and in the anti-Japanese campaigns. The Peruvian police accused Communists of involvement in minor incidents, such as in November 1931 when several university students threw rocks and bottles at the Japanese embassy while shouting "Viva el Comunismo!" to protest Japan's invasion of China.<sup>472</sup>

Given that foreigners were only minimally employed in industry, the Textile Federation paid little attention to bills like 7505.<sup>473</sup> Instead, it was the Federation's aggressive agenda to defend its members' interests during the 1930s that led to its

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<sup>471</sup> See Denis Sulmont, María Bermúdez Lizárraga, and Francisco Durand, *Historia Del Movimiento Laboral Textil* (Lima, Perú: Núcleo Laboral Centro de Proyección Social del Programa de Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad Católica, 1978).

<sup>472</sup> "Report from Prefect of Lima to Director of Government," 10 November 1931, Ministerio del Interior, Prefecturas, Lima, MI 311.

<sup>473</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*. In 1940, 1095 Japanese men and 41 Japanese women were working in Peru's industrial sector in the Department of Lima.

conflicts with Ichikawa.<sup>474</sup> While Ichikawa owned the Fábrica Nacional de Sombreros (hats) and Medias Inca (socks), his factories were only two of many foreign textile companies in Peru, the majority owned by United States and British investors.<sup>475</sup>

During the 1930s, the Textile Federation filed a flood of complaints and launched several protests against Peruvian and foreign textile companies alike.<sup>476</sup> While the Textile Federation generally referred to Ichikawa as “el japonés” in their complaints to Labor Department and the Lima Prefect, the complaints against Ichikawa were similar to those against other textile factories.<sup>477</sup> At worst, the Federation characterized Ichikawa as “this Japanese man who thinks he can flaunt the Laws of our country.”<sup>478</sup>

Initially, the Federation did not racialize Ichikawa’s behavior as “Japanese,” but instead classified him as typical of the “capitalist” class responsible for the suffering of Peruvian workers. For instance, in August 1935, the Federation accused

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<sup>474</sup> Prior to the 1930s, weavers participated in the general strike of 1919 in which several Japanese-owned textile plants were attacked. See Gardiner, *The Japanese and Peru, 1873-1973*, 63. According to a David Chaplin, a Peruvian textile factory owner in Arequipa used ‘exotic techniques’ to try to break the strikes and union organizing efforts consuming his factory in the 1920’s: he imported 50 to 100 Japanese girls ‘under the control of a Japanese ex-army officer’ to work in his mills, keeping them sequestered in a locked dormitory until they eventually escaped. See David Chaplin, *The Peruvian Industrial Labor Force* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), 251.

<sup>475</sup> Ciccarelli, “Peru’s Anti-Japanese Campaign in the 1930s: Economic Dependency and Abortive Nationalism,” 115.

<sup>476</sup> See Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, 1931-1937 and Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 1926-1943, AGN.

<sup>477</sup> On June 8, 1928, the textile union at Vitarte, owned by the U.S.-financed W.R. Grace company, accused foreign technical director Mr. Barlow of kicking worker Vicente Ortega for not standing up when he walked by. (See “Letter to Lima Prefect,” Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.6, AGN.) The Investigations Division of the Social Affairs Brigade reported November 3, 1939 that the Italian manager Galo of the “El Pacífico” Factory regularly mistreated workers and told his director that “all Peruvians are ignorant and savages.” (See “Report” in Folder 1932-1945, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Presos Políticos y Sociales, 3.9.5.1.15.1.14.2, AGN.)

<sup>478</sup> “Federation of Peruvian Textile Workers to Prefect of Lima,” 29 September 1934, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.11, AGN.

Ichikawa's factories, along with several others, of being at the forefront of a "violent offensive" that "has thrown out onto the street a large number of workers who will fall victim to unemployment and misery, dragging their families into starvation."<sup>479</sup>

Reports from the Peruvian government's Social Affairs Brigade, the agency responsible for domestic spying, reveal how the Textile Federation came to be involved in the larger anti-Japanese campaign of the era. On September 19, 1934, the Brigade investigator who had infiltrated the Federation reported that 17 Textile Federation delegates had gathered and discussed an ongoing strike against Ichikawa in which union representatives had recently been jailed. The infiltrator reported, "One delegate requested that the Federation support a boycott of Japanese businesses and it was agreed that a recommendation be made to the Executive Committee...that the Federation prepare a publication publicizing the abuses that the Japanese business owners commit against Peruvian workers, especially the Ichikagua [Ichikawa] company."<sup>480</sup> At a September 30, 1934 meeting, the Federation agreed to "hand out flyers encouraging workers to participate in a boycott of all Japanese businesses."<sup>481</sup> The Federation's decision to participate in the boycott seems largely one of political

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<sup>479</sup> "Boletín de la Federación Textil: A Todos Los Trabajadores Textiles y a la Clase Trabajadora," 26 August 1935, Ministro del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.11, AGN. The workforce at the Ichikawa hat factory was all Peruvian, employing 25 men and 17 women according to records submitted in "Expediente relativo a la reclamación interpuesta por los servidores de la fábrica de sombreros "Ichicawa" contra la gerencia de dicha fabricas," 27 January 1936, Legajo 12, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, Case #196, AGN.

<sup>480</sup> "Report from Investigation Division (name illegible) to Brigade Chief," 19 September 1934, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Presos Políticos y Asuntos Sociales, 3.9.5.1.15.1.14.2, AGN.

<sup>481</sup> "Report from Investigation Division (name illegible) to Brigade Chief," 30 September 1934, Prefectura de Lima, 3.9.5.1.15.1.14.2, AGN.

expediency to garner support for their campaign against Ichikawa. On the other hand, at least one Federation delegate was already involved in the boycott of Japanese businesses. While the documents do not indicate the organizer of the boycott, it is likely the Anti-Asian Society which launched a boycott of Asian businesses that same year. The Anti-Asian Society's motto was "Peru for Peruvians," or the exclusion of Asians from the workplace and business ownership, ostensibly in an effort to secure employment and opportunity for Peruvians. However, similar to all of the Anti-Asian organizations, they advocated not only the cessation of Chinese and Japanese immigration to Peru, but also promoted European immigration. The Anti-Asian Society was supported by the fascist-leaning Unión Revolucionaria (UR), a vocal proponent of eugenic policies in Peru.<sup>482</sup> While the Federation likely shared few of the UR's philosophies given APRA's diametrical opposition to the UR, they endorsed the boycott to meet their short-term goals. In doing so, the Federation contributed to the anti-Japanese movement not only through their endorsement, but also by lending legitimacy to the racism inherent in those campaigns.

#### **4.6 Official Japanese Response**

Unwilling to accept the reality of their disadvantaged position within Peru's racial battles, the Japanese Peruvian community's national organization, the Sociedad Central Japonesa (Central Japanese Association, SCJ), advocated prescriptions similar

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<sup>482</sup> *Acción*, February 1934 – April 1936, publication of the Unión Revolucionaria. Also see José Ignacio López Soria, *El Pensamiento Fascista (1930-1945)*, Biblioteca Del Pensamiento Peruano (Lima, Peru: Mosca Azul Editores, 1981), 141-210.



to those unsuccessfully applied in the United States: voluntarily limit immigration and prove that the Japanese were “modern” and the racial and cultural equal of whites by repressing what they considered the “backward” behaviors of many Japanese immigrants.<sup>483</sup> The racial rejection of the Japanese by the Limeño *populacho*, its riff-raff, was difficult for the Japanese embassy and SCJ to stomach. Instead, they decided that the problem was numerical and that too many Japanese were concentrated in Lima. In addition to limiting Japanese immigration to Peru, the Japanese government, still in need of Japanese immigration to the Americas to alleviate its own social problems, promoted the settlement of Japanese immigrants in the Peruvian *montañas* through the Peruvian Colonization Association established in Lima in 1931.<sup>484</sup> This effort was neither well received by the Japanese, who could make a better living in Peru’s more hospitable coastal cities, nor by the Peruvian press, which accused the Japanese of colonizing Peru as part of an imperialistic plan.<sup>485</sup>

#### 4.7 Conclusion

The labor movement’s attacks on the Japanese were not simply economic, but rather sprang from a position conditioned by racist ideologies of the past and present,

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<sup>483</sup> Nihonjin-Peru-Ijushi Henshiu Iinkai, *Peru koku ni okeru nihonjin ijushi* (History of Japanese Immigration in Peru), Tokyo, 1969, pp. 182-184, as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 232-34.

<sup>484</sup> "Una ligera exposicion sobre el ensayo de colonizacion de la Montana por la Colonia Japonesa en el Peru," Japanese consulate to Foreign Relations fo Peru, 28 September 1931, Record Group 6-18, ARE.

<sup>485</sup> Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 164; Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru, Part 1," 77. The Japanese government had less need to promote immigration to Latin America following its invasion of Manchuria in 1937, at which point it focused its efforts on encouraging Japanese to settle in that region as part of its colonization of China.

domestic and international. The bakery workers' union Estrella del Perú, particularly, reformulated many labels historically applied to the Chinese and attached them to the Japanese immigrants in Lima-Callao. The Lima unions, however, also tapped into circulating discourses of eugenics and yellow peril. On one hand, the unions used these ideas in a very utilitarian manner to force inspections of Japanese bakeries to protect their Peruvian members' jobs or to use the negative publicity surrounding the Japanese to pressure Japanese companies like Ichikawa to accede to the union's demands. On the other hand, union members demonstrated how they had internalized racial conceptions of the superiority of European immigrants and the inferiority of Asians. For instance, the Estrella del Peru accused the Japanese of monopolizing industry, evidence of their inherent despotic nature, when in reality the Italians owned the majority of bakeries. While Estrella del Peru justified this discrepancy by clarifying that the Italians treated Peruvian workers relatively well, the union's consideration of the Italian bakery owners as welcome members of Peruvian society cannot be considered outside the context of one hundred years of pursuing Italian and European immigration to "whiten" and hence "better" Peru. Estrella del Peru's campaign against the Japanese bakery owners promulgated and reinforced the racial image of the Asian business owner as venal and intent on exploiting the Peruvian worker. Yellow peril alarmism infused the union's language as the Japanese were portrayed as an impending danger, intent on absorbing Peru. Just as important, the Japanese were framed in the public mind as nothing other than that single portrayal, meaning that the Japanese (or Chinese) could not be conceptualized as people who

alleviated the poverty of the Limeños by providing inexpensive food and goods or people who also suffered, perhaps even at the hand of their countrymen or women. Whereas in the Chancay Valley Japanese workers joined the protests, oftentimes against the Japanese managers, Estrella del Peru excluded and attacked the Japanese workers.

As the union movement clawed and grasped for its share of political and economic power in Peru, it was challenging both the racial and economic hierarchy long established in Peru. Lima's workers, largely mestizos of the lower classes, had tasted the possibility of power when they achieved the 8-hour-day in 1919 and they had no intention of resigning themselves to a marginalized status. Yet the oligarchy continued to keep a firm hold on the reins of the government well into the 1940s and showed little willingness to share political and economic power with the workers. The union movement charged into the space, claiming its long overdue concessions and fending off all who would encroach upon their gains. In demonizing the Japanese, they had everything to gain and nothing to lose. The Japanese workers in Lima, unlike the yanacónas in the Chancay Valley, were a small minority and could be easily dismissed by the union movement. In casting their struggle as a nationalist mission to save Peru from the Japanese, the labor movement advocated their own acceptance into the nation which had long excluded them. In doing so, they pushed Peruvian hopes for a racial democracy even further into the future.

## Chapter Five

### Race, Economic Protection, and Yellow Peril: Local Anti-Asian Campaigns and National Policy

On June 26, 1936, President Oscar Benavides issued an executive decree (DS 1936) limiting immigration to Peru as well as the activities of foreigners within its borders. The decree allowed only 16,000 immigrants of each foreign nationality to reside in Peru, such that nationalities that exceeding that limit would be denied immigrant visas. The decree effectively halted all Japanese immigration to Peru. It also stipulated that foreigners were barred from owning more than 20% of the businesses or industries in any province as well as reinforced the already existing 20% limit on foreign employees (Law 7505) and included *yanaconas* within such limits (as discussed in Chapter 3)<sup>486</sup> While DS 1936 made no reference to race or nationality, the decree was specifically formulated to undermine the standing of the Japanese immigrants who had become increasingly prominent in the small business sector.<sup>487</sup> Foreign Minister Alberto Ulloa y Sotomayor, who in conjunction with Benavides authored DS 1936, used Chinese immigration as a starting point for what he called the

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<sup>486</sup> Balderrama Tudela, "Legislación De Extranjería," 123-25. The legislation stipulated that no immigrant group could represent more than .002 of the population and in the absence of a recent census, the figure was set at 16,000.

<sup>487</sup> In *Posición Internacional del Perú*, published five years after the DS 1936, Benavides' Foreign Minister Alberto Ulloa y Sotomayor freely admitted that the decree was designed to exclude Japanese immigrants and curtail their influence in Peru, although great pains were taken in decree's language to avoid violating the Peruvian constitution and Peru's diplomatic agreements with Japan. Alberto Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú* (Lima: Fondo Editorial del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, [1941] 1997), 344-6.

“anti-Japanese action of the State.”<sup>488</sup> Writing in 1941, Ulloa explained the Peruvian government’s restrictions on Chinese immigration as a response to the “ethnic repulsion” expressed by “diverse classes.”<sup>489</sup> He described the “problem of Chinese immigration” as having “ethnic, social, and economic implications” because the Chinese displaced small Peruvian business owners, competed with workers, fomented vices, and mixed with Peruvian women “creating an infamous derivation, the mestizo known as ‘chino-cholo.’”<sup>490</sup> Ulloa continued

But the Chinese did not present any danger from the political viewpoint and even those [problems] to which I have been referring were minor compared to what the Japanese would later present. This [Japanese] is a subject of an imperialist and expansionist country which is developing a world policy based upon influence, if not domination, and is obviously organizing a universal economic infiltration, the interests and objectives of which are closely related to its difficulties with the United States.<sup>491</sup>

The age of Japanese “yellow peril” had arrived in Peru. Internationally, Japan’s military successes were incorporated into international yellow peril discourses as early as 1905 in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese war. In Peru, however, the notion of Japanese immigrants representing a political and military threat gained currency only in the 1930s. Japan’s invasion of Manchuria in 1931, the League of Nations’ condemnation of its actions, and Japan’s occupation of Manchuria in 1937 were all

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<sup>488</sup> Ibid., 345.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid., 340-41. As discussed in previous chapters, the Porras-Wu accords of 1909 suspended Chinese immigration with the exception of women and children. During the 1930s, the Peruvian government repeatedly accused the Chinese government of violating the regulations stipulated in the accord. In 1939, Minister of Foreign Relations Enrique Goytisolo suspended all Chinese immigration to Peru. See Asociación de Comerciantes, “Compendio De Legislación ” *Revista Mensual de Comercio del Perú*.

<sup>490</sup> Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú*, 341.

<sup>491</sup> Ibid.

covered widely in the Peruvian press. Within Peru, the Japanese immigrants had reached their economic and demographic apogee by the early 1930s. Even so, the Japanese immigrants largely dominated small retail and commanded no important role in the Peruvian economy as did business enterprises such as the Italian-owned Banco Italiano or the German-owned sugar hacienda Casa Grande.<sup>492</sup> The yellow peril doctrine, however, was founded upon racial fear and, as such, was immune to the realities of the Japanese immigrants' minor role in the Peruvian economy or their lack of political intervention in Peruvian affairs.

Yellow peril alarmists like Ulloa found support for their anti-Japanese positions among middle-class mestizo business men. During Leguía's term (1919-1930), the commercial economy and government bureaucracy had expanded, providing employment opportunities that fostered growth among Peru's urban middle-class. However, when the world economic crisis came crashing down on Peru, many middle-class Peruvians discovered that their economic standing was at best tenuous. As middling mestizos, the loss of their financial position could easily translate into a loss of their social standing. While this was true for all racial groups in Peru, middle-class mestizos' ambiguous position on the racial hierarchy allowed them the greatest range of upward and downward mobility. To be accepted as *gente decente* (people of stature), they more than any group relied upon profession, financial success, and

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<sup>492</sup> Although the Gildemeisters, descendants of nineteenth-century German immigrants, were Peruvian-born, in 1910 they merged their sugar hacienda Casa Grande with a German syndicate. Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932*, 15.

education.<sup>493</sup> At the same time Peru's middle class was experiencing economic insecurities, its men were afforded greater political power when the 1933 constitution dispensed with the property requirement for voting, allowing all adult, literate men to vote in presidential elections.<sup>494</sup> To these men, the Japanese small business owners represented a threat to both their economic and social position. Flexing their political muscle, middle-class business men drew upon circulating anti-Japanese discourses to organize against both the Japanese and Chinese business owners in their cities. Not only did they advocate for the restrictions that were included in DS 1936, they also used DS 1936 to legitimate race-based discrimination against Asians in their communities.

### 5.1 Hemispheric Context of Anti-Asian Legislation

While the 1930s worldwide economic depression was a catalyst for nativist legislation in some Latin American countries, Mexico passed the first law restricting foreign labor in 1919 during the post-WWI economic contraction. Mexico's "80% Law" was almost identical to Peru's 1932 Law 7505, with the exception that only *foreign* businesses were required to comply with the requirement that 80 per cent of employees be Peruvian. As opposed to Peru, the legislation was designed to undermine the significant number of Chinese store owners rather than the smaller

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<sup>493</sup> Voss, *Latin America in the Middle Period, 1750-1929*, 79-80, 247, 69.

<sup>494</sup> Peru. Congreso Constituyente de 1931, *Constitución Política Del Perú, Promulgado El 9 De Abril De 1933, Concordada Con El Debate Que Originó Su Dación En El Congreso Constituyente De 1931, Y Con Las Modificaciones Contenidas En Las Leyes Nos. 8237, 9166 Y 9178* (Lima: 1947). Adult women were literate were given the right to vote in municipal elections.

Japanese population largely employed in agriculture in Mexico.<sup>495</sup> The Mexican anti-Chinese movement was headquartered in Sonora where the Chinese were concentrated and was led by José María Arana, a teacher and small businessman. In 1916, Arana founded “Commercial and Businessmen’s Junta” that pressured municipal authorities to pass anti-Chinese ordinances.<sup>496</sup> While Arana’s campaign lost momentum in the 1920s, the 1930s depression breathed new life into the racial and economic opposition to the Chinese, this time led by Sonoran politician José Angel Espinoza. Mexico’s anti-Chinese policies culminated in 1931 with the mass deportation of the Chinese from the state of Sonora. In explaining the expulsion of the Chinese, Evelyn Hu-DeHart argues that while Espinoza promoted racism through his virulently racist treatises, his “fundamental motivation was economic.”<sup>497</sup> Gerardo Rénique, however, argues that the “demonization” of the Chinese was also an “ideological vehicle” not only for popular economic demands, but additionally unified the Sonoran white-criollo elite with the national policymakers who advocated *mestizaje*.<sup>498</sup> The Japanese in Mexico were not included in the 1931-32 expulsions, but the Lázaro Cárdenas government evicted approximately 300 Japanese families from their farms in Baja California Norte when in 1934 it appropriated the U.S.-owned cotton farms where the Japanese rented land. Mexicans were subsequently given first rights to the

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<sup>495</sup> Hu-DeHart, "Racism and Anti-Chinese Persecution in Sonora, Mexico," 16; Rénique, "Race, Region, and Nation: Sonora’s Anti-Chinese Racism and Mexico’s Postrevolutionary Nationalism, 1920s-1930s," 222.

<sup>496</sup> Hu-DeHart, "Racism and Anti-Chinese Persecution in Sonora, Mexico," 11-12.

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid.*: 19.

<sup>498</sup> Rénique, "Race, Region, and Nation: Sonora’s Anti-Chinese Racism and Mexico’s Postrevolutionary Nationalism, 1920s-1930s," 230.



expropriated lands as part of the Mexican agrarian reform, displacing most of the Japanese.<sup>499</sup>

While the 1930s economic crises provided fertile ground for nationalist immigration policies in Latin America, these movements were not generally xenophobic but instead targeted specific racial groups. For instance, in Brazil, Jeffrey Lesser writes that between 1930 and 1935, Brazilian politicians “shifted their discourse on immigration and immigrants.” He adds, “Nationalism would transform old ideas about “whitening” of Brazil into federal policies aimed at ‘Brazilianization.’”<sup>500</sup> Consequently, undesirable immigrants – especially Jews in the case of Brazil – were reconstructed as inassimilable. During this era, national policymakers ascribing to racist eugenics-inspired policies “dovetailed” with Brazil’s middle class “that desired economic and social mobility without immigrant competition.”<sup>501</sup> In 1934, Brazil enacted a new Constitution which limited any nation’s annual immigration to Brazil to two percent of that country’s immigration over the previous fifty years. Even more importantly, the Constitution, modeled on the United States’ 1924 Immigration Act, gave the national government the latitude to bar immigrants based upon “origin” in order to “guarantee the ethnic integration and physical and civil capacity of the immigrant.”<sup>502</sup> Brazil’s 1934 Constitution was not

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<sup>499</sup> Masterson and Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 61-62.

<sup>500</sup> Jeffrey Lesser, *Welcoming the Undesirables: Brazil and the Jewish Question* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 48.

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.*, 47-48.

<sup>502</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-67.

only an inspiration to Peru, but also served as an additional impetus to enact restrictive immigration legislation out of a fear that Japanese immigration would be redirected to Peru.<sup>503</sup>

## 5.2 1936 Executive Decree: Race, Economic Protection, and Yellow Peril

In the decree's preamble, Ulloa and Benavides outlined the decree's multiple motives. For Ulloa and his yellow alarmist counterparts among Peru's elites, DS 1936 would curtail the influence of the Japanese in Peruvian society, hence undermining their ability to organize militarily against Peru. For industrial and agricultural workers, the decree gave them hope that the Japanese and Chinese would be forced out and their own economic situations would improve. For many middle-class Peruvians, DS 1936 was an opportunity to take action against the Chinese and Japanese whom they believed had undermined their position in their communities. Race, however, was inextricably tied to roots of each of the group's opposition to the Japanese and Chinese. Hence, the preamble led with an appeal to the "preservation and betterment" of the Peru's "racial heritage" and followed with the need to protect both the Peruvian economy and nation from foreign influence:

Considering:

That it is the unavoidable responsibility of the State to protect the conservation and betterment of the ethnic and economic legacy of the

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<sup>503</sup> Masterson and Funada-Classon, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 72-73. This fear, however, was unfounded. While Japanese immigration to Brazil was limited but not stopped, more Japanese left Peru between 1933 and 1939 than entered. Only 2,953 Japanese entered during this period while 5,610 departed. This was due to a variety of factors such as Japan redirecting emigration to Manchuria, the Peruvian economic crisis, and legislation and decrees which restricted the economic activities of the Japanese. See "Memorandum from the Ministry of Foreign Relations" 26 August 1940, presented to the Peruvian Senate by Callao Senator Carlos Concha in Peru, *Diario De Los Debates Del Senado, Legislatura Ordinaria De 1940*, 418.

nation, the economic wellbeing of society, and the conservation of the customs that bind it [society] and strengthen it;

That the nationalist tendency expressed intensely in recent times by numerous nations is to interfere in foreign countries through their subjects' activities, their commerce, their spirit and their customs;

That the Peruvian workers and business owners have been suffering damaging competition that has been characterized by the conditions indicated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> consideration [above] of this Decree;

That the popular classes already feel the crisis that has resulted from growing influence of the immigrants that have produced dislocations in the economy as well as other social conditions in the country;

...

That article 16 of the Constitution prohibits business monopolies and monopolizations and does not restrict their prohibition in any way; all forms of monopoly are therefore understood in this fashion, including the exclusive or partial dominance of certain activities, such as occurs in some of the small businesses and the occupations of workers and artisans;

...

That article 40 of the Constitution establishes freedom of commerce and industry yet limited out of public necessity, which is without doubt the prevention of its harmful exercise;

That article 42 of the Constitution guarantees freedom of profession as long as it is not opposed to public security, within which is included the government's right to limit activities that due to their characteristics and importance can compromise the security of the nation;

That article 50 of the Constitution authorizes the State to support the physical, moral and social perfection of the population, and the dispositions of the present Decree are located within those broad, preventative concepts;<sup>504</sup>

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<sup>504</sup> Balderrama Tudela, "Legislación De Extranjería," 123-25. Original Spanish: *Considerando: Que constituye una finalidad inexcusable del Estado velar por la conservación y mejoramiento del patrimonio étnico y económico de la nación, por el bienestar económico de la sociedad y por la conservación de las costumbres que la vinculan y la fortalecen; Que la tendencia nacionalista expresada intensamente en los últimos tiempos en numerosos estados los lleva a proyectar en el exterior la actividad de súbditos, su economía, su espíritu y sus costumbres; Que los obreros e industriales peruanos vienen sufriendo de una competencia perjudicial que se caracteriza por las condiciones señaladas en el considerando 2º. de este Decreto; Que las clases populares sienten ya el malestar consecuente con las perturbaciones que sufren la economía y las demás condiciones sociales del país por la creciente influencia de inmigraciones que las afectan; Que el artículo 16 de la Constitución prohíbe los monopolios y acaparamientos industriales sin que tal prohibición esté limitada por ninguna fórmula restrictiva, comprendiendo por lo tanto todas las formas del monopolio, entre las cuales está la de aprovechar exclusivamente o en gran parte de un género de actividades, como ocurre en algunas pequeñas industrias y ocupaciones de obreros y artesanos; Que el artículo 40 de la Constitución establece la libertad de comercio e industria limitada por la necesidad pública, que es sin duda la de precaverse contra su nocivo ejercicio; Que el artículo 42 de la Constitución garantiza*

### “Racial Heritage”

In 1936, Peru’s racial heritage was far from a settled matter in Peru and its “racial future” inspired even more debate. What is clear in 1936, however, is that race continued to be utilized by diverse sectors as an essential tool for establishing their place in Peruvian society. Peru’s nation-building project remained uncompleted and Peruvians already in positions of power as well as those making new claims on the state generally accepted the racial composition of their nation as an essential element in that process. In noting the need to improve the nation’s “ethnic heritage,” Benavides and Ulloa invoked the nineteenth-century discourse, albeit re-invigorated by the present eugenics movement, to “better the race.” “Betterment of the ethnic heritage” historically was understood in the Peruvian and Latin American context to mean the reduction of the proportion of Indians to whites in the overall population through white immigration as well as diminishing the proportion of Indian to white blood in its growing mestizo population. In noting that it was conserving Peru’s “ethnic legacy,” the decree was purposely vague. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, indigenistas considered the indigenous people to be Peru’s ethnic legacy, while the “whitening” advocates emphasized Peru’s Spanish heritage.

In the 1930s battle to establish the racial parameters of the Peruvian nation, both eugenics and *indigenismo* were central to the debate. By the 1920s, *indigenismo* had destabilized the entrenched ideology that Peru’s Indian population was an

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*la libertad de trabajo siempre que no se oponga a la seguridad pública, dentro de cuyo concepto está la facultad gubernamental de evitar actividades que por sus características e importancia pueden comprometer la seguridad del Estado; Que el artículo 50 de la Constitución autoriza al Estado para favorecer el perfeccionamiento físico, moral y social de la población, dentro de cuyos amplios conceptos preventivos caben las disposiciones del presente Decreto;*

unsheddable racial albatross around the nation's neck. For many advocates of indigenismo, the indigenous peoples represented the foundation of the Peruvian nation, the basis of "Indo-America" in the terminology coined by Peruvian intellectual leaders such as socialist José Carlos Mariátegui and APRA's Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre. The most palatable version for Peru's elites, however, was Leguía's (1919-1930) "official indigenismo," which glorified the indigenous people rhetorically while continuing to deny them political and economic rights.<sup>505</sup> While indigenistas did not celebrate mestizaje (construction miscegenation) in Peru, as opposed to Mexico's "cosmic race" or Freyre's Brazilian "racial democracy, the mixed-race Peruvian was recognized as the fastest growing racial group. The eugenics movement accommodated indigenismo, as well as the Peruvian reality of a majority indigenous population, by accepting the Indians into the national body inasmuch as they were determined remediable through changes in social habits.<sup>506</sup> Just the same, avowed eugenicists as well as more mainstream intellectuals held tight to the notion of "whitening" the racial composition of Peru through European immigration. In his

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<sup>505</sup> Rebecca Earle, *The Return of the Native : Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 185-212; José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete Ensayos De Interpretación De La Realidad Peruana*, 14. ed. (Lima: Empresa Editora Amauta, [1929]1975). Augusto Leguía's "Patria Nueva" (New Nation) is the classic Peruvian example of the co-existence of these two concepts in a single ideology. Leguía celebrated the indigenous heritage of Peru, establishing the Patronato del Indígena, yet the Indians continued to be marginalized by the state both politically and economically. Leguía's "official indigenismo" was easily parroted because it implied no change in the system, but was excoriated precisely for that reason by indigenista intellectuals and politicians such as José Mariátegui and Hildebrando Castro Pozo. Also see Thomas M. Davies, *Indian Integration in Peru; a Half Century of Experience, 1900-1948* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974).

<sup>506</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2, Latin Americans embraced a neo-Lamarckian version of eugenics which allowed for the possibility of genetically transforming races by altering social milieu. See Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*.

1929 dissertation published and acclaimed by the Peruvian Congress, Mario del Río represented this state of elite thought when he wrote:

It is imperative then, given the indications of a true emergency, that a million white immigrants (German, Spanish, Poles, Czechoslovakians, Austrians, Russians, etc.) come as soon as possible to serve as the foundation for crossing with our race, given that on a small scale it [this crossing] has produced very good results; of course we all know the strong and attractive Peruvians, offspring of German, Austrian, Italian, Spanish, etc. fathers and indigenous and mestiza women. Certainly our principal race, the indigene, cannot be considered either biologically nor spiritually an inferior race, given that it is intelligent and capable, not only for agricultural and industrial labor, but also for intellectual speculations relating to the spirit, art, politics, and the politics and science of government.<sup>507</sup>

While Del Río's celebration of Peru's indigenous peoples seems inconsistent with "urgent" need for whitening, his rhetoric is reflective of "official indigenismo" which covered strong currents of eugenic beliefs dedicated to Europeanizing Peru and the continuing to exclude Peru's indigenous peoples from power. Del Río's greatest eulogies of Peru's Indians were found in excerpts from Ministers of Development who oversaw the forcible recruitment of Indians to labor on Leguía's massive and infamous road construction projects, wherein they were described in terms akin to the "noble

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<sup>507</sup> Mario E. del Río, *La Inmigración Y Su Desarrollo En El Perú. Prologo Del Doctor Luis Varela Orbegoso Clovis* (Lima: Sanmarti y cia., 1929), 109. Del Río's omission of Italians from his list of desired "whites" seems accidental since several pages are filled with praise of Italian immigration "whose fomentation...we sincerely support." See pp. 81-82. The Congressmen who moved to publish Del Río's dissertation and otherwise supported his work were: Celestino Manchego Muñoz (President, Chamber of Deputies), Ricardo A. Maguiña Suero, Augusto C. Peñaloza, Arturo Pérez Figuerola, Celso S. Abad, Vicente Noriega del Aguila, Roberto E. Leguía, Alberto Salomón, Glicerio A. Fernández, Alejandro Maguiña, and Julio E. Egoguirre. See pp. 13-19. Original Spanish: *Se impone, pues, con caracteres de verdadera urgencia, la venida en menor tiempo posible, de un millón de inmigrantes blancos (alemanes, españoles, polacos, checoslovacos, austriacos, rusos, etc.) como base para el cruzamiento de nuestra raza que, en pequeño, ha dado muy buenos resultados, pues todos conocemos hermosos y fuertes ejemplares de peruanos, hijos de alemanes, austriacos, italianos, españoles, etc. de padres y madres indios y mestizos, pues nuestra raza principal, la aborigen, no puede ser considerada biológica ni espiritualmente, como raza inferior, ya que tiene inteligencia y condiciones, no sólo para las faenas agrícolas e industriales, sino también para altas especulaciones del espíritu, del arte, de la política y de la ciencia del gobierno.*

savage”: “simple and serious; proud and strong...ignorant of hate; impervious to fatigue.”<sup>508</sup> Del Rio’s book was also filled with declarations on the need to civilize the “indigenous race,” and Peru’s “cultural backwardness” was geographically referenced to the country’s indigenous regions that “lacked European immigrants.”<sup>509</sup> After hundreds of years of denigration of the indigenous, the coded language was clear to the readers.<sup>510</sup>

For Del Rio, Peru’s only hope for reaching its economic, social, and cultural potential lay in “crossing” white immigrants with what he describes as “our race.” However, sounding much like Clemente Palma at the turn-of-the-century, he dedicated several pages to describing the positive attributes of each European “race” that he believed should be incorporated into the Peruvian racial mix to effect a transformation. He waxed eloquently on the “German race” as “endowed with great strength, discipline, intelligence, culture, and high self esteem...dignity, honor, and morality

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<sup>508</sup> Ibid., 122-25. Original Spanish: “*sencillo y sobrio; altivo y fuerte, que todo lo puede y todo lo vence; que desconoce el odio; que ignora la fatiga... libertado de trabas ancestrales, por la obra y el esfuerzo del Presidente Leguía...*” For instance, Del Rio quotes (p. 125) Minister of Development Manchego Muñoz who in his capacity as member of the Peruvian Touring Club praised Leguía’s road project and wrote that with the project, “*se esfuma también, para siempre, la leyenda negra de apatía, de ineptitud y de pesimismo, con que aparece adulterada en nuestra historia la figura del indio, que las construye, tal vez con secreta nostalgia de los grandes caminos q cruzaron el Imperio del Sol.*”

<sup>509</sup> Ibid., 193-4. The language is often coded for indigenous such using as using “the interior” or “tierra adentro” as a euphemism for indigenous people. For instance, Del Rio wrote of the need for European immigration to bring civilization “*hacia el interior, a fin de despertarle de su letárgico y milenario sueño, incorporándolo a la activa y triunfadora vida moderna.*” Del Rio, in another instance, noted that European immigration had largely concentrated on the Peruvian coast “*explicándose por este motivo el retraso en la cultura de los pueblos de tierra adentro.*”

<sup>510</sup> For more discussion of this issue, see Davies, *Indian Integration in Peru; a Half Century of Experience, 1900-1948.*

truly laudable”<sup>511</sup> Eugenic thought promoting “whitening” continued to flourish throughout Peru in the 1930s despite some *indigenistas*’ derision of the notion. Mariátegui, for instance, wrote that “to expect indigenous emancipation to occur through an active crossing of the indigenous race with white immigrants is an antisociological naiveté, imaginable only in the rudimentary mind of an importer of merino sheep.”<sup>512</sup>

Yet in rhetorically excising the Peruvian Indian as the primary barrier to Peru’s progress, a new question arose: Who was preventing Peru from achieving its destiny? For many of Peru’s social commentators, the Japanese and Chinese in Peru handily filled the void. For mestizos rising in society, this was an especially comfortable position because it avoided commentary on their own particular racial backgrounds. In the words of Dora Mayer, “...those persons (*poblanos*) that argue so much about the differences and superiority of races are themselves more and more of a questionably white race, because the potent hand of destiny...squeezes in the common melting pot all the skin colors, all the hair types, all the eyes that reflect different regions, and finds in some the spirit that they so disrespected and it turns upon

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<sup>511</sup> Rio, *La Inmigración Y Su Desarrollo En El Perú. Prologo Del Doctor Luis Varela Orbegoso Clovis*, 79-82. Original Spanish: *dotados de gran fortaleza, disciplina, inteligencia, cultura, un elevado sentido de amor propio...dignidad, honradez y moralidad verdaderamente encomiables*. In addition to his warm praise of Peru’s Italian immigrants, Del Rio was a most effusive advocate of German immigrants. Del Rio did not advocate British immigrants in spite of their positive racial attributes due to their “*exagerado e insolente orgullo...quien jamas se adapta por completo a las otras razas y pueblos, por considerarlas, bajo todo aspecto, inferiores a él.*”

<sup>512</sup> José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete Ensayos De Interpretación De La Realidad Peruana*, 14. ed. (Lima: Empresa Editora Amauta, [1929]1975), 41. *Esperar la emancipación indígena de un activo cruzamiento de la raza aborígen con inmigrantes blancos, es una ingenuidad antisociológica, concebible sólo en la mente rudimentaria de un importador de carneros merinos*. Mariátegui argued that the “Indian problem” was not “ethnic,” but rather a result of economic marginalization.



itself.”<sup>513</sup> In this way, the Japanese replaced the Indian as the “problem” with Peru, a point of consensus in the polarized discussions of race of the 1930s.

Benavides and Ulloa paid further homage to the tenets of the eugenics movement by noting the decree “favored the physical, moral, and social perfection of the population.” The question of exactly what a “perfect” Peruvian was addressed by portraying the Japanese and Chinese as the polar opposite. In the words of Peruvian Congressman P. Nosiglia who alluded to the “the dangers...of the Japanese “conquest” of the future of our country,”

In reality, our aborigine should not mix with the yellow [race] because this cross does not better [the race], either physically or morally, and it is our responsibility, if we cannot keep it pure, that the mixing is for the better, not to ethnically reversed.<sup>514</sup>

Similar to the debate on race, there was even less consensus among policymakers and popular commentators as to what might constitute national culture or “the customs that bind and strengthen.” At times “culture” was used as a facile veil for race. Certainly the decrees’ assertion of “conservation” of national culture represented a mythical notion of nation given the cultural divisions between Peru’s large indigenous populations and its criollos, to give just one example. Yet many politicians and intellectuals of the era expressed a desire to define the nation in terms of culture and customs as a way of codifying who had a right to membership.

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<sup>513</sup> Dora Mayer de Zulen, “El Monumento a Manco Capac,” in Comisión Organizadora del Monumento a Manco Capac, *La Independencia Del Perú Y La Colonia Japonesa* (Lima: 1926?), 82.

<sup>514</sup> *La Prensa*, October 2, 1937, as cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 154. Original Spanish: *Efectivamente nuestra aborigen no debe mezclarse con la amarilla porque este cruce no la mejora, ni física, ni moralmente, i es nuestro deber, si no podemos mantenerla pura, que al mezclarse sea para mejorar, no para retroceder étnicamente...*

Conservative Víctor Andrés Belaunde, native Arequipan and Lima resident, defined “Peruvianness” as culturally Catholic (as opposed to pagan Indians) and “family values” based upon Hispanic traditions.<sup>515</sup> The 1933 constitution, for example, reaffirmed Catholicism as the national religion.<sup>516</sup> Much of what was identified as “Peruvian culture” was most closely aligned with the coastal white upper classes’ aspirations for a Western-style modern nation and was echoed by its growing mestizo middle class.<sup>517</sup> In this regard, the Chinese and Japanese again served as negative counterpoint to amorphous “Peruvian customs.” In the words of Boisset, the Japanese are “the antithesis of the ideal that we pursue.”<sup>518</sup>

### **“National Security”**

The 1936 decree warned that a “nationalist tendency” of “numerous nations is to interfere in foreign countries through their subjects’ activities, their commerce, their spirit and their customs.” While yellow peril as a racial threat had typically been interpreted as both Japanese and Chinese, Japan’s development into a world economic and military power produced a discourse that was largely constructed around the Japanese. However, unlike industrialized countries such as the United States that saw Japan as potential threat to their markets, public fervor in Peru was seldom stirred by

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<sup>515</sup> De la Cadena, *Indígenas Mestizos : Raza Y Cultura En El Cusco*, 132.

<sup>516</sup> The constitution stipulated tolerance of religions other than Catholicism.

<sup>517</sup> De la Cadena, *Indígenas Mestizos : Raza Y Cultura En El Cusco*, 63-64.

<sup>518</sup> Boisset, Felipe M., *El Problema Racial en el Perú (o el peligro de la raza amarilla)*, Lima: Empresa Tipográfica Union, 1919, pp. 20, 22, 28 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 88-89.

Japanese trade policies with the exception of Japanese textile quotas enacted in 1934.<sup>519</sup> Instead, the commercial focus of yellow peril was in the form of Japanese, and oftentimes Chinese, immigrants' small business enterprises. While yellow peril alarmists did not write about race in the same terms as eugenicists, the consistent element in the historical development of yellow peril was that it was based in a rejection of the Chinese and Japanese, even prior to Japan becoming a military power. The doctrine also racialized the Japanese immigrants by conflating them with the military exploits of their government. In the words of Peruvian author Victor Guevara, the Japanese possessed "genetic patriotism."<sup>520</sup>

Ulloa represented a sector of the elite that opposed the Japanese in Peru based upon their conviction that the Japanese immigrants were emissaries of the Japanese government and that the economic standing the immigrants had acquired in Peru made them a danger to nation. Guillermo Salinas Cossío, agricultural exporter and former president of the SNA, similarly reflected this attitude when he wrote, "Neither are the

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<sup>519</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3, one exception to Peru's lack of "yellow peril" accusations regarding Japanese trade policies was the Benavides administration's temporary suspension of its 1934 trade agreement with Japan on the importation of finished cotton goods following protests by the National Industrial Society (SNI) and the Lima Chamber of Commerce. The Japanese government subsequently submitted to voluntary textile quotas. The Lima Chamber of Commerce did not focus on trade policies with the exception of the textile quotas, but it did reprint a small number of commercial "yellow peril" articles written by United States writers such as Wallace B. Donham, Dean of the Harvard Business School. See Cámara de Comercio de Lima, "El Japón Avanza." In another issue, however, the Chamber printed Peru's Ambassador to Japan Pedro E. Paulet's defense of Japan against accusations of "dumping." See Cámara de Comercio de Lima, "La Producción Aurífera Mundial Y La Política Monetaria Del Japón," *Boletín* 5, no. 55 (1934). The Lima Chamber of Commerce also refused to observe China's request for a boycott of Japanese goods following Japan's 1937 invasion of Manchuria. See Cámara de Comercio de Lima, "La Asociación Central De Exportadores Del Japón," *Boletín* 9, no. 103 (1938).

<sup>520</sup> Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 136.

Japanese unaware that political expansion is not, generally speaking, just a simple transformation or consequence of economic ownership. Behind the merchant generally follows the soldier.”<sup>521</sup> Ulloa believed that the proliferation of Japanese business enterprises was a threat to “national security” because they allowed the Japanese immigrants to act as spies for the Japanese government. Ulloa wrote:

...the Japanese, primarily the owner of the corner store or hacienda store, makes his business a gathering place, of information and influence...He installs a phonograph or a radio to convert his business into a kind of retail social center where people come to eat, a place where relationships are formed that the Japanese will know how to exploit later and where everything that is known or heard is talked about.<sup>522</sup>

### **“Damaging Competition”**

While Ulloa’s desire to rid Peru of the Japanese was based upon his belief that they were a national security risk, DS 1936 served a populist objective by promising Peruvian workers and businesses owners relief from “damaging competition.” In this way, it not only blamed Peruvians’ economic woes on the Japanese, but also reinforced a belief that the Japanese and Chinese immigrants had no right to participate in the Peruvian economy, nor Peruvian society for that matter. The decree promised to conserve and better Peru’s “economic heritage” just as it would its “ethnic heritage.” Peru was mythically represented not only as a nation of racial equals

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<sup>521</sup> *La Prensa*, September 6, 1937, as cited in *Ibid.*, 147. Original Spanish: *Los japoneses no ignoran, tampoco, que la expansión política no es, en la generalidad de los casos, sino una simple transformación o secuela del tutelaje económico. Tras del comerciante viene generalmente el soldado.*

<sup>522</sup> Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú*, 341-42. Original Spanish: *el japonés, sobre todo el dueño de pulpería o de tambo, hace de su negocio un centro de concurrencia, de información y de influjo... Instala el fonógrafo o el radio para convertir su tienda en una especie de menudo centro social en el que se sigue consumiendo, en el que se crean vinculaciones que el japonés sabrá explotar más tarde y en el que se habla de todo lo que se sabe o se oye.*

known as “Peruvians,” but the “popular classes” were also erroneously led to believe they could rely on their nation to protect their economic interests. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, the provisions requiring that 80% of the work force be Peruvian were enforced neither in the bakeries, according to *Estrella del Perú*, nor against yanacostas. The Benavides government, in reality, stood staunchly against expanding the political and economic rights of Peru’s lower classes. His government was also intent on stamping out the influence of groups who were challenging state power based on the representation of precisely those groups: APRA from the left and the fascist-leaning Unión Revolucionaria (UR) from the right. While prior to 1936 APRA had attacked the Japanese economic and military imperialism, UR had run the more vicious campaign against Asians in Peru in its newspaper *Acción* in 1934, calling for the cessation of Chinese and Japanese immigration, enforcement of Law 7505 against Japanese, and a boycott of Asian businesses.<sup>523</sup> It is likely not by chance that DS 1936 was issued in the midst of Benavides’ *Frente Nacional* party’s election battle with both those parties.<sup>524</sup>

DS 1936 reflected and legitimated the racial denigration of Asians and their role in the Peruvian economy and society while lending credence to Japanese political designs on Peru. *La Prensa* publicized these issues in their 1937 series entitled

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<sup>523</sup> See multiple issues of *Acción* 1934. *Acción* also published the bulletins on behalf of Anti-Asian Society of Peru which sought to encourage European immigration while restricting Asian immigration and Asian businesses.

<sup>524</sup> The APRA candidate Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre was disqualified from the 1936 race over political intrigue, but Luis Antonio Eguiguren stepped into the void. When the October election count showed Eguiguren in the lead, Benavides pressured the Congress to annul the election on the basis of the Apristas’ support of Eguiguren.

“Japanese Infiltration” which ran nearly forty articles between August and October. Led by Salinas Cossío, several congressmen and Peruvian intellectuals were featured alongside editorials and public commentary. Akio Banno and K. Ikeyama, editors of Japanese newspapers, wrote several articles in defense of Japan and the immigrants in Peru. While many of the articles focused on Japanese immigrants’ control of land in Peru, as discussed in Chapter 3, Congressman Salvador Olivares exemplified the most widespread Peruvian interpretation of the racial-economic-political trinity of yellow peril when he wrote

The Asian immigrations of Mongols and Japanese onto the coasts of America...will end the hegemony of the Indo-Hispanic race; and, what is even more serious, even the Sovereignty of our incipient nationalities...

The Asian races commercially invade our populations in an alarming way, infiltrating, as such, in these embryonic organisms, and reaching the center of our jungles and our rivers...we do not mean to commit the sin of pessimism, or to be the prophets of disaster, in announcing that, in the not so distant future, we will go on to become a colony of Mikado...<sup>525</sup>

### 5.3 Peru for Peruvians: The Small Business Owners’ Anti-Asian Campaign

Ulloa expressed confidence that the 1936 decree represented the Peruvian public’s wishes in spite of anti-Japanese sentiment “not having yet exploded.” More than a decade prior to DS 1936, Peru’s first anti-Asian league, *La Asociación Nacional*

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<sup>525</sup> *La Prensa*, October 17, 1937, as cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 156. Original Spanish: *Las inmigraciones asiáticas de mongoles i nipones hacia las costas de América...acabarán por comprometer la hegemonía de la raza Indo-Hispana; i, lo que es más grave, hasta la Soberanía de nuestras nacionalidades incipientes...Las razas asiáticas invaden comercialmente nuestras poblaciones en forma alarmante, infiltrándose, por decirlo, así, en estos organismos embrionarios, i llegando hasta el centro de nuestras selvas i de nuestros ríos...no creemos pecar de pesimistas, ni ser profetas de desgracias, augurando que, para un futuro no muy lejano, pasaríamos a ser una colonia de Mikado...*

*Antiasiática*, was formed with the objective of securing the complete racial exclusion of Asians from Peruvian territory.<sup>526</sup> In its Statement of Principles, the Association asserted that Asians were inferior races who would “reverse the eugenic process of the nation (*nacionalidad*),” what they also described as the “conservation or betterment of the race.”

In consideration of the spent and varied state in which the Peruvian race finds itself due to the mixes with other inferior races, like with black and Asian, and keeping in mind that a race must be formed to make a better future than the present, inferior races that are inassimilable must be stopped from continuing to penetrate the national territory...with their blood and work they enter its heart...<sup>527</sup>

The Association described itself as “completely nationalist” intent on “encouraging the national soul to reject the cast-off immigrants” which the organizers accused of having caused “economic, social, and ethical imbalances.” They further added that “the decayed and inferior civilizations have detained the march toward national progress.” The Association finally declared its intention to organize a boycott of the businesses of the “yellow element” and encourage economic protection of the “Peruvians, Americans, and Europeans.”<sup>528</sup> While the press had sporadically run

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<sup>526</sup> “Asociación Anti-Asiática,” 12 December 1922, Legajo 1, Reconocimiento de Instituciones, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, File #21, AGN. The Ministry of Foment, however, denied the organization recognition for unstated reasons.

<sup>527</sup> “Declaración de Principios o Carta Social de la Asociación Nacional Antiasiática,” 12 December 1922, Expedientes Laborales, File #21. The organization noted that while it sought the exclusion of all Asians, its actions were directed against “especially the Chinese.” Original Spanish: *Considerando lo gastado i variada que se halla la raza peruana por las mezclas con otras razas inferiores, como la negra i la asiática, i teniendo presente que hai que preparar una raza para el futuro mejor que la actual, hai que impedir que siga penetrando al territorio nacional elementos inferiores que sean inasimilables...que con su sangre i trabajo ingresan a su seno...*

<sup>528</sup> “Declaración de Principios o Carta Social de la Asociación Nacional Antiasiática,” 12 December 1922, Ministerio de Fomento, Expedientes Laborales, File #21, AGN. Juan H. Bussio was named president and Victor Valderrama Zavala secretary general. Other members of the board include: Cesar

articles calling for the suspension of Asian immigration or railing against the predominance of Chinese and Japanese businesses, the Anti-Asian Association represented an increasing level of organization in a campaign that intertwined economic protectionism with the precepts of eugenics.

In December 1930, Ernesto Clermont Ferrand, owner of a Lima Ford car dealership and a shop selling imitation china, printed 10,000 copies of the first and only issue of *Anti-Asia*.<sup>529</sup> Although announced as a publication of the Asian Boycott League, the newspaper seemed to rest upon the singular efforts of Clermont.<sup>530</sup> Just the same, Clermont appears to be a precursor of an anti-Asian movement among middle-class Peruvian businessmen that was rising to the fore and asserting its rights.<sup>531</sup> Given that most of these “Peru for Peruvians” organizations concentrated their efforts on blocking the licensing Asian businesses through administrative venues, Clermont’s long treatise on the issues provides a more detailed airing of the movement’s motivation. Like the 1922 Anti-Asian Association, *Anti-Asia*’s primary

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Mendoza, Miguel Glasinovich, Godofredo Ybarra, Jorge Saal. Spokesmen were Pedro Remotti, Adolfo Ugarte, and Hipolito Varela.

<sup>529</sup> *Anti-Asia*, December 1, 1930, 19. Archives of the Centro Cultural Peruano Japonés, Lima, Perú. *Anti-Asia* shows two advertisements for Ferrand Brothers, one selling “artículos de loza de fantasia” on Arzobispo 300 and the “Compre Ud. un Ford” on Avenida Progreso. While the reasons for its short life are unclear, there is an indication that the Ministry of Government may have banned further issues be printed in response to the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations letter to that effect in which it called *Anti-Asia* tantamount to defamation. See “Minister of Foreign Relation to Minister of Government,” 5 December 1930, Ministerio de Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 300, AGN.

<sup>530</sup> *Ibid.*, 20. All the articles were signed “Clefferr” (short for Clermont Ferrand). Clermont further advises the reader that he included the four pages of advertisements without charge to the businesses to indicate where readers should shop when boycotting Asian businesses.

<sup>531</sup> While Clermont Ferrand are surnames of French origin, it is unclear if Clermont Ferrand is Peruvian by birth or an immigrant.



objective was to marginalize, and eliminate, the “undesirable races” that had a foothold in the Peruvian economy and achieve the “racial-economic wellbeing of the country.”<sup>532</sup> Clermont drew upon discourses of old, accusing Asians – “a race with few scruples” – of “transmitting all of their sicknesses and infections” through the merchandise they sold and of cheating clients to increase their profits.<sup>533</sup> The debate was also framed as moral-religious battle between good and evil, the Asians in Peru portrayed as the “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.”<sup>534</sup> *Anti-Asia*, however, crossed into newer territory for the popular press by dedicating several pages to the “yellow race’s” military designs on Peru. Yet rather than presenting all Japanese as inevitable spies of an imperialist government as Ulloa did, Clermont interpreted the Japanese government’s aggression in Asia as a racial characteristic particular to “especially the Japanese” but also the Chinese.<sup>535</sup> For Clermont, the Japanese *and* Chinese intentions were clear: “Invade Brazil, Peru, bit by bit, and then charge on to the conquest of a rich continent like South America where perhaps by destroying our own race they will be able to find their wellbeing and riches.”<sup>536</sup>

*Anti-Asia*, however, also extended the idea of race-based aggressiveness to the business practices of Asians, classifying their dominance in business as inevitable

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<sup>532</sup> *Anti-Asia*, 17.

<sup>533</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, 11.

<sup>534</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>535</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>536</sup> *Ibid.* Original Spanish: *Invadir poco a poco Brasil, Perú, y luego lanzarse a la conquista de un continente rico Sudamérica en donde quizás exterminando a nuestra propia raza pueda encontrar bienestar y riquezas.*

because they were an “all-absorbing race” and “imperialists” and utilized “military discipline” to conquer the Peruvian economy.<sup>537</sup> Clermont did, however, distinguish between the Japanese and the Chinese to some degree. While qualifying both as a “racial danger,” he characterized the Chinese as “a true social danger” and the Japanese as “a terrible economic danger,” the former reflective of activities, i.e. gambling and opium, that continued to be associated with the Chinese and the latter evidence of the increasing importance of the Japanese in small retail.

Clermont clearly stated that the mission of *Anti-Asia* was to protect “the racial rights, and the integrity of the Peruvian nation.” While Clermont spilled much ink on the undesirability of Asians for the Peruvian nation, he is far less explicit as to who deserved the “racial rights” or what constituted the “integrity of the Peruvian nation.”<sup>538</sup> Like the Anti-Asian Association eight years earlier, *Anti-Asia* asserted that Peru could be rescued from the fire by halting Asian immigration and protecting the businesses of “Peruvians and desirable foreigners.”<sup>539</sup> Clermont, again like the Anti-Asia Association, posited “Peruvians and desirable foreigners” in opposition to Asians, but did not make any reference to race of the “Peruvians and desirable foreigners” he lauded. However, Clermont’s advertisements for “desirable business owners” he suggested be patronized during the Asian boycott give an indication of his preferences.<sup>540</sup> The four pages of 2 x 2 inch advertisements were overwhelmingly

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<sup>537</sup> Ibid., 3, 7, 15.

<sup>538</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>539</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>540</sup> Ibid., 20.

dominated by Europeans or names suggesting European origin (non-Spanish). The announcements for shoe stores, restaurants, grocery stores, clothing stores, pharmacies, etc. carried an abundance of Italian names – Chichizola, Rebosio, Giacoletti, Cattani, Bértoli – and were frequently designated as “Italian” such as the advertisement: “Venezia Pharmacy, Owner Dr. Marino Canella, Italian Pharmacist.” After the Italians, a variety of European establishments were highlighted: “The English Store,” the “French Peruvian Hotel,” the hotel “Strasburg Gardens,” and in the case of some, the proprietor’s European nationality was made explicit. No establishments in the almost four pages of advertisers bore a Peruvian indigenous name and only a handful was of Spanish origin. While the latter case could indicate a Peruvian mestizo, some advertisements clarified that the owner was Spanish, not Peruvian, as in the case of S. Talisa Puig, proprietor of a money exchange establishment.

How did Lima’s burgeoning working class fit into *Anti-Asia*’s formulation of the Peruvian nation? Clermont excoriated working class Peruvians for supporting the “yellow race” out of “convenience,” and accused them of committing “something akin to criminal treason” by shopping at Asian stores.<sup>541</sup> Clermont called on schools, universities, and unions to educate Peru’s masses on the error of their ways and convince them to support an economic boycott.<sup>542</sup> On the other hand, *Anti-Asia* scarcely mentioned working class issues of unemployment or the union accusations

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<sup>541</sup> Ibid., 8, 13.

<sup>542</sup> Ibid., 17.

that Japanese businesses displaced Peruvian workers.<sup>543</sup> From a racial perspective, *Anti-Asia*'s multiple cartoons depicted all the Peruvians as light-skinned with European features with the sole exception of President Sánchez Cerro who appeared on the front cover. (See Figure 5.1)



Figure 5.1 *Anti-Asia* cartoons<sup>544</sup>

<sup>543</sup> Clermont did encourage people to buy from companies that hire many Peruvians, specifically mentioning the German company Casa Welsch. *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>544</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

In the advertisements, Clermont seems to voice a lament of the loss of a European-style culture in Lima, now increasingly dominated by the provincial Peruvians who had poured into Lima by 1930 and the Chinese and Japanese who had opened stores to meet the growing demand for low-priced items. Not only the upper class but also the up-and-coming middle class in Peru identified with European culture. The stores selling European luxury goods, beloved status symbols in Lima society, were at risk of being overwhelmed by Asian stores catering to the popular classes. Would “Kiosko de la Merced,” the importer of “aristocratic” French chocolates survive? Would Limeños be able to continue to visit tailor Bartolomé Llanos and rely upon him for his “first class materials” and his “constant supply of English fabrics”? Would the hat shop of the Cordano brothers, “the preferred shop of the Callao chic,” survive the competition of Japanese competitors selling Ychikawa hats? Or would they, if they were to survive, have to stoop to the level of Rómulo Corigliano’s Bazar “El Cisne” on the Plaza San Martín, “whose prices beat all the Asian competition”?

While some of the business owners who participated in the “Peru for Peruvians” organizations may have been directly threatened by Japanese or Chinese competitors, many others were like Clermont Ferrand and not in direct competition. While the Japanese and Chinese were involved in porcelain, they were seldom found selling Fords or any other car. *Anti-Asia’s* racial-economic fear, however, was also closely tied to social status. The status of the mestizo middle-class was highly dependent upon economic position or profession as well as education. As opposed to

the more fixed socio-racial positions of white elites at the upper extreme or indigenous peasants at the lower, the proper education and job could elevate their status to *gente decente* while the opposite could drop them into them into the masses. Japanese business owner Seiiche Higashide observed that the inroads Japanese immigrants had made into small, neighborhood shops put them into direct competition with “beginning merchants’ who had worked themselves up from the lower strata of Peruvian society.” In Higashide’s words

The Japanese economic advances touched a sensitive spot among those of that stratum and brought forth a poisonous resentment. It was that group, indeed, that could be most readily co-opted by the anti-Japanese efforts of the U.S. government.<sup>545</sup>

The “economic-racial chaos” occasioned by the Japanese and Chinese, in the eyes of many middle-class mestizos, was the instability that Asians brought to the social order.<sup>546</sup> While the Peruvian business owners were proud to have Europeans or Peruvians of European descent as their social equals, many like Clermont Ferrand found abhorrent the notion that a Japanese or Chinese person could occupy the same rung on the social ladder. *Anti-Asia*’s cartoon “The Asian Metamorphosis” (Figure 5.2) graphically portrays a societal transformation that many middle-class Peruvians feared. The Asian character begins in a position subordinate to his tall, light-skinned Peruvian employer. However, he is portrayed as soon acting as a despotic boss over a Peruvian worker in collaboration with corrupt Peruvian officials. In the final panel,

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<sup>545</sup> Higashide, *Adios to Tears : The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps*, 104-05.

<sup>546</sup> *Anti-Asia*, 17.

the affluent Asian man occupies both an economic and social position superior to the man who is reduced to begging from the Asian man who remains seated. The man marked “Peruvian” and dressed in a rumpled suit is by no accident several shades lighter than Sánchez Cerro, a message designed to reinforce what many middle-class businessmen already knew in 1930 Peru: their position was tenuous.<sup>547</sup>



**Figure 5.2** “The Asian Metamorphosis”

### 5.3 Town Councils and the Anti-Asian Campaigns

While the press and the Anti-Asian associations represented one locus of the anti-Asian campaign, the second was a growing number of local business associations that pressured municipal officials to exclude Asians from commercial activity. On the surface, the organizations appear simply as acting in their own economic self-interest, intent on clearing out their Asian competitors. Yet the municipal councils, the business organizations, the Japanese businesses, and the community often engaged in spirited debate, shedding light on local racial attitudes and notions of membership in

<sup>547</sup> Ibid., 12.

the nation. Interestingly, the most active anti-Asian business associations and town councils were located outside of Lima.<sup>548</sup>

On October 20, 1930, the Chiclayo Provincial Council passed a resolution calling on the national government to halt the “infernal avalanche” of Japanese & Chinese immigration to Peru.<sup>549</sup> Chiclayo, a coastal province located almost 700 kilometers north of Lima, counted approximately 963 Asians (680 men; 283 women) out of a total population of 105,646 residents. (See Map, page vii.) The total number of Asians in Lambeyeque, the department where Chiclayo was located, numbered just 1167 (822 men; 345 women) out of 192,890. Of the Asians in Lambeyeque, 489 were Chinese citizens (439 men; 50 women), 181 held Japanese citizenship (139 men; 42 women), and the remaining 41% of the Asians were Peruvian citizens.<sup>550</sup> In spite of Asian immigration not appearing to be an “avalanche” in numerical terms, the Provincial Council clarified in a follow-up letter to the Minister of Foreign Relations

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<sup>548</sup> One of the few cases originating in Lima occurred in February 1926. The Federation of Peruvian Pharmacists protested that Nonomiya Shoten, a Japanese immigrant and owner of a drug manufacturing company owner, had taken possession of a bankrupt drugstore that was heavily indebted to Shoten’s company. The Federation convinced the Pharmacy Inspection Commission to close the drugstore and recommended that pharmaceutical professionals not patronize any Asian-owned pharmacy-related operation. See “Memorandum from Japanese Consulate in Lima to Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations,” 9 February 1926, Record Group 6-18, ARE.

<sup>549</sup> “Letter from Ezequiel Bravo Llúncor and B. Gamarra to Mayor of Chiclayo,” 30 October 1930, Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 314, AGN.

<sup>550</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*. Given that there was no census between 1876 and 1940, we are forced to rely on the 1940 census, although there were likely slightly more Japanese in Chiclayo in 1930 than in 1940. The 1924 *Padrón de Extranjería* for the department of Lambeyeque indicates 251 Chinese and 174 Japanese nationals. The 1924 figures, not surprisingly, are much lower for the Chinese and almost the same for the Japanese given that more Japanese immigrants left Peru than entered during the 1930s. See Alfonso Samamé Rodríguez’s compilation of the *Padrón de Extranjería, 1924*, Archivo Regional de Lambayeque.



Rafael Larco Herrera that they were also seeking the cessation of Asian immigration for “circumstances of a racial, economic, patriotic, etc. nature.”<sup>551</sup>

At issue were Asian-owned businesses. The council members, most likely middle class men of some stature in Chiclayo, noted that they were seeking a resolution against Asian immigrants on behalf of the Workers’ Confederation 1<sup>st</sup> of May, an anarco-syndicalist group based in Chiclayo.<sup>552</sup> The Workers’ Federation, according to the council, was responding to the call of the National Committee for Hygiene and National Consolidation, likely a eugenics organization.<sup>553</sup> The resolution, as such, represented the seemingly unlikely alliance of middle class mestizos, unionized cholos, and eugenicists, each group serving its own purposes yet united in their opposition to Asians. While it seems incongruous for cholos and mestizos to have embraced eugenics, Peruvian society was well steeped in notions of white superiority as well as Asian inferiority. Secondly, the Latin American version of eugenics did not consider mixed-race individuals as necessarily a lost cause as long as they embraced “whitening.” By placing themselves as Peruvians in opposition to Asians, however, both avoided the details of whiteness where they might be found

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<sup>551</sup> “Letter from B. Gamarra to Director of Government,” 11 December 1931, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 324, AGN.

<sup>552</sup> Joel Delhom, “El Movimiento Obrero Anarquista En El Perú,” in *Annual Conference of the Society for Latin American Studies* (University of Birmingham: 2001). Printed in Anarchy Archives at [anarchyarchives.com](http://anarchyarchives.com).

<sup>553</sup> “Letter from Ezequiel Bravo Llúncor and B. Gamarra to Mayor of Chiclayo,” 30 October 1930, Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 314, AGN. Either Bravo or Gamarra may have been an attorney for the union as the letter indicates that one of the authors “represents” the union. While I have not located information on this particular group (Comité de Saneamiento y Consolidación Nacional), eugenics organizations were almost always named with references to hygiene, health, and national consolidation.

failing and bolstered their position relative to a group widely considered inferior in eugenic terms.

In Chiclayo, the municipal council men also struggled to explain the success of Asians whom they had cast as ethnically inferior. Bravo and Gamarra wrote of the Asian store owners:

Because of their age-old habits and customs they are born predisposed to exploit everything with greater success than we do, coming from a different environment and unfortunately they receive the support of the masses, who, perhaps because of their archaic customs [*atavismo*] prefer them.<sup>554</sup>

In this context, the masses were likely indigenous cholos and they, like the Asians, were portrayed as having a culture that existed outside the modern world. Asians and indigenous peoples were sometimes assumed to have a natural affinity because of an ancient common racial origin based upon the theory that Americas' original inhabitant crossed from Asia over the Bering Strait land-bridge. In 1926, former Peruvian ambassador to Japan Francisco A. Loayza published a book supporting a direct connection between the Japanese and the Peruvian Indians based upon linguistic similarities between Japanese and Quechua.<sup>555</sup> Although Loayza's book did not denigrate the Japanese or indigenous peoples, this similitude was generally invoked to the detriment of both groups.

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<sup>554</sup> "Letter from Ezequiel Bravo Llúncor And B. Gamarra to Mayor of Chiclayo," 30 October 1930, Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 314, AGN.

<sup>555</sup> Francisco A. Loayza, *Manko Kapa (El Fundador Del Imperio Del Los Inkas Fué Japonés) : Estudio Especial Para El Xxii Congreso Internacional De Americanistas, En Roma* (Pará Brazil,: F.A. Loayza Livraria Gillet, 1926).

Not content to wait on the national government to take action, the Chiclayo City Council passed a resolution on November 7, 1930 calling upon the government to restrict Asian immigration to Peru, protect national business from the “methods and competition” of Asians, and conduct a review of all Asians’ immigration documents, naturalizations, business licenses etc. and deport any immigrant not fully in compliance.<sup>556</sup> The Chiclayo Council, overriding the mayor’s concerns regarding the resolution’s constitutionality, put into practice the resolution by denying Japanese and Chinese applicants the right to open businesses in Chiclayo.<sup>557</sup> Chiclayo further sent a memo to all municipalities in Peru asking them to join the anti-Asian resolution.

In January 1932, the Provincial Council of Bajo Amazonas wrote the Ministry of Government to give its hearty support to the three-point Chiclayo resolution. Located in the Amazon River basin in northeastern Peru, the province’s Asian population (largely Chinese) was negligible: 187 men and 33 women out of a total population of 96,077.<sup>558</sup> The mayor of Bajo Amazonas emphasized that Peruvian government should adopt the anti-Asian measures recommended by the Chiclayo ordinance because the “economic, nationalistic, and racial aspects,” had already been recognized by “nations of culture equal or superior to ours, such as the United States

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<sup>556</sup> “Alcaldía de Chiclayo, Decretos y Resoluciones,” 7 November 1930, Folder #2, File #577, p. 17, Archivo Regional de Lambayeque.

<sup>557</sup> “Concejo Provincial de Chiclayo, Actas y Sesiones,” 5 November 1930, Folder #13, Archivo Regional de Lambayeque; “Letters from Edo.G. de la Piedra (Chinese Consul in Chiclayo) to Chinese Legation in Lima,” 12 May 1931 and 5 June 1931, Ministerio de Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 314, AGN.

<sup>558</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*.

of America, Mexico, Chile, Argentina and others...<sup>559</sup> While the Council had no issue with its small local Asian population, they saw their mission as one of a higher nature. With a nod to the global racial hierarchy, the Bajo Amazonas Council asked the Peruvian government to stand against Asian immigration so that Peru could take its proper place among the civilized nations. What were the policies of the “cultured nations” so admired by the Bajo Amazonas Council? The United States, already a nation with a white majority, had barred all Asians in 1924. Argentina, for its part, was envied among Latin American eugenicists for having successfully attracted European immigration, making it Latin America’s “whitest” country.<sup>560</sup> As discussed earlier in this chapter, Mexico was most famous for its expulsion of the Chinese from the state of Sonora in 1931 and in 1934, Brazil enacted immigration quotas which largely affected Jews and the Japanese. Both Brazil and Chile had also passed laws limiting the percentage of foreign employees in the workplace, similar to Peru’s Law 7505.<sup>561</sup>

In 1930 and 1931, the Concejo Provincial de Jauja passed a series of ordinances to restrict the economic activities of Japanese.<sup>562</sup> The central highlands

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<sup>559</sup> “Letter from Mayor of Bajo Amazonas to Director of Government,” 18 January 1932, Ministerio de Interior, Concejos, MI 324, AGN.

<sup>560</sup> “Actas ” (paper presented at the Segunda Conferencia Panamericana de Eugenesia y Homicultura de las Repúblicas Americanas, Buenos Aires, 1934), 200-01. At the Second Panamerican Conference on Eugenics and Homiculture, Peruvian eugenicist Carlos Enrique Paz Soldán praised Argentina and the United States as “nations extraordinarily advanced from the standpoint of their overall human composition.”

<sup>561</sup> “Letter from Japanese Consulate in Lima to Peruvian Minister of Foreign Relations D. Alberto Freundt Rosell,” 17 May 1932, Record Group 6-18, ARE. The Japanese Consulate’s letter cites the laws in its letter to Freundt.

city was the birthplace of the saying “esto es Jauja,” or “this is heaven on earth.”

While the vast majority of Japanese immigrants settled in the coastal lowlands, many Japanese who migrated to Jauja to take advantage of the health benefits of its dry climate stayed and set up shop as small retailers. Some Japanese also took advantage of opportunities in nearby Huancayo, the thriving commercial hub for the Mantaro Valleys’ highly productive indigenous communities. By 1930, 575 Japanese lived in the department of Junin, the majority in the cities of Jauja and Huancayo.<sup>563</sup> (See Map, p. vii.)

Ricardo Kawamura, originally from Japan, was a Jauja resident when he purchased a *chingana* (store/restaurant/bar) from Juan Codama, also Japanese, in January 1935 and applied for a business license from the Jauja Provincial Council. However, instead of selling groceries, Kawamura became embroiled in a legal battle over the constitutionality of the Council’s ordinances, passed in 1931 and 1932, which “restricted the all-absorbing expansion of the Japanese business and factory owners to the effective and desperate detriment of Peruvian [businesses] that this Concejo is

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<sup>562</sup> “Expediente iniciado por don Ricardo Kawamura, sobre licencia de traspaso de un establecimiento comercial, K-22, empezó el 6 de agosto de 1934, Jauja,” 2 April 1935, Ministerio del Interior, Expedientes de Concejos Provinciales, MI 354, AGN. In his report of January 24, 1935 to the Concejo Provincial de Jauja, Police Inspector T. Bullón Salazar recommended the denial of applicant Ricardo Kawamura’s application for a business license on the basis of ordinances passed by the Concejo on May 5 and November 20, 1931 and January 19 and July 15, 1932 that restricted the issuance of business licenses to Japanese.

<sup>563</sup> Editorial Peru Shimpō Sha, *Zai Peru – hojin 75 nen no ayumi: 1899 nen – 1974 nen (Japanese Immigration to Peru, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)*, Lima, 1974, Japanese section, pp. 67-68, 93 as cited in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 196.

obligated to assist.”<sup>564</sup> When Kawamura’s case was discussed by the Provincial Council, delegate Julio W. Vizcarra expressed concern that the ordinances violated constitutional provisions guaranteeing the freedom of commerce.<sup>565</sup> Inspector T. Bullón Salazar responded with an impassioned defense of the anti-Japanese ordinances, drawing upon the racial discourses of Asian immorality and emphasizing, for those who might have a more ingrained association with the Chinese in this regard, that the Japanese and Chinese were a single race. Bullón accused the Japanese of “stripping” Jaujeños “of their customary professions, leaving them hungry [without bread]” and operating their businesses in an “illicit” fashion because the “Japanese Asian race” secured preferential treatment by bribing municipal officials under the false pretence of making donations for public works. Similar to the Bajo Amazonas letter, Bullón noted that the Jauja ordinances in effect represented not only the “general and national clamor” against the proliferation of Japanese commerce in Peru, but also added that many countries had limited the commercial activities of the Japanese.<sup>566</sup> Convinced by Bullón, the Council denied Kawamura’s application 7-4.<sup>567</sup>

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<sup>564</sup> “Report of Police Inspector Bullón to Concejo Provincial,” 24 January 1935, in “Expediente...Ricardo Kawamura,” 2 April 1935, Ministerio del Interior, Expedientes de Concejos Provinciales, MI 354, AGN.

<sup>565</sup> “Minutes of Jauja Provincial Council Meeting,” 25 January 1935, in “Expediente...Ricardo Kawamura,” Ministerio del Interior, Expedientes de Concejos Provinciales, MI 354, AGN.

<sup>566</sup> “Minutes of Jauja Provincial Council Meeting,” 25 January 1935, in “Expediente...Ricardo Kawamura,” Ministerio del Interior, Expedientes de Concejos Provinciales, MI 354, AGN. Bullón declared, “...if they [the Japanese] are generous once, donating two or three hundred soles for some public work, it pales in comparison to the benefits [they receive] and makes the donation look pitiful.” Original Spanish: “*si alguna vez se encuentran generosas como son obsequiando doscientos o trescientos soles a favor de alguna obra publica, no está en relación con las utilidades y hasta vergonzoso resulta el obsequio.*” Bullón also noted that the Japanese had especially displaced other Jauja residents in the area of shirt making.

Kawamura, however, appealed his case to the Ministry of Government which ruled that the Jauja Provincial Council provide Kawamura with his business license on the basis that the province's ordinances were unconstitutional.<sup>568</sup>



**Figure 5.3** Business License of Y. Nishimura, Tailor, Lima

<sup>567</sup> “Minutes of Jauja Provincial Council Meeting,” 25 January 1935, in “Expediente...Ricardo Kawamura,” Ministerio del Interior, Expedientes de Concejos Provinciales, MI 354, AGN.

<sup>568</sup> “Memorandum from Attorney of the Supreme Court to Director of Government,” 13 May 1935, and “Executive Resolution,” August 1935, in “Expediente...Ricardo Kawamura,” Ministerio del Interior, Expedientes de Concejos Provinciales, MI 354, AGN. The Supreme Court’s Attorney issued an opinion indicating that the Jauja ordinance violated article 42 of the Constitution guaranteeing freedom of commerce, unless it compromised public morality, health, or security: “*El Estado garantiza la libertad de trabajo. Pueden ejercerse libremente toda profesión, industria ú oficio, que no se opongan á la moral, á la salud ni á la seguridad pública.*”

#### 5.4 Legitimizing Anti-Asian Racism: The Aftermath of DS 1936

DS 1936 affirmed the legitimacy of exclusionary race-based economic policies that some local politicians and business men had advocated prior to the decree. In spite of the DS 1936's language specifying that it was to be applied against "foreigners" rather than particularly against the Japanese or against Asians in general, it was widely understood by the sectors that opposed Asians as a golden opportunity to push for even greater restrictions. Furthermore, DS 1936 fomented the creation of anti-Asian organizations by providing a state-consecrated legal framework around which they could organize their activities.

Trujillo, in the Department of La Libertad, is an example of how DS 1936 fostered the creation of Anti-Asian associations. (See Map, p. vii.) Although the La Libertad's Prefect, A. Eduardo Lanatta was on record as considering Asian immigration "noxious for our nationality for ethnic and economic reasons," there were indications that the Japanese community Trujillo had been well received by the general population.<sup>569</sup> In 1935, Juan Armas M. published the *Guía de Trujillo* (Guide to Trujillo) in which he spoke in glowing terms of the Japanese community in the city. Describing the local Japanese as "industrious and serious," he noted that the Japanese were active in commercial enterprises, especially those requiring little capital. Striking an affectionate tone, Armas went on to list numerous members of the Japanese community who were not only highly respected, but also those who were "very popular among Peruvians" in Trujillo. Kenzo Arima, for instance, was

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<sup>569</sup> "Letter from A. Eduardo Lanatta to Director of Government," 13 September 1935, Ministerio del Interior, Prefecturas, La Libertad, MI 350, AGN.



highlighted as “having lived among us since 1920, owner of the most important silk factory, and a gentleman that enjoys great commercial prestige and is held in the highest esteem socially” with memberships in the Central Club and Trujillo’s most important civic associations. Augusto Odajiri was reported to be especially popular among the Trujillo youth.<sup>570</sup> The reputation of the Japanese was also likely aided by the efforts of the honorary Japanese consul in Trujillo, Carlos Larco Herrera. The Larco Herrera family was one of the most important sugar hacendado families in La Libertad and was powerful both nationally and locally. The Larco Herreras also employed a significant number of Japanese on their sugar plantation Chiclín.

Following the passage of DS 1936, the first stirrings of anti-Japanese activities were heard in La Libertad. In May 1937, Felipe Ganoza announced the establishment of the Asociación Nacional de Comerciantes, Industriales y Agricultores de Trujillo whose mission was to “defenderse de la invasión de comerciantes extranjeros quienes...originan el desplazamiento de los nacionales con la competencia desleal y la falta a las leyes peruanas.” Although framed in race-neutral terms of “Peruvians” against “foreigners,” the Japanese barber shops and their stores which sold shirts were particularly singled out.<sup>571</sup> Undoubtedly, the Japanese and Chinese nationals were formidable in the area of commerce. In 1940, 284 Japanese men and 38 Japanese women out of a total economically active population of 333 in the Department of La Libertad reported their profession as “business owner.” Among foreigners, they were

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<sup>570</sup> Juan M. Armas, “La Colonia Japonesa de Trujillo en el año 1935,” *Guía de Trujillo*, 1935, as reproduced by Jorge Cox Denegri, Museo Chiclín, Perú.

<sup>571</sup> “Letter from Japanese Consul Nobuo Fujimura to Carlo Larco Herrera,” 3 May 1937, Libro 2, Archivos Personales de Carlos Larco Herrera, Museo Chiclín, Perú.

surpassed only by the more numerous Chinese nationals who reported 289 business owners (285 men; 4 women). As mentioned, the Chinese represented the largest foreign population in La Libertad (582 men; 44 women), followed by the Japanese (441 men; 303 women), with Germans a distant third (61 men; 32 women).<sup>572</sup>

When the National Association of Trujillo lashed out against Japanese businesses, were they indeed targeting only foreigners or did they instead conceive of the commercial “invasion” in racial terms? By 1940, almost half of the 1933 Asians in La Libertad were Peruvian citizens, 803 by birth and 65 by naturalization.<sup>573</sup> Even if these figures are adjusted down to compensate for the fact that many Peruvian-born Asians were still children in 1940, it is still likely that nearly 1 out of every 3 Asian adults in La Libertad was a Peruvian citizen.<sup>574</sup> It is also noteworthy that Ganoza’s organization singled out Japanese shop owners in a region dominated economically and politically by foreign-owned sugar plantations. In addition to the United States-funded W.R. Grace and Company’s Cartavio hacienda, the Gildemeister family’s Casa Grande was the behemoth of La Libertad. Founded in the nineteenth century by German immigrant Juan Gildemeister, the plantation was managed by his Peruvian-born children. However, in 1910, the Gildemeister family expanded their holdings by securing funding through a German investment company which became a partial

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<sup>572</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*.

<sup>573</sup> Ibid. The 1940 census provides naturalization data only for its classification “yellow race” and does not break it down between Japanese and Chinese. The naturalization category also includes “Peruvians born in a foreign country,” but this figure would be negligible for Asians in Peru in 1940.

<sup>574</sup> The province of Trujillo, also capital of the department, was home to 68% of the 383, 252 residents in the department of La Libertad.

owner of the enterprise.<sup>575</sup> While Ganoza's organization was focused on the Japanese, it was the United States- and German-owned haciendas' domination of the "Norte Chico" which had generated powerful protests during the 1910s and 1920s and contributed to APRA leader Haya de la Torre's early opposition to foreign investment in Peru. By the 1930s, however, the small- and medium- farmers who had led the charge against Casa Grande had been defeated and many had lost their land, although they would channel their energies into APRA's claims on national power.<sup>576</sup>

The "Peruvian Business Owners" association of the city of Huancayo similarly demonstrates how DS 1936 united middle class business owners against Asians. Huancayo's Municipal Council issued a business license to Japanese resident Takashi Nagatani on June 26, 1936, the same day that Benavides issued his executive decree. While Nagatani went about setting up his hat shop, an exclusive distributor of Peruvian-made Ichikawa hats, an ad-hoc group of 40 business men came together and launched their protest. They derided the Municipal Council for having issued Nagatani a business license and accused them of "prostituting the sacred concept of the Resolution [DS 1936] which is to defend the national heritage."<sup>577</sup> The Huancayo Chamber of Commerce also came out in support of the Peruvian Business Owners and reprinted a series of articles from the local newspaper *La Voz de Huancayo's* and

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<sup>575</sup> Klarén, *Modernization, Dislocation, and Aprismo; Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party, 1870-1932*, 15.

<sup>576</sup> For a thorough discussion of this issues, see *Ibid.*

<sup>577</sup> "Letter from Peruvian Business Owners to Prefect Jorge Buckingham," 19 August 1936, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 372, AGN.

entitled it “A careful analysis of the illegality of the [Nagatani] opening.”<sup>578</sup> The Huancayo subprefecture’s survey, however, found only 60 Japanese-owned businesses out of a total of 586 in the city of Huancayo, or 19.6%, and Nagatani was allowed to open.<sup>579</sup> Galvanized by their loss of the Nagatani case, the Peruvian Business Owners formalized their ad-hoc organization into the *Asociación de Comerciantes e Industriales Peruanos*. In 1940, the association supported Jauja business owners pressuring their Municipal Council to deny a business license to Francisco Wu, representative of the Chinese wholesaler G. W. Yichang.<sup>580</sup> In spite of his position as Vice President of the Huancayo Chamber of Commerce, Wu found himself powerless against the Association led by several of his colleagues from the Chamber of Commerce and his license was denied.<sup>581</sup>

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<sup>578</sup> Agricultura e Industrias Cámara de Comercio, Huancayo, , “El Conflicto “Nagatani” ” *Boletín*, no. 3: 5-9.

<sup>579</sup> “Report from Ernesto Mostajo, Subprefect of Huancayo, to Prefect of Junin,” 31 December 1936, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 372, AGN. The report further found 11 Chinese-owned businesses and 22 businesses owned by people of other foreigners as compared to 493 Peruvian-owned establishments. The Chamber of Commerce had publicized statistics that gave the same number of foreign-owned businesses, but counted only 226 Peruvian-owned businesses. Based upon this data, Nagatani’s opponents argued that greater than 20% of the businesses in Huancayo were Japanese-owned. According to DS 1936 and its subsequent May 1937 regulation, each foreign nationality could own up to 20% of *each type of business* so Nagatani should have been judged against other hat shops in the Huancayo province. See Chamber of Commerce of Huancayo, “Padrón de Establecimientos Comerciales e Industriales Establecidos en Huancayo,” 15 October 1936, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 372, AGN.

<sup>580</sup> “Letter from Asociación de Comerciante e Industriales Peruanos (Huancayo) to Jauja Mayor Pedro Leon Morales,” 7 September 1942, in “Expediente elevado por el Concejo Provincial de Jauja, sobre denegación de licencia municipal solicitada por la firma Yichang & Co. S.A. para la apertura de sus establecimientos comerciales,” case file JM 22-August 1942, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 433, AGN.

<sup>581</sup> Agricultura e Industrias Camara de Comercio, Huancayo,, *Boletín*, no. 98-99: 8; Agricultura e Industrias Cámara de Comercio, Huancayo, , *Boletín*, no. 49-50: 1.

The nationalist Trujillo and Huancayo business organization were only two of the “nationalist” business organizations that sprang up in small cities all over Peru in the post-1936 period. While some of the “Peru for Peruvians” organizations of business men were formally incorporated, occasionally under the auspices of the local Chamber of Commerce, others were ad hoc groupings that denoted themselves simply as “Peruvian Business Owners.”<sup>582</sup> Under the legal cover of DS 1936, these organizations stirred entire communities against their Japanese or Chinese residents, accusing anyone who opposed their mission of not being patriotic or likely receiving bribes from the Asian business men. In fact, in the period from 1936 to 1945, “nationalist” business organizations in the provinces of Cañete (Department of Lima), Canchis (Cuzco), Chiclayo (Lambayeque), Huancabamba (Chiclayo), Huancayo (Junin), Jauja (Junin), Piura (Piura), and Tacna (Tacna) pressured municipal councils to deny business license to Chinese and Japanese proprietors.<sup>583</sup> (See Map, p. vii.) According to the records reviewed, the nationalist business organizations challenged only businesses they perceived to be owned by Japanese or Chinese residents. It should be noted that these cases represent only those license denials that were appealed to the Ministry of Government, meaning that there were likely numerous

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<sup>582</sup> In addition to the role of several Chamber of Commerces in the cases discussed in this dissertation, the *Asociación de Comercio e Industrias de Arequipa* published a request to the president in 1935 asking for “protection against Japanese and Chinese immigration and commercial infiltration.” See Normano and Gerbi, *The Japanese in South America; an Introductory Survey with Special Reference to Peru*, 77.

<sup>583</sup> In investigating the appeals, documents from 1936 through 1945 have been reviewed in the Ministerio del Interior files held at the AGN. Most of the documents were located in subsections Concejos Provinciales/Municipales and Particulares, with additional information on the cases gathered from subsections Relaciones Exteriores and Prefecturas. Supplemental information was collected in the ARE, Record Groups 6-18 and 6-11, communications between Peru’s Ministry of Foreign Relations and the governments of Japan and China, respectively.

applicants whose cases were denied but were not appealed, although there is nothing to indicate that the overall denials would include more non-Asian foreigners.<sup>584</sup>

What was the response of the Japanese community to the local campaigns against them? At the national level, diplomatic representatives engaged in futile negotiations to secure changes to DS 1936 and community leaders attempted to defend the contribution of Japanese immigrants to Peru, as discussed in Chapter 4. Japanese community leaders, however, also attempted to reform the Japanese immigrants in response to the multitude of complaints that had been launched against Asians in general and Japanese in particular in the press. Along these lines the Sociedad Central Japonesa (SCJ) issued a series of regulations in the aftermath of the 1930 riots, including controlling the number of Japanese businesses by requiring the owners to first seek permission from the SCJ. Furthermore, the SCJ agreed that it would seek the deportation of those who did not comply with its guidelines.<sup>585</sup> While the SCJ certainly had no legal authority to impose such restrictions on the Japanese immigrants in Peru, they were likely more successful in Lima where the SCJ was headquartered than in the more distant communities.<sup>586</sup> In Nagatani's case, for instance, the Peruvian

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<sup>584</sup> For instance, the Provincial Council of Huaral, home to a large Asian population, reported in 1943 that that it had not been issuing new licenses to foreigners other than one to a Polish pharmacy because it considered that the other nationalities had filled their quotas. See Concejo Distrital de Huaral, "Boletín Municipal," no. 65-66: 10. A specific case of a Japanese national who was denied a license but did not appeal is that of Carlos Tamaki. The Provincial Council of Huancayo denied him a license alleging irregularities in his application. See Provincial Council of Huancayo, *Boletín Municipal y Bibliográfico*, November – December 1940, attached to "Letter from Provincial Council of Huancayo to Subprefect," 18 July 1941, Ministerio del Interior, Prefecturas, MI 412, AGN.

<sup>585</sup> Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 232-33.

<sup>586</sup> The AGN files, notably, contain no appeals of business license denials from the Municipality of Lima.

businessmen of Huancayo were outraged that Nagatani had not sought pre-approval with the Japanese Community, noting that the Municipality had a “friendly agreement” with the Japanese Community to not issue a license to any Japanese citizen without the Japanese Community approval.<sup>587</sup> In general, the Japanese organizations and consulate counseled their community members to “not give any reason” (*no dar motivo*) for offense, in spite of the impossibility of this task.<sup>588</sup> Some Japanese business owners, however, chose a different tack and rather than keeping a low profile went the opposite direction and advocated for their position within their community.

### **5.5 Peruvian Communities, Peruvian Nation**

In January 1938, Tasaku Mishima was granted a one-year license to operate the bazaar he purchased from fellow Japanese national Kikuno San Nakano while the Provincial Council of Cañete prepared a survey of businesses.<sup>589</sup> Cañete’s sugar plantations had been a primary destination for the Japanese immigrants to Peru, and the province remained heavily populated by long term Japanese residents and their

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<sup>587</sup> “Letter from Peruvian Business Owners to Prefect Buckingham,” 19 August 1936, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 372, AGN.

<sup>588</sup> “Letter from Japanese Consul Nobuo Fujimura to Carlo Larco Herrera,” 3 May 1937, Libro 2, Archivos Personales de Carlos Larco Herrera, Museo Chiclín, Perú.

<sup>589</sup> “Expediente seguido por Tasaku Mishima como apoderado de Kikuno San Nakano para que se le conceda licencia para conducir el establecimiento de su poderante,” initiated 14 January 1938, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN.

children.<sup>590</sup> Mishima expressed great civic enthusiasm when he applied for his permanent license in November 1938, noting that his store “not only satisfies pressing public needs, but also, with its attractive façade is also an adornment to one of the most important commercial streets in town.”<sup>591</sup> The Cañete Council, however, denied Mishima’s application in March 1939 because they had yet to carry out a survey of businesses in their province. Mishima, like Nagatani, appealed to the Ministry of Government as well as wrote a letter to President Benavides. More importantly, however, Mishima appealed to the local community. That same month, 139 men and women ranging from the relatively well-to-do of Cañete (i.e. doctor, pharmacist, wife of hacienda administrator, employee of Banco Italiano, etc.) to its middling and poorer residents (i.e. cobbler, tailor, seamstress, worker, milk man, barber shop owner, etc.) wrote a letter to Mayor Agustín Mispireta insisting the Mishima’s license be issued.<sup>592</sup> According to their letter, Mishima’s store made available a variety of products that previously were only found in Lima, and they wrote that stores like his should be “encouraged and supported” rather than closed. They noted, in fact, that an abundance of stores favored the consumers whereas closing stores such as Miashima’s gave the

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<sup>590</sup> While the 1940 Census does not distinguish between Japanese or Chinese foreign nationals at the provincial level, it shows 669 Asian men and 402 Asian women in the province. The city of San Vicente de Cañete where Mishima opened his store had 276 Asian men and 151 Asian women. The high number of Asian women is indicative that the Asian population was likely dominated by the Japanese as Chinese nationals and Chinese Peruvians were far more likely to be men. Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*.

<sup>591</sup> “Letter from Mishima to Provincial Council of Cañete,” 25 November 1938, in “Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN. Bazaars typically sold textiles, household articles, toys, sporting goods, etc.

<sup>592</sup> “Classification of signatures by Subprefect Pásara,” 21 April 1939, in “Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN.



remaining couple of stores a virtual monopoly to the detriment of consumers.<sup>593</sup> In the Nagatani case, Prefect Jorge Buckingham reported that Nagatani's Huancayo hat shop had been a boon to consumers as his economical pricing had lowered hat prices throughout the area.<sup>594</sup> The Cañete community letter further questioned the Council's policy:

Up until recently, licenses have been issued to all sort of foreign business owners without producing any protest; but it is only when there has been established among us a commercial enterprise that because of its way of doing business provides important services to the public, that is when the immigration law is put into practice.<sup>595</sup>

Indeed, Ulloa wrote that DS 1936 would likely spark an outcry from the middle and lower classes, especially as Peruvian businesses were not prepared to step into the void that would be left by the Japanese:

[The Japanese businesses] had become a regular social institution that favored the middle class and the masses [el pueblo] by selling the cheapest food and clothing items. There was no way to uproot them from these activities or forcibly expropriate them without the Peruvians being prepared to replace them and without the economic interests of the popular and middle classes suffering a profound disturbance.<sup>596</sup>

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<sup>593</sup> "Letter from Community members to Provincial Council," 15 March 1939, in "Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN.

<sup>594</sup> "Note from Prefect Buckingham to Director of Government," 30 November 1936, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 372, AGN.

<sup>595</sup> "Letter from Community members to Provincial Council," 15 March 1939, in "Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN. Original Spanish: *Hasta hace poco tiempo se ha estado concediendo licencias a toda clase de comerciantes extranjeros, sin observación ni protesta alguna; pero es que solamente cuando se ha instalado entre nosotros una firma comercial que por su forma de trabajo presta servicios importantes al público, se trata de poner en practica la ley de extranjería.*

<sup>596</sup> Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú*, 344. The Chinese and Japanese were renowned for inexpensive stores and restaurants. In 1932, the Congreso Constituyente representatives who debated setting up government-funded "*restaurantes populares*" for the poor lamented that the prices would have to be "cheaper than the *chinganas*" of the Japanese and Chinese, in the words of Representative Hildebrando Castro Pozo. See Peru, "Diario De Los Debates Del Congreso Constituyente," 2472. Original Spanish: *[El japonés] había llegado a ser una verdadera institución*

In most cases, however, the business owners organized but neither the consumers nor the Asian business owners put up a fight beyond filing a legal appeal. The Japanese business owners, as discussed, were generally advised by their organizations to not make trouble. Mishima, however, built upon his community relationships to assert his right to engage in commerce. In response to the community letter, the Cañete Council reversed its position and issued a license to Mishima.<sup>597</sup>

Whereas Mishima attempted to portray himself and his business as an essential part of San Vicente de Cañete, the local newspaper *La Voz del Pueblo* wrote a series of articles between December 1938 and March 1939 designed to prove the opposite. *La Voz del Pueblo's* campaign sought to isolate Mishima and portray him as a community outsider by constructing an image of “Japanese” as both insular and exploitative of Peruvians:

...the Japanese who absorb everything to the degree that, if they need a shirt, they buy it from a fellow Japanese and in that way, if they need bread, furniture, or clothes, they never ever buy it from a Peruvian, just among themselves they form a market of consumption and demand. The absolutely essential, the impossible to obtain is the only thing that they obtain from our hands, our industries.<sup>598</sup>

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*social que favorecía la economía de la clase media y del pueblo, mediante la venta más barata de los artículos de alimentación y de vestido. No había posibilidad de desarraigarlo o de expropiarlo violentamente de estas actividades, sin que los nacionales estuvieran preparados para reemplazarlos y sin que aquella economía de las clases popular y media sufrieran una honda perturbación.*

<sup>597</sup> “Note from Mayor Agustín Mispireta P. to Subprefect Pedro José Pásara,” 28 March 1939, in “Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN.

<sup>598</sup> “Y la burla sigue...,” *La Voz del Pueblo*, 18 March 1939, p. 1, in “Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN. Original Spanish: *los japoneses que todo lo absorben [sic] al extremo que, si necesitan una camisa, se la compran al paisano y así, se urgen de pan, muebles, o vestidos, no lo compran al nacional jamás, solo ellos y entre ellos es el mercado de consumo y demanda, lo imprescindible, lo imposible conseguir en lo único que adquieren de nuestros brazos, de nuestras industrias.*

*La Voz del Pueblo* paired the image of the separatist Japanese immigrant with the increasingly publicized imperialism of the Japanese state, calling the Mishima's business nothing more than the "Japanese colonization" of Cañete commerce.<sup>599</sup> Jauja's Inspector Bullón had used similarly militaristic language in the Kawamura case when he declared that "the Japanese-Asian race business man had invaded and laid his plans of action."<sup>600</sup> The Cañete residents who supported Mishima's stores were likened to traitors, much like the patrons of Asian stores who were the subject *Anti-Asia's* tirade, and accused of "antipatriotism."<sup>601</sup>

The anti-Japanese efforts of *La Voz del Pueblo* were bolstered by the Subprefect of Cañete, Pedro José Pásara. Pásara had arrived in Cañete in 1929 to serve as an administrator on the hacienda El Chilcal and was later elected mayor of Cañete.<sup>602</sup> Whereas the Mishima supporters framed their arguments with local referents, Pásara like *La Voz del Pueblo* drew upon discourses circulating nationally that racialized Japanese immigrants and cast them as something distinct from

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<sup>599</sup> "Nuestro Escudo es la Ley, nuestra Defensa es la Ley," *La Voz del Pueblo*, 22 December 1938, p. 1, in "Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN.

<sup>600</sup> "Minutes of the Jauja Provincial Council Meeting," January 25, 1935, in "Expediente...Ricardo Kawamura," 2 April 1935, Ministerio del Interior, Expedientes de Concejos Provinciales, MI 354, AGN.

<sup>601</sup> "La Ley es la Ley y Debe Cumplirse," *La Voz del Pueblo*, 24 March 1939, p. 1, in "Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN. Original Spanish: *el comerciante japonés raza asiática ha invadido y sentado sus planes de acción.*

<sup>602</sup> "Letter from Subprefect Pásara to Prefect of Lima," 21 April 1939, in "Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN.

Peruvians and dangerous to Peruvians.<sup>603</sup> However, in spite of his claim that his goals were nationalist, Pásara revealed that he believed only certain Peruvians deserved a voice in the community. To this end, Pásara classified each of the 139 signatures found on the community letter and informed the Prefect of Lima that only 42 signatures were “notable persons” of the town of San Vicente de Cañete.<sup>604</sup> He discounted the remaining signatures: 29 residents of the town whom he classified as “people of the most humble social category”<sup>605</sup>; 5 “Japanese” residents<sup>606</sup>; and 36 who lived outside San Vicente de Cañete.<sup>607</sup> Although Pásara did not mention race, most of the signatories were likely mestizo given that the almost two-thirds of San Vicente de Cañete’s population was classified as “white and mestizo”: 7008 (3709 men; 3299

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<sup>603</sup> Pásara, for example, makes confident assertions that he is representing the desires of the “popular masses” and in spite of the Mishima case having nothing to do with yanaconas, he adds almost direct quotes of the articles on Japanese yanaconas that were featured in *La Prensa*’s 1937 “Japanese Infiltration” campaign (Chapter 3): *Debo también... informar a Ud. la ansiedad que se nota en toda la masa popular de población, que desea y espera se cumplan los decretos sobre extranjería, pues aparte de que ven todo el comercio en poder en extranjeros, en su mayoría de nacionalidad japonesa, ven también con temor el ingreso de estos mismos extranjeros en el campo agrícola, donde por los altos pagos que efectúan ya sea como arriendo o por compra de terrenos, en Cañete, hacen prohibitivo a los peruanos dedicarse a esas labores agrícolas.* See “Letter from Subprefect Pásara to Prefect of Lima,” 21 April 1939, in “Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN.

<sup>604</sup> “Letter from Subprefect Pásara to Prefect of Lima,” 21 April 1939, in “Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN. Among the “notable” signatures were those of the Public Notary, Post Office Manager, employees of companies like the Italian-owned Banco Italiano and English-owned Milne and Company, Director of the School for Girls, and five Council members.

<sup>605</sup> For Pásara, this group included, among others, a butcher shop employee, cobblers, tailors, seamstresses, drivers, workers, market vendors, and owners of small taverns.

<sup>606</sup> There is no indication whether these signatories were citizens or not, as it was unimportant to Pásara. Three signatories were wholesalers like Mishima, one was an employee of a wholesaler, and the fifth was Pedro Tachibana, an area landowner and renter.

<sup>607</sup> “Letter from Subprefect Pásara to Prefect of Lima,” 21 April 1939, in “Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN. Twenty-seven other signatures were either unknown or illegible to Pásara.

women) out of a total population of 10,782.<sup>608</sup> In the end, Pásara made clear that only residents of stature had the right to intervene in political and economic affairs of San Vicente de Cañete and, in a larger sense, the Peruvian nation. Mishima's case was finally settled in January 1941 when the Supreme Court determined that Mishima's store had opened in violation of DS 1936.<sup>609</sup>

Across the Andes in the Department of Cuzco, Antonia Chávez echoed the Cañete residents' questioning of whether the anti-Asian campaigns truly had the best interests of the community, or nation, at heart. Chávez and her husband Ernesto Siu Lam, a Chinese national, were issued a license to open a pulpería (corner store) in Sicuani, Province of Canchis, in October 1940.<sup>610</sup> Local business owners quickly sent a telegram to the Director of Government informing him that a Chinese man had opened a business, to which the director responded by ordering that Siu's establishment be closed as it was in violation of a 1940 revision of DS 1936.<sup>611</sup>

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<sup>608</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*. The next most populous group was Indians who numbered 2959 (1645 men; 1314 women). In the absence of clear racial divisions among the mestizo group, Pásara drew upon profession and likely family name to organize his hierarchy.

<sup>609</sup> "Ruling of the Attorney of the Supreme Court," 25 January 1941, in "Expediente ...Mishima, Case #157, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares Mp-36-1940, MI 396, AGN. After the newspaper campaign, the Provincial Council changed its decision again and rescinded the license they had issued to Mishima, although it is not clear that they ever forced his store to close.

<sup>610</sup> "Expediente relativo: licencia apertura establecimiento a Ernesto Siu Lam," initiated 31 October 1940, case file CM-58-1940, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 406, AGN.

<sup>611</sup> "Telegram from Director of Government to Subprefect and Mayor Sicuani," 23 November 1940, in "Expediente...Siu Lam," case file CM-58-1940, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 406, AGN. A June 28, 1940 Executive Resolution decreed by President Manuel Prado suspended the issuance of new business licenses to foreigners until after the 1940 census was completed. See Asociación de Comerciantes, "Compendio De Legislación," *Revista Mensual del Comercio del Perú* (1940): 182.

Chávez responded by distributing a flyer to Canchis residents, turning on its head arguments that monopolies and exploitation had a race or nationality:

The small group of business owners of this plaza, among whom are foreigners, and who have in their hands the businesses of basic food goods to the degree that it could qualify as a monopoly, has achieved through false complaints that the corner store that I established cooperatively with my husband Mr. Ernesto Siu Lam...be closed. The *pueblo* of consumers that suffers hunger and tolerates the exorbitant and capricious increases in the price of basic necessities, the humble classes subjected to exploitation, the indigenous victims of trickery, you should know who guards your interests and who goes against them.<sup>612</sup>

Chávez went on to lament that in spite of being Peruvian, she was denied her citizenship rights because she had married a Chinese man:

I, a Peruvian by birth, born in Arequipa, have come to this city in search of honorable work because I am in my country, but because of the fact I am married [*unido*] to a Chinese foreigner, who only carries with him wherever he goes his ability to work and his right to life, I have come to suffer – I would say in my own land, in this Peruvian home, welcoming and hospitable in many ways – expulsion, denial of work, of sustenance and hospitality at the hands of those who fear competition and try to maintain a situation of privilege. To you, people of Canchis, my gratitude, because you have accompanied me in my tribulation as a humble woman, as a long-suffering Peruvian woman.<sup>613</sup>

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<sup>612</sup> “Al Vecindario de Canchis” signed Antonia Chávez de Siu Lam, 24 November 1940, in “Expediente...Siu Lam,” case file CM-58-1940, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 406, AGN. Original Spanish: *Pequeño grupo de comerciantes de esta plaza, en el que se cuentan extranjeros, y que tiene en sus manos el negocio de abarrotes y subsistencias, a tal extremo que puede calificarse que ejerce monopolio, ha conseguido con quejas falsas, que el establecimiento de pulpería que establecí mancomunadamente con mi esposo don Ernesto Siu Lam ...sea clausurado. El pueblo consumidor que sufre el hambre y soporta el alza antojadiza y exorbitante de los artículos de primera necesidad, las clases humildes sujetas a la explotación, los indígenas víctimas del engaño, deben conocer quienes velan sus intereses y quienes van contra ellos.*

<sup>613</sup> “Al Vecindario de Canchis” signed Antonia Chávez de Siu Lam, 24 November 1940, in “Expediente...Siu Lam,” case file CM-58-1940, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 406, AGN. Original Spanish: *Yo, peruana de nacimiento, natural de Arequipa, que he venido a esta ciudad, en busca de trabajo honrado, porque estoy en mi patria, por el hecho de estar unido a un extranjero de nacionalidad china, que sólo lleva donde va su capacidad de trabajo y su derecho a la vida, he venido a sufrir, diré en mi propia tierra, en este hogar peruano, acojedor y hospitalario por muchos títulos, la expulsión, la negativa del trabajo, del sustento y la hospitalidad por quienes temen la competencia, y*

However, it was not only the Canchis business owners but also the national government that was infringing on her citizenship rights because of her marriage to an Asian man. On June 28, 1940, President Manuel Prado y Ugarteche (1939-1945) had issued an Executive Resolution suspending the concession of new business licenses to foreigners until the results of the 1940 census were known, hence making it possible to determine the 20% cap on foreign-owned businesses. While this provision was protested by the Lima Provincial Council and overturned because of its calamitous effects on Lima's tax base, it was the remainder of the resolution that negatively affected Chávez and other Peruvian women married to Chinese or Japanese men.<sup>614</sup> The resolution specified that before issuing a business license to a Peruvian, the Municipal Councils should investigate and monitor whether the license was being requested on behalf of foreigners or with financing from foreigners, in which case it should be denied.<sup>615</sup> While the impetus for the 1940 Resolution came partially from the increasing number of corporations, it was also eerily familiar to a 1931 case originating in the Municipality of Arequipa in which the Peruvian woman applicant was deemed suspicious because she was married to an Asian man. The Municipality passed a resolution to grant Julia Cisneros de Chang's application to open a restaurant only on the condition that she employ solely Peruvians or "non-Asian foreigners" and

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*tratan de sostener situaciones de privilegio. A vos, pueblo canchino, mi gratitud; porque se me has acompañado en mi tribulación de mujer humilde, de peruana sufrida.*

<sup>614</sup> Ministerio de Hacienda, *Memorias* (Lima: Imprenta Torres Aguirre, 1941), 691-92.

<sup>615</sup> Asociación de Comerciantes, "Compendio De Legislación," 182.

that “no Asians could be involved in the business.”<sup>616</sup> Since the passage of DS 1936, the Ministry of Government had received several inquiries as to the legality of Peruvian women opening businesses given that, in the writers’ opinion, they were likely doing so only as a cover for their Asian husbands. The Vice-Mayor of Huancayo Oscar Norero wrote to the Director of Government in April 1937

...some foreigners taking advantage of their marriage to Peruvian wives, try to obtain licenses from this Municipality for the opening of their commercial establishments in the name of their wives; and, this Municipality, careful to comply with the DS 1936 which regulates the activities of foreigners in Peru, asks that your high office be so kind as to issue a special article to clarify this situation, given that various foreigners have been residents of this country for many years, are married to Peruvian women and they have citizen children, but the merchandise is often acquired and administered by the foreign husband.<sup>617</sup>

Chávez obtained a business license in March 1941 only after submitting a declaration to the Director of Government clarifying that it was she who was seeking the business license.<sup>618</sup>

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<sup>616</sup> “Letter from Enrique A. Carrillo to Director of Government,” 9 September 1931, including attachment “Letter from Chinese Legation to Ministry of Foreign Relations,” 29 August 1931, Ministerio de Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 314, AGN.

<sup>617</sup> “Letter from Vice-Mayor of Huancayo Norero to Director of Government,” 15 April 1937, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 372, AGN. Original Spanish: *algunos extranjeros amparándose en su matrimonio con esposas peruanas, pretender obtener licencias de esta Municipalidad, para la apertura de sus establecimientos comerciales e industriales en nombre de la esposa; y, esta Municipalidad celosa en el cumplimiento del DS 26 junio 1936, que reglamenta las actividades de los extranjeros en el Perú, suplica a su elevado despacho, dignándose dictar una disposición especial que aclare esta situación, ya que varios extranjeros son residentes en el País muchos años, casado con peruanas y con hijos compatriotas, pero que las mercaderías están adquiridas y muchas veces administradas a nombre del esposo extranjero.*

<sup>618</sup> “Letter to Subprefect of Canchis to Prefect of Cuzco,” 1 March 1941, in “Concejo Provincial de Canchis, apertura de establecimiento al comerciante chino Carlos Siu,” initiated 23 April 1942, case file CM-61-1942, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 433, AGN.



The issue, however, was much deeper than the surface accusation that a Peruvian woman was attempting to deceive that state on behalf of her Asian husband. As discussed in Chapter 1, women were the focus of eugenics because they were equated with their sexual reproduction, a site that eugenicists sought to control in managing the racial composition of future generations. Given the male-heavy Asian immigration, especially Chinese, it was much more common for a Peruvian woman to marry or form a family with an Asian man than an Asian woman with a Peruvian man. While there was no legal proscription of miscegenation, there were many sectors of society that did not approve of Peruvians who married or had sexual relationships with Asians characterizing as akin to racial betrayal. In the early twentieth century, Peruvian women on the plantations who had sexual relationships with Japanese men had been shamed by plantation owners as discussed in Chapter 1. Eugenic thought in the 1920s and 1930s had continued to promote the negative impact of Peruvians having sexual offspring with Asians, even if it did not translate into policy. Congressman J. M. Tirado of Callao, for example, predicted dire consequences for the nation's "racial health" should Peruvian women mix with Asian men who they continued to characterized as "congenitally degenerate."<sup>619</sup> Among the general public could be found the attitude of María de Marquina who wrote into a Lima newspaper in 1930 proposing that Peruvian women who formed a unions with men of the "yellow"

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<sup>619</sup> Congreso Constituyente, "Diario De Los Debates, 12th Constitutional Session," (December 21, 1931), 378-85.

race be severely penalized.<sup>620</sup> Consequently, Peruvian women who married Chinese or Japanese men found their rights as Peruvians infringed upon by both the local and national governments.

## 5.6 Racialized Citizenship

While the language of DS 1936 was race-neutral, the decree was created to dislodge the Japanese from their economic foothold in Peru and was applied to both Japanese and Chinese business owners who were the racial and economic thorn in the side of the mestizo middle class. Whereas the unions and press complained that DS 1936 was not being enforced in favor of Peruvian workers and yanacunas as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, the evidence suggests that Municipal Councils were zealously enforcing the decree against Japanese and Chinese business owners.<sup>621</sup> Many times, as noted in the previously discussed cases, municipal authorities either working with or pressured by local business owners persecuted Chinese and Japanese business owners and denied licenses when not legally required to do so by DS 1936.

President Manuel Prado showed his government to be highly receptive to the middle class sectors which had become increasingly organized since the passage of DS 1936. Shortly after his election in 1939, Prado issued the previously mentioned resolution on June 28, 1940 suspending the issuance of any business licenses to

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<sup>620</sup> *La Prensa* (Lima) and *La República* (Lima), August 27 – September 19, 1930, as cited in Gardiner, *The Japanese and Peru, 1873-1973*, 68.

<sup>621</sup> Noncompliance with DS 1936 in regard to the yanacunas and 80% Peruvian workforce provisions was debated in the Senate, *El Comercio*, August 27, 1940, and in the Chamber of Deputies, *Ibid.*, November 8, 1941, as cited in Normano and Gerbi, *The Japanese in South America; an Introductory Survey with Special Reference to Peru*, 115.

foreigners. According to inter-departmental memos in the Ministry of Government, the June 1940 resolution was a populist measure to assuage public sentiment that had exploded into rioting against the Japanese in May 1940 (to be discussed further in Chapter 6).<sup>622</sup> While the riots had been sparked by false allegations that the Japanese had a cache of arms in the port of Chimbote just north of Lima, the Prado government responded with populist resolutions geared toward Peru's middle sectors. While the Peruvian oligarchy celebrated the election of their favorite son, Prado was also attentive to the political movements building against the Peruvian elite's monopoly on power. APRA was the most serious threat and Prado quickly set about co-opting as much of APRA's middle and working class base as possible. Nationalist decrees and resolutions, understood by the Peruvian populace to mean anti-Asian, were an easy way to make inroads into these middle sectors.

Lima was noticeably absent from the cases reviewed above because there were no appeals of DS 1936 originating from business owners in the Lima province. The evidence suggests, however, that the Provincial Council of Lima was complying with DS 1936 and the SCJ may have assisted them in these efforts by controlling the number of Japanese who applied for business licenses.<sup>623</sup> Lima Mayor Gallo Porras,

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<sup>622</sup> "Letter from Director of Government and Municipalities to Director de Government," 3 June 1942, in "Derogación de Resolución Suprema 28 junio 1940 (y modificación 5 de febrero 1941)," case file Lm-84-1941, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 420, AGN.

<sup>623</sup> For instance, in October 1940, the Director of Government questioned Lima mayor Luis Gallo Porras as to why notices of Japanese businesses openings continued to appear in the newspaper when no new licenses could be issued. Gallo Porras provided the Director of Government with the Lima Police's Inspection Report on the Japanese businesses which had been carried out shortly after the notices appeared in the newspaper. The Japanese were renting the businesses, an activity permitted by the 1940 revision. "Letter from Mayor of Lima Gallo Porras to Director of Government," 21 Octubre 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.19.

in fact, wrote that compliance with the 1940 revision suspending all business licenses to foreigners was bankrupting Lima and asked for modifications, which were incorporated into an Executive Resolution issued on February 5, 1941.<sup>624</sup> In spite of the 1941 resolution, Gallo Porras continued to appeal to the Director of Government to allow foreigners greater freedom of commerce noting that economic activities had been “paralyzed” and the drop in municipal income was negatively affecting public works.<sup>625</sup> Simultaneous to Gallo Porras’ entreaties to the national government to lift restrictions on foreign businesses, Congressmen Roberto F. Garmendia and E. Bernedo Málaga were pushing for more restrictions. In September 1941, the two representatives proposed a law that not only completely barred the issuance of business licenses to any foreigner, but also restricted the exercise of “commerce, industry, agriculture, and the trades” exclusively to Peruvians *by birth*. Bernedo Málaga defended his proposal emphasizing that “retail trade is in the hands of Japanese, Chinese, etc. foreigners and Peruvians only work as laborers.” While the bill was rejected as unconstitutional by a vote of 42-10, the citizenship rights of Asians

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<sup>624</sup> Ministerio de Hacienda, *Memorias*, 691-92. An Executive Resolution on February 5, 1941 noted that the complete suspension of the issuance of business licenses ordered by President Prado on June 28, 1940 “ha ocasionado grave perjuicio de las rentas municipales la falta de percepción del importe de las licencias respectivas, con el consiguiente desmedro para el desenvolvimiento comercial e industrial del país.” Based upon the request of the Provincial Council of Lima, the 1941 resolution allowed foreign businesses to move, expand, and sell to another foreigner, with the caveat that a Peruvian could not sell his or her business to a foreigner. The Municipalities were empowered to allow licenses based upon DS 1936 and its May 1937 regulations. The Provincial Council of Lima’s report on the effects of the June 1940 resolution can be found at “Report from Luis Gallo Porras to Director of Government,” 15 November 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 406, AGN.

<sup>625</sup> See “Derogación de Resolución Suprema 28 junio 1940 (y modificación 5 de febrero 1941),” case file Lm-84-1941, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos, MI 420, AGN.

were already attack.<sup>626</sup> The Japanese were the intended targets of much of the legislation during the 1930s and the early 1940s because of the national government's racial-political fears whipped up by yellow peril alarmism. However, given Peru's history of discriminating against Asians, it was not surprising that Peruvian citizens of both Japanese and Chinese descent suffered the consequences.

The case of Bernardo Liu Kam in the southernmost province of Tacna demonstrates how the citizenship rights of Peruvians of Chinese descent were also compromised on the basis of race. When Liu, a 22-year-old Peruvian-born man, applied for a license to open an *encomendería* (general goods store) on November 3, 1939, he was taken aback by Provincial Council's unanimous denial of his application on the basis that he was leading the "advance of the Asian elements established in the neighboring valleys" on Tacna. The Asian "advance" was difficult to imagine with only 40 Asian men and 8 Asian women among the total population of 21,032 in the Province of Tacna. As to businesses, five Japanese and six Chinese nationals owned establishments in the Department of Tacna. These numbers were dwarfed by the more numerous Chileans and Italians, 44 and 30 of who owned businesses, respectively.<sup>627</sup> In spite of the obvious dominance of the Chileans and Italians in commerce, the Tacna Chamber of Commerce had previously attempted to block the licensing of Chinese national Jorge Liu's retail *aborrotes* (groceries) establishment shortly after the passage

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<sup>626</sup> Peru, "Diario De Los Debates De La Cámara De Diputados, Legislatura Ordinaria De 1941," (Imprenta Torres Aguirre, 1944), 666-68.

<sup>627</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*. The Departmental statistics for the "yellow race" are reflective of the Province of Tacna because only five Asians in the department lived outside of the province of Tacna.

of DS 1936 on the pretense that the Province of Tacna had not conducted a survey of its businesses.<sup>628</sup>

In a letter to the Director of Government, Bernardo Liu questioned how the fact that his parents were Chinese citizens could restrict his citizenship rights.<sup>629</sup> The Mayor of Tacna, F. Francisco Barrios, explained his denial as follows:

In reference to the report that is requested in reference to the case of Mr. Bernardo Liu, I should inform you that the appellant is only Peruvian because he happens to have been born in our territory, the proof of which are all the characteristics of the noted Liu;...and finally the commercial history of his ancestors and of the appellant himself, is proof that they are bad businesspeople and negatively affect the populations where they reside or have acted. Finally, I must manifest to you that when this issue was debated before the Council over which I presided, it unanimously agreed that, in defense of small local commerce and keeping in mind that the people of Tacna have repudiated and repudiate all that which can bring as a consequence the degeneration of the races...<sup>630</sup>

The town council cast Liu in exclusively racial terms, discounting his Peruvian birth and instead continuing to promote his “yellow race” as having a degenerative

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<sup>628</sup> “Telegram from Tacna Chamber of Commerce to Minister of Foreign Relations Hernan C. Bellido,” 31 October 1936, Record Group 2-0-E, ARE. There is no indication that Jorge Liu is any relation to Bernardo Liu Kam.

<sup>629</sup> “Letter from Bernardo Liu Kam to Director of Government,” 16 January 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 395, AGN.

<sup>630</sup> “Report from F. F. Barrios to Prefect of Tacna,” 14 February 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Particulares, MI 395, AGN. Original Spanish: *En atención al informe que solicita en el expediente seguido por don Bernardo Liu, debo manifestar a Ud. que el recurrente solamente tiene de peruano el hecho casual de haber nacido en nuestro territorio, como lo prueban las características todas del mencionado Liu; ...y que finalmente los antecedentes comerciales de sus antepasados y del propio recurrente, prueban la calidad de malos negociantes en perjuicio de las poblaciones donde han residido o actuado. Finalmente, tengo que manifestarle que puesto el asunto en debate ante el Concejo de mi presidencia, este, por unanimidad acordó, que, en defensa del pequeño comercio local y en atención a que el pueblo tacneno ha repudiado y repudia todo aquello que pueda traer como consecuencia la degeneración de razas.*

effect upon the population. Nine years earlier, a “Chain letter in Defense of the Race” had circulated in Tacna reflecting a philosophy that differed little from that of the Tacna Provincial Council in 1939:

Sir: Are you Peruvian? Are you patriotic? Have you thought about the future of your children and your race? Up until when will we allow that the Asians continue invading our national territory? The moment has arrived in which all we Peruvians must unite to save the race, pulling the country out of this terrible plague.<sup>631</sup>

In the final instance, race was the juggernaut that rolled over Japanese and Chinese claims of membership in Peru as residents or citizens of Peruvian communities and capable of making a positive contribution to the nation.

## 5.7 Conclusion

Born during the reign of yellow peril and popularized as economic nationalism, DS 1936 both revealed the societal penetration that eugenics had achieved in Peru and served to legitimate the exclusions of Asians at both the national and local level. While seemingly preoccupied with the local context, mestizo council men and business men were keenly aware of not only national but also the international policies and discourses that constructed Asians as a racial threat, and the Japanese additionally as a political threat. No longer was the racial destiny of Peru solely an intellectual and elite preoccupation; rather, middle class community leaders felt sufficiently part of the Peruvian nation to see their own fate tied to not only the

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<sup>631</sup> “Note from Charge de Affaires of China to Minister of Foreign Relations,” 20 October 1930, Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 300, AGN. Original Spanish: *Señor: ¿Es Ud. Peruano? ¿Es Ud. patriota? Ha pensado en el porvenir de sus hijos y de su raza? Hasta cuando permitimos, que los asiáticos, sigan invadiendo el territorio nacional? Ha llegado el momento en que todos los peruanos nos unamos para salvar la raza, sacando del país a esta terrible plaga.*

uninhibited rise of their racial class within Peruvian society, but also to the rise of Peru in the global racial hierarchy. DS 1936 was instrumental in organizing the anti-Asian sectors of Peruvian society, providing them a venue to advocate and implement discriminatory measures against Asians. The town councils' anti-Asian measures, in fact, often foreshadowed the national government's infringement upon the rights of Peruvian citizens of Asian descent and of the Peruvian women married to Asian men.

Some of the Japanese and Chinese targeted by the local campaigns fought for their place in Peruvian communities, regardless of the Japanese embassy's orders to avoid conflict. These struggles produced counter-discourses from Peruvians and Asians alike that questioned the exclusion of Asians from Peruvian communities and, in the end, challenged the race-based hierarchy in Peru. However, the voices advocating racial equality in Peru were few and far between. Even political groups like APRA that purported to do so would not be able to resist using the Japanese in Peru as pawns in their political power game, which will be discussed in following chapter.



## Chapter Six

### Peru's "Racial Destiny": Citizenship, Reproduction, and Yellow Peril

In the years prior to the United States' entrance into World War II, the Benavides and Prado administrations issued a series of decrees infringing upon the citizenship rights of both Japanese who were naturalized Peruvian citizens and the Peruvian children of Japanese immigrants. Nearly a hundred years of racial denigration of Asians in Peru had prepared the ground for race-based incursions on the legal citizenship rights of Peruvians of Japanese descent. The eugenics-inspired call to "defend the race" against the purported negative biological and social consequences of Asian immigration had similarly permeated numerous sectors of society. By the 1930s, however, the yellow peril discourses circulating in the West had transitioned from Asian racial contamination of the white population – or the not-white-enough population in Peru's case – to the danger of Japanese political and racial domination. Simultaneous to the changing external circumstances, Peru's "yellow" population was increasingly Peruvian-born rather than foreign. Although the 45,945 Asians in Peru represented only .68% of the total population in 1940, 38% were Peruvian citizens. This phenomenon was closely tied to the Japanese and particularly Japanese women who by 1940 represented one-third of the 17,598 Japanese nationals in Peru.<sup>632</sup> The

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<sup>632</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940*. I arrive at the conclusion that the Peruvian citizens classified as "yellow" are largely children born to Japanese immigrants on the basis of 1) low naturalization rates among Asians in Peru (for reasons to be discussed later in this chapter) 2) Japanese represent the largest group of foreign nationals from Asia and Japanese women represent the largest Asian female group. As such, they are the most likely to have children that would be classified as "yellow" rather than "mestizo." According to census guidelines, children of one "yellow" parent and one parent of any other racial group should have been classified as "mestizo," not

final stage in the demonization of the Japanese in Peru prior to their World War II internment revolved around not only around accusations of Fifth Column activities on behalf of Japan, but also of uniting with Peruvian Indians to launch a race war against the “whites” both in Peru and internationally.

### 6.1 Undesirable Citizens

Within weeks of passage of DS 1936 (July 11, 1936), Benavides issued a corollary decree suspending all naturalization proceedings. According to Ulloa, the Benavides government deemed the suspension necessary because naturalization applications had spiked after the passage of the decree, “making a mockery” of it.<sup>633</sup> While this decree like DS 1936 avoided any mention of the Japanese, Peruvian policymakers had sought to incorporate racial selection into the naturalization policy as recently as the 1933 constitution. During the 1931 Congreso Constituyente’s discussion of Representative J.M. Tirado called upon his colleagues to consider limited naturalization for Asians:

I think that the word “foreigners” is too narrow. In Peru, as we know, there is a strong current respective to immigration; and in this respect, there seems to be the tendency to limit it to certain races. We see as well that in Peru the Asian races have the tendency to come into this country with great intensity. For this reason, I think that it should be specified in this article that the foreigners who have the qualities for

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“yellow,” although census takers likely classified some of the mixed children as “yellow” given what I have observed in other public records during the same period. Although the Chinese remained an important immigrant group from Asia, numbering 10,915, the fact that Chinese women continued to immigrate in such miniscule numbers (only 550 in the country in 1940) meant that the majority of the children of Chinese immigrant men were born to Peruvian women. The remaining foreign nationals from Asia are negligible (21 Filipinos; 1 Siamese).

<sup>633</sup> Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú*, 349.

invigorating this country. Possibly my idea is a little vague, because I am respectful of the rights of foreigners, but the idea of awarding nationality to a foreigner, so that [person] exercises the same rights that the Peruvians do, especially those who are from a race that does not tend to better our hygiene or our population, I think it is a little dangerous...I present this point of view, that I take to be homage to the fact that Peru needs to invigorate its race, transform it and have a perfectly healthy people, something that is not going to happen with other races which are congenitally degenerated.<sup>634</sup>

Representative Toribio Sierra, also from Callao, similarly lamented that in Peru, “there are few truly desirable foreigners who adopt our nationality,” noting that those most likely to nationalize were of races that had barred them from entering other countries. Sierra questioned Peru’s “benevolence” and its granting of naturalizations without regard to the applicant’s origin.<sup>635</sup> While national statistics on naturalizations had not yet been gathered in 1931, Sierra was conscious of the 9782 Japanese nationals and 5704 Chinese in the provinces of Lima-Callao who, in addition to their compatriots in other departments, would be able to naturalize after just two years of residence according to the proposed 1933 Constitution.<sup>636</sup>

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<sup>634</sup> Peru, *Diario De Los Debates Del Congreso Constituyente De 1931, 1931-1936*, vol. I (Lima: 1931-), 378-85. Original Spanish: *Yo creo que es demasiado estrecha la palabra extranjeros. En el Perú, ya sabemos, que hay una fuerte corriente con respecto a la inmigración; y al respecto, parece que hay la tendencia a limitarla respecto de ciertas razas. Vemos también que en el Perú las razas asiáticas, tienen la tendencia de abordar a este país con gran intensidad. Por consiguiente, yo creo, que debe especificarse este artículo a los extranjeros que reúnan las condiciones necesarias para vigorizar al país. Posiblemente, mi idea es un poco vaga, porque yo soy muy respetuoso al derecho que asiste a todos los extranjeros, pero eso de dar la nacionalidad a un extranjero, para que venga a ejercer los mismos derechos que los nacionales especialmente a los de una raza que no tiende a mejorar nuestro estado higiénico ni a mejorar nuestra población, yo creo que es un poco peligroso...presento este punto de vista, que lo tomo en homenaje a que el Perú tiene necesidad de vigorizar su raza, transformarla y tener un pueblo perfectamente sano, cosa que no sucede con otras razas congénitamente degeneradas.*

<sup>635</sup> *Ibid.*, 381-82.

<sup>636</sup> Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931*; Peru and Pareja Paz Soldán, *Las Constituciones Del Perú; Exposición, Crítica Y Textos*, 317-23.

While neither Tirado's nor Sierra's proposals were acted upon, the calls for restricting naturalization continued through the 1930s. Following the passage of Law 7505 (80% Peruvian employees) in 1932, the Lima Chamber of Commerce praised its objective but noted "it could establish restrictions to avoid that the nationalist objectives of the law be flaunted when it comes to the naturalization of foreigners, who perhaps obtain it too easily and in the majority of cases, without any other objective than flaunting the goals stipulated in Law 7505..."<sup>637</sup> Given the public furor around primarily Japanese and secondarily Chinese businesses, the target of the Chamber's comments were clear. On a more ominous note, however, the Chamber of Commerce's comments reflected how Asians who naturalized were assumed to do so out of a base interest, while the motives of whites, preferred because of their race, were not questioned. As such, the construction of the Chinese and Japanese as unscrupulous and selfish reappeared in Peru's naturalization policies, initially at the administrative level.<sup>638</sup> When Chinese national Santiago Chong, a Lima businessman

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<sup>637</sup> Cámara de Comercio de Lima, "La Ley 7505 Y Los Empleados Extranjeros," *Boletín* 5, no. 61 (1934): 345-47. The Chamber of Commerce's primary concern with Law 7505 was securing the exemption of foreign technical personnel from the effects of the law, which the Benavides added to the 1934 Resolution regulating 7505. The Chamber of Commerce primarily acted as an advocate on behalf of Lima's large enterprises, foreign and Peruvian, and consequently dedicated more energy to securing limits on the importation of Japan's finished cotton goods rather than seeking to curb the activities of Japanese immigrants. Original Spanish: "...podrían establecerse restricciones para evitar que los fines nacionalistas de la Ley sean burlados en los referente a la nacionalización de extranjeros, que quizá se obtiene con demasiada facilidad y en la mayoría de los casos, sin otro objeto que el de burlar las disposiciones de la Ley 7505..."

<sup>638</sup> Sanchez Cerro had suspended naturalizations in 1931, but naturalizations were once again allowed following the promulgation of the 1933 Constitution. The 1933 constitution stipulated that foreign nationals were required to have lived a minimum of two years and renounce their original citizenship, a condition waived for Spanish nationals, before applying for Peruvian citizenship. Peru. Congreso Constituyente de 1931, *Constitución Política Del Perú, Promulgado El 9 De Abril De 1933, Concordada Con El Debate Que Originó Su Dación En El Congreso Consituyente De 1931, Y Con Las Modificaciones Contenidas En Las Leyes Nos. 8237, 9166 Y 9178, 2.*

and resident of Peru since 1912, applied for naturalization in 1934, the Chief of the Social Affairs Brigade responsible for investigating such applications noted that Chong's application was in order: he had lived in the country more than the required number of years; his foreign resident card and payment were current; he did not have a criminal record and was of good character; and he was a prosperous businessman.

Chief Pedro L. del Puno, however, recommended that Chong's application be denied and gave the following explanation:

The present application would be acceptable if it were noted in the applicant a true love for the country and respect for the responsibilities that weigh upon him; but his objective is to elude the payment of his foreign registration fee with the Immigration Department, and with this, a series of obligations that are incumbent upon a foreigner...<sup>639</sup>

In January 1938, Benavides reactivated the naturalization process following the 1936 suspension but decreed that all naturalizations must obtain the approval of the Ministry of Foreign Relations.<sup>640</sup> In April of that year, Japanese national Chuhei Kato Kawai applied for naturalization noting that he had lived in Peru since 1916, owned a drugstore in Lima where he lived, had married in Peru, and his children were born in Peru. Kato also wrote that he was naturalizing because of the "affection I feel for this country." Puno, who continued in his post with the Social Affairs Brigade,

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<sup>639</sup> "Memorandum on Naturalization Application of Santiago Chong," 20 March 1934, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.11, AGN. Chong's application was denied by the Lima Prefecture initially based upon the report and subsequently because he had not included a declaration renouncing his Chinese citizenship as required by the 1933 Constitution. Original Spanish: *La presente solicitud sería aceptable si se notase en el recurrente verdadero amor al país y respeto por las obligaciones que sobre él pesan; pero como el objeto es eludir el pago de derechos de inscripción en la Sección de Extranjería, y como este, una serie de obligaciones que le incumben como extranjero...*

<sup>640</sup> "Letter from Ministry of Foreign Relations to Ministry of Government regarding January 13, 1938 Executive Resolution," 18 January 1938, Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 379, AGN.

derided Kato's claims and refused to provide Kato with the good conduct report required for naturalization. Puno wrote in his report that Kato was attempting to naturalize not "out of love for the country, to which he maintains no important ties" but because he was seeking to avoid the laws restricting the activities of foreigners.<sup>641</sup> Even though Puno was not a high official, he and others in similar posts wielded great power over the lives of immigrants who sought to naturalize. Puno's opinion on the Japanese and Chinese applicants' motives, however, was an echo of the opinion of Peru's highest officials. Jorge Rivera Schreiber, Head of Immigration, wrote the Director of Government in 1937 that "in general, those who apply for Peruvian citizenship are individuals of low moral character and adopt [Peruvian] nationality for speculative reasons..." Rivera Schreiber had written the Director of Government to issue an immediate order to the Provincial Council of Chancay to cancel the naturalization of two Israelis, Oscar Eidelberg Goldschmiedt and Thale Armando Amidhed, on the basis that July 1936 decree suspending naturalizations remained in force.<sup>642</sup> While the Japanese and Chinese were most frequently singled out for discriminatory treatment in the administration of immigration regulations, it is likely that Rivera Schreiber's strong reaction originated from the fact the two applicants were Jewish. Anti-Semitism in Latin America frequently manifested in immigration

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<sup>641</sup> "Memorandum on Naturalization Application of Chuhei Kato Kawai," 5 April 1938, Ministerio del Interior, Prefectura de Lima, Particulares, 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.16, AGN.

<sup>642</sup> Letter from Jorge Rivera Schreiber to Director of Government, 17 December 1937, Ministerio del Interior, Concejos Provinciales, MI 379. The Chancay Council denied any wrongdoing noting that they had not processed any applications since the decree and that Eidelberg Goldschmiedt's application was process three months prior to the July decree. Provincial Council of Chancay, Letter to Director of Government, 24 December 1937, MI 379, AGN.

policies during this period.<sup>643</sup> Similarly, the Peruvian Ministry of Government reported in a confidential document to the Ministry of Foreign Relations that Peru used DS 1936 to limit not only Japanese and Chinese immigration, but also Jewish immigration.<sup>644</sup>

On June 14, 1940, the Peruvian Naturalization Law 9148 was promulgated, increasing requirements for naturalization and giving the government discretion to deny naturalization “without cause” when “in its judgment, such [denial] is required for the public good.”<sup>645</sup> In the congressional debates on the law, Senator Carlos Concha of Callao argued that “modern countries must defend themselves from the importation of undesirable elements.”<sup>646</sup> Concha went on to emphasize that while the liberal requirements for naturalization stipulated in Peru’s constitution were part of its historical efforts to attract European immigration, Peru was now faced with the “danger” of an “uncontrolled migrant movement” that was threatening its population.<sup>647</sup> The Japanese were obviously on the minds of many Senators as they

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<sup>643</sup> See Max Paul Friedman, *Nazis and Good Neighbors : The United States Campaign against the Germans of Latin America in World War II* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 126-27; Lesser, *Welcoming the Undesirables: Brazil and the Jewish Question*.

<sup>644</sup> “Confidential Report from the Ministry of Government to the Ministry of Foreign Relations regarding the Inter-American Conference on Coordination of Police and Judicial Measures,” 13 November 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 402, AGN. The Ministry of Government’s report was issued in response to a questionnaire issued by the Panamerican Union soliciting issues to be addressed at the upcoming Inter-American Conference.

<sup>645</sup> Peru and García Calderón, *Constitución, Códigos Y Leyes Del Peru : Recopilados Y Concordados, 1830-31*. Foreign nationals seeking to naturalize were required to read and write Spanish, have a profession or be employed, and show morality and proper conduct.

<sup>646</sup> Peru, *Diario De Los Debates Del Senado, Legislatura Extraordinaria De 1939* (Lima: Imprenta Torres Aguirre, 1940), 59.

<sup>647</sup> *Ibid.*, 60-61. This discussion was in reference to Article 7 which noted that citizenship would be cancelled if the naturalized Peruvian “made use” of the previous nationality.

talked about the need to protect non-Asian Peruvians from economic displacement or the “agents of powerful nations with a conquering spirit” or the “de-nationalization” of Peru by foreigners with “an exalted national sentiment.”<sup>648</sup> Senator Ruíz Bravo of Lambayeque also asked if the naturalization laws could be applied to German General Fauppel, a naturalized Peruvian who at the time was Germany’s ambassador in Franco’s Spain.<sup>649</sup> The 1940 naturalization law, however, primarily facilitated ongoing discrimination against the Japanese and Chinese as naturalization regulations granted significant discretionary power to administrative officials who were called upon to judge applicants’ “motives” in applying for Peruvian citizenship.<sup>650</sup> The historical construction of the “undesirable” Asians as “turbulent and false” made this hurdle often insurmountable.<sup>651</sup> With the onset of World War II, Peru’s suspension of the naturalizations of Axis nationals made this a moot issue for the Japanese.<sup>652</sup>

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<sup>648</sup> Ibid., 58, 63, 66.

<sup>649</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>650</sup> “Naturalization Regulations,” 20 June 1940, Article 1c. See Balderrama Tudela, “Legislación De Extranjería,” 141-42.

<sup>651</sup> Rio, *La Inmigracion Y Su Desarrollo En El Peru. Prologo Del Doctor Luis Varela Orbegoso Clovis*, 62. Original Spanish: *Los japoneses...ni se interesaron por crearse vinculos amistosos con los nacionales, debido a su character levantisco y falso...*

<sup>652</sup> Numerous Latin American governments, often in coordination with the Pan American Union, took measures to both prohibit and revoke the naturalizations of Axis nationals during World War II. See Edward N. Barnhart, “Citizenship and Political Tests in Latin American Republics in World War II,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 42, no. 3 (1962).



## 6.2 Denationalization of Japanese Peruvians

Japan was the sole country barred from sending immigrants to Peru based upon DS 1936. The Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations' asserted that 22,650 Japanese were already living in Peru, meaning that Japan was well over the 16,000-person cap.<sup>653</sup> The Japanese government contested this figure as high, referring to an August 1936 census conducted by their consulate in Peru which counted a total of 13,031 Japanese "from Japan" (8834 men and 4197 women).<sup>654</sup> In the ensuing debate between the Japanese embassy and the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations, it quickly became clear that the Peruvian government was including Japanese immigrants' children *born in Peru*. In spite of Japan's protestations, the Peruvian government was unmoved and refused to change its count.<sup>655</sup> The Peruvian government's refusal to consider as Peruvian citizens the Peruvian-born children of Japanese immigrants did not have immediate consequences for the Japanese Peruvians; however, it signaled the Peruvian government's intent to denationalize Peruvians of Japanese descent.

With the passage of DS 1936, Japanese families in Peru quickly realized that not only was their position as immigrant residents under attack, but so were the citizen

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<sup>653</sup> Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú*, 350-53.; Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 240-41. This figure counted all Japanese over the age of 10 as stipulated by the DS 1936.

<sup>654</sup> "Letter from Nubio Fujimura (Charge de Affaires) to Foreign Minister General César A. de la Fuente," 23 February 1937, Record Group 6-18, ARE. The Japanese clarified "from Japan" because of Japan's standard of *jus sanguinis*. Handwritten note on the document indicates that it was forwarded on to Alberto Ulloa who in 1937 was the Legal Advisor for the Benavides government.

<sup>655</sup> Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú*, 350-53.

rights of their Peruvian-born children. Many Japanese parents had been lax about registering their children's birth with local municipal authorities in spite of the civil code requiring that children born in Peru should be registered with the municipal authorities within a period of eight days.<sup>656</sup> After the stipulated eight-day period, a petition could be submitted to local judicial authorities and the birth registered via a court order.<sup>657</sup> Following the issuance of DS 1936, Japanese families appeared before the judicial authorities en masse to petition the inscription of their children's births such that approximately 2,500 Peruvians of Japanese descent were registered by court order between June 1936 and April 1937. When *La Prensa's* judicial notices pages began to overflow with the registered births of the children of Japanese immigrants, protests were heard in Lima.<sup>658</sup>

The Benavides administration responded with Law 8526 promulgated on April 20, 1937, which restricted the rights of Peruvian citizens if they were born to foreign parents by 1) annulling the registration of their birth if it was issued via a court order after June 26, 1936 (the date of DS 1936) and 2) indefinitely suspending their right to

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<sup>656</sup> The Japanese government asserted that it was largely early immigrants who failed to register the births of their children because they were ignorant of Peruvian law, lived on haciendas located far from municipal offices, and many planned to return to Japan. While this may have been true, Japanese urbanites also failed to register their children, especially if they attended a private Japanese school where a Peruvian birth certificate was not required for enrollment. See "Memorandum from Japanese Charge de Affaires to Minister of Foreign Relations," 25 May 1937, Record Group 6-18, ARE.

<sup>657</sup> Article 33, Civil Code of June 2, 1933, *Compilación de Legislación Peruana*, Chamber of Deputies, 1955, 3, p. 954 as cited in Barnhart, "Citizenship and Political Tests in Latin American Republics in World War II," 299.

<sup>658</sup> Luis and Ricardo Goya Ito, *Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú*, trans. Ch. Saito (Lima: Editorial Perú Shimpo S.A., 1974), 37.

register with judicial authorities if they were born before June 26, 1936.<sup>659</sup> In other words, approximately 2500 Japanese Peruvians born in Peru were stripped of their citizenship in violation of Article 4 of the constitution that stipulated that anyone born in Peru was Peruvian.<sup>660</sup> They were not only deprived of the rights guaranteed to citizens under the Peruvian constitution such as voting (in the case of literate men), but they also became subject to the laws restricting the activities of foreigners in Peru. While the consequences were serious enough at the time of the Law 8526's promulgation, the ramifications of their inability to prove Peruvian citizenship would be even more devastating when the Peruvian and United States' governments began organizing the deportation of Japanese Peruvians during World War II.

The Prado government (1939-1945) continued the assault on the Peruvians of Japanese descent by promulgating the decree "Peruvian-born Children of Foreigners" on July 31, 1940. In a novel interpretation of the constitution, the decree established that Peruvian-born children of foreigners from countries that recognized *jus sanguinis* citizenship lost their citizenship by living in their parents' country of origin, studying there, or complying with laws related to military service.<sup>661</sup> While taking up arms on behalf of a foreign country constituted cause for losing one's Peruvian citizenship according to Article 7 of the 1933 Peruvian constitution, study or living in foreign

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<sup>659</sup> Peru and García Calderón, *Constitución, Códigos Y Leyes Del Peru : Recopilados Y Concordados*, 1599.

<sup>660</sup> Balderrama Tudela, "Legislación De Extranjería," 118.

<sup>661</sup> *Ibid.*: 137. The decree did provide a process to request the re-establishment of their citizenship, but the federal government's decision was discretionary.

parents' country of nationality was certainly not contemplated.<sup>662</sup> This measure, according to a Peruvian official, was directed against the Japanese. The Inter-American Emergency Advisory Committee, much like Ulloa, considered Japanese immigrants' children to be potential agents of the Japanese government. The Advisory Committee praised the decree as having prevented "what probably could have become the most serious abuse of American nationality on the part of natives."<sup>663</sup> The Prado government's flurry of restrictive immigration legislation was partially a populist response to anti-Japanese movements that had been building throughout the 1930s. However, the Peruvian government was also reacting to the United States' call, issued through the Inter-American meetings of foreign ministers, to control potentially subversive foreigners in the Western hemisphere.<sup>664</sup>

Given the racial animosity certain sectors sustained against Asians, it was not surprising that policymakers also aggressively undermined the rights of Peruvian-born Asians. In 1930s Peru, however, the Peruvians of Japanese descent found themselves in a much more vulnerable position than Chinese Peruvians because of the way that

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<sup>662</sup> According to Article 7, Peruvians could also lose their citizenship by acquiring a foreign nationality. See *Ibid.*: 118. In September 1940, an even more restrictive law was debated and passed by the Chamber of Deputies which stipulated that "sons of foreigners, even if born in Peru, are during their minority to be considered as being of the same nationality as their fathers." *El Comercio* September 5, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 1940 as cited in Normano and Gerbi, *The Japanese in South America; an Introductory Survey with Special Reference to Peru*, 116.

<sup>663</sup> "Memorandum Prepared by the Chief of the Section of Congresses and International Organizations at the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Culture of Peru the Emergency Advisory Committee" and *Legislación para la Defensa Política en las Repúblicas Americanas*, Volume I, Montevideo, 1947, pp. 535-537, both cited in Barnhart, "Citizenship and Political Tests in Latin American Republics in World War II," 309-10.

<sup>664</sup> *Ibid.*: 298. The American states' foreign ministers met in Panama in September 1939, in Havana in 1940, and in Rio de Janeiro in January 1942 when they formed the Inter-American Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense.

Japanese community practices interacted with yellow peril discourses. While Peruvian-born children of Japanese were considered as “undesirable” as their parents, they were also considered as not truly “Peruvian” in many quarters largely because the Japanese Peruvian community placed a high priority on educating their children in Japanese schools. A minority of Japanese immigrant families with financial means also sent their children, usually boys, to Japan to complete their education. While the German and Italian schools in Peru were questioned as promulgators of Nazism and fascism, respectively, the furor was primarily over the more numerous Japanese schools and the children of Japanese immigrants who were educated in Peru.<sup>665</sup> In 1941, 22 Japanese schools were operating in Peru.<sup>666</sup> The largest Japanese school, Lima Nikko, was founded by the SCJ in 1920 and although it began with just 24 students (13 boys and 11 girls), by 1941 its 70 teachers were instructing 1600 students.<sup>667</sup> Japanese parents, by and large, sent their children to Japanese schools because they respected the educational standards of Japan, contemplated the possibility that their family might some day return to Japan, and because they hoped their children would be literate in the Japanese language and embrace the cultural

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<sup>665</sup> In the 1940 debate on the national education law, Senator Diez Canseco described the German schools as teaching Nazism, the Italian schools as teaching fascism, and the Japanese schools as “proclaiming...the greatness of Japan.” Senator Alvarez Calderón argued, however, that the Japanese schools were much more dangerous both because of their greater number and because of their curriculum. Peru, *Diario De Los Debates Del Senado, Legislatura Ordinaria De 1940*, 606-07, 12-13.

<sup>666</sup> Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 212.

<sup>667</sup> While the student body was almost exclusively Japanese, the teachers were a mix of Japanese and Peruvians. *Ex-Escuela Japonesa Lima: Bodas De Diamante, 1920-1995*, (1995), 31-37.

values they considered to be Japanese.<sup>668</sup> While only three schools were recognized by the Japanese Ministry of Education, the Japanese schools in Peru attempted to incorporate the Japanese curriculum which included not only moral instruction, but also patriotic propaganda.<sup>669</sup> The fact that many Japanese Peruvians were educated separately from non-Japanese Peruvian children certainly created social distance. At the same time, this was ameliorated by the majority of Japanese Peruvians integrating into Peruvian schools after eighth grade, the highest level offered in Japanese schools.<sup>670</sup> The Japanese Peruvians born in Peru were fluent in Spanish while their Japanese was considered second-rate by new Japanese immigrants.<sup>671</sup> Also the Japanese and their families did not live in “ethnic ghettos” and as a consequence Japanese Peruvian children generally socialized with neighborhood children. For instance, in Lima and its environs, Japanese families were spread throughout the city.<sup>672</sup>

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<sup>668</sup> One of the texts used in Peru for third-graders was *Shushin*, or “A Good Japanese [Person].” This text instructs that “good Japanese” respect the Emperor and Empress and are loyal and patriotic, but primarily guides the students in behavior, treatment of others, and taking care of oneself. For a Spanish-language translation of the Japanese text, see Appendix 1 in Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 213.

<sup>669</sup> Lima Nikko was one of the schools recognized by the Japanese Ministry of Education. *Ibid.*, 211-12.

<sup>670</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>671</sup> Higashide, *Adios to Tears : The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps*, 77-78.

<sup>672</sup> For instance, according Daniel Masterson’s review of secret Peruvian naval intelligence documents that were prepared just prior to the outbreak of WWII, 8005 Japanese residents of Lima-Callao were spread out relatively equally among twelve of the provinces’ eighteen zones. The Japanese were generally found in greater numbers in the more populous zones, such as Callao, and in lesser numbers in the sparsely populated zones such as La Perla. The Japanese were divided in the following fashion: Lima Zone 1(0); Lima Zone 2 (1180, representing 14.7% of the total Japanese population in Lima-Callao); Zone 3 (743, 9.3%); Zone 4 (587, 7.3%); Zone 5 (454, 5.7%), Zone 6 (270, 3.4%), Zone 7 (686, 8.6%), Zone 8 (858, 10.7%); Zone 9 (262, 3.3%); Pueblo Libre (60, <1%); Magdalena del Mar

In the best of cases, Peruvian-born Japanese were accused of having a “Japanese soul” rather than a “Peruvian soul,” a claim that was made on the basis that many attended Japanese schools.<sup>673</sup> Much like the Bernardo Liu of Tacna, Senator Alvarez Calderón said of Japanese Peruvians “they are only Peruvians because they were born here.” Senator Alvarez Calderon accused Peruvian-born Japanese of being “spiritually unlinked” from Peruvian nation, and continued in ominous tones, “The material antagonisms can be resolved, but those of spirit never can.”<sup>674</sup> Foreign Minister Ulloa wrote that the “the children of Japanese [in Peru]... continued being Japanese even when birth has given them our nationality.” As for the children of Peru’s Japanese immigrants who studied in Japan, Ulloa warned

They will return under the protection of their nationality of origin to continue acting like Japanese... but they will carry out in everything whatever function or whatever job... very closely monitored by their own self-control which in the final instance is the control of the Japanese state; or acting in response to mysterious movements or orders, they will adapt to all sorts of circumstances to carry out a mysterious objective.<sup>675</sup>

The Japanese consulate attempted to convince the Peruvian government to rescind its decrees that targeted the Peruvians of Japanese descent by arguing how “Peruvian” they were. The Japanese consul wrote, “They speak your language

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(74, <1%); Miraflores (385, 4.8%); Barranco (188, 2.3%); Chorrillos (163, 2%); Callao (1467, 18.3%); Bellavista (29, <1%), La Perla (12, <1%). See Masterson and Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*, 150.

<sup>673</sup> Peru, *Diario De Los Debates Del Senado, Legislatura Ordinaria De 1940*, 172-73. The observations were made by Senator Diez Canseco.

<sup>674</sup> *Ibid.*, 607.

<sup>675</sup> Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú*, 342.

[Spanish], they struggle and work for Peru, and they have never even been to Japan.” He further insisted that “all the children of Japanese immigrants upon being born in a country that is not that of their parents strongly and lovingly attach to the country where they were born.”<sup>676</sup> From the perspective of the Japanese immigrants, there were “broad and unbridgeable” differences between the Peruvian-born Japanese and the first-generation immigrants.<sup>677</sup> Seiichi Higashide, who immigrated to Peru in 1930 at the age of 21, recounts his impressions of the Peruvian-born children of first-generation immigrants:

First, the nisei [second generation Japanese born in Peru] were generally not fluent in the Japanese language. They could make sense of it when they heard it, but could not speak it or write it correctly themselves. Moreover, they did not really understand Japanese society and culture in which the first generation had been born and raised. They had heard of such matters from parents and teachers, but that was at best indirect, learned information.<sup>678</sup>

Not surprisingly, the very different assessments of Japanese Peruvians’ connections to Peru or Japan depended upon the position of the speaker. However, the discourse of “inassimilable” that developed around the Japanese in Peru was not based simply upon the Japanese community’s high rates of endogamy or its institutions – schools, associations, newspapers – that were created to serve the Japanese immigrant community. Rather, the accusations of separatism followed several decades of public figures not only rejecting Japanese immigrants based upon alleged inferiority, but also

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<sup>676</sup> “Memorandum from Japanese Charge de Affaires to Peruvian Minister of Foreign Relations,” 25 May 1937, Record Group 6-18, ARE.

<sup>677</sup> Higashide, *Adios to Tears : The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps*, 77.

<sup>678</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-78.



eschewing miscegenation between the Japanese and Peruvians. Many, such as respected Cuzqueño author Victor J. Guevara, argued vociferously against the introduction – biological and cultural – of Japanese in Peru, yet went on to criticize the Japanese “because entering the country as closed families, they are not susceptible to being assimilated and incorporated by the nation, as are other foreigners...”<sup>679</sup> One level of the debate on Japanese assimilation in Peru has weighed the discrimination that the Japanese encountered against Japanese community isolationism.<sup>680</sup> However, whether the Japanese immigrants acculturated, integrated, or “fit in” to Peru is not the question presented by the “inassimilable” label applied to the Japanese in Peru. On one hand, “assimilation” during this period in the Latin America period often meant “whitening,” meaning that immigrants were not expected to assimilate *into* any culture within the country but instead were to racially and culturally Westernize the existing national population.<sup>681</sup> This is similarly demonstrated by the discourse analyzed in the previous chapters.

In the context of the circulating yellow peril doctrine of the 1930s, however, Japanese community institutions in Peru were the focus of public attention not because

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<sup>679</sup> Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 136. Original Spanish: *porque ingresando al país en familias cerradas, no son susceptibles de ser asimilados e incorporados por la nacionalidad, como son otros extranjeros.*

<sup>680</sup> While the central works of Gardiner, Fukumoto, and Morimoto give equal weight to isolationism and discrimination, the assimilation issue has been more thoroughly debated in articles by Stephen I. Thompson, "Assimilation and Nonassimilation of Asian-Americans and Asian Peruvians," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 4 (1979); Bernard Wong, "A Comparative Study of the Assimilation of the Chinese in New York City and Lima, Peru," in *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*, ed. Jorge I. Domínguez (New York: Garland Pub., 1994).

<sup>681</sup> Lesser, "Immigration and Shifting Concepts of National Identity in Brazil During the Vargas Era," 25. Also see Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*.

the authors had any desire for the Japanese to become a part of Peruvian society. Instead, allegations of Japanese isolationism were used to bolster arguments that the Japanese were a danger to mainstream Peruvian society, not only racially and economically, but also politically. Reflecting this opinion, a *La Prensa* article noted, “The Japanese peril...is found in the establishment of Japanese population nuclei within the country, organized, assisted, and directed by the government of Tokyo; nuclei that remain strangers to our country and do not mix with our population.”<sup>682</sup> Manuel Romero de la Puente described the Japanese community in Peru as “a nation within another [Peru.],” adding that “It is in reality an extension of the Japanese state.”<sup>683</sup> While the Japanese embassy in Peru and the Sociedad Central Japonesa were famous for attempting to control the Japanese immigrants in Peru – oftentimes in an effort to make them more acceptable to Peruvian public opinion – the Japanese immigrants were not the automatons that Ulloa perceived them to be.<sup>684</sup> While the majority philosophically supported Japan in WWII, no evidence of Japanese espionage or subversion of the Peruvian state was ever discovered.<sup>685</sup> Even the Peruvian

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<sup>682</sup> *La Prensa*, September 22, 1937, as cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 151. Original Spanish: *El peligro japonés...estriba en el establecimiento en el país de núcleos de población japonesa, organizados, ayudados i dirigidos por el gobierno de Tokio; Núcleos que permanecen extraños a nuestro país sin mezclarse con nuestra población*

<sup>683</sup> *La Prensa*, August 24, 1937 as cited in *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>684</sup> The case of Julio Furuya, discussed in the final section of this chapter, is an example of the Japanese consulate’s attempts to control the community and Japanese immigrants’ resistance. Seiichi Higashide also chafed at, and broke out of, what he describes as the “small, closed world of Japanese immigrants in South America.” See Higashide, *Adios to Tears : The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps*, 7.

<sup>685</sup> John K. Emmerson, *The Japanese Thread : A Life in the U.S. Foreign Service*, 1st ed. (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1978), 125-49. Emmerson was the Japanese-speaking U.S. Embassy

Minister of the Government described the Japanese “danger” in 1940 as one of “economic penetration” rather than a military in nature.<sup>686</sup>

### 6.3 Imperialism via the Womb

By the 1930s, the increasing number of Japanese women in Peru and the corollary growth in the number of children born to Japanese immigrant women came under the microscope of Peruvian eugenicists.<sup>687</sup> Between 1924 and 1940, women grew from 12% to 33% of the Japanese community in Peru.<sup>688</sup> After Peruvian plantations ceased their contracting of Japanese laborers in 1923, the Japanese living in Peru were allowed to sponsor other immigrants and many Japanese men petitioned their wives or “picture brides” (*shashin kekkon* in Japanese). Consequently, wives and picture brides represented the majority of Japanese women immigrants to Peru during this period.<sup>689</sup>

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official in Lima who oversaw the investigation and deportation of the Japanese from Peru to the United States.

<sup>686</sup> “Confidential Report from Minister of Government to Minister of Foreign Relations,” 13 November 1940, Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 402, AGN.

<sup>687</sup> Given that the majority of Japanese women immigrated to Peru in the position of wife or picture bride, the Japanese immigrant women during this period of study were almost exclusively married to men of Japanese descent.

<sup>688</sup> Women numbered 2,145 and men 15,887 in 1923, according to Morimoto, *Los Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú*, 72. Women numbered 5,833 while men numbered 11,745 in 1940 according to Peru. Departamento de Censos., *Censo Nacional De 1940; Resultados Generales* (Lima,: 1941).

<sup>689</sup> Although there are no statistics specifically for Peru, Toake Endoh estimates that 47% (8,000 out of 17,000) of the Japanese who immigrated to Latin America (with Brazil and Peru as the prime destinations) between 1923 and 1941 were picture brides or already married to Japanese men in Latin America. See Endoh, “Shedding the Unwanted : Japan’s Emigration Policy in a Historical Perspective”.

According to Leys Stepan, eugenic policies in Latin America were generally directed toward women because reproduction was understood “to define women’s social role far more than men”<sup>690</sup> In the case of Peru, Japanese women were characterized as synonymous with their biological reproductive capacity, and their fertility in this regard caused great alarm among eugenic advocates. In 1935, the following statistics on children born to Japanese parents in the capital city of Lima were presented at the First Peruvian Conference of Nipiology. These numbers indicated, according to Dr. Carlos Enrique Paz Soldan, the number of children that “gushed from the womb of the imported race”:

**Table 6.1 Births to Japanese Women in Lima**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Births</u>	<u>Japanese Births</u>	<u>% of Lima Births</u> <sup>691</sup>
1932	8743	342	3.91%
1933	7966	334	4.19
1934	8145	345	4.21
1935	8630	313	3.6
1936(Jan-June)	4257	186	4.34

Paz Soldan was the founder of the Peruvian eugenics movement and had long advocated the exclusion of Japanese immigrants from Peru.<sup>692</sup> In 1919, Paz Soldán characterized the Japanese immigrants in Peru as “human waste” and advocated their

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<sup>690</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 12. Asunción Lavrin adds that eugenics “reinforced the image of women at the service of the state.” Asunción Lavrin, *Women, Feminism, and Social Change in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, 1890-1940* (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 191.

<sup>691</sup> Carlos Enrique Paz Soldán, "La Penetración Japonesa En El Perú," *La Prensa*, October 3 1937, 2. Paz Soldán updated the figures from the Nipiology Conference.

<sup>692</sup> Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 48.

exclusion “in defense of the national race.”<sup>693</sup> Paz Soldan lamented that Japanese women’s fertility was greater than (non-Japanese) Peruvian women’s and that “under such conditions a mutation can be predicted in the not so distant future for the race which populates Lima.”<sup>694</sup> While Paz Soldan does not make clear the source of his statistics, the number of Japanese women in Lima-Callao grew from 2554 in 1931 to 5337 in 1940 and Japanese men increased from 5779 to 10236.<sup>695</sup> Paz Soldan, former Director of the National Children’s Institute, expressed concern at what the “robust” children of Japanese parents would mean for the “racial destiny of Peru.”<sup>696</sup> According to eugenic thought, “degeneracy” occurred through miscegenation; however endogamy was much more common among the Japanese than other immigrants in Peru in large part because of the significant numbers of Japanese women also immigrated to Peru. This fact, connected intimately to the construction of the Japanese immigrants as a military threat, changed the focus of the eugenicists from miscegenation to the “robust” and multiple progeny of Japanese women. Medical doctor Paz Soldán’s derision of the health and strength of Japanese children might also reveal some Peruvians’ resentment of the Japanese nation, a country that had

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<sup>693</sup> Carlos Enrique Paz Soldán, *El Comercio*, December 10, 1919 as cited in Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 229.

<sup>694</sup> Paz Soldán, "La Penetración Japonesa En El Perú," 2.

<sup>695</sup> Peru. Dirección de Estadística, *Censo Nacional De Población Y Ocupación, 1940.*; Lima Province Junta Departamental Pro-Desocupados, *Censo De Las Provincias De Lima Y Callao Levantado El 13 De Noviembre De 1931.* According to Amelia Morimoto’s survey, 1278 of issei (first generation immigrant) respondents, 69% of whom were 21 years of age or older by 1940, averaged 5.34 children per woman. Amelia Morimoto, *Población De Origen Japonés En El Perú : Perfil Actual* (Lima: Comisión Conmemorativa del 90o Aniversario de la Inmigración Japonesa al Perú, 1991), 49, 125.

<sup>696</sup> Paz Soldán, "La Penetración Japonesa En El Perú," 2.

modernized, industrialized, and Westernized at a rate Peruvians could only envy. As *La Crítica* wrote in reference to the Chinese in 1918, “it certainly cannot be the degenerate men that have achieved such victories...now circumstances that are cited as a motive for alarm.”<sup>697</sup>

In this case, however, the Japanese women were the “motive for alarm,” represented as a menace to mainstream Peruvian society and accused of being agents of the Japanese government intent on achieving the “Japanization” of Peru “via the womb.”<sup>698</sup> *Anti-Asia* had sounded a similar alarm in 1930, citing exaggerated population figures of 30,000 Japanese immigrants with 40,000 “cubs of their race” whom the editor extrapolated would number 200,000 within 20 years given the “fecundity typical of barbarous people.”<sup>699</sup> *El Oriente* newspaper in Iquitos also highlighted the fertility of Japanese women, noting:

If the Japanese continue with their plan to spread throughout Peru, establishing their retail or industrial businesses, monopolizing the productive lands, maintaining their own newspapers and schools, and multiplying in a way that the mothers of that nationality know how to, it is not far away the day that the Empire of the Rising Sun will attempt to form a colony in our country...<sup>700</sup>

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<sup>697</sup> "El Odio Al Extranjero." Original Spanish: *...no son ciertamente los hombres degenerados los que logran hacer una victoriosa competencia en el comercio y el trabajo a nuestros naturales y elevarse en posición social o los altos negocios de la banca y de las compañías de seguros, circunstancias que se citan como motivo de la alarma actual.*

<sup>698</sup> Paz Soldán, "La Penetración Japonesa En El Perú."

<sup>699</sup> , 7.

<sup>700</sup> Reprinted in *La Prensa*, October 26, 1937, as cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 158. Original Spanish: *Si los japoneses siguen su plan de extenderse por el Perú, estableciendo industrias o negocios, acaparando tierras de cultivo, manteniendo periódicos i escuelas propias, i multiplicándose en la forma en que saben hacerlo las madres de esa nacionalidad, no está muy distante el día en que el Imperio del Sol Naciente pretenda hacer una colonia en nuestro país...*

In addressing the VII Pan American Children's Conference held in Mexico in 1935, Peruvian delegates presented a resolution based on "the progress in human Genetics, the knowledge of the laws of heredity, and the prodigious advancements in Eugenics" and called for the curtailment of Asian immigration in an effort to defend the "racial characteristics of the New World."<sup>701</sup> In his article on the conference, Paz Soldan went on to characterize Japanese women's "production, in our own land, of Japanese children" as an attempt to create an "ethnic empire," to advance the political and economic interests of Japan.<sup>702</sup>

Eithne Luibheid's analysis of the United States' Japanese exclusion movement finds that Japanese women were similarly characterized as what she calls "fanatical uterine nationalists."<sup>703</sup> Not only did Japanese exclusion campaign leader V.S. McClatchy similarly focus on the "extraordinary birth rate of Japanese," he also wrote that "Every [Japanese] girl (school girl) is thoroughly drilled in the doctrine that, should she become a "picture bride" in America, or an immigrant to other lands, her loyal duty to her Emperor is to have as many children as possible, so that the foreigners' land may become in time a possession of Japan."<sup>704</sup> The Japanese

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<sup>701</sup> Paz Soldán, "La Penetración Japonesa En El Perú." Paz Soldan writes that the resolution received "unanimous triumphant [support]" from the audience, but Japanese diplomatic intervention scuttled its passage.

<sup>702</sup> Ibid.

<sup>703</sup> Eithne Luibhéid, *Entry Denied : Controlling Sexuality at the Border* (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 70.

<sup>704</sup> V.S. McClatchy, "Japanese Immigration and Colonization: Brief Prepared for Consideration by the State Department," 1921 included in V.S. McClatchy, ed., *Four Anti-Japanese Pamphlets* (New York: Arno Press, 1978), 65, as cited in Ibid., 87.

government did implement a powerful program to incorporate its citizens into supporting its war effort and women in Japan were encouraged to assist the Japanese government by saving and managing their household's income.<sup>705</sup> These war programs built upon the Japanese state's social indoctrination of Japanese women to be a "good wife, wise mother" (*ryosai kenbo*) and represented the education that most Japanese women who immigrated to Peru would have received.<sup>706</sup> While Japanese women were just as likely to express loyalty to the Japanese government as men, there is little to suggest that Japanese women in the Americas considered their sexual reproduction as part of an imperial plan.

Mei Nakano, instead, suggests that Japanese women migrated to the United States for economic reasons, for adventure, or out of familial loyalty.<sup>707</sup> Japanese Peruvian women's testimonies reflect similar motivations. Twenty-year-old Tsuru Sonan de Yara, who immigrated from Okinawa province in 1928, recounts that she traveled to Peru "to make money."<sup>708</sup> More than one woman remembers childbearing

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<sup>705</sup> Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1999), 161-74.

<sup>706</sup> Audrey Kobayashi, "Migration as a Negotiation of Gender: Recent Japanese Immigrant Women in Canada," in *New Worlds, New Lives: Globalization and People of Japanese Descent in the Americas and from Latin America in Japan*, ed. Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, Akemi Kikumura-Yano, and James A. Hirabayashi (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 207; Sharon H. and Sally Ann Hastings Nolte, "Meiji State's Policy toward Women, 1890-1910," in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 155.

<sup>707</sup> Mei T. Nakano, *Japanese American Women: Three Generations, 1890-1990* (Berkeley: Mina Press Publishing, 1990), 26 as cited in Luibhéid, *Entry Denied : Controlling Sexuality at the Border*, 70-71.

<sup>708</sup> Moromisato, ed., *Testimonios De Vida Y Homenaje Al Vigésimo Aniversario De Vida Institucional (1979-1999)*, 202.



as a burden rather than as a mission in service of the Japanese nation. Kobashikawa Kamado recounts

When I arrived in Peru, everything was very difficult for me because I didn't know the country; every two or three years I had a child, I only had time to take care of them and educate them, I didn't have time for distractions and my hobby was simply work and work.<sup>709</sup>

Some Japanese immigrant women in Peru even resisted their role as mother and wife.

Okinawan Tsuru Miyasato de Chinen relates that when her 42-year-old husband died leaving her with 7 children:

Marrying once, that was enough, no marrying again! Well, so many children, who takes care of them then! Got to be tough! No, I don't like it, just taking care of children, nothing else.<sup>710</sup>

Miyasato, like other Japanese women immigrants to Peru, expressed her desire to have a life outside of family and children – an opportunity that drew some women to Peru.<sup>711</sup>

DS 1936 suspended all Japanese immigration to Peru, noting specifically that Japanese women married to men already in Peru were to receive no special accommodation and would be allowed to immigrate only if Japanese immigration levels in Peru fell below the 16,000 limit.<sup>712</sup> However, the nearly 6,000 Japanese women that remained in Peru continued to be demonized in the Peruvian press, the

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<sup>709</sup> Asociación Femenina Okinawense del Perú, *20 Años*, 86.

<sup>710</sup> Moromisato, ed., *Testimonios De Vida Y Homenaje Al Vigésimo Aniversario De Vida Institucional (1979-1999)*, 212.

<sup>711</sup> A Japanese Peruvian woman who traveled to Peru during this period later recounted to Mary Fukumoto, "I was happy because I was coming to Peru to travel around." Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 166.

<sup>712</sup> Balderrama Tudela, "Legislación De Extranjería," 123-25.

racist rhetoric penetrating their intimate relationships. While the Japanese immigrant man was accused of being a soldier in disguise, the Japanese woman was portrayed as doubly, or triply, dangerous because her body was capable of undermining the best laid plans to eliminate the “Japanese race” from Peru.

#### 6.4 Yellow Peril to Fifth Columnists

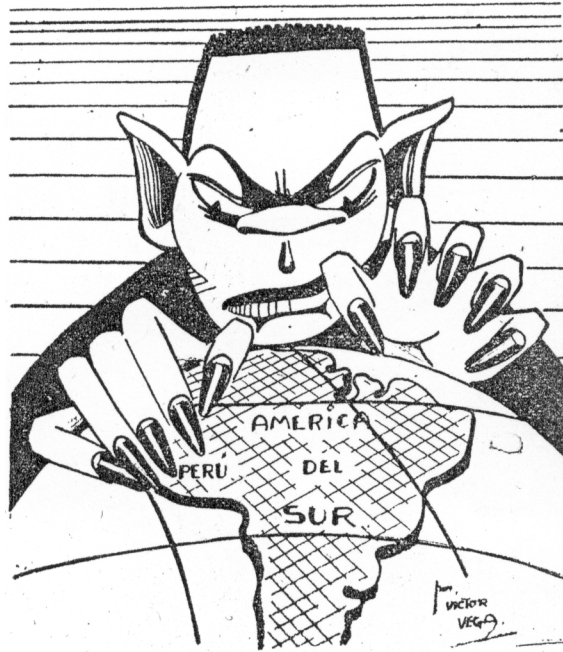
By the late 1930s, the anti-Japanese propaganda in Peru had reached a fever pitch. Guevara wrote, “When least expected, when Japan finishes its current campaign against China, it will remember [Peru] and protect the lives of the 30,000 Japanese that live in the heart of Peru.”<sup>713</sup> Small Lima newspapers like *Mundo Gráfico* kept up a steady drumbeat, running headlines like “Japan is digging its claws into the map of Latin America,” “20,000 Japanese ready to act in Perú,” and “The vast and powerful economic and military organization of the Japanese in Peru.” An April 13 article warned that in Peru “there exists the Fifth Column of the Japanese army, ready to act in the moment it is ordered. Hidden in each Japanese subject that we know as a modest worker or business owner is a soldier, an official, or a high level officer.”<sup>714</sup> The Japanese in Peru were graphically represented as the quintessential

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<sup>713</sup> Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 137. Original Spanish: *con que el día menos pensado, cuando el Japón corone su actual campaña del avasallamiento de China, se acordará de él i de hacer la protección a las vidas i haciendas de los 30 mil japoneses que tiene en su seno.*

<sup>714</sup> “Comienza La Lucha Contra La Dominación Japonesa En El Peru,” *Mundo Grafico*, May 4 1940; “Es Poderosa Y Vasta La Organización Económica Y Militar De Los Japoneses En El Perú,” *Mundo Grafico*, April 20 1940; “La Reacción Nacionalista Contra El Peligro Nipón Se Extiende En Toda La República ” *Mundo Gráfico*, May 11 1940; “Nuestra Campaña Sobre Los Peligros De La Inmigración Japonesa Ha Conmovidado La Opinió Pública,” *Mundo Grafico*, April 13 1940.

“Fu Manchu,” strong yet cunning, a feminized villain sinking his long nails into his prey.<sup>715</sup> (See Figure 6.1.)



**Figure 6.1** *Mundo Gráfico* Cartoon<sup>716</sup>

The Japanese immigrants in Peru, however, had acquired a more effective enemy than the sensational headlines of minor newspapers. In spite of the fact that the APRA party continued to operate clandestinely in Peru even into the early 1940s, its power had grown internally as well as externally. From the time of its formation, APRA had been anti-imperialist and, as such, was an outspoken critique of Japan, as well as Germany and Italy. However in the late 1930s, APRA also joined the chorus

<sup>715</sup> Lee, *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*, 113-14.

<sup>716</sup> "Sobre El Mapa De América Latina " *Mundo Grafico*, April 13 1940.

of fringe groups and publications alleging the presence of Japanese Fifth Columnists in Peru. In a 1938 Aprista publication, León de Vivero painted a picture of the Japanese community in Peru as a standing army of 30,000 soldiers operating clandestinely under cover as neighborhood barbers and local farmers.<sup>717</sup> *La Tribuna*, the clandestine Aprista newspaper, echoed Vivero's warning of a Japanese Fifth Column, noting that it was the most dangerous of the three Axis countries represented in Peru.<sup>718</sup> APRA was also blamed for inflammatory flyers circulated during the early 1940s such as this one which incited Peruvian men to action:

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO FALL UNDER THE TOTALITARIAN WHIP  
OF THE JAPANESE, RESOLVE YOURSELF TO FIGHT LIKE A MAN  
FOR THE LIBERTY OF YOUR COUNTRY!<sup>719</sup>

On May 13, 1940, Lima convulsed in a massive riot against the Japanese. Rioters attacked and looted 615 stores and ten Japanese were killed in the melee.<sup>720</sup> While the motives of rioters are not clear, both APRA and the press were accused of stirring anti-Japanese sentiment. In the weeks prior to the riots, Lima newspapers *Mundo Gráfico* and *La Crónica* had prominently covered a violent dispute between the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and barber Julio Furuya which left María Acosta,

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<sup>717</sup> León de Vivero, *Avance Del Imperialismo Fascista En El Peru*, Colección Trinchera Aprista (Mexico City: 1938), 35-36.

<sup>718</sup> *La Tribuna*, October 27, 1940, p. 1, 4 in Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 402, AGN.

<sup>719</sup> "Muchacho Peruano!" signed Liga Juvenil Anti-totalitaria. Undated but included with other flyers dated 1940 in Ministerio del Interior, Relaciones Exteriores, MI 402, AGN.

<sup>720</sup> Ministerio de Hacienda, *Memorias*, 87-88. Losses to the Japanese community were estimated at over \$6 million. Although the Peruvian government agreed to compensate the Japanese in cash and agricultural products totaling 1.4 million soles, the Japanese had only been compensated 100,000 soles when Peru broke diplomatic relations with Japan in January 1942. See "Letter from M. Yodokawa to Lino Cornejo," 19 January 1942, Record Group 6-18, ARE.

Furuya's Peruvian employee, dead. The newspapers used the incident to accuse the Japanese community of disregarding Peruvian laws and authority.<sup>721</sup> APRA, however, was also blamed, accused of having circulated incendiary flyers just days before the riots. The flyers announced that the Japanese had arms stored in the coastal port of Chimbote and were awaiting the arrival of the Japanese Navy to launch an attack on Peru.<sup>722</sup>

The APRA party's anti-Japanese stance sprang from its anti-imperialism; however, its unsubstantiated accusations of Fifth Column activities can be better understood as an attempt to discredit President Manuel Prado in the eyes of its working and middle class base as well as in the international community. Although firmly allied with the oligarchy, the Prado government had gained ground with those sectors by creating social programs in an attempt to undermine their support for more radical parties like APRA.<sup>723</sup> Crassly attempting to stir nationalist fears, APRA paired "Peru for Peruvians" rhetoric with allegations that Prado, like Benavides before

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<sup>721</sup> "Es Poderosa Y Vasta La Organización Económica Y Militar De Los Japoneses En El Perú," *Mundo Grafico*, April 20 1940; "Nuestra Campaña Sobre Los Peligros De La Inmigración Japonesa Ha Conmovid La Opinión Pública," *Mundo Grafico*, April 13 1940. Also see Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 243-47.. Furuya, a naturalized Peruvian citizen since 1923, had been kidnapped from his home by men associated with the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and placed on the ship Ginyo Maru destined for Japan. The police of the Port of Callao, however, boarded the ship and removed Furuya. The Japanese consulate attempted to distance itself from the event. See "Letter from Alfredo Solf y Muro to Hitosi Satoh," 18 May 1940, Record Group 6-18, ARE.

<sup>722</sup> Fukumoto Sato, *Hacia Un Nuevo Sol : Japoneses Y Sus Descendientes En El Perú : Historia, Cultura E Identidad*, 243-47. The 1940 riots are also covered extensively in Alejandro Sakuda, *El Futuro Era El Perú : Cien Años O Más De Inmigración Japonesa*, 1. ed. (Lima: ESICOS, 1999), 229-37.

<sup>723</sup> Contreras and Cueto, *Historia Del Perú Contemporáneo : Desde Las Luchas Por La Independencia Hasta El Presente*, 219.

him, was in the pocket of the “fascists,” standing idly by while the Japanese formed military divisions in Peru.<sup>724</sup> APRA waged a similar campaign in the international press in an attempt to both undermine Prado and prove its democratic credentials to the United States in the hopes of launching a future election bid without opposition from United States.<sup>725</sup>

In the international press, APRA also attempted to promote a particularly Latin American version of “yellow peril” by alleging that the Japanese were forming a united front with the region’s indigenous peoples. In this way, APRA tapped into the Latin American elites’ fear of their indigenous people, who in the Andean nations still represented the majority or near-majority of the population in 1940. As discussed in Chapter 1, Latin America was built upon a colonial and republican history of marginalizing its indigenous peoples and in spite of the repression, Peruvian Indians remained a political and potentially violent threat. Eminent indigenista author Ciro Alegría wrote in conjunction with Aprista Alfredo Saco in 1942 that when the Japanese attacked Peru, they would likely be able to recruit “millions” of indigenous Peruvians to their cause by “emphasizing the Japanese-indigenous racial unity, and fanning their latent resentment against whites.”<sup>726</sup> In the English-language press, Saco and Alegría published a similar article, this time emphasizing, “For many years the Japanese have been seeking to win the good will of the Peruvians, especially of the

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<sup>724</sup> *La Tribuna*, 27 October 1940, 1-4, in Ministerio del Interior, MI 402, AGN.

<sup>725</sup> For more discussion of APRA’s motives in opposing the Japanese, see Ciccarelli, “Peru’s Anti-Japanese Campaign in the 1930s: Economic Dependency and Abortive Nationalism,” 126-28.

<sup>726</sup> Ciro Alegría and Alfredo Saco, “30,000 Japanese Forman La Quinta Columna Del Perú,” *Norte Revista Continental* 2 (1942): 16.

Indians and half-breeds. One of the methods employed is advocating the theory that the American natives come from Asia.”<sup>727</sup> Aprista Manuel Seoane wrote in 1943 that

...the Japanese availed themselves of every means to gain sympathy among the six million Quichua and Aimara Indians who make up two-thirds of Peru’s population. They told these people that Japanese are Children of the Sun, like the Peruvian Indians themselves...They used the story to convince the Indians that there were strong racial ties between the Indians and the Japanese as opposed to white men. They also pointed out the physical similarities between themselves and the Indians of Peru to prove their thesis that the first inhabitants of Peru came originally from the Land of the Rising Sun.<sup>728</sup>

In 1924, the Japanese government gave a statue of Incan leader Manco Capac to Peru in celebration of the country’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence from Spain. The celebration of the event inspired speeches from Japanese and Peruvian officials alike that spoke in literary terms of the similarity of the Incan and Japanese veneration of the sun as well as their similar creation stories.<sup>729</sup> In concrete terms, however, the majority of Japanese on the coast were geographically distant from the majority of indigenous Peruvians who lived in the highlands. APRA’s campaign, however, had little to do with the realities of Japanese alliances with Latin America’s indigenous people. Instead, they were attempting to play upon the fears in white Europe and North America that Japan was capable of leading peoples who had been oppressed by the West in a race war against them. During this period, Japan actively promoted its military campaigns as a fight against white supremacy and the United States was

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<sup>727</sup> Ciro Alegría and Alfredo Saco, "Japanese Spearhead in the Americas," *Free World* 2, no. 1 (1942): 84.

<sup>728</sup> Manuel Seoane, "The Japanese Are Still in Peru," *Asia and the Americas* 43 (1943): 675-66.

<sup>729</sup> Capac, *La Independencia Del Perú Y La Colonia Japonesa*.

keenly aware that Japan's overtures to African American leaders had been well received on this basis.<sup>730</sup> Although APRA used a variety of approaches to attack the Japanese, its goals of undermining Prado and securing its own political position in the hemisphere vis-à-vis the United States remained the same.<sup>731</sup>

The claims of the Japanese attempting to establish ties with Peruvian Indians, however, also took on a life of their own within Peru. Julio and Manuel González Tello, for instance, wrote a letter to *La Prensa* in 1937 alleging that the Japanese school in Lima taught "that the Incas were Japanese or that the indigenous race is the sister race of the Japanese."<sup>732</sup> The notion that the Japanese were challenging white supremacy in the world was not lost on Peruvians, either among those that challenged white superiority or those that supported it. Writing prior to the Japanese invasion of China, indigenista Dora Mayer lauded Japan's military victory over Russia in 1905:

At last the fallacy of those legends came out, of the inevitable [fatal] subjection of the races of color to the white race, and to illustrate that their world does not recognize the great moral truths but rather focuses on the small material proofs, the rock of the Japanese David of Mikado hit the forehead of Goliath the Russian czar.

...

The Asians, forced to abandon their reserve by the audacious West, tore free with a resolved first of the chains held tight by a hand that scoffed at their debilities of superstition and backwardness. What white race or race of color!<sup>733</sup>

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<sup>730</sup> For a more thorough discussion, see Horne, *Race War : White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire*.

<sup>731</sup> APRA advocated political rights for Peru's indigenous peoples, but this did not stop them from using white fear of Indians for their own political purposes.

<sup>732</sup> *La Prensa*, October 14, 1937, as cited in Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 155-6.

<sup>733</sup> Capac, *La Independencia Del Perú Y La Colonia Japonesa*, 81-83. Original Spanish: *Al fin el sentido absurdo de esas leyendas sobre la fatal sujeción de las razas de color a la raza blanca, tuvo que saltar, y para ilustración de su mundo que no reconoce las grandes verdades morales sin fijarse en*



Ten years later, Akio Banno, director of the Japanese newspaper Lima Nippo, published an article in *La Prensa* in 1937 entitled “We Refute the Concept that the Yellow Race is Inferior to the White Race” in response to various articles on the negative racial impact of Japanese immigration to Peru. In his article, Banno argued that no race was inferior to another, celebrating the accomplishments of the “indigenous race” and the “black race” as well as those of the Japanese.<sup>734</sup> While Japan’s assertions of equality rang empty once Japan’s brutal occupations came to light, at the time they inspired hope among some and fear among others. Banno’s article inspired the wrath of Victor Guevara who wrote multiple pages contesting Guevara’s notions that the “white race” and “yellow race” could be considered equal.<sup>735</sup> However closer to the issue, *Mundo Gráfico* ran an article in 1942 based upon popular German philosopher Oswald Spengler’s *Hour of Decision*, published in 1934. According to *Mundo Gráfico*, Spengler’s book outlined how the South American Indians would provide Japan with the “human capital to unleash its violence against the white race which has up until now maintained its yoke upon them.” *Mundo Gráfico* opined that Peru would likely be Japan’s first target as it could be “most easily colonized” and because it contained the “most concentrated indigenous

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*las pequeñas pruebas materiales, cayó el proyectil de David del Mikado japonés en la frente de Goliat del zarismo ruso... Los asiáticos, forzados a abandonar su retraining del audaz Occidente, arrancan con puño resuelto las ligaduras aseguradas con mano burlona en sus debilidades de superstición y atrazo. ¡Qué raza blanca ni raza de color!*

<sup>734</sup> Banno, "El Mejoramiento De La Raza Y La Inmigración Asiática."

<sup>735</sup> Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 131-34.

mass in the Americas.”<sup>736</sup> The article failed to mention Peru’s own contentious relationship between its white elite and the indigenous populations. For this reason, however, the notion of Japanese-indigenous alliances resonated in Peru. Not surprisingly, it was in the indigenous-dominated central highlands province of Jauja, home of one of the first anti-Japanese ordinances, where the local subprefect sounded the alarm. On January 14, 1944, Sub-prefect Carlos A. Pease Olivera wrote to the Prefect of the department of Junin that the nearby mine should be protected because

...the Japanese elements could commit an act of sabotage, and they could utilize Peruvian agents, interesting them and taking advantage of the ignorance of the indigenous. The Japanese have influence within the indigenous masses because of the small discounts they give them in the purchase of food items...<sup>737</sup>

The Japanese were again portrayed as taking advantage of Peruvians, this time of the “ignorance” of the indigenous to achieve the alleged military goals. The relationship between the Japanese and Peruvian indigenous communities during World War II, however, was quite different. In reality, numerous indigenous communities provided a safe haven to many Japanese hiding from United States orders for their arrest and deportation.<sup>738</sup>

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<sup>736</sup> "Sobre El Mapa De América Latina ".

<sup>737</sup> Letter from Sub-prefect to Prefect of Junin, Ministerio del Interior, Prefecturas Junin, MI 448, AGN. Original Spanish: *...los elementos japoneses podrían cometer algún acto de sabotaje, también podrían utilizar agentes nacionales interesándolos y aprovechando de la ignorancia de los indígenas. Los japoneses tiene influencia dentro de la masa indígena en virtud de las pequeñas ventajas que le acuerdan en el expendio de víveres...*

<sup>738</sup> While the United States did not formally issue deportation orders, the Peruvian government developed its list of deportees under the close guidance of the United States envoy to Peru, John K. Emmerson. Emmerson, *The Japanese Thread : A Life in the U.S. Foreign Service*.

## 6.5 Conclusion

In the final years before the deportations of Japanese Peruvians began in 1942, multiple threads of toxic thought united to form both the basis for government policies and the public campaign against the Japanese. Policymakers continued to think of nation building in eugenic terms, “bettering the race,” well into the 1930s and erected barriers to Asian inclusion both through immigration and naturalization policies. As both Chinese and Japanese attempted to join the Peruvian nation, they were repeatedly excluded, condemned as lacking the elusive “Peruvian soul.” The “Peruvian soul” was ill-defined, but those who invoked it were clear about what it was not: “yellow.” Regardless of birth or legal status, race trumped citizenship rights and the Peruvian political establishment acted aggressively to legislate Peruvian citizens of Japanese descent out of Peruvian society. The Peruvian-born children of Japanese immigrants were a clear target for the exclusion policies, as they represented the potential threat to a whitened “racial destiny” for Peru. While Paz Soldan supported his allegations with statistics, the portrayal of the Japanese births as overwhelming was no more than the yellow peril of old. Yet eugenics also gave yellow peril access to intimate relations, allowing Japanese women to be cast as the most dangerous of Japanese agents.

Yellow peril was becoming more and more menacing to the Japanese Peruvians by the end of the 1930s, casting them as agents of the Japanese government or Fifth Columnists. To achieve this discursive transformation, the Japanese Peruvians’ social and cultural practices were stripped of meaning and reformulated to represent danger: the children of the Japanese immigrants received military training at

their schools; endogamy was part of a colonization plot; and favorable pricing of food was an attempt to ally with Peru's indigenous peoples against the Peru. While all these representations were far from reality, they were a sign that the Japanese in Peru had stirred the Peruvian power holders' deepest racial fears of the latent challenge that had long beat within their own borders.

## Epilogue

Alberto Ulloa reflected the position of many Peruvians in positions of power when he wrote in 1941:

The ideal in this respect is not only that no more Japanese come to Peru and the number of [Japanese] residents diminishes...[it is], rather, that they disappear completely from our country, that they return to their own or go to nearby regions where they have their most natural influence. Only when we have achieved this will we have consolidated an important aspect of the independence of Peru.<sup>739</sup>

Victor Guevara shared Ulloa's opinion, arguing that quotas did not resolve the problem of the Japanese already in Peru – “a grave problem in need of an urgent solution.” He asked, “How then do we get rid of them? Violent expulsion would mean an unjust act in violation of the canons of international law and would be a hostile action against a power of first order with omnipresent strength.”<sup>740</sup> Peru's options, however, changed drastically following Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor and the United States' declaration of war on Japan. At the Pan-American minister of foreign affairs conference in Rio de Janeiro in January 1942, the United States proposed the hemispheric internment of Axis nationals. Between 1942 and 1945, the Peruvian nation purged itself of 1799 Japanese Peruvians, earning its reputation as Latin America's most dedicated participant in the United States internment program.<sup>741</sup>

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<sup>739</sup> Ulloa y Sotomayor, *Posición Internacional Del Perú*, 355-56.

<sup>740</sup> Guevara, *Las Grandes Cuestiones Nacionales; El Petróleo, Los Ferrocarriles, La Inmigración Japonesa, El Problema Moral*, 139-40.

<sup>741</sup> Emerson, *The Japanese Thread : A Life in the U.S. Foreign Service*, 126, 38-49. For the number of Latin American internees (Japanese, German, and Italian) from each country, see United States Department of State, “Memorandum to Lafoon,” 30 January 1936, reproduced on [www.gaic.org](http://www.gaic.org).

Nikumatsu Okada was deported to a United States internment camp in 1942, exchanged for a U.S. citizen in the Far East, and died in Japan shortly thereafter.<sup>742</sup> Okada's rental contracts reverted to their owners and his assets were frozen. In 1943, President Manuel Prado issued an executive resolution that Japanese bakeries be confiscated by the government. Furthermore, Prado ordered the establishment of a commission to re-organize the bakeries and distribute them among other bakery owners or bakery workers' unions, or both.<sup>743</sup> Japanese businesses were confiscated, according to a decree embargoing the assets of Axis nationals, and many were auctioned off to Peruvians.<sup>744</sup> In March 1943, Peru passed Law 9810 canceling the naturalization of Axis nationals who were judged by the Ministry of Government to have participated in "subversive activities or in propaganda favoring systems opposed to democracy."<sup>745</sup> When the war ended, the United States attempted to return to Peru the interned Japanese Peruvians it had been unable to deport to Japan or trade in exchange for United States citizens held by Japan. Peru refused, accepting less than

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<sup>742</sup> Buitron Vda. de Kafiti, *Centenario De La Inmigración Japonesa Al Perú: Participación De Los Inmigrantes Japoneses En La Agricultura De Huaral*, 1899-1999, 36.

<sup>743</sup> "Resolution: The Government Acquires the Bakeries of Japanese Subjects" and "Resolution: Comisión para la Reorganización de la Industria Pandificadora," 17 April 1943, in Superintendencia de Economía Ministerio de Hacienda, *Recopilación Concordada De Leyes, Decretos, Resoluciones Y Otros Documentos, Sobre Restricciones Impuestas a Determinadas Personas Por Efecto De La Guerra Mundial Y En Ejecución De Los Acuerdos De Rio De Janeiro* (Lima: República del Perú, 1944), 116-19. This decree, as opposed to the others which specified "Axis nationals," applied only to the Japanese-owned bakeries.

<sup>744</sup> *Ibid.*, 46-55. While the German and Italians in Peru did not avoid the effects of these decrees, the Japanese community felt the inordinate weight of the measures.

<sup>745</sup> Art. 1, Law 9810, March 22, 1943, *El Peruano*, May 12, 1943, as cited in Barnhart, "Citizenship and Political Tests in Latin American Republics in World War II," 329.

100, arguing that the Japanese were inassimilable as well as an economic and social threat to Peru.<sup>746</sup>

The Higashide family was among the Japanese Peruvian internees that the United States wanted to return to Peru after the Higashides refused to accept deportation to Japan. Angelica Shizuka de Higashide and her children had been born in Peru, while her husband Seiiche Higashide was a Japanese immigrant. Reflecting on his life in his memoirs, *Adios to Tears*, Higashide writes of his feelings for his “three motherlands”: Japan, Peru, and the United States where he remained after being interned in 1944. He writes:

Although I have been away from Japan for over half a century [immigrated to Peru in 1930], I still feel that spiritually I am Japanese. At the same time, I believe if the war had not interfered, my roots would have remained planted in Peru. I would have acquired citizenship there and would have had my bones buried in its soil. Such was my love for Peru. Each of these countries evokes in me a deep, penetrating longing to return when I am away. And in each I enjoy the comfortable sense of ease that can only come when one is at home. Thus, I am tied emotionally to these countries by a sense of belonging. To cut off any of them would be like losing part of my identity. So while I agree it is strange to say that I have three motherlands, for me there is no other way to express what I feel.<sup>747</sup>

While this dissertation is largely a study of how the Japanese were folded into and affected the debates on race and nation in Peru, the Japanese were not only the objects but also actors in the drama. In the midst of the tornado of anti-Japanese sentiment

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<sup>746</sup> “Correspondence between the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations and the United States Embassy in Peru,” Record Group 6-3, 1945-1946, ARE. On the other hand, Peru fought the United States for the return of many of the 704 German Peruvians it had interned in the United States. The United States was attempting to deport to Germany the internees that it alleged were Nazi activists.

<sup>747</sup> Higashide, *Adios to Tears : The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps*, 7-8.

that seemed to tear through Peru and that has been recounted, the Japanese in communities across Peru were building lives that inspired a “love” for Peru. How would the Peruvian senators of 1940 have reacted to Higashide’s explanations of “spirit,” “love” and multiple “motherlands”? Although Higashide was never given the opportunity to address the Peruvian senators, in December 1982 he testified before the United States Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to advocate that Japanese Latin American internees be included in any reparations bill for Japanese Americans. In spite of Higashide’s and other former internees’ testimony, the Japanese Latin Americans were denied inclusion in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 which granted reparations and an apology to interned Japanese Americans.<sup>748</sup> The Japanese Latin American internees, organized through the Campaign for Justice, have continued to seek redress through the United States Congress, lawsuits, and international tribunals.<sup>749</sup>

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<sup>748</sup> United States. Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied : Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians* (Washington, D.C.: The Commission, 1982). The CLA required recipients to have been United States citizens or residents at the time of internment.

<sup>749</sup> In 1998, the United States government settled *Mochizuki v. United States*, a case filed on behalf of Japanese Latin American internees. The internees were awarded \$5000 and a letter of apology from the United States government. The fund, however, was limited and there were numerous problems with claims. The United States Congress is presently considering the “Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act” (S.69 and H.R.42), a bill to create a commission to investigate the deportation and internment of the Japanese Latin Americans. See Campaign for Justice (Redress Now for Japanese Latin American Internees) at [www.campaignforjusticejla.org](http://www.campaignforjusticejla.org) or more information.



## Conclusion

During the 1930s, opponents of the Japanese immigrants accused them of having formed “a nation within a nation” in Peru. While this notion was fed by transnational ideas of yellow peril, it also had deep roots in Latin America’s own history. Republican Peru’s first “nation within a nation” was its indigenous nation, many times destroyed, but still capable of inspiring a palpating fear in the heart of white Peru. Not only was the Peruvian oligarchy’s control of the Peruvian nation based upon political and economic power, but also on its ability to manage “race”: its meaning, its value, and its deployment. Far from being a hegemonic project, the elite’s control of race was riven with fissures; contestations and negotiations abounded, not to mention repeated violent challenges. If there was any consensus in Peru on race in the first four decades of the twentieth century, it was only that race was of vital importance in defining the Peruvian nation.

Peru’s racial identity was a topic of national contention during the years that the majority of Japanese settled in Peru. Peruvian elite and popular intellectuals, however, never arrived at any common understanding of what the “Peruvian race” was – strange as that may sound given how often the term appears in the debates of the period. As discussed, Peru remained largely polarized between indigenistas asserting an “Indo-American” ideal and “whitening” advocates favoring a Europeanized racial identity. Given the unsettled discussion of race in Peru, Asian immigration took on heightened significance. In other words, the discussion on the exclusion of Chinese

and Japanese immigration frequently served as a platform to advocate for whitening, i.e., because Peru was already dominated by “mongrel” and “inferior” races, or to argue in favor of the centrality of the Peruvian Indian, i.e. because Asians took the place slated for Indians in the modern Peruvian nation. Consequently, opposition to Asians served as a unifying racial discourse in the midst of ongoing and unresolved debates over “Peruvian-ness.”

What it meant to be indigenous, mestizo, chola, negro, chino, and finally japonés in Peru during this period also responded to a world that had been militarily and economically dominated by Europe and, by the twentieth century, the United States. The very same nations produced a steady flow of ideologies and sciences asserting white supremacy that justified their rule over the peoples they had conquered. In Latin America, the white minorities who governed drew selectively on these ideas, integrating social Darwinism and eugenics into their repertoire of racial, and gender, management techniques. Liberalism’s elusive promise of national inclusion was the pied piper that encouraged less powerful and even traditionally marginalized sectors to tie their fate to that of the Peruvian nation. In jockeying for position on the socio-racial pyramid, many among the popular and middling classes ingested selected elements of the racial doctrines from home and afar, reformulating them to support their own cases for a place in Peru.

The Japanese immigrants stepped directly into the fissures of contestation, cleavages that grew wider with each decade as the Peru “of color” organized as workers, peasants, or yanacunas, and as the middling mestizos planted their flag in

Peru. The Japanese men and women largely entered into Peruvian society on economic terrain, as agricultural workers on haciendas or through the small businesses they came to own. However, the fact that Japanese and Peruvians formed relationships on an economic plane does not mean that those relationships were purely transactional or competitive. For instance, Foreign Minister Ulloa writes how the Japanese businesses were a social center, although he assigns darker motives to this occurrence. Relationships formed through economic interactions should not be discounted, especially through activities like union organizing where shared risk carried the potential to create bonds of significance. Additionally, the racial images that were produced through these economic encounters were particularly powerful. For instance, on the sugar plantations, the hacendados repeatedly characterized the Japanese workers as “insolent” or “haughty.” According to the established hierarchy, those whose race condemned them to subordinate positions on the social scale were expected to treat their racial and class superiors with deference, timidity, or “*cabizbajo*.” When the Japanese did not express the expected attitude, the hacendados responded with denigration. While this particular meaning of “Japanese” was produced in multiple circumstances, the enduring power – and danger – of racialized images was seen during the WWII deportations. When the Ministry of Government asked government representatives in Trujillo to suggest possible deportees, the local officials reported that no one was involved in subversive activities. However, they detained two Japanese men for deportation because their “haughty and impulsive temperament” made them likely candidates for Fifth Column activities.<sup>750</sup>

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<sup>750</sup> “From Prefect of La Libertad to Minister of Government,” 16 September 1942, Libros Copiadores

Also in the realm of economic relations, allegations of competition and monopolization are clearly at the forefront of attacks on the Japanese. While elites launching these attacks should be suspected of populist pandering or opportunism, those classes potentially affected by Japanese agricultural workers or business owners should be considered more carefully. What I have attempted to demonstrate, in particular in the case of the unions and business owners, is that the motives of the groups that attacked the Japanese were more complex than simply economic competition. In fact, the racial inferiorization of Asians did not simply sit side-by-side with concerns over economic displacement, but instead was determinative of whether the affected groups allowed the Japanese access to their strata of society or not. In the case of the cholo and mestizo bakery workers who were fighting for their piece of Peru, the Japanese were a supposedly inferior race yet they passed them by and became their employers. While Estrella del Perú aggressively challenged Peruvian- and Italian-owned bakeries, those class-based challenges did not acquire the same venom as Estrella del Perú's campaign against not only Japanese bakery owners, but also Japanese immigration. In the case of the "Peru for Peruvians" business owners, middle-class mestizos' economic, social, and political progress of the 1920s seemed in danger of evaporating in the 1930s under the weight of the depression, social dislocations, and the diminution of their political power. As the Japanese (and Chinese) business owners flowed into the cities and socio-economic spaces that these local power holders considered their exclusive domain, they provoked, in Seiichi Higashide's words, "a poisonous resentment." The "poison" flowed not because the

Japanese opened one more hat shop, or five more barber shops, but because the “yellow race” was seemingly storming their small bastions of power.

The Japanese who settled in Peru’s communities were certainly attempting to carve out space for themselves both economically and socially, and were quite successful in accomplishing at least the former. However, the public perception of the Japanese as an overwhelming presence that monopolized businesses, lands, as well as the (ill-defined) Peruvian “race” can only be understood within the context of yellow peril. Even prior to the explicitly militaristic version of menace attached particularly to the Japanese immigrants in 1930s Peru, yellow peril constructed the Asians in Peru as the “hordes” intent on devouring everything in their path. At the same time, the Japanese and Chinese were seen through Orientalist eyes, conceptualized and homogenized as a race (or at times as two related races) that thought with one mind and acted as a single organism. This idea is present in the arguments against “Japanese monopolies.” While the generally accepted legal definition of a monopoly is a single business enterprise dominating a line of commerce, the general public found the idea convincing because the Japanese were not considered as individuals, but as a seamless entity. Foreign Minister Ulloa represented the extreme, but not uncommon, edge of this thought in his belief that the mind of every person of Japanese descent was an extension of the Japanese state.

In tracing the construction of the image of the Japanese in Peru, many of the portrayals can be closely tied to the way that the Chinese in Peru were imagined. When I say imagined, I do not mean that the images appeared out of thin air. Rather,

the material circumstances, such as the Chinese business owners' role on the front lines of food provision in times of scarcity in Peru, intersected with the transnational racial doctrines to create enduring representations – exploitative, immoral, unscrupulous – promulgated as racial characteristics of Asians. The press, organs of the elite, played a central role in circulating these selective images of the Chinese and Japanese communities. Peru's privileged sectors were well served by the country's excluded sectors unleashing their ire on the Japanese and Chinese, as opposed to forming class-based alliances with the capacity to challenge their power. The most vivid example of this principle is seen in the Chancay Valley where the agricultural export sector attempted to undermine yanacostas' collective threats to their exclusive control by recasting the conflict as classless "Peruvians" against dangerous "Japanese." To achieve this goal, the Japanese yanacostas who fought for workers' rights alongside Peruvian yanacostas were erased, not unlike their predecessors on the sugar plantations. The Chinese and Japanese store owners whose low-priced products assisted the Peruvian poor are similarly missing from the picture, although Peruvian and Japanese individuals in Canchis and San Vicente de Cañete fought for them to be taken into account. Dora Mayer and Miguelina Acosta Cárdenas also generate important countercurrents to the seemingly endless welter of anti-Asian rhetoric. Why is it important to conjure up the erasures? Not only it is part of the "re-humanizing" of the Japanese in this chapter of Peruvian history, but it is also essential to making sense of how history unfolds. In concrete terms, without the inclusion of the erasures, it is

virtually impossible to understand how Alberto Fujimori, son of Japanese immigrants, could have been elected twice to the Peruvian presidency in the 1990s.

Returning to the 1930s (the decade of Fujimori's birth), we see the effects of the Japanese in Peru having penetrated the inner realm of the Peruvian nation.<sup>751</sup> Yellow peril alarmism and eugenics combined to prevent the dam from being breached. While these doctrines had always functioned to exclude the Japanese from the national body (figuratively) and the national bodies (literally), the Japanese woman was the new villain and her reproduction was the ultimate weapon. No longer were the Japanese Peruvians outsiders, but instead they were interwoven into the fabric of the Peruvian nation, both as settlers and Peruvian-born legal citizens. In spite of the accusations of not having assimilated, the underlying fear among those opposed to the Japanese was just how deeply they had sunk their roots into Peru.

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<sup>751</sup> I am drawing upon Robert Lee's conceptualization of yellow peril at the level of the outer dike (excluding Asians from the country) and inner dike (excluding Asian from racial mixing in the country). See Lee, *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*, 136-37.

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### Abbreviations

**ARE** Archivo de Relaciones Exteriores (Perú)

**AGN** Archivo General de la Nación (Perú)

**MI** Ministerio del Interior

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