

Courage for Peace: Toshio Mori's *The Brothers Murata*

Not “might makes right” but “right makes might”

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Our theme today fits into the War and Reconciliation series with an eye to Article 9 and the talk of revision.<sup>1</sup> Since my country of birth is the United States, it is probably not so convincing for me to speak about the Constitution—that is for the people of this generation here to decide what is best for Japan and its place in the world. I would like to offer some reflections on nationalism/patriotism, on how peoples often look at outsiders in their midst, and especially on the ability to be able to rise above popular feelings and emotions and see something essential. Toshio Mori in his short novel, *The Brothers Murata*, acknowledges the calls to patriotism but appeals to a higher ideal.

Before discussing this short novel that takes place in an American concentration camp, it is good to see how and why Mori and his characters got into that concentration camp in the first place. (These ten sites set up in the United States were called “relocation camps,” but since they were places to confine citizens whose loyalty is under suspicion, they fit the definition of concentration camps. This is also the phrase used at the Washington, D.C. National Museum of American History’s exhibit “A More Perfect Union: Japanese Americans and the U.S. Constitution.”)

The story starts with the finding of gold in California in 1848. This discovery

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented at Nanzan University on 28 January 2006. Introductory material and a personal story have been omitted from this printed version. The material from William Hohri and Minoru Kiyota has been added.

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encouraged a number of Chinese to come to America as prospectors. Later, the Chinese helped complete the transcontinental railroad. But once the mining and railroad jobs ended, they worked on farms and gathered in the cities for laundry and restaurant businesses. Both their complaints about working conditions and their competition in a tight labor market made them the enemy of bosses and local workers alike. In 1882 the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed. However Californians needed help for their farms, so they turned to the Japanese who, by 1885, were emigrating to work in the sugar cane fields in Hawaii. But when these resourceful Japanese immigrants began starting their own farms, the Californians reacted with a series of anti-Japanese laws. In addition, the Hearst papers and some government officials spoke of the threat to the democratic way of life in the United States—“the yellow peril,” it was called. Laws were passed stating that the Japanese could not own land, could not rent land for a long period of time, and could not be eligible for naturalization as citizens (however their children born in America were citizens “by birth”). Furthermore, the Japanese were subject to individual forms of discrimination such as being refused service, not hired by companies, or teased and harassed.<sup>2</sup>

In this volatile situation the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred; the “sneak attack” it was usually called. Newspapers, politicians, farming groups, and others demanded that the Japanese be removed from the West Coast lest spies give the Japanese Navy information about harbors and military airports and installations. Reportedly Japanese farms usually were near places of military importance so that the arrangement of the crops could signal to Japanese pilots these military targets. Japanese with fishing boats were considered spies because they had radios and oil drums on their boats and were in

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<sup>2</sup> For the information in this section see Avakian 109-15 and Spickard 57-63.

a position to contact and give support to enemy ships. Some of the shrill criticism seemed true as there were Japanese fields in the not very suitable land around airports, factories, and bases. This was the only land the Japanese could get. And the oil drums on the fishing boats were used to hold bait. The radios were to help keep contact with other fishing boats and land, in case of necessity.<sup>3</sup>

In *Farewell to Manzanar* Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston quotes her father replying to army accusations that he was engaged in spying because he had two oil drums on his boat: ““Bait. Fish guts. Ground-up fish heads. You dump it overboard and it draws the mackerel, and you pull in your nets, and they are full of fresh fish. Who took this photograph anyway? I haven’t gone after mackerel in over a year”” (44). This episode shows that the government had Japanese/American fishermen under surveillance before the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Though there was not one single case of spying brought against the Japanese and Japanese Americans on the West Coast, still the voices demanding removal won out. On February 19, 1942 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed the Executive Order 9906 authorizing the removal of enemy aliens from areas designated as military zones. Actually the FBI had already begun its arrests of suspected spies immediately after Pearl Harbor had been attacked. For years they had made a list of suspect peoples of the Axis powers, i.e. Germany, Italy, and Japan. Several thousands of these nationalities were arrested and put in various military-run prisons. Roosevelt’s order was an extra precaution. In this case, however, because of the large numbers (like the Japanese in Hawaii), all those of German and Italian descent were not rounded up and put into the

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Spickard 96-97 for a list of newspaper headlines.

camps like those of Japanese ancestry.<sup>4</sup>

During World War I there was a similar outcry against things German. City street names were changed; hamburgers were renamed Salisbury steak; German bands no longer played in public parks on Sunday afternoons; and people known to be German were harassed and beaten. This was part of the anti-foreign sentiment building up in America and culminating in the notorious National Origins Immigration Act of 1924 that shut out immigration from Japan.

Hysterical fabricated stories against despised groups did not originate with the West Coast papers. In the nineteenth century there were anti-Catholic novels, the most famous perhaps being *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*. Another forgery, the hate-work full of falsehoods, is *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a supposed handbook of Jewish intrigue and world conquest. Both works continued their lives in the twentieth and even twenty-first century. The anti-Japanese articles and books fit into this hateful tradition. The danger of nationalism or so-called patriotism is that it can often turn into a fear and mistrust of minority groups and foreigners.

Those of Japanese ancestry living beyond the two-hundred mile military zone were not subject to removal. They could go on with their lives in the Midwest and on the East Coast. The majority, however, of the Issei and Nisei, lived on the West Coast. Consequently about 110,000 of the 120,000 people of Japanese descent were made to leave their jobs and homes and move first to temporary living quarters and then to one of ten permanent "relocation camps." Despite the injustice of being moved without having done any wrong, the Issei and Nisei complied. The Nisei were particularly discouraged because they could see how their parents as "enemy aliens" might be

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<sup>4</sup> Krammer's work is important for showing the larger scope of the government's actions against

regarded as suspicious, but they never imagined that other Americans would consider them, the Nisei, as un-American.

As enemy aliens the Issei lost their positions of authority when the community moved to the camps. In their place the Nisei found themselves having to deal with the authorities and represent their community. For Nisei overall, the Japanese American Citizens League became the major spokesman. The JACL advised compliance with the evacuation (Spickard 95-96 and 101). Moving away from an area that had a history of anti-Japanese sentiment and actions seemed to be best for their protection. Also, it was an act of obedience to the government.

But the JACL wanted the Nisei to show even more positive signs of their patriotism. “To shed blood for one’s country” had been a phrase often used to portray patriotism. (This same mentality exists even in contemporary times: Japan was criticized for its help in the Gulf War because it gave only money and did not shed blood.) After the attack on Pearl Harbor the Nisei in uniform were deprived of their guns and demoted to 4-C, the category for enemy aliens (Chan 125). Bill Masaoka, National Secretary of the JACL, wanted the draft restored to the Nisei so that they could prove their loyalty to America with their blood. In November 1942 Masaoka gave his baptism by blood speech in which he called for the reinstatement of the draft so the Japanese Americans could have a chance to fight and prove their loyalty. Addressing the JACL Special Emergency National Conference in Salt Lake City, 17–24 November 1942, Masaoka said: “Somewhere, on the field of battle, in a baptism of blood, we and our comrades must prove to all who question that we are ready and willing to die for the one country we know and pledge allegiance to” (Quoted in Muller 42–3).

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enemy aliens before and during World War II. See pages 83 and 171.

The U.S. government was favorable to the idea but with the condition that the Japanese Americans serve in a segregated unit. The government reasoned that if the Nisei were integrated into the regular army units they would be mistaken for enemy soldiers. In January 1943 the government sent out a call for volunteers for a unit to be made up of Japanese Americans from Hawaii and the mainland. This 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team which fought in Europe in 1944 became the most highly decorated unit in the American army. The Nisei soldiers did indeed prove their courage and patriotism. In January 1944 the draft was reinstated for the Nisei. Already the year before, in the case of the volunteers, some objected to Nisei serving a government that had denied them their civil rights without a cause. When the draft was announced, the opposition increased. *The Brothers Murata* reflects this conflict between the call of patriotism and the demands of justice.

Here I think it is proper to insert some words about the call to patriotism. One of the reasons for revising the Japanese Constitution is patriotism. First of all, they say, the Constitution was not written by the Japanese. Secondly, the Constitution needs to encourage patriotism. And most importantly, Japan needs to be a real country, with a real army. Then, so the advocates reason, the Japanese people can find pride in Japan. The international criticism of Japan's financial contributions at the time of the Gulf War showed the country that its pacifist position was not respected. In the words of John Nathan: "Many Japanese were shocked, angry, and deeply humiliated by the condemnation that greeted a decision to uphold pacifism and the constitution that they had approved" (164). Both internal and external pressures are on the Japanese people to revise the constitution in the name of patriotism and their duty as one of the leading

nations of the world.<sup>5</sup>

The connection with the Japanese Americans is that, once again, an appeal to patriotism is being made to promote military participation. In his day, in the midst of the war, in the midst of the controversy even, Toshio Mori had the courage for peace. In *The Brothers Murata*, despite his own family's pride in the military service of his younger brother, Toshio Mori proposed a refusal to engage in military combat or even to cooperate in war through non-military service. This refusal not only went directly against the JACL recommendation, but also it denounced sympathy for the Japanese war efforts. In sum, according to Mori, war is not a viable option for human survival and world peace.

Strangely, in this story of belligerency and conscientious objection, Mori produces his most violent story. In other stories there appear quarrels, protests, breaking off relations, but no physical violence among the main characters.<sup>6</sup> In this story, there are beatings and a final murder. Emotions at that time must have been at a high pitch

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<sup>5</sup> Inazo Nitobe in his famous work, *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* explains why loyalty to the government is such a vital element in Japanese traditional thought: "Since Bushido, like Aristotle and some modern sociologists, conceived the state as antedating the individual,--the latter being born into the former as part and parcel thereof,--he must live and die for it or for the incumbent of its legitimate authority" (92). In Chapter One, "Bushido as an Ethical System" Nitobe notes that Victorian art critic and writer Ruskin respected war for its role in bringing out the best virtues and highest qualities in men. Ruskin writes: "I found, in brief, that all great nations learned their truth of word and strength of thought in war; that they were nourished in war and wasted by peace; taught by war and deceived by peace; in a word, that they were born in war and expired in peace" (27).

See Satoh, Haruko. "Japan Seeks Its Constitutional Soul." *Far Eastern Economic Review* 168.7 (2005): 30-34. *Proquest*. 5 Nov. 2005 <<http://proquest.umi.com>>; "85% of Lawmakers Support Revising the Constitution." *Japan Times* 5 Sept. 2004. 26 Dec. 2005 <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/makeprfy.p15?nn20040905a1.htm>>; and Arita, Eriko. "Panel Advocates Teaching Patriotism." *Japan Times* 21 March 2003. 26 Dec. 2005 <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/makeprfy.p15?nn20030321b7.htm>>

<sup>6</sup> In *Woman from Hiroshima* Yoshio, the second son to volunteer for the Army, is beaten up by the pro-Japan group (87). Neither in *The Brothers Murata* nor in *Woman from Hiroshima* does Mori mention the actual shooting and death of James Hatsuki Wakasa on 11 April 1943. Since the Issei was walking near the fence, the guard thought he was trying to escape and shot him (*Topaz Times* 12 April 1943: 1).

indeed, because Mori the observer usually can manage to have the conflicting differences expressed, and if not reconciled, at least not ending in violence. With World War II and one's patriotism and manliness at stake, Mori witnessed that the tensions under pressure could not be resolved by words. They broke out into spiteful criticism, destruction of property, and personal violence.

*The Brothers Murata* focuses on the family tensions brought about by the Nisei who seem to be basically for joining the military and by the Issei and some Nisei who are against this movement either for civic or legal reasons. (The Issei were not allowed to become American citizens; they had no recourse but to be Japanese citizens. The Nisei felt that their rights as Americans should be restored before they were called to the military.) In this mixture Frank is a conscientious objector. However, Mori's family-focused tensions derive from the basic unsettled feeling in the camps. *Manzanar Rites* and *Beyond Loyalty: The Story of a Kibei* feature the continuing hardships of the Issei and Kibei (American citizens of Japanese descent who spent some years studying in Japan and then returned home to America).

In *Manzanar Rites* William Hohri depicts the uneasiness caused by Japanese American Citizens League members who too zealously promote American patriotism and report on what they perceive as disloyalty, at the cost of practical wisdom (70, 79. Mr. Minoru Yamanaka, a gardener with two sons, had made the mistake of visiting Japan. When Pearl Harbor was bombed, he was arrested because of his contacts with the Japanese consulate concerning the trip (14). After seven months imprisonment at Ft. Missoula, Montana, he was released to join his family at the concentration camp at Manzanar, California. As a prisoner of war, he learned of the Geneva convention and his rights (38, 53). However, when he and his friend Soichiro Hayashida openly discussed

the possibility of contacting the Spanish consul in California to complain to Japan about the conditions at Manzanar (worse than at Ft. Missoula), this upset the constantly positive-thinking Nisei informer, George Ushida (24-25, 54-56).

Instead of listening to the grievances, the authorities try to cover up. They arrest Yamanaka and send him to the Sante Fe Department of Justice prison and also arrest his son for obstructing justice. When the people protest, the authorities fake a meeting, defended by a nervous armed guard that kills a teenager. This betrayal and shooting lead to more violence as gangs seek to get revenge on the informers. More stringent controls and sending the protest leaders to the Department of Justice prison camps cuts off any chance of furthering the contact with the Spanish Consul.

More than *The Brothers Murata*, *Manzanar Rites* shows the suspicions and bitter feelings aroused by the conditions at the camps. It also shows that the Issei had much to contribute to the situation, but were kept out of the discussions because they were not American citizens (37). Instead, too much trust was put in the younger second generation.

But, as *Beyond Loyalty: The Story of a Kibei* (written first as a novel in Japanese and then translated and enlarged as an autobiography in English) attests, being second generation and a citizen did not always ensure one's rights either. Minoru Kiyota, later Professor at the University of Wisconsin, was so frustrated by the scornful treatment given him when he asked permission to leave camp for study (80-83), that he refused to answer the loyalty questionnaire positively. He tells how the questionnaire caused the pro-Japan group to be more active and disruptive. "It was an extraordinarily tense atmosphere in which the nisei had to decide what they should do" (99). Because of his negative answers, he was considered disloyal and was sent to the Tule Lake

Segregation Center where under stress he renounced his American citizenship (101, 111). (He had not been allowed to continue his college education; he had been shot at when he tried to get permission to talk to camp officials; he had been sick; and, although he had studied in Japan, he had been beaten by a group of ultra-nationalists at Tule Lake because he spoke English too well and because camp rumors said that he had spoken with the officials, a traitorous act in the eyes of pro-Japan groups.)

In *Manzanar Rites* William Hohri, a Nisei, focuses on the experiences of the Issei. In *Beyond Loyalty: The Story of a Kibei* Minoru Kiyota tells his story of being at Topaz from September 1942 to September 1943 and his angry reactions to the treatment he received. Both of these books show that the deep feelings Mori expressed in *The Brothers Murata* were a part of life at the camps in those days.

Toshio Mori was born in Oakland, California in 1910. His two older brothers were still in Japan where their father had left them when he emigrated first to Hawaii, then to California. After their father got settled, he called for his wife. It was not until another son was born and he decided to raise flowers for both wholesale and retail that he had his two older sons come to America. So among the four full-blood brothers were two Japanese citizens and two American citizens. Kazuo, the youngest, joined the army in 1941. Toshio helped his father cultivate the flowers and was responsible for their delivery to wholesale outlets and his two older brothers' retail shops in Oakland. At night Toshio wrote stories for four hours and eventually had some published that attracted the attention of William Saroyan, a popular Armenian-American novelist. Although, with Saroyan's help, a book contract for a collection of short stories was signed in July 1941, the book was not published until 1949 because of the war and later the backlog of publications. In the late 1970s another collection of stories and the novel,

*Woman from Hiroshima* were published. *The Brothers Murata* did not appear in print until 2000. Mori died in 1980. He never visited Japan. His stories frequently contain a narrator who observes closely, but seldom criticizes.

*The Brothers Murata* takes place at the Topaz, Utah concentration camp near Delta, south of Salt Lake City. The time seems to be after the draft was reinstated in January 1944. The volunteer system is well underway and the government can issue induction papers to those of age. The two main characters are the older brother Frank, a conscientious objector, and the younger brother, Hiro (to be considered a “hero”?), a proud patriotic volunteer for the army, who feels that he is honoring the family name and his late father’s words by doing so. Other chief characters are the brothers’ mother who defends her son’s volunteering, a pro-Japan Issei who is given the nickname “General” because of his war pride,<sup>7</sup> Jean, Hiro’s fiancée, whose brother, Jack, is in the army and whose parents are moving to the Tule Lake concentration camp eventually to return to Japan, and various friends of Hiro and Frank.

The story opens playfully with Hiro and several of his friends laughing, teasing, and congratulating each other for the time they spent at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City and for having passed their physical examination. Having volunteered to serve in the special segregated unit, they will need to wait only a few weeks to receive the papers telling them to report for training before being sent overseas to fight in Europe. The only jarring moment comes when Hiro learns that his brother Frank is among those who are against volunteering and the draft.

The lines of dissention appear openly at a meeting to recruit volunteers. Those who have already volunteered explain why they did so. Then John Tabe, the leader of

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<sup>7</sup> The “General” also appears in *Woman from Hiroshima* (85-90).

the opposition, disrupts the meeting. He protests, asking the others to recall the injustice of the evacuation. Hiro thinks to himself that these people are “disloyalists,” that they are not so much concerned for civil rights as they are for their own safety (145). He agonizes over Frank’s presence with the opposition. Didn’t he remember their father’s dying words: “‘Stay in America. Be a good American—always. Live, grow, and die American’” (145).

After this meeting the lives of Hiro and Frank diverge. When Hiro is invited to join the opposition and refuses, he is marked as a target. He is beaten once after his refusal and another time, more seriously, as tensions grow. Those in favor of volunteering can no longer walk alone at night; they go in pairs for protection. Hiro overhears Issei men criticizing his mother for not properly controlling the son who is joining the army. (This seems to indicate that many Issei were not in favor of Nisei volunteering to fight in the army.) His mother also learns of people talking about her son and one day confronts the people in her block at mealtime. She tells them that her heart sank when Hiro told her his decision because she had raised him for her old age. She and friends had tried to dissuade him but he is convinced of what he has to do. She says that just as the Issei have fond childhood memories of Japan, so Hiro knows only America. She ends her speech by telling the people to leave her and her son alone:

“If you still can’t agree with us, will you please keep it to yourself? It is not your business if my son wishes to serve his country. It is he who is risking life—not you. And if he believes it is worthwhile, you or anyone else have no right to stop him—not even his mother.” (168)

Toshio Mori’s nephew, Jim, remembers how proud his great-aunt was of her son, Kazuo, in the army. Whenever Kazuo visited the camp on leave, she would show

him around. So it not unusual that Mori here seems to sympathize with the volunteers. Even more positively Mori has mother end her speech with the patriotic reasoning of the JACL—the Nisei soldiers will gain the respect of all Americans for the people of Japanese descent living in America. It is a prophecy as the 442<sup>nd</sup> did capture the admiration of the country and lead to better conditions after the war. Mother concludes:

“And mark my words, folks. These boys who serve for us, the people, they will be remembered in the annals of this country. They will be remembered as those who led the crusade for freedom and peace in behalf of their people.” (168)

[In *Woman from Hiroshima* Mori mentions the party given to send off new Nisei soldiers (50). This was a custom the Issei brought with them from Japan. However, this was not a simple continuation of a custom. At a March 1941 meeting of Issei from Colorado, and two neighboring states to the north, Wyoming and Nebraska, the Issei discussed how the community should treat Nisei men drafted into the American military should there be a war between Japan and America. According to Bill Hosokawa, the members of the meeting decided to consider them as going off to military training and left it up to individual communities to decide to what extent they would celebrate the young men (*Colorado's Japanese Americans*, 4).]

But the family was not left alone. After Hiro had been beaten up a second time, more seriously, their place in the barracks was attacked. Rocks, dung, and other debris were hurled through broken windows. This attack and Jean's demand that Hiro do something to make Frank leave the opposition prompts Hiro to action. Jean felt that her brother was in the army and she was sacrificing her parents for Hiro. If Hiro did not make comparable efforts for American democracy, she would break off their

relationship.

In several meetings between Frank and Hiro before Jean's threat, Hiro becomes convinced of Frank's steadfast refusal to respond to the draft. In their first meeting at home, Frank explains that he is indeed following their father's ideals as a "man of peace." "It was his dream that someday there will be harmony among the people of the world. And I am working for that harmony" (156). Notice that here Frank does not say he is "fighting" for that harmony. And for Frank this harmony among people also means civil rights for all people in America, starting with those of Japanese ancestry and their present situation, so he does not want to wait until after the war for "redress" (157).

[It is significant that Mori uses this term "redress" in 1944. It would not be until the 1970s that the redress moment gained momentum. His use of the word here shows that the Nisei were indeed aware of the injustices but chose to put them aside for the moment to attack a greater threat to their way of life in America. Frank says: "Uncle Sam usually forgets problems that were magnified during wartime, and when the war is over it is too late. Then he has to take care of the more immediate worries. You'd be buried—you'd be forgotten and deserve no attention" (157).]

Frank raises a challenge to Hiro who claims to be fighting for democracy and freedom. "If we're fighting for freedom so freemen can live as equals, then why are we here in the first place? Why must we citizens of this leading democratic nation be ordered behind the barbed-wire fence when we have committed no crime?" (156). Similar objections led to others refusing to serve as long as their families were in the camps. At Heart Mountain concentration camp a group of Nisei made a formal declaration of their conditioned refusal/acceptance; that is, they would go to the army after they and their families had their civil rights restored to them (Spickard 122-44). At

this point Frank proposes that each allow the other to go his own way. Hiro doesn't accept. Later Frank moves out of their house because he does not want to quarrel with Hiro.

A planning committee is conducted by Hiro's friends who feel that they will have to counter John Tabe's group's violence with violence. George Sato resigns as chairman of the volunteers because he does not agree with the new policy. Hiro is appointed to stop Frank. Their next meeting takes place after Frank has received his letter from the government telling him to report for a physical examination and eventual draft into the army. Hiro is surprised at Frank's continued refusal: "You have no case against the draft" (187). Frank has written a letter of protest. He explains to Hiro and his friend, Tad: "I want man to live peacefully with one another, and whenever a problem should arise, it should be solved by civil methods. . . . If individuals can comply to the national laws, why cannot nations comply with universal laws?" (188).

When Tad suggests that the present war is a means toward achieving the goals of harmony and peace, Frank disagrees. He refers to the First World War, the war that in the words of President Woodrow Wilson was supposed to make the world safe for democracy. It failed to achieve its goals as the present war attests. (Also the Issei service in that war did not win them citizenship or preferential treatment at the time of World War II. They were treated as enemy aliens just like the rest of the Issei.). For Frank war is not the solution. The only solution is for everyone to refuse to fight. "If every man in the world would realize this senseless butchery of fellow beings and refuse to bear arms or to perform noncombat duties, then this war would die quickly in a day or two" (189). Though this stand for peace may seem unrealistic, Mori dared to propose this through Frank.

[That Frank represents Mori's deeper feelings can be seen by the ending. Throughout the story, considering Mori's mother's regard for Kazuo's military service, Mori gives both sides leeway for their views. If anything, Frank seems to be a bit on the negative side because he aligns himself with John Tabe who advocates violence. But in the end Frank is true to his non-violent approach and Hiro stands condemned by his actions.]

In his explanation Frank goes beyond what most conscientious objectors would refuse—Frank is not only against bearing arms, he is even against noncombat service that aids the military efforts. In this, his approach is pure and simple like that of Henry David Thoreau who refused to pay his poll tax because he said the money would support the war against Mexico and a government that recognizes slavery. Thoreau maintained: “It is not a man's duty, as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any, even the most enormous, wrong; he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support” (“Civil Disobedience” 487).

Since Frank goes with the opposition as the people closest to his views, others naturally think he must be pro-Japan. When Tad and Hiro visit Frank at a meeting place of the opposition so Hiro can read Frank's draft refusal letter more carefully, they meet “General” Mita who is fond of the “Asia for Asiatics” theme and assures Hiro and Tad that Japan will be victorious. He urges them to choose Japan as Frank did: ““It's a lost cause, boys. Japan is your country. She claims you but not America. She does not want you. Frank, here, is wise. He chooses Japan”” (191). Frank quickly states the opposite: ““You're mistaken, General. My country is America but I am not fighting for any

nation. . . . I fight for man and his rights” (191). Like Thoreau who would pay a highway tax because it helped people with their travel but would not pay a poll tax because it supported a government with unjust policies, Frank is concerned for people and not for the State. In other words, his patriotism is directed not to a government but to a people and the place where they live: “My country is America but I am not fighting for any nation” (191). Frank is going against the spirit of Bushido that directs loyalty to the government (Nitobe 92).

When Frank gets his induction paper that he is supposed to report for military training and service, Frank visits Hiro to tell him that he will refuse. This will most likely end in his arrest and imprisonment. When Hiro realizes Frank will not change, he invites him for a weekend in Salt Lake City.

The last chapter shows Frank and Hiro in a tall building overlooking the city. Hiro calls Frank’s attention to a beautiful girl to bring him closer to the window and then pushes him out to his death. Thus Frank’s life in quest of peace and harmony ends in violence. Since this violent ending is so uncharacteristic of Mori, I can only explain it as a rejection of Hiro’s kind of patriotism and support for Frank’s. Frank had courage for peace and was willing to abide by his ideas even if they seemed unrealistic, unpatriotic. Frank was a person who knew that people had rights and that one’s land was worthy of respect and trust but that patriotism did not extend to militaristic acts of government that killed other peoples and destroyed other lands.

Mori wrote this short novel in 1944 when the outcome of the war was not yet decided, when war fever was at its peak, when the 442<sup>nd</sup> unit was being sent out in early summer to fight in combat, in a word when it would seem unpatriotic to suggest that a refusal to fight was more patriotically American than a willingness to fight. Well might

he say with the Psalmist: “Too long have I lived among people who hate peace—who when I propose peace are all for war” (Psalm 120:6-7). Thousands of years ago a time of peace was prophesied when swords would be turned into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:4), but that and Mori’s dream may not happen very soon. Like Tad says when he hears Frank’s suggestion that wars would stop when people refuse to fight: “We will have war until we reach the zenith of our process” (189). That may be, but can we not hope? Could it not be that the present Article 9 is reaching for this zenith, this high point in human harmony?

In the words of the traditional song “Down by the Riverside,” “ain’t goin’ to study war no more, no more” several generations have been brought up under this peace constitution. Can patriotism only be sculptured as a man with a gun, like the Minuteman at Concord, Massachusetts, or can it not also be presented as a person with a dove or a string of origami cranes? Can one be proud of one’s country only if it is strong with tanks, ships, and bombers? Cannot one be even more proud of a country that stands out dignified among others for its leading role in peace and seeking reasonable, humane solutions to problems? “Might makes right” is the way to war. “Right makes might” is the way to human solidarity and peace.

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