The Architecture of Confinement

In this global and comparative study of Pacific War incarceration environments, we explore the arc of the Pacific Basin as an archipelagic network of militarized penal sites. Grounded in spatial, physical and material analyses focused on experiences of civilian internees, minority citizens and enemy prisoners of war, the book offers an architectural and urban understanding of the unfolding history and aftermath of World War II in the Pacific. Examples are drawn from Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Japan and North America. The Architecture of Confinement highlights the contrasting physical facilities, urban formations and material character of various camps and the ways in which these uncover different interpretations of wartime sovereignty. The exclusion and material deprivation of selective populations within these camp environments extend the practices by which land, labor and capital are expropriated in settler-colonial societies – practices critical to identity formation and endemic to their legacies of liberal democracy.

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The Architecture of Confinement

Incarceration Camps of the Pacific War

Anoma Pieris
University of Melbourne

Lynne Horiuchi
Independent Scholar
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Preface

The intellectual collaboration underlying this book began in conversations at the University of California, Berkeley, during the late 1990s when we were part of a cohort of passionate students. These were followed by several journeys between Australia and the USA over a five-year period when we developed this topic. Anoma’s conceptual commitment to post-colonial border-thinking, with expertise in Singapore’s penal history and newer interest in Australian migrant stories, coalesced with Lynne’s commitment to bringing an understanding of Japanese American incarceration within the purview of “built environment” disciplines. Lynne’s firsthand knowledge of the Japanese American community, and their grievances and triumphs, provided the opening for an ambitious comparative study that might explore race and citizenship in settler societies by focusing on wartime incarceration. Our interests cross over in Asian, Southeast Asian, Australian and Asian American studies from divergent geographies, rooted in shared theoretical frameworks. We are influenced, among others, by scholars like Gloria Anzaldúa, Gayatri Chakroverty Spivak, Kimberlé Crenshaw and Lisa Lowe, who have laid bare the structural racism encoded within Western liberalism.

This book was inspired by the drawing “Ideal City,” based on the footprint of the Cowra prisoner-of-war (POW) camp, exhibited by artist/architect Alex Selenitsch, at Melbourne’s Place Gallery in 2011. The image has been reproduced on the book’s cover. Alex, who as a two-year-old passed through postwar immigrant camps hastily converted from an earlier generation of military buildings at Cowra and Bonegilla, first compared the camp’s distinctive geometry to Vincenzo Scamozzi’s Ideal City, observing that the city, a twelve-sided polygon with a twelve-pointed star through its peripheral ramparts, “is a fusion of military control, rational organization and faith and hope for the future – [and that] these are founding qualities of OZ [Australia] since the first fleet.” The first fleet refers to eleven ships, including six convict transports and two naval vessels that arrived from England in 1787 to establish the penal colony at Botany Bay, the first European settlement in Australia. Noted
Alex, they “were repeated for the Fleets of Displaced Persons who arrived here just after WW2 [World War II]”; 170,000 refugees were sent to Australia by the International Refugee Organization after World War II to be placed in repurposed military camps, Alex’s family among them. Utopian sentiments and dystopian social processes characterizing the spaces of both migrant streams were intensified at sites like Cowra; the town’s military training facility, located near the POW camp, was converted for migrant accommodation after the war. Innovative architectures adapted for convicts, prisoners of war, internees, immigrants and refugees accumulated as a carceral taxonomy; an archipelagic continuum across time. Beginning with these Australian sites, this book explores the dispersion of this carceral taxonomy along the arc of the Pacific Basin, as the underlying footprint for an architectural history of the wartime camps.

This book also draws from Alex’s creative use of discarded scrap material salvaged from vacated design studios at the end of each academic year. “Ideal City” is a composition of twelve separate sheets. Its various sources and dialogic evolution fittingly convey the residual and relational materialities of immigrant emplacement, a feature of the subaltern practices described in this book. The resourcefulness of immigrants in building affective resilience is mirrored in the strategies by which wartime internees and prisoners of war transformed their austere and forbidding surroundings. These underlying themes of genealogy and subalternity recur throughout this book.

Much of the evidence gathered in this book has been fragmentary because of the erasure of many key sites and loss of wartime records. We have narrated these stories as best we can from the available evidence, mindful of the instability of sources and materials and changes to these over time.

Anoma Pieris
Lynne Horiuchi
Acknowledgments

Anoma Pieris

The larger research project, Temporal Cities: Provisional Citizenship – Architectures of Internment (2015–18) FT140100190, culminating in producing this volume, was funded by an Australian Research Council (ARC) Future Fellowship. A University of Melbourne Establishment Grant enabled collaboration with my partner investigator Lynne Horiuchi and funded Alex Selenitsch’s Liminal House exhibition, which contributed intellectually to this project’s framing. The grant enabled fieldwork in all of the cited sites and related international archives. I am grateful to the university and ARC for granting the time and funds for conducting this research.

Acknowledgments


Key individuals who generously gave of their time and attention include, in Australia, Lurline and Arthur Knee (Tatura Irrigation and Wartime Camps Museum), Kay Ball and Warrick Finlay (Murchison Historical Society), Rosemary Gower and Max Scholz (Barmera), Lawrance Ryan and Graham Apthorpe (Cowra), Don Kibbler and Tony Mooney (Cowra Japanese Garden), Ariele Hoffman (Jewish Museum, Melbourne), Eva de Jong-Duldig and Melinda Mockridge (Duldig Studio, Melbourne), David Houston (Hay Internment and Prisoner of War Camps Interpretive Centre) and Steven Bullard (Australian War Memorial); in New Zealand, Mark Pacey; in England, David Tett; in Singapore, Jeya Ayadurai, Francis Li, Jon Cooper and Lee Yng; in Japan, Yoshikazu Kondo, Yoko Ishizuka and members of the Japan Australia Society-Jōetsu; in the USA, Bruce Embrey, Gann Matsuda and the Manzanar Committee, Jeff Burton, Rosemary Masters, Alisa Lynch, Bernadette Lovato, National Park Service rangers at the Manzanar National Historic Site and Alan Miyatake; in Canada, Paul Gibbons and members of the Kyowakai Society, Cole Harris and Amanda Murphy at New Denver. A number of individuals who were interviewed for the project, too numerous to be acknowledged here, are mentioned at relevant places in the book.

I am grateful to researchers and archivists at various institutions for assisting me with queries. They include staff at the Tatura Irrigation and Wartime Camps Museum, Australian War Memorial, the National Archives of Australia (Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne), the National Library of Australia, State Library of South Australia, State Library of Western Australia, Harvey Visitor Center, Cowra Breakout Association, Berri Library, State Library of Victoria, Museums Victoria, the Jewish Museum of Australia, Duldig Studio; National Archives of Singapore, National Library Singapore, Changi Museum; Imperial War Museum, London, British Museum, National Archives UK, Museum of Military Medicine, The Royal Philatelic Society; UC Berkeley’s Environmental Design Archives, Bancroft Library, UCLA Charles D. Young Library, National Archives and Records Administration archives in Washington, DC, Eastern California Museum, Independence; National Parks Service, Manzanar National Historic Site, Karyl Matsumoto; Toronto’s Japanese Canadian Cultural Center, Burnaby’s Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Center, New Denver’s Nikkei Internment Memorial Center; and the Jōetsu City Council. I apologize for any omissions from this list.
Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Greig Crysler at UC Berkeley’s College of Environmental Design for hosting me as a visiting scholar in 2015, and the University of Melbourne for hosting my partner investigator Lynne Horiuchi on her visits to Australia.

A number of people assisted me in preparing maps, drawings and tables, and formatting data for the manuscript at various stages. Foremost among them is Zachariah Dahdoule, who painstakingly reconstructed the camp plans from blurry aerial photographs and fragmentary drawings. Miki Hawkinson translated the Japanese documents mentioned in Chapters 10 and 11. Lian Zhou translated an oral history from Chinese to English. Catherine Woo, Dhara Patel and Yoke Lin Wong drew and annotated a number of maps, and Yoke Lin assisted me in formatting images and tables. Wendy Roberts and Yvette Putra helped prepare the manuscript for review and submission. I am particularly grateful to May Yee for copyediting the manuscript and Geraldine Suter for preparing the index. Thanks also to the CUP editors, reviewers, publishing team and consultants for their support.

A few people deserve very special thanks: most importantly, my dear friend and collaborator Lynne Horiuchi, who agreed to explore this difficult and ambitious topic with me, and without whom its global scope could not have been achieved. Alex Selenitsch was an inspiration throughout. My friend Lai Chee Kien in Singapore continually alerted me to relevant material. My sister Aneela and friends Isabelle Vergnaud and Sandarshi Gunewardena hosted me during research. My life partners Athanasios and Bijou enthusiastically accompanied me on fieldtrips, attended commemorative ceremonies and offered encouragement throughout this project. I wish to specially thank my dear friends and neighbors Vivien and Gwen Stevenson, whose many tales of wartime service recounted over years of Sunday afternoon tea provided the broader context for understanding the meaning of the war for Australia.

Lynne Horiuchi

This project builds on my several decades of research on the Japanese American incarceration histories, activism and involvement with the Manzanar Pilgrimage and lengthy conversations with Sue Embrey. I am deeply indebted to Greg Robinson and Roger Daniels who have over the years provided me with the intellectual foundation for my work on this topic.

Anoma came to Berkeley as a visiting scholar in late 2015, contributing to a course on Race, Space and Ethics at the College of Environmental Design run by myself and Greig Crysler. We traveled to Washington, DC, together and later in April 2016 to Los Angeles and the Manzanar...
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Pilgrimage. My thanks to Bruce Embrey, Gann Matsuda and the Manzanar Committee, JK Yamamoto of Rafu Shimpo and the National Park Service staff and rangers, including Jeff Burton, Rosemary Masters, Alisa Lynch and Bernadette Lovato, for enabling our research through interviews, a focus group and access to archival photographs and images. Thanks also to the staff at the NARA, Washington, DC, Bancroft Library and Environmental Design Archives at UC Berkeley, the Eastern California Museum, Inyo County and the Charles E. Young Library at UC Los Angeles. Thanks to Karyl Matsumoto and Alan Miyatake for providing images and permissions for individual photographs used in Chapters 8 and 9.

I visited Australia in late 2016 and was hosted by the University of Melbourne, traveling to Cowra, Canberra and several other significant sites related to this project, including Melbourne’s Duldig Studio, the Jewish Museum of Australia and the annual luncheon of the Dunera Association. Anoma and I have since visited back and forth between Australia and California in developing this topic. Our thanks to the editors of *Asian Diasporic Visual Cultures of the Americas* (ADVA), Susette Min and Shipu Wang for giving us the opportunity to test our collaborative work in their journal in 2017.

I would like to thank the University of Melbourne for hosting me and involving me in a workshop at the faculty, and Lawrance Ryan, Graham Apthorpe and several members of the Cowra Shire Council for introducing me to the project sites and their histories and arranging meetings with Don Kibbler, Tony Mooney and the *Cowra Guardian*.

Among the many people who have provided intellectual assistance, encouragement and companionship along the way, I would especially like to thank Sean McPherson, Dell Upton, Greg Levine, Sandra Luft and the brilliant colleagues I’ve met at the University of California at Berkeley. In the Japanese American community, I am indebted to Chizuko Omori, Emiko Omori, Patricia Shimomura, Hershey Miyamura and Michiko Yoshida for their generous help in this project.

To Anoma, I owe the honor of participating in this endeavor that is largely hers, guided by the exceptional breadth of her work and generosity that taught me so much about looking west from America across Asia and looking north from Australia to Southeast Asia, New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago. Members of the Jose Roberto Gonzalez family also hosted me in Canberra; Ben and Claudia White drove me to Cowra. My life partners, Manuel Reyna and Marley, have been constant, faithful and patient companions in completing this volume.
Abbreviations

ACT     Australia Capital Territory
AIF     Australian Imperial Force
AMF     Australian Military Force
ANZ     Archives New Zealand
AWM     Australian War Memorial
BANC    Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley
BC      British Columbia
BCSC    British Columbia Security Commission
BL      British Library
CAC     Civil Aliens Corps
CCC     Civil Constructional Corps
CED     College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley
CWRIC   Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians
DPWI    Directorate of Prisoners of War and Internees
FBI     Federal Bureau of Investigation
FSA     Farm Security Administration
IJA     Imperial Japanese Army
InPOW   Indian prisoner of war
INS     Immigration and Naturalization Service (USA)
IPOW    Italian prisoner of war
IWM     Imperial War Museum
JACL    Japanese American Citizens League
JAER    Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Records
JCCC    Japanese Canadian Cultural Center
JPOW    Japanese prisoner of war
NAA     National Archives of Australia
NAB     National Archives and Records Administration Building, Washington, DC
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