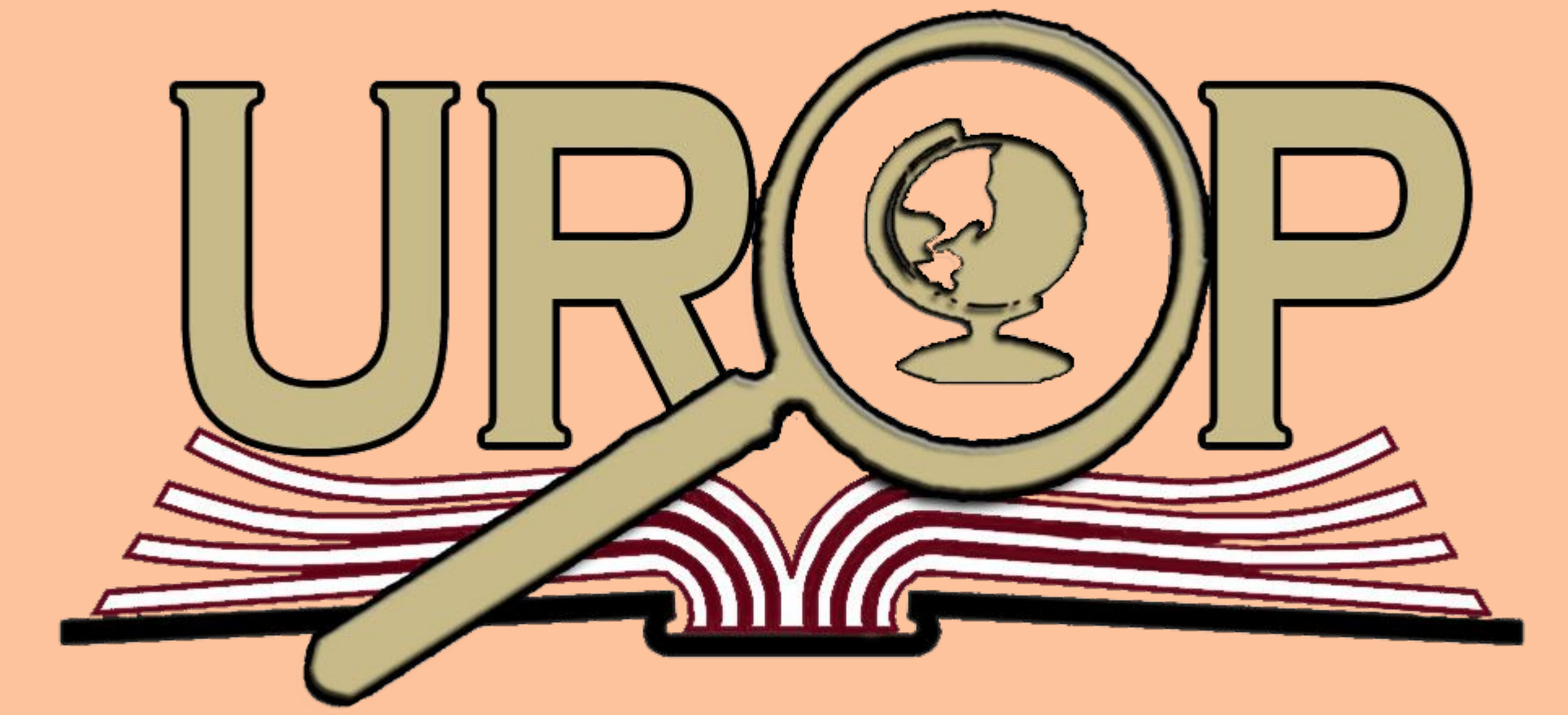




# The Shogun's Grandniece

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## Introduction

The Nagamine family features a long, affluent lineage of Japanese immigrants to the United States, one of whom married into a family related to the bloodlines of Japan's last Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu. This relative, the Shogun's grand-niece, currently lives in a sleepy Oregon town with a small population, low-diversity, and overall homogeneity. Her grandparents, Haruyuki and Yone Nagamine, immigrated to the United States in the late 1910s and established a life in California in the city of Los Angeles, specifically in the Silver Lake area. Now a "hipster" part of the city, Silver Lake initially attracted many young people for its relatively inexpensive cost of living and bustling film scene. Before this, it attracted affluent immigrants; Haruyuki was a fruit distributor while his wife Yone was a successful midwife. They took up residence in a Spanish Colonial Revival style house, common in Los Angeles due to its European and bourgeois look. This architectural style particularly attracted wealthy immigrants who wanted to assimilate into American society. However, during WWII, the Nagamines were separated by the 1941 Pearl Harbor attack, and Yone could not return back to the US with her daughter, while her husband Haruyuki, as a business leader in the Issei (first generation) Japanese community, was arrested, and interned during the war. Their lives, and those of their daughter and granddaughter, represent the ups-and-downs of US-Japan relations in the 20th and 21st century. My research specifically focuses on the demographics of Japanese immigration—before, during, and after WWII—and how these global situations affected the decisions and the image of these immigrants in America.

## Methods

- Researched population statistics and demographics of Klamath Falls, Oregon, Los Angeles, and Silver Lake; all places in which the family once resided.
- Contacted the National Archives and Record System (NARA) to retrieve alien case files of Haruyuki Nagamine.
- Consulted records of internment.
- Visually analyzed popular architecture and photographs from the 1930s-1950s looking for style trends in relation to historical context.
- Utilized FSU's library catalog to research peer reviewed journals about Japanese immigrants in America and life in Japan before, during, and after WWII.



Caretaker Mary Ogawa, making preparations to close the Nagamine home prior to evacuation of residents of Japanese ancestry from this area. Evacuees of Japanese descent will spend the duration in War Relocation Authority centers. (1942)

## Results

- Before WWII, first generation Japanese immigrants, *Issei*, tended to stay in more tight-knit communities compared to second generation immigrants, *Nissei*.
- Public schools in America were a center of assimilation efforts from the Wilson administration, with the goal of romanticizing Americanization to immigrants.
- Many wealthy Japanese immigrants in the Pacific Coast resided in Spanish Colonial Revival style housing.
  - This style of housing looked bourgeois and established a style of "Europeanness" which appealed to many immigrants looking to assimilate to American society.
- During WWII, Alien Hearing Boards were held to interview Japanese immigrants about their connections to Japan and possible support for the Japanese government.
  - Most were deemed a risk and were not allowed to leave internment.
- Many Japanese immigrants were sent to Chicago after internment to either go to college, send their children to college, or receive employment.
  - Chicago Japanese immigrants were less discriminated against than those who settled in the Pacific Coast.
- When looking at marital statistics in contemporary times, women in the 'other' category, Asian, Native American, Alaska native, and multiracial women, had the highest marriage to divorce ratio. For every three women married there was one woman who divorced.

**Through this research it is clear that Japanese immigrants have experienced a lot of hardship and discrimination in the United States, but nonetheless, their contribution to America has been invaluable in shaping this country to what it is today.**



Kooskia Internment Camp anniversary picnic. (25 May 1944)

## Future Plans

This research is ongoing as Professor Culver is currently writing a book. She hopes that it paints a larger picture of the complex, and often trans-Pacific, lives of Asian-Americans, Japanese in particular, over the long 20th century.



The Nagamine residence prior to evacuation of people of Japanese ancestry from this area. (1942)

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