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TITLE: *Uprooting Community: Japanese Mexicans, World War II, and the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*

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Selfa A. Chew in *Uprooting Community: Japanese Mexicans, World War II, and the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*, recovers the complex and silenced history of the Japanese Mexican community. Her book composed of eight chapters, details the lives of Japanese-Mexicans, through tumultuous times: before and during WWII. Her comprehensive overview of the political and legal situation of Japanese-Americans (Japanese on both sides of the border) highlights the uneven power dynamics and population control enacted by the United States and Mexican governments. The originality of this work lies in the way Chew narrates the complex life experiences of Japanese-Mexicans and their histories, in addition to the extensive archival work that uncovered letters, pictures, periodicals and personal narratives the author used to support her claims, all with a touch of personal storytelling.

Chew emphasizes the differentiated treatment of Japanese and Japanese-American men and women in Mexico and the effects of de-nationalization, a term borrowed from Nicholas De Genova and Giorgio Agamben. The process of de-nationalization meant that Japanese and Japanese-American men and women legally lacked the same rights as Mexican citizens and were often ostracized due to their appearance, language ability, profession, class and gender, as well as orientalized with the rest of the different Asian immigrants in the country. Once the war broke,

Japanese immigrants and their descendants were further marginalized and even though unlike the United States, in Mexico, Japanese men often married Mexican partners, these new social arrangements did not guarantee their dislocation.

Central to her argument is the increased power of the United States in Latin America along with a fervent imagined nationalist agenda of a homogenous post-revolutionary Mexico. Chew describes the U.S. demand to dislocate or uproot Japanese and Japanese-American men from the borderlands and the complicity at which the Mexican government aided in this task. The unjust dislocation was part of a broader impact on Latin America's social fabric in general as Franklin D. Roosevelt had met with Latin American diplomats on two occasions in 1941 and 1942 to acquire raw materials as well as to dispossess any "axis nationals" of citizenship from countries in the Americas.

Chew provides compelling evidence to show the methods that Japanese-Mexicans and members of their community enacted to avoid displacement. The strategies included writing letters to government representatives and petitions from community members. Despite pleas from family members, friends and even entire towns to resist relocation, nearly all cases resulted in internment, poverty, sickness and sometimes death. Though a few wealthy Japanese-Mexican elites did

manage to enjoy uninterrupted living conditions due to their ties with powerful Japanese and Mexican nationals. Chew's strength is in showing how Japanese-Mexicans were forced to consider their own connections to their communities and nation as they crafted arguments to avoid relocation.

Chew has done thorough archival work, resuscitating the correspondence and oral histories of families of Japanese-Mexicans and gathering official documentation and periodicals from U.S. and Mexican sources. The double task of recovering the magnitude of the Japanese-Mexican displacement as well as the extent to which members of this community were denied their civil rights is a substantial effort to combat the erasure of the Japanese-Mexican community from Mexican historical memory. Chew clarifies how popular discourses have excluded any mention of collaboration with the U.S. in confining citizens on an ethnic basis. For example, the speeches of Mexican officials show the constant "will to ignore the damage the Mexican government inflicted on the Japanese-Mexican community during World War II" (79), particularly during their dislocation.

The impact of multiple relocations from the U.S.-borderlands to Mexico City to the concentration camps of Villa Aldama and Batán created a fragmented and vulnerable community. Chew's presents a case study of Temixco Concentration Camp told through oral histories and official documentation.

The former hacienda outside of Mexico City housed families of hundreds of Japanese Mexicans from 1942-45, many of whom were displaced from border and coastal towns, and worked to survive and provide their children with education. The last chapter, "A Transnational Family", includes the story of one family who was uprooted from their home in Ciudad Juárez to a concentration camp in Crystal City, Texas. The chapter describes the treatment of the family by INS officials as they determined that their racial background made them ineligible to enter the U.S. legally. The chapter also follows the family through deportation proceedings after leaving the camp.

This book offers a critical approach in documenting a silenced part of history. The details of each chapter provide insight into the manipulation of legal systems in the U.S. and Mexico to target and control a portion of the population along racial lines. The incredibly moving accounts of persons and families along the borderlands of the U.S. and Mexico are a testament of the cruel and racist actions taken by governing officials in both nations. This book is a must read for historians of Mexico, the U.S. and Japan. Scholars and students with an interest in the complexities of racial relations in Mexico and United States, immigration, violence and World War II, as well as those interested in the Asian diaspora in the American continent at large should be attentive to the lessons of this well-written history.