

Acculturation and Ethnic Identity: A Case of Hawaii's Japanese and Okinawan*

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preface

This paper consists of two chapters concerning the acculturation and ethnic identity of Hawaii's Japanese and Okinawans. The first chapter, written by Dr. Calvin Endo, deals with his experiences in Hawaii and Japan. Endo's chapter is composed of two parts. In the first part (I-1), he describes his adolescence; and in the second part (I-2), he provides his impressions of his visit to his mother's ancestral home in Kumamoto, Japan. Endo's essays are autobiographical sketches of his life in which the theme of social change is reflected. The essays give us vivid examples of a *sansei* (third generation) Japanese growing up in Hawaii.

The second chapter (II) is a transcription of a question-and-answer session held at a famous "Japanese church," Makiki Christian Church, in Honolulu, Hawaii on August 31, 2012. The theme of the session was "Culture and Ethnic Relations of Hawaii's Japanese and Okinawans." The participants in the session comprised two groups, one of which had sixteen students who were "questioners," and the other which had middle-aged Japanese and Okinawan men from Hawaii, including Endo, who answered the questions. The students were members of Professor Shiramizu's seminar class "Acculturation and Ethnic Identity" who visited Hawaii to conduct research on Japanese and Okinawan culture there, and attended the session as one of their activities. In preparation for the session, the students had read Endo's essays, so they were ready to ask questions.

Key words: Hawaii's Japanese and Okinawans, Ethnic relations, Japanese language, Japanese religion, Identity development

I-1 Ethnic Identity and Inter-Ethnic Relations Growing Up in Mid-20th Century Hawaii

Calvin Masao ENDO, Ph.D.

The events during the 1940s ushered a period of turmoil among Japanese living in the United States. Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, expanding World War II into the Pacific theater. That action had a major effect on relations between Japanese-Americans and the wider

American society. The American public's anger towards the Japanese nation was also directed to people of Japanese ancestry residing in the United States mainland. The loyalty of Japanese-Americans toward the U.S. government was questioned, resulting in the wholesale incarceration of people of Japanese ancestry in several internment camps for the duration of the war. In most cases, their property and other personal possessions were confiscated, except what little they could carry with them.

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The experiences of Japanese-Americans in Hawaii were different. Martial law was declared, many individual rights were suspended, the daily activities of the public were controlled by the military. However, unlike Japanese in the continental U.S., only a limited segment of Hawaii's Japanese population was incarcerated. Through the efforts of local government and community leaders, military officials agreed that individuals whose loyalty might be questioned were to be sent to internment camps. These included Japanese community leaders, Buddhist priests, language-school teachers, and others with strong ties to Japan.

However, the war and its aftermath also presented conflicts between the first and second generations within some Japanese families as well. The question of loyalty to Japan or the United States divided *issei* parents and their *nisei* children who were native-born American citizens.

I was born in the midst of World War II—in 1943. Since I was an infant, I have no personal recollection of the events of the war and its effects on the daily lives of people under martial law. I am told that I was born in a temporary hospital on the grounds of a Catholic church since the neighboring hospital was taken over by the military. My first memory related to the war was when I encountered two visitors at my grandparents' home sometime in 1946 or 1947: I was told they were my uncle and his friend who had just returned home after serving with the U.S. Army in Europe.

Growing Up on Maui

I was born in Wailuku, Maui, in a primarily blue-collar community known as Happy Valley and lived there for about 10 years. My father was a home appliance repairman who later became a television technician when TV was introduced in Hawaii in the late 1950s. My mother worked at the pineapple cannery, a typical job for women at the time (see photo 1, Endo's preschool days).

I am *sansei*, as both sets of my grandparents immigrated to Hawaii as plantation contract workers. My paternal grandparents came from Fukushima-ken. I know very little about them as they passed away when I was very young. My father was the younger of two sons. My mother's parents immigrated from Kumamoto-ken in 1899. She was the fourth of six children. The eldest son became a small business owner, the second son a doctor. My mother and her older sister were middle daughters and they had limited formal educational training as they were needed to work to help the family financially. The youngest daughter became a schoolteacher and the youngest son was a lawyer. This son was a university student at the outbreak of World War II and volunteered to join the 422nd Infantry Regiment and fought in Europe. This pattern of occupational mobility was relatively common among Japanese immigrants, as many of the *nisei* generation were able to achieve educational and occupational success within one generation.

I don't know why the community I lived in was called Happy Valley. We were all working class families struggling to make a living. Happy Valley was not a "plantation camp," although there were two such camps nearby that housed workers at the Wailuku Sugar Company. Those workers shared the same class and ethnic backgrounds as we did.

During my childhood, we did not understand the concept of ethnic groups. As we grew older, we were told we were Japanese, Filipino or Chinese, but to us these were just labels without any special meaning. As we grew older, we learned differences among playmates and their families by the language spoken at home and physical features as skin color that determined their ethnic ancestry.

We were all renters, several families rented homes from two major landowners: the Ogawa and Matsui families who, aside from owning large residential properties, also owned businesses, such as a gasoline station and small supermarket. There were even a few multi-ethnic families, which was

quite unusual for the time: one with a Filipino father and Japanese mother, while another was a Portuguese father with a Japanese wife. There was one Native Hawaiian family named Kuhaulua that included son, Jesse (later to become a famous *sumotori Takamiyama*.) We kids played together, occasionally fought with each other, and freely enter each other's homes as doors were never locked in those days.

Most business owners were Japanese, many of Okinawan ancestry. Our parents shopped at Takamiya meat market, Takara green grocery store, and Shimabukuro hardware store. We kids favored Kamita store for cone (*inari*) sushi, Okada candy store's freshly made puffed rice and senbei, and the Chinese-Hawaiian owned Frank Kong store that sold a variety of Chinese preserved plum (*see mui*) and dried cuttlefish.

The Social World Widens

At age 4, my mother enrolled me in pre-school, a rare experience for a child from my neighborhood. In those days, very few parents could afford enrolling their children in private pre-school. It must have been a hardship for my parents to pay my tuition fee on their small income. This pre-school was operated by the Episcopal Church and the two teachers and most students were Caucasian. The few Asian students were nicely dressed, well-behaved and used "standard" English, not "pidgin" as I did.

The head teacher was the wife of an executive at the local sugar mill. The Caucasian kids were children of managers, professionals and business owners. Many of the parents of Japanese children were merchants, government workers, and public school teachers. I remember feeling very uncomfortable in that social environment and cried every morning for a week.

At the end of the school year, the teacher suggested that I take the oral examination to enter kindergarten at Kaunoa School, the local "English

standard" school¹.

My mother chose not to as we did not own a car so I would not have transportation to that school located several miles away from Wailuku. I went on to public school while most of the others went on to the English standard school.

The public school students were racially and ethnically diverse. In the 1940s and 1950s Japanese comprised 38 per cent of Hawaii's total population² but it seemed like the percentage was probably higher on the neighbor islands. In elementary school, it seemed more than half the students were Japanese. At each grade level students were divided into four classes based on individual academic ability level. This system had the unintended result of segregating students racially and ethnically. The high ability class comprised mainly Japanese, a few Caucasian, Chinese and Korean students. As we advanced to each grade level, the same students remained together.

Starting in elementary school, most of our time was centered on school activities.

I began to associate with my classmates more than with my old neighborhood friends. The majority of our elementary school teachers were older *nisei* women who played important socialization roles during our formative years. They taught us values as respect for elders, diligence perseverance, humility and compassion.

¹ In the 1920s, English standard schools were part of Hawaii's public schools that were created in response to pressure from newly arrived whites who complained about the quality of English spoken in public schools but could not afford private school which catered to wealthy families. Entrance to these schools was based on English fluency (as determined by an oral examination) but the result was segregation along racial lines. In later years, however, there were more Japanese and other Asians than white children enrolled in English standard schools and served as a means of upward mobility for ethnic minorities, including *Japanese nisei and sansei*. English standard schools ended in 1960.

² Schmitt, Robert C., *Demographic Statistics of Hawaii: 1778-1965*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1968), p. 75.

Since public school did not provide after-school care, many *nisei* parents sent children to Japanese language school operated by Buddhist churches and other organizations that sought to pass on Japanese language and culture to the younger generation. There, we received instructions on the language, culture, morals and rules of proper behaviors of Japanese. Although we did not take the instructions seriously, the years attending Japanese language school were not wasted because in later years, we realized the lessons we learned were not limited to the language, but also on the proper attitudes and behaviors of being Japanese.

My membership in the Buddhist church was another major influence in developing my Japanese identity. My friends were all of Japanese ancestry and were involved in many church-sponsored activities as Boy Scouts and the Young Buddhist Association. The church also sponsored activities for girls so we naturally formed relationships with them as well. As a result, during our formative years through middle and high school, we associated mostly with Japanese. In truth, rather than attraction to Buddhist religion per se, it was the people we met through church activities that kept us involved. We shared similar social class backgrounds, shared adolescent interests, and were subjected to the same parental lectures about being kind to others, respecting elders, and not doing anything to embarrass your family and friends.

During my late teen years, the church finally had an English-speaking minister who was born and raised on Maui, attended the University of Chicago and completed his Buddhist education in Kyoto. He was a person to whom we all gravitated. He was young, educated and understood the minds of adolescent boys. He was a minister but acted more as a social worker and a friend to us. We confided in him with adolescent problems such as morality, sex, and interpersonal relationship issues with our parents, teachers and the opposite sex. Although he was a minister, he did not lecture or sermonize, but treated us as adults. He has remained an inspiration and a role model to me fifty years later. Although

he is long retired, he remains active in the Honolulu community, working with leaders of other religions to emphasize values of compassion, peace, tolerance of differences among peoples and religions, and interdependence of all things on earth.

Another influence in developing my Japanese identity was the accomplishments of Japanese in the history of Hawaii and the United States during the 20th century. From textbooks and other media sources, we learned of the hardships faced by Japanese workers recruited as contract workers in Hawaii's sugar plantations and the social discrimination they faced. We studied about Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and resulting internment of Japanese Americans in concentration camps and life under military control as the result of declaration of martial law throughout Hawaii.

Faced with anti-Japanese sentiments throughout America that resulted from the Pearl Harbor attack and expansion of World War II into the Pacific, young *nisei* decided to prove their loyalty to the U.S. by enlisting in the U.S. military. After initially being denied, they were allowed to join and, in 1942, formed their own 100th Infantry Battalion and, later, the 442nd Infantry Regiment. These *nisei* soldiers proved their loyalty on the battlefield and were recognized as the most decorated unit in World War II.

After the war, these soldiers continued to better their lives by enrolling in college and universities, with many continuing on for graduate and professional degrees. Returning to Hawaii, they entered the professions as law, medicine, banking and education that, until that time, were dominated by Caucasians. Their goal was to provide everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity or social status, equal rights and opportunities. In the 1950s, in an effort to engage minorities in the political process, the *nisei* rallied workers of all minority groups to end Caucasian control of Hawaii's political and economic systems.

The changes brought about by the so-called “Democratic Revolution of 1954” are still evident today. Individuals of minority backgrounds are found in high executive positions in major corporations, all professions, and levels of government. In the years following Hawaii's admission of Hawaii as the 50th U.S. State in 1959, voters have elected in succession: two Caucasians, a Japanese, Native Hawaiian, Filipino and, recently, two Caucasians as state governors. Elected members of the U.S. Congress since statehood have included six Japanese, five Caucasians, two Chinese and a Native Hawaiian. Of these, four are women. Beginning in 2013, three of the four Hawaii Congressional members will be women.

Their influence of Japanese-Americans on the course Hawaiian history in the 20th century is a source of pride among us all. Although the population of Japanese has decreased substantially to about 17 per cent by 2010³, they remain one of the most influential of the ethnic groups in Hawaii. Much of their strength and influence lay, to a great extent, in the strong sense of identity among members of the group. Japanese tend to share traditional values and morals instilled by the *issei* and *nisei*, but also share predominantly middle class values, and are supportive of liberal social policies.

Questioning My Japanese Identity

My earliest memory of meeting Japanese nationals, beside my grandparents, was with cadets on Japan's maritime training ships. On occasion, the *Nippon Maru* would visit Maui for a week. My older female cousins would flock to the harbor to greet and entertain the cadets throughout their stay, taking them on sightseeing tours and inviting them home for dinner.

As a child, I had a vague idea that the cadets were “real” Japanese from Japan, a far-away country. The young men resembled us in physical features and spoke a familiar language that our grandparents and parents spoke. However, their mannerism—gestures, how they carried themselves, and their timidity and unassertive nature—were different from us Japanese. I understood that they were from Japan but they were not the same as us “local” Japanese. We shared Japanese ancestry, practiced similar cultural traditions and religious rituals. But despite our common ancestry, I viewed them as foreigners and felt no strong affinity with them. As an adult, my first visit to Japan was as an university graduate student. With research funding from a private U.S. foundation, a group of us spent a summer doing research in a city located on the coast of the Sea of Japan. Since I was at the doctoral dissertation stage of my studies, I was able to collect data that resulted in completing my dissertation titled: *Career Anchorage Points and Central Life Interests of Japanese Middle Managers*. This experience in Japan was a revelation: to the Japanese I was *gaijin*, a foreigner, not Japanese. Although I looked Japanese physically, my behavioral characteristics were that of a foreigner. This city was a middle-sized city away from the major population centers of eastern Japan and foreigners were few: some English language teachers, Christian missionaries, and tourists.

We were a group of five students of varied ethnic ancestry: two Caucasian, a Korean, and two Japanese. The two Caucasian males spoke much better Japanese than I, were versed in Japanese history and culture, but were obviously foreigners by sight. The Korean male was born in Korea and fluent in reading, writing and speaking Japanese, but recognized as Korean by his name. Beside myself, the other Japanese was a female born in Japan but raised in the U.S., fluent in Japanese, shared Japanese behavioral mannerisms, and spoke English with a “Japanese” accent. She seemed to be accepted as *Nihon-jin* by the populace.

³ State of Hawaii, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, *2011 Data Book: A Statistical Abstract*. (Honolulu: 2012), Table 1.39: Ethnic Stock by County, 2010.

As soon as we arrived, it seemed the entire city was aware of a group of young *gaijin* had taken residence in the city. When walking together publicly, we often heard murmurs of “*gai-jin*” and students insisted on practicing their English conversation with us. I seemed to be singled out for attention, probably because I looked like a *Nihon-jin* in physical features but least Japanese among us foreigners by every other measure of personal behavior. The people were curious about this Japanese-looking person who spoke broken Japanese, in a strange dialect, using archaic words not used in contemporary conversation.

Initially, I found it disconcerting that I was not considered Japanese in my ancestral homeland. Eventually, I accepted my *gai-jin* status and met many interesting people, made lasting friendships and thoroughly enjoyed the Japanese lifestyle. Most importantly, I met and eventually married a woman from this city. There was opposition by her family about marrying a *gaijin* and moving to the United States. My *nisei* parents were concerned as well, not knowing how a *Nihon-jin* daughter-in-law would adapt to life in America. Evidently, in this instance, the differences in ethnic identity between *Nikkei-jin* and *Nihon-jin* emerged.

In the nearly 45 years of marriage and after more than fifteen visits to Japan, I’m still a *gaijin* to our Japanese family and friends. I often wonder how my wife feels after living all these years in Hawaii, still being recognized by locals as *Nihon-jin* merely by her appearance. When she meets someone for the first time, the person responds by saying: “Oh, you’re from Japan. How long have you lived here?” Japanese tourists we meet when shopping at the popular Ala Moana Center will often nod their heads in a sign of familiarity or, occasionally will greet her with “*konnichi-wa.*” Bridging two different cultural *milieu*, she also faces a confusion of identities.

In trying to find an explanation, I believe it lies in the confusion between the concepts of *nationality* and *ethnicity*. On the one hand, Japan

has a relatively homogeneous population, as the large majority of people are of Japanese ethnic ancestry. For most, nationality and ethnicity are synonymous; they are Japanese by nationality and Japanese by ethnicity. The confusion in identity would be among life-long residents of Japan of different ethnic ancestries as Chinese, Koreans and other minorities.

On the other hand, the United States is a nation of immigrants. Save for the Native Americans, the population consists of people whose ancestors immigrated within the last two centuries from Europe, Asia and points around the world. We share a common nationality: American, but we also identify with the ethnicity of our ancestors. We are hyphenated Americans: Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans, Chinese-Americans, African-Americans and so forth.

In Hawaii, the bulk of foreign immigration took place within the last 100 to 150 years. Members of different ethnic groups are mainly third- to fifth-generation residents of Hawaii but their ethnic ties remain salient. Although we are Americans by nationality, we also identify with our different ethnic ancestry. Hawaii is often called a “melting pot” of different groups living together, but is more like a “stew” where ethnic groups live together yet each ingredient—each ethnic group—remains well defined within the whole.

There are numerous clubs and organizations dedicated to the preservation of the culture and traditions for each group. Looking at the annual calendar of events throughout the state, you will find many festivals and all types of observances dedicated to each ethnic group. The local food culture is a mix of dishes from sushi to Portuguese bean soup, roast pork to kalbi, *pho* to won ton mein, gyros to pasteles.

Also, many residents converse with each other in the local language—Pidgin—a combination of words and phrases borrowed from many ethnic groups that are incorporated into everyday English.

As *sansei*, I still remember growing up in the presence of my immigrant grandparents. I married a Japanese national who continues to speak Japanese in our home and we regularly visit with her family and other friends in Japan. We are Buddhists and observe the rituals and significant events of the church. I define myself as Japanese in the U.S. and accept that I'll probably always be *gai-jin* in Japan. Among my circle of friends in Hawaii, we recognize our differences with Japanese nationals by referring to them as *Nihon-jin* and ourselves as "local" Japanese.

How long the younger generations Japanese-Americans will value their Japanese heritage and appreciate the contributions of the Japanese to building modern Hawaiian society? With each new generation, ties to their immigrant ancestors and the traditional values and practices they brought with them grow increasingly remote. I am third-generation, our adult children are the fourth- and our grandchildren are fifth-generation. Already, many of our grandchildren are of mixed ethnic ancestry.

With an ethnically diverse population, greater numbers of Hawaii's people have been choosing marriage partners outside their ethnic group. The rate of out-marriage has been increasing among all groups over the years, including the Japanese. In 2010, the percentage of Japanese who identified solely as Japanese was 17 per cent of Hawaii's total population, but those who identified themselves as Japanese in combination with one or more other groups, the constitute 23 per cent of the population⁴. Clearly, the percentage of "pure-blooded" Japanese is declining partly the result of inter-ethnic marriages. Demographic changes will be a major factor in the extent to which future generations of Japanese-Americans value their Japanese heritage.

I-2 Reflections on Visiting My Kumamoto Relatives

Calvin Masao ENDO, Ph.D.

Introduction

My maternal grandparents immigrated to Hawaii as contract plantation workers along with thousands of other Japanese who left their homeland, seeking better economic opportunities in foreign lands during the late 1800s to early 1900s. Sanjiro and Saku Honda left their families in Kumamoto and boarded the ship at Yokohama to seek a new life, not knowing what lay ahead at the end of their long voyage across the Pacific.

The only insights I have of their life in Hawaii were gained through stories told by my mother as she reminisced about difficulties the family experienced trying to make a living in upcountry Maui. Sanjiro and Saku struggled to raise a family of seven children (one son died in his youth), working in the sugar and pineapple fields, doing odd manual labor jobs as opportunities arose. For example, Saku supplemented the family income by preparing and selling bento to single males, taking in their laundry and peddling watermelon and other produce that she grew. The children worked in the pineapples fields as young as age 10 to earn additional income.

Despite these hardships, I marvel that my grandparents were able to raise their children well, even affording to send three of them to universities and professional schools. Through their effort, as well as help from their children who worked to supplement the family's income, one son became a physician, another a lawyer and judge, and a daughter a school teacher.

⁴ State of Hawaii, *2011 Data Book*, Table 1.39: Differences in Population by Selected Detailed Asian Race 2000 and 2010.

[photo 1] The family of Saku and Sanjiro Honda (center of the photo) of Maui ca. 1948. The boy standing in the front row, 3rd from the left, is Calvin Endo



photo by courtesy of Mr. Makoto Nagano, present head of the family. The Nagano is Saku's parental home. Photo copied by Shiramizu in 2012.

I grew up listening to their stories as my mother recounted the difficult childhood experiences she and her siblings faced, but the stories had little impact on me at the time. To my brother and me, these were typical “lectures” about life that every parent gives to unappreciative, spoiled children. Only after I had a family of my own and listened to Grandma retelling the same stories to my two daughters did I appreciate the struggles that the immigrants and their families faced in making a new life in a new land. I hope those lessons were meaningful to my daughters as they have grown into adulthood and have children of their own.

The experiences of our Honda family is not unique, but typical of hundreds and thousands of Japanese immigrant families who struggled to earn a living during the early years in their new homeland. In recent years we, their children and grandchildren, have begun to understand and to appreciate the great sacrifices of our grandparents and parents to insure that we can enjoy a better life. As part of the effort to learn more about our family roots, we *sansei* and *yonsei* are beginning to trace our family histories back to Japan and maintaining personal connection by visiting our relatives in Kumamoto.

My Memories of Grandpa and Grandma

As long as I can remember, my family has had a close relationship with our Honda grandparents. When I was a very young boy, they lived alone in their own house in Happy Valley, a small community in Wailuku, Maui. As a child, we lived about a three-minute walk away, while Aunt Tsuyako and her family lived next door to them. Grandma and Grandpa's home was the center of our activities as Mom and Auntie visited them daily to care for their needs. We children also spent much of our time playing at their large property (see photo 1, Endo's preschool days).

Grandma and Grandpa raised chickens in a coop large enough for people to walk through to gather eggs. Of course, that was a great playpen for us kids as well. Grandma also had a vegetable garden that we helped tend by pulling weeds. Best of all, they had a wood *furo* in a bathhouse separated from the main house with water heated by open fire. We kids loved to help Grandma tend to the fire and then enjoyed soaking in the large wooden tub.

Grandma did much of the work, feeding and caring for the chickens, tending her garden, and doing all the housework. We kids especially enjoyed eating her *dango jiru*, which she prepared by making her own thick noodles. Grandpa enjoyed playing with the grandkids; I still remember sitting on his shoulders as he pranced around the living room, often lowering his head to imitate a bucking horse.

When my family moved to a new home in the neighboring town of Kahului, Grandma and Grandpa moved in with us. They were getting old so it was decided it best for them to live with our family. They remained with us for the remaining years of their lives. Even then, habits did not change as Grandma tended the yard and vegetable garden, did some cooking and light housework. Grandpa spent much of his day on his personal easy chair, reading the Japanese-language newspaper and smoking *Bull Durham*, a roll-your-

own cigarette, dropping much of the tobacco onto the rug that required daily vacuuming to pick up the loose tobacco. My lasting image of Grandma Saku was that of a hard-working woman, the backbone of the Honda family from the early days as immigrants through her final years of life.

Meeting our Kumamoto Relatives

As long as I can remember, our Honda family in Hawaii has been in contact with Grandma Saku's family, the Nagano family in Kumamoto. I am told that Grandpa and Grandma Honda traveled back to visit family in Japan on two occasions. My Uncle, Howard Hisao Honda, always had an interest in Japanese history and culture, as well as researching the Honda family background. He encouraged the rest of his siblings to maintain contact by exchanging letters with some members of the Nagano family. As a physician, Uncle Howard had the financial resources so he was first to travel to Kumamoto to meet the family personally in the 1950s.

Over the years, as other siblings and their families could afford traveling to Japan, they, too, visited family in Kumamoto and continued to exchange letters. Presently, even after their *nisei* parents have passed, the *sansei* children have continued to visit Kumamoto in the past few years. Early on, in the early 1950s, one of these children stationed in Korea during the Korean Conflict, traveled to Japan and paid a surprise visit. To this day, the Nagano family members recount their shock and amazement that Kiyoshi, who spoke no Japanese, was able to find his way to the family's home in the rural outskirts of Kumamoto. Other *sansei* cousins have visited in recent years.

On occasion, several members of the Nagano family have also visited family members in Hawaii. Rikuko (Nagano) Sayama and her husband, have visited in the past. Mr. & Mrs. Akiyama (Mrs. Akiyama is a member of a branch of Nagano family living in Tokyo) have traveled to Hawaii on several occasions. Mr. & Mrs. Shinya (Hiromi) Nagano, son and daughter-in-law of the present

Nagano main family head, honeymooned in Hawaii as well.

Thus, there has been continuous contact between family members in Hawaii and Kumamoto over the century since Grandma and Grandpa Honda immigrated to Hawaii. In the minds of our Hawaii family members, even after our second generation parents have passed, we feel it important to continue the close ties between the families on both sides of the Pacific Ocean.

In about 1984, our Endo family first visited Kumamoto. My mother Dorothy Yoshiko (Sanjiro and Saku's middle daughter) and my father decided to travel to Japan to meet her relatives. My Japan-born wife Kayoko and I, with our two young daughters, accompanied them. It was a memorable event for Mom, as she finally met relatives with whom she had corresponded but never met personally. The Nagano family grew rice on a farm on the outskirts of Kumamoto City. What I remembered most about that was their newly built western-style house that contrasted with traditional Japanese homes of their neighbors.

In October 2012, nearly thirty years later, my wife and I had the opportunity to visit Kumamoto once again. My good friend and colleague, Professor Shigehiko Shiramizu of Komazawa University, arranged for us to visit our relatives as part of his on-going research project on Japanese identity among American-Japanese in Hawaii. In contrast to our family's earlier visit, I looked forward with greater personal interest and anticipation toward this meeting. It may have been coincidental, but this visit had personal significance to me, as I am 69 years old, Mom's age when she visited in 1984. The focus of that previous visit was on Mom meeting her close relatives. At the time, Sanjiro and Saku had already passed away so my mother and her siblings represented the succeeding generation of Hawaii family members with closest blood ties with family in Japan. For Mom, it was her first and only visit so the meeting was a truly momentous occasion.

Our 1984 visit focused on our *nisei* mother meeting her Japanese cousins. This time, I represented the third generation in Hawaii. The only surviving child of Sanjiro and Saku Honda is 96-year old Aunt Tomiko, so we of the *sansei* generation who must assume the responsibility to maintain close relations with Kumamoto family members. This time, I viewed our visit to Kumamoto from a different perspective than our previous meeting. This was a chance to renew acquaintance with Nagano family members I met so long ago and learn a little more about earlier generations of our family.

Professor Shiramizu, my wife Kayoko, and I flew from Tokyo to Fukuoka and then traveled to Kumamoto by train. We were greeted at the station by Mr. and Mrs. Sayama, Rikuko Sayama is the sister of Makoto Nagano, the family head at the time of our earlier visit. Both Rikuko and Makoto are my second cousins. The Sayamas treated us with a quick tour of the city and lunch of famous Kumamoto ramen. Later that afternoon, they drove us to the Nagano family farm located on the outskirts of the city.

[photo 2] Reunion of *sansei* and *yonsei* generation of Nagano family. The lady at the far left of the front row is Mrs. Endo, a man behind her is Mr. Endo. Mr. Nagano in black is at the center.



Photo taken by Shiramizu at the entrance of Mr. Nagano's house, in Kumamoto, 2012.

As we traveled to the farm, I noticed the landscape has changed substantially. During our previous visit, I remembered we drove through

miles of narrow roads that were carved among fields of rice, with farmhouses scattered among the fields. Now, there were clusters of houses and small businesses and fewer open fields. The Nagano family house is much as I remembered: a western-style, red tile roof and, inside, a sunken living room. The design of the house still contrasted with the architecture of traditional farmhouses of the neighbors.

Upon our arrival, we were met by Makoto and his wife, Yachiyo. Initially, I did not recognize Makoto as he is much slimmer physically than I remembered. They lived with son Shinya, daughter-in-law Hiromi and their two sons. Although they still cultivate rice on a portion of the land, their primary crop is tomato. Where there once were vast open fields of rice, they now have converted much of the land into covered greenhouses required to raise this delicate crop. The greenhouses are equipped with mechanisms to control temperature and water to insure optimum conditions inside the vinyl enclosures. Overall, it seems growing tomato is much more labor-intensive than rice as each plant must be grafted by hand to insure high quality tomatoes and harvesting requires picking each tomato by hand(see photo 3).

[photo 3] Mr. and Mrs. Endo at a greenhouse of Nagano family, growing tomatoes.



Photo taken by Shiramizu in Kumamoto, 2012

The evening was spent dining on a fabulous spread of food prepared by Mrs. Nagano and Hiromi. First we offered incense at the family *butsudan* [Buddhist household altar] (photo 4).

The dinner conversation centered mostly on filling in missing information about family members of previous generations and adding new ones, especially children and grandchildren of the Hawaii branch (photo 5). Surprisingly, the Nagano family had prepared the family genealogy that was helpful in adding missing information. They also had old photographs of Hawaii family members that they had received over the years, photographs that I have never seen before. Especially poignant was a framed picture of an elderly woman who turned out to be Grandma Saku's mother. There was a strong resemblance between mother and daughter.

[photo 4] Mr. Endo offering incense and praying to his ancestors at Mr. Nagano's butsudan.



Photo taken by Shiramizu at Nagano's house in Kumamoto, 2012.

During the conversations, we had questions concerning Grandpa Sanjiro Honda. With a telephone call to someone in the Honda family, we learned that Sanjiro has a surviving niece. She is 97 years old, a year older than our Aunt Tomiko, but this lady was unable to provide any information because of advanced age and failing memory. Still, we were excited the Honda side of the family can still be located and we may try to contact them on a future visit to Kumamoto.

This visit to Kumamoto sparked my interest to learn more about my Japanese ancestors. Coincidentally, after we returned to Hawaii, I received an email message from a Honda cousin in Hawaii (Howard Hisao Honda's grandson) that included the Nagano genealogy that Uncle Howard

had passed on to his daughter. After she passed away, she apparently had left the documents with one of her sons. This *yonsei* grandson belongs to the Mormon Church so he has a most interested in researching the Honda family genealogy.

The first person listed was Chyozaaburo Nagano, Grandma Saku's grandfather. What I found fascinating is family records of an individual extending back to the end of the Edo Period. Also, Grandma was born in 1879 and Grandpa Sanjiro in 1877, within the first decade of the Meiji Era. I was never much interested in Japanese history but viewing our family in the context of these two significant periods of Japanese history increased my interest in learning more about our Japanese ancestors. That transitional period must have had a major impact on the lives of individuals as well as in Japanese politics and government so it would be interesting to learn about how it impact our family in particular.

Among the documents I received from my cousin, the most exciting item is a photograph of Grandma and Grandpa Honda with Nagano relatives that was taken during their first return visit to Japan in 1953 (Showa 28). This was another period of turmoil for Japanese at the end of World War II and life must have been difficult of the Nagano family.

[photo 5] Mr. and Mrs. Endo enjoying dinner with the Nagaganos.



Photo taken by Shiramizu at Mr. Nagano's house in Kumamoto, 2012.

That photograph is especially important because each family member is identified by name so, for the first time, I could match visual images of individuals with their names listed in the family genealogy. I could identify several of Grandma's sisters and brothers, including a younger brother whom I remember meeting during our visit many years ago. Unfortunately, I did not know of his relationship with Grandma at that time so I failed to learn more about him. That photograph solved a mystery that had puzzled me for years since I began a search through Hawaii government archives for names and dates of Japanese immigrants who arrived in Hawaii in 1899. I located the name of a man named Honda and his wife Saku but his name was not listed as Sanjiro, but Mitsujiro, so I had concluded this couple was not Grandpa and Grandma. The photograph identified Grandpa in kanji, confirming the archival records did indicate their arrival in Hawaii.

Now, at my age, I have gained greater appreciation for my family's roots. This recent meeting with family in Kumamoto, juxtaposed with my recollection of Mom's visit thirty years ago, gives me a time frame to assess the changing relationship between the Japanese and Hawaiian branches of our family. In 1984, the focus was on my mother who had the closest generational and emotional ties to the Kumamoto family. At the time, I did not have any strong emotional feeling

about meeting our Japanese relatives. I had already married a Japanese woman and felt stronger emotional ties to her family. They were my Japanese family – her siblings were my contemporaries so we had more in common as we exchanged visits more frequently throughout the years.

Presently, as one of the eldest among the *sansei* generation of the Honda family in Hawaii, I feel stronger emotional ties to our Kumamoto family members, not as my mother's relatives, but now as my relatives. The fact that several of our *sansei* cousins have traveled to Kumamoto is evidence that members of our generation feel the same. We see the need to foster closer relations between the families and encourage continuation of ties among my children and grandchildren. Japan is no longer a two-week journey by ship, but a mere half-day flight from Hawaii so we must encourage personal exchanges.

The family genealogy and photograph of Grandma relatives during her 1945 will be treasured and will serve to motivate us to continue personal connections with family in Japan. For us in Hawaii, those family records have provided information on the main Nagano family line as well as branch families. On the recent visit, Makoto Nagano provided us a copy of his family line, which Professor Shiramizu is in the process of translating into English. With all these documents, we should have about as complete a family history extending to the late Edo Period.

[photo 6] Mr. Endo watching photo of his grandma Saku Honda's funeral held in Maui, 1958.



Photo taken by Shiramizu at Mr. Nagano's house in Kumamoto, 2012.

The next step is to consolidate and organize all family genealogical data into a comprehensible and manageable system. I don't think we can research much more on Japan branch families, but can at least keep adding data as the Hawaii/U.S. branches grow. Copies of genealogical data will be distributed to third-generation Hawaii family members and hope will encourage their children and grandchildren to maintain interest in their family history on both sides of the Pacific.

II Questions and Answers Session on Culture and Ethnic Relations of Hawaii's Japanese and Okinawan

Participants:

Shigehiko Shiramizu (SS; Japanese, born in Japan, 1948, professor in GMS, Komazawa University)

Calvin Endo (CE; Third generation of Japanese ancestry, born in Hawaii, 1943, retired professor of University of Hawaii)

George Ikeda (GI; Second generation of Japanese ancestry, born in Hawaii, 1940, retired professor of University of Hawaii)

Eugene "Gene" Kaneshiro (GK; Third generation of Okinawan ancestry, born in Hawaii, 1945, a member of Makiki Christian Church, retired state government officer, restaurant owner)

Komazawa University students, and a graduate (full names will be used first).

1. Personal backgrounds

SS: First of all, I'd like to say thank you Mr. Gene Kaneshiro. Through his good offices, we can use here, the conference room of Makiki Christian Church (see photo 7). He is one of active members of this church. And also, thank you for coming to this session, Mr. Endo, Mr. Ikeda and Mr. Kaneshiro. Well, could you give a self-introduction please?

CE: A very short biographic sketch? Okay. My name is Calvin Endo. I am a retired former professor of the Sociology Department at the University of Hawaii. Retired six years ago and now living the life of leisure. I'm *sansei* – third generation – so my grandparents came from Japan, from Kumamoto. My maternal grandparents – my mother's side's from Kumamoto – and my father's side is from Fukushima. Japanese get confused, so they say, "How come one side of your grandparents were from Fukushima and the other side from Kumamoto?" And I said, you know, you have to remember that [laughs] my parents met here. There were a lot of contract laborers that came from Kumamoto, and also a group that came from Fukushima. So my parents

are basically – my father's family came from Fukushima and my mother's family came from Kumamoto. I have done research in Japan; I did a couple studies. One was on middle management people in the city of Kanazawa–Ishikawa-ken. And I started to interview middle managers, in insurance companies and banks, in large corporations. In Kanazawa the biggest manufacturer was Komatsu [Komatsu seisakusho], and then some retail people. And the second study I did was on medical students in Tokyo universities. Juntendo, Toudai, I forgot the third medical school... So I've done some amount of research in Japan.

GI: Did you study in Japan?

CE: Oh, very little studying in Japan. Well, mine was – I had more research grants – so I wasn't affiliated with any university – officially – in Japan. We pretty much were funded by American corporations to do our research. I previously, first met, Doctor Ikeda when he was teaching a course at the university and we got to talking. And then we suddenly realized that we both spent time in Kanazawa. This was in the late 1960s. Way before you were born. Your parents were still children then. So, on the basis of both our experiences in Kanazawa, and especially as being *gaijin* and... You know, at that time Kanazawa had very few *gaijin*, so we had many experiences together. So that was about 30 years ago since we met, and we've been constantly talking about Japan and about the changes in Kanazawa, over the course of the 30 or so years. So anyway, that's all.

SS: Ok thank you very much. So, did you say – medical school students survey or something like that?

CE: So, it's basically the socio-economic background of students, and it's the predictable result, that the largest number of medical students are – their parents, or their father mainly, were medical students themselves. So there's this inter-generational consistency in the medical field.

SS: So it's sort of reproducing their socio-economic status.

CE: Whether we're talking about Toudai, or Juntendo... It's still pretty consistent. They're

upper-middle class to begin with, and many of them, their father – primarily – were medical doctors themselves.

[photo 7] Q and A Session at a conference room of Makiki Christian Church



Photo taken by Shiramizu in Honolulu, Aug. 31, 2012

SS: Oh, I see. [Explains in Japanese for students.]
Okay, thank you very much. Well Ikeda sensei, please.

GI: My name is George Ikeda, and I'm retired from the University of Hawaii also. I was the director of research for the School of Travel Industry and Management. I am *nisei*. My parents are from Ehime. My father came to Hawaii when he was 15 years old. He was a teenager; my mother came later when she was 18, and they lived here in Hawaii and got married. So I'm a late *nisei*. Most of my contemporaries are *sansei* or *yonsei*, but I am still *nisei*. My relationship with Japan goes back many many years. The first time I went to Japan I was a sophomore in college at the university, and I first went to Beppu University in Oita-ken. And that was the first time I went. The second time I went, I went on a fellowship to Kanazawa Daigaku – Kanazawa University, in Ishikawa-ken, and after that my relationship with Japan has gone back and forth. When I retired I was a visiting professor at Rikkyo University in Tokyo, for two years in the School of Business, a Masters in Business Administration Program. And my relationship with Okinawa goes back to 1990 when Hawaii and Okinawa used to have exchange relationships and we used to run a seminar once a year for

visitors from Okinawa. And then, thereafter, the School of Travel Industry Management at the University of Hawaii helped Ryukyu Daigaku set up their tourism program. So I had been travelling back and forth from Okinawa until about four years ago when I stopped going. But anyway, that's my relationship with Japan and Okinawa.

SS: So, I could say your background is of business administration?

GI: Well my background actually was in political science, but then I began to specialize in the visitor industry here, and so I worked in the visitor industry, research areas and teaching, for about 20 years.

SS: I thought you were from business administration at Harvard University?

GI: No, in Harvard I was in the (graduate school of) political science.

SS: Oh, political science?

GI: So I have a very mixed background!

GK: My name is Gene Kaneshiro. I was a different example, in fact I was a poor example. I entered University of Hawaii but didn't finish it. I got distracted, I was into shooting pool and racing cars and having the good fun life and all that. Then I went into the restaurant business with my mother and father, and his older brother. So I worked for 26 years, and worked the hard way. Mopping the bathrooms and washing dishes, and learning it from that way. We had two restaurants [the restaurants were one of the most popular in Honolulu] that served American food, and I sold them to Kyotaru restaurant chain in Tokyo. And I worked for them for almost three, four years, until my wife had the stroke and I had to leave the restaurant. Eventually I had the opportunity to become the director of the school lunch program for the State of Hawaii Department of Education and then I retired several years ago. Anyhow, I was pretty lucky in that I was able to have a job and do those kind of things, but my one regret is that I don't have the University of Hawaii degree. I keep thinking about it – one day I'll go back to school.

SS: Oh yeah, that's a good idea! [laughs]

Okay, actually, before we came here, we have read the essay "Ethnic Identity and Inter-Ethnic Relations – Growing Up in Mid-20th Century Hawaii" written by Calvin Endo. So students, you have some questions from the essay and also if you have questions generally pertaining to Okinawans and Japanese in Hawaii, don't hesitate to ask. Okay, who is the first?

2. Religion and language in the Japanese community

Suzuki Misaki: To Dr Endo. Hi I am Misaki. How did you belong to the Buddhist church? when your ancestors were in Japan?

CE: Oh, Japanese church (temple)? Well you know, Japanese immigrants who first came here in the late 1800s were primarily Buddhist, and the one of the main branches of Buddhism here is Higashi Honganji [the denomination is *Jodoshinshu*], and the main church is here, on the (Pali) highway. And then what they had was branch churches on the islands, where they had a population of immigrant workers from Japan. And so, I was born into that religion, basically. And even if I'm third generation, my friends and classmates (of the plantation town) were all were Buddhist, and we went to a Buddhist church. We went to Japanese language school at the Honganji and all that. But by the third generation in other Japanese families, already started going to Christian religions as well. So you have a good number of Japanese who are Christians, like here at Makiki Christian Church. But originally it's just because my grandparents and then my parents. I more or less remained in that religion, although when I went to school on the mainland (Oregon) I joined a Baptist church. And at that time I was just trying to develop my own concept of what's best at that time. But since I've come back to Hawaii, I still felt more comfortable, because my close friends from high school days are still, pretty much, involved with the Buddhist church.

SS: In your community, do you know somebody who converted to Christianity, or do you have a

real example?

CE: You know what? George Ikeda is more interested in that aspect, because he is *nisei*, but also growing up you went to an Episcopal church?

GI: Yes. At home my parents only spoke Japanese. When we were ready to go to school, they felt that it was important for us to be able to learn and speak English, outside of our home. So from the very beginning – from kindergarten – they sent us to the closest church, St Mark's Church in Kapahulu, an area next to Waikiki. So older siblings and I went to St Mark's Church, because we wanted to learn English from kindergarten. St. Mark's is an Episcopalian church so my older siblings also became Episcopalians. It was through kindergarten at the Episcopal church that was started speaking English, so we could adjust to regular public school.

SS: So you learned English, but no Christianity or...?

GI: Well, in those days, we began to attend church service once a week, the four of us. So that's where we started learning Christianity although my parents' primary reason for sending us to church was because they wanted us to learn English.

CE: During the days of the plantation, the people in the plantation camps banded together and formed their own *kumiai* [same- province association], you know, and they brought their own religion with them and the priests and so forth from the different sects. So like my grandfather, they brought their own – we call them Bonsan – into the plantation camp. And they brought the religion with them, that they wanted. And the idea was – they eventually all tended to go back home. So they brought not only the Japanese language teacher, but they brought also the Japanese Buddhist priest, and established temples there.

SS: George, you became Christian?

GI: Uh, nominally, yes. We were baptized.

SS: Oh, baptized. Do you go to church?

GI: These days I don't go to church. But my older siblings – I was the one that probably wasn't that

religious, but my older siblings still, I mean, they go to church frequently.

SS: That was a good question, Misaki. Next, who else?

Samantha Lo Monaco [an exchange student from Australia to Komazawa University]: Mr. Ikeda, following on from what you said about going to church but not being particularly religious... I was sort of the same, I was baptized but my family never went to church either. And obviously growing up in an English speaking country there was no reason – community-wise there was not really a need to go to church. Mr. Kaneshiro, you said that you have only been a member of this church since 1990. Before that were you involved in another church?

GK: I went to church like Nuuanu Congregational Church when I was in my teens. And then I was never baptized until I came to Makiki Church.

SL: So, in the Japanese community in Hawaii, is it more common to join the church as a child or a teenager? Or are most people baptized?

GK: I think the best example is what George is. That one of the purposes of sending him to a Christian church is because they speak English. We've been to church because I had three brothers, and we were raising heck all over the neighborhood so my parents decided maybe they should send these kids to church so they behave a little bit more! You know? I wasn't baptized until 1992 or '93, around there, and it came about because my wife was always a member here – we were married here – and you know my daughter is baptized here and so forth. So, you know, I was due. And my wife had a stroke, and that stroke brought religion to me. So that's how I came about joining the church, but I was always around the church. A lot of friends that we grew up with were members of the church. Either of Nuuanu Congregational Church, or of Makiki. Because my high school is right across the street over here, McKinley High School. And that's where I met my wife.

GI: I have something to offer here too. Calvin's family were Higashi Honganji. My father and mother were *Jodoshu* [a Buddhist denomination].

And because we were raised Christian (as I mentioned), we really didn't understand anything about Buddhism. The only time we went to Buddhist temples was for funerals of relatives. And this is a very sad story but I think it's true of many Japanese families. After my parents died, then there was no longer real connection for us to the Jodo Mission temple. Many of the Buddhist religious items like the *butsudan*, no family members wanted to take care of it. And so finally, my brother and I went to see the priest at Jodo Mission temple and we were told that they would accept it and dispose of it properly by burning it. The priest asked us, "Do you really want to do this? Because you're giving up your ties with Japan and your family." But we said that we didn't understand anything about Buddhism, and we didn't know what to do with the butudan in the house. The priest said that the oldest son should have it in his house but the priest said very reluctantly that he would accept it. At the end of the meeting, the priest gave us a copy of a genealogy of our family. It became very evident to us that one of the most valuable legacies of the Buddhist temples in Hawaii is that they kept family records.

SS: Yes, actually, you can trace back to the ancestors of some certain generations all the generations, so it's one of the most important functions of the Buddhist temple. *Kakochou* we say. The literal meaning is "past note of the family", so you can trace back several generations according to the *Kakochou*. George, how many generations could you go?

GI: It actually doesn't go back very far, because we were farmers in Japan and the surname Ikeda must only go back to the Meiji Era for us. The genealogy we received went back about five generations.

SS: If you're from a really old family you can trace back 10 generations, or even 20 generations. But common people's case, not so many generations... Anyhow, it's a very interesting story.

GI: Actually, Makiki Christian is Congregationalist?

GK: Congregationalist, yeah.

CE: My friends my age who became Christians

are mostly Congregationalists. Because Congregationalists, see... We're all the products of immigrants. So we – *nikkeijin* [Americans of Japanese ancestry] – they are generally more liberal. So, the Democratic Party primary supporters are *Nikkeijin*. So Congregationalists, among the different protestant denominations, tend to be on the very liberal end of the spectrum. When I was on the Mainland, there wasn't any Buddhist churches so I decided to go a Protestant church to learn what Christianity was about. But, I made an unfortunate decision and went to a Baptist church. Baptists are quite conservative compared to other Protestants, and they're very strong in trying to recruit new members by preaching, proselytizing and all that. And they want to dominate your life so much. So my reaction was negative. I said, if this is what Christianity is... Had I gone through a more liberal denomination, yeah. I would probably (be more attracted)...

SS: So do you mean it might be depending on denomination?

GI: Yeah. That makes a lot of difference.

CE: And even if you were from the Baptist... Southern Baptist...

GK: Oh, "fire and brimstone!"

CE: So, very evangelical. I remained a Buddhist, maybe in some sense a reverse of George, (an outcome of) the situation. My parents were bilingual, but us third generation, we understood a few Japanese words, but no phrases or no sentences. So they wanted us to learn Japanese, so a lot of the Buddhist churches [temples] had after-school Japanese language schools. So we were forced to go to Japanese language school. So that's kept us tied to the Honganji. And then, as we get older... Our churches also sponsored boy scouts, and all these other kind of clubs. So we had nothing better to do, so we're old enough to be boy scouts so we joined the boy scouts. At that time, already, the Buddhist churches were losing membership. Because the first, second generations were retired and passing away. And we really hated the Buddhist church services! Because we'd go to Sunday school and the

minister was talking in Japanese, and we were just bored to death. And all the sutras, you know, we didn't understand anything. It was just the social activities of the Buddhist church that kept us together. And for that reason a lot of other people of my generation went to Christian churches instead. And I only maintain my ties because when my parents passed away, they had already bought little niches at the church. Their ashes are there, so whenever we visit Maui, we have to take flowers and give a donation. And at one stage, when the Honganji church decided to renovate *Nokotsudo* [a charnel house] and make it bigger we give them bigger donation. Once I was told that, "Oh, they're stunning! \$325." So we said ok. So for my family the problem is solved. A one-time payment of \$325, but then you have to make donations, for *Obon* [lantern festival, festival of the dead] and things like that. But still, when you have to make \$25 or \$50 donations once or twice a year, still the cost is quite manageable. So that's why my wife and I still, pretty much, remain Buddhists. When my wife – she was born and raised in Japan, and she really had no religion also – since I was a Buddhist she said, okay.

SS: Occasionally you have to pay \$20-30?

CE: I give \$50 for Obon, but then in-between, you know... Honganji has – every month when the newsletter comes out, there's an envelope asking for a donation for all these various kinds of programs, anniversaries or whatever they have...

SS: But you don't need to donate each time...

CE: No, it's voluntary. But every month with the newsletter there's always an envelope or contribution for this particular thing... And I remember, about 6-7 years ago, and also I had to pay dues every month, they said. \$30 for membership dues. Well, yeah, 6 years ago I guess. I get this letter. It says, "We have a fundraiser to renovate a building. And it's costing a lot of money, so we would like you to donate \$1000 to our building fund. But you can give in installments. Five years, or whenever." So you've got these obligations. You don't have to give \$1000, but you know... My brother, he doesn't – he's not a

member so he gives \$100 or \$200, but I gave the full amount over a two-year period. But, it becomes... I guess that's the – for any kind of organized religion there are always these kinds of practical needs for survival. There is always renovation for churches. Most of all churches have this kind of ...

SS: So Gene, How about the Makiki church case? the amount of money is almost the same?

GK: It varies on occasion. We have what is called 'tithing'. It's a promise to donate some of your – some of what you have – on a regular basis to the church. And every year people will commit themselves to donating so many dollars. Some for operational needs, to run the church, and its programs, then we also have a building fund for major things that we need to have done. Like I showed you the ornaments that we need to fix. Just to paint the building would probably cost us close to a quarter million dollars. We rely on the tithing and donations and gifts. Like, someone whose parents passed away, with insurance on them, they decided to give a part of that insurance money, like \$30000. The elevator we have in the building over there was donated by one of our church members who, according to her tax accountant and attorney, said, "Oh, she has a tax problem." So she donated an elevator, and some furniture, and that \$50000 grand piano, the Steinway piano. So we have those people who can and want to share with us. The inheritance that she had, and things like that.

SS: Okay, thank you very much. Gene, you wanted to say something more?

GK: When I was in the ninth grade, we had a social club organized under the YBA – Young Buddhist Association – which was under the auspices of the Higashi Honganji temple up on Pali Highway. And periodically they would invite us to go across the street to the temple and they would have the priests over there talk with us. Not so much to try to get us to join the temple, but just to teach us a little bit about Buddha's teachings, and so forth, which is the connection between the social organization and the Buddhist temple. Whether it rubbed off or not, it didn't for me, but

I don't know about my other classmates. But that was our first – my first – exposure to the Buddhist temple. But my family – both sides – my mother's side and my father's side, were Buddhists. The Jikoen Temple [the denomination is Jodoshinshu, and the members are mainly Okinawan in Honolulu] on School Street. So we used to attend funeral services and Obon service there when I was growing up. I think the unfortunate thing, like you said, was the service is all done in Japanese whereas the priests usually spoke in English, your ceremonial portion of the service is all in Japanese. So we really don't know what was going on. Nobody stopped to teach us anything about that. So we quickly lost interest. But when I went to Nuuanu Congregational Church, Reverend Osumi was there, and he was a very interesting man to listen to. And I think that's the background I had in religion.

GI: Because that Reverend Osumi used to always write in the daily newspaper, and his sayings were so inspirational. Even after he passed away, his articles were kept in the archives, because he was so well known. Another thing is that people in Hawaii -because we are largely descendants of immigrants we tend to be open minded and accepting of everyone's customs and religions. So even if someone may be a Congregationalist or a Protestant, if they go to a Buddhist funeral, they observe Buddhist rituals. There are rituals that we still do because a lot of funerals are still Buddhist so people need to learn how to do incense offering, and most religions are liberal enough to accept their members participating in this way...after all, it's a very religious, sacred kind of ritual. So you have *gaijin* such as Portuguese, Filipino, and others who come to the funeral and follow traditional Buddhist ritual.

GK: You just watch the person in front. They say "oh this is appropriate, therefore you offer incense".

GI: You only know a real Buddhist if they have *juzu* [a Buddhist rosary]. Few people of our age... I do, but most people don't have *juzu* anymore.

GK: Lots of the Christian churches in Hawaii belong under the United Church of Christ. It's

Congregationalist. And a lot of the missionary who first came with that background. So for example, you have Midpac High School [Mid-Pacific Institute: a private, co-educational college preparatory school], UCC church-based. Kamehameha School is UCC-based. Central Union Church. Kawaiahao Church, Kaunakapili Church and so on. There are UCC Churches on the Big Island that are very small, and basically family-related, that's about 180 years old. They're UCC Churches.

SS: So actually, if a missionary came from the mainland, were they almost UCC?

GK: Not specifically. They were Protestants. They came from the northeast United States. Yeah. So Kawaiahau Church, and you got Kalihi Union Church, but Kalihi Union no longer belongs to the UCC anymore, they pulled out.

GI: Can I say something about the pros of churches? I said that when I was young my parents wanted us to learn English so they sent us to a Christian church. Well, the reverse happened when I was about 10 or 11, when my parents felt that I didn't know any Japanese. And so they wanted me to go to *Nihongo Gakko* [Japanese language school]. There were some *Nihongo Gakko* in the neighborhood, but they sent me *Jodoshu's Nihongo Gakko*. Because (my parents belonged to) *Jodoshu* and they had a Japanese school, and the priest would teach Japanese. So that's where I learned Japanese. I went to a Waikiki language school and then I went to *Jodoshu*, where Bishop Miyamoto was my Japanese teacher. So that's where I learned Japanese. Churches have a function other than religion, and it could be reversed. To learn Japanese I went to a Buddhist temple.

3. Japanese language school and the functions

GK: Talking about Japanese school, I went to one called Palama Gakuen.

SS: Yeah, that's famous!

GK: Until fifth grade. However the emphasis was on reading and writing. More writing than reading. And very little conversation. Had they

focused the learning methodology, or the teaching methodology, on the spoken language, maybe I would've hung in there and learned a little bit more. But today my Japanese is limited to "sushi", "daikon" and "takuwan"... And you know, I can hardly say a sentence. I can go to Japan and get around because there's always somebody who can speak English. But five years and I can only... I can read *hiragana*. I cannot read *katakana*. And I can write my name and that's about it. But my Japanese school was not affiliated with a temple. It was just a stand-alone Japanese school, established many years ago, and it was essentially almost like after-school babysitting. That's what it amounted to. And I think we paid \$2 or \$3 a month I think, back in the '50s.

SS: Still, very cheap.

GK: Yeah.

SS: George, how about your Japanese school experiences.

GI: Not conversation, mainly reading and writing. I first went to a Waikiki-Kapahulu Japanese language school and then I went to *Jodo Mission Nihongo Gakko*. But what is important to note is that the Japanese community in Hawaii in general tried to revive the Japanese language schools after World War II. Before WWII, Japanese language schools were very very strong, and more than forty thousand students were enrolled in the schools. During the war, the government closed down all the Japanese language schools. After the war, the schools were revived but they never were able to get the kind of involvement they had before the war. Dr Endo and I both were members of the Board of Directors for the successor to the Waikiki-Kapahulu Japanese Language School. If you go past there the building is 100 years old. It's still there and it looks exactly like an old Japanese school, in Japan. However, we had to close it down as a language school in the 1980s because there were no students anymore, to learn Japanese. Students could also learn Japanese in the regular public schools as a foreign language which was not an option in our days when public schools didn't

teach Japanese.

SS: Oh, you have Japanese language classes in the public schools?

GI: An elective (course). As a foreign language. For us when we were going to school, it was after regular English school, so we went to Japanese school after that.

GK: My daughter went to Soto Mission Japanese School (in 1980s) . It was more for after school babysitting, but then, when she went to Punahou School [one of the top private co-ed college preparatory schools in Hawaii] and they have this elective language courses, so she took Japanese. She can read and write but she has a hard time speaking because she doesn't have the opportunity to use the Japanese language. She lives in California now, you know. But if she goes to visit Japan, she can understand but she has a hard time speaking. She can read enough hiragana and katakana and some kanji, to make out what signs say, you know. Or look at instructions on a map or something, but other than that – and that's with 6 years of formal language, Japanese language from 7th grade to 12th grade and then Japanese school prior to that.

SS: So they hire a native Japanese teacher at Punahou?

CE: Yeah, at Punahou. All native speakers there.

GI: Because during our days as children, the teachers at Japanese language schools were usually the (Buddhism) minister, the minister's wife, and laypeople who were *issei* [first generation Japanese], Few of them were trained as teachers and there was no real teaching method involved. But what the other thing was, that during our day anyway. This was back in the '50s . the minister also taught discipline.

GK: With a stick.

CE: They also did a good job in disciplining us. They used to hit us all the time so we behaved. So yeah, as Gene and George said – it's not conversational. It's reading and writing, and hitting.

SS: Very interesting story. Students, any questions?

4. Upward mobility and education: *issei* to *nisei*

Okonogi Takafumi [a graduate of Komazawa University]: The first question is: in the beginning, the *issei* were mostly coming over for the plantations, so basically they were all laborers, and coming from Okinawa and Japan which were in a depression, no one would've really had an education, kind of thing... But in just one generation, suddenly being able to attend university and become successful, would you say that the church played a big role in the upward social mobility of the Japanese immigrants here?

GI: Well in my own experience, it wasn't the church so much as the basic Japanese values. My father came at 15 and (before he came to Hawaii) he only went to shougakko [primary school] in Japan. My mother also went only to shogakko in Japan. My father felt that he had always missed out on an education. He couldn't go to high school so he wanted to make sure that the children had an education. And the other thing was that I think they were very quick to adopt American values. My mother and father felt that daughters were just as important as sons, and the girls should have an education also. So they wanted to make sure that the girls went to college, as well as the boys, because they felt it was important for equality's sake. And I think that's very much an immigrant thing – it's not just Japanese. You look at Koreans, you look at Chinese (they also went and go to higher education).

SL: Well actually my family's situation is exactly the same. My father's father is Sicilian, and came over to Australia to work on sugar plantations. And he only went to elementary school as well, and then exactly the same as that.

GI: I think it's a first generation type of values that they adopt for their children. Whether the children carry it on is another story, and I think it did continue to the third generation. When you come to fourth and fifth generation, I think it dissipates a little bit. That discipline is not there,

necessarily.

SL: Yeah, I definitely don't have that kind of discipline...

GI: They may not want to go to college, they may want to do other things.

SL: Well, more than the church, it was the immigrants' attitude generally.

SS: George, you said that not only boys but also girls went to higher education, it means they were equally treated by the parents?

GI: Yes.

CE: That's very significant.

SS: In Japan even my generation, there was a definite difference concerning going on to university. For example my elder sister, she was a kind of model student in high school, but she couldn't go to university, because not only our family was poor but also she was a girl. My father didn't accept her wish. Definitely more boys could go on to higher education institutions than girls until 1970s. But here in Hawaii, you can see a lot of women school teacher.

GK: Shige-san, the unfortunate thing is that the girls were stereotyped into occupations, such as teaching and nursing. But they have since gone out of that. My wife was told by her mother that she would be a teacher, and only a teacher, because when you raise your children you will be home during the summer. So, she became a teacher. But to this day she regrets not having the opportunity to go into law. She said "I think I would've been a good attorney", because she loved to do research. But she graduated from the University of Hawaii, she got a Masters Degree from Stanford University, she got a Library Masters degree from the university. She spent 35 years in the department of education in the state of Hawaii, then she retired. But she still feels that she would've been a good attorney, if given an opportunity. But during her days, or our days, there were not too many women entering – or even considering – going to law school.

CE: I think what George spoke well about was the difference between the fourth and fifth generation versus the second and third generation. I think the difference is, the second generation, which

was my father's age, they're, you know, the *isseis* always saw that education was the key to the future. That's the key. However, applying basic knowledge is more important than getting a diploma. So you got the diploma but if you don't know how to apply yourself... And application, you know – using this knowledge – the writing skills, the spoken skills, and then the historical skills that you learn through school – applying it was very well applied in the second and third generation, I believe. Because the *isseis* and the *niseis* was always around themselves, the family unit was very solid. We always had dinner together, but when the fourth and fifth generation comes along, the family unit kind of... There's more divorces, there's more single parent children being raised... Here and everywhere across – in fact, even around the world. You lose that. And that's why, George said, the values have changed a little bit. But more people are going to college, but it's – for you folks, it's how you apply yourself after you get the degree. Because you don't have to go into the specified field that you are studying. You know, like George, (he was in) political science. He could've been the Governor of Hawaii. But you know he's applying what he learned, and all that background... It's the application, is what it is.

SS: Could you explain a little bit more how it's related to the family relationship?

CE: The family unit: you have a mother and father watching over the children and knowing who are their friends, who are they hanging out with, how are they doing in school, checking with the teachers at school, making sure that they're going to school, you know. All those things will lead to the child becoming a better person who will be able to apply himself properly. And (for example George) whereas a political science major, you know, went into travel industry management school and did research... He still applies what he learned all the way along, from his parents and sibling and so forth. So it's the family unit, and that family unit is disintegrating (recently). It's falling apart.

GK: But I think the day of the mother and father

telling the child “you’re going to be a doctor” is gone. Today the mother and father say, “You’re gonna go to school because a high school diploma is not enough. You need to go to college, and once you get that college degree you can apply yourself.” To answer Okonogi’s question though, you know from plantation to something else – business, or education or whatever – the key was education, but I think more important was the family being able to raise the person properly. As I mentioned I didn’t finish the college. Then I began to work for restaurants, the family business. But none of my brothers went into the restaurant business. I have two brothers, they didn’t go into— one became an accountant. My daughter refused to be in the restaurant business, because it’s too hard work. She said, “Papa I don’t want to be in the restaurant business.” So today she’s in health services, occupational therapist. Works in a hospital in San Francisco. So you know, with education and certification, she was able to move on.

5. Maintaining ethnic values and cultures

OT: I have one more question. Hawaii is a multi-ethnic society and the intermarriages are becoming common too. In this situation, it must be difficult to maintain the ethnic values for long time. So, Mr. Kaneshiro, as a community leader what do you do for fourth and fifth generations?

GK: I don’t know if the ethnicity plays that much difference. I think that the – taking the good parts of all the different cultures that we grew up in, in Hawaii, you know... Taking the good parts, I think, will help us. There’s – in almost every ethnic group there’s very good parts that you can take from. The Japanese, and all the - generally speaking the Asian culture – be it Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, you know. There are very good areas where you can pick up. If a young person recognizes that right away, and applies that. You can move forward. To me I think that – and I guess the question also is – the influence of the church. I think the church is not

so much what the person would be, outward, first. The church brings some inner peace first. If you are at peace with yourself – in any religion – if you are at peace with yourself, the outward thing comes about. “Love thy neighbor”, you know. “Love thy God.” And in any religion it is the same. “Love thy family; love thy neighbor; love thy friends.” Or, we say, “Do unto others as you would want others to do unto you.” That’s what church brings to us. I don’t believe church will bring you a specific occupation, or... It brings you the inner peace first. And if you’re okay with yourself, you’ll be nice to other people outside. And that’s where you know, you tie that together with your knowledge or business, or your knowledge of science, or research... I think that’s where religion comes about. Religion doesn’t say, “You will be a good person!” You have to understand that you have to trust, and you have to be a good person inside first. Then you can be a good person outside. If you’re not inside good, it ain’t gonna work. It’s not gonna happen. And that’s where church will give you the balance.

SS: So, George, Calvin, could you add anything to that?

GI: I’d just like to add to what Gene said, that it’s common values that now are what we are about. Because, statistically, I mean even the Japanese Consulate says this, that Japanese as an ethnic group in the United States, will probably disappear in another two or three generations. Because over 50% of marriages now for *sansei* and *yonsei* are intermarriages with other groups. My nieces and nephews, only one is married to a Japanese-American; everyone else is intermarried. However, they and their children when we get together we all appear to have common values: emphasis on education, and good family values, these sorts of things. But it’s nothing to do with Japanese culture. Well not nothing, but very little to do with Japanese culture.

CE: In recent years – I guess it started with the Hawaiian renaissance around the late 1970s – the younger generation became more interested in Hawaiian tradition.

SS: You mean Hawaiian, not Japanese?

CE: Yeah, Hawaiian. I'm talking about the Hawaiians – native Hawaiians. You know, it's like, in the mainland the African Americans... *Roots*, you know they had the TV miniseries of *Roots*, things like that. People started to begin to get interested in their roots. And I think in Hawaii it was the Hawaiian population – native Hawaiians – who became more interested in looking at their ancestors, and gradually other ethnic groups (also became interested in their history). So it's around, I guess around the fourth generation, that there was this kind of revival – renaissance – to get back to their ethnic ties. And Japanese – fourth, fifth generation – beginning to develop that. The one group that was really strong, is the Okinawan. In the 1980s – [people] start talking about *Uchinanchu* [literally: person of Okinawa]. I'm a sociologist and one of our students at that time was an Okinawan (who started her study about Okinawan culture). Around that time people start talking *Uchinanchu*. What is that? I'd never heard of it. But then, gradually, non-Okinawans – other Japanese, and other things – began to understand this *Uchinanchu*. Basically, it's the indigenous ties to the indigenous population of Okinawa – Ryukyu Islands – prior to Japanese take over and all of that too. And so, with the Okinawan festival, we outsiders were just shocked at how well-organized, and the strong association with their *Uchinanchu* culture. And we noticed all these flags of member clubs of the *Okinawa kenjinkai* [association of people from Okinawa prefecture] such as Ginowan club and all of that. We all got interested in what is this, what does this mean? So that... that fourth to fifth generation Okinawan young people became very strong and wanted to get back to that identity – *Uchinanchu* identity. But they're – to me, it's very unusual, because the rest of the other ethnics there's not that strong desire to get back to their roots as the *Uchinanchu* group seems to be. So it was... Yeah, there's that admiration among us *Naichi* [Hawaii's Japanese the ancestors were from mainland Japan] to see this very strong identity.

Because we don't have that.

GI: Yeah I would like to add to that. For example, when I was growing up, most Japanese belonged to their own *kenjinkai*, and our family was Ehime-ken, and the largest in those days was the Hiroshima-*kenjinkai*. But, by the time of twenty years ago, the Ehime-*kenjinkai* just disappeared. You know, nobody was interested in maintaining it anymore. And most of the *kenjinkai* have disappeared. I think Hiroshima-*kenjinkai* still exists but there is no group as strong as Okinawans. So that's one of the things about Japanese identity that was there for earlier generations that has disappeared in Hawaii.

GK: I wanna add to that. Okinawan organizations (such as locality clubs: like Oroku club, Ginowan club...) are under the Hawaii United Okinawa Association [Okinawa *kenjinkai*] – there are more than 50 clubs and these locality clubs were organized years ago (by the people from the same village and town), during the days of sugar plantations, to help each other. That's the reason why we have these clubs. The commonality – the common purpose, the common reason – was because they all – in the camp, the sugar cane camp – came from the same village, more or less. So they got together and, you know... If they were big enough they were able to bring the *obosan* [Buddhist priest] or the Japanese language teacher. And they were able to find a midwife to help with births. And whenever they had somebody die, they would all get together and help with the funeral service. And to this day, one of the major functions of the Oroku club is to help at funeral services of club members. And other clubs – there's 50-some odd clubs that belong to the HUOA – one of their major functions is to help with funeral service. And so, the reason why we have this Okinawan Festival, is because all of these clubs got together and we built a – we call it *kaikan* – a big meeting hall. And to maintain that and to have all the cultural Okinawan dance and music and performances, that's the reason why we have that. And that's why we have the festival which is what you folks are going to go to tomorrow.

But the people who come to the festival are not only Okinawans. They're every ethnic group that attends. And since we started that, we have the Filipino Fiesta festival, the Korean Festival, the Vietnamese Festival... What else do we have?

CE: We even have a Greek Festival!

GK: Oh, Greek Festival! And the Portuguese Festa. The Australians haven't figured it out yet, but you know... one day...

SL: We don't really have enough of our own culture... But there's all festivals like that in Australia.

GK: Yeah, Australians only drink beer! [laughs]

SL: Pretty much.

GK: But, I mean, you know that's the reason. When they saw the Okinawan, the Okinawan groups got together and did the festival, this whole town woke up. They said, "Wow!" We are trying to perpetuate. And we have groups come in from Okinawa, like the group called Begin, they came and performed. And we have our own home-grown Jake Shimabukuro [Born in Hawaii, fourth generation of Okinawan ancestry].

SL: Yeah, the famous ukulele player!

GK: Yeah, Jake. I don't think he's gonna perform this year. He may be out of town. But we have different groups that come. And today I understand in Okinawa, that the "oki-pop" music, just like k-pop music, is really coming about. Very interesting to have those things come about. And it has woken up a lot of ethnic groups in this town. And that's something that I think we can be proud of. But you know, Okinawa is still under Japanese rule, and the Japanese government. However, us Okinawans are like the Sicilians.

SL: [laughs] Yes.

GK: We are an island state at the tip of the mainland, and we want to be known as Okinawans, not Japanese. And we tease other people.

SS: I was adopted to the Ginowan club around ten years ago, and last year (2012) they celebrated their hundred year anniversary.

GK: We're celebrating 90 year.

SS: So I attended that. Each club has a long history.

Samantha, you may have a question relating to the differences between Sicily and Okinawa.

6. Naichi Japanese and Okinawans : the differences and the relationship

SL: Yes. Leading on from that, I've never been to Sicily. My mother's Australian but my dad's father came from Sicily, so I guess I'm *sansei*, I suppose, on that side. Growing up with Italian family in Australia, some of Dad's cousins – who were fully Sicilian, like Dad – they married Italians who were from the north, like Florence or somewhere in the north. There's a lot of, sort of, playful – not bullying – but teasing in the family. My cousins wife would say things like, "You speak like a peasant," or because they speak Sicilian it's like *Uchinaguchi* [Okinawan language]. Mainland Italians often can't understand Sicilian dialect. And the same goes for the Sicilians, they can understand standard Italian but maybe not the northern dialects. So there's a lot of semi-playful – not discrimination – but teasing. Everyone lives in Australia now so they don't really care anymore, but in Hawaii, Mr Endo you said that you didn't realize anything at all about Okinawan – Uchinaguchi, that kind of thing – before you encountered the graduate student. So is there any kind of relationship like that here between the mainland Japanese and the Okinawan people?

CE: Maybe I... excuse me Gene. I mentioned that I was born and raised until age 8-9, in Happy Valley, which is a section of Wailuku on the map. Wailuku is the capital city of Maui County, but Happy Valley was a working class neighborhood. About as low class as you could get in those days. But you know, I mention purposely in my essay, that the merchants there – Takamiya meat market, Takara grocery and Ricky Shimabukuro ran the hardware shop. Most of the small merchants in that section of town were Okinawan. I didn't know that, but when I got older and understood that, and see the business – how the Okinawans had their, pretty much their own kind of organization. From the

vegetable grower, the pig farmer, all the way up to the restaurants and the green grocery stores, etc. I didn't know that! They were Japanese, but, Takamiya to this day is still there. They're famous for all the pre-cooked *bento* that they sell. Everybody goes there. If you go there at 12 noon then you can't find any parking. Everybody's buying the pre-cooked meals! But they still have a butcher shop and they have the most beautiful pork you can get. It's better even than what you can get in Honolulu, because they're still getting it from the source. They sell beef too, but... When I go to visit my daughter on Maui I go there to buy belly pork, or pork shoulder... Most of the other merchants are gone. Takara's store is no longer there. But only later on did I realize they were Okinawan. So what does that mean? My parents were second generation, and the Naichi, basically the Japanese who came from the main islands of Japan, differentiated themselves from the Okinawans. Or any other group that was under Japanese domination or control, who were not from the main islands. So I was told that "these are Okinawans," by my parents or their generation, or my friends' parents, that they're different.

SL: Did they seem to have an opinion about that being a better or worse thing? You've said that a lot of small business owners were Okinawan, so that implies that they were successful as a community. But, did it seem like your parents had some kind of preconception about what kind of people Okinawans would be?

CE: They had preconceptions in the sense of... When you are going to look for a wife. So they had all these stereotypes about what an Okinawan woman... Or, how you distinguish them from a Naichi woman. And I don't know if they're true or not. Skin color... Body hair...

SL: I think very similar to Sicily and Italy!

CE: But! In this kind of reverse discrimination, they said, "You've got to be careful. When you see a pretty girl, she might be Okinawan." Because Okinawan girls are prettier than Naichi girls. So we were brought up with these kinds of

stereotypes that we learned. But growing up as a little kid, I went to all these stores and bought stuff. And we didn't see any difference. But as it turns out, Happy Valley had a substantial population of Okinawans. And talk about beautiful girls, the Yamashiro sisters... Just absolutely beautiful. And I didn't realize that in one section of Happy Valley that was kind of out from the main street, there were still pig farmers in this area called Piihana. So there is that tradition here, and so, in a sense, the Okinawan population had to – in order to survive – pretty much band together and establish a network, helping each other like that. Because there was this not only differentiation, but discrimination involving these two groups. Yeah, that's a sad part of history, but it's a reality.

SL: But on the plus side it means that the Okinawan community ties became so strong in the Okinawan festival, so successful...

GK: There is an Okinawan festival, a small one, in Maui.

SL: Oh, really?

SS: Could you add something, Gene?

GK: My daughter used to always say, "Because I'm half-Okinawan (half-Naichi) I have eyebrows that are so bushy, and hair on my arms and my legs." And she always used to tell me, "I got that from you!" Because of the Okinawan, you know... But I told her, "You're lucky!" [laughs] But she always used to complain to me about that.

GI: I just want to make an observation about the strength of Okinawan culture, because I don't know if any of you have been to Amami-Ooshima, but, unlike the rest of Okinawa, Amami-Ooshima was part of Kagoshima prefecture. But if you've ever been to Amami-Ooshima, there's so many things that are familiar there about Okinawan culture. The music, customs, food many of those things are preserved. I think there is something very unique about Okinawan culture that even after all the years as part of a different Japanese prefecture, the people in Amami have not lost that identity.

SS: Yes, Amami-Ooshima was a part of the Ryukyu

kingdom. By the way, as for the hair, my daughter says the same thing. "I'm hairy because of *you!*" I'm from Kyushu, so I have a southern feature.

GK: And that's a big joke in Hawaii. The differences between an Okinawan person and a Japanese person. The Okinawan person's got more hair, that's how you know.

SS: Well nowadays it's a joke, but before I don't know.

GK: Before it wasn't!

SS: Okay, students, The remaining time is very short. So if you have questions, make haste.

Ohnami Yuuki: What is the difference between Okinawan and Japanese in your opinion?

SS: Besides hair.[laughter]

SS: She's asking you both – each one of you.

CE: The other myth that we were brought up with was that you can tell an Okinawan from a Naichi by the name. They believe that Arakaki, Yamashiro, Kaneshiro, Ooshiro, Arashiro... All that. But then when I started going to Japan, and picked up books for reading material and all that. When I moved to Kahului, another town in Maui, my neighbors were Yamashiro, next door to that was Higa, and two doors down was Nakamura. But Nakamura – oh that's a Naichi name! – no. There were Okinawan Nakamuras too. So in other words, name is not a distinguishing characteristic. Which we used to hold as...

SS: Actually, if you know the kanji then name is a differentiating characteristic, but if you don't know the kanji then you can't tell.

CE: Yeah, and again going back to living in Happy Valley, there were a lot of Arakakis and Yamashiros. And typical – that we considered – in all probabilities that were Okinawan. But there were so many other names that were both. And they were all in English – Romanized – so we don't know the kanji. And otherwise there's no way of differentiating. Probably in the past, occupation. But not anymore. Gene Kaneshiro and all the others – all the major successful restaurants are all started by Okinawans, mostly. But again it's historical. And it's kind of occupational.

SS: George, are there some differences you've

noticed?

GI: Actually, none that I have personally encountered. I think that... I just wanted to point out that the discrimination was very strong at the very beginning, because my mother told me the story of when she came over on an immigrant boat when she was 18. On that boat coming from Japan, there were some Okinawan women onboard. That was the first time my mother had ever known any Okinawan women but she said that the crew would make fun of the Okinawan women.

SS: The ship crew?

GI: Yeah. Because they dressed a little differently from the other Japanese women. And so she said that early on that was the first time she ever learned that there was discrimination against Okinawans on the immigrant boat coming over. She was an immigrant herself like the rest of them, but the ship crew members discriminated against the Okinawan women which she did not understand.

SS: That was a real shock, I guess.

GI: Yeah.

GK: The immigrants, actually, my grandfather sailed out of Yokohama. So he went from Okinawa to Yokohama first, and was processed in Yokohama. And so they were on the same boat – a steamer – as everybody else that was recruited in Japan. So there were people from mainland Japan along with the Okinawans, and they all sailed across from Yokohama to Honolulu. But today there's not much difference, especially in Hawaii. But you know there is a difference between Hawaii Japanese and Okinawans and the ones from the mainland U.S., and the local Hawaii Japanese called the Japanese from the mainland United States "kotonks," a slang. And you say, "Why kotonks?" Because you knock their head and they go "ko-tonk" because it's mostly empty! But they say that because the Japanese in the mainland United States can speak much better than the ones in Hawaii. You know we speak the pidgin English and all that, because we're born and raised here. And we use more language and words from other ethnic

groups. Like for us, pau hana means “finished work”. Pau means finished [in Hawaiian], hana means work[in Hawaiian], so pau hana. And we use a lot of Japanese words, Chinese words, and so forth you know. And I guess that's how we live, and that's called Pidgin (English).

SS: So Gene, what do you think is the difference between Naichi and Uchinanchu. You can realize the differences?

GK: In my lifetime, my parents were very liberal. My mother and father never told me that I should not marry a Naichi girl, or even a Chinese girl, or even a *hakujin* [Caucasian]. We call hakujin ‘haole’ [in Hawaiian], a Caucasian person. My parents were quite liberal, and for that reason, everybody was my friend. In my neighborhood we had Filipino, Chinese, Portuguese – lots of Portuguese up in my neighborhood up in Wailea – and so growing up with those different ethnic groups, we went to the Chinese New Year celebration, we went to the Portuguese Festa, where they used to make the sweet bread, they're mostly Catholics. I mean, we were all – we grew up... My best friend his name was Aloysius Aho. You know, we've had all different ethnic groups. And that's how, in Hawaii, we grew up. They use the term “melting pot”. Everybody is in the one pot, and we are all together. It doesn't matter. And that's how I grew up, therefore, I really didn't notice the differentiation. But every ethnic group had their little differences in terms of habits, and culture, that kind of things. We used to always say, “Oh the Portuguese family, they're always painting everything.” Their house was very nicely painted. If it doesn't move, they paint it. The Japanese families, they always have boxes of stuff inside their garage where they park their car. They don't throw away anything, I guess they keep everything.

SS: Interesting. How about Uchinanchu? Do they throw it away?

GK: Same thing, same thing as Naichi Japanese, they have piles of stuff. I think how I grew up was... Our neighbor was Okinawan. I think there was some true generosity. You know, if

somebody gave us a fish, the first thing we'd do is cut it in half and give it to a neighbor. Here, somebody gave us a fish so you can have some. And we don't take anything off and we share a lot of things.

SS: Excuse me, Gene, I grew up with that kind of culture, country side of Kyushu. So Okinawans are more... more that kind of thing they do than Japanese?

GK: I think so. But then, you know because my circle was within the Okinawan families, and restaurants as an example. We were never competitive. My restaurant was Colombia Inn. Down the street was Flamingo, and up the street was Wisteria. Three different Okinawan families running three different major restaurants.

SS: Yeah, those were very famous.

GK: And my story is, one night I was running out of Budweiser beer and I called Wisteria and I asked Roy Asato. “Can you let me borrow six cases of beer because my delivery didn't come?” He was ready to put it in his car and deliver to me. That's the friendship that we had. And we never looked at each other as competitor. That's all. That's how I grew up, and that's how we lived.

7. The middle classes' roles of cultural activities

SS: I have one last question where I'd like to ask your observation. At the Okinawan Festival there are more than 2000 volunteers who are working. Just for one festival. And if you take a look at the festival, or even the World Uchinanchu Taikai, held in Naha, you see the attendants – if you get interviews with them, you may realize – the pivotal roles are taken by professionals, college graduates – professional means school teachers, lawyers government officials, business leaders and so forth. In other word: people of middle classes. A lot of the middle classes. Not many from the working class, not many from the upper class. Mainly the middle classes take pivotal roles in the community activities. So, do you think my observation is not wrong? What do

you think Gene?

GK: Well you've got everybody there, of course. In a festival situation, running two days, the ones that you don't see may be the people who do most of the planning. And those guys do the things before the festival and they do the work after the festival. We've got the professionals, they're maybe cooking as well as planning. You know, attorneys, engineers, people in the professions. Even doctors. I think the festival brings everybody out. I don't see... Middle class may be represented as the majority, and maybe out on the day itself – the two days, Saturday and Sunday – but... a festival I guess is a coming together. We're having a hard time getting the younger people, if anything. There's no more *isseis*, hardly, active. Because they're too old. The *niseis* are getting worn down too, and limited. Even *sanseis*, you know. I'm 67 and my peers, I have a hard time getting them out. Come on, we need help! Getting the menfolk *sanseis* out is hard. The *yonseis*, we see more women. And they're accepting leadership roles. So if there's any change going on in this whole spectrum... But I wouldn't say that it is predominantly middle class. You have by default, more of the middle class than the upper and of course the lower levels. But you know the festival brings out a cross section, and you may not see the ones who did all the legwork. The real planning and all that, you know. Maybe they don't have the skills to be out there cooking, but you see those guys preparing the program, making the arrangements for all the VIPs to be greeted properly, do the media relations, do the contact with the Okinawan government, asking them to donate some funds to run the whole thing. You see those people, but you don't see them all. And those who get elected are all there. Because even though you call them politicians, they genuinely want to help the community. They truly want to help the community. So you'll see the politicians there for two reasons: one is to gather votes, but they really care about the Okinawan community. If they have Okinawan ancestry and they are elected as a

Senator or a Member of the House, or appointed as a director of transportation or director of this, or so forth. You see all of that there. In a festival atmosphere, I think you see everybody. But... Yeah. I don't see any differentiation going on.

SS: Simply because I ask you if the middle classes take a pivotal role... For example you see the Hui O Laulima ladies, helping hands people. Those are mainly college graduates and professionals or school teachers and so forth. Because you have that group, your cultural aspects have been getting more and more prosperous. Once I asked the journalist, Betty Shimabukuro.

GK: She's a food editor.

SS: Yeah She was a food editor of the Star Bulletin, I asked her, "Do you have similar groups in the Filipino community? Korean community? Chinese community?" She said "they have no such prominent groups. Because they are too busy to do things." It means I guess, you should be a middle classes and should have leisure time, too.

GK: Well, in the Filipino and the Korean communities, there are these two factions within the groups. They have the first immigrants and their descendants, and the new arrivals and their descendants. So there is a split and they're slowly coming together. They realize that as long as they stay split they're not going to be successful. But the Okinawan community – it was different. We had a commonality. We're all here, there's not too many newcomers. Newcomers with new ideas, with new – different – cultural values. Similar, but different. I think Koreans and Filipino communities eventually will be as successful, because I think the general public will demand that of them. The general public will want to see what is the real Korean culture? What is the real Filipino culture? And I think they will come together.

CE: And the Korean – going back to religion – the Korean churches, Christian churches, they have the old second, third-generation descendants of the original immigrants members and now you have new immigrants of Koreans who are well-

educated, wealthy professionals, and they clash at church. Because they still go to the same church. And they speak in public – this big conflict between the new arrived Koreans and the old local Koreans. And it's been in the newspapers. Because the new arrivals are well-educated, wealthy, they're professionals and all that, and they wanna pretty much control the church. It's very unfortunate but that's it. Whatever happens, it's in the newspaper.

GK: Shige. So what is the plan for this group from this point today?

SS: Today? They have to write an essay about this session.

GK: [laughs] This is Hawaii!

SS: Yeah, I know but they come here with me, they're not tourists! [laughter] However, if they want to be tourists they'll come alone. [laughter]

GK: Maybe we could've done a relay or something. But anyway. I hope everybody will have a chance to explore Waikiki, and at the festival tomorrow of course we are hoping that you will come and help us mix dough and all that, but there's not too many opportunities for you to do something like that, but one of the things that I'd like for you to do, while you are at the Kapiolani Park, and helping over there or doing whatever – look at the people's faces, and look at all the different ethnic groups of people that attend a festival like this. You'll be surprised that you will see true Hawaii in a mixed gathering of several thousand people at any given time. You will see the "hapa", the half-haole and the half-Japanese, the Hawaiian, and the Hawaiian-Chinese. There's – I don't know what the demographics are – but there's probably 5% pure Hawaiians, or even less. Mostly they are intermarried, and a lot of them were Chinese that they intermarried with. But you see in the eyes, and the color of hair – people dye their hair so it's hard to tell- you know the cheek bones... Look around at the faces. That's what Hawaii's all about. And you wonder. Is this a *Nihonjin* [Japanese]? Or... You wonder. And I learned this because some of my

friends who came from Japan, you know, we went to a festival like this, or we went to the Ala Moana shopping center, or other places where there's lots of local people, people from Hawaii. And I said, "Did you know this?" And they said yeah. That's how they taught me. In Japan everybody looks the same. All *Nihonjin*. But when they come to Hawaii they see so many different ethnic groups. I guess when you go to Yokohama, around Yokosuka... You'll see the different ethnic groups. But not so much. Because I travel... we went to Hokkaido, we went to Okinawa, we've been to Tokyo and Nagoya and all that. My wife and I, we travel quite extensively. And we look and go, "Oh... everybody looks the same." All *Nihonjin*. But when you go to a function like tomorrow you're gonna see people from all different ethnic groups. And it's very interesting, how they're all eating *andagi* [so called "Okinawan doughnut"] or they're eating pig feet soup. All the different kinds of foods that they have available over there.

CE: And all the ethnic groups in Hawaii get together primarily for the food. You go to the Okinawan festival you buy your *andagi*, *yakisoba*...

SL: Same in Australia.

GK: It's all *tabemono* [food].

SL: It's good motivation to attend.

CE: Did you go to the food court at Ala Moana yesterday? From Naniwaya *udon* and *ramen*, *shabu-shabu*, and...

SL: Hawaiian food too...

SS: So my students checked the food here in Hawaii carefully. And they found that "Japanese food" here is not really Japanese, it's different from Japan's Japanese food. Korean food, too. It's different from Korea's Korean food. That's a localization! Make things "Local". It's very important subject to study. You know, good students can realize it. That's why came here, Hawaii.

GK: Well, I hope Shige-san will let you go to the beach today, have some fun. But be very careful, hang onto your purses because we have some

bad people in Waikiki. They're willing to steal anything if you leave it on the beach.

SS: Well, thank you very much today for your consideration for long time, DOUMO ARIGATOU GOZAIMASHITA.

* In the text, [] are supplementary note by Shiramizu.