These elementary school girls from Peleliu are performing at a luau in Palau. The luau, given for the PREL (Pacific Resources for Education and Learning) Conference in Palau in July, 2000, was also attended by Moving Cultures Conference attendees. Carl Hefner, a KCC representative to the conference, photographed the girls and the photos of the bai on the back inside cover.

Moving Cultures: Remaking Asia-Pacific Studies, is a project funded by a Ford Foundation grant to develop innovative instruction for area studies and a new core curriculum for the School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

Participants studied cultural transformations in Palau created by the inundation of investment, tourists and migrant workers from Asia. The group is developing a new approach to Asian studies that focuses on the challenges presented by moving cultures. The project also will establish virtual classrooms connecting faculty and students in Hawai‘i to their counterparts in Fiji, Palau and the Philippines.

KCC representatives included Provost John Morton, Gail Harada, Colette Higgins, John Cole, Jeanne Edman, and Hefner.
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To our readers:

In this issue of Horizons: A Journal of International Writing and Art, we offer a selection of essays that reflects the rich diversity of cultures, interests, and experiences of the students of Kapi'olani Community College.

Although the papers submitted explored many subjects, they included this year a number of pieces that examined different aspects of Chinese culture as seen through personal experience, participant observation, literature and film. As a result, if there is a theme for this year's Horizons, it involves a fascination with this complex, multi-faceted, ancient, yet dynamic, culture. However, as always, the range of topics is as broad as our name suggests.

There are a number of people that we wish to thank for their efforts in making this year's Horizons a reality. Among them are John Cole, Robin Fujikawa, Carl Hefner, and Andrew McCullough, all of who encouraged students to submit papers. Carl Hefner graciously allowed us to use a number of photographs for this issue. We thank Moriso Teraoka who also contributed photographs and Heikki Akiona for his time and expertise. We gratefully acknowledge their assistance.

And, most of all, we would like to thank the students who wrote and submitted the papers included here. We hope that more students will be encouraged to submit work for future editions of this and other journals that are published here at KCC: Diamond Journal, Spectrum and Ka Nani. It is with great pleasure that we share their work with you.

Frances Meserve, Editor
Winifred Au, Advisor

Cover Photo:
Chinese Dancer (1998 International Festival)
Color Photo by Moriso Teraoka

Back Cover Photo:
Okinawan Dancer
Color Photo by Carl Hefner
KOREAN CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

What do most Americans who have never been there think of when they hear the name Korea? They may think of the Korean War or of the confrontation between North and South Korea. Or, more positively, they may think of the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul or of kimchi, a traditional Korean food. I was born and lived for 28 years in Korea. I was educated there from elementary through graduate school and it was there that I formed my identity and my way of thinking.

Korea is located near Japan, with three of it sides facing the Pacific Ocean. Although its geographical location made it physically accessible to the introduction of Western culture and institutions, Korea did not open its doors to the West until the 19th century. In contrast to some other Asian countries, Korea was reluctant to accept Western culture until the middle of the 20th century. One important reason for this is the strong influence of Confucianism. As a result, although many Westerners are somewhat familiar with Japanese or Chinese culture, Korean culture is more unfamiliar to them. This ethnographic research seeks to introduce the Korean people--some of their customs, foods, language patterns and traditions--to those who may not be familiar with them.

FOOD

Koreans are the only people in East Asia who eat their rice and soup with spoons. Neither the Chinese nor the Japanese use spoons with such regularity. The Koreans' love for spoons no doubt derives from the many soups and stews they eat and the national preference for sticky rice.

Korea is a small country, surrounded by water on three sides. More than half of its landmass is mountainous. Koreans enjoy a rich and varied menu, however. They began growing cereals during the mid-Neolithic period, and rice cultivation was introduced to some parts of the country around 2000 B.C. Rice remains the main staple and is eaten with an array of side dishes featuring vegetables, fish and meats.

Fermented foods, such as soy sauce, bean paste, and red pepper, were important sources of protein in early times and remain Korean favorites. And, of course, no Korean meal would be complete without the ubiquitous kimchi, which is made with fermented vegetables and was essential to the traditional winter diet because of the scarcity of fresh vegetables. Today few homes are without a refrigerator, but kimchi remains on every Korean table. Each region has its own special kimchi, reflecting variations in climate and local traditions.

Kimchi reflects the spirit of the Korean
people. The five cardinal colors of East Asian cosmology are found in kimchi: green, red, yellow, black and white. Garlic, ginger, fermented shrimp or anchovies, red peppers, white radish, green onions, and other vegetables provide color as well as flavor.

The five tastes—sweet, sour, pungent, bitter, salty—are present in all varieties of kimchi, but kimchi’s unique taste is the result of the fermentation process that unites these flavors.

Koreans also enjoy varied holiday fare. Rice cakes, red bean porridge or glutinous rice are found on most holiday tables. New Year’s Day is always celebrated with steaming bowls of ttokkuk, rice cake soup. The Tano Festival, held on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, features cakes made from rice flour and flavored with mugwort or flowers. Chusok, the Harvest Moon Festival, is a time for thanking the spirits for a bountiful harvest and for honoring one’s ancestors. Crescent-shaped rice cakes are served at this time, while red bean porridge is eaten on the winter solstice. These traditions are vivid proof that food feeds both the stomach and the soul.

Since ancient times, red was thought to drive off evil spirits. On the winter solstice Koreans eat red bean porridge and sprinkle it around their yards to ward off evil spirits in the dark winter months. At funerals, the deceased’s name is written on a red banner to offer protection and red ink is used to record deaths on the clan register. For this reason, Koreans frown on the use of red ink to write the names of living people.

Koreans used soup and liquids to extend their ingredients when the country was poor and families were large. Over the centuries, they have come to like this kind of food. This preference in food reflects a good deal about Korean culture. Soup and juicy foods are relatively easy to share so Koreans come closer through sharing meals together. Korean meals feature many soups and juicy dishes so spoons are essential. However, from a cosmological point of view, spoons and chopsticks are a natural combination for the Korean people. The chopsticks represent yang, the active male element, and the spoon represents the passive female element, yin. Together they bring a certain harmony.

THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIORS

In many Western cultures, people eat slowly, enjoying conversation as they dine. Koreans, on the other hand, believe that talk at the dinner table can bring bad luck. In part, this is due to Korea’s strict Confucian past. In Confucianism, it is considered rude to talk when eating. But here are some other possible reasons. There are no separate courses in Korean meals; if people want to enjoy their food while it is still hot, they need to eat quickly. This is especially true of soup, which we have seen is an important part of almost every Korean meal.

Koreans also believe that the purpose of eating is to fill one’s stomach, not simply to enjoy the food. Thus, the faster one eats, the sooner the goal is achieved.

At restaurants and coffee shops around Korea, you often see people fighting over the check. This is because Koreans are in the habit of having one person pay the entire bill. Koreans feel strange when friends pay for their meals individually. It upsets their traditional belief that friendly feelings, or chong, should transcend all material considerations. By buying each other’s meals, Koreans feel closer to each other.
In the traditional agrarian society, labor was important. When a daughter married, she moved to her husband's family's home and therefore was no longer available to work on her own family's land. Sons, on the other hand, stayed with their parents even after marriage and were therefore more valued than daughters.

Sons were also important because, under Korea's Confucian tradition, the family name and traditions were passed down through male heirs. When a couple could not produce a male heir, they would adopt the son of a relative or the husband would have a son with another woman in order to guarantee that the family name was carried on into the next generation. Parents depended on their sons in retirement. Sons were responsible for caring for their aging parents and for performing ancestral memorial rites.

A family without sons was by definition unfortunate and unhappy, and a woman who could not produce a son was hardly considered a woman. To a certain extent, this tradition lives on today, even as more women take jobs in the modern workplace.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

The annual university entrance examination is practically a national holiday in Korea. All of the newspapers and television stations cover the exam. Police cars are mobilized to transport late students to the exam centers, and parents stand outside the university gates praying for their children's success. There are always more students applying to university than there are places. More money is spent on private tutoring and exam schools than on public education.

Koreans put great stock in a college education. It is the most important factor in deciding one's career. Another reason for such a focus on education is the devotion of Korean parents to their children. They will do anything to ensure their children's success and happiness. Many parents hope that their children will achieve the success that they dreamed of but were unable to achieve.

ETIQUETTE

Korean etiquette is complicated. Respect for elders is one of the most important aspects of etiquette for Koreans. If your business counterpart is older, then decorum is very important. One does not smoke nor cross one's legs in front of him or her. It is also important to sit up straight in meetings and, when standing, to avoid putting one's hands into one's pockets. In conversation, extended direct eye contact can be considered rude. When greeting someone, good manners demand that one bow slightly when shaking hands.

Refusing food or drink can be a problem. It is considered polite to eat or drink at least a token amount of what is offered. It is considered a sign of respect for the host to partake of his hospitality. When a guest leaves food uneaten, it shows a lack of regard for the feelings of the host. A Westerner who eats kimchi and other Korean foods with gusto will win approval.

SOME LINGUISTIC PATTERNS

Koreans refer to Korea as "our" country, their wives as "our" wife, their houses
as “our” house, etc. This is a linguistic expression of the strong link between the individual and the group in Korean society. Because of Koreans’ strong collective consciousness, “we” takes precedence over “I”.

In Korea, questions are answered literally; that is, when someone is asked a question in the negative, e.g., “Aren’t you going to school?”, a “yes” means, “Yes, I’m not going to school,” and a “no” means, “No, I am going to school”. Thus, the answer responds directly to the question, not to the objective situation.

In a family- and clan-centered society like traditional Korea, the precise expression of family relationships is important. Each person is called something different depending on who is speaking. This reinforces one’s place in the family hierarchy. For example, a girl calls her older brother oppa, her older sister onni, but her younger brothers and sisters by their given names. A boy calls his older brother hyong, his older sister nuna. Maternal aunts and uncles have different titles from paternal aunts and uncles, and so forth.

Commas generally are not used in Korean names. At times, when Korean names are Anglicized, a comma is added to distinguish the given name from the family name. Given names are usually made up of two characters and almost always hyphenated when Anglicized. There are only a few hyphenated last names: Son-u and Nam-gung are the most common. It is usually safe to assume that the single character name is the surname and the hyphenated name is the given name. At work, people generally use their surname and their work title; for example, President Chang (Chang Sajangnim), Director Kim (Kim Kwajangnim), etc.

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**RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS**

The Korean landscape is dotted with red neon crosses on church steeples, Buddhist temples, and spirit posts, which are an important part of Korea’s indigenous folk religion. Many religions coexist in relative harmony because as the Korean people embraced these religions over the centuries, they modified them slightly to fit the indigenous culture. For example, Korean Buddhism has been influenced by the indigenous shaman religion as well as by Confucianism and Taoism. Korean Christians have also been influenced by traditional indigenous beliefs and many perform Confucian ceremonies honoring their ancestors. Thus, religions are generally practiced according to broadly held beliefs.

According to an old Korean legend, the Korean people descended from Tan'gun, the son of Hwanung, himself the son of Hwanin, the ruler of Heaven. Hwanung wanted to live in the mountains on Earth so his father sent him there to rule the human race. One day, Hwanung met a bear and a tiger that were living in a cave. The two animals wanted to become human beings and marry. They begged Hwanung to help them. He gave to each 20 heads of garlic and a bunch of mugwort, a special mountain plant, and told them they would become human if they ate these foods and stayed out of the sunlight for 100 days.

The bear and the tiger tried to obey Hwanung but, after several days, the tiger gave up and left the cave. The bear stayed inside, eating only garlic and mugwort. On the 100th day, the bear was transformed into a beautiful woman. She was very happy but soon found herself lonely because the tiger followed her wherever she went and
frightened other people away.

Finally, she asked Hwanung for help. “Great Lord, thank you for making me a human. But I am lonely. Please give me a husband to keep me company.” Hwanung felt sorry for her and took her as his own wife. They soon had a son named Tan’gun who grew up to establish the kingdom of Choson, Land of the Morning Calm, in 2333 B.C.

No one knows if Tan’gun really existed, but he is an important symbol of the Korean people and their culture. Many Koreans calculate the date from the year of his birth, just as almost all people in the West calculate the date from the year Jesus Christ was born. The year 2000 is actually the year 4333 in the traditional Korean calendar.

Twice a year, in the second and eighth lunar months, a ceremony is held at a shrine on the grounds of Sung Kyun Kwan University in Seoul to honor Confucius and a number of his greatest Chinese and Korean disciples. This rite derives from ceremonies that once honored teachers, ancestors and nature. Over the centuries, this ceremony has come to be identified as a rite honoring Confucius and the sages. It originated in China but today is only observed in Korea.

In Korea, the rites in which a shaman relays human wishes to spirits through offerings, song and dance are called kut. These rites also reveal the intentions of the spirits toward humans. The shaman, or mudang, is an intermediary between the realm of the spirits and human society.

Every village has its own guardian deity. At the entrance to the village, or at a prominent place in the community, a shrine, or sonangdang, honors this deity. The shrine can be an orderly pile of round stones, a large or auspiciously shaped tree, a pair of spirit posts, called a changsung, or a small building. These shrines are part of everyday life. When a villager has a special wish, he or she might place a stone or a bright piece of cloth on the shrine and pray to this deity. The whole village holds rites honoring the titular deity several times a year. These rites are officiated by shamans and village officials. Tampering with the offerings left at village shrines is strictly prohibited; as a result, one often finds tattered remnants of cloth and elaborate piles of stones around such shrines.

At the entrance to rural villages one often encounters pairs of fierce “spirit posts” made of stone or wood. The changsung guard the village from evil spirits and also serve as boundary markers, milestones, and guardians at paths leading to Buddhist temples or Taoist shrines.

The worship of stones or trees resembling male or female genitalia is also part of Korean folk religion. The phenomenon originated in the Neolithic Era and is evident in the artifacts and paintings of the Shilla period. In the centuries that followed, Koreans have carved phalli from wood and worshipped stones and trees that resemble the male organ. The practice is believed to have its roots in fertility rites, the age-old desire for male heirs, and the traditional belief in geomancy.

Protestantism came to Korea after the signing of the Korean-American treaty in 1882. The medical missionary Horace N. Allen, of the Northern Presbyterian Church, came to Seoul in 1884, followed in 1885 by the educators Horace G. Underwood, Henry G. Appenzeller and W. B. Scranton who set up several Western style schools in the capital. Christianity challenged the basic values of Choson society and its believers were subject to persecution in the early years. But, as Christians took an increas-
ingly active role in the anti-colonial struggle against the Japanese in the twentieth century and as missionaries and churches promoted more educational opportunities, Christianity gained acceptance. Today, Korean Christian churches are actively evangelizing abroad and approximately 25 percent of the population, some 9 million people, are Christians.

People have searched for suitable places to live since the beginning of time. P'ungsu, Korean geomancy, is a popular belief which asserts that the natural landscape is imbued with mysterious life energy and can determine human fortune. It originated in Chinese feng-shui—indeed, p'ungsu is the Korean pronunciation of this Chinese word. However, p'ungsu has, over many centuries, developed a somewhat different focus. Chinese geomancy derives from the Naturalist concept of the Five Elements, wuxing (ohaeng in Korean), which in turn developed from Taoist teachings. In Chinese geomancy, the focus is on the flow of water and wind, hence the name “feng-shui” (wind-water). Water is relatively scarce in China, and the terrain and climate can be harsh. Chinese geomancers often attempt to transform natural conditions. Korea's topographical conditions and climate are generally more friendly to human habitation. Thus, p'ungsu has developed in a more accommodating direction. Korean geomancy focuses on harmonizing with nature and complementing natural forces and configurations in order to enhance human life. P'ungsu understands nature as a living thing and attempts to promote human welfare by managing the living energy of the land. Over the centuries, this belief system has developed into a science.

Ki (qi in Chinese), a living energy, is the animating force of all things. The science of p'ungsu analyzes this force in the environment in order to accommodate it in the best interests of the individual or family. Ki can be divided into two forces—yin and yang. When evaluating a site for a building or grave, p'ungsu practitioners look for harmony between these forces.

**CONCLUSION**

Through this ethnographic study I could better understand Korean people and the way they behave. It was confirmed that their behaviors, attitudes and traditions are the products of the cumulative effects of their environment, including the geographical, social, political, and historical circumstances of their history. When I consider that all human beings are “social beings,” it is not surprising to me that certain of my behaviors and thoughts are the products of the common and traditional beliefs of Korean culture. It was a very great experience for me to trace my physical and spiritual roots.
Balikbayan: A Filipino Homecoming, a medley of eleven stories by Michelle Maria Cruz Skinner, weaves a brilliant, multi-layered tapestry revealing the Filipino heart and soul. From her first story, which reveals the innocence of a young girl led by her grandfather to believe that she can heal, to the last narrative about a young woman recently returned home from abroad for her grandmother’s funeral, we are given glimpses into the history, rituals, thoughts and beliefs that create this rich and unique culture. In her offering, Skinner presents not only the seemingly aspects of Filipino life but the seamier ones as well in an effort to aid the reader in achieving a more complete picture of life in the Philippines. It is these elements particular to Filipino culture blended with elements common to all cultures and incorporated throughout Skinner’s pieces, that make her work significant.

For example, “Faith Healer” shows us the special relationship between Lolo and his granddaughter. Grandparents and their grandchildren appear to share an unconditional acceptance and understanding that parents and their children seldom experience. The healing power bestowed by her breech birth and confirmed for her by Lolo when she removed a fishbone stuck in his throat becomes an important part of this young girl’s self-image which, unfortu-nately, cannot survive his death.

“Simbang Gabi” finds Clara enduring a typical adolescent relationship with her seemingly well-intentioned but overbearing mother. Clara’s rebellion and encroaching independence, a normal stage of adolescent development, are symbolized in the burning of her Christmas pageant gown on the pyre and in the blossoming of her friendship with Memet, both of which occur in conjunction with Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, a symbol of hope and new life.

This story also introduces the concept of divergence between members of families and between different strata within a society. Clara is curious about Mang Lito and his large, impoverished family which is so different from her own: “Sometimes, overcome by curiosity, I would stand on my bed and peer out my window, over the wall, and into the lot below” (Pg. 15). She is, however, more tolerant of class differences than her mother. Although Clara accepts Memet, Mang Lito’s daughter, as a friend, her mother pointedly neglects to offer Memet a ride home after a basketball game. Here Skinner also suggests the Filipino fascination with fair skin and its use as a standard of beauty. In the Philippines, Mestiza, or Spanish/Caucasian, features are highly desirable physical attributes in both males and females.

Reaction to death is another common
theme in these stories. “All Souls” relates a young man’s experience at his grandfather’s graveside vigil. Peping’s feeling of being “dragged down with his own mortality” (Pg. 69) reflects an experience which is common when reflecting on the death of someone close to us, whether it be recent or in the past. And the deaths of those we love change us, as Cruz Skinner shows us in “Faith Healer.” As noted above, a young girl’s belief in her healing powers, a belief which has given her an identity and a sense of value, perishes because the one who believed in them has died.

Deception is another concept that crosses cultural barriers. “They Don’t Give Scholarships to Artists” presents the story of a moral and ethical dilemma faced by Nino, a sixth grader, who chooses to speak the truth about his aspiration to become an artist. His classmate, a boy who lies and tells the scholarship selection committee what they want to hear—that he hopes to become a civil engineer—wins the scholarship. This tale also illustrates the commonly held notion that the arts, and creativity in general, are less valuable than intellectual pursuits.

“At the Corner of EDSA,” “The Television Man” and “An American Romance” all appear to address the ambivalent relationship many peoples of other cultures experience with Americans. Because they believe that all Americans have a lot of money, the people in the crowd predict that the young American, a Peace Corps worker, will need to pay a huge sum for an accident they assume he caused (“EDSA”). In “The Television Man,” the white man’s visit to film a religious celebration is welcomed for the exposure and business opportunities it brings, despite an intuition of undesired changes that will surely follow. (A possible parallel may be found in the experience of Hawaiians in the development of tourism in Hawai‘i.) However, in “An American Romance” the issue is not economic but the would-be lovers’ misunderstandings, miscommunications, fear (Evelyn’s) and insensitivity (Macarthur’s) that prevail in spite of the universal attraction that can arise between a man and a woman.

“Taglish,” which denotes a combination of the Filipino dialect, Tagalog, and the English language, represents Filipino ingenuity in their efforts to “Americanize” their culture. Cleverly written in Taglish, this narrative depicts a situation which portrays this integration as incomplete. Although Veronica, the contestant in a game show, is able to speak and understand Taglish, she is unable to recognize the two correctly spelled English words in order to win the contest.

“A Modern Parable: The Elections in San Lazaro” illustrates the universal responses of apathy and fear of involvement in the face of violence. A few days before an election, a politician is kidnapped in broad daylight by two unmasked gunman who, in the course of the kidnapping, shoot a policeman who has come to investigate. Upon questioning by other police officers, the victim’s friends and other bar patrons are unable to give any descriptions of the gunman or help the officers in any way. Nor had they attempted to aid the wounded policeman. By their actions, the author implies not only apathy and fear but also a strong sense of how people attempt to survive when confronted with violence or a sudden assault the mind finds difficult to accept.

These concepts are also subtly suggested within the symbolism of the polluted river into which “sewage spilled out at night when nobody was watching” (Pg. 53) and “where the little boys swim” (“In the Neon
City by the River,” Pg. 63). In many cultures, as in many religions, water represents purification and cleansing. Here, however, Skinner portrays the water of the river as a “muddy, thick black that looks like it could suck you right in” (Pg. 53). The river becomes the symbol of the corruption, destruction and depravity that seek to defile the innocent. This haunting tale finds a perceptive young woman, Theresa, observing a child prostitute from a distance in the course of an evening out with friends. The evening culminates with news of the child’s death, news which forces Theresa to confront the stark contrast between the frivolous, comfortable life of her American friends and the difficult, impoverished, and sometimes desperate existence of the majority of her fellow Filipinos, a contrast apparently unnoticed by anyone else.

The above examples exemplify Cruz Skinner’s knowledge of not only the Filipino and American cultures into which she was born, but also a keen understanding, sensitivity, and insight into human nature. Her characters’ ordeals, circumstances, and reactions to life transcend culture and become instead universal human experiences described within the boundaries of daily life in the Philippines. As I read the stories and identified emotionally with the different personalities, particularly that of Ruth in “Balikbayan,” I, too, became reacquainted with my Filipino heritage, embraced it, and experienced my own homecoming.

Filipina Dancers
Color Photo by Carl Hefner
INTRODUCTION

How I Became Involved

When I first decided to participate in the Chinese Citizenship Education project as part of Kapi‘olani Community College’s Service Learning Program, I had no idea that I would learn so much from these truly dedicated individuals. In fact, I really only chose this project because it would enable me to collect data for an ethnographic field study I planned for my Cultural Anthropology class. Ironically, this project has turned out to be one of the most memorable things I have done thus far in my academic career and I will probably volunteer for this project again next semester.

My Study

From my first day on the job, I became interested in learning about what motivated these individuals to immigrate to Hawai‘i, where they came from, their perceptions of the United States (both pre- and post-immigration) and what they miss about their homelands. I had never given much thought to what people from other countries go through in order to become United States citizens, much less the intense dedication that must accompany their desire.

Over the course of the project, I also became aware of some of the frustrations these people encounter while simultaneously attempting to master English as a second language, learn the entire history of America, and study how our complex political system functions. Hopefully, this paper will interest you enough that you will volunteer some of your own time and energy to this truly rewarding cause.

METHODOLOGY

Getting Started

In order to participate in this Service Learning Program, each volunteer had to attend two preliminary orientation programs, including a general orientation that provided an overview of the program and INS training that informed all of the tutors about the process by which a naturalization examination is conducted. I found the INS training to be most helpful in teaching the students because the INS examiner who spoke at the orientation made it very clear that conversational skill is the area in which most people fail the exam. She also pointed out that the examiners are aware that many of the subjects who take the exam memorize the answers to the questions word for word. Therefore, she informed us that examiners sometimes change the wording of
the questions slightly in order to verify that the examinees fully understand the meanings of the questions being asked.

The third orientation was very valuable to me as it covered some basic methods of teaching English as a second language. In fact, this teaching session was so helpful to me that I wish it had been presented prior to my first encounter with the students as it would have provided me with some useful material to incorporate into lesson plans for the students. I found that after the ESL training, which occurred three weeks into the project, my students became more responsive to my teaching methods and appeared to have better comprehension of the material I covered.

**Reporting for Duty**

After attending the two mandatory meetings for the Chinese Citizenship Education Project, it was time for me to report for duty. I volunteered to work with the students for two hours every Thursday for ten weeks. However, the associations that hosted the meetings were closed in observance of Veterans’ Day, which resulted in my logging only 18 hours instead of the originally anticipated 20. It was during my weekly visits that I gathered data and made the observations that are included in this paper.

**The Environment**

My study was conducted entirely at the Association of Chinese from Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos and at the Hawai‘i Chao Chow Association. These two one-room associations are located right next to each other on the second floor of an old office building on the fringes of Chinatown in downtown Honolulu. Neither of these rooms was air-conditioned and both lacked sufficient teaching aids, such as chalkboards, paper, and picture books. Nonetheless, they served their purpose in providing a meeting place for teaching English as a second language, American history and Civics. I was able to collect personal data for my study by asking students questions when working on basic conversational skills. This technique served a dual purpose as it allowed me to collect my data and, at the same time, give the students an opportunity to work on the conversational skills they would need in order to pass the naturalization exam.
The Students

My subjects were Chinese Nationals who possessed alien registration cards that enabled them to reside in the United States. All but three of the subjects I worked with were over 60 years of age and did not hold jobs here in Hawai‘i. Most of the students had been housewives in their homelands and also assumed that role here in the United States. The rest of the students had retired from their professions prior to immigrating to the West. Their former careers ranged from accountants to mechanical engineers. All of the students reported that they survived economically from pensions that they or their spouses received from former careers. A large majority of them stated that they also relied economically on their relatives, usually one of their children, who had already obtained United States citizenship.

Key Informants

Since the students in the program spoke English at different levels of fluency, I found it most helpful to make sure that each group had at least one student who spoke very good English so that he or she could interpret for the others if necessary. This method worked so well that I used this technique throughout the entire project. If I had not enlisted this help from the more advanced members of the class, I would not have been able to gather enough data for my research.

By the fourth session, I had established close relationships with a male and a female subject who each took great pleasure in

Tutoring center at 114 North King Street
Color Photo by Allen Cookson
helping me teach the less advanced students by translating unfamiliar words into Cantonese. Because all but two of my visits to the tutoring site were spent with these two individuals, they became my key informants. Interestingly enough, my two informants were married to each other and later revealed that in order to move to America they first became Canadian citizens. They were both in their mid-fifties and owned their own import-export business and also taught tai chi. They informed me that a person is more likely to obtain a visa and an alien registration card if he or she enters this country from Canada than if arriving from Hong Kong or Mainland China.

I am thankful for the fact that I was able to form such a wonderful relationship with this dynamic duo who proved to be my best asset in interacting with the other students. I can’t think of a better way for the students of this program to learn than from each other. Not only did my key informants help those less skilled in English, but they also reinforced their own speaking abilities and rehearsed many of the questions they can expect to see when they take the examination themselves.

Interesting Revelations

One of the most interesting things I discovered while working with the students was the fact that most of them seemed to live in very tightly knit communities in the surrounding area known as Chinatown. Chinatown is a historic area of Honolulu “bounded by King, Nu’uanu, and Beretania Streets and Nu’uanu Stream” (Gurnani-Smith, 50). Many of the students revealed that they shop, socialize and attend church only in places where Chinese is predomi-
here.” Everyone I worked with that day nodded his or her head in agreement. One of the women also added that her family moved here because they can live a better life in the United States even with the meager amount of money they receive from the government. It was statements like these that made me realize just how fortunate I am to be living in this country. Many of these people seemed perfectly content living at what is officially considered the poverty level as long as they have both family and freedom.

**Culture Shock and Homesickness**

I was curious to find out if any of these individuals had experienced culture shock after they moved to America or if there was anything they deeply missed about their homelands. To make sure they understood the term, I had one of my key informants translate the definition from my textbook, *Humanity: An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, which defines culture shock as “the feeling of uncertainty and anxiety an individual experiences when placed in a strange cultural setting” (Peoples and Bailey, 412). One of the women stated that she was nervous about failing the citizenship test and wondered if that counted as culture shock. I then asked her if she liked living in Hawai‘i more than in Hong Kong and she said, “Yes.” I told her that it was more likely that what she was feeling was test anxiety and not culture shock. Nonetheless, everyone agreed they were nervous about passing the exam. After all, the $250.00 fee is arguably excessive and must be paid each time the test is administered. I can’t think of a more stressful situation than that of having to take such an expensive and difficult test with so much at stake in its outcome.

![A KCC student helps to prepare Chinese immigrants for the naturalization examination.](image)

*Color Photo by Allen Cookson*
Study Habits and Test Preparation

Probably the best way the students try to overcome nervousness and anxiety associated with the naturalization exam is by intensive study regimens and attending ESL training at the various adult education centers around Honolulu. Many of the people I worked with attended ESL training for four hours a day, five days a week, and then attended one of the Chinese Citizenship Education Project tutoring sessions three to four times per week. This meant that some individuals spend in excess of twenty hours per week training for their exams, not counting the independent study they often do at home. This is a prime example of just how dedicated these people are to becoming citizens of this country. I would also like to reiterate that these people are not just studying a foreign language during all of this study time but are also learning about American history and how the government is organized. This is quite a difficult undertaking especially when one is not completely literate in the language in which all of the answers must be written or spoken. Despite the disadvantage of not being fluent in English, almost all of the students I came into contact with can give the names of key figures in our political system. For example, even those with poor English skills could tell me that William Rehnquist is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and that Daniel Inouye and Daniel Akaka are Hawai‘i’s two Senators. I would be willing to bet that many freshmen at KCC would have difficulty answering these same questions.

Future Plans

Like most of us, the students of the Chinese Citizenship Education Project have dreams about what they would like to accomplish in the future. One of the common themes was that of bringing loved ones still in their homelands to America. In fact, most of my subjects have children and grandchildren in Hong Kong and Mainland China whom they have not seen since emigrating. They hold on to the belief that a brighter future for their families is important enough to endure miles and years of separation, even though it is extremely difficult to be so far from loved ones. One woman put it best when she said, “I miss my family but they are more happy that I am living in America than with them in China.” She hopes someday to bring her son and his family to Hawai‘i to live so they can be together again. She wants to see her grandchildren obtain a Western education so that they can become something other than factory workers like their parents. I guess you might say that the problem my students see with the land of opportunity is that very few of their family and friends are here to enjoy the vast opportunities with them.

CONCLUSION

I can best describe my experience with KCC’s Service Learning Program this semester as enriching, exciting, and fulfilling. Besides, I don’t recall seeing a class in this semester’s catalogue that included teaching government, history, personal relations, patience and group leadership all
in one course. My experience with the Chinese Citizenship Education Project is undoubtedly the high point of my academic career thus far. I would strongly recommend service learning to anyone who is looking for a rewarding and challenging project next semester.

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In the film, *To Live*, by Zhang Yimou, Fugui’s struggle in life exemplifies China’s transformation during the Communist Revolution and in the years that follow. Like all of the Chinese who adapted to Communism, Fugui and his family force themselves to grow and live beyond their past. Zhang uses symbolism and irony to create a parallel between this struggling family and the young nation that emerged out the Civil War. Fugui learns that life is a process of changing and growing stronger. The film allows the viewer to experience the passion and the tragedies of the Communist take-over, Mao’s Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution through Fugui’s eyes; ultimately we experience his realization of what it truly means to live.

In the scene in which Fugui carries his exhausted son, Youqing, to school where the children now work smelting metal instead of studying, he gives him an analogy of the life of their family that stands as the central metaphor of the film:

*Our family is like a little chicken. When it grows up, it becomes a goose. And that’ll turn into a sheep. And the sheep will turn into an ox. After the ox is Communism. And there’ll be dumplings and meat everyday.*

Fugui is trying to explain to his son why they must work so hard and wants him to understand that happiness is achieved only after a long process of growth and change. At this point in the film, Fugui, like most of the Chinese people, appears to believe that happiness will come through Mao’s Communism.

The four-step analogy can be applied not only to Fugui’s life but also to the process that China went through during the Communist Revolution and after. Zhang Yimou divides the film into four distinct parts: the 1940s, 50s, 60s, and “several years later.” At the beginning of each section a black screen announces the time period, followed by a shot of the same street in Fugui’s home town. The significance of this shot is to be found in his intent to show how things changed, both in China and in Fugui’s life, during these short intervals of time. Zhang is particular in dividing the film into these four distinct parts to show the process of growth Fugui and China experienced according to the metaphor of the chick, goose, sheep, and ox. There were many important moments in the film where Zhang could have elapsed time in a similar manner but chose not to, such as Fugui’s return from the war or Fengxia’s death.

The film begins with a black screen showing the words, “The 1940s.” The following shot is of a very clean and traditional Chinese street and a man in traditional attire walking away from the camera. This demonstrates something of the simplicity
and innocence of life in China during this period as later contrasted with modern China. This section of the film relates to the chick in Fugui’s analogy, which symbolizes youth and innocence, the new ideas of the Revolution, and the young government that is emerging. Also, in Chinese culture, chickens are commonly used as symbols of courage, fidelity, and aggression, attributes that can also be applied to the violence of the Civil War during the 1940s.

In this part of the film, we see Fugui’s fall from landlord status after losing his money and house to Long’er in a gambling debt. Instead of loaning Fugui money, Long’er gives him a chest containing shadow puppets. Zhang uses this chest as a recurring symbol of Fugui’s, and China’s, past. With the puppets, Fugui is able to make his living entertaining people. In a scene that finds him performing a puppet show depicting a man and his wife, Fugui sings, “Me and my husband just want more time to frolic in our great bed.” The shot shows the puppets approaching one another at the exact moment that a soldier’s knife cuts through the screen between them. The puppets represent Fugui’s desire to be with his family. The soldier’s knife symbolizes the violence of the war that will keep them, and many other Chinese families, apart.

Fugui and his friend, Chungsheng, are then captured by the Counter-Revolutionary Army. While taking a break from hauling artillery, Chungsheng says to Fugui, “I’d die happy if I could drive.” And Fugui answers, “Fine. Me, I want to live. There’s nothing like my family.” Here Fugui realizes the value of his life and his desire to be with his family. Fugui’s new outlook contrasts with the self-centered attitude he had when he was rich and obsessed with gambling. In the scene where the two wake up to see that the Counter-Revolutionaries have all been killed, Fugui’s first thought is: “Dying like that. Their families won’t even know.” Then Chungsheng says, “Fugui, we’ve got to make it back alive.” And Fugui answers, “And live a good life.” The pact that the two of them make and Fugui’s new appreciation of life are what drive him to protect his family throughout the rest of the film.

When Fugui returns home after serving with the Communist Army, he learns that the new government has paid for his mother’s burial and that his daughter, Fengxia, has become mute. The death of his mother symbolizes the death of China’s old traditional ways. Fengxia’s sudden inability to speak is symbolic of how the new government has taken away the voice of the people. Fugui also witnesses the execution of Long’er, the man responsible for making him a peasant. Long’er is dragged down the street and killed for being a landlord. Zhang shows us the irony in the fact that Fugui’s misfortunes in gambling have turned out to be a most fortunate turn of events for him and his family.

The film cuts to the 1950s. The opening shot of the street shows us how things have changed. The street is now crowded with people dressed in Western attire and Fugui is dodging bicycle traffic. Zhang wants to show the drastic physical as well as ideological changes that China has experienced in ten years. The chick has become a goose. In Chinese culture, the goose is a sign of hope and is thought to bring good things. This can also be applied to the great optimism of the Chinese people during the 1950s and their faith in Mao’s Great Leap Forward.

The next scene in this section shows
Fugui and his family donating all their belongings made of iron at the Communist Party’s request. To Fugui’s surprise, his son, Youquing, drags out the puppet chest and points out the iron bolts and pins in the puppets. Fugui and his wife, Jia Zhen, eventually convince the party leader to spare the puppets because of their entertainment value. Youquing’s enthusiasm for the Communist government indicates the excitement felt by the Chinese youth. And Fugui’s attachment to the puppets and the chest symbolize his attachment to the old ways of China. In another interpretation, the chest can be seen to symbolize China while the puppets represent the way that the people are being controlled by Mao.

In this part of the film, Zhang spends a great deal of time showing how exhausted Fugui’s family is, and how they and everyone in his town work day and night. To comfort his exhausted son, as he carries him to school, Fugui tells Youqing, “If you do as Daddy says, our lives will get better and better.” This symbolizes the promise made by Mao to the exhausted millions that their lives would improve with the Great Leap Forward. Later that night, Fugui learns that his son has been crushed under a wall. Youqing’s death is a bitter reminder of the pervasive tragedy endured by the Chinese people in a time that was to have been full of hope and good fortune. By the end of the 1950s, the Great Leap Forward had become one of the worst disasters in China’s long history.

The next section of the film, “The 1960s,” begins with the same shot of Fugui’s street. Now the buildings are covered in propaganda, everyone wears red arm bands, and Fugui stops to look at the Red Guards walking past him. The goose has become a sheep. After facing the tragedy of the 1950s, the hopeful geese are led as passively as sheep. The once optimistic people have realized the ineffectiveness of the Great Leap Forward and have become desperate for any sort of change. The result was the Cultural Revolution, a time of action without thought of consequences.

The next scene shows us the party leader telling Fugui to dispose of the puppets. He explains to Fugui, “Don’t you see what they are? Emperors, generals, scholars and beauties. Classic feudal types. Latest editorial: The older, the more reactionary. Do as Chairman Mao says.” Fugui says, “They always remind Jia Zhen of Youqing.” The party leader replies, as Fengxia burns the puppets, “Let’s not bring up the past.” Fugui, as well as many others, must forget the tragedies that occurred during the 1950s and the Great Leap Forward, as symbolized by the burning of the puppets.

When Fugui, Jia Zhen and Wan Erxi, their new son-in-law, take Fengxia to the hospital to give birth, they discover that all the doctors have been overthrown and replaced by young overconfident nurses. The nurses assure them that they are qualified and refuse to be assisted by any of the condemned doctors. They deliver the baby successfully but panic when Fengxia begins to hemorrhage. Fengxia’s death is one example of the results of the miscalculated efforts of the Cultural Revolution. In their desperation for change, the Chinese people attacked their own political, social and educational foundations; China was further weakened as a nation.

The final part of the film is labeled “Several Years Later,” and this time the street looks like a slum and Fugui is pulling a cart with his grandson, Little Bun. The sheep is now an ox, a symbol of strength.
The Chinese have learned from their mistakes of blind trust in the 1960s and have become a stronger people. We see Fugui, Jia Zhen, Wan Erxi and Little Bun visiting the graves of Youqing and Fengxia. Here we see everyone content, showing us that despite the tragedies of the past, life has gone on and they have become stronger. This echoes the idea that after Mao died, the Chinese people also had to find the strength to go on.

It is Little Bun’s birthday and Fugui has bought him a box full of chicks. When they return home, Little Bun asks Fugui where they will keep them. Fugui then pulls out the puppet chest, now empty, and puts the chicks inside. He says, “This box is bigger, isn’t it? Then they’ll eat more, and someday they’ll grow up.” The chest again represents China, and the chicks, the Chinese people, who have made use of the land—“a bigger box”—taken from landlords in the Communist Revolution. The chicks will outgrow the box just as the people have outgrown the Cultural Revolution.

Fugui then repeats his analogy to Little Bun, “And then the chickens will turn into geese, the geese will turn into sheep, and the sheep will turn into oxen.” When Little Bun asks what will happen next, instead of saying that the ox will turn into Communism, as he had once told Youqing, Fugui answers, “After the oxen, Little Bun will grow up.” Little Bun then says, “I want to ride on an ox’s back.” And Fugui answers, “Little Bun won’t ride an ox. He’ll ride trains and planes and life will get better all the time.” Fugui recognizes the great changes that China has undergone and sees the opportunity for happiness in Little Bun and his generation continuing on into the modern world.

Fugui’s recounting of the analogy to Little Bun is Zhang’s retelling of China’s Communist history for the viewer. Despite the hard lessons of the past, the Chinese people have gained the strength of oxen, and it is this strength that will carry the them to happiness in the future.
Geofrey C. Erese

HAwAIIAN TATTOOS

The history of Hawaiian tattooing is buried deep in the history of Western Polynesia. According to Kwiatkowski, Hawaiian researcher and author of The Hawaiian Tattoo, many of the motifs still seen in Tonga and Samoa have similarities to designs that date to an earlier culture known as Lapita. The Lapita culture is thought to have had its beginnings in the islands of Fiji and possibly earlier in the area of Papua New Guinea. It is from designs on pieces of Lapita pottery that the similarities of many Polynesian tattoo designs were recognized. It is logical that some of these early designs would have continued into the tradition of the Hawaiian tattoo.

The very word tattoo originated from the Tahitian word tatau, meaning to mark the skin with color. The Hawaiian word for tattoo markings, according to Emery’s research is uhi, which may also connote a veil or covering. The Andrews-Parker dictionary defines uhi as “the mark left by dye on the body or on tapa. The application of these techniques is known as kākau, which means the art of writing. Kākau i ka uhi means to tattoo, literally to put down or to strike on the design. The term mōli, as given in Hawaiian dictionaries, is the name given to the needle. We have no written records for the name of the mallet used; however, Emory, a well-known Hawaiian researcher, quoted an excerpt from the Andrews-Parker dictionary which used the phrase, “Haahi iho la ka mōli, pāhūhū a'e la ke koko” (the moli is struck on, the blood flows out). He concluded that hahau might be the name of the tapping mallet.

Based on historical accounts, Hawaiians were less extensively tattooed than other peoples of Western Polynesia. Emory points out that our lack of information about Hawaiian tattoos may be linked to the attitudes of the first white visitors who were fascinated by, but not knowledgeable about, such practices. Most writers found the Hawaiian tattoos to be less striking and less extensively used than in other Pacific Island societies they visited.

It is possible that there may have been designs that were unique to each island. The people of the islands of Maui and O‘ahu were known to have half-body tattooing known as pahupahu. Arago, an artist and writer who accompanied early expeditions to the South Pacific, reported that men from O‘ahu were “tattooed only on one side, which produced a very singular effect: they looked just like men half burnt or daubed with ink, from the top of the head to the sole of the foot.” Another account of the people of Maui written by William Ellis, Captain Cook’s surgeon, reports:

The custom of tattooing prevails greatly among these people, but the men have a larger share of it than the women;
many (particularly some of the natives of Mowwhee) have half their body, from head to foot, marked in this manner, which gives them a most striking appearance.

On Kaua‘i, Captain Cook describes the practice of “tattooing figures of men badly imitated” on the chest. Because of inadequate information, it is difficult to distinguish the differences that may have existed on the various islands. It is possible that certain family styles and motifs may have existed or that certain patterns were associated with individual islands.

The tools used by Hawaiians were quite similar to those used by Western Polynesians. The use of certain Hawaiian birds’ beaks, claws, and bones were quite common. The bones of some species of fish were also used as needles by the early Hawaiians. This can be substantiated by the collection of G. Hedemann in the Hawaiian section of the Bishop Museum and by some written accounts from the various expeditions. One of the more detailed descriptions by Arago reports:

They fix the bone of some bird to a stick; slit the bone in the middle so as to give it two or three points, which they dip in a black colour...they apply these points to the part to be tattooed, and then they strike gently on the stick to which the bone is attached, with a wand, two feet in length.

The most common dye used was a combination of the burnt remains of the kukui nut combined with the juices of sugar cane. This type of dye produces an intense black and stains anything it comes into contact with. Kwiatkowski mentions another method of producing dye by mixing the juices of the leaves of the Hawaiian iris and fruits of the Hawaiian pokeberry. Other plants were also used, such as plumbago, and many were slightly poisonous.

According to research and historical accounts, many Hawaiians were tattooed, but they were not in the majority. Tattooing was not restricted to the higher ranking members of society. It was more a matter of economic access: those who could afford to have them done were more likely to be tattooed.

Emory states that most of the tattooing among early Hawaiians was for ornamental purposes and that it was available to most who desired such decoration. It was also used, however, to brand slaves as a form of punishment and sometimes used as a sign of mourning. Most of the mourning tattoos worn by women were on the fingers, hands, and wrists. Some designs were worn on the palm. According to Hawaiian historian, John Papa I‘i, the person who chanted for hula and beat the hula gourd drum had the left hand “beautifully tattooed, because that was the hand that held the cord attached to the drum through a hole.” Women wore the majority of their tattoos on their ankles and lower calves in the form of bands. Designs were often associated with an individual’s ‘aumakua, the family or personal god.

The typical designs prior to the arrival of the Europeans were based on simple geometric and linear designs, such as squares, triangles and parallel lines. In general, these patterns can be considered pre-contact designs. Geometric motifs appear in tapa designs carved on Hawaiian tapa beaters or on the tapa bamboo stamps. Examples of these artifacts can be viewed at the Bishop Museum.

The arrival of the first foreigners influenced the motifs, introducing such pictorial themes as goats, guns, names, dates, etc.
These are considered post-contact designs. Kwiatkowski’s research suggests that after the arrival of the American missionaries in the 1820s, tattooing was strongly discouraged in Hawai‘i as it represented the ancient pagan religion and the idolatrous ways of pre-Christian Hawai‘i. The Biblical reference used by the missionaries to denounce the practice of tattooing was Leviticus 19:28: “Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, not print any mark upon you....” Tattooing was also considered to be detrimental to health because of the risk of infection. The practice was largely abandoned for over a hundred years.

Professor Keala Losch, a teacher of Hawaiian language and culture at Kapi‘olani Community College, expresses the belief that the last step in the Hawaiian Renaissance is the revival of the Hawaiian tattoo. The ancient form of hula, the making of tapa, and the interest in the ancient Hawaiian religion all have made strong comebacks. In an interview, Professor Losch stressed the importance of knowing the difference between the ordinary Hawaiian tattoo and the uhi. He explains that even though a tattoo may have a Hawaiian theme, it is not necessarily an uhi. Many Hawaiian tattoo motifs have been affected by European influences and a tattoo without mana is just a decoration or a piece of artwork. Further, uhi is something that many Hawaiians already possess; the kākau is simply a process to help bring it out. In order to build mana, which is the spiritual and cultural foundation, he suggests three basic steps in preparing for a Hawaiian tattoo. The first is to get the approval of parents and grandparents. He recommends consulting with the pastor or priest of your church, as well, before making the decision to get a tattoo. The second suggestion is to do research. He suggests that a person desiring a Hawaiian tattoo learn as much as possible about Hawaiian history and the history of tattoo designs. In this way, a person can distinguish between ancient and contemporary designs. He also thinks that it is important to research your family history and to learn what kinds of tattoo designs might have been used by family members in the past. It is important, as well, to get as much information as possible about your family’s island of origin, as particular motifs and patterns of tattooing were associated with different islands in the past. And finally, Professor Losch stresses the importance of learning the Hawaiian language. Although it is not necessary to become fluent before getting a tattoo, learning the Hawaiian language will teach a great deal about Hawaiian history.

The revival of interest in Hawaiian tattoos has grown out of the pride Hawaiians feel in their culture, and Hawaiian tattoos not only reflect that pride for all to see, but they also represent a connection back to the roots of Hawaiian culture.

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*Noa: Warrior with Maori tattoo
Color Photo by Carl Hefner*
Annette Y. M. Lum

TRADITIONAL CHINESE FESTIVALS IN MODERN TIMES

INTRODUCTION

When my father was a child growing up in Hawai‘i, my grandparents brought him up in a strong Chinese family background. My mother was raised in Hong Kong. They were taught the Chinese traditions and culture. This knowledge was passed from my grandparents to my parents in hopes of keeping the Chinese culture alive. They hoped that my father and mother would raise my brothers and me to keep the Chinese traditions and culture so we could pass on this knowledge to our own children.

Chinese festivals and beliefs play an important role in the Chinese community. There is a strong bond in every Chinese family when it comes to traditions, rituals and beliefs. The Chinese people believe that this bond within families enhances the relationship between parents and their children. It also aids the teaching of rituals and the passing on of knowledge. Therefore, Chinese festivals have an important influence on modern Chinese families in Hawai‘i.

In every Chinese festival, there are foods and symbols that relate to that particular festival. Food plays an important part in every Chinese festival as it is intertwined with the Chinese legend associated with that festival or observance. This paper is based on the study of five different Chinese festivals and how they play an important part in the experience of the modern Chinese family.

By interviewing a local Chinese family living in Hawai‘i, I was able to gain knowledge outside my own family about what it is like to be a Chinese-American and the influence of Chinese traditions and festivals. The Lin family have been friends of my family for many years, and I have known them all my life. They live in Hawai‘i Kai where they have resided for many years. Mr. Lin is retired. He is familiar with Chinese traditions and he practices Chinese martial arts which include kung fu and tai chi. Mrs. Lin is a homemaker who is also very familiar with her Chinese culture and is a practicing Buddhist. They have three grown children between the ages of 26 and 30. Tyler, the eldest, is a graphic artist and has many responsibilities as the eldest son. Greg, the second oldest son, currently works for an architectural firm. The youngest, and only daughter, is Amy. She is also employed by an architectural firm and attends the University of Hawai‘i where she is earning her Bachelor of Science in Information and Computer Sciences.

I also had the opportunity to interview some friends who are members of the Honolulu Chinese Jaycees, a leadership organization of young men and women who contribute to the community in a variety of
ways. The Honolulu Chinese Jaycees are involved in many Chinese cultural activities including the Dragon Boat Festival and Chinese New Year.

In gathering information from the Lin family and from members of the Honolulu Chinese Jaycees, I was able to gain a better understanding of how important Chinese festivals and rituals are to many Chinese Americans in Hawai‘i. The traditions and rituals mentioned in this paper are only a few of the many that have been passed down from generation to generation. With the participation of the children who continue to practice and observe these traditions, these festivals will be observed for a very long time to come.

In order to get a better understanding of Chinese festivals, a general knowledge of the Chinese lunar calendar is a must. The Chinese lunar calendar is associated with Chinese astrology, a system that categorizes people into twelve animal groups according to the year in which they were born. Each year of the 12 year cycle is associated with an animal, and there are five elemental factors that also are considered in the interpretation of Chinese astrology. There are many legends about how Chinese astrology came to be developed, but the most popular one concerns the Jade Emperor and how he restored order among the animals of the earth (Chang). Each of the animals of the earth proclaimed that his or her species was the most virtuous and unique and, as a result of this contention

The Lion Dance performed by members of the
Lum Chinese Martial Arts Academy
Color Photo by Elaine Van Lerberhge
between them, there was chaos. The Emperor knew that he must find a way to restore order, so he decided to hold a race. The winner would be declared the First of the Earthly Creatures. He chose a day, and all the animals assembled at the starting point, each believing that he or she would win. The Jade Emperor explained to all that there would be a time limit and that the first 12 animals to end the race would be called the "heavenly stems," denoting an eternal position in the divine order.

At the beginning of the race, all of the creatures were running at their best. The horse, which led the others, galloped over the terrain and was convinced he would be victorious. He then came to a stream and, because he could not stop his momentum, he fell in. The ox, which followed the horse, moved easily through the stream because he was accustomed to plowing through rice paddies. The ox then thought the victory would be his. As the ox approached the finish line, a rat leapt from the ox's ear and scurried to the finish line. The ox, angry that the rat had ridden on his back, came in second. Then the other contestants began to straggle in. Looking like a ball of wet fur, the tiger arrived next. Then came the rabbit, dragon, snake, ram, horse, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. These thus became the twelve symbols of the Chinese zodiac, which the Chinese have consulted ever since.

An almanac is made and printed in Hong Kong and is updated every five years. The Chinese use this almanac, called the Tong Sing, for time setting and for determining auspicious times for celebrations, parties and other sorts of occasions. Mrs. Lin uses the Tong Sing to predict whether a particular day will be good or bad for a specific occasion. For example, when one of Amy's friends was planning her wedding, she asked Mrs. Lin about what days in May would be best. Mrs. Lin looked in the almanac and found a day that had good feng shui for the wedding.

**HUNGRY GHOST FESTIVAL**

This festival is celebrated on the first day of the seventh lunar month when the gates of Hell and Purgatory open wide and the spirits are allowed a month of feasting and revelry in the world of the living. This major occult festival begins on the 15th and lasts through the whole month. The hungry ghosts are rampaging spirits who are restless and homeless. These ghosts have been abandoned by unfilial descendants or are spirits of those who died violent deaths and were never given proper burials.

According to Taoist and Buddhist legends, it is believed that the souls of the dead imprisoned in Hell were freed during the seventh month. From the last night of the sixth month, when the gates of Hell are opened, to the last night of the seventh month, when they are closed again, the released souls are permitted to enjoy the feasts prepared for them. To placate them, people make offerings of incense, food and money at roadsides, crossroads, temples, and other open spaces. These offerings are not placed near homes for obvious reasons. Few older people like to go out after dark, and only the bold marry during this dangerous month.

The Lin family follows a tradition for the observance of this festival every year. During the day of the festival, Mrs. Lin folds a bag full of *gum mun* (folded gold and silver paper that is used as money by the spirits) and prepares the offerings of fruits and nuts. Tea is also made and poured into a
plastic cup. When all available family members have arrived home in the evening, they proceed to the front yard. Mrs. Lin creates an area in which to place the offerings while her children place incense and candles in the ground around them. Mr. Lin prepares the area where the gum mun will be burned after which Tyler lights the candles and incense. After a short period of silence, they burn the gum mun in a metal container. After the gum mun has been burned, the family waits for ten minutes to let the spirits enjoy the fruits, nuts and tea. Then they throw these offerings into the street away from the house. This ensures good luck for the family members.

The Hungry Ghost Festival is observed by many Chinese families in Hawai‘i. My family’s traditional way of celebrating this festival is the same as the Lin’s. The incense and candles are burned to attract the ghosts. The burning of the gum mun symbolizes money given to the ghosts to spend in the afterlife. And throwing the offerings into the street ensures that the spirits are drawn away from the house and that they won’t cause harm to the family, taking the bad luck away with them.

**THE DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL**

The Dragon Boat Festival falls on the fifth day of the fifth moon between May 28th and June 28th. This festival commemorates the death of the scholar-statesman Chu Yuan. Chu Yuan served under the King of Chu in the time of the Warring States Period (403-221 B.C.). Chu Yuan demanded government reforms, but the king would not heed his warnings. Through the influence of his enemies, Chu Yuan was discredited at the court and lost his influence in the government. Being also a poet, Chu Yuan composed a poem entitled, "Encountering Sorrow," which was a fictional description of his search for a prince who would listen to good counsel. Unable to regain the king’s favor, he became so discour-
aged that on the fifth day of the fifth month
he tied a heavy stone to himself and leapt
into the Milo River in order to drown him-
self.

The people, who knew him as an up-
right and honest person, tried to save him
in their “dragon boats.” They banged gongs
to frighten the river dragon into returning
Chu Yuan. They also threw rice dumplings
into the river in order to divert the fish from
eating Chu Yuan and to sustain his spirit.
Unfortunately, their attempts were futile
and he drowned.

In commemoration of Chu Yuan a race
is held consisting of three or more boats. At
the finish line, there are flags representing
each dragon boat’s color, and at the end of
the race the first flag catcher to snatch his
boat’s flag wins the race. Each boat has nine-
teen members. In addition to the sixteen
paddlers, each team has a drummer, a
steersman, and a flag catcher. The paddles
used are approximately half the size of regu-
lar canoe paddles and, as a result, the
strokes of the paddlers are much shorter
than those normally seen. The drummer
provides the rhythm to guide the paddlers
and drums loudly so that all members can
hear. The rest of the festival is conducted
on land where there are many booths, ac-
tivities and presentations.

The rice dumplings, joong, are thrown
into the water as a sacrifice and to ease the
suffering of Chu Yuan’s spirit. It has been
said that someone once met Chu Yuan’s
spirit and was told, “The food you have
given me has all been taken away by the
dragon. Hereafter, you should wrap the rice
in bamboo leaves tied with five colored
thread. These are the two things that the
dragon is most afraid of” (Associated Chi-
inese University Women, Vol 2). Thus, the
people began to make the glutinous rice
wrapped in a pyramid shape using bam-
boo leaves or reeds. Joong is still eaten in
the memory of Chu Yuan, but it can also be
eaten at other times. It is a popular food.

For several years, with the help of
AT&T, Honolulu has hosted Dragon Boat
races every July. Three boats were donated
to the people of Hawai‘i by the Taiwanese
government so that these races could be
held and the awareness of Chinese culture
broadened. Numerous sponsors and volun-
teers have made this festival a success an
annual success.
CHING MING

To celebrate spring in early April, 106 days after the winter solstice, the heavenly gates are opened for thirty days to let the spirits wander (Peng). This period is called Ching Ming, which translates from clear (ching) and bright (ming). This month long memorial serves as a time for the sentimental remembrance of ancestors for the Chinese people. Ching Ming is celebrated over a month long period so that families can plan the time to get together and visit their ancestors’ graves. This is the only festival that is celebrated at the same time each year and does not follow the lunar calendar. Ching Ming is also a time to rejoice in the communion of the lineage, both living and dead, and a time to ponder eternal thoughts. Families get together each year on this special occasion and sweep the graves of their departed members. They place offerings there of fresh flowers, food, gum mun, wine and tea. Family members bow to express their respect for their departed loved ones.

Food is laid in front of the headstone for the ancestor and is also placed to the right of the grave as an offering to Sun-ga, the Earth God who cares for the ancestors in the afterlife. While Sun-ga and the ancestors eat, the family cleans the gravesite to make it a more “comfortable” place for the ancestor. They also picnic with the ancestors there. The gum mun is burned to provide money for the ancestors in the afterlife. Firecrackers are used by some families for Ching Ming. The main rituals are to be completed by noon.

These observances soothe the ancestors’ feelings and reassure them that they have not been forgotten or neglected. Families celebrate Ching Ming in different ways. In some, a whole roast pig is included in the ritual. My entire family takes part in the Ching Ming tradition. For us, it is a time to leave our busy schedules and to work together as a family. We go to two different locations as my great-grandparents are buried in Manoa and my grandparents in Kaneohe.

The day before we observe Ching Ming, my mother prepares the dishes for the ancestors and Sun-ga. She makes an odd number of dishes, normally 5 or 7, one of which includes fish.

On the day we go, we wake up early in the morning because we have to visit two different gravesites. My father places two boxes in the kitchen. Each will contain portions of the dishes my mother has prepared, 3 pairs of chopsticks, 6 cups (3 for tea and 3 for wine), and a few other things for preparation when we reach the sites. When we arrive, we all walk together to the gravesite. While my brother retrieves the cage for burning the gum mun, my mother and I set out the dishes and cups for the ancestors.
and Sun-ga. My father places the incense, candles and various kinds of Chinese paper in their proper places. When we kow tow (bow) to our ancestors, it is generally in the following order: Father and mother, eldest child, next eldest, then youngest. After spending time with each of the ancestors and allowing time for them to eat, we burn the gum mun. After the gum mun has been burned, we touch each dish and cup to let the spirits know that we are going to leave them. After this ritual, we kow tow again before leaving.

The Chinese have great respect for their ancestors. Year after year, children are shown the proper rituals for Ching Ming. In hopes of keeping this tradition alive, each generation is taught so that they may in turn teach their children.

MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL

On the fifteenth day of the eighth moon of the lunar calendar, traditional Chinese families and their friends gather to watch the moon. This is the day in September when the moon is fullest and brightest.

This festival celebrates the legend of Hou Yih, an officer of the imperial guards. According to the legend, one day ten suns appeared in the sky. The emperor, who was perturbed and feared that this occurrence foreshadowed evil for his people, ordered Hou Yih, an expert in archery, to shoot nine of the ten suns away. This great feat impressed the Goddess of the Western Heaven. Because Hou Yih was also a talented architect, the goddess commissioned him to build a palace made of multicolored jade. His work so pleased the goddess that she gave him the elixir of immortality in the form of a pill. He was not allowed to swallow the pill until he had undergone a year of prayer and fasting, so he took the pill home and hid it. One day his beautiful wife, Chang Oh, happened to find the pill and decided to take it. She was punished immediately. She began to soar up toward the moon. Hou Yih tried to rescue her but was swept back to earth by a typhoon. Chang Oh’s beauty enhanced the brilliance of the moon, which glowed even brighter. On the moon, she was transformed into a three-legged toad and coughed up the pill, which became a jade rabbit.

As each Chinese holiday is accompanied by some type of food, moon cakes are the chosen delicacy of the Mid-Autumn Festival. There are at least a dozen different kinds of moon cake, but the traditional one is a baked pastry filled with lotus seed paste and a salted egg yolk in the center. The cakes are at least three inches in diameter. Although not as widely known in Hawai‘i as some other Chinese festivals, many families continue to observe the Mid-Autumn Festival and Chinatown bakeries are very busy at this time of year selling moon cakes. This is the only time of the year that moon cakes are sold and many families have at least one box of moon cakes in their homes.

SPRING FESTIVAL

The Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is a time of great excitement and joy for the Chinese people. The festivities begin 22 days before the date of the New Year and continue for 15 days after. During the time prior to New Year’s Day, people acquire and prepare the necessary food and clothing. Families clean their homes, wash all household utensils and discard unwanted items during this period.

Spring cleaning is most important because it designates a time to bid farewell to
all of the bad things that have happened during the old year and to welcome the good things that are to come in the new one. Families decorate their homes with papers containing the symbols for happiness, longevity and wealth. Sometimes the decorations have more than one meaning. For example, the character for wealth when turned upside down reads “the arrival of luck and wealth” for the household.

The color red is very important in the Spring Festival. Red symbolizes fire and is used to scare away evil spirits and bad luck. Receivers of li see perceive this gift as a sign that the year will be prosperous. New clothes of red represent new beginnings for the coming year (Inside China Today).

There are many legends associated with the New Year. One such legend tells of a beast named Nian who lived in the mountains and preyed on the people year after year. Nian in Chinese means “year.” One day, an old man came and offered to subdue Nian. When he confronted the beast he said, “I hear that you are very capable, but can you swallow the other beasts of prey on earth instead of people who are by no means your worthy opponents?” From that time, Nian attacked the beasts of prey, although he still harassed people and their domestic animals from time to time. Because Nian feared the color red, the old man told the people to put up red paper decorations on their windows and doors at each year’s end to scare Nian away. The old man then disappeared, riding away on Nian. The people believed that the old man was an immortal god and since that time the Chinese have commemorated the conquest of Nian. The term guo nian, which may be translated as “surviving the nian,” has today become “celebrate the (New) Year,” as the word guo means both “pass-over” and “observe.” Thus the customs of putting up red paper and of setting off firecrackers are for the purpose of scaring Nian away.

In Hawai’i today, the Dragon and Lion Dances are just a few of the events that take place during the New Year celebration. Traditionally, the Dragon and Lion Dances were used to drive away demons and ensure a good harvest, as well as being an expression of the hope of good luck in the coming year. Nowadays, the dances have become symbols of the rich culture of the Chinese people. Other activities, such as pageants, parties and other celebrations, are also observed during this exciting time. In Hawai’i, New Year’s festivities include a pageant sponsored by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. This is followed by a block party on Maunakea Street on the next weekend. There is also a Night in Chinatown celebration in which Lion Dance groups bless stores throughout Chinatown. And all of this is accompanied by numerous other entertainments.

Most Chinese families in Hawai’i follow the traditions of the Spring Festival. These include spending time with family, cleaning the house to sweep out the bad
luck, and sharing a family dinner together. Li see is given to children by parents, relatives and grandparents. To show respect and appreciation, the children kneel before their relatives and serve them tea.

CONCLUSION

My parents have passed to my brothers and me the same teachings and beliefs they received from their parents. Growing up in a loving household where we were taught the traditions and culture of the Chinese people, my brothers and I not only have cherished memories but also the knowledge to continue these traditions in the future. Knowing so many Chinese-American people who, like me, value their culture and traditions, it is safe to say that this culture will be preserved and will continue into the years to come.

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Lion Dance and Firecrackers
Color Photo by Carl Hefner

Lion receiving li see from a Chinatown store
Color Photo by Elaine Van Lerberhge
INTRODUCTION

Throughout the year, Filipinos observe many festivals. Their festivals celebrate good fortune and prosperity and also ward off harmful spirits. Many of these festivals continue to be observed by Filipinos who have relocated and have lived for many years away from their homeland. I would like to examine some of these through the experiences of the family of Ramon and Dolores Bocalbo.

There are three generations of Bocalbos living all over the world; however, most of them still reside in the Philippines. Ramon emigrated to America in 1976. His wife, Dolores, had come the year before, and he followed bringing their two daughters. They lived in Texas for two years, but the climate proved to be unsuitable for them. They moved to Hawai‘i in 1978. Ramon joined the U.S. Army and received his citizenship one year later. Hawai‘i has been their home ever since.

Ramon comes from a family of seven children, of which he is the third eldest. He has two brothers and three sisters still living. His oldest sister also lives in Hawai‘i but is currently living in Michigan while earning a medical degree. One younger brother is a flight attendant living in Texas. A younger sister is a military computer specialist and resides in Colorado. Only one of his brothers married and had children so these are Ramon’s only nieces and nephews. Both of Ramon’s parents are living. His mother lives in Hawai‘i and his father in the Philippines. His father has remarried and has six children from his second marriage.

Dolores comes from a family of five children; she has one brother and three sisters. Her parents died about ten years ago, but her siblings are still alive and keep close ties with Dolores. All are married and have children so Dolores has many nephews and nieces. Her brother and one of her sisters reside in the Philippines, and two sisters now live in Canada.

Ramon and Dolores have three children. Their two daughters are married; one lives in Hawai‘i and the other in California. Their son attends Leeward Community College and lives with them. He is studying to become a computer programmer. Ramon feels that it is unfortunate that neither of his daughters has provided him and Dolores with grandchildren yet, but he is hoping that they do so soon because he is not getting any younger.

Though the Bocalbos have lived in Hawai‘i for many years, they still remember and observe many festivals that were important to them when they lived in the Philippines. Through talking with them, I was able to understand what these festivals
mean to the Bocalbos and why they are still important to them. Ramon and Dolores are eager to share their knowledge and love of these important occasions.

**FILIPINO FESTIVALS**

Festivals take place in the Philippines throughout the year. In January, the Quiapo Fiesta is observed on the second Tuesday of the month. On the third Tuesday, the Ati-atihan Festival is celebrated in some areas of the Philippines. Lent, the forty day period preceding Easter Sunday, is celebrated in February, March and April. During Lent, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday (or Passion Sunday), and Good Friday are important days, culminating in the celebration of the Resurrection which is observed on Easter Sunday. The celebration of Santacruzan occurs in May. In September, the Penafrancia Fluvial Festival is observed. In December, as in many other countries, Christmas and New Year’s Day are important days to celebrate. With all of these festivals, which do the Bocalbo’s observe and do they continue to practice the traditions they grew up with in the Philippines?

As stated earlier, in the month of January, there are two festivals which are always celebrated in the Philippines. The Quiapo Fiesta, also known as the Feast of the Black Nazarene, is centered around a life-sized image of the suffering Christ bearing the cross on his shoulder, his face streaked with blood. The mahogany statue was brought from Mexico in the 17th century. The galleon carrying the statue encountered many difficulties on the voyage and the crew came to believe that its prayers to the statue saved them and the ship each time. The crew’s belief in the Nazarene’s miraculous powers lives on in present-day devotees 300 years later. Celebrated in the second week of January, the festival culminates in the procession of the Black Nazarene followed by thousands of people through the Quiapo district of Manila. Devotees attempt to touch the image with handkerchiefs and towels, which they then rub on their bodies in hopes of a miraculous cure.

Ramon and Dolores recall this festival clearly. The Feast of the Black Nazarene was an important event to their parents. Both remember their parents taking them to the festival when they were young children.
They remember that the cross was a symbol of hope and of healing, and that they fought the crowds for a chance to be able to touch a small portion of the miracle they believed it to possess. Now that they are both in America, there is no opportunity for their children to see the Black Nazarene. However, Ramon and Dolores honor this day by praying to God in hopes of a year without pain or suffering.

The Ati-atihan Festival, literally translated as "making like the ati," is celebrated in Kalibo. Kalibo is the capital of the province of Aklan, one of the four provinces of Panay Island. Its origins can be traced back to the time when ten Malay Datus from Borneo purchased the island from the ati, a short dark-skinned people who were the original inhabitants. This agreement between the two peoples was sealed with a joint feast and a celebration that included songs and dances. Today, the way this festival is observed is similar to the way that people observe Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

Groups of young people wear costumes, blacken their skin, and paint designs on their faces. They prance and kick to the music of frenzied rhythms, creating a colorful spectacle that encourages bystanders to join in the merriment. Ramon and Dolores did not attend this festivity as Ati-atihan is celebrated in provinces they did not live in. But the story of the origins of the festival continues to be told in both families.

An important sacred time called Lent is observed in the months of February, March and April. Lent is a season for soul-searching, repentance, and reflection upon one's life. Lent originated in the earliest days of the Catholic Church as a preparation for Easter, when the faithful re-dedicate themselves and converts are instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the 40 days of Lent, the individual imitates the Biblical stories of Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for 40 days, His return to complete his ministry, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which has been since ancient times a day to fast, pray, repent and show remorse by placing ashes upon the forehead. This custom entered the Catholic Church through Judaism, and it is a most appropriate symbol for the beginning of a period of sober reflection, self-examination, and spiritual re-direction. For Ramon and Dolores, Ash Wednesday is a time to remember that we were created from ashes and that when we die we return to the ground as ashes.

Palm Sunday, also called Passion Sunday, is one of the most joyous and festive days celebrated in the Philippines. It is the day that marks Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. He was greeted by many onlookers waving palm branches and spreading their cloaks on the road before the donkey that carried him. Ramon and Dolores celebrate Palm Sunday by attending Mass and receiving a palm frond that has been blessed by a priest. The palm frond is then taken home and placed at the family's home altar. The palm is kept until the next arrival of Palm Sunday one year later.

Following Palm Sunday is the Holy Week, which begins late in April. This includes Good Friday and ends on Easter Sunday. Good Friday is the day that Jesus was sentenced to death. In the Philippines, the Black Nazarene joins the processional that re-enacts Jesus' march in which he carried the cross upon which he would be crucified. Ramon and Dolores remember the procession and the people who took part in the re-enactment. During this observance,
the individuals who volunteer to lead this procession actually flog their backs and crown themselves with thorns which make them bleed. Although this performance is painful and violent, both Ramon and Dolores fondly remember watching it and visualizing Jesus’ procession through the streets of Jerusalem. During the period of Lent, the Bocalbos pray and reflect, and on Easter Sunday celebrate his resurrection and ascension, which opened the gates of Purgatory and allowed the lost souls to enter Heaven. Both Ramon and Dolores believe that this was the purpose of his crucifixion and resurrection.

Santacruzan is the queen of the May festivals. May is the month when beautiful and abundant flowers appear in the Philippines. Maidens called sagalas dress up in beautiful gowns. The prettiest of them is named the Rayna Elena, and she plays the part of St. Helena. She carries a small cross and has a young boy for an escort who acts the part of a prince. With the other sagalas, the Rayna Elena walks in the procession throughout the town. Ramon remembers this celebration and its parades. Although his children have never seen it, he keeps this festival alive for his family by talking about it and comparing it to the Lei Day observances that take place in Hawai‘i this time of year and other May Day observances in other places.

The Penafrancia Fluvial Festival is celebrated on the third Saturday of September. It is held in honor of the Virgin Mary and, during the celebration, her statue leads a procession on water. The barge that carries the statue is surrounded by thousands of devotees gliding alongside in boats. This statue was brought to the Philippines in the 17th century, and she has since reigned over this region of fiery volcanoes. The week long festivities begin with the Traslacion (held on the second Friday of the month) in which the statue is brought from her traditional home at the Penafrancia Shrine on the outskirts of Manilla to the Naga Metropolitan Cathedral. On the 9th day (Saturday), the statue is brought to the Penafrancia Basilica Minore via a fluvial procession on the storied Naga River. Ramon and Dolores did not remember watching this festival that takes place on the river, but according to them, it reflects the great love that many Filipinos have for the Virgin Mary, who symbolizes mercy and forgiveness.

As in many other countries, Christmas is celebrated in December in the Philippines. The 16th day of December marks the opening of the Christmas season and this season begins with a pre-dawn Mass or misa de gallo. The misa de gallo is a nine day series of pre-dawn masses. In some provinces, Christmas songs from the church fill the air before the ringing of church bells to summon the faithful to mass. Parents, children, and relatives attend Mass together. After Mass, people hurry to tiny stalls to buy and sell regional delicacies. On Christmas Eve, the Festival of Lanterns is held. A home is incomplete without its lantern that symbolizes Christmas. The lanterns, or parols, come in many sizes. The parol is the symbol of the star that guided the Three Wise Men to the baby Jesus. In addition to the Lantern Festival, the family shares noche buena, a dinner either before or after attending Mass, on Christmas Eve. During the celebration of the birth of Jesus, people are expected to forgive the transgressions of others, to love one another, and to exchange gifts. The main difference between the observance of Christmas in the Philippines and among Filipinos in Hawai‘i is the custom of decorating a Christmas tree. Ramon and Dolores

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do not buy a Christmas tree but, instead, bring a dried branch of foliage to their priest to be blessed and place it upon their altar at home. Says Ramon, “Christmas is not about Christmas trees. All you need is a good heart to celebrate Christmas.”

On the eve of the New Year (December 31), the Filipino family joins together to set off fireworks to make as much noise as possible in welcoming the New Year. This noise frightens away evil spirits who might bring bad luck and misfortune. In addition, plenty of food is offered, coins placed in everyone’s pockets, and candles are lit in hopes of a good prosperous year to come. Ramon and Dolores continue to celebrate New Years as they did when they lived in the Philippines. They both believe that Filipino celebrations have given them good fortune.

CONCLUSION

I believe that most traditional Filipino festivals continue to be observed by many Filipinos even after they relocate to the United States. As my research with the Bocalbos shows, the observance of these occasions is an important part of their lives. Even the festivals that the Bocalbos did not celebrate when they lived in the Philippines are remembered by them, and their knowledge of these festivals is handed down to their children. These festivals are an important way for them to keep in touch with their Filipino culture and identity.

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If an equation could define the "good life," it would be dream plus passion plus persistence times love equals happiness. Further, as al-Ghazali explains: "Know that the love of God is a standard that leads to victory... This love is a universal solvent to secure happiness. Whoever secures it, is richer than in the possession of both worlds" (p. 242). Whether pursuing temporary pleasure or disciplining for eternal joy, the love of God is what sustains me. The solution to achieving both short-term and long-term goals is to live a life full of love and passion and choose to be happy.

Dandin described the three aims of life as being "virtue, wealth, and love" (p. 312). I found this to be ironic because Dandin's example of love was based on aesthetic values and beauty versus true love. True love does not focus on what one can receive from another but rather on the action of giving. The prince says, "The character of such a girl cannot but correspond to her appearance, and my heart is fixed upon her, so I'll test her and marry her" (p. 311). His version of love was more like lust, which provides temporary excitement, but does not have enough substance to last. I value the kind of love developed over a lifetime, or God's love as expressed in the Bible: "Love suffers long and is kind," and "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails" (I Cor. 13:4, 7-8). Dandin mentioned virtue, which signifies endurance, commitment and excellence, all of which are important in achieving lasting success in any area of life.

Still, all we have is now. The measure of our contentment and personal achievements are determined by our ability to live in the present moment. Regardless of what happened yesterday and what may happen tomorrow, now is where we are. From this point of view, the key to living a "good life" must be in focusing on the present moment and making it more pleasurable. Lady Murasaki describes this when she says, "I cannot help feeling that to be near so beautiful a queen will be the only relief from my sorrow. So in spite of my better desires (for a religious life) I am here. Nothing else dispels my grief--it is wonderful!" (p. 261). Be happy today, for who knows whether there will be a tomorrow to enjoy? On the way to achieving my long-term goals, I decided to be happy on the journey, not just upon reaching my destination.

Expressing my passion is a key to my short-term and long-term success and happiness. When you are really in touch with your passion, you begin to live with purpose. You have to figure out what it is you love, who you really are, and have the courage to follow your dreams. Passion is not found in doing something you must do, but in doing something with pleasure and en-
thusiasm because it is deeply satisfying. I believe that if you follow your passion, the discipline associated with achieving long-term goals seems almost unnoticeable. Ephraem of Edessa depicted a woman who achieved her long-term goal by “disciplining herself with vigils and the stern burden of abstinence... ceaselessly calling on God” (p. 215). When you have passion and a dream, the things of the world seem worthless compared with the blessings God gives you for being obedient and persistent. Living with passion involves living in the present, doing what you love most; yet, it requires releasing control over desired results by having faith in God to provide your future. This concept is similar to one described in The Upanishads: “When all desires which once entered his heart are undone, then does the mortal become immortal, then he obtains Brahman” (p. 68).

I believe the secret of being happy in either the short-term or the long-term is not in doing what you enjoy, but in enjoying what you do and being flexible to change. I decide to be happy and work toward my dreams and goals for the love of being involved; because it is my privilege and joy to learn, to test myself, to experience, and to make a difference along the way. I strive not to be like Lady Murasaki, who said, “Having no excellence within myself, I have passed my days without making any special impression on anyone” (p. 263). In addition, she seemed to have a false dependency on other people to make her happy: “Especially the fact that I have no man who will look out for my future makes me comfortless” (p. 263).

Many people spend their lives hoping that things will get better, wishing for a magic wand or a knight in shining armor to make their lives easier. I believe that what we receive in life reflects what we are. As the Bible says: “For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life” (Gal. 6:8). God, through His love, promises success: “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart” (Gal. 6:9). I decide to find happiness in what happens today as I pursue my dreams with persistence and live a life full of passion, ignited by God’s love. I realize that I cannot control the outcome of my efforts, yet every day along the journey is so fulfilling knowing that God loves me and will provide me with an abundance of blessings. As al-Ghazali wrote: “Know that the love of God is a sure and perfect method for the believer to attain the object of his desires” (p. 241). I believe that in attaining the “good life” of dreams, passions, and achievement with persistence, “Love never fails...”

Editor’s Note: All primary sources cited are from:


AN INTERPRETATION OF THE "GOOD LIFE"

The "good life" is knowing who I am, feeling good about it, and having a sense of humor. Sounds real clear cut and simple when I see it on paper, but that one sentence encompasses a lot. The "good life" is something I'm always working toward, and, even when I feel like I'm "there," it is a high maintenance job. Having already lived what I think of as a life in hell in pursuit of the "good life," brought on by my own will and lustful desires, I have gained some perspective on what this all means for me. I do know who I am, and I do know what is important to me. I know what makes me happy and what works for me. I try to keep a balance between hard work and leisure time. It seems that too much of either can cause problems. I tried to "have my cake and eat it too," and the cake turned to lye, and I couldn't swallow it. Instant gratification only brings me temporary results, far inferior to anything I have worked for in my life. Now I much prefer to chart a course, challenge myself to follow it, no matter what, and sigh with relief along the way. As long as I'm moving forward, I consider myself a success. That feeling of self-fulfillment cannot be erased, and that is what makes my life a "good life." It is up to me to choose the right path, and I try to stay on the one less prone to landslides.

Yes, I want it, and I want it now! That's still my stance in life, but I know now that nothing outside of myself is ever going to change the way I feel on the inside.

As for Saktikumara, the Indian prince, I can relate to him. He knew what he wanted, and what a creative plan he had to find it, or her, I should say. He was very meticulous. He devoted a great deal of time to finding what he considered the "perfect woman." This was his self-created illusion of the "good life," the missing piece in his life. It was his obsession, his reason for being. Dandin's story is a great example of human instincts gone astray. So often we see this in our culture, the reaching and grabbing onto that one thing that will fulfill all of our needs. The problem is that no one thing can do all of that. He was so consumed by the hunt that by the time he got to the kill, the prey had lost its lustre.

Because he thought he knew what he was looking for, his use of restraint worked well during the search, keeping him from settling for something short of his desired goal. This was impressive and a definite strength. He had a realistic idea of what to look for in a woman (in my humble opinion), and so he was able to eventually find her. What he didn't realize was that he was looking for a fantasy. If this woman was his true heart's desire, then why did he stray when he found her? He had plenty of ambition, but too much self-centeredness. The prince was attempting to catch a cloud in a
butterfly net, a fantasy.

So, in the end, there he is with twenty-twenty hindsight. He spent his entire life either gazing into the distance, or grieving for the past. Never once did he stop to savor the moment.

Lady Murasaki is a bystander to the "good life." She lives vicariously through the queen. She has no sense of self. Once she was someone, her husband's wife. But, with his passing, so, too went her identity. She never recovers from this loss. Her diary writings reveal a life filled with fear, a fear so paralyzing that there are only bits and pieces of empty pleasures, with no real attempt to solve the puzzle of her unhappiness. Self-restraint echoes through her diary pages, so much so that they are disheartening to read. She has become so comfortable in her lady-in-waiting position, and does not realize that this seemingly safe cocoon suffocates her, slowly. Perhaps she is physically safe here, but there is no happiness in her heart, only longing. She is afraid to live a life of her own, which she so desperately envies of the queen.

She does know what she wants but does nothing to find it or to feel it. Unfortunately, she chose not to follow her "better desires" (p. 261). I'm sure that in large measure the issues here are cultural, but I don't agree with such a subservient ideology as is presented here. She idly watches the world, including possible romance, passing her by, smiling coyly all the while behind a polished maquillage of etiquette. Underneath it all is a grief-stricken soul who has lost her way, with no one to retrieve it for her. Ah, I hear the sad sigh of a damsel in distress, as she weeps herself to sleep each night. Or maybe, just maybe, she dreams in solitude of a romance with the prince. It makes no matter, for she doesn't dare act on her God-given instincts.

From what I can tell, Lady Murasaki has all the tools at her disposal, all the elements of the "good life," but no hands with which to pick them up. She is stuck, stifled, by the loss of her once-upon-a-time love. Until she heals from that, I see no future happiness for her. The saddest part of all this is that I doubt she is even aware of these things.

Now, on to the saga of St. Mary the Harlot. I feel sorry for her. I see no balance of restraint and pleasure here, only extremes. In her early years, she is a happy woman, living what she believes is the "good life." Then, life throws her a curve-ball, as it often does, and everything changes. So, just how devout was she? How strong was her faith? How could she possibly have been enlightened by a spirit which had no forgiveness for her sins? Did she feel there were too many hoops through which she would have to squeeze? How narrow was the entrance back into God's grace? I wonder.

Mary was a fortunate soul to have the undying love of her Uncle Abraham. It seems strange to me how little it took for her to fall from grace. The change from a life of serving God to the life of a prostitute seems pretty drastic. She obviously felt unworthy of repentance and had little faith in God's forgiveness. But she was able to give herself another chance through Uncle Abraham's love and guidance.

I can understand the feelings of guilt associated with certain carnal pleasures. What I don't understand is how she could have been truly fulfilled by her young faith, a faith so confining that she resorted to prostitution instead of immediate repentance for what happened to her. I guess this was a classic case of divine intervention through
Uncle Abraham. I believe in a God of my own understanding, but I don’t live in fear of It. What does it matter if God forgives you, if you cannot forgive yourself? The remains of Mary’s life seem a waste to me. I don’t believe that she arrived at death in grace. I think the smile on her face was one of relief. She was finally free from repentance to God. I’d be smiling, too.

Although I could certainly relate to Prince Saktikumara, I feel that al-Ghazali’s beliefs are the most fruitful for one who seeks the “good life.” The God he speaks of sounds like the all-loving God that I have come to believe in. A “good life” is unattainable without some sort of faith. There is a reason why things happen the way that they do. What may seem to be random chaos has its own rhythm. Cause and effect are not only scientific law, they are spiritual law, as well. Seek God, and you shall find God. That has been true for me. I detect a good balance in al-Ghazali’s ideas between the material world and the spiritual. If our priority is spiritual development, the void is thus filled, relieving us of material bondage.

I also agree with al-Ghazali that “the love of God exists in every heart” (p. 241). This idea of union with God is one I can understand. And, the lack for union, if left unnoticed or unacknowledged, will decay the soul. I have lived in search of a “good life,” having faith only in the physical realm. Human power alone failed me. Somewhere along the line, my perspective changed as a direct result of seeking spirituality. I am still daunted, but I have tangible evidence in my own life of some divine presence at work in and around me.

Of the chosen readings, al-Ghazali’s writings are the most relevant to the idea of attaining the “good life.” I don’t see a problem here in need of a solution. I have my own interpretation, of course, and I drew for this essay the words and ideas in the readings that reflect what I already believe.

Three of these four stories focused on the pursuit of “fool’s gold.” I’ve found plenty of that on the roads I’ve traveled. Things are never what they seem. For now, I do have a “good life,” nothing like what I imagined. I can only hope that I don’t cling to it desperately lest it become elusive. Am I fooling myself? It’s not worth worrying about. Al-Ghazali reassures me that I have found “spiritual gold.”

Editor’s Note: All primary sources cited are from:


Having grown up in family of Christians, I never thought much about the other religions of the world. Until I attended grade school, I had no idea of the existence of Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. Growing up in the Philippines, I learned about the basic teachings of these religions in high school. From that time I have been interested in the teachings of Buddhism but it is only recently that I was able to do research about them.

Buddhism is one of the world's most influential religions. It has spread through almost all of the countries of Asia and is now finding a willing ear in the countries of the West. The interest in Buddhism in the West began in the late eighteenth century with the emigration of Asian Buddhists. Buddhism is known for its complex faith and practice and it was this complexity that caused me to pursue this study. In my opinion, like all other religions, Buddhism is a powerful medium to promote peace and an aid in facing the challenges and mysteries of life.

I spent almost two months with Buddhists at the Hawai‘i Chinese Buddhist Society during which I learned some of the beliefs held by this group. I attended their services every Sunday, spending two to three hours per visit. It was difficult at first, as I knew no one but the person who gave me permission to come and study the services. Also, my inability to speak Chinese was a barrier. Then I met a woman who became my key informant. She helped me to overcome the language barrier and helped me to interview members of the congregation and their religious leader. I also read articles about Buddhism and took photographs.

Buddhism is a family of religious traditions founded by Siddhartha Gautama. He was a prince of the Shakya tribe in the region of the lower Himalaya Mountains. One day he left his palace and witnessed some of the suffering of ordinary life. He saw a bent old man, a sick man wasted by disease, a dead body awaiting cremation and a sanyasin, a monk, who had no possessions yet who seemed to be at peace. These four things, now called the Four Passing Sights, made the Buddha decide to leave his luxurious life. Dressed in orange, he wandered the whole of India. He searched for peace of mind and soul, which he could not find in Hinduism. While resting under the shade of a Bho tree in Bodh-Gaya, he achieved, through meditation and rigorous discipline, an insight into the human condition which resulted in his receiving the name of Buddha, the Awakened One. After this awakening, he wandered as a monk-teacher, encouraging others to follow the path he had discovered, a path leading to nirvana, the release from suffering and re-
birth, that brings inner peace. The movement that he created flourished and after two hundred years divided into two major schools of thought and practice, Theraveda, or Hinayana, and Mahayana. Theraveda held to what were considered the original views of the Buddha while Mahayana Buddhism set forth a new vision.

The beliefs and teachings of the Chinese Buddhists I studied are based on the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism, also called the "great vehicle." Mahayana was brought to Hawai'i by Chinese and Japanese immigrants in the late nineteenth century. Mahayana teaches that anyone is capable of achieving nirvana; it is not only monks who can aspire to it. Mahayana believers criticize the pursuit of arhatship, a goal only achieved through monastic discipline. Arhatship, according to them, is a selfish pursuit for the arhat is only concerned with his or her individual salvation. They believe instead that the end of suffering can only be achieved by compassion for others.

In Mayahana, the Buddha exists in three different ways, known as the Triyaka. Ultimate truth and reality itself are found in the Buddha's dharma body or dharmakaya. The sambhogakaya is translated as the body of bliss and enjoyment. Lastly, the nirmanakaya is the embodied person on earth. The first time I asked my key informant about the three bodies of Buddha, I got confused. She explained it to me by comparing it to Christian doctrine, which explains the Person of Christ as a holy trinity.

The attainment of nirvana is the ultimate goal of all Buddhists. Nirvana is achieved through meditation. Meditation can be compared with prayer in Western religious practice. It is not reached by analytical reasoning. The Buddhist must understand and practice the strict discipline of the divine Buddha. It is not enough merely to believe; one must practice.

In the temple, different images of the Buddha are seen. At the center of the altar is the Amitabha Buddha. This represents the dharman body of the Buddha. It is the Buddha of endless light. According to a sutra (a text embodying the words of the Buddha) his paradise can be reached by good deeds, by meditation on Amitabha and his paradise, and by praising his name over and over with full faith in his power.

Located immediately behind the Amitabha is the Kuan-yin, whose name means "hears all cries." Kuan-yin is a bodhisattva, a manifestation of the eternal Buddha who embodies supreme compassion. Kuan-yin has at least 1000 hands which represent her many powers to heal.

Kuan Yin and the Amitabha Buddha
Color Photo by Donnaly A. Guillermo
On each palm is an eye, which symbolizes her ability to see all that are in need. Although I am referring to Kuan-yin as female, my key informant told me that Kuan-yin possesses the characteristics of both male and female. Kuan-yin was originally a male but has come over time to be thought of as a woman.

Aside from Amitabha and Kuan-yin, there are two other bodhisattvas in the sanctuary. In the left corner of the temple sits Quan Cong, who is a warrior god. People pray to him for safety and victory. Waito is the Buddha who provides protection for the temple and sits in the right corner. There is also a medicine Buddha who offers health and healing. Behind the medicine Buddha are placed the names of those seeking his help with health problems. Under the gong sits Ji Jong Wo, who is the Buddhist equivalent of Christianity’s St. Peter.

When a member of the temple comes to pray, he or she always burns incense. Holding the incense with both hands, the worshipper goes to every Buddha and makes three bows. The incense represents the sweet scent of moral virtue that emanates from those who are true. The three bows depict respect for the heavens, the earth and the underground. They also offer flowers to the Buddhas and light candles. The flowers, beautiful for a short time only to wilt and die, remind them of the impermanence of life, whereas the candle flame symbolizes enlightenment. The people I saw in the temple had different kinds of clothing: some wore everyday clothing while others were dressed in black or brown robes. I learned that these different kinds of clothing signify the number of baptisms. Those in street clothes have not yet been baptized or have yet to accept Buddhism as their religion. Those in black robes have been baptized three times, which means that they take refuge in the Buddha, in the Dharma, and in the Sangha. The brown robes are worn by those who have been baptized five times and these people keep the Five Precepts of morality—not to lie, kill, steal, engage in illicit sex or partake of alcohol—in addition to the Threefold Refuge.

The Sunday service lasts for approximately one hour. The gong is sounded to let people know that the service is about to begin. It also is used to drive away evil spirits that might harm the sacredness of the service. After the gong is beaten, everyone makes three bows. Then the monk, dressed in orange, leads the chanting of sacred Buddhist texts. There is no sermon, only chanting. In the middle of the service, one member of the congregation moves around the
A room holding a spoonful of rice. This symbolizes their prayers for the poor, hungry and homeless of the world. The service ends with three bows.

I was able to talk with the monk who leads the services. He told me that every monk vows to keep the Ten Precepts of Buddhism: to not take life, lie, steal, engage in sexual activity, drink alcohol, eat any food after noon, adorn their bodies with anything but the three robes, participate in or be a spectator to public entertainments, use high or comfortable beds, and use money. A monk who seeks to attain a higher ordination must commit himself to keeping the 227 rules of the monastic code and to recite them at least twice a month. Further, he must confess any violation of these rules in the company of another monk. They study and meditate the entire day except when receiving food offerings and performing ceremonies. They accept suffering and strict discipline. He told me that the sufferings are nothing when compared to the gifts they receive and are yet to be given. He also told me about the Four Noble Truths: the truth of the existence of suffering, the truth of the cause of suffering, the truth of the cessation of suffering, and the true path to the cessation of suffering.

I was also able to witness one of the most important rituals of Chinese Buddhists, the Chung Yong Memorial Service. They perform it three times a year, in April, July and October. The memorial service is dedicated to the deceased members of the temple. Unlike the ordinary services that begin with a member of the congregation beating the gong, in the memorial service the gong is sounded by a monk who is assisted by a nun. After chanting, the spirits of deceased relatives and friends are invited into the temple with prayers and chants. The names of the deceased are arranged neatly behind the Jizo Buddha, who guides the spirits of the dead into the world and back to the “other world” after the service. The names are read and the spirits are baptized again. After this baptism, the names are burned.

During the service, I noticed that people were folding gold and silver paper. I learned from two members of the congregation that these papers serve as money for the dead. They believe that the spirits of their relatives and loved ones still rely on them to help them in the other world by providing money that is needed there. This paper money is burned during the service and through being burned is sent to the other world.

After the memorial service, there was
a meal with all members sharing food they had brought. There was no meat, only vegetables, and my key informant explained that they believe in the sacredness of all life and the reincarnation of souls into the bodies of other living things. Therefore, they are all vegetarians.

Aside from this commemoration for the dead, the Chinese Buddhists also celebrate three festivals that mark events in the Buddha’s life: his birth is celebrated on the eighth day of the fourth month, his enlightenment is remembered on the eighth day of the twelfth month (Bodhi Day); and his death is memorialized on the fifteenth day of the second month. The New Year celebration is held in February. For this holiday, families come together and share a vegetarian meal.

Buddhism is indeed a complex religion. It contains beliefs and practices that help its believers cope with life’s mysteries and challenges. It emphasizes practice over correct belief, morality over formality, and it stresses the importance of nonviolence. In the kind of world we live in today, it is important for us to live with some of the Buddha’s teachings, beliefs and practices. I am not suggesting that we all convert to Buddhism, but simply that it can teach us some ways we can change our world and make it a better place to live.

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There are many herbs that are used for a variety of purposes, among them to enhance memory, to ease menstruation difficulties, to increase energy and to ease anxiety. My research examines a fascinating plant called kava. Kava is a member of the pepper family and is native to the South Pacific. It not only has been used for a variety of medical purposes but also has deep cultural significance for many Pacific peoples. It has been used for thousands of years and has unique virtues.

Many people today are concerned with health, weight and appearance. And many prefer to use a natural substance, such as an herbal product, rather than an artificial medication. There is a greater appreciation of the uses of botanicals. Such herbs include ginseng, gingko, and many more. Kava is one of the most fascinating of these medicinal plants. The botanical name for kava is *piper methysticum*. It is an indigenous vine of the pepper family. It grows throughout the Pacific Islands and grows well in altitudes from 150 to 300 meters above sea level. It is considered a swamp loving plant but can also be grown in stony ground. It is cultivated commercially in the United States and in Australia. Kava is usually grown on frames and is propagated from runners in late winter or early spring. The newly cut stems must be protected from direct sunlight and wind. It needs well-drained stony soil and a shady location. The plant’s leaves are heart-shaped, pointed, and smooth and green on both sides. The root may be harvested at any time of the year when the plant has reached the height of two meters. However, the plant may grow up to six meters tall. Roots can grow to a diameter of eight centimeters when mature.

Traditionally kava was only consumed during ceremonies. These might be formal rituals or more casual occasions. In any kava ceremony, the first step is to prepare the drink itself. George Foster, a member of Cook’s second expedition to the Pacific, noted:

Kava is made of the most disgusting manner that can be imagined from the juice contained in the roots of a species of the pepper tree. The root is cut small, and the pieces chewed by several people, who spit the macerated mass into a bowl, where some water (milk) of coconuts is poured upon it. They then strain it through a quantity of fibers of coconut, squeezing the chips, till all their juices mix with the coconut milk; and the whole liquor is decanted into another bowl. They swallow this nauseous stuff as fast as possible; and some old topers value themselves able to empty a great number of bowls.
This description, though biased, gives details of the way that kava was prepared. It has also been reported that in some places young virgin women were the only ones who could prepare the drink.

Kava has been used to welcome distinguished visitors, as a gesture of peace and goodwill, and as an offering to the gods. Pope John Paul II took part in a kava tea ceremony during his visit to the Pacific Islands. It has been used to create and maintain social relations; the gathering together and drinking of kava signifies good fellowship. It may also have served to unite various classes of some societies as the barriers between chiefs and commoners and between strangers fall under its soporific effects. In some cultures, kava is used as an aid to conflict mediation. The herb helps to induce a state of calmness and cooperation during important negotiations.

Kava is also used as a ceremonial drink to commemorate many important events: i.e., journeys, weddings, births and deaths. It is offered as gift to express friendship and is used in healing practices.

The plant is also used as a religious intoxicant. It is used by both priests and laymen to stimulate the connection to spiritual sources of wisdom and in seeking ancestral favor. Kava is valued in the Pacific Islands as a calming and stimulating substance with a variety of uses. If taken in large quantities it produces a euphoric state, and this may be why it has long been considered an aphrodisiac.

Kava also possesses many important medicinal properties that make it a valued herb. The root of the plant contains kavalactones. These have a depressant effect on the central nervous system and have anti-spasmodic effects. The kavalactones also have an anesthetic effect on the urinary lining and tubules and on the bladder. High quality kava rhizome contains 5.5 to 8.3 per cent kavalactones. These also have anti-anxiety, muscle relaxant and anticonvulsant properties.

Kava has been shown to have the ability to effect the brain in a variety of ways. Its molecules attach to number of receptors and, in one study, the areas of the brain most effected by kava were the hippocampus, amygdala and medulla oblongata. The cerebellum, the brain center for muscle coordination, was not effected unless repeated large doses were given. Such doses caused muscle weakness and dizziness. Interestingly, kava did not bind to receptors in the frontal cortex, the center for higher mental functions and analytical thinking. There will be more research done, no doubt, on the effects of kava on the brain.

Kava has four main therapeutic properties. The most powerful is the relief of nervous tension. The second is to relieve anxiety, a common condition in our hectic lives. Another is as an effective diuretic with potent anti-spasmodic and antiseptic actions that make it useful for the treatment of genito-urinary tract infections. It has also been used to treat cystitis, prostatitis, venereal disease and yeast infections. The fourth therapeutic property involves its ability to improve appetite and digestion. Aside from these, there are many other traditional uses. Its analgesic and cleansing diuretic actions make it useful for treating rheumatism, asthma, and worms and other parasites, a common problem in the tropics. The herb also brings pain relief to gout sufferers and helps to remove waste products from the joints. Because kava aids in digestion some take it for obesity. There are other, more common, uses as well. Kava can be used as a poultice for headaches and as a sweat in-
ducing tea for the treatment of colds and fevers. It can also be used topically for various fungal diseases of the skin. It has been used as an antiseptic in the treatment of venereal disease, especially gonorrhea. It also makes an effective analgesic mouthwash for toothaches and canker sores.

The proper dosage of kava is based on the level of kavalactones. According to clinical studies, the dosage recommended is from 45 to 70 mg of kavalactones three times daily. Many people take kava extract which supplies 200 to 250 mg of kavalactones per day in three doses. To promote a deep restful sleep, one should take a dose approximately 20 to 30 minutes before retiring. An overdose is usually signaled by a lack of coordination, followed by fatigue and a tendency to sleep. If an overdose is suspected, it is wise to seek medical attention immediately.

There are few side effects to kava usage. In recommended doses, the only reported side effect is mild gastrointestinal disturbances. Long term usage of large doses may cause a lack of motivation, weakness, leg paralysis, a yellow discoloration of the skin and a peculiar scaly skin rash. Kava is not habit forming. In all cases studied, these symptoms have been found to be completely reversible when kava consumption is discontinued. Kava should not be taken by pregnant and lactating women. It should not be used with other substances that act on the central nervous system. Taking kava with alcohol, barbiturates, antidepressants and anti-psychotics may increase its effects.

Studies show that using kava wisely can bring many benefits. People today use this root for many different things in a variety of preparations. The different preparations that kava comes in—powder, gel capsules, pills, and liquid—will affect each person differently depending on concentration and form.

Kava retains its traditional uses and cultural significance, even while it continues to grow in popularity throughout the world. It offers many advantages. Kava may one day replace many addicting drugs in the treatment of anxiety, for example. Many people carry it with them, finding it useful for coping with the many stressful situations that everyday life brings. Any complications that arise due to the use of kava will disappear when it is stopped. There are no withdrawal symptoms. With all of its positive benefits and so few negative effects, kava is almost too good to be legal.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHANGING CUSTOMS IN JAPANESE MARRIAGE CEREMONIES IN JAPAN AND HAWAI'I

Weddings are historical and traditional ceremonies. They involve many things: religion, culture, tradition, and families. In the past few years, many more Japanese couples have chosen to have their weddings in Hawai'i. Since coming to Hawai'i I have seen many Japanese couples dressed in wedding attire and I have wondered what the wedding ceremony for them is like and how it differs from the traditional Japanese wedding ceremony.

The custom of mi-ai has been and is still widely practiced among Japanese. Mi-ai is an interview between a man and woman with a view to marriage, as arranged by their parents or a third party who functions as a go-between. Mi-ai interviews usually occur in hotels, theatres and other such public places. In former times, mi-ai was considered compulsory for each of the parties concerned. A man might be invited to the home of his prospective bride and, if he were favorably impressed, he would leave behind a fan to indicate his acceptance of the young woman. The bride-to-be had little chance of expressing her view on the subject.

Yui-no is derived from the verb ii-ire, which means “to apply.” It is also used to refer to the practice of families to be united through marriage to dine and drink together. In any case, it is an important function in the process of betrothal in Japan. At yui-no, gifts are exchanged between the prospective husband and wife. The most important item to be presented to the future bride is an obi, a belt for the kimono, which represents female virtue.

A hakama skirt, expressing fidelity, is given to the bridegroom-to-be. If formally observed, in addition to the obi and hakama, the yui-no gifts include as many nine items representing happiness and fortune. The nine items are:

Naga-noshi: Prepared from abalone, this was once an important and costly item. It expresses the sincere wishes of the sender.

Mokuroku: This is a list of all items exchanged in the yui-no and includes the names of all the donors.

Money: Money is often exchanged as a ceremonial gift.

Katsuo-bushi: This is dried bonito, used in making soup stock and a highly valued preserved food.

Surume: This is dried cuttlefish.

Konbu: This dried seaweed is included for its procreational power and expresses a wish for happy and healthy generations to follow in the family.

Shiraga: Another name for asa (hemp), these strong fibers are exchanged to signify enduring ties and cooperation in married life. Shiraga phonetically means “gray hair,” expressing...
a wish for a long life together for the new couple.

Suehiro: This is a fan that symbolizes happiness. Expanded to its full extent, it signifies a better future for the couple.

Yanagi-daru: This wine cask may be replaced by cash designated for the purpose of buying sake.

All of these yui-no gifts are accompanied by the list of family members who contributed them, as the gifts are actually exchanged between the two families through a go-between on a day considered auspicious according to the almanac.

The traditional Japanese wedding usually takes place in a Shinto shrine. The ceremony is presided over by a Shinto priest who first holds the purification service for the guests in attendance. Such a wedding ceremony is generally attended by members of both families, relatives, and, of course, the nakodo, or go-between. The traditional wedding costume for both bride and groom is the kimono. The bridegroom wears the black haori and hakama decorated with his family crest. The bride wears the classic shiro-muku, or snow white kimono, during the marriage ceremony and changes to a more colorful kimono, called a iro-uchikake, after. The iro-urchikake is lavishly decorated with white or red silk and is worn with an elaborate white headpiece.

After a ritual by the priest during which he recites the oaths of marriage, it is then customary for the bridegroom and bride to read an oath in which they vow to be faithful and obedient to each other in married life. The san-san-kudo, or the three-times-three exchange of nuptial cups, is then performed by the wedding couple. The bridegroom and bride proceed to the sanctuary to offer twigs of a sacred sakaki tree to the gods, ending the main part of the wedding ceremony. Drinks of sake are then exchanged by the newly wedded couple and close relatives of both families signifying the families’ union though the wedding ceremony. The Shinto wedding is accompanied by traditional music and attended by miko maidens in red and white dresses who serve sake to the wedding party. Although such a marriage ceremony as I have described above can still be seen in Japan, there have been changes in the ceremony that reflect more Western ideas.

The mi-ai interview is no longer considered compulsory. Until the turn of the century, the mi-ai interview of a prospective wedding couple was more of a required formality than an opportunity for the man and woman to get to know one another and learn about each other’s views of marriage. Today, the mi-ai is used to provide the prospective bride and groom with an opportunity to meet and to know each other more intimately. Currently, although there are some Japanese couples that meet through mi-ai interviews, most Japanese find their future partners on their own and then ask a current or former employer to act in the role of nakodo between the families.

Although the purpose of the mi-ai interview has changed, yui-no is still an important ritual for Japanese today. When two of my friends became engaged last year, they exchanged yui-no in the traditional way. In addition, my younger sister is getting married next year, and my parents and sister are also thinking about observing the yui-no tradition.

As in most European countries, a June wedding is popular in Japan. Spring and autumn are also popular wedding seasons. Many Japanese hotels and memorial halls offer marriage packages. One typical
package at a Japanese hotel is priced at 1.2 million yen (approximately $12,000.00) for 100 guests.

It is often difficult for Japanese couples to select a day on which to hold their wedding ceremony. An auspicious day is determined according to the traditional Japanese calendar. Generally Taian, the Big Rest Day, and Tomobiki, the Attracting Friend Day, are considered very good days for wedding ceremonies. For Taian weddings during any weekend of the month of June, wedding couples must make their reservations at least one year in advance.

Over the past decade, I have attended three wedding ceremonies in Japan and one in the United States. They were all similar in their Western style. The bridegrooms were dressed in tuxedos, and the brides were wore Western-styled white wedding gowns. Wedding rings were exchanged between the bride and groom. A large elaborately decorated wedding cake was the center of the wedding reception. Currently, many wedding ceremonies in Japan are performed either in the Western style or a combination of both Japanese and Western style. Today, few people wear wedding kimono during the entire wedding ceremony. In the Western style weddings, the bride and groom are dressed in Western attire without kimono. In the combination Japanese and Western style weddings, the bride and groom wear traditional wedding kimonos for the early part of the ritual then change into Western style attire for the remainder of the ceremony. Obviously, the bride has to spend most of her time changing her kimonos and dresses in this type of wedding.

The practice of having their wedding ceremonies and spending their honeymoons in Hawai'i and other foreign locations is very popular among Japanese couples today. According to Ka Leo O Hawai'i, the newspaper of the University of Hawai'i, the number of visitors who reported spending their honeymoons in Hawai'i in 1997 rose from 560,600 the year before to 621,210, an increase of 10.8 percent. Last fall, Hawai'i was the most popular destination for Japanese visitors. Japanese tourists have been an important sector of this state's visitor industry, and Hawai'i is one of the top three destinations for the wedding and honeymoon market in Japan. "The Japanese, in particular, are attracted to Hawai'i because of well-orchestrated marketing, wedding and honeymoon packages and economics," says George Ikeda, director of research and training for the School of Travel Industry Management at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Most wedding ceremonies for Japanese couples in Hawai'i are conducted in Western style. Last month, my friend's sister had her wedding ceremony here in Hawai'i. It was almost identical to Western style weddings in Japan. The differences between a wedding ceremony in Hawai'i and one in Japan are primarily in their location and the number of guests invited. Japanese couples are attracted to Hawai'i for their weddings because such a wedding has become a status symbol in Japan. Many of my Japanese friends back in Japan want to come to Hawai'i for their weddings and honeymoons because not only is Hawai'i a beautiful place but also because such a wedding is impressive to their families and friends.

Even though some marriage rituals have changed among the Japanese in the last few decades, these rituals are still important to them. Through this study, I realized that there is now not much of a difference between a wedding ceremony for Japa-
nese in Hawai‘i and a wedding ceremony in Japan. Through my research for this paper I also learned many new things about both the traditional and current Japanese marriage rituals and ceremonies. In my comparison of the choices in wedding rituals, I personally prefer the combination of the traditional Shinto rituals with the modern, Western style ceremony. I feel that this combination is a reflection of Japanese society as a whole as it faces the new century.
Nursing homes have a culture that defines how many of the elderly in our society live after they are no longer able to live independently. Initially, nursing homes were meant to be places where people recovered from illnesses, injuries or surgeries or to live when suffering from debilitating chronic diseases. As the population of the elderly has grown, they have become lifesavers for families who are unable to give the care needed for their elderly relatives. Nursing homes and care homes now provide housing for nearly 60% of the elderly with some debility (Forest). They have become an invaluable resource for many.

This study was conducted at Maunalani Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Although this facility has been known by different names through the years, it was the first of Hawai‘i’s nursing homes. Its roots began in the limited number of hospital beds in Hawai‘i during World War II. In 1942 local hospitals could not accommodate the number of patients needing care and, as a result, many chronically ill patients were discharged in order to meet the needs of acutely ill patients. The late Ethelwyn A. Castle willed her property on Wilhemina Rise for a nursing home. In 1950, after many petitions and much struggle, this facility was finally opened. Its original purpose was to care for patients who were not ready to return home and needed nursing intervention.

The study was conducted over a period of 15 weeks. All areas of nursing home life were studied including the admission process, resident activities, Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and meals. A tour of the facility was also included. Many informants were used, among them the admissions coordinator, administrative assistant to the director of the nursing home, the activity coordinator, nurses, certified nursing assistants (CNAs), and the residents themselves. Everyone was very helpful. Approximately 99 residents were involved. This number fluctuated due to admissions and discharges that occurred over the period of the study.

Many people who place their loved ones in a nursing home feel that they have abandoned them. However, in many cases, nursing home placement may be the best choice for a family member. “Because we have a horrid perception of the ‘home’ and our culture has not adequately dealt with the period between retirement and death, it is hard to view the decision of placement as good” (Forest, 34). Many of the residents that were interviewed were apprehensive at first but, once they acclimated to their new home, they became more social than before and, when given the option, did not want to leave. Some residents are very aware that they cannot receive the same care
at home, especially those who have suffered strokes or other catastrophic injuries. However, there are some who desire to return home and sometimes attempt to escape the facility.

In the first day of the study a tour was given to introduce all areas of the nursing home. The admissions director and the administrative assistant accompanied me. Although I was an employee of the facility, I requested the type of all-encompassing tour that a resident or family member would receive. This tour provided a brief history of the facility, the beautiful view, introduction to the staff, and information about how to get help in an emergency. Also covered were the dining, exercise and activities areas and all safety features of the facility. It was impressive how organized everything was, and the monthly calendar posted on every floor notified residents of everything that was going on at every hour of the day.

Although there are many activities offered, each resident is free to choose the ones he or she wants to participate in. This gives the resident a sense of choice, which is vital to adjusting to life away from home. Every day at 9:30 a.m. and at 2:30 p.m. exercise classes are held to help strengthen residents and encourage them to use muscles that might not otherwise be exercised. The facility’s physical therapy assistant teaches this class. This routine is very important to many residents. Three residents from one of these classes were interviewed and asked why they participate. They replied that they attend the classes to maintain their bodies and to keep from feeling debilitated. Exercise classes help to reassure them, they said, that they have a lot to live for. In the beginning of the study only 22 residents actively participated in the classes. However, by the end of the study, an additional 19 had joined the group. When the physical therapy assistant was asked what the reason might be for the increase, she replied, “When people see other people enjoying themselves, they tend to want to join that group. Nobody wants to be left out.”

View of Diamond Head from the lānai of Maunalani Nursing and Rehabilitation Center
Color Photo by Alex E. Kang
The definition of culture as defined by the text, *Humanity, An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, is as follows: "the socially transmitted knowledge and behavioral patterns shared by some group of people" (Peoples and Bailey, 18). The residents and staff of Maunalani have developed a culture of their own according to this definition. They have adapted to morning showers, ADL care, daily activities, set meal schedules and the people in their environment. Those who have no family have made Maunalani their permanent home. Many are aware that they may not ever set foot outside the facility again, although activity outings are offered every month for those able to go. Some residents have not been outside the facility for ten years and yet report that they are very content with life.

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) are very important in the lives of residents because many are not able to perform them for themselves anymore. For those who are able to manage their daily activities, the nurses encourage them to do these for themselves. For those who are not able to take care of themselves, the nurses must do these tasks for them.

Even when residents are unable to care for themselves or even to speak, it is important to maintain their dignity. One incident at the nursing home points out this need. The staff in one section decided to arrange the hair of some female residents who are unable to talk. Intending to make the women look cute and pretty, they tied the women’s hair up in a fashion often used for little girls. When these residents were taken into the main activity room, other residents laughed at the hairstyles. This points out the need for people to keep within social norms as too much deviance from them can result in ridicule. In this case the situation was quickly resolved.

Resident meals are set up in three different rooms. The largest room is the designated dining room. The living room is set up for residents who are termed “high functioning.” Meals are also served in the

![The Lāna'i](Image)

Color Photo by Alex E. Kang
day room. Each week a menu is posted. If residents do not like what is being served at a particular meal, they can order a sandwich or saimin. Food trays are brought in on a big cart and distributed by the nurses. Each tray is labeled as each resident has his or her own diet specifications. Residents can also let the kitchen know about their preferences. In this way, the diet can be varied as much as possible. Volunteers are also available to assist residents at meal times. Eating seems to be the most popular activity for residents. The activity coordinator told me that most residents look forward to mealtimes because they can enjoy meals as delicious as home-cooked ones and chat with their friends. Seating arrangements are based on the level of alertness and on the preferences of residents, many of whom have close relationships with other residents.

Religious services are offered at Maunalani through various churches and temples in the community. Also offered are musical performances by a variety of people. Bingo games are held twice a week and the facility offers a range of outings, as well as karaoke and dancing. Activities from the outside world are brought in on a regular basis. Residents vote on which activities they prefer, although the Activities Coordinator makes the final decisions. Bingo is a favorite with the residents. It allows them to use their listening and verbalizing abilities. Some of the quietest residents will shout quite loudly if they get a winning combination. Residents win points that can be accumulated and used for haircuts at the facility.

A local hairstylist comes to Maunalani every Tuesday to provide hairstyling services. A room is dedicated solely for the salon, and residents can have their hair done in any fashion for a nominal fee. For many, this is their only opportunity to get haircuts, and many women have their hair done every week by the stylist. This contributes to a sense of dignity in the residents, and the people who work at Maunalani realize how important this is to the physical well-being.
of the people who live there.

Dental and medical care are also offered on a regular basis. Physicians visit the facility every 60 days, and a dentist comes every month.

The Department of Health and Social Services is also involved in the everyday life of many residents. Many suffer from depression and other ailments. One man attempted to escape three times and, because his condition required 24-hour care, his family was not able to care for him at home. The social worker was able to place him in another facility, one that uses physical restraints to control the movements of residents. This was difficult for his family and is an example of the stresses that families can suffer when a loved one requires such care.

Family visits are probably the most important events for most residents. Some more prone to depression due to prolonged loneliness. Nurses and other caregivers must fill this void and it is an important part of their function. The nurses that I observed always made time to give attention to residents and often cared for them as if they were their own parents or grandparents.

The rising need for elder care has contributed to the growth of the nursing home industry. Many families in the United States will have experience with nursing homes. The residents of Maunalani Nursing and Rehabilitation Center have a culture of their own, just as residents of all nursing homes do. It is hoped that most of these other facilities are as comfortable and supportive, offering choices of daily activities, care, and dignity to residents. All aspects of life are incorporated in the experience of living in a nursing home, and, at their best, such facilities can offer an almost complete home-like setting. But the most important need of those living in nursing homes cannot be met by staff and professional caregivers. It must come from family members who take the time to visit.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


CYBER CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Cyber culture, with its multidimensional aspects, has so many meanings for so many people. I decided to do my study on this subject matter mainly because of my fascination with this new form of computer mediated communication, the effect it is having on the world, and how the paradoxical aspects of the Internet reflect contradictions underlying all of society. A few field studies have confirmed that organizational electronic mail reduces social differences and increases communication across social boundaries. It is incredible how we have evolved into a society in which social interactions transpire via "virtual communities" that are practically infinite in size. Worldwide communication occurs instantaneously. Internet distance education is made possible by Web based classrooms where synchronous attendance is optional. Cyber based market exchanges take place through electronic commerce. And people surf the Web to acquire information on myriad subjects. It is a virtual culture, with its own unique knowledge, behavioral patterns, roles, norms, symbolism and terminology. People create their own reality through an iterative process where any person is at the same time producer and product of such interactions.

The Internet was originally conceived as a military project supervised by the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency and was created during the Cold War as an information system capable of surviving a Soviet nuclear attack. Those same features of decentralization and flexibility that were designed to make it militarily invulnerable contributed to giving us the Internet of today: an international, chaotic, dense bazaar of a virtual world inhabited by various types of people. The way the Internet is changing the evolutionary patterns of communication, social and business interactions has caused me to wonder about the negative consequences it may have in the future. In 1994's "Cyberia: Life in the Trenches of Hyperspace," Mr. Douglas Rushkoff states that we are often taken in by Web based commercialism that transforms our cynicism and distrust of manipulation and introduces newer, more subtle forms of persuasion. He reminds us that no matter how clever we think we are, we're inevitably being manipulated. Will the term cyber-ethnocentrism exist? Will there be some kind of web-based historical particularism in the future? Will all interaction, shopping, investing, researching, etc. be confined to computer mediated processes? Should I be idealistic in my views of cyber culture?

Cyber culture is in a constant state of flux. Of course, what we call cyberculture today may not exist tomorrow. Like other
new technologies, computer mediated communication is evolving at an incredible rate. As we continue to embrace and integrate basic Internet technologies into our personal and business lives, we can expect even more innovations in the future.

COMMUNICATION IN CYBERSPACE

When I decided to do an ethnographic study on cyber culture, little did I know the challenges I would face during my virtual field research. Many of the most interesting virtual communities are very proud of their exclusive nature. A stranger attempting to do academic research is sometimes seen as an unwelcome intrusion. Each questionnaire I sent out during this semester was met with doubt and initial noncompliance. It is an unfortunate fact that many virtual chat rooms are the target of voyeuristic behaviors and solicitations. Gaining the trust of any user was an accomplishment in itself. Proving that my intentions involved legitimate research was difficult. Doing ethnographic research on virtual communities required me to use different tools than those needed in computer oriented business-organizational evaluation studies, for which excellent methodological literature already exists. This literature emphasizes the community aspect of a computer conference and focuses on the subjects who play active roles as senders and/or recipients.

While debate over quantitative and qualitative methods may continue as a thread in the discussions of research on virtual communication, I find that new kinds of problems remain in the background. There has been little discussion of the assumption, for example, that an electronic survey among the users of a given system could provide a cheap and fast way to draw connections between on-line behavior and traditional socio-economic demographic variables (age, gender, level of education, family income, etc.).

Computer-mediated communication systems exhibit a fair amount of interpretative flexibility. Such communication can mean different things to different individuals or different groups, and their use continues to be interpreted and reinterpreted. Social worlds, even in cyberspace, are exceedingly complex and their basic characteristics cannot be determined by any intrinsic feature of the communication medium. Relationships on the net can be altogether more or less democratic, uninhibited or egalitarian than in real life, depending on an intricate pattern of elements. This "computer mediated communication is rapidly turning the world into Marshall McLuhan's 'global village'." The social implications of computer mediated communications are vast, especially because of its potential ability to help people, regardless of gender, race, or physical appearance, communicate with each other with fewer prejudices and misunderstandings than any other medium in existence. Through the understanding of on-line social interaction we can also hope to understand better the complexity of our daily social experience.

In fact, I found that on-line behavior can be even more social and normative than face-to-face interaction. The term virtual community has lately become a useful metaphor for the articulated patterns of relationships, roles, norms, institutions, and languages developed on-line. Even the very authenticity of communities developed on-line should not be taken for granted without an effort to come to a commonly accepted definition of what a community re-
ally is. The term "virtual community" is therefore still a "problematic scientific concept." According to Geertz, an interpretivist ethnographer, "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun."

When I began my virtual field study, I wanted to find out how women and men felt about communicating on-line. I wanted to learn about their thoughts regarding the differences between male/female interactions on-line and face-to-face. I sent out questionnaires to several different "chat rooms." While the number of responses (81) that I received is not a very large sample, I feel that the respondents' voices are representative of many people in cyber communities. In the following charts I have indicated gender, as it influences the types of on-line experiences that people have and their interpretation of such experiences.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Question 1

In your experience, do men and women communicate with each other differently on-line compared with face-to-face interactions?

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<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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Most people's comments suggest that men and women are able to communicate far more easily on-line than face-to-face. Men felt that in face-to-face interactions, they tend to speculate about women from a gender oriented perspective, but on-line they are able to relate to them more as people. During on-line interactions, men seem to deal more with the content of what women have to say rather than dismissing women's talk because it comes from women. This may be due to the culture of the net, one that places a high value on seemingly "rational" discourse (and women may seem more "rational" on the net than in person) and because it's impossible to use nonverbal communication to assert dominance in this context. Even in such a supposedly "gender-free" environment, sexism still exists in cyber space. It is simply more difficult to get away with it. In many discussions unrelated to sexism or to women's issues, I believe that women are taken more seriously than in face-to-face encounters.

Both men and women felt that women have more of a "presence" on-line, and that it is easier for women to make their voices heard. As one male "cybernaut" explained, "women are able to drive their point home without the familiar patronizing or trivializing dismissal characteristic of many face-to-face interactions." I found that there are two sides to the freedom and anonymity found on-line. Men tend to feel more open on-line and exhibit more verbal affection, as in using on-line hugs and kisses. Unfortunately, though, some people tend to be more obnoxious due to this anonymity. One woman felt that men in general "show much less concern about the usual social constraints because of on-line anonymity."

There are other anecdotal reports of problems with virtual interactions that many of my respondents did not discuss. For one, some women reported that their suggestions are ignored as much in on-line conversations as in face-to-face ones. Many also experience "flaming," a cyber-term for the posting of angry messages, which is an on-line phenomenon that tends to be associated with men. A Mr. Hoai-An Trung suggests: "Since women tend to use language

Jennifer S. G. Vibert: Cyber Culture
differently than men do, these highly aggressive language patterns may be even more of a barrier to their participation. Styles of communication, sometimes referred to as 'debate' and 'relate' styles, often complicate messages. While debating and arguing an issue is a normal style for some people, others understand these debates as an attack, causing them to pull away from the discussion."

**Question 2**
When you're communicating on-line, are you aware of the gender of the person with whom you are communicating?

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<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>(73%)</td>
<td>(64%)</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
<td>(36%)</td>
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Approximately the same percentage of women as men were aware of gender in on-line communications. Several of the respondents contextualized their answers; if they were communicating in a professional environment, they reported being less aware of gender than if they were communicating in a social environment, such as in feminist discussion or news groups.

**Question 3**
Do you write your responses differently for women than for men?

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<th>Women</th>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>(45%)</td>
<td>(30%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>(40%)</td>
<td>(59%)</td>
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<td>Unsure</td>
<td>(15%)</td>
<td>(1%)</td>
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Two women reported that they were more at ease when talking with other women. One wrote: "If I'm talking to a woman, I am freer about expressing my feelings and talking about my life experiences. In responding to men, I tend to confine myself to a debating mode." Another wrote, "I am still more guarded with men than with women for the simple reason that I am more at home with women and the things they choose to talk about. I may share some interests with men and we can chatter away about them, but I share 'reality' with women."

Some men felt the need to "hold back" with women more than with other men, believing that women tend to take criticism more personally than men do, resulting in more negative responses. The majority of men reported that they replied similarly to postings, whether replying to women or to men. A higher percentage of women felt that they wrote differently for women than for men.

There are probably several other reasons for women to be more cautious about what they write to men. On-line sexual harassment continues to take place, and computer mediated communication, stripped of most other communication cues, can very easily be misconstrued: i.e., a joke, misinterpreted, can be taken for a come-on.

**Question 4**
Do you think that women communicate differently on-line than face-to-face?

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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(56%)</td>
<td>(58%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>(32%)</td>
<td>(26%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>(12%)</td>
<td>(16%)</td>
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I found that women who experience feelings of intimidation are more likely to express it freely on-line. I feel the whole thing is healthy and cathartic. One man felt that "a shy woman might be a bit more in-
dined to talk more when she cannot see an actual face, only type characters on the screen.” Another woman thought that women “get more active when communicating on-line, because they do not have to act ‘feminine’ as expected in daily life.” I also found that women’s interactions with each other on-line are very similar to face-to-face experiences. Women tend to talk with each other about very personal things, such as menstruation, cramps, labor pains, child rearing, marital relationships, etc. Very personal issues are constantly being broached, and women of all types eagerly contribute their own experiences and opinions.

Men felt that it is easier to communicate with women on-line than face-to-face, citing that “women tend to be more chatty and loquacious.” It was also pointed out that people with speech impediments or obvious physical handicaps find on-line communication easier. Anonymity allows people to have conversations based more on intellect and mutual interests and less influenced by such factors as whether the other person is attractive or not, too old or too young, disabled or obese. Some people who have experienced prejudice because of their appearance or gender find the physical anonymity of computer mediated communication liberating and do not want their correspondents to find out more about them than their “sparkling wit.”

One woman, who described herself as small and “cute,” answered:

If someone sees me saying something ‘macho’ or using profanity, the contrast with my appearance lets me sometimes use these to good effect. There have been several times, though, when I’ve gotten dressings down for these on the net or in email. Not that this was necessarily undeserved; it’s just that it wouldn’t happen face-to-face.

Another woman found that “women may communicate differently because this type of communication allows them to be as direct as possible without running such a high risk of sexual discrimination, particularly if her gender is not clear until the end. The lack of gendering of communication can allow me to make bold statements without having to worry about how my gestures or voice might falsely render them.” Computer mediated communication allows people “to experiment with different personas and presentations of one’s ‘self’” (Goffman, 1959) in relative anonymity and safety. One man thought that women felt it easier to engage in persona creation. Many normally quiet, painfully shy individuals turn into confessional, prolific, acerbic, and very vocal cybernauts.

Many fascinating stories came from women who met their husbands on-line. It does seem paradoxical that text based communication through computer screens and telephone lines can be incredibly intimate. It seems that people can become acquainted faster on-line than in person. As one woman said, “It is like making a friend in hyper-drive. One advances beyond small talk very quickly.”

**Question 5**

Communication face-to-face, and even on the telephone, is gendered because of physical cues such as dress, age, voice, etc. These cues are not transmitted on-line. How does the absence of these cues affect you?
Question 6
How important is gender to you in the presentation of yourself on-line? (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not important and 5 is very important)

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<tr>
<td>(1) 9%</td>
<td>(50%)</td>
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<td>(2) 18%</td>
<td>(7%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) 37%</td>
<td>(22%)</td>
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<td>(4) 9%</td>
<td>(7%)</td>
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<td>(5) 27%</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
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Women tended to feel that their gender was "somewhat important" to "very important" in how they presented themselves on-line. For most men, their gender was relatively unimportant. The results of the answers to this question are unclear. The question was, as one correspondent pointed out, "very broad" and probably confusing. Even though I am unable to draw any general conclusions from these replies, I include them here to maintain a sense of the continuity of the data.

CONCLUSION

To many of my respondents, cyber culture meant virtual socializing. In a world where we are encultured to stereotype and be prejudgemental, cyberspace has provided a virtual realm relatively free of such prejudices. On the surface, it would seem that most people believe that cyberspace tends to be friendly to women. It allows women to adopt more active personas and speak on a "level playing field" where gender cues are absent. I have also observed that sexist comments and jokes exclude women from participation. It is somewhat obvious that face-to-face patterns of interaction are replicating themselves in cyberspace despite the many advantages that computer mediated communication offers for equal speech.

I have only included the more representative thoughts of my respondents. Several sent me anecdotes and examples taken from their on-line experiences. Their answers point to a phenomenon which needs further investigation. Computer mediated communication, originally considered cold and alienating (Walther, 1992), has become, in Marshall McLuhan’s terms, a “cool” medium, which is “high in participation or completion by the audience” (McLuhan, 1964). People become highly emotionally involved in their on-line interactions. Some actually meet and fall in love on-line, while other engage in “flame wars.”

Questions also arise about the effects that computer mediated communication will have on face-to-face interactions. Will the directness of on-line communication help improve people’s face-to-face interactions? Such questions have yet to be answered. Computer mediated communication is a fascinating extension of the ways in which human beings duplicate the misunderstandings and confusion that currently take place between the sexes in everyday life. The choice of direction is not being made deliberately but is being made in the millions of daily on-line interactions. Choices in communication, and topics of discussion, are gradually shaping, as a river slowly carves a canyon, the culture of cyberspace.
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LOOKING THROUGH THE EYES OF YIN AND YANG

White and black, soft and hard, feminine and masculine—these are a few of the combinations of contrasting elements of the universe. According to the views of the Chinese philosophy known as Taoism, the balance of these opposites leads to harmony. Tai Chi focuses on this balance to better both the inner and outer self. My choice of Tai Chi as a topic for this study was influenced by my interest in furthering my understanding of this martial art that I have participated in. Also, Tai Chi is a part of Chinese culture, a culture that my life is part of and which gives me an identity in this world. This paper will explore the idea that participants of Tai Chi gain a different perspective on life based on the concepts and values of this Chinese artform.

The primary location of my study was the HongWanJi Temple in Palolo Valley. Chuk-Kai Tai Chi classes were conducted in a hall below the temple itself. For additional material, I conducted a search for Tai Chi related material on the Internet. My key informant was my father, Patrick Ling, who provided a plethora of information gained in his long experience with Tai Chi. My experience as a student of Chuk-Kai Tai Chi also informed this participant observation study. One class session was devoted to data acquisition through observation.

During my general study of Tai Chi, I found that there are several variations of this martial art. There are three main styles. Yang style is known for its wider stances, overall round movements, even tempo, softness and gentleness. Chen style is characterized by its lower stances, constant twisting, varying speed, a balance of soft and hard moves, including power sets that one might associate more with other martial arts like kung fu. Wu style is known for its higher stances, parallel feet positions, minimal arm movement, and the slowness and deliberateness of its execution.

Although there are differences, all the styles share certain universals in their central beliefs. One of these beliefs is the importance of the balance of yin and yang. Another belief can be summed up in the saying, “Four ounces of strength against a ton of force.” This refers to the idea that with harmony and balance, little effort is needed to counter what would appear to be superior force. At the root of these values is the principle of controlling one’s chi and balancing and directing the body’s internal energy. This energy is the result of many factors, among them the control of the physical body in the areas of breathing, muscle tension and flexibility. It also includes the emotional control of the mind. Tai Chi students learn control of the emotions, especially of anger. According to my key informant: “The people who come to this class are not fighters or down-right ag-
gressive people. Maybe some of them were violence-mongers in their past, but now they have matured and understand how to control their inner self."

Another example of this learning of emotional control can be found in an excerpt from an interview with Dr. Martin Inn conducted over the Internet. In response to the question, "Has Tai Chi changed your life?" Dr. Inn replied, "I used to be a pretty intense, fiery person. Practicing Tai Chi over the years really toned me down. I feel that it's made me more intelligent. It's allowed me to be able to look at things with a broader perspective."

Tai Chi was developed over 300 years ago. Mastering this martial art takes much time, and students at the Chuk-Kai class meet every Monday and Wednesday evening. Through social learning, students also learn values and attitudes embodied in the knowledge of Tai Chi.

As stated before, the concept of the balance of yin and yang is central to the practice of Tai Chi. The yin and yang symbol represents the unity and balance of these two forces. The white portion represents yin, which is associated with femininity and softness. The black portion denotes yang, which represents masculinity and hardness. Both portions have an eyelet site, which idea that each little of the other. When one portion becomes greater, the unity of the circle becomes disrupted and this is viewed as a weakness. Dr. Inn states, "Often, in our culture, if you're too strong, you'll break. So by becoming too strong or hard, you become fragile."

Soft and hard are important concepts in Tai Chi. According to Mr. Ling, too much yang, or hardness, is not good. It is the balance that is vital. He points out that some forms of Tai Chi have ventured away from hardness only to become too yin, thus upsetting the balance. Regarding fighting styles he says:

A person who knows all hard could be beaten by someone who knows soft because the soft person understands...
how to control their Chi so that person could wear down the person of hard style without expending much energy. If you were to pit the person who knows just soft style against someone who can balance his or her soft and hard style, then the person who has the balance will be the victor. This is because that person also understands how to control his or her Chi and how to use it against the opponent, and also has the additional knowledge of when to strike with hard style, which can decimate an opponent when done right. So, putting a balanced fighter against a hard fighter will produce the same victor because in this case, the victor has additional knowledge of softness.

Regarding the importance of balance, it is my interpretation that understanding equilibrium in Tai Chi reflects the self-possessed calmness an individual can apply to daily life. Dr. Inn illustrates this when he says, “It (Tai Chi) allows you to deal with the complexities of modern day stress by applying the principle (of balance) to your daily working and living situations.” The harmony that is taught by the lessons of Tai Chi enables one to deal with today’s mounting stress and, for the most part, enables one to look upon life from a positive viewpoint.

Movements and stances in Tai Chi forms are direct reflections of striving for balance. The stances reflect equilibrium in the form of the body’s weight distribution. In my field observation, I noticed that in every move and position performed by the students, the back was kept straight and the center of gravity maintained along the axis of the torso. As stated by one of the teachers, any feeling of unstableness in a stance should be corrected in order to bring the movement into balance. An unstable stance makes it easier for an opponent to knock you down. When movements are made, weight is shifted gradually from certain parts of the body to others, but the individual’s center of gravity remains stable.

When a student of Tai Chi begins to understand how to exert control over the body, then he or she can start to learn how to control a weapon. As when learning the hand forms, there are hard and soft styles of weapon sets.

The last exercise I watched during my observation of Tai Chi class was the “Push Hands” exercise. It involves two people who stand across from each other and place their wrists against one another’s. Then they begin to make circular movements with their arms. The exercise produces an alternating control at the point of contact between the two individuals. As explained to me, this exercise depicts the change of yin and yang forces as the control of the arm movement shifts from one person to the other. The goal of the exercise is to understand how “energy can be easily be dissipated or diverted.” As stated on the Tai Chi Academy web page, the
"Push Hands" exercise demonstrates that "awareness and reaction often triumph over force and aggression." Awareness of one's control at the physical and mental levels is a result of Tai Chi training and incorporation of its values.

From a concept based on harmonizing two opposing elemental forces, the culture of Tai Chi came to be. Essentially Tai Chi is based on the balance of two different yet complementary forces. The need for equilibrium is evident in the culture of Tai Chi. Values are formed that focus on the balance and control of not only the physical but also the mental. Thus, Tai Chi practitioners gain much that enhances their daily lives through the concepts, values and beliefs of this Chinese martial art.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Sanctuary of a Chinese Buddhist Temple
Color Photo by Donnalyn A. Guillermo
REFLECTIONS ON ONCE WERE WARRIORS

Alan Duff’s *Once Were Warriors* is an insightful look into the struggles of modern day Maori life. The story revolves around the Hekes, a Maori family living in poverty. Through his convincing plot and characterizations, Duff graphically illustrates a number of topics about the conflicts that Maoris have faced in the two centuries since their colonization by the English. The subjects that Duff explores include cultural displacement, as symbolized by the attempts of Jake and Nig Heke to assimilate their warrior ancestry in the modern world and the hope of change and redemption, as seen in the transformation of Beth Heke.

Despite the fact that they were the indigenous people of New Zealand, the Maori people found their culture displaced by that of Westerners. This led to the Maori struggle to assimilate their cultural legacy into a new and foreign society that was often hostile to it. Duff weaves a number of examples of this into the novel, starting with the concept of the warrior. The Maoris were once powerful warriors. In addition to their fierceness and strength, they were noble and chivalrous. However, the translation of the Maori warrior spirit two centuries later has diminished greatly.

Jake ‘the Muss” Heke is a physically strong man, as illustrated by the references to his huge hands, his size, his ability to fight, and his tendency to threaten others. Jake’s physical prowess represents the glorified Maori warrior of the past. Yet, his strength does not equip him with the necessary skills to survive in the present world. He cannot keep a job, support his family, or even take care of himself. Furthermore, Jake abuses his strength by beating his wife.

Following in his father’s footsteps as a displaced warrior is Nig Heke, the eldest son, who becomes a member of the Brown Fist gang. While Maori warriors of the past fought with honor, even tending to their wounded enemies in an effort to ensure they could continue to fight, these Brown Fist modern day warriors have no such code of ethics. Instead they threaten their neighborhood with unprovoked violence, even going so far as to kick a woman in the face. As Nig poignantly reflects, “The dream’d turned to a nightmare” (Pg.153).

After becoming a Brown Fist, Nig has his face tattooed like his Maori warrior ancestors. He gets his tattoo done with a tattoo gun, rather than in the traditional Maori method of chiseling it on. Nig has a dream one night in which he asks men with detailed face tattoos if they are his Maori ancestors. They answer:

‘No. We are not of your cowardly blood, for we know you are knowing fear. We are warriors’... Nig gestured frantically towards his face, his new tat-
toos just like theirs and freshly swollen from doing... Their tattooed faces were deeply etched, while his manhood markings were but lightly marked (Pgs. 182-183).

In this passage, Duff reflects upon the difference between the Maori warriors of the past and the recent Maori gangs. The “deeply etched” tattoos were chiseled in, often taking several weeks or even months to do, symbolizing the deep honor, responsibility and work that went into becoming a warrior. The Brown Fists and other gangs were “lightly marked,” both literally and figuratively. The tattoos took less time, pain, and investment to have done.

While Duff’s characterizations of Jake and Nig Heke represent the problems of trying to synchronize the glorified warrior past with the present, Beth Heke symbolizes the hope for change and redemption. Beth is a strong woman who, driven by the tragedy of her daughter’s suicide, begins a crusade to introduce pride to the Pine Block community. Like Jake, Beth finds strength in her ancestry. However, unlike the male protagonists, Beth is able to figure out how to merge the past with the present. Her transformation becomes a shining example for the community of all that is powerful and good in Maori culture.

Beth recruits the assistance of Chief Te Tupaea in educating the neighborhood kids about their shared heritage. The chief tells them stories that reflect Maori pride. The young people have never heard most of these stories before and the chief attributes this ignorance to the fact that “They taught us their history, English history” (Pg. 173). Beth is different from Jake and Nig in the sense that she is able to find strength in the past and apply it to the present. Her success is rooted in the ability to recognize and let go of the past. Chief Te Tupaea inspires the Maori youth of Pine Block to relinquish their past grievances and reclaim their future:

Nor was Chief into blamin people, the Pakeha, the system, the anything for the obvious Maori problems; you know, our drop in standards just in general. He didn’t care bout no damn white people ta blame, no damn systems meant to be stacked against a people, he just told em: Work! We work our way out (Pg. 185).

In addition to educating the youth of Pine Block about their proud warrior past, Beth and the chief stress the significance of getting beyond the past and reclaiming their present. By infusing the Maori community with hope, Beth helps make the community aware that it has a future.

Through the character development of Jake, Beth and Nig Heke, Duff provides insight into Maori culture and the struggles that modern Maoris face in their attempts to integrate their proud warrior past and the post-colonial present. Through the characterizations of the male protagonists, Jake and Nig Heke, Duff effectively conveys the problems that contemporary Maoris face in reconciling the old with the new. Through his depiction of Beth Heke, he suggests that hope for their future lies in the ability to recover the strengths of their once proud past and merge it successfully into the modern world.
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The Bai, Traditional Men’s House of Palau

The bai was meeting place for the governing chiefs of the village. Other bai served as clubhouses and learning centers where fishing, hunting, building and warfare skills were learned.

The large planks of the building were precisely fitted together and lashed with coconut sennit rope. The interior beams (left) and outside gables were carved and painted to depict historic events of the village, humorous tales and legends.

(Above) A storyboard from one of the beams.
(Left) A fertility goddess originally found in a bai.

Information based on Nancy Barbour’s book, Palau.