Horizons

A Journal of Cultural Issues
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Traditional Mochitsuki

The topic of my individual field study report is traditional Japanese customs. Specifically, my study will focus on the old Japanese tradition of mochitsuki (mochi pounding). This topic is of great importance to me for two reasons. First, my father introduced this tradition to our family, because he wanted to teach his children about their Japanese culture. Second, it was my paternal grandmother’s wish before she passed away that we, as a family, continue the tradition of making mochi (rice cake) the old fashioned way.

In ancient Japan, rice was a special valuable food used only for special occasions and holidays. Typically, rice was offered as one of the first crops to the Gods. The Japanese believe that rice is the gift of the Gods, and making mochi is a way to celebrate the harvest and to welcome the New Year. In Shinto religion, they believed that one grain of rice was one tamashi (human soul), and when it was pounded, the rice cakes represented millions of souls (Urata 1). When pounding the rice, each person could reflect on the God’s blessings and events of the previous year. Thus, pounding and handling the rice was a self-purifying and self-reflecting act.

Mochi, or rice cake, is essential to the Japanese Oshogatsu (New Year’s celebration). The Japanese see the New Year as the opportunity to begin the year with a “clean slate” (DeFrancis 18). It is believed that the fresh soul of a Kami (Gods) would descend only to a clean place if summoned by a pure heart (Mochinaga Brandon & Stephan 17). Therefore, debts are paid, quarrels are settled, homes are cleaned, baths are taken, and new clothing is worn for the occasion.

The old Japanese tradition of pounding steamed mochigome (sweet glutinous rice) is called mochitsuki (mochi making event). In earlier times, both in Japan and in the Japanese-American communities, friends and family would gather together to pound the mochi for the coming New Year. Mochitsuki is an all day event, which requires many hands, long hours, and hard physical labor. Despite the hard work, it is also a fun time of fellowship.

Isssei (the first Japanese immigrants) to Hawaii brought their traditions with them when they came to the islands. They followed their traditions just as they had at home in Japan, only now, they were immigrants’ in Hawaii. Now, their traditions were more meaningful to them. The whole plantation village would gather to pound mochi.

In modern day Japan, traditional mochitsuki is less common. However, there are some folks who still make their mochi by pounding it the old fashioned way. Otherwise, most of the New Year mochi consumed these days are produced by the easier to use, electric mochi making machines. Today, the custom of mochitsuki is carried on mostly in the temples, shrines, and in a few homes. Mochitsuki and other Japanese customs are important to defining one’s identity, and should be preserved.

The information for my study was gathered in a few different ways. I researched through books to get the general information, but the majority of my knowledge and study of this topic has come through the observation of my family members over years and years of which we celebrated this special day at our family home. We have been pounding mochi for approximately twenty-five years. It all began when my father took an interest in learning more about his Japanese heritage and about making mochi the traditional Japanese way. He did some research to find out what equipment he would need to practice this tradition, then he scheduled a trip to Osaka, Japan where my maternal grandfather’s friend helped my father find all the necessary equipment. My brother and I joined my parents on this fun trip to Japan. Coincidentally, my father’s friend in Hawaii had an usu (mortars made from a wood stump, stone or concrete forms) which he was either going to throw away or use as a planter. He happily gave it to my father. We still use that usu today during mochitsuki.

We were now ready to have our first mochitsuki. Mochitsuki begins the day before the event with the washing of the mochigome. Everyone, including my children participate in the washing of the rice as it is believed to bring good luck in the New Year. The washed rice is soaked over night in large containers. Early the next morning the usu is scrubbed clean and the kine (wooden mallet) and seiro (wooden steaming
frames) are soaked in water to prevent the pounded rice from sticking to it. The mochigome is now ready to be steamed in the seiro, which is lined with a bamboo mat. My family also lines the seiro with cheese-cloth, so that the rice does not stick to the seiro and it is easier to transfer it into the usu. Three or four seiro are stacked one on top of the other and placed over a kettle of boiling water. In ancient days, the seiro was made with either pegs or dovetailed joints and no metal was used. Our seiro was made the old fashioned way. However, nowadays, it is more common to find them made with nails.

Before the first batch of rice is ready, hot water is poured into the usu to prevent the mochigome from sticking to it. When the elders think the seiro nearest the kettle is ready, they will lift the top two seiro and someone will check the mochigome to see if it is ready by feeling the texture of a grain of rice. If it is soft to the touch, it is cooked and ready to be placed in the warmed usu. The hot water is dumped out of the usu and the cooked mochigome is placed in it. A fresh seiro is then placed on top of the stack and the steaming continues while the other batch is being pounded. Using the kine, two people mash the rice in the usu until it forms a single mass. The hot steamed rice is then pounded with the kine. One or sometimes two people alternately swing the kine downward, with a lot of force and enthusiasm and sometimes to the beat of the music. The strike of the kine must be precise or else the kine will hit the side of the usu causing small wooden splinters to become embedded in the rice. Another essential participant in the pounding is the experienced mixer who quickly darts his or her hand into the usu and turns the rice between the pounding. Since the mochigome is so hot, the turner is constantly dipping his hand in water not only to cool his burning hands but to make sure the mochi doesn’t stick to the mallet. An additional duty of the mixer is to keep a sharp eye out for anything straying into the usu and contaminating the rice. Usually, this is limited to a bad kernel of rice or a piece of stray splinter from an aging kine. If the turner misses something, there is always a senior man of the family nearby keeping a watchful eye on things. The mochi is pounded until the mass of rice is smooth and shiny, with no discernable individual grains of rice.

When the mochi looks smooth and consistent, the mass of mochi which is still very hot, is turned onto a cloth or paper covered table, which already has a thin layer of katakuriko (potato starch) spread over it. This makes the sticky mass easier to handle. An adept person pinches off small portions of the steaming hot mochi for others who quickly form them into round bun shapes with their hands. These are used to offer to the Gods.

Some of the mochi is stuffed with tsubushi-an (mashed, sweetened red bean paste), koshian (fine, sweetened red bean paste), or even peanut butter. The formed inochi is then set aside to cool and is ready to be eaten. My family likes to eat the plain mochi fried, with kinako (toasted soybean flour) and sugar sprinkled on top.

One of the main difficulties we face in Hawaii to keep this tradition alive is the availability of the proper equipment. Since so few people still pound mochi the old way, it is difficult to find a replacement for necessary tools like the kine. Some of the kine my family uses are over fifteen years old. Last year, I had a difficult time locating a place in Japan that sells the equipment. Sadly, because mochitsuki is being done less frequently in Japan, the equipment is harder to find. When I finally found a shop, the owner was so surprised and elated to hear that we continue this tradition in Hawaii.

While mochi is an important part of Japanese culture and tradition, making mochi is the most valuable part of the tradition. It brings families and friends together, and it helps to remind everyone to honor the elders in their family and remember their ancestors. Although there are electric mochi makers, the mochi is not appreciated as much as when it is made the old way by the hands of friends and family. As my father’s friend says, “Mochi made the old way tastes much better than if it were made by machine. The love and labor put into making the mochi comes out in its taste.”

The plain round mochi is also used as a household decoration for New Year’s called “kagami-mochi” (mirror rice cakes). This mochi decoration is constructed of two rounded cakes stacked one on the other and topped with a mikan (mandarin orange). This is then put on top a gohei (sheet of white paper) which signifies purity, and then laid on a small sanbo (raised tray).

The two rounded cakes symbolize the sun and the moon. Two for increased good fortune and rounded to represent smooth harmony and long life. The mikan has replaced the Dai Dai (bitter lemon) once used to symbolize new life from the seeds. The mikan covers wishes for wealth because of its color and fertility because of its many seeds. Dai Dai means, “generation after generation,” thus it is symbolic of long life and good health. The bitter lemons mature in winter and if left on the tree, become green again, signifying rebirth (Clarke 80). Since this fruit is not cultivated today, tangerines are used because it has many seeds that represent many offspring.

The origin of kagami mochi goes way back to ancient Japan when it had imperial courts. It is traced back to a ritual of the imperial court called hagatame (teeth strengthening). Back then, strong teeth were a symbol of good health, so offering the toshigami (honorable God of the Year) large, firm rice cakes, which required strong sturdy teeth to eat, represented a request for them to grant many years of healthy life. The round shape of the mochi resembles the shape of a traditional Japanese kagami
Kagami-mochi is displayed in a place of honor in the home and furnishes the New Year's God, Toshigami-sama. In ordinary households, they are most commonly placed in the tokonoma (in-door shrine to their ancestors). On January 3, the mochi is broken into pieces and eaten. The kagami mochi is never cut with a knife for to do so would be to cut up the good fortune it represents. The whole display is dismantled on January 11 (Clarke 81).

There are many Japanese people in Hawaii that make mochi and use it in ozoni (New Year's Day soup). Ozoni is the traditional New Year's breakfast for most Buddhist families. The soup is prepared with mochi and vegetables each having its own significance. According to my mother, "The mochi signifies strength and cohesiveness, the pulling of the inocho when eating it signifies long life, the vegetables bring good health, and the soup cleanses the soul." Recipes and ingredients vary widely from family to family with mochi always being the key ingredient. In our family, the main vegetable that we always include in our ozoni is the mizuna (green leafy vegetable) that is grown by my father every year just for this occasion. The Japanese believe that eating this soup on New Year's Day would bring good health, good luck, and strength to the consumer and assure prosperity for the New Year. Being easily digestible, it is also supposed to refresh the spirit.

There are other traditions observed on New Year's Day. For example, sake (rice wine) is served to each member of the family with the male head of the household taking the first sip. If one drinks tea on New Year's morning, umeboshi (pickled plum) would be added to the tea for good health. Also, feasting on a variety of foods continues on New Year's Day. In Hawaii, sashimi (sliced raw fish) is a favored dish to be eaten on this day. Usually red fish like Ahi (yellow-fin tuna) or Aku (skipjack tuna), replaces the Tai (red sea bream) which is commonly used in Japan because it is the king of fish. Sardine, a common fish is also served along side the Tai. Served together at New Year, they signify harmony between ruler and people. Eating of fish at New Year is believed to bring good luck. Other foods eaten during the New Year are: kazunoko, kuromame, konbumaki kampyo, gobo, kinton, kamaboko, renkon, and nantu. Kazunoko (herring eggs) are eaten for fertility and wishes for a family blessed with many children. Kuromame (sweetened black beans) are eaten for good health and future success. Konbumaki (seaweed wrapped around fish) tied with kampyo (gourd) are eaten for happiness. Carrots, pork and gobo (burdock root) may also be included in the

konbumaki. Gobo is a plant whose roots grow deep into the soil so the eating of it symbolizes that the roots of the family are also deeply set. Kinton (mashed sweet potato and nuts) are eaten for good fortune. Whole chestnuts are included in the kinton, symbolizing gold, money, or prosperity. Kamaboku (fish cake) is eaten because of the lucky combination of colors, red and white, that will bring happiness. Renkon (lotus root) sliced crosswise, is symbolic of the wheel of life and a sacred plant in Buddhist tradition. Nantu, a steamed rice cake wrapped in banana leaves is traditional among Okinawan families. Akemashite omedetoo gozai masu (The very best wishes upon the opening of the New Year)!

Since the New Year celebration is a family time, for many people it is also a time to visit gravesites. Those visiting gravesites offer mochi to their beloved ones who have passed away, along with rice, sake, salt and water.

I truly believe that mochitsuki, although slowly dying out, is still an important part of Japanese culture, custom and tradition. I am very fortunate that my family still considers making mochi an essential part of our family legacy, and I intend to pass this down to my children. It seems that the modern Japanese people prefer making mochi in a machine, because it is less time consuming than going through the hard labor of steaming the rice and pounding it. They miss the true significance of mochitsuki. I, on the other hand, would rather do it the old-fashioned way and keep the tradition going. If I neglect to do my share of preserving my heritage, it will be gone and I will not have my ancestral connections to pass on to my children.

In conclusion, I feel that it is my family duty to follow the customs and traditions of my heritage. Mochitsuki and other customs, teach me values such as honor thy parents, work hard, respect and love family and friends, share and give freely, etc. I strongly feel that I am who I am because of my parents, grandparents, great grandparents, and so on “okage sama de” (I am what I am because of you... my parents).
Bibliography


### Focal Vocabulary

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<td>Akemashite omedeto gozai masu</td>
<td>“The very best wishes upon the opening of the New Year.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dai Dai</td>
<td>generation to generation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gobo</td>
<td>generation to generation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gohei</td>
<td>sheet of white paper used for kagami mochi - symbol of purity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hagatame</td>
<td>teeth strengthening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issei</td>
<td>first generation</td>
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<td>Kagami mochi</td>
<td>“mirror mochi” - shaped like the rounded disk of the traditional Japanese mirror</td>
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<td>Kamaboko</td>
<td>fish cake</td>
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<td>Kami</td>
<td>god</td>
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<td>Kampyo</td>
<td>gourd</td>
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<td>Katakuriko</td>
<td>starch made of dogstooth violet or potato starch</td>
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<td>Kazunoko</td>
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<td>toasted soybean flour</td>
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<td>Kine</td>
<td>wooden mallet</td>
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<td>mashed sweet potato and nuts</td>
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<td>Konbumaki</td>
<td>seaweed wrapped around fish</td>
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<td>Koshi-an</td>
<td>fine, strained, red bean paste (smooth)</td>
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<td>Kuromame</td>
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<td>Mikan</td>
<td>mandarin orange</td>
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<td>Mizuna</td>
<td>green leafy vegetable</td>
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<td>Mochi elasticity</td>
<td>symbolizes strength</td>
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<td>Okinawan steamed rice cake</td>
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<td>Okage sama de</td>
<td>“I am what I am because of you... My parents”</td>
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<td>Okasane</td>
<td>one small on top of a larger - purity of your mind and body for good health and heart</td>
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<td>The New Year</td>
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<td>raw fish</td>
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<td>small raised tray used for kagami mochi</td>
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<td>Seiro</td>
<td>wooden steaming frames</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamashi</td>
<td>human soul</td>
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<td>Tokonoma</td>
<td>alcove with indoor shrine</td>
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<td>Toshigami-sama</td>
<td>honorable God of the New Year</td>
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<td>Tsubushi an</td>
<td>mashed, unstrained red bean paste (chunky)</td>
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<td>Ume</td>
<td>pickled plum</td>
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Jruchi mai
Usu
Uzu
Whiteness of mochi

non-glutinous rice (regular Japanese rice)
mortar made from a wood stump, stone or concrete
citrus fruit
purity of heart and intentions
The Price that the Philippines Pays for Having Plenty Babies

Randy Rivera

Filipinos regard children with the utmost importance. They feel that the more children they have the better. They are a very family oriented culture. Author Belen Medina, a sociology professor at the University of the Philippines, writes in her book “The Filipino Family:” Reproduction is traditionally regarded as an important function of the family in the Philippines. Children are looked upon as a sort of investment or insurance policy with the expectation of economic support in old age. They are also of great help in the house as baby sitters, kitchen aides, etc. Parents also see their children as a source of happiness, wealth, and grace from God. They believe that the more children they have the more blessed they are. In addition, children serve as a symbol of masculinity on the part of the father. Sons also serve to carry on the family line. Because of the high value placed on children, the Philippines has a relatively high birth rate (44).

What is family planning? In simple layperson’s terms, “family planning” simply means deciding when and if a couple should have children. An article titled “Filipino Women Who Use a Modern Method Prefer the Pill or Tubal Sterilization,” provides statistics regarding contraceptive use in the Philippines: A total of 69% of married women have never used contraception; the pill and condoms were the most popular methods reported by the largest proportions of women (36% and 14%, respectively). At the time of the survey, 28% of women were using a modern method and 18% were using a traditional one. The most widely used methods were female sterilization and the pill (each mentioned by 10% of women), followed by withdrawal and natural family planning (9% each). No methods at all were relied on by more than 4% of women. Use of modern methods were higher among women in urban areas than among rural inhabitants (31% vs. 25%). Further, women with at least some education were much more likely than women with no formal schooling to rely on such methods (25-31% vs. 9%). When family size was considered, contraceptive prevalence was highest among women with three children (40%) and lowest among women with none (1%) (Olenick 93). Based on these statistics, it seems as if most married women (69%) never practice contraception. It means they are looking to procreate to their maximum of capabilities.

It is important to differentiate family planning from contraception. Contraception is merely a component of family planning. Family planning encompasses a whole range of services beyond birth control. Child rearing is a huge responsibility, and it has definite consequences. More children means more responsibility and greater consequences. As a result of those consequences and the nations’ relatively high birth rate, the government of the Philippines should strongly encourage the education and use of family planning.

Excessive population growth increases the demand for drinking water in the Philippines. Take the district of Cebu for example. In his journal article “Towards Enhancing Access to Affordable Water Supply for the Urban Poor: Six Communities in Cebu City,” Rick Heikoop (an urban regional planner) writes: Secondly, the water production of Metro Cebu Water District (henceforth MCWD) does not match the needs of the population of Metro Cebu or of Cebu City. Less than 40% of the population is covered by its (Metro Cebu) services, and informal settlements hardly at all. They have to rely on communal water associations (henceforth CWAs), water vendors, and deep wells with hand pumps (252). Water is absolutely crucial to life. People would die without it. Its importance even surpasses that of food. One can survive much longer without food than without water. If Filipinos, as a whole, are not educated about family planning then the population growth rate of the Philippines will continue to increase at an alarming rate. In turn, the strain on the water supply increases because people continue to recklessly reproduce.

Excessive population growth also increases the demand for food in the Philippines. There is a significant amount of hunger in the Philippines. In an editorial from Philippines Free Press one of the nation’s major magazines, the editor writes: Fifteen percent of Filipinos go hungry every day. That’s one out of seven homes. This is the second highest level in the country’s history; the first was the 16 percent recorded shortly after the fall of Joseph Estrada. It is undeniable that hunger is increasing and, with it, the misery of the poor and the danger of adding more malnourished-and retarded-to the ranks of the youth. Hunger does not only make people miserable, it also guarantees the uselessness of future generations (“To Fight Hunger” 1). This article warns that hunger not only affects the current generation but future generations as well. Also, the food shortage is further aggravated by rampant population increases. More children means more mouths to feed. According to the website of one
of the nation's largest newspapers the Manila Bulletin "With a current population now reaching an estimated 82 million that increases yearly by 1.8 million, and at the rate urban centers industrialize, the rapid increase of the number of people means the need for more food..." (Manila Bulletin Online). One can infer from this article that the demand for food will continually outweigh the supply, and it will only get worse if something is not done about the rapid population growth. Anyone who has ever been hungry knows how unpleasant that feeling is. Long-term malnourishment is absolutely devastating. Without the proper nutrients, a person would severely compromise the integrity of his or her bodily functions. If Filipinos, as a whole, are not educated about family planning then the population growth rate of the Philippines will continue to increase at an alarming rate. In turn, the strain on the food supply increases because people continue to recklessly reproduce.

The number of abandoned children is increasing. Many of these abandoned children end up on the streets because orphanages are too crowded to take them. In his website article "Street Children in the Philippines," Tomoko Kojima writes about the plight of these children: The number of working children and street children is increasing now. The cause of this increase in abandoned children is due to the general increasing population of Philippine's cities. Although urban development remains high while rural development remains low, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to expand. The greater this gap becomes, the more these children are either abandoned or forced to work. Therefore street children appear (Kojima 1-2). On the streets, these poor young souls are left to fend for themselves. Oftentimes, they are forced into doing drastic and self esteem destroying tasks just to get something to eat. These "tasks" usually involve working in the sex and prostitution business. According to this journal article "Philippines: Child Pornography Rings Pervasive" from Off Our Backs While: it is known that child pornography has been widespread in many Southeast Asian nations, it was not thought to be pervasive in the Philippines. However, early results from a recent study by UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) shows that the child pornography industry in the Philippines is much more widespread and systematic than originally thought... The Philippines are plagued by child pornography because of the country's widespread poverty and general tolerance of prostitution and pornography, according to Alipui. In addition, technology allows for simple and quick proliferation of child pornography (7). Children who grow up on the streets lead a very disadvantaged lifestyle. They often turn to a life of crime and drugs. If they do make it to adulthood, they often become hardened criminals or drug addicts. More street kids now means more problems for society in the future. The number of street kids should be reduced. Family planning can mitigate this problem by decreasing the amount of unwanted, unplanned pregnancies. It allows people to have children when and only if they are ready for such a huge responsibility.

If the Philippines government doesn't educate the people about family planning then who will? It seems no one because the Roman Catholic Church vehemently opposes it. Roman Catholicism is the predominant faith in the Philippines. Jennifer Bowman, who has a Masters in Public Health, writes about how dominant Catholicism is in the Philippines. According to her, 84% of all Filipinos are Roman Catholics (4). Because the vast majority of Filipinos are Catholic, the Church has an incredible amount of power and influence. Bowman then goes on to cite a very vivid example of how intensely the Church opposes family planning: Many leaders in the RCC (Roman Catholic Church) would ideally like to see the complete withdrawal of government support for population matters. To facilitate this, the RCC continues to actively reject international family planning proposals aimed at reducing fertility. Recently, Cardinal Jamie Sin in Manila lambasted a new type of 'cultural dictatorship'. Sin charged the government with promoting "abortion, homosexuality, lesbianism, sexual perversion, condoms and artificial contraception." Through attacks, the RCC has completely separated itself from the policies of the government and its members (9). Separation of church and state has always been a source of conflict in the Philippines. Regardless of the position of the church, many Filipinos seem to have an inherent reflex to make as many children as they possibly can. Belen Medina sheds some light on why Filipinos adopt the Church's anti-family planning stance so readily. "Children are believed to bring good luck... The more children a couple have, the more blessed is the union because a child is seen as a gift of God and a sign of peace. Thus, contraception is seen as sinful and is frowned upon" (Medina 195). Seasons change. What might have been good luck in the past might now be looked upon as bad luck as an entire nation struggles to sustain a booming population.

Without a doubt, the Roman Catholic Church is the biggest roadblock to the endorsement of family planning in the Philippines. In his book Contraception Your Questions Answered John Guillebaud provides a very insightful and interesting commentary about the perspectives that different societies, cultures, and religions have about family planning: Societal attitudes towards reproduction, fertility, sexuality, and family planning are important that they create the general climate in which arise the decisions about whether to have children, how many, and whether to use contraception. All religions are pro-natalist (pro childbearing) and anti-abortion. Some may allow a pregnancy to be terminated for specific reasons, e.g. where the woman's life is at risk. Religions may not be averse to planning of limiting one's family but may be divided as to the means to do it, e.g. restricted to abstinence or natural family planning for strict Roman Catholics. There is a notion shared by some Catholics and some from an Afro-Caribbean background that there are a certain number of souls/children waiting 'out there' and it would be wrong to prevent their arrival... Orthodox Jews: the
man must not impede the sperm hence male methods are not used though the woman may use contraception. For Muslims both husband and wife must agree to the use of birth control; abortion may be allowed to prevent a handicapped child. Strict Muslim women can only be examined by female doctors and touch their vulva with the left hand. Somewhat of a problem for female barrier users! Both Jews and Muslims must avoid sexual relations during and for a specified time after any menstrual bleeding-a major perceived obstacle to intrauterine and some hormonal methods. Cultural factors rather than religious ones appear more significant among Caribbean women. Birth outside of wedlock is not considered a social stigma. Fertility (or the proof of it) is considered very important: How seriously people take their religion and their perception and knowledge of what it actually says with regard to family planning obviously varies. Some may have rejected their background. Thus in giving contraceptive advice it is essential to ascertain the particular person’s views (today) and to avoid making assumptions about their beliefs and attitudes. Note: Treat the person not the culture (510). Mr. Guillebaud is essentially saying: that a common sense approach to having kids is usually best, that people are far more important than any set social standards or inflexible religious belief systems, and that the most important time frame is “now” not the “past” or the “future”. The “spirit” or “truth” of all belief systems seeks to enhance the quality of life for all. “Life” is always subject to change. Change is the only true constant. The Church must change its attitudes towards family planning for the benefit of the Filipinos whom they theoretically serve.

In conclusion, the Philippines should definitely endorse family planning. Too many people places a strain on the food and water supply. Unplanned pregnancies lead to an increase in street children. The government has to be the superpower that encourages the education and use of family planning because the Roman Catholic Church, the other superpower of the Philippines, vehemently opposes the practice. Family planning benefits the well being of the Philippines and its people. Nothing in life is given or received for free. Having and raising children are no exceptions. The Philippines pays a very heavy price for having plenty babies.

Works Cited


The Opium War: Who Is Really To Blame

Clint Kanoaka

According to definition, opium is “a bitter, yellowish-brown, highly addictive drug prepared from the pods of an Old World poppy and from which alkaloid drugs, such as heroin, codeine, and morphine are derived.”

There is no doubt that the Opium War marked the downfall of one of the greatest and most powerful nations at that time. For thousands of years leading up to the war, China had reigned as one of the richest and most self-sufficient, yet isolated (at least toward the West) nations in the world. With overseas markets calling for the payment of many high-cost goods from China, such as silk, teas (green and black), porcelain, and medicines, and with virtually no need or desire for foreign goods, the Chinese economy soared. Although this uneven trade was of concern to other nations, only Great Britain, with their large economy, advanced military, and numerous trade routes and facilities, had the power to do anything about it (Wakeman, pp. 135-137).

While history books often decree that the British are responsible for shouldering the majority of blame for the Opium War, it is important to take an objective view of this situation. It would be erroneous to portray the British without any reproach, as it is indisputable that they played a major role in the illegal shipments of opium to China, it is difficult to place the entirety of the blame upon them. This paper aims to examine the events leading up to the war, and analyze the roles played by both the British and the Chinese in this epidemic that would swiftly initiate the rapid deterioration of one of the most elite and distinguished nations in the history of mankind. It will also cover the addictive nature of opium, addressing issues such as why this drug did not wreak as much havoc upon the British as it did the Chinese, as well as provide an overview of its production and consumption. Finally, this paper will attempt to show that while the actions of the British were both immoral and unethical, China, the most glorious of Asian nations, had not only put itself in a position to be exploited, but through its own arrogance and social inflexibility, had also created reason for it by gaining the envy, resentment, and possibly even hatred of other nations - especially England.

The Opium War was actually a duo of wars fought between the nations of China and Great Britain (the “superpowers” of the world at that time) over a span of 20 years, with the first lasting from 1839-1842, and the second from 1856-1860. These wars are largely regarded as the most humiliating time period in China’s considerably long history; as it was the first time that this vastly independent and austerely self-governing nation had been forced to obey the demands of a foreign power. While this “opening of China” to the world was not fully complete until the end of the second war, the major steps taken to break down China and draw it into the modern world were mostly accomplished through their defeat at in the first war (Fay, pp. 1-7). Thus, this paper will be focusing upon the first war waged between China and British, known as the Anglo Chinese war (3).

However, before looking at the Opium War that would be waged between China and Britain, it is important to first understand the reasons that China was so adamant about solving the epidemic spread of opium addiction throughout the country.

According to definition, opium is “a bitter, yellowish-brown, highly addictive drug prepared from the pods of an Old World poppy and from which alkaloid drugs, such as heroin, codeine, and morphine are derived.” It is a narcotic drug that gained fame throughout the world for its multiple medical uses, which include treatments for diarrhea, dysentery, asthma, rheumatism, diabetes, malaria, cholera, fevers, bronchitis, insomnia, and pains of just about any sort (Graham, pp. 22-23). Needless to say, opium was widely regarded as a “wonder drug” throughout much of 18th and 19th century. During this time, physicians would normally prescribe a solution in which opium was dissolved either in water, or more usually alcohol, to help ease the ailments of their patients. Due to the general lack of medical knowledge at the time, it was nearly impossible to be successful in practicing medicine without the benefits of opium. In fact, medical knowledge was so limited at that time that opium was often prescribed to patients suffering from the very symptoms of opium addiction (30).

The process of extracting raw opium from the papaver somniferum, or the opium poppy, is a long and tedious task, and thus, its cultivation and development was usually confined to nations where labor costs were low. Opium is obtained by collecting the milky-white sap that oozes out of the sliced seed capsules of the poppy. This is achieved by painstakingly slitting each capsule with a special four-bladed knife, called a nostril or nurme. After allowing the sap to run from the pod overnight, the juices are then collected the next day after having hardened upon the surface of the pod. Two to three days later, this process is repeated, and is usually done as few as four to as many as eight times basically until the pod will produce no more sap.
In order to produce a considerable amount of opium, an enormous amount of poppy pods are required. Estimating a yield of approximately half a gram of opium from each poppy capsule, it would take over 18,000 pods to produce just 20 pounds of product. With over 6,000 tons of opium being shipped each year during the 19th century, this tedious process was reserved for regions where labor was cheap, such as India (16). Since India had both the requisite costs and environment for opium cultivation, and because it was the British colony that housed the massive British owned trading company, the East India Company, which subsequently did business with China among others, it became a leading producer in the opium exchange that would eventually lead to the war. However, India had been manufacturing opium for years, and had sent it throughout the world where it was generally consumed orally, either through eating the gum or by dissolving it into a liquid (although it was sometimes mixed with tobacco and smoked in a weak opium mixture called madak) (Chesneaux, Bastid, and Begere, pp. 127-128).

While it is unclear exactly how the Chinese got into the habit of smoking pure opium, as it was rarely consumed this way in India, it is understood that within certain parts of Asia, in countries such as Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and especially China, those who used opium for the purposes of relaxation or stimulation usually smoked it in a pipe (Pay, 18). It is probable that opium was consumed in this fashion because it endowed its users with instantaneous effects and a more intense, pleasurable “high.” It would therefore seem likely that the reason the Chinese suffered such extreme adverse reactions from opium, compared to the British who consumed opium in the usual, oral manner, was because the heightened potency also made it more addictive. This belief is furthered by statistics revealing that the opium used for madak yielded only about 0.2 percent of morphine, a miniscule amount when compared to the nine to 10 percent ceded by smoking it in pure form. The use of the low-grade madak is often compared to the feeling gained from the high of marijuana, which was good, until compared to the astounding effects of the pure product. While this increased purity created a stronger, more satisfying high, it unfortunately also created a product with a more prolific addiction rate (19). The smoking of opium is accomplished through the use of an unusual pipe that cannot be packed or lit like a normal tobacco pipe. It is about 18 inches long and one inch in diameter, and often has a turned mouthpiece made of animal horn (usually buffalo). The last six inches of the opposite end are encased in copper and are usually decorated with silver or another adornment. In the middle of the copper inlay is a three-inch socket where the bowl, which is often constructed of fine clay in a shape resembling a flattened tumip with a hole the size of a pinhead at the top, is attached (Naquin and Rawski, 4445).

To smoke the opium out of this pipe, one would take a drop-sized bit of opium and heat it under a flame using a long needle. Once the opium began to bubble and sputter but before it began to vaporize, the user would tip the bowl over the needle and flame, and inhale through the mouthpiece. One drop-sized piece would last only two or three puffs, however the effects upon the user would be “an almost immediate rush that was very blissful,” said Marco Ching, a native of Hong Kong, current HPU student and employee of an antique shop in Chinatown (Ching, Personal Interview). According to other accounts, the drug produces relief from the cares and worries of everyday life by dulling reality. And, while reality may be lessened, the senses of the user may seem heightened, with the user feeling finely tuned and aware of their surroundings, believing that he or she is able to “perceive the imperceptible” (Fay, 8-9).

The Opium Wars began when the Chinese government tried to stop foreign merchants, especially British merchants, from illegally importing opium into China. The first war began in 1839 when Chinese officials seized large quantities of opium that had been stored in warehouses in the city of Guangzhou (Canton). In an attempt to show their resolve in banning the illegal import of this drug, the government destroyed the 20,000 chests of impounded opium (approximately 2.5 million pounds), and detained the smugglers under Chinese jurisdiction. Infuriated, the British retaliated violently, sending battleships to deal with this outrage. Due to their technologically advanced military, the British were able to ravage the Chinese, and by 1842, hoping to avoid further destruction, the Chinese government yielded to the British, ending the war in humiliating fashion (Fay, 108).

In defeat, China was forced to sign the Treaty of Nanking, the first treaty to ever conform China to the rules of the outer-world. Through this treaty, China ceded the Island of Hong Kong to the British Empire. This was also the first time that the Chinese had ever relinquished territory to a foreign power. Additionally, China was forced to open ports in Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai to foreign trade, and was made to pay off the lost “British stock.” And although opium remained illegal in China, the treaty essentially secured the future of opium trade in China, both by allowing British merchants to do business with all Chinese merchants (as opposed to the relative few they were previously allowed to conduct business with), and by giving Hong Kong to the British while allowing their merchants in China to operate under British regulations. The latter would let the British import opium into China via Hong Kong, and then sell it off into China while suffering only the penalties dictated by the British government if caught (Grant and Wakerman, pp. 227-228).

Upon reading this summarized history of the First Opium War, it is easy to hold the British completely to blame for what had happened, because in just about every way, they were iniquitous in their actions. However, it is also important to look at the reasons behind their actions. However, it is also important to look at the reasons behind the war, which can more clearly be seen through the hefty demands imposed by the Treaty of Nanking.
Although the sale of opium had been banned in China since 1800 (and had also been previously banned in Britain due to its detrimental effects), the black-market trade of the drug still flourished. As it was, over 2 million Chinese were addicted to opium, largely around port cities like Canton, where money, even for government officials or mandarins, was short. To support themselves, their families, and their official establishments, many Mandarins were inclined to accept bribes or "squeeze money," which was generously given by their smuggling counterparts in order to secure the safety of this illegal stock. While the Chinese may have viewed this as a way to make their ends meet, the British saw it in a completely different light. And how could they not? After all, these government officials seemed most willing to profiting off of this trade, and although the Chinese government had outlawed opium, the officials governing these laws seemed inclined to support their cause (Fay, 41-51).

While offering bribes to ship illegal goods into China may have been unethical, the British felt justified in this, as they believed that the Chinese government, for many years had unfairly restricted the trade agreement between the two countries. China's desire to keep all Western philosophies out of its society had inevitably put a stranglehold on virtually all merchandise exported from Britain. Believing that their culture was superior to all others, the Chinese had no interest in purchasing goods they thought to be inferior to their own (43).

Britain had long been unhappy about the trading conducted with the Chinese, because they had no interest in purchasing goods from the British. And though the Chinese had no desire for British merchandise, the same could not be said about the British and their desire for Chinese commodities. So as China exported large quantities of stock into Britain, merchants were forced to pay in silver, rather than trade in goods. Thus, opium was the lone product that Britain could provide to this nation that so vigorously shunned all other imports. And though it was illegal, it was a huge cash crop for the British, bringing in more than three-times its production cost, and almost guaranteeing a legion of repeat buyers. With such huge profits being raked in and with rampant corruption within the Chinese government, the British reasoned that by supplying a product coveted by the masses, it was merely evening a trade operation that the Chinese had for too long slanted to benefit themselves (56).

Another aspect addressed by the Treaty of Nanking was the inclusion of the edict that British criminals arrested in China would be tried under British law. While the Chinese may have seen themselves as superior, their arrogance was at the very least matched by that of the British, who viewed the Chinese as vicious and barbaric (although this sentiment was mutual, as the Chinese felt the same way about the British) (Destenay, 76). How could the British allow any of their citizens, even those guilty of smuggling opium into China, to be subjected to punishments as crude as those levied by the Chinese?

Although the Chinese would rightly argue that any foreigners who commit a crime on Chinese soil should be forced to deal with the consequences of the Chinese government, the British believed that China's Imperial Commissioner, Lin Tse-hsu was too aggressively persecuting British merchants, and refused to comply with their demands. In order to put an end to this dispute as to who governed the penalties of foreigners in China, Britain, henceforth the treaty, dictated that all British captives were to be tried under British law (Fay, 83).

This statute in the treaty allowed even more opium to flow into China after the first war. Occupying Hong Kong gave the British a port already on Chinese territory, where they could legally ship as much opium as they wanted. Then, in a plan of devious construction, merchants could continue to disperse the drug throughout China without too much worry. After all, if they were caught they would only suffer the penalties of the British government, which were miniscule when compared to the sentence of death by strangulation (hanging) as called for by Chinese law (84).

But despite the wrongs that were done to them, to completely alleviate the Chinese of any fault would not accurately portray the reality of the situation at hand. The Chinese, whose beliefs and culture had for so long been the foundation of so many Asian societies, had grown in both complacency and arrogance from their superiority. Being the mainstay powerhouse of Asia, the Chinese had virtually no true competitors. Thus, when Westerners began appearing, wanting to peddle their inferior goods, the Chinese assumed that these were just another group of substandard foreigners. After all, upon seeing what the British had to offer, could they have thought otherwise? The British had seemed inferior in just about every way: their food was second-rate, as was their cloth, porcelain, and tea. However, as the Chinese eventually found out, there was one aspect where the British completely and totally dominated them - through their military (Wakeman 44).

Through their arrogance and ensuing isolation, China shut its doors to the world. While this was not directly involved in the events leading up to the war, it was a major factor in their destruction. Feeling that the Westerners had little to offer, and wanting to keep their existing ethnicity untainted by European ways, China paid no heed to the advancements occurring in Britain. Thus, when Britain's battleships attacked China, the Chinese learned that their military was far inferior to that of the English. In fact, it was so bad that firepower of the Chinese cannons could not even reach the British battleships at sea (Fay, 224-228). Although it had been the Chinese who had introduced gunpowder to the West, it was the British who ended up with the superior arms.
Once again, Chinese arrogance played a major factor in this occurrence, as it had led them to shut out the ideas and inventions that came from the West. While the Chinese had been admired for their inventions, which included the printing, the compass, and wheelbarrow among the other aforementioned devices, they failed to take into consideration the potential of other nations to have great ideas. So, when the British military attacked, China was unprepared for it, having in their possession outdated military weapons and technologies.

In conclusion, it is evident that the events leading up to the war were propagated both by the Chinese and the British, although in completely different ways. The British were unhappy with the acute ways in which the Chinese treated them, both by refusing to buy their goods and by inflexibly restraining the trade. The Chinese, on the other hand, while doing little wrong in legal terms, were so full of conceit and pride after years of superiority in Asia that it flaunted its greatness in the face of others, refusing to adhere to, or even consider, the suggestions of others.

Much like a bunch of stubborn, squabbling children, both sides felt that the other was being unfair, and demanded that the other give way to suit their needs. With both sides unable to reach a compromise, war broke out and the Chinese were handily defeated by the advanced military of the British. But things could have been much different.

Had the Chinese not been so filled with self-importance, perhaps they would have taken a closer look at what other nations were doing with their resources. In doing this, it is absolutely possible that a number of the detrimental effects that China suffered may not have happened. Had the Chinese opened themselves up to the military advancements coming out of Europe, perhaps it would have been better stocked to turn away the invasion. After all, what had initially begun as bickering between nations about trading, was eventually decided not through rules governing fairness or righteousness, but rather through military might, which, by the 19th century, was led by the powerful British forces.

However, as far as the opium trade is concerned, the British can only be blamed for the opium products of China in the same way that modern Columbian cartels can be blamed for America’s problem with cocaine. That is, it can’t. It was not the British who had an epidemic spread throughout their country because of opium. Furthermore it was not the British who were making the market for opium so viable in China. It was the Chinese people who were helping to import the drug and who were so addicted to it that they could not stop; not the for the glory and pride of China, or even for themselves.

Bibliography


Chinese Herbal Medicine

Shelbi Jim On

"Nature cures the disease, the doctor collects the fee." - Old Chinese Proverb

To many, the Chinese are considered to be a very proud race. They are proud of their heritage, culture, but most of all their scientific and cultural achievements. Currently, one of their most significant contributions to the world is the knowledge of using natural substances, plants, and animal products to cure and thwart illnesses. Coming from a traditional Chinese household, the use of herbal medicines is incessantly present in my life. The knowledge and wisdom of herbal medicine has been passed down from generation to generation. My family has continued to practice traditional herbal medicine, especially when Western medicines and drugs do not produce the desired results.

My research focuses on the uses of Chinese herbal medicine. It also focuses on the factors that contribute to the massive popular usage of these herbs within the Chinese community and its influence worldwide. I have chosen the topic of Chinese herbal medicine because I can easily relate to it due to my experience. I also can bring in my own and my family’s experiences in using herbal medicine and discover its effects on our perspectives, heritage, culture and household.

This study took place in three different clinics/shops that sold and prescribed Chinese herbal medicine to the public. These clinics/shops include Fook Sau Tong, Viet Hoa, and Chee Wo Tong. Over a period of two months, for two hours every Saturday afternoon I would meet with Mr. Douglas Chong and visited these clinics/shops to conduct my study.

Mr. Douglas Chong was my key informant in which he introduced me to the different types and practices of Chinese herbal medicine. He also interpreted the Chinese names of the tonics into English and helped me communicate with several of the employees that work in the shops. Other informants included Betty Ching, an 83 year old traditional Chinese woman, and Helen Tom, a 50 year old Chinese-American woman, who are devoted practitioners of Chinese herbal medicine. These informants buy their herbal medicines weekly from these shops and consult with professionals in order to help them choose their tonics to cure ailments.

My study was conducted by choosing these three shops as my cultural scene. I first began by making observations and taking down notes about the human behavior that existed in those social atmospheres. After several times of just observing the scene I decided to participate in the events in order to gain experience about my topic and a first hand account of was is taking place in these areas. Each week I would meet with Mr. Douglas Chong in addition to my other informants and conducted unstructured interviews. These interviews were based on open ended questions regarding the types of tonics bought, the medicinal use of those tonics, their individual beliefs in herbal medicine as opposed to modern medicine, and any other factors that made these individuals practitioners of herbal medicine.

The Chinese have practiced herbalism from the beginning of their civilization. Its practice arose before the 2nd century B.C. and since then has grown in popularity. Over this period of several thousand years, the Chinese people have perfected herbal medicine practice in both its usage and its results. To the Chinese, the approach of herbal medicine is very complicated and cannot be looked at from the simplistic angle of how each herb acts. It is instead essential to understand the philosophy behind its practice and the principles of life in which herbalism is based upon.

The philosophy behind herbal medicine is founded on the principles of yin and yang. Nei Ching wrote in his book The Yellow Emperor Classic of Internal Medicine, "in order to treat and cure diseases, one must search into their origins. Heaven was created by an accumulation of Yang, the light element, while earth was created by an accumulation of Yin, the dark element. Through their interactions and functions, Yin and Yang, the negative and positive principle in nature, are responsible for diseases which befall those who are in rebellion against the laws of nature." This doctrine of yin and yang is a fundamental principle employed by all Chinese to every aspect of their lives. Yin and yang exist only in relativity to one another and are considered idealized states. Yin represents the negative inactive state characterized by cold, darkness and the interior. Yang on the other hand represents the positive active state characterized by heat, light and the exterior.

The body is constantly changing from yin to yang and vice versa. Thus illnesses would arise when the body is...
Increasingly yin or yang. Herbalists would prescribe medicine to counteract the excess yin or yang with excess yin and yang respectively, in order to balance the body’s energy. For example, Yang herbs such as Jen Shen or Fu Tzu are hyperstensives. These herbs are used for those suffering with yin conditions such as low blood pressure. Similarly, Yin herbs such as Ta Huang are hypotensives. These herbs are used for those suffering with yang conditions such as high blood pressure. In the realm of herbalism every herb is designated its own unique yin yang character thus making the combinations of both limitless. As a result an appropriate herbal remedy can be created for any possible condition or disease.

In addition to the philosophy of yin and yang, herbal medicine also involves the fundamental theories regarding different body types and diseases. The “empty full theory” categorizes body types into four groups: full yang, empty yang, full yin, and empty yin. Full yang people tend to be active and overweight with a red complexion. Treatment for such persons results in inducing discharge with Hsiao Ch’eng Chi’ Tang tea. Empty yang people are active and thin with a tan complexion. Treatment for such persons results in creating warmth with Chen Wu Tang, Szu Ni Tang, and Wu Wei Keng Tang teas. Full yin peoples are somewhat inactive and overweight with a yellowish complexion. Treatment for such persons results in inducing sweating with Ma Huang Tang and Hsiao Ch’ing Lung Tang. Empty yin people tend to be inactive and underweight with a pale complexion. Treatment includes Pai Hu Chia Jen Shen Tang, Li Chung Tang, Wu Tzu Tang, and Szu Ni Tang.

In concurrence with the empty full theory, herbalism uses a system for the classification and treatment of diseases that affect water, blood, and chi in the body. The water disease category includes everything associated with swelling. The blood disease category includes everything associated with blood stagnation. The chi disease is associated with anything that produces nervous and mental disorders. In each category there is a specific herbal medicine to treat every body type. For example, peoples with a full yang body type and water disease would drink Wu Ling Tang tea. In contrast, peoples with an empty yang body type and water disease would drink Pa Wei Wan tea.

In addition to the types of disease there are six stages of disease. The first stage is Tai Yang in which the disease has not yet penetrated the body’s defenses and is still located in the skin and muscles. General symptoms include fever, strong pulse, headache, body pain, cough, and chills. The second stage is Shao Yang in which the disease is half inside the body and half outside; the symptoms are alternating hot and cold General symptoms include dizziness, vomiting, dry throat, and blurred vision. The third stage is Yang Ming in which the disease may have entered the stomach and intestines. General symptoms include constipation, excessive sweating, restlessness, and thirst. The fourth stage is Tai Yin in which the spleen is affected by the disease and the stomach cannot digest liquid food and water. General symptoms include stomach pain, no thirst, vomiting, and diarrhea. The fifth stage is Shao Yin in which the disease has entered the heart and kidney; symptoms may be empty yang with cold or empty yin with heat. General symptoms include cold extremities, diarrhea, vomiting, no vitality, distended chest, restlessness. The last stage is Chueh Yin in which the disease has damaged all of the bodies’ organs; death may soon follow. General symptoms include pain and heat in the throat, hunger, vomiting, passing of worms from the abdomen.

In the field of herbal medicine, herbalists feel the pulse of a patient in order to diagnosis their illnesses. An herbalist would first feel the patient’s left pulse with his right hand; and feel the patient’s right pulse with his left hand. He would then place three fingers- the index, middle, and ring finger over the pulse of both hands. Next he would apply a weak, moderate, and strong pressure with each finger. The positions of each finger and the amount of pressure applied by the herbalist to each spot would reveal the condition of the various body parts of the patient. For example, if a patient were to have a large pulse then they are experiencing abdominal pain or have intestinal worms. A slippery pulse would indicate that the woman is pregnant for more than three months. After taking the patients pulse, the herbalist would then prepare a certain combination of herbs to treat that particular condition.

The hundreds of prescriptions created by herbalists are then prepared through one of the three methods. The first method is called Wan, or pill. These herbs are ground into a fine powder, mixed with a binding agent and rolled into pellets. These pellets are taken with boiled or warm water to drink. The second method is called San, or powder. These herbs are grounded into a fine powder. The powder is taken by dissolving the powder into boiled or warm water and drinking the liquid. The third method is called T’ang, or soup. Herbs are boiled with cold water, strained and drunk. The most commonly used method of preparing the herbal medicine is creating c/ia, herbal teas, or smaller versions of T’ang.

In the last century, medical and social advances have presented society with the “illusion of control.” This illusion instigated society’s dependence upon technology and modern medicine in the West. Although modern medicine is well advanced in therapeutics and in surgery, it has not been successful in developing an effective way to deal with chronic and degenerative disorders. After several millennia, the Chinese have developed and adapted an herbal system using the products of the Earth in order to develop “radiant health.” This method of treating illnesses and disease has produced long term results for patients. As a result, it has increased the popularity of herbalism within the Chinese community.
There are several reasons as to why herbal medicine has increased in popularity and has been used more frequently in the Chinese community. First, Chinese medicine is natural and contains nutrients. Second, herbal medicine is used as a preventative means in addition to curing diseases. Third, Chinese medicine takes all emotional, nutritional and physical disorders into consideration for treatment. Fourth, the prescriptions by herbalists are tailored for the patient's individual symptoms. Fifth, there are no side effects of tonics when used appropriately.

Chinese medicine uses natural medicines as opposed to synthetic analogues of natural products. Herbal products known as tonics contain vital elements that may enhance the life force of those who consume it. Tonics provide nutrients and other biologically active agents that seem to invigorate the body and mind in a balanced way. Some tonics are considered super-nutrients, while others improve our physiological functioning and boost energy. Tonics are safe and virtually non-toxic when used properly.

Tonics are not only used to treat diseases but also to prevent specific ailments. Many Chinese herbalists believe that early diagnosis leads to permanent prevention of damage. As a result, Chinese physicians diagnose diseases and treat indications early in order to deter the disease from advancing. A good example is itchy skin. Chinese believe that itchy skin is related to the vitality of the liver. Therefore, the liver is the focal point of treatment; therefore, taking care of the liver would allow the skin to take care of itself. This would thus prevent itchy skin from occurring again in the near future.

Western physicians in contrast would prescribe a dermatological lotion to only treat the skin ailment. Consequently, Western medicine focuses only on curing the specific system and does not include prevention.

Chinese medicine approaches illness in a holistic manner. Unlike Western medicine, Chinese medicine does not isolate emotional or nutritional disorders from physical disorders in treatment. It instead allocates the internal causes of diseases to dietary imbalance. The Chinese regard the universe as an organism and man as a microcosm of the universe. Man is considered to be an integral part of the organic development of the universe in which the mind and body are inseparable. Westerners, on the other hand, equate the human body to a machine and disregard the human mind. To the Chinese even though the body is constructed of many different components the sum of those functioning parts becomes greater than the whole. By understanding this function and their interdependence Chinese medicine becomes a nutritive complement to Western health care.

Drugs used in Chinese medicine are individually tailored to fit the patient's symptoms. Chinese medicine pays special attention to the totality of the objective and subjective symptoms of an individual. As opposed to Western medicine, that offers nonspecific treatment for a number of conditions, Chinese medicine uses specific herbal combinations to treat differentiated symptoms.

Chinese herbal formulas generate no side effects when taken in proper amounts. As opposed to Western medicine, herbal formulas are natural products of the earth and therefore contain no harmful side effects. Western medicine contains synthetic materials that are un-natural to the human body and therefore may disrupt its balance, thus causing vomiting, dehydration, diarrhea, etc.

Currently, the Chinese practice both Chinese and Western medicine simultaneously. The common pattern emerging from all individuals is: whenever conditions are in a crisis situation or surgery is involved, the Chinese will opt for Western medicine; however, when individuals suffer from chronic disease they will choose Chinese medicine to cure their conditions. An example of the complementarity of Chinese and Western medicine is pregnancy. Western medicine is frequently employed during surgery to interrupt pregnancy. However, after the surgery women experience "hernia syndrome" which causes chills, headaches and sometimes paralysis of limbs. The woman would then be treated with Tang-kuei, Evodia, and Ginger combination brewed into a tea. This combination would cure the individual because the symptoms arise from the obstruction of yin in the liver.

In addition to the co-practice of both medicines is the influence of Chinese medicine on Western remedies. Many tonics used by the Chinese for thousands of years have influenced the Western public to follow in their footsteps. An example is the Chinese medicine Ephedrine, which Western medicine uses as a sympathomimetic drug.

Laboratory evaluations resulted in the extraction of Ephedrine from Ma Huang in 1923, which was later used for clearing lung conditions and stimulate the central nervous center. The Chinese have been taking the Ma Huang combination for at least 1800 years prior to Western usage. Chinese herbalism preventative ideals have influenced the Western society to increase the uptake of certain foods. The first example is the tonic ginseng. Recently in the United States, ginseng has become increasingly popular in energy drinks. Studies have shown that it is an energy tonic that provides clear perception and stamina. However, the Chinese have practiced using ginseng since the dawn of their civilization in which it is considered "a tonic to the five viscera, quieting the animal spirits, stabilizing the soul, preventing fear, expelling the vicious energies, brightening the eye and improving vision, opening up the heart to benefit the understanding, and if taken for some time will invigorate the body and prolong life." Another example is the tonic Dangshen.
Ligusticum is a black fungus that is very effective in increasing and improving blood circulation, cleansing the liver, and improving the peripheral nervous system. The Chinese have used this fungus in an important soup called the “four things soup” in which it helps harmonize the blood. Currently in western medicine, this black fungus is being looked at as an agent that may be used in the treatment of cancer, AIDS, and counteract symptoms of old age. Chinese herbal medicine has also influenced nutritionists to promote certain foods to prevent diseases. For example, many nutritionists have encouraged individuals to intake more fruits and vegetables with anti-oxidants to prevent cancers and other diseases. The Chinese influenced nutritionist because of their prior use of tonics that are anti-oxidants.

The usage of Chinese herbalism is an intricate practice that involves skill, dedication and time. It is a form of healing art and science that one masters. Chinese herbalism offers many preventative means and cures for symptoms sometimes not curable by modern medicine. It is a unique practice in which it determines the causes and effects of the disease, and develops a cure that fits the particular individual. As a result, the mental and physical conditions of the patients are of major concern to the herbalists as oppose to the disease itself. The formulated teas and herbs used to treat the general and specific ailment of the body goads the body’s immunity to the specific disease in the future and provides long-term effects.

In the constantly changing world that we live in, the practice of Chinese herbalism continues to retain its traditional use and cultural significance in the Chinese community. Because of herbal medicines virtually non-existent side effects and complications its practice has grown in popularity extending its influence to the western culture and even western medicine.

The future of Chinese medicine looks promising in which several steps are currently being taken to combine both Western and Chinese medicine. The first step includes the alignment of Western medicine in the prevention of diseases. The second step is to integrate Chinese herbs into modern medicine and extend that integration to encompass all medical activity worldwide. The third step is to make these valuable forms of traditional medicine readily available to the public. Although there are several obstacles arising deterring the combination of such two doctrines, these obstacles are not insurmountable. The integration of both Western and Chinese medicine will no doubt be a long and arduous journey but it is assimilation is imperative for both China and the world.

Bibliography


Photographs of Chinese Herbal Medicine
Deaf Culture and Community

Mary Hannah

Who makes up the modern Deaf World? Can a hearing person become enculturated into this community? These are some of the questions I set out to answer with my project. I have always wanted to learn sign language since the first time I saw an interpreter on a public access TV show. The movements of sign are fluid and beautiful, so I was very happy to be able to enroll in the American Sign Language (ASL) course at KCC. My field study was done during my second semester of ASL class. It is not just about the sign for a word it is also about the culture and community of the Deaf. These are things I was never aware of. The Deaf do not look at themselves as disabled or deficient. They have built a strong culture based on their history, language, traditional behaviors, common goals, and the arts. The Deaf communities have very close bonds to each other. Because of past prejudices and oppression they are not very trusting. Involved in my field study is Darlene, my key informant. She is in the ASL interpreting program and I feel she has become a part of the Deaf community. She is well known in the Deaf community, serves on the Aloha State Association of the Deaf (ASAD) board and is active in many group activities. Juli is an ASL student in my class. I have been observing her interaction with the three deaf students in our class throughout the semester. Also Ricky who has been studying ASL for many years and wants to become a sign language teacher. I wanted to interview one of the Deaf students; however Darlene discouraged me from this. She said they wouldn’t understand what I am doing and would not want to be a part of a study. She said they would feel uncomfortable and avoid me. Keep in mind while reading that when I use the words “talk or say” it is meant in the signing term, not actual speech.

“A culture is a set of learned behaviors of a group of people who have their own language, values, and rules for behavior and traditions.” A person maybe born into his culture or he could become acculturated in the culture of his choice.

“A community, on the other hand, is a general social system in which a group of people live together, share common goals and carry out certain responsibilities to each other.”

“A Deaf community is a group of people who live in a particular location, share the common goals of its members, and in various ways, work toward achieving these goals. A Deaf community may include persons who are not deaf themselves but who actively support the goals of the community and work with deaf people to achieve them.” (Baker, 92)

A hearing person who identifies themselves as a member of the Deaf community would be identified as having attitudinal Deafness. This means that you respect, and support the values and goals of the group. But most especially the community recognizes you as being a part of the community. The first step to this recognition would be to learn and use ASL with respect.

ASL evolved from a blending of the French Sign Language (FSL) and the signed language used within the communities of Martha’s Vineyard. FSL was taught to Thomas Gallaudet, in Paris, by abbe’ Sicard and Laurent Clerc. In 1817 Gallaudet would return home to America bringing Clerc with him. Together they would open the American School for the Deaf. On Martha’s Vineyard the deaf were not the only ones using sign. The hearing used sign when talking with the deaf and also amongst themselves. Signing was as normal as speech. Within a short time the so called Golden Age of Deaf Culture flourished. Many ASL based schools opened and this lead to many more first for the Deaf communities. There were churches, clubs, sports, and a newspaper for the Deaf. Then the oral movement, lead by Alexander Graham Bell came about during the 1860’s. Bell believed that deafness was a curse and that the deaf should be integrated into the hearing society. By the turn of the century Bell and his colleagues had succeeded in making serious changes in the education of the deaf. 80% of residential schools were turned into oral day schools the other 20% used a combination of both. Deaf children were forced to learn to speak and ASL was forbidden. Signing was now the “Deaf community’s longtime guilty secret. (FHPO 341) The self-esteem of the Deaf people plunged. Bell also thought that the deaf should not marry and bear deaf children. He believed that the deaf carried bad genes that lead to their so-called “defect”. Not knowing why or how children were born deaf, some reasoned it was due to consanguinity. However this has never been proven. Roughly 85-90% of deaf children are

Roughly 85-90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents. A large percentage of these children will have no language until they are sent to school. On the flip side is the hearing child born to deaf parents, this child will never realize what is “hearing” until he is in school.
born to hearing parents. A large percentage of these children will have no language until they are sent to school. On the flip side is the hearing child born to deaf parents, this child will never realize what is "hearing" until he is in school. Both groups of children will start school with communication problems. Learning English for deaf children is very difficult and the education system devotes far too much time to the oral/aural training. It is estimated that deaf students spend less than 3% of their class time learning reading and writing skills. English for them is a second language and ASL does not have the same syntax as English.

Today, we had to mime a situation in front of the class. We each got a slip of paper with the different situations typed out. My role-playing was that I lost my ring down the sink in my hotel room. The class then needed to guess at what we mimed. When it came to Norybell's turn, she's a deaf student; she chose a paper and read it a couple of times. She seemed confused, turned her back to the class and signed a bit to herself. After a time she went over to Darlene, the teachers' aid, for help. Darlene read it and then signed the instructions to Norybell so she could understand.

On Friday, April 9th, we went to a captioned movie of The Last Samurai at Dole Cannery. During the movie Norybell asked many times what was happening. She couldn't understand some of the context of the sentences. Juli has told me Norybell has a hard time with her English class. Juli helps her when she can, however Norybell will get frustrated and not want to talk with Juli for a while. The day before the movie Norybell brought in her photo album in from her trip to Alaska this past spring break. She said we could look at her pictures but not read what she had written on the pages. After a few minutes of looking she took the book away. She said she thought we were taking too long to look at the pictures so we must be reading her captions and she can't write English sentences well so she was embarrassed. The structure of ASL sentences is subject then action. There are no function words like "of", "by", "the" or "ing" and the plural "s" is not used in ASL.

As with any foreign language, taking the class and actually using the language are two different things. Our teacher required us to attend at least two deaf events, to talk to a deaf person for at least 10 minutes and then to write about it. I thought this would be great and set out to attend as many events as I could. I wanted to meet, interact, and work with this community. The first event I went to was a workshop this is a small part of the actual essay I wrote for my ASL teacher about my experience there:

On Saturday the 24th of January, I went to the Choices workshop sponsored by ASAD. The purpose of the workshop was to enlighten other groups and individuals about the services and resources that are available for the deaf and hard of hearing (hoi). They had nine speakers and two interpreters for any hearing people in the workshop... During the portion of the meeting given to KCC, a deaf older lady attending the workshop asked one of the representatives from the school what dialect they were teaching because she couldn't understand the signs. Apparently a student tried to sign to her and she couldn't understand them. Her encounter with the student annoyed her. One of the KCC ASL teachers stated that even though we are 2 or 4-year students we are not as proficient in sign as a deaf person may be. We are slower and not as fluent but that doesn't mean we don't know how or are learning a different form of ASL. Jan Fried said that like all foreign languages it will take time for us to sign fluently and that's why we need mentors, or at least we need to get out to the Deaf community functions and practice our signing. After that lady commented like that I thought to myself, "I'm not going to talk to you! I'm scared already!" This is the first time I have seen any deaf person act like this. Last semester when I went to the Deaf events, the Deaf people were encouraging and seemed to want to talk with you. They were patient and helpful. The only Deaf person I talked to that day was Kristine Pagano; she is the treasurer for ASAD. She asked me my name and told me hers. Her last name Pagano took a couple of tries on my part. I told her I wanted to volunteer and did she need volunteers. She said she did so I gave her my email address and I am waiting to hear from her. When I sign to deaf or just knowledgeable signers I get so nervous that I do everything wrong or I forget. Going to the events are very helpful. I watch the signer and try to tune out the interpreter. I think I recognize more signs on my own and I am not so lost.

Children of Deaf parents begin learning the language of their parents from infancy. Whether the child is deaf or hearing they will acquire native competence. They also team the beliefs and behaviors of their parents cultural group. In turn they will become cultural and linguistic role models for Deaf children who do not have Deaf parents.

In most major cities you will find Deaf clubs, these clubs are like a second home for the Deaf members. Socializing at these clubs starts early and the children are always apart of this social group. The club is the place that Deaf children will learn about their history, and the values and customs of their culture. Long considered a key place for acculturation and socializing, outside of residential schools. Adult members can get information about the community and friends while the young members can hear historical Deaf stories and jokes, overall developing a pride in Deaf people. In our modern society membership has dwindled among young people. Mainstreaming of deaf children in local schools delays the child establishing a complete knowledge of ASL and Deaf culture. Another reason is the captioning of television programs. This makes entertainment available in the home so parents no longer need to seek out the entertainment of social clubs.
Tonight I went to a social gathering of Deaf people... a community gathering. On the second Friday of every month some of the Deaf community get together at Starbucks in Pearlridge to see each other and talk story. Our teacher, Ami, encouraged us to go and practice signing. I met Darlene there as usual. There were about ten other people there when I arrived. I sat at an empty seat within the circle and didn’t say anything at first. Darlene went to see someone she knew and was engrossed in a conversation. Everyone knew each other, I knew no one. It was intimidating to say the least; the conversations in the circle were fast and furious. I finally got up the nerve to talk with someone; the first girl I spoke with seemed stuck up, not willing to talk. I asked her name she hesitated and then with a scowl, (I'm not exaggerating) she signed her name (I'll call her A) she did not ask my name so I told her my name is Mary... she said “please to meet you.” This is the correct response after meeting someone. She did not talk to me after that. Later I found out that she is hard of hearing and didn’t like that I didn’t try to voice talk with her. Another girl asked my name I spelt it out and the asked hers (I'll call her B). I had a hard, time she was born with a birth defect and doesn’t have all her fingers. Some are only stubs. This took a while and I was so embarrassed, which of course made me more confused. She then asked where I was born, I couldn’t understand and then A” voiced, “she’s asking you where you were born. What level of ASL are you? 101?” I’m in the higher level so that certainly sent me down a little. I told “B” where I was born and had a brief chat with her before she went to eat with some of the others. I went to sit by Darlene and ended up in a conversation with Ricky who had just arrived. Ricky is friends with “A”, he asked her do you know my friend Mary... she said yes she met me that night. After that she was very friendly but did not want to sign, she wanted to use her speech. “A” became hard of hearing after a childhood illness. In “B’s” case her parents were first cousins; she was born deaf and deformed. On Monday I saw Ricky and “A” I went to talk with them. I said hi but only Ricky said hello, “A” turned her back to me and didn’t want to talk.

On March 12th I attended the ASAD meeting, there was about 15-20 people there. This included board members and others who are involved in the Deaf community. There were five of us who were not deaf or hard of hearing. Three of us were students observing, Darlene and another board member. I should mention here that I did join the ASAD, paid my yearly fee and this was my first meeting. The purpose of the ASAD is to provide referral services for the Deaf, advocate during legislature to improve deaf services, develop social and senior clubs, the meetings are slow and there was an interpreter tonight. Darlene is on the board so she sat up front. I was sitting with Gail and David, two students from the interpreter class at KCC. Earlier before the meeting started Darlene introduced Gail, they are friends from class, to Sky a deaf woman who came in. I was sitting next to Darlene and Gail watching the introduction but Darlene didn’t introduce me and Sky never introduced herself to me. After a while I introduced myself and asked her name. Other members slowly arrived no one said hello or looked our way. They sat on the other side of the room from us. Kristine Pagano arrived, she is the treasurer, and she said “hello, thank you for coming.” I found this unusual, in the “hearing world” if you are in a group or circle of people where you are the new person; most would approach you asking “Have we meet? My name is” or “are you new to the group” but they don’t. Tonight I saw the same people Steve and his wife, Roy, and Oliver. Also Jeff, who is a teacher at KCC and my old teachers husband, none of them ever say anything not even hi or good to see you again. They have seen me for a year now and I always wave and smile but I don’t get any more response than a nod. It may be because they know I am an ASL student and after my class is over they think I will be gone.

There are standards of politeness for the Deaf culture, such as saying hello, sharing information, goodbyes. Sharing information with others in the community is a showing of unity. If you were late you would say sorry I’m late and then explain in detail what had kept you. In our class if you need to leave early or go to the restroom you need to stand up and explain this, not just quietly leave the room. The same if you are sick you are expected to email the teacher and tell her why you were not in class. Of course in public it is rude to watch a Deaf person having a conversation with someone else. It is considered eaves dropping of sorts.

March 9th today in class we learned about describing people. Your description should follow as such: height, body type, color of hair, hairstyle, any noticeable characteristics or marks. Norybell is very short; I’d say under 4ft tall, Ami had her stand and she told her, “short you, what happened?” in the Deaf culture this shows concern for another. It is not rude or being nosey, as I would think. Norybell answered that everyone in her family is short maybe it’s because they are Filipino. Another example Ami gave was if you should meet up with someone you have not seen for a long time. This woman has gained quite a bit of weight; in the hearing world you would not make reference to this fact. But in the Deaf culture it is okay it shows concern. So you might say, “Before you skinny, now fat. What happened?” At this point she may tell you she has had children or doesn’t exercise, what ever, but this is acceptable. It’s considered sharing information.

Receiving your name sign is an important event in acculturation in the deaf culture. Distinguishing marks are used in name signs. There are two classes of name signs: descriptive and ones that use the manual alphabet. Norybell’s name sign is the first two fingers scratching the chin. This sign means sweet or cute and the first two fingers are the “N” alphabet. So it could be a descriptive sign given to her by her family. She has five brothers and is the baby of the family. Janice’s sign name is the
manual sign “J” following down across her jawbone, this is both descriptive and manual. Janice has a protruding jaw line. When you meet someone for the first time you spell your first and last name then you give your name sign. There after you are always referred to by your name sign. If you come from a Deaf family you are given a name sign at birth by a family member. The name sign would usually be in the same location as all your family members to show unity. For instance John would be “J” on the right shoulder, his brother Bill would be “B” on the right shoulder and so on. Children from hearing families usually receive their name sign after they have become proficient in ASL and their acculturation progresses. As students if we receive sign names it will be from our teacher, sometime in the second year.

April 6, we got our midterm test back today and I didn’t do very well. The test was given in three parts; one of these parts was expressive. For this we sat with Ami and talked story with her, she wanted to see how we interact with normal conversation. I scored low on Non-manual, grammar, and eye contact. Non-manual and eye contact are basically the same, when talking with a deaf person it is rude to look away or glance elsewhere during the conversation. You should look at the person not stare them in the eye but watch and observe their facial expressions and the signing. Also you would never walk in between two people or interrupt them. If you need to talk with someone you should stand next to his or her non-dominant hand. You could lay a hand on their arm or just stand quietly very close to them. They now know that you want to talk to them and will turn to you when the conversation breaks. Facial expressions are a very important part of the deaf language, this is non-manual. Your facial expressions coincide with the hand signs. When asking a yes or no question your eyebrows are raised. In asking a wh-word question, your eyebrows are lowered. When you give directions if the place is close by you open your mouth. If it is far away you lean back a little, tilt your head and open your mouth. One day in class I was called forward to do an exercise with Ami. She asked me, “are you married?” I did the sign for no but nodded my head yes!

These are excerpts from “At the Metro Silent Club” by Gloria Cosgrove a reporter doing an interview with some deaf people at a Deaf Club. Gloria questions, “I’ve heard that some Deaf people feel strongly that hearing people shouldn’t be involved in the Deaf -World. What’s your feeling about it?” Jake shrugged. “It’s true there are deaf people who feel this way, but not everyone does.” “I do,” said Henry emphatically. “Don’t be offended, Gloria. You asked for the truth after all. But my perspective is that hearing people should stay out of my world. When I was working, I spent all day with hearing people, and when I was done I wanted to go home to my own people.” “But what about hearing people who sign well,” Gloria asks. Henry shook his head. “There’s still a difference. Hearing people may learn to sign well to be able to communicate with Deaf people, but is the Deaf-World their world? (Journey 373) This piece from a reporters interview makes some strong points. Other remarks were that the hearing person can “jump off the Deaf-World boat and get on the hearing- world boat whenever they wanted to” (Journey 375) this is true even for myself. For instance, Darlene and a group of the deaf girls go to lunch at Subway. I’ve been invited, but I have only been there a couple of times. There were times during this field study that I have thought about going to Subway to talk with the girls, then I think no I’m tired or I don’t feel like signing today and I instead go with my friends to the cafe. My classmate Juli has really developed a friendship with the Deaf girls and her signing abilities have changed dramatically. At the being of this semester she had, I’d say the same communication abilities as I had. Through out the semester I have watched her improve rapidly. She began by talking with the 3 deaf students in the class, slowly. Actually, the two boys started talking with her first. Norybell did not talk with her till much later. She said that in the beginning it was difficult, the two boys in class would talk with her but Norybell would get impatient with her slow signing abilities. Juli started to help Norybell with her English homework after class. This led her to make another friend Janice, who is Norybell’s English classmate. Juli is the same age as the deaf girls so this makes it easier for her to interact with them. I talk to them but I am older, they could be my children, so I have two barriers age and communication. She meets them at Subway for lunch two days a week and chats with them online every night. They attended outings together, BBQ’s and movies. They have developed real friendships and this has improved Juli’s language ability. I met a deaf man named Doug at the cafeteria on March 18; we were watching one of the performances. He is probably in his late 40’s, very interesting man. We talked for a while and we exchanged email addresses. I have emailed him but have not heard back. It was fun to talk with him because the performance was loud but we could still carry on a conversation. When we went to the movie I met Cheryl. She is 47 yrs old and works part time at HCC. We also exchanged emails but she has not answered my letter. And I have not heard back from Kristine either about volunteering. Have I gone wrong somewhere or are the older Deaf more reserved? They have been raised in the oral system and have seen more of the past prejudices than the younger kids who are mainstreamed in the education system.

March 31th, I met with Ricky today. I asked him how he thought he could become a part of the Deaf community. He said “I have been trying real hard to get into the Deaf community, not just by taking sign language but also by taking the culture course. This semester I have a Deaf education class for children and I am starting to learn how they think, what their values are. Since I have started learning more about deaf culture and pride my attitudes and out looks have change. I am afraid of the genocide of the culture due to such things as cochlear implants and other
technological devices. When I first hear about cochlear implants I thought great now they can hear. But it's not about hearing it's about the loss of a culture. I am now starting to embrace the beauty and vibrancy of the culture. They have a lot of pride, they do not want to pity at first I thought I'm hearing and you're not. Now I find I am emulating them. They have something that I want; they have knowledge of the Deaf culture. I'm no longer looking down at them I respect them. They do not need my help they are better equipped in the world than I am. They have developed these coping skills to overcome. I used to think they were not as smart as I am; now I feel they are smarter because they have been able to overcome and cope with out hearing and I don't think I could do that. A lot of them overcame the odds and are now professionals. I went to the best private high school and I'm not a professional.' I started ASL thinking I was going to learn sign language and then I can help the Deaf people. I had a mission. Now after many embarrassing moments and this research I have concluded that the Deaf people don't need my help. For hundreds of years they have persevered and kept their history, language, and their community strong. They would welcome me into this bond if I came in as an equal. Not as a savior. The best way to go about it is to volunteer within the community. I could do volunteer work with the Deaf schools and also for the ASAD fundraisers. It will take a lot more than two semesters to develop a trust with the members. Their social functions are a time for them to let their hair down and relax. Their time to catch up with friends they do not get to see very often. It is a time for them to be wrapped in the comfort of their own world. So instead of attending all their social functions and trying to talk with them I will instead develop this new friendship with Cheryl. She recently emailed me and we have common interests. She wants me to teach her to knit and I want her to teach me to make haku leis. During this study I met another student named Kerry, she has a long history with the Deaf. She told me that the Deaf we meet at the events know we are from the school. They have seen us come and go they get tired of being the guinea pigs. Since talking with her this comment she made to me has really made me think of their feelings instead of mine.

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The Ceremony of a Lao Buddhist Funeral

Oi Fukuki

Ever since I can remember, my mother and father have been practicing Buddhism, a prevalent religion followed in my homeland, Laos. As for the children in our family, being that we grew up in a different culture and society, we never took part in our parent’s religion. Instead, we chose Christianity, a religion that was introduced to us by friends while growing up. At the end of year 2003, a tragedy struck our family when we received news that our dad was diagnosed with cancer. He did not have very long to live. His doctor estimated only about six months; therefore, our family did whatever it took to spend quality time and to make sure that all his wishes were carried out. His last wish was to have a Laotian Buddhist ceremony at his funeral. At this point, we were dumbfounded.

Although my mother is Laotian and Buddhist, she did not have a clue on how to go about holding such a service because of her mental condition. My siblings and I too were oblivious. Luckily, my father was one step ahead of us and had already planned out his funeral service with the two organizations that he belonged to, Lao Buddhist Foundation of Hawaii and Lao Senior Citizens of Hawaii. He assured me that we will be guided by the elders and that they knew exactly what to do. Without an ounce of education about a Laotian funeral ceremony, I had no choice but to do my best and make it happen. I am extremely thankful that my father had such supportive and loyal friends. If it had not been for them, my family and I would not have been able to carry out the traditional ceremony that my dad wished for.

Being that this is the most cultural experience for me and knowing that I needed to do a field study project, I took the opportunity to write about “The Ceremony of a Lao Buddhist Funeral.” There are many different important factors of a Lao Buddhist Funeral. To get a better comprehension of why certain rituals are performed and why the people do what they do, we need to understand a brief history of Buddhism, understand their belief of karma, and then view the actual rituals as a whole.

My field study project took place primarily in Kahuku at a Lao Buddhist Temple. Besides the temple, it also took place at Borthwick Mortuary in own-Town Honolulu. My goal was to understand the different rituals that were performed and to understand the process involved. My key informants were the Kahuku Monks, the Pearl City Monks, Bounsou and Vaughn Chanthalangsy, Po and Bebe Sananikone, Keo and Emmeley Nakasen, Puongpun Sananikone, Phatana Rattanasamay, and Vilath Douangphoury. Among the many elders, other informants were Thone Rattanasavanh, Sounthaly Luangphakdy, Khanthaly Sihavong, and Nuon Keo. This study was a participant observation. I spent the entire week living among the monks and the elders at the temple and engaging in their daily activities. My family and I were the host of the ceremony and were being guided step-by-step by one of the aunties appointed from Wat Lao of Hawaii Association. According to protocol, I would ask open ended questions and get clarifications from Aunty Vaughn when necessary. I would also interview others as a form of comparative method. The estimated time spent on this ceremony, from beginning to end, was roughly about two hundred hours over a week’s time frame including the final ceremony held one hundred days later.

Buddhism is a religion and a philosophy inspired by the life and teaching of Siddhartha Guatama, a wandering monk who came to be known as Buddha, “the Enlightened One.” When Siddhartha was a young man, he left society and went to meditate on the causes and relief of human suffering. Six years later, Siddhartha achieved enlightenment and became the Buddha. He began to teach others how to achieve enlightenment too. In the 31st century B.C., the Indian emperor Ashoka spread Buddhism by sending missionaries to Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and other parts of Asia. Today the way of the Buddha has more than 500 million followers, concentrated in Asia but also found in significant numbers in Europe and North America.

Buddhism’s beliefs include the “four noble truths,” which are suffering exists, suffering is caused by desires, suffering ceases when desires cease, and freedom from suffering can be achieved by following the “noble eightfold path,” says Edward Conze, the author of “Buddhism; Its Essence and Development.” He goes on to say the “noble eightfold path” is the practice of right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. When
a person has no more desire, he or she will have nirvana, or enlightenment. If nirvana is not met, Buddhists believe that a person will continue to be reincarnated until he or she receives nirvana. If reborn again, a person is either demoted or promoted depending on the karma which the person held in his or her past life. Besides the “four noble truths” and the “noble eightfold path,” Buddhism also believe in five precepts: do not kill, do not steal, do not commit adultery, do not lie, and do not drink alcohol or take drugs, stated Thich Nhat Hanh, “For A Future To Be Possible.”

There are different branches of Buddhism: Tibetan Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism, and Theravada Buddhism. The two major traditions are Theravada, which is “the Way of the Elders” and Mahayana, “the Great Vehicle.” Robert C Lester of “Buddhism: Religious Traditions of the World” explained that the ladder of Buddhism is divided into numerous sects, each with a distinctive emphasis. Even with the Theravada tradition, there are significant differences of practice from one country to another. Some Buddhists emphasize self-understanding through meditation, others good deeds, and still others the worship of the Buddha. There is no one-single Buddhism but many Buddhisms. Regardless, all Buddhisms are Buddhism. In Laos and Thailand, the people there follow Theravada Buddhism.

I hear my mother saying the phrase “mon see bahb” (meaning he or she will have bad karma) and “puhn see me buhn” (meaning he or she will have good karma) all the time, but never realized the power behind those words. It is very clear to me now that Buddhists believe in karma and rebirth. During my entire stay at the wat (Lao Buddhist temple) in Kahuku, I must have heard the same statement at the lease twenty to thirty times from numerous people. These expressions were usually blurted out when one performed certain actions. For example, someone was about to swat a fly in the kitchen. When the other person saw what was happening, she immediately said “don’t kill the fly, you will be bahb. Just chase it out of the kitchen.” Another example was when a child crossed over an elder lady’s leg. When the child’s mother noticed that, she told her child to walk around next time because being disrespectful is bahb. An illustration of buhn (good karma) is when I overheard one of the auntsies praising my sister. She told my sister how proud she was that my sister was working so hard and that my dad would be proud too. She said “you will have plenty of buhn.” My sister was performing a good deed in honor of someone else.

So what is Karma? As stated in the American Heritage Dictionary, Karma is the total effect of a person’s actions and conduct during the successive phases of one’s existence. This accounts for his or her thoughts, words, and deeds. Karma means action. Buddhists do not believe in fate. They believe that an individual has total control over his or her destination through his or her actions. Like what Joseph Goldstein exclaimed form his book “The Experience of Insight”, “the Buddha was once asked why some people are born rich, others poor; why some people have healthy bodies, others sickly. Why is it that some people are very beautiful and others ugly? Why some have many friends and others none? What accounted for all the differences that can be seen among people? He replied that all beings are the inheritors, the heirs, of their own past karma.” It is really our past deeds which are the womb out of which we are born. Life as it is experienced in the present is the result of the accumulated force of all past actions.

It was understood that my family and I were going to be hosting a lot of friends and family, perhaps, a large portion of the Laotian and Thai community who my father played had known. This is one of the reasons why my father wanted the ceremony to be held at the temple. Neither my home nor the homes of my siblings were large enough to entertain anywhere from twenty-five people to a few hundred people at a time. Therefore, we followed my dad’s wish and decided the ceremony would be held at the Lao Buddhist Temple.

I knew that the wat (temple) is located at a farm in Kahuku but I did not realize how simple the setting and life-style is there. I later found out that this location was only temporary while the new Lao Buddhist temple is being built in Laic? After pulling up from driving through the long narrow dirt road with mud puddles and bushes along the way, I stepped out of my car and saw that there was white carpet on the dirt. Huh, white carpet on dirt? Not like it was a door mat or any thing, it was actually about 35 by 20 square feet. It looked like it was used as a supplement for flooring to prevent mud from tracking into the temple and into the kitchen which is juxtapose to one another.

After properly greeting (by pressing my hands together in a praying position and bowing my head) the monk who was wearing his saffron robe, some aunties whom were wearing casual blouses with their sin (long ethnic wrap skirt), and some uncles whom were in jeans and t-shirts, I entered the kitchen. Automatically, I had a flashback. The thought of Laos came to me when I saw the set up. There were no decorations, just basic necessities. This includes laundry baskets on the floor, each filled with different sized bowls and another basket with plates. There was also a big bucket filled with pots and pans. On the counter, were different sorts of condiments. There were a lot of vegetables left in boxes that looked like they needed to be refrigerated. It really seemed like the people who reside here live a simple life. After walking out of the kitchen and into the open air which overlooks the farm, I took a deep breath and thought to myself, “Wow, they really make the most with of what they have here.” I remember feeling so refreshed being in the natural environment and feeling so far away from society.

In my father’s culture, when a person passes away, it
is the custom that a family member of the deceased will hold a service either at his or her home or at a wat called the “Buhn Som Mu”, meaning three days ceremony. This ritual goes on for twenty-four hours a day for three days straight. What actually takes place during these three days is that friends and family will visit the family member of the deceased to show support. The family must have a display of the decease’s picture, a candle that is kept lit at all times, a minimum of one incense that is kept burning, an offering of the decease’s favorite food along with his or her favorite beverage, a bunch of unburned incense, blank envelopes, a log book, and a donation box. The host must be prepared to entertain visitors by having a sufficient amount of food, drinks, and brand new decks of playing cards.

There are two reasons behind this service. One, to celebrate the deceased by letting him or her know that he or she was loved and respected. This is done through lighting incense, which is believed to be a bridge from the physical world to the spiritual world, and then communicating through prayers. Each person who wishes to communicate with the deceased must light his or her own incense. The proper way to light the incense is directly with a match or a lighter, not by burning it from the already lit candle that is in front of the decease’ picture. Another reason for this service is to support the family members of the deceased.

There are three forms of support: emotional support, financial support, and the act of service. To show emotional support, friends and family will visit and mourn together. They will stay up all night as a form of sacrifice to show love for the dead. Friends and family are free to come and go throughout the three-day period. As for the family members of the deceased, at least one person must always be awake. It started from many decades ago that a good way to keep from falling asleep is to gamble with cards. Gambling makes it interesting and people will even stay up days at a time. This is the reason why the host needs to have boxes of brand new decks of cards. Once the card starts to bend a little, it needs to be replaced with a brand new deck. Besides playing cards, people converse, reminisce, cook, eat, and drink.

As for financial support, each family that visits will show honor by inserting money into the envelope, signing the log book, then dropping the envelope in the money box. After that, he or she will light the incense properly and wai (pray). The reason for the log book is to account for thank you cards to follow and it is also a good way to account for donations taken in. Although the donations are purposely to lessen the family’s financial burden, it is good karma to give a fair amount as an offering to the wat.

With the act of service, one could volunteer to help in the kitchen with the preparation of food, help by serving the guests, and help with cleaning up and washing the dishes, or maybe even volunteer to bring food and/or supplies. These acts of service are an invaluable help, especially since the host is dealing with a lot of guests all at once.

During the “Buhn Som Mu,” one of the rituals that is carried out is the offering to the decease and the offering to the ajahns called “Buhn Tawai.” This starts off first thing in the morning. Breakfast needs to be prepared for the decease with his or her favorites. The portion on this is very small, about one to two bites per item and is served on a dessert size plate with a lit candle on the side. Before offering it to the decease, the ajahn or monk must wai upon it. The host must also ensure that a meal will be ready for the ajahns before 11:00 a.m. to give them sufficient amount of time to finish their meal before twelve noon. When preparing food for the ajahn, he must have the first servings. It cannot be food that has already been served or else it will be considered used and are not suitable for giving. The varieties of full size plates being offered, along with a bottled water, is then placed on a bamboo serving tray which is then hand carried out to the ajahn at the time of serving. Each ajahn is served his own tray. This will be his only meal for the entire day. The food that is left on the ajahn’s tray, which is usually more than enough to feed eight to ten people, is then passed down as a communal meal.

Before the ajahns eat, a chant is performed. In this process, the ajahns sit on stage horizontally with even spaces between them. They are seated on the floor with their legs crossed Indian style and their hands are in a wai (praying) position. The chant goes something like “arahato somwa somputasa”, and is repeated for about five minutes.

Basically, the ajahns or monks are holy men who act as a mediator between the spirit world and the physical world. It is believed that the living have the power to free the spirit by the rituals they perform. After that chant, the ajahns would wai and then continue with another chant. The second chant involves a ritual called “yaht nam”, a performance which calls for a cup of water and one empty cup. Yaht nam means dripping of the water. Before the chant starts, people that are involved in the ceremony must bow his or her heads while one’s hands are in a praying position to the ajahns three times. From the time the chant starts to the time the chant ends (about two and a half minutes) we use one hand to wai directly in front of our noses and mouths in an upright position. With our other hand, we are steadily pouring our cup of water into the empty cup slow and steady. The pour should be at a pace where there is enough water to last throughout the chant. Once the chant is done, we bow our heads to the ajahns three more times. After the prayers and chanting is over, the cup of water is then taken outside the temple to the largest plant or tree one can find. At this point, he or she will water the plant or tree with the yaht nam water and call on the decease to come and retrieve any offerings that we have for him or her.
One significant ritual that is performed during a Lao Buddhist funeral is an act of being ordained as ajahn (monk) or mae khau (nun). Traditionally, ordination in the Sanha (school for the monks) is considered a rite of passage for young Lao and Thai men. Boys under the age of twenty may be ordained as novices or aj aim noi and those over twenty may receive higher ordination as a full-fledged monk or ajahn. For the purpose of a Lao Buddhist funeral, ordination is being done as a rite of passage for the decease. The act of this ritual is a sacrifice of human needs according to society so that the deceased will be let into heaven. Normally, one who gets ordained is the immediate family members of the deceased and others who are near and dear to him or her. In this case, the ordained ajahns were my brother, one of my uncles, one of my dad’s good friends, and the son’s of my dad’s close friends. The mae khaus were my mother, myself, my two sisters, my niece, two of my auntsies, and two of my dad’s closest female friends.

The process of being ordained for a male is to shave his head, eyebrows, and mustache. He must also wear an orange or a saffron robe which is a sacred color honored as symbolic of humility. As for the female, when she is ordained as a nun or “mae khau”, no cosmetics or jewelry can be worn, no perfume worn either, and her clothing including her footwear must be all white. This signifies purity. Once the male is ordain as ajahn noi (novice) or ajahn (monk), and female ordained as mae khau (nuns), he or she must perform according to title. This includes no consumption of food and beverages after twelve noon other than water. Besides, their thoughts must be pure, and they cannot have any physical contact with the opposite sex. When there is communication between the ajahn and a female, there should be no eye contact. If so, it should be very minimal and unintentional. Even if she does not participate in the ritual, to respect the culture, in the presence of a monk she should keep her head lower than his. Bow if he is standing and sit in a hunch position if he is seated. Once the senior ajahn disordained the ajahn noi, ajahn, and mae khan, they can continue their daily lives as usual.

The ritual of the funeral or the “Pohng Sop” was held at Borthwick Mortuary. The set up was very beautiful and very cultural. In the front row, right side of the room facing the stage, sits nine mae khaus all dressed in white. We had on white long skirts, white blouse, white pa kip (cloth that is worn around the body from the left shoulder wrapped all the way to the right waist), and white matching sandals. The ajahns were in front of the room, with their right side of the body facing the guest. They were in two rows. The seven senior ajahns in their saffron robes were seated in the first row while the nine ordained ajahns and aj aim noi with their orange robe took up the second row. Together we formed an “L” shape. There were ten huge wreaths decorating from wall to wall and disperse of flower arrangements throughout. It was an open casket where mourners were able to view my father one last time.

The ceremony started off with a eulogy of my father followed by a speech presented from close friends, business associates, and family members honoring him. After that, the ritual of a Lao Buddhist funeral started. All the senior ajahns started to chant. This beautiful harmonious rhythmic melody went on for about half an hour. From there, one senior ajahn instructed a male member of the Lao Buddhist temple to guide the mae khaus of the next step. We had to remove our sandals and proceed in a line to retrieve a leaf that was folded into a triangle with an insert of two flowers and a candle. With this symbol, we would place it in the coffin and continue on by sitting on a mat with both feet to our right side pointing back. Once all the mae khaus were seated, the prayers began. This is where the ajahn prayed a line then the mae khaus and the ordained ajahns repeated after him. The prayer probably last about ten minutes, then the senior aj alms went into another chant for about another ten minutes. The praying and chanting are basically to cleanse my father and prepare him for his life in heaven.

After the chant, each immediate family member was presented with a saffron robe which we then placed in the coffin so my father could take it with him to heaven. To follow, our family cleansed him of any impurities by washing his face with young coconut milk. The coconut needs to be young because it symbolizes freshness and it needs to be coconut milk because the juice is bared from its own fruit. Therefore, no liquid can be more pure than from a young coconut.

Mourners will view my father and say their prayers for him one last time by the following ritual. At this point, people were lined up to retrieve the leaves that were inserted with a candle and two flowers. This was their opportunity to place it in the coffin and say their goodbyes. Once that was done, they all waited outside for the coffin to be carried out. The moment had come where we gathered a funeral procession in taking my father to the crematory. My brother, now the only male figure in the household, headed the procession and held a framed photo of my father. Behind him were all the ajahns, then close friends of my father who were carrying the coffin, followed by all the mae khaus then friends and family. What kept the funeral procession together was a long white rope which was held starting from the aj ahns all the way back to the family and friends. After the coffin had been placed in the crematory, the male figure in the family would then press the button to begin the cremation. While the other religion and culture may find this to be undue distress to the family, it is the Lao way of saying that the family is the last to send my father to the after life safely.

While the coffin was being led to the crematory, buckets of folded one dollar bills were scattered to the crowd of at least three hundred people. These dollar bills represented good luck and good fortune. The numbers on the bills are believed to be a lucky number for lottery winning. In fact, one of the women
who was thrown a bill came crying to me and said “I saw these numbers in my dream; your dad wants me to have good fortune." This is an example of the people's belief in good luck and good fortune. Scattering of one dollar bills is one of the practices at a Lao Buddhist funeral.

One hundred days following the funeral service, it is mandatory that a ritual called Buhn Loi Won be held. Buhn Loi Won means one hundred days later. This culture believes that for the first one hundred days, the deceased know that they are dead but refuse to leave the physical world. His or her soul is floating around because he or she feels that there is still some kind of connection or undone business. The purpose of this ceremony is for the living to tell the dead that it is alright to go on. Life on earth is over and the deceased has nothing to worry about any more. We, the living, are considering the deceased gone. This is a final goodbye.

During the Buhn Loi Won, it is customary to hold a tak bhat. Tak bhat is when worshipers come to the temple to make donations. As with every ceremony, the ajahn starts with prayers and chants. After that, the people line up without their footwear carrying their khan (silver or gold color) or bowl full of offerings. These offerings are anything good that you wish upon the temple. The norms are money in an envelope, fruits, mochi rice, bottled water, and wrapped cookies or candies. There should be enough offerings for each ajahn at the temple. For example, if there are six ajahns at the temple, the set up would be six Khans on the table. When people who are lined up make their rounds, he or she will insert one item into each khan. If that individual has three different kinds of items, he or she will insert three different items into each khan. After this process is done, the ajahns will only take what they need and the rest is distributed to the donors.

Another practice held during the Buhn Loi Won is called the Gong Buhn. Gong means to pile, and in this case, piling of goods. Lao people believe that the spirit must leave the earth armed with the things that it needs to survive in the afterlife. It seems pretty confusing, particularly from a westerner’s point of view, why a spirit would need to take with him clothes, food, money, a bed, and other basic human necessities, but the Laotians believe that if the spirit enters the afterlife bare, he or she will not be settled in heaven and will be naked. Basically, the set up here is a colorful four-post bed decorated and piled with money tree, everything mentioned above, and more.

Although this experience was emotionally and physically draining for me, I am glad that my family and I followed through and carried out my father’s wish of having a Laotian Buddhist funeral. I am of utmost gratefulness to the Lao Buddhist Foundation of Hawaii, Lao Senior Citizens of Hawaii, and the Lao Community. I did not realize the strong ties and the social obligations behind this culture. This journey has been very positive and educational. I now have a better understanding and respect for my father’s religion and for the culture as a whole.

Terminology
Ajahn- Monk
Ajahn Noi- Novice
Buhn Loi Won- A ceremony of a hundred days later
Buhn Som Mu- Three days ceremony
Buhn Tawai The offerings
Gong Buhn- A ceremony where goods are piled for the deceased to bring to heaven
Khan- A gold or silver color bowl
Mae Khau- Nun
Mon See Bahb- He or she will have bad karma
Pa Kip- A piece of cloth use for clothing
Polmg Sop- The funeral
Puhn See Me Buhn- He or she will have good karma
Sanha- School for the monks
Senior Ajahn-The monks from the temples
Sin- Long ethnic wrap skirt
Tak Bhat- A ceremony where offerings are made to the temple
Wai-to pray
Wat- temple
Yaht Nahm- A ceremony for dripping of the water

Bibliography

Okinawan Dance and Sanshin in Honolulu

Keri L. Engen

Hawaii is home to many immigrant groups. One of these groups are the Okinawans who came to the Hawaiian Islands in hopes of a better life. Their ancestral home, Okinawa or the Ryukyus, consists of an archipelago of one hundred fifty islands that stretch for eight hundred miles between Kyushu, the southernmost island of Japan, and Taiwan in the East China Sea. These islands have been inhabited for approximately four thousand years and the ethnic origins are theorized to be a mix from southern China via Taiwan, Southeast Asia through the Philippines and possibly Melanesia. The indigenous religion in the Okinawan archipelago is animistic and shamanistic but may have been altered by Shinto, Buddhist and Taoist influences from its neighbors, Japan and China (Okinawan Prefectural Government). Although Okinawan belongs to the Japanese linguistic family, it is identified as a different language “due to its remote relationships in morphological, phonological and lexical aspects” (Higa). There are also many dialects within the Okinawan language.

The Okinawan archipelago experienced many social and environmental problems at the end of the nineteenth century. Japan had absorbed Okinawa as a new prefecture and appointed a governor under the Meiji Restoration. The Japanese government was not particularly interested in preserving the indigenous culture of Okinawa and forced a program of assimilation onto the archipelago. Unfair taxation by the Japanese government was also a break-point issue for the Okinawans (UOAH 14).

Also during this time, a series of typhoons had left a path of devastation through the island chain. Okinawa was already experiencing acute overpopulation at the turn of the century and coupled with this series of natural disasters, left the archipelago in a period of famine. Kyuzo Toyama, a member of the People’s Rights movement, encouraged emigration for the people of Okinawa. Emigration was believed to be beneficial to the islands for it would relieve the burden of overpopulation, famine and provide an escape route from the discriminatory practices of the Japanese government. This led to the first Okinawans stepping foot on Hawaiian soil in January 1900 to work on the Ewa Plantation of Oahu. By 1927, over ten thousand Okinawans had immigrated to Hawaii (UOAH 15).

After their arrival in Hawaii, the Okinawans faced many challenges. The first challenge was that of language. The marked differences between the Okinawan and Japanese languages kept these two groups apart. The Okinawans’ religious beliefs were also not as inflexible. They readily ate pork, considered to be unclean by this set of Japanese immigrants, further isolating the Okinawans as a group (UOAH 164). The alienation that Okinawans felt in Hawaii by differences in religion, language, and customs set them apart as a separate entity.

This separation from other immigrant groups is what ultimately formed a strong cultural bond among the Okinawans in Hawaii. “They turned to their culture as a means of solace, a source of individual and group pride, and a basis for healthy self-concept and expression” (UOAH 166). They formed social groups and clubs thereby perpetuating cultural functions and observing Okinawan holidays. Through these activities, we get a glimpse of the cultural life of the Okinawans. The performing arts such as traditional dances and the music that accompanies them are essential in helping define that culture. This is what the Okinawans felt was beautiful or important to their lives through the centuries.

The Okinawans take great pride in their culture as demonstrated each year in Honolulu when they host the Okinawan Festival in Kapi’olani Park. Since the first immigrant Okinawans, I would like to discuss what the subsequent generations have done to keep interest in Okinawan dance and music alive in Hawaii, and thus Okinawan culture as well.

Curiosity about my cultural background was heightened after I moved to Hawaii. Here was the birthplace of my mother and where my grandparents immigrated. As a starting point, I found the tome “Uchinanchu” to be an invaluable asset to this field study and used it as my primary ethnohistory. I also found very informative Internet sources by the Prefectural Government of Okinawa that I used as my other ethnohistoric sources.
I conducted interviews with three individuals to get a cross section of Okinawans in Hawaii. The first interview was in person with Shizuko Akamine of the Kilauea Group. She instructs Okinawan dances to seniors in the Kaimuki/Kahala area. The second interview was with Frances Nakachi Kubo who teaches Okinawan dance on a more professional level. I observed Ms. Nakachi Kubo and her students at her dance studio called, "Senjukai Hawaii." I used a questionnaire to interview the busy Ms. Nakachi Kubo, which was done electronically via email. My last interview was conducted in Downtown Honolulu with Grant Murata. I spent almost two hours with the sanshin instructor, talking about the musical instrument and the future of the Okinawan culture in Hawaii.

Depending on the source, "Crownship," "court," and "classical dances" were either assembled under one category or described separately. I shall examine them as one and call them "classical dances." The classical dances evolved from the fifteenth century to the late nineteenth century. In 1404, China and the Ryukyu kingdom established formal diplomatic relations. During their protracted stays in the islands due to unfavorable sailing conditions, the Chinese envoys would be entertained with music and dances by the Ryukyu court. These court dances would eventually evolve into a more sophisticated form following the Satsuma invasion, a clan from southern Kyushu, in 1609. From that point onward, the Ryukyuan court was obliged to send ambassadorial delegations to Japan on imperial and ceremonial business. These voyages gave the envoys an opportunity to experience Japanese performing arts firsthand, notably Noh drama from which Okinawan classical dance took its final form called kumi odorı (Sakiyama). Zo Odori or Popular Dances

By 1879, the Ryukyu kingdom was dissolved by the Japanese government under the Meiji Restoration and was renamed Okinawa Prefecture. This left the performing arts without official patronage by the nobility. The dancers and musicians found an outlet by presenting kumi odorı to the commoners in commercial venues.

Gradually new theatrical dances were choreographed incorporating everyday themes of the farming and fishing communities. Zo Odori or popular dance is the name for these dances created during the Meiji period from 1879 to 1912. "These dances were not stuffy like the kumi odorı, they were lively and radiant (Sakiyama)."

The World Wars signaled the end to the Meiji Restoration period in Japan. It also ushered in the modern era for Okinawan dance. Prior to the World Wars, dancing was an exclusively male activity. Now women became the principle dancers in postwar Okinawa (OCPED). The reason for this is not explained in any of the texts that I have examined and may be an interesting study in itself.

There are many folk dances in Okinawa depending on the locality in which they are danced and the island of provenance. Most commonly, folk dances were celebratory or religious in nature. One of the favorite folk dances all over Okinawa is the Eisa, also known as the Don Dance in Hawaii, which is performed during July to pay tribute to the ancestors. The name eisa is taken from a refrain in the Buddhist songs that are sung during the dance (Okinawan Prefectural Government).

There is no doubt that the sanshin is the most important musical instrument in Okinawa. "Deep ties formed between sanshin music and Kumi Odori (Ryukyuan Classical Theater)." "Without the sanshin, Okinawan performing arts would not be what they are today (OCPED)." There has been speculation that this musical instrument's earliest origin is Egyptian. However, there is no doubt that it came to the Ryukus from China. The sanshin is a three stringed lute that resembles the samisen (shamisen) of Japan. There are two fundamental differences between the two instruments: the body of the sanshin is covered in snakeskin-the samisen, cat skin, and a sanshin is plucked rather than strummed. The other parts of the sanshin are a long slender neck made of ebony, the strings of silk or nylon, and a plectrum that is made of cow or buffalo horn or ivory (Okinawan Prefectural Government).

The sanshin is traditionally played by men, but in Hawaii, there are also women who play the instrument. Other optional instruments that accompany Okinawan dance are the kutu (koto in Japanese), which is a type of zither, the hanso, a flute, the kuco. three to four stringed bowed lute, and a pair of teku or hand drums.

My first interview with Shizuko Akamine took place on January 28, 2004. She is the sensei or instructor of the Kilauea Group that is comprised of thirty seniors who meet twice a week. I spent two hours with her group, watching them perform various dances while Ms. Akamine gave me detailed descriptions and explanations of each dance. The dances were accompanied by sound recordings of Okinawan music played on a sanshin.

The first dance the group performed was a dance of welcome called Kage Are. Ms. Akamine explained to me that this dance would normally be presented to the nobility at the beginning of a celebration. This would be considered one of the classical dances. The seniors performed this and other dances for me with great enthusiasm. All told, these women presented a dozen dances from the different divisions of Okinawan dance: classical, zo odorı, modern, and folk.

Ms. Akamine also explained to me that within the different classifications of dance there were subdivisions depending on who performed the dances. Ronjin Odori were performed by the elders. Wakashu Odori were boys' dances,
Nisai Odori, young men, and Onna Odori, women.

I asked Ms. Akamine whether there were any meanings in the hand positions and the accoutrements for each dance. She responded by telling me that there was significance, but she did not tell her students what they were because, "they didn't care.”

Although the senior group does not make many appearances at festivals or invitacionales, Ms. Akamine makes sure that her dancers do not slack off. As I was watching, she stopped the dance that was in progress because her students were not lined up properly and made them start over again from the beginning. She takes great pride in teaching the dances properly.

I returned the following Monday to observe the larger class of the two and spoke to a few more of the seniors during their break. I handed out a short questionnaire. Three quarters of the respondents said they attended the dance classes mainly because they were Okinawan and they wanted to keep the culture alive. The second most popular answer was because they enjoyed coming to class each week. They did not feel that coming each week to dance was specifically for exercise, socializing or to keep busy. One of the women took me to the side before I left and invited me to join their group saying, “You know, we’re disappearing one by one and there’s nobody to replace us.”

Fortunately, this woman was mistaken in thinking that the Okinawan culture and its performing arts were disappearing with her generation. I went to the YWCA in downtown Honolulu on February 5, 2004 to observe two of Frances Nakachi Kubo’s dance classes, one for beginners and the second, her advanced students. Ms. Nakachi Kubo’s dance studio, Senjukai Hawaii, last performed at the Korean Festival in January 2004 at Kapi’olani Park.

Ms. Nakachi Kubo’s beginning class consisted of four girls aged four, five, six and seven years. All were born in the United States and are of Okinawan ancestry. The girls were having problems concentrating as Ms. Nakachi Kubo rehearsed the dance steps with them. I may have been the distraction even though I was sitting in the very rear of the studio. It may also have been because there was not any music with which to dance. Ms. Nakachi Kubo separated herself from the girls and turned on the recording of sanshin music, the sounds of which gave the little girls cues of when and where they were supposed to be on the dance floor.

After the class, I had a chance to speak to the girls who were just beginning their own cultural journey. In general, the girls had no concept of culture. They knew they were Okinawan because their parents told them that they were. Along with the dance classes, these little girls were slowly becoming enculturated as both Okinawans and Americans. Culture aside, the girls told me that they came to class because they loved to dance and thought it was fun. They especially liked the complicated dances like Kurushima.

The next class of the evening was the performing branch of the studio. It comprised of six female students dressed in the Hawaiian version of the bingata or Okinawan kimono. Ms. Nakachi Kubo held a short meeting before practice. Much respect was shown for the sensei by the students.

Each dance was first practiced without music. The faces of these women took on a dreamy look as though they were hearing the music as they moved in unison across the dance floor. Then Ms. Nakachi Kubo started the music on the cassette player, and I was fully absorbed by the dances. I was fascinated by the intricacies of each dance, how the women moved their hands, the accoutrements such as fans and parasols synchronized with the rhythm, and the position of their feet. I learned that it is an art to be able to use a paddle during a dance and not hit your dance mates and that there is a specific way in which to make a turn by first crossing the right leg over the left and then pulling the body weight around.

One particular dance that I noticed looked like tai chi, and Ms. Nakachi Kubo explained to me that it was a classical dance that brought one, "To the state of meditation; it is like meditation in motion.” This dance was called, "Shudun.” In the online interview she also explained to me the relevance of movements called ha no ji and iron te. The stance, ha no ji, is to stand with the toes facing forty five degrees, “ha” being the Japanese character that looks like feet facing forty five degrees. “Iron te” is a hand movement that means prayer hand.

I asked Ms. Nakachi Kubo what, in her opinion, was the reason why local Okinawans want to learn Okinawan dance. She responded by writing, "To learn about their identity and their homeland. Many are interested in how their family (grandparents/parents) were brought up and want to explore more. This learning process helps many find [out] about themselves and nurtures hope. Learning and sharing the beauty of any culture promotes peace and hope for many.”

In the future, Ms. Nakachi Kubo would like to choreograph some dances of her own, which will be “local.” She feels this will attract the younger generation to learn Okinawan dances. She would also like to share the Okinawan culture to a broader segment of the community by focusing on performing for a wider variety of cultural events in the islands.

My last interview was on February 6, 2004 with Grant
Murata, a well-known sensei of the sanshin in Honolulu. Mr. Murata was taught by one of two "National human treasures of Japan (2000)." Choichi Terukina, who instructed him under the style of the Afuso Ryu School, hence, the name of Mr. Murata's studio. "Afuso Ryu Gensei Kai Hawaii Sandaa Kai? When asked how he became involved in the sanshin, he replied that while he was learning Okinawan dances, he was exposed to the music, and through an invitation from a friend, started taking sanshin lessons. He told me that from that point onward, he seriously took up the musical instrument and let the dancing fall by the wayside.

Mr. Murata has very strong feelings for the Okinawan culture and especially his role in transmitting it through music and the sanshin. He believes that his students are there "because, the ancestors made their feet walk into his studio and want to learn music." Therefore, he treats his students as special people because they want to learn Okinawan tradition; to learn the sanshin is to learn the entire cultural package. There are different levels of understanding and learning according to Murata, "You can learn it by a book, but you will never catch the spirit, the essence of Okinawa that way. That is what the sensei is for. It is more than just learning the dance or music It is a relationship between sensei and student, a relationship that lasts a lifetime."

He is afraid of the Okinawan culture slowly becoming diluted by Japanese influences as well as Americanization in Hawaii. Much of the terminology in Okinawan dance and music is now written and spoken in Japanese. He believes speaking Japanese in Okinawa today is preferable to the younger generation because to speak Okinawan would be to label yourself as "uneducated, an old fuddy-duddy." We discussed the importance of language being a window into a culture, that there is a definite mind set when speaking a particular language; to know how to speak another language is to know how a culture thinks. Losing the Okinawan language would be tantamount to losing the culture. Mr. Murata uses the Okinawan language as much as possible when teaching the sanshin. He also gives language classes at the Okinawan Center in Waipio.

Americanization is another factor in further weakening of the Okinawan culture in Hawaii. Mr. Murata sees some new members of the Hawaii Okinawan community wanting to make changes to make the culture more appealing. He is afraid that making decisions to change things that originally had symbolic significance would have devastating effects on the deeper meanings of the Okinawan culture.

Modern innovation is another thing that appalls Mr. Murata's purist sensibilities. He was initially horrified by the development of the sanshin made with a synthetic skin as opposed to snakeskin. These sanshins cost one third less than a traditional sanshin that sells for about $300, but this makes the instrument more accessible for people interested in learning and according to Mr. Murata, more youngsters are interested in the sanshin than ever before. He currently teaches forty students.

Mr. Murata had a short story to tell me that summed up our conversation, "There's this guy, ninety two years old, who has been [teaching sanshin] for the last seventy years, and I asked him the question, 'You did it for seventy years, who's going to take over your school? If you died tomorrow, do you know if your school will live on, that your teaching will be passed on?'

'Yeah, well...
That's very rude of me to ask that question to somebody that old, but I looked at him and I think to myself, 'What's that guy doing?' So, you know what that leads me to think? The fact that nobody took (over) after means the guy's a lousy teacher! Good player-exceptional player. Lousy teacher. What might be true of me, lousy player but good teacher."

Mr. Murata believes that several of his students will pass on his knowledge to the following generations. He feels that as long as there is this commitment to the Okinawan culture, it will survive the test of time as it has done for the last one hundred and four years in Hawaii.

The continued survival of the culture since the first Okinawans landed in Hawaii demonstrates the strength of the culture, and it is this strength that will ensure the continuation of Okinawan performing arts in the future. The Okinawans in Hawaii are extremely proud of their heritage and take great enjoyment in it. The interviews I conducted gave me an insight into how Okinawans in Hawaii from different levels and areas of expertise were able to transmit their knowledge of the performing arts and thus, the Okinawan culture to their students. Without these sensei, I believe that the Okinawan culture would soon disappear in Hawaii because the performing arts are probably one of the most important aspects of the Okinawan culture. As long as there is ongoing interest or curiosity about the Okinawan culture, there will be people like Shizuko Akamine, Frances Nakachi Kubo, and Grant Murata who are dedicated to disseminating the knowledge and instructing those who want know the history and the meaning of Okinawan performing arts. Without disregarding tradition, Okinawan performing arts will continue to grow and evolve in Hawaii just as they have done in Okinawa itself.
Bibliography


kilauea Group
Witchcraft: Black Art in the Philippines

Grace Dumlaú

"To those who do not believe in it, witchcraft is nothing but a sex-ridden emotional fantasy, a nonsensical mumbo-jumbo indulged in by the superstitious, the psychotic, the illiterate and the quack."

-- Nid Anima

I grew up thinking my mother had the most bizarre beliefs. As a first generation Filipino-American, I felt that my mother was overly superstitious. When I was a child, she told me the story of when she was six months pregnant with me and decided to travel to the Philippines for the first time since immigrating to America. She remembers sleeping in the front of her home when she felt someone touching her leg. She awoke and was shocked to see the old woman from next-door staring at her. My mother tried not to show her fear, for the elderly woman was rumored to be a mangkukulam, a witch with the power to harm. That was the first time I heard of Filipino witches.

I decided to further investigate Filipino witchcraft because stories of witches and witch doctors are common among Filipinos. Moreover, analysis of their beliefs, myths, and folklore may help to get a clearer understanding of the culture, values, and beliefs of Filipinos.

I first interviewed my mother, Lucena, at home for about an hour. She was born and raised in the Philippines and immigrated to Hawaii when she was in her early twenties. I was able to ask her many questions since I felt very comfortable with her. She told me stories and basic information about witchcraft, which helped me to do background research. She also provided me the names of relatives with personal experiences. After learning the basics, such as terminology from my mother, I did some research on the Internet. I was intrigued by what I learned and did more research finding several books at the library. Armed with more knowledge, I interviewed my father’s sister, Estefania who also lived in the northern part of the Philippines until she moved to America in her midtwenties. Lastly, I interviewed Maria, who left the Philippines with her family in the early eighties. Interviews lasted about an hour for each informant. I noticed a lot of consistency in the beliefs they held and information I found in the literature.

The Republic of the Philippines, located in Southeast Asia, is made up of 7,107 islands. Main island groups are Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Filipinos comprise 111 cultural and linguistic groups of Malayo-Polynesian origin, with varying degrees of Chinese, Spanish and American influences. The dominant religion is Catholicism, though a significant number are Protestants and Moslems. It is the world’s third largest English speaking country next to the United States and the United Kingdom. There are over 100 regional dialects. This made research a challenge for me, since each region had their own words for witchcraft and variations in beliefs.

Witches are one of the many supernatural beings found in Philippine folklore. While researching the topic, I found it to be initially confusing because the books were using witches and aswang, a vampirilike creature, interchangeably. “The name aswang means five creatures in Philippine myths. It means ghoul if it devours human corpses. It means vampire if it sucks human blood. It means viscera sucker if it sucks internal organs or sputum. It means weredog if it becomes a beast and eats people raw. It means witch if it uses magic to make people ill or kill them” (Anima 53). However, some literature would introduce the various beings as different. I am noting that there is a difference between a witch and aswang in that “Philippine witches have never been reported to eat human flesh” (Ramos 173) while aswang are known to feast on blood. Moreover, those I interviewed clarified that there is indeed a difference between the two beings. My research deals specifically with witches who do not devour human beings.

The most common names of Philippine witches are the following:

Aswang (as a hexer or vindictive person) -Bikol, Tagalog, Visayan
Barangan - Visayan
Mambabarang - Bikol, Visayan

She remembers sleeping in the front of her home when she felt someone touching her leg. She awoke and was shocked to see the old woman from next-door staring at her. My mother tried not to show her fear, for the elderly woman was rumored to be a mangkukulam, a witch with the power to harm.
Witches are generally old men and women, however the majority of them are women. They are said to look sickly with red eyes by day and become vigorous and active at night. Poor and deformed individuals are feared to be witches. However, Filipinos usually treat these individuals with politeness because witches will inflict harm on those who upset or anger them. Filipinos tend to be extremely kind to strangers. In the past, the fear of a witch’s wrath may have led to this behavior.

Witches also avoid looking directly into the eyes of others because images are seen upside down in a witch’s eyes. Their eyes are also said to be narrow and long in bright sunshine. Staring straight into a person’s eye is seen as attempting to discover whether a person is indeed a witch. This may be why Filipinos have an evasive glance. Witches may also look like normal people. They are usually respected because they are feared. They tend to live in rundown isolated huts and avoid interacting with people. Some witches attend mass and take communion. When I asked my mother, “How do you know a person is a witch?” She replied that other people would know. Those who have been victims of a witch can tell you.

Filipino witches have various powers, which according to belief, tend to be strongest on Tuesdays and Fridays. Inflictions may range from sores, possession and even death. One of the most powerful witches can kill by only wishing or saying that a person they want to kill will die. They can also kill any person they dislike by merely breathing on them or looking at them. Meanwhile, some witches need something personal from their victim to inflict harm. Other witches don’t have supernatural powers. They use poisons they find in nature to harm their enemies.

Witches are named according to the type of powers they possess. The Tagalog term for witchcraft or the harm inflicted by a witch is ku/am or gahoy. The witch herself or himself is called mangkukulam. The mangkukulam has the power to create mysterious humps or swelling in any part of the body which medical science cannot cure. The manggagaway is responsible for persistent, nagging illnesses. The mamamaraya’s strength is in causing the victim’s lips or abdomen to swell, leading to a feeling of having eaten something heavy. The mangaaumulit finds a victim’s soiled clothes and allows his or her pet bugs to mix in them so they become familiar with the victim’s scent. At night, the insects are released so they can locate the sleeping victim and cause itchy sores on the victim.

Ilokano’s also have their own beliefs and use different terms. The manggagumud possesses no supernatural powers and specializes in poison. Some collect snake venom or other poisons found in nature and put it into their victim’s food. The gifts that a witch give to people, especially food, are politely accepted, and burned, buried or thrown to the dogs. On my first trip to the Philippines three years ago, my mother warned me never to eat anything given to me without first consulting her. She was worried someone may take advantage or me an unsuspecting person from a foreign country.

Another witch, the managtanem, uses a “voodoo” doll to inflict pain on his or her victims. They create a doll replica of the victim and hurt them by sticking pins into various parts of the doll’s body, corresponding to the victim’s body. The managmulit possesses no supernatural powers. They simply wish ill, evil or misfortune on an individual. They offer candles in church and request that misfortune befall on the person they envy. If their wishes come true, it is usually chance or coincidence. The macaa-amul (macaa-usog in Tagalog) has a pair of magical eyes which generally causes harm to children they look upon. Strong spells can make adults sick. Victims are usually struck with fever and vomiting. Only the macaa-amul can cure the harm his or her evil eyes cause. For example, he or she must rub the child’s forehead, midsection or feet with his or her own saliva. The mammuyan can determine the thief of a victim’s possessions. The mammuyan is more effective when a thief leaves items behind. Buyon is the term used to refer to the ritual of determining or pinpointing.

Others with special skills include the managpalad or palm reader, ilot, a masseuse, the mammil-lo, who deals with fractures and dislocations, and the albolario, an alternative medicine practitioner or shamanistic folk healer. Those inflicted with harm by the witches usually visit an albolario because medical doctors are unable to heal them. They actually may worsen the symptoms. Thus Filipinos rely on both medical doctors and folk healers to cure their ailments.

When asked if she had any personal experience with witches, my aunt told me the story about my younger cousin, her daughter, Zonia. For the early part of her life, my aunt alone raised Zonia because her husband was living in the Philippines. When Zonia was about a year old, she had recurring problems with diarrhea. My aunt would take her to a doctor, who would prescribe the usual remedies. Although she would get better,
she would later relapse. Zonia was constantly visiting the doctor with her recurring diarrhea problem. My aunt was worried because she was planning to take Zonia on a vacation to the Philippines to visit her father. During a period Zonia was doing better, her mother took her to that planned trip. However, when she arrived there she got sick again. A family member suggested my aunt see an albolario to help her with her illness. The folk healer began massaging Zonia’s stomach when he said, “This must be the child! You must take her to a woman who lives in the next village. She has been having a recurring nightmare about a young infant.” He gave my aunt the woman’s address and my aunt and uncle went searching for her the next day.

My aunt still remembers looking for the woman’s home because she recalls counting the homes on a street to determine the right address. When she found the woman and explained her situation, the woman exclaimed, “She must be the child! I’ve been dreaming of. I have this recurring dream where a young baby is crying. There are no young children in my family, so I didn’t know who this baby must be. The baby always dies at the end. Every time I have this nightmare, I wake up and come to this tree in my backyard and chop at it. It’s my way of preventing this dream of becoming a reality. However, in the past several days, I’ve been having this nightmare every day.”

The woman then performed a special ritual where she recited incantations and rebaptised Zonia. She concluded the ritual by ripping off her own dress, throwing it down and saying, “You will now be known as Simporosa!” She instructed my aunt to call Zonia by this new name. From then on, Zonia had no problems with diarrhea.

Although my aunt doesn’t know whether my cousin’s ailment was caused by a witch, according to her, it was the knowledge of the folk healer that cured her illness once and for all.

A witch with supernatural powers usually acquires them through heredity or a dream. Maria’s grandmother had a dream as a young woman. In this dream, she was told to collect various beads and string them together to make a bracelet. Once she completed this bracelet, she had the power to heal. When a person suffered from an ailment, she would use folk methods to heal them. However, after performing her services, she would make requests for tobacco, food, or animals to be killed in exchange. Maria, who was in college while living with her grandmother, suspected she derived her powers from a supernatural evil force. She believed her grandmother got her healing powers from the Devil because she asked for animal blood in return for her services. Maria recalls witnessing her grandmother becoming possessed by evil spirits. On one occasion, she went to a priest for help. The priest came over in hopes of giving her grandmother communion. Unfortunately, the priest told Maria he couldn’t help her because her grandmother vehemently refused to take communion. When her grandmother passed away, the bracelet mysteriously disappeared.

To rid oneself of the pain imposed by evil witches, a bewitched person usually sees an albolario. These healers use various methods to cure the individual. Some use an anting-anting, an amulet, talisman or charm with supernatural powers. “It can be a crocodile’s tooth, snake’s fang, whale’s spine, shark’s fin, odd stones, rooster’s spur, guinea birds horn, bizarre roots, weird herbs, or anything rare or strange or Siamese like a twin-tailed lizard or two headed snake, or any freak creation or monstrosity (Anima 41).” My great-grandfather Narciso, was an albolario, employing methods such as the use of anting-anting. He had an extensive knowledge of plants and herbs that he used to cure those suffering from illnesses or a witch’s spell. On my vacation to the Philippines, my grandfather told me the story of his father. A woman was driven mad because a witch had possessed her. Her family didn’t know what to do and was afraid for their daughter. They consulted my great-grandfather and said that he could marry her if he could cure her of her illness. My great-grandfather was able to save her, so he took on a second wife.

Tawas is Tagalog for the ritual or curing kulum, infliction caused by a witch. It usually consists of boiling guava leaves, herbs, roots and other special concoctions. Other methods include exorcisms in the case of a possessed individual. A stingray’s tail is used to beat the possessed person until the person screams. The voice is not the person’s own. The exorcist does not stop the punishment until the evil spirit promises to lift the evil spell cast by leaving the possessed person’s body. They say that no pain is felt by the afflicted for all the beating he or she receives during the exorcism.

There are numerous ways of fighting the mangkukulam. Certain plants, the smoke of certain burning objects such as rubber, plastic, chicken feathers, leather and the shell of crabs and lobsters keep witches away. Witches are also said to fear certain rituals, certain objects commonly found in the home such as coconut-midrib brooms, rattan canes, the stingray’s tail and dried peculiar-looking fish such as the globefish and porcupine fish hung over the windows. When entering a Philippine village, one likely sees such objects displayed outside the windows.

Some countermeasures against the mangkukulam may be European or particularly Roman Catholic in origin. These include holy water, palm leaves that are blessed on Palm Sunday, incense and a display of the crucifix. Another effective method is an oracion, a mix of Latin words and phrases from a church text. The oracion is written down on a piece of paper or in a little book and carried as a weapon against witches or other creatures. An oracion recited in or under the house of a
patient suffering from a mangkukulam's spell is said to keep the 
witch away. Nevertheless, the early Christian Church generally 
held that the belief in witchcraft had no basis in fact, though 
they admitted that mentioning the name of Jesus by a Christian 
believer was effective in countering an attempt to bewitch. This 
belief reached the Philippines while Spain occupied the country 
and thus the popular exclamation “Susmariosep” is uttered when 
reacting to anything threatening or unexpected.

Analysis of the folk beliefs regarding witches and other 
aspects of witchcraft allow us to better understand the Filipino 
culture. Some of their behaviors and beliefs may have its origin 
in the idea of witches. For example, their evasive glance, 
politeness to strangers, and superstitious ideas may be due to 
their fear of mangkukulam. Their faith in alternative medicine 
may stem from their belief in the existence of witches and 
perpetuated by the idea that only a folk healer can cure a witch's 
evil spell. Moreover, their strong religious values may come 
partly from a fear of evil and witches and preventative methods 
which may have origins closely fled to the church. Thus, Filipinos are able to hold strong religious values 
while maintaining a belief in the existence of witches and magic 
because it strengthens their religious faith.

After this ethnographic study, my increased awareness 
of the Filipino culture allowed me to see why my mother held 
certain “bizarre” beliefs and ideas. I realized her beliefs were 
part of her culture; part of who she is. Now, when interacting with 
her, I know that her ideas are greatly influenced by her culture 
and upbringing. I spend more time listening with an open mind, 
trying to better relate and understand her ways.

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Sumotori

Ideally a new recruit should be tall for his age and big-boned, not necessarily fat, but with the capacity to gain weight. Veteran scouts and doctors used to treating sumotori can often tell just by looking at the contours of a youth's chest and stomach area if he can be expected to gain enough weight.

Jackyn Doi

The sport of sumo wrestling is one of the most exciting spectator events to watch. The basic combat between two powerful men is relatively easy to figure out. The first man who either steps out of the ring or falls to the ground in the ring has lost that match. However, sumo is not really that simple. There are so many rules and rituals that make no apparent sense. The complexity behind each match is what sparked an interest in me. Sumo has been a part of my life ever since I was a little girl. Most of my immediate family is from Japan and sumo to them is a way of life. I chose to write my field research paper about the sport of sumo wrestling because it is such an important part of my cultural heritage. The word used for the sumo contenders is sumotori. Although many people refer to sumotori as “wrestlers” sumo has more in common with traditional Japanese martial arts than it does with Western-style wrestling. As an entire way of life in modern Japan, sumo offers a rare glimpse into the topknots, beliefs, and lifestyles of another era. Sumo’s valuable tradition is very much alive, a form of entertainment or leisure that has remained popular over many centuries. The sport of sumo is nonviolent and thrilling to watch and is also a remarkable cultural phenomenon.

The majority of my field research took place at my grandmother’s house. Having been born and raised near Tokyo, Japan, my grandmother, Gwen Sakata, has seen many sumo tournaments and is very familiar with the culture and traditions of the sumotori. Since we received this assignment, I have started to hang out with my grandmother for at least one day each weekend. I have questioned her on just about everything having to do with sumo. Her passion for the sport has given me much insight as to what life was like for the sumotori. I also conducted part of my research at the Hawaii Public Library. The books that I researched helped me to fill-in the missing links and helped me expand my study further. Here is what I have learned...

The Japanese words for a practitioner of sumo are sumotori (“one who does sumo”), rikishi (“strong man”), or osumosan (“honorable practitioner of sumo”). These words are equivalent and can be used interchangeably. Most of the sumotori do not understand English, yet they still object to being called “sumo wrestlers.” Rikishi is actually the term most preferred by the sumotori themselves. Today however, I will be using the term sumotori because it is probably easier to remember for those unfamiliar with the Japanese language.

All professional sumotori are affiliated with a sumobeya (“sumo stables”). The sumobeya are where the sumotori train and, unless they are married, also live. In July of 1990, there were officially forty-two stables, many of which were maintaining a network of scouts, in various parts of Japan. Sumo scouts tend to be former sumotori from the particular stable, longtime supporters of the sumobeya, and friends or relatives of the oyakata (“coach”). The coaches and the active sumotori may also do some scouting themselves. Sumo scouts are always keeping an eye out for information about large-sized, athletic, or exceptionally strong young men. Especially in the smaller cities and towns, rumors of an unusually tall, large, or powerful boy spread quickly, and the local papers usually gave good media coverage to the winners of various regional sports events.

The champions from local sumo competitions are highly sought after, but so are those from judo competitions. Several of the techniques in judo have been adapted from sumo, an older sport. Many grand champions like Hokutoumi and Onokuni, have backgrounds in judo. Although sumo is often referred to as “sumo wrestling” in English, very few professional sumotori have entered sumo from Greco-Roman wrestling, and none have succeeded in a big way. In fact, there have been more successful sumotori who have come into sumo from swimming than those from Western-style wrestling. Champion swimmers tend to have strong legs and hips---essential elements in sumo. Most of the famous sumotori from my grandmother’s time were champion swimmers before joining sumo.

The majority of new sumo recruits, both past and present, come from the countryside, particularly from the cold
northern regions such as Hokkaido and Aomori. The farmers and fishermen from these regions have difficulty making a decent living throughout the entire year, and during the off-seasons they often venture to Tokyo and other urban areas to seek temporary employment. Since farmers and fishermen in such areas tend to have difficulty supporting a large household, they are usually glad to send sons other than their eldest into sumo. Sumo also happens to be very popular in Aomori, not only as a traditional sport but also as one that, in contrast to baseball, can be practiced indoors during the long winter months.

Whether a younger has gotten into sumo on his own account, at someone else's urging, or by accident, he must meet some stipulations set by the Sumo Association to be formally accepted. The qualified must be at least one hundred and seventy-three centimeters tall, weigh at least seventy-five kilograms, have completed junior high school, and have gotten the consent of a parent or guardian. Overall physical examinations are also given to check the condition of each recruit's internal organs and blood pressure. Those with health problems are usually put on medication or a health program but are seldom flat-out rejected.

Before World War II, the entrance requirements were practically nonexistent, allowing boys of almost any size and as young as thirteen to go into sumo, often instead of school. With the establishment of compulsory education in Japan after the war, some determined thirteen year-olds took to commuting to junior high school from their stables. It was difficult for such boys to concentrate on both their studies and sumo at the same time, and because their special treatment often proved a disruptive life in the sumobeya, the ruling concerning the completion of compulsory education was put into effect in 1972. Minimum height and weight requirements have changed since the war and they will constantly be revised in accordance with the increases in the average size of the Japanese people. Those who do not meet the minimum height or weight tend to get rejected outright. Some undersized sumo hopefuls have been known to resort to desperate means in order to pass the shindeshi kenka ("physical examination"). For instance, some who are on the short side have reportedly pounded their heads repeatedly against a wall or a pole to "grow" a centimeter taller by developing a bump. Others who are a bit low on weight have been known to gorge on food and then drink huge bottles of water, all of which is often thrown up right after the examination.

Ideally a new recruit should be tall for his age and big-boned, not necessarily fat, but with the capacity to gain weight. Veteran scouts and doctors used to treating sumotori can often tell just by looking at the contours of a youth's chest and stomach area if he can be expected to gain enough weight. It is preferable for an apprentice to put on weight steadily while training and learning sumo techniques. If a boy is too fat from the beginning, he may not be very athletic and, consequently, may have trouble doing the various exercises unique to sumo. Unfortunately, every year some overweight, lazy boys also join under the impression that sumo will be a cinch for them. They soon learn otherwise; despite the behemoth proportions sumotori tend to take on later in their careers, boys who are large from the very onset often perform poorly. Many quit in the first year; others lose weight in the beginning and then gain it back while also gaining muscle mass the sumo way. The bellies of even some of the most rotund high ranking sumotori tend to be very firm and hardly resemble the bowl of jelly they may look like. There is a lot of well toned muscle under all that flesh.

Once the Sumo Association accepts a youth, he is expected to take up residence in one of the sumobeya. Traditionally, the sumobeya have been located in the Ryogoku area of Tokyo near the Kokugikan stadium, and even today the greatest number of stables can be found in this vicinity. However, due to the increasing difficulty of obtaining land in the area, several sumobeya have been constructed in other parts of Tokyo and its suburbs. Even if a new recruit's home is located in the Tokyo area, he is still required to live in one of the stables at the beginning of his career. A youth who is already living in a stable as the son of the head coach must move from the family's living quarters (usually on the top floor) to a big communal room downstairs for the lowest ranked sumotori. From the day a coach's son enters professional sumo, he must refrain from calling his parents "father" and "mother." Instead, he will address them as oyakata ("coach") and okamisan ("coach's wife"), just like the other sumotori in the stable. All the coaches in a stable are called oyakata. The oyakata using the same name as that of the stable is the head coach, or stable master. Another way to distinguish the stable master from other coaches is by referring to them as shisho ("master").

In the sumo world almost everything is done according to rank. The new recruit must get up the earliest in the morning, often before the crack of dawn, to begin training. The training area, called keikoba, may look fairly simple at first glance, as it primarily consists of a rectangular dirt floor with a dohyo ("ring") in the middle, encircled by rice-straw bales which are sixty percent buried and forty percent exposed. Some stables have two rings but only one is standard. Each practice ring is considered sacred and has a Shinto altar hanging on one of the walls. The keikoba contains more than meets the eye: strips of dried squid, washed rice, seaweed, drops of sake, and other various items associated with good luck are buried in a spot under the dohyo. Each ring is remade and refilled with good luck charms prior to every tournament.

Although women visitors are welcome to sit and watch sumo practice from an agari zashiki ("raised tatami-mat area"), they are not permitted to touch any part of the actual keikoba due
to ancient Shinto beliefs about the female body being impure. Advance permission is usually not needed to view a practice session; even complete strangers are welcome to watch as long as they remain quiet and sit with their legs crossed or kneeling on the tatami-mat. Guests are allowed to take photographs, but generally not with flashes, which can disturb the concentration of the sumotori in the practice ring.

After practice, popular sumotori start making handprints in black or red ink on thick, square paper boards called shikishi, which are later autographed and sold to sumo fans. Some families with small children may want to ask one of the sumotori to hold their youngster after practice, following an old Japanese belief that a child who has been held by a sumotori will grow up to be healthy and strong.

Shiko is sumo-style stomping begun in a position with the legs spread far apart. One leg is raised high up and then brought down while the sumotori exhales. This process is then repeated with the other leg. Beginners in professional sumo are recommended to practice shiko at least five hundred times a day to strengthen their legs. Matawari are sumo-style splits. While sitting on the ground with his legs spread as wide as possible, the sumotori starts bending the upper half of his body forward to touch the ground. Matawari can be very painful and it has driven many novices, most notably Hawaiian-born Takamiyama, to tears. Anybody who has witnessed sumotori doing such splits is unlikely to dismiss them as mere fat men. Teppo, a thick wooden pole placed in the ground in a corner of the keikoba, serves as the sumo equivalent of a punching bag. The rikishi slides his feet back and forth, all the while slamming his hands against the teppo pole. This exercise not only strengthens the arms, legs, back, and hands but also improves coordination and timing. Almost all stables nowadays seem to be equipped with Western athletic equipment, such as barbells and exercise bicycles. Some also encourage their members to jog or take up golf. Still, these are all considered supplementary and are no substitute for the traditional basics.

The sumotori in the top two divisions are known as sekitori. The sekiton wear thick, white cotton-canvas mawashi ("colored belt") during practice. The apprentices don black ones for both training and regular matches. During practice both sekitori and novices have their hair fixed in the same simple chonmage ("topknot"). The sekitori work out among themselves and also give training to apprentices. The seniors in particular take charge of the juniors on days when no coaches show up. Training is carried out daily all year round; the only vacations are for about five days after each tournament and on New Year's Day. The most spectacular joint practice takes place once on an unfixed date during the twelve days prior to every Tokyo tournament. The training session is held in view of the Yokozuna Deliberation Council and the leading sekitori from each stable participate in this practice.

Butsukari-geiko ("collision practice") is another element of basic training that takes place toward the end of the day's workout. This is when an apprentice sumotori charges at the chest of one of the senior rikishi and tries to push him around the ring. A novice may be required to do this repeatedly until he is practically collapsing from exhaustion. Particularly rough treatment of an apprentice during practice is expected and is known sarcastically as kawaigari ("tender loving care"). In a way, such treatment has been proven to motivate an apprentice. Kawaigari at a few stables has been known to get out of hand, leading some novices to leave the sumo world altogether, but deliberate brutality is rare. Finally, each sumotori squats down in a style known as sonkyo: the knees spread open, the back straight, the hips lowered, their hands on their knees, inhaling and exhaling deeply. In some stables the performance of the sonkyo ends the practice session. In many others this is followed by a senior sumotori asking one or more of the novices to recite the sumo code of honor while still squatting sonkyo style. A few stables even have a grand finale with all the sumotori standing up to sing the official Sumo Association song. Practice sessions end generally a few hours before noon, but the apprentice sumotori is hardly able to relax. After hours of intense training on a dirt floor, the sumotori are allowed to bathe in order of rank. Apprentices enter the bath area to serve as attendants to the sekitori or the oyakata. In the traditional Japanese bath, the scrubbing and rinsing are performed before actually stepping into the tub. In the sumo world, it is the duty of the attendants to scrub the sekitori.

After bathing, the sumotori sit down, again in order of rank, in the agari-zashiki to feast at low dining tables which, depending on the stable, are either circular or rectangular. As if the novices were not hungry enough after being up several hours on an empty stomach (sumo practice cannot be done on a full one), next they must stand in the dining area to serve the sekitori. This tradition serves as motivation for the apprentices to climb to the higher ranks as quickly as possible. The apprentices who do not appear at the keikoba on a particular day are probably on chankoban ("kitchen duty"). This involves going out to purchase food supplies for the day as well as fixing the meals. The most famous part of a sumotori's first meal of the day consists of chanko-nabe ("good-luck stew"). The sekitori cook the chanko-nabe themselves by dropping various items chopped up by those on kitchen duty into a big pot set up before them. Here is my grandmother's own recipe for "good luck" chanko-nabe: Ingredients:

| 1 medium chicken | 2 cakes aburage (deep-fried tofu) |
| 2 medium onions  | 1 cake koyadofu (fresh tofu)     |
| 2 large leeks    | 1/2 cup soy sauce               |
| 1 daikon radish  | 1/2 cup mirin (sweet sake)      |
| 1 large potato   | 1/2 teaspoon salt               |
| 10 shiitake mushrooms | 2 packs udon (wheat noodles)     |
Bone the chicken and cut meat into 1 '/2 -2 inch chunks; save the bones for soup stock. Slice the leeks into bite size pieces. Fill a large stew pot with water and place over medium-low heat. Add the bones with the leeks into the pot and simmer, uncovered, about three hours to make the soup stock. Slice the daikon and potato and boil them in a separate pot. Cut the onion and shiitake into quarters, chop the cabbage into small pieces, and cut the cakes of tofu into bite sized chunks. Add all the sliced ingredients and the soy sauce into the stock pot and simmer until the fresh vegetables are cooked, and then add the cooked daikon and potato. Season to taste with mirin and salt, and then simmer for a few minutes more. Serve HOT. After finishing the chanko, reheat the soup with the udon noodles and serve in deep soup bowls.

After the meal, married sekitori normally returned home. There are no regulations concerning where married sekitori may reside, but most prefer to live reasonably close to the stables since most of their time is spent there. Single sekitori may go out for personal business or pleasure or else retreat upstairs to their own private rooms in the stable. In general, only the sekitori are allowed their own separate rooms. Apprentices must live in a large communal room along with other low ranking sumotori. If an apprentice is not required to run an errand for a coach or a sekitori, he may spend his afternoon as he pleases. Many of the novices immediately return to their communal room for a nap. Taking a nap right after a meal helps a sumotori's body store the calories he has just consumed. That is why napping is considered an intrinsic part of the training process.

All professional sumotori, except the newest recruits, have their hair fixed in a topknot called chonmage. The hair of new recruits is still too short for this so getting it put into a topknot for the very first time is a memorable milestone in the career of any sumotori. The topknot is held together with a fragrant pomade called bintsuke. There are professional sumo hairdressers who have perfected the art of arranging a topknot. The chonmage worn by the sumotori during practice and during their free time are the more simple styles. When appearing at a tournament the sekitori have their hair arranged in an otcho, a fancy topknot resembling a ginkoo leaf. The main interest of the apprentices is to be promoted so that they may have the honor of donning the ochio topknot. Yet with so much competition, only about one-tenth of the new recruits will ever become sekitori.

From this field research project, I have concluded thatsumo is far more than just a sport. It is truly a complex and ritualistic lifestyle not many of us are fortunate enough to experience. I have also concluded that the sumotori are much more than just competitors. Their dedication and determination resemble characteristics of a warrior rather than an athlete. There really is much more to sumo than meets the eye. Even after writing ten pages of information, I still feel like I have inadequately covered all the aspects involving the lifestyles of sumotori. I had no idea how elaborate the life of a sumotori could be, but I am glad I got the opportunity to gain a greater appreciation for such honorable giants.

Bibliography


The Art Products of Hawaiian Culture: of Traditional to Modern Times

Ka Lee Chau

My study is about how the Hawaiian art products represent part of the Hawaiian culture. How the traditional art product influence the modern society. In this paper, I am going to introduce several items. They are traditional clothing that were worn by Hawaiians, twin baskets, leis, Hawaiian quilts and aloha shirts that many males wear.

The reason that I am studying this topic is that by studying art products of a culture, we can know what kind of environment and country it is. Art products can represent many things. Such as history, the ways that people live, and what kind of resources are abundant in that country. The art of one's culture can be simple, but it can also be mysterious. It can represent the atmosphere and environment of that culture.

By studying traditional clothing, I can know how the Hawaiians lived in the old days, how they make their cloths and what kind of materials did they use. Studying twin baskets can let me know how Hawaiian made good use of their natural resources and made them into a beautiful basket. Leis are so common in Hawaii that we can find them in everything. They actually represent the “aloha spirit” of Hawaii. The Hawaiian quilt pattern can represent the variety of flowers that were growing in Hawaii. Aloha shirts are the mixing of many traditional art products. When people see the pattern of the aloha shirts, they will know they are produced in Hawaii.

Auntie Paulette said 20 oz of feathers are enough to make a feather lei. In the ancient times, Hawaiians got different kinds of color feathers from different kinds of birds. O'ō was a bird that could give golden brown color feathers but they are now extinct. I'iw and Pailla can give red feathers. Hula dancers sometimes wear feather lei as part of their costume. People usually take about 20 to 28 hours to make a feather lei. They usually make feather lei with one color but the maximum is four colors. There is no specific color to represent certain kinds of things. However, Auntie Paulette said every year upon graduation time, the University of Hawaii usually requires green and white and Punahou requires blue and golden yellow to make feather lei in order to represent their school color.

The common garments (‘a‘ahu) - perineal bands (malo) for men and skirts (pa‘u) for women were made of bark cloth, or tapa. In cold weather rectangular pieces of tapa called a kīhei was worn over the shoulders like a cloak. Beautiful feather capes and cloaks were a local development created to mark the social distinction of high chiefs. There was a caste system in the Hawaiian ranking society. They are the chief, the Ali‘i, ranked lineages and commoners. The high chief wore helmets covered with feathers that were created to be worn with feather garments. Though the people went barefooted as a rule, sandals were made to protect the feet in rough lava country.

Garments were made from the bark of trees that was

They actually represent the “aloha spirit” of Hawaii. The Hawaiian quilt pattern can represent the variety of flowers that were growing in Hawaii. Aloha shirts are the mixing of many traditional art products. When people see the pattern of the aloha shirts, they will know they are produced in Hawaii.
plaited from narrow leaved grasses and finer sedges, and decorated capes and skirts were made for women of rank and others. This was the division of labor system in Hawaii. T-leaf capes were used by fowlers who caught birds in the forest on sticks, and others, who caught sea birds in the mountains. Bark cloth is a product of tropical countries, and its source covers the globe. Hawaiian bark cloth displays the greatest varieties of texture and colored designs. The use of bamboo stamps to impress color designs on the cloth was also confined to Hawaii. In vegetable dyes, the Hawaiians had a green dye and a blue dye that have not been used in any other part of Polynesia. A ribbed cloth (kua’ ula) was also made with special instruments unique to Hawaii.

The production of white tapa provided women with a medium upon which color could be used in a richer variety of patterns and designs, than in any other surface. The decoration on gourds and mats was limited to one color on each object, but the ease with which color could be applied to tapa led to a search among the local plants for vegetable dyes of different shades. In Hawaii, yellow was called ‘olena, red was called ‘ula’ ula, blue, green brown and black were called uliuli, dark and black were called ‘ele’ ele. The Hawaiian dye plants that can dye color are ‘akala that creates pink, ‘ama’uma’ u which creates red, and ma’o which creates green.

The feather capes and cloaks of Hawaii are beautiful products of native craftsmanship in which the craftsmen attained a high standard in technical skill and in color decoration. The extra stimulus given to the development of various colored patterns was largely due to the fact that capes and cloaks became the monopoly of the higher chiefs to mark their social distinction and rank. They became regalia instead of wearing apparel and were prohibited to commoners and to women. To further mark the distinction against women, the garments were made entirely by men. The value placed upon red and yellow feathers induced men to become professional bird hunters. Twin Baskets

The material in general use was the pliable aerial root of the ‘ie ‘ie. They were used in twining to form fish traps. The aerial roots, which have the appearance and qualities of vines, were gathered in long lengths, stripped of their skin, or bark, and probably wound in coils to await use. The roots were used whole or split; and before use they must be moistened or soaked in water, for the split pieces are very brittle when dry.

A brown color was also used as a general background in some baskets. Color was used in some of the better-made baskets. There were different types of twin baskets, type one and type two. The most decorated basket in the collection belongs to type one.

The favorite Hawaiian starch food to be eaten with fish or other proteins was semi-liquid poi. Containers were needed that would not leak, and the requirements were admirably met by gourds. The gourds selected as poi containers were the short, and the longer gourds of fewer diameters. Covers were necessary to keep out of dust and flies and to prevent the upper surface of the poi from hardening. The covers were made from the bottom end of another gourd. Though they had much shorter than the container, they had to leave a greater diameter than the upper opening of the container in order to fit over it. But though gourds were useful containers for poi, they became brittle and were easily broken.

Hawaiian craftsmen appear to have developed twined basketry to such an extent and popularized them so much that they practically fulfilled all wants in the container line. Thus the use of coconut leaves was entirely abandoned.

Lei are a symbol of aloha, a token of greeting and a sign of friendship and love. We can see people wearing lei at parties, dances, graduations, weddings, and at the airport. When Captain James Cook arrived in 1778, he reported that some of the islanders wore strands of kukui or candlenuts. Mature nuts of the kukui were gathered after they fell from the tree, punctured, cleaned out, and strung through the center. They were polished to a beautiful blond, deep-brown, or black. Smaller seeds such as the red wiliwili and the black mane le were also strung into lei. Lei were also made from seashells, maile, flowers and feather. Maile grows throughout Hawaii. The maile on the Big Island tends to be large-leaved while that found on Oahu is more mid-sized. One of the most desired lei types is maile laulii, a round small-leaved maile in the mountainous regions of Kauai. Of the most unusual Hawaiian feather objects was the kahili, a wooden pole topped by a cylinder usually made of seabird feathers. These kahili were used as standards and protective agents for individuals of high rank. They were waved over the heads of royalty and carried in funeral processions to ward off evil spirits. This is one of rituals that Hawaiians. Some common flowers that are used to make lei are bougainvillea, carnation, cigar flower, crown flower, gardenia, illima, ohia lehua, palaiana, maunaloa, pikake, plumeria, pua kenikeni, stephanotis, vanda orchid, tuberose, and yellow and white ginger.

Lei Day is on the first day of May and is one of Hawaii’s most popular and colorful celebrations. Parades fill the streets, music fills the air. Downtown festivities included Hawaiian music, hula dancing, flower exhibitions, strings of maile fluttering from maypoles, and lei-making contests. Today’s public Lei Day activities on Oahu are centered at Kapiolani Park in Waikiki.

Hawai’i’s quilts, more than those of any other region or people, are intimately connected with this place. They directly reflect the history and natural world of the islands where they
were made, and the culture and beliefs of the people who made them. Hawaiian quilts evoke the spirit of a legendary and universally coveted island paradise. Although bedcovers were not needed for warmth in Hawaii's balmy climate, islanders found the creative, decorative, and expressive possibilities of quilt making irresistible.

The missionaries first arrived in Hawaii in 1820 did play an evolution of Hawaiian quilt. By 1870, Hawaiians had developed their own approach to quilt design, filling the entire top of their quilts with a single large appliqué that was usually patterned after island trees, plants or flowers. The symmetrical and highly stylized designs were cut from a folded piece of solid-colored cotton cloth and appliquéd to a contrasting top, usually of solid white or cream. Early quilters could not be choosy about fabric. Although cotton was grown on Maui and Oahu in the islands were imported and therefore were relatively expensive. Quilters used bed sheets as the ground for their appliqué work and whatever they could find as backing material. Although many quilters used solid-colored fabrics, a number of early quilts have appliqués cut from small printed calico. Common early color schemes for appliqués included red, deep blue, yellow, or orange on white. Pastel greens and purples were also sometimes used, and a few early quilters experimented with light-colored appliqués sewn onto dark backgrounds. Hawaiians had their own intellectual approach. They believed that they were part of the natural world and that all of nature was infused with spirituality. Plants, animals, humans, mountains, tides, winds, storms, and volcanoes were all seen as related and each mutually dependent on the other for life and meaning, no one thing more or less important than another. The islands were viewed as a sacred ground its plants and animals were accorded respect, reverence, and care in return.

Hawaiians also saw quits as literal embodiments of their makers' spirits. Some quilt makers, afraid that their spirits might be forced to wander after death, were buried with them. Hawaiians quilts were almost invariably made as gifts for family members or close friends. Quilt making was, above all else, an act of love. The quilt maker concentrated on loving thoughts of the recipient.

Hawaii is known for its remarkable ethnic mix, and, seen historically, the process of racial blending occurred in a relatively short period. When the 1800s began, the islands' population was composed almost entirely of Hawaiians. With the Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, Koreans and Filipinos, subsequent intermarriage between these many groups led to the extraordinary diversity now seen in Hawaii.

As mentioned before in the traditional clothing section, Hawaiians used to wear kapa. Kapa production faded away until its revival in the late 20th century. It was very common to wear tapa pattern in the 1950s. As Hawaiians gradually shifted to Western clothing, a clothing style from Tahiti would have some influence on the development of Hawaii garment industry. By the 19th century, tailored shirts with collar and buttons up the front had already been brought into Hawaii by American businessmen, and they served as design inspiration for palaka shirts and jackets. The influence of Hawaii's many Asian immigrants was pivotal in the creation of the aloha shirt. When Japanese opened their own business, they sold both western-style dress shirts and Japanese fabric. Japanese silks and cottons were used to make the earliest aloha shirts-and that revolutionary step was about to be taken.

Aloha shirts cannot exist without printed fabric. The invention of the aloha shirt was of some significance in the history of Hawaii. The first aloha shirt was made in 1930s.

It should be pointed out that aloha shirts represented a notable development in men's fashions. Depending on their job or social status, men in America (and Hawaii) for many years wore solid color shirts, usually white, sometimes accented with a colorful necktie or bandana. Stripes or plaids might occasionally be seen, but it was virtually unknown for a man to wear a shirt bearing, for example, flower designs or any other recognizable image. Even in the freewheeling 1920s, a brightly colored patterned bathrobe was considered quite unusual. Aloha shirts changed all that, first as to what men could wear as leisure attire, and eventually in Hawaii, as to what men could wear to work.

In 1946 the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce appropriated $1000 to study aloha shirts and prepare suitable designs for clothing businessmen could wear during the hot summer months. A resolution was passed that allowed City & Honolulu employees to wear sport shirts from June through October each year, but the aloha shirt was specifically excluded, in the following year came the next step, when the first Aloha Week celebration took place. Aloha Week arose from a mixture of cultural and economic motives. This golden age lasted until about the middle to late 1950s. In retrospect, when the output of this period is reviewed, the huge number of prints created was astonishing and how eye-popping some of them were. Glowing, riotous, vibrant hula dancers, throw-net fishermen, exploding volcanoes, palm trees. Recognizable actual places; Diamond Head, Aloha Tower, Waikiki Beach, Ala Moana Park, Nuuanu Pali, Etc.

Aloha wear has existed now for more than 70 years. It unified the multiethnic group in Hawaii. There is also the concept of being local, which partly transcends but also complements these racial differences. Aloha wear serves to set apart Hawaii residents from outsiders, or visitors.

The reason that I studied these five art products is because they can truly represent the spirit of Hawaii. It can also denote the characters of Hawaiians are. After doing this
research, Hawaii gives me a feeling that it is a place that is full of peace and harmony. Hawaiians are very passionate and really nice. Therefore, my hypothesis is correct because I learned more about Hawaiian culture by studying their art products.

I also learn that foreign culture can influence another culture by immigration.

People from one country can bring their idea and exchange it with another country and learn their special skills. Therefore, we should preserve our culture so that it will continue to exist in the next generation.

Terms

garments ('a'ahu)
yellow ('olena)
red ('ula'ula)
blue, green brown and black (uliuli)
dark and black ('ele'ele)
candlenuts (kukui)

Bibliography


Aswang

Aswang is the most terrifying word in the Filipino language, especially for children. Children born in the Philippines are exposed to the word at a very early age. Children who often cry are taught that an aswang will hear and then come eat them because aswang love to eat children. If a child wanders away from their parents without permission, the parents scare the child, telling them that an aswang will kidnap them. The monster will whisk them away and eat them. If a child talks back to their parents, the parents sometimes threatens to feed them to an aswang. To many children in the Philippines, an aswang is the scariest most horrifying thing in the world. As a child grows up many of these thoughts and fears still exist in their mind.

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Raymond Acosta

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I began my ethnographic study by reading a few books on the topic. Doing this makes it easier for me to do my interviews. With a background on the topic I can ask the right questions and better understand the terminology of my informants. My key informant is my mother Maria who gave useful information about the subject. Cinema in the Philippines greatly impacts the culture. Watching several movies on the subject also adds a better visual understanding to the stories I read about and what informants spoke of. My final step in gathering information on aswang is the internet. I searched online and found a few newspaper articles from the Philippines. Using all four of these methods allowed me to view the subject matter with a holistic point of view.

What is an aswang? An aswang is a term that encompasses five of the most horrifying creatures of the Philippines. The first is the vampire aswang who sucks the blood of its victims. Next is the viscera sucker. It uses its long tongue to suck the abdominal organs of its prey. Third is the weredog that feeds on little children. Then there is the ghoul that preys on the bodies of newly the deceased and mourners alike. Finally, there is the witch who cast spells on those who oppose her.

The vampire aswang are mostly women. She is beautiful and light skinned, which makes her irresistible to men. She has no problem finding a mate, for every man in town desires to be with her. When she finds a man with a sizable estate, she marries him. She uses her new husband's home as a resting place during the day because sunlight burns her skin. At night, she looks for victims to feed on. The particular aswang sustenance is human blood. She has a pointed tongue like a mosquito that pierces the jugular vein of its victim. She sucks a little of her husband's blood each night until he dies. This is when she transforms into a bat and migrates to a new town to terrorize.

The vampire aswang is called amalanhang (the stiff one) in West Visayan and mandurugo (blood sucker) in Tagalog. She can be destroyed with sharp objects such as bamboo spikes, bob knives and metal spikes. If the amalanhang does not return home by dawn or fails to find shelter from the sun she will be burnt to a crisp. She is also afraid of fire and any type of bright light.

The viscera sucker is usually an albino woman with long hair. She can take the form of other people she sees and can take flight but has no wings. The aswang detaches from the waist or neck and leaves the lower half of her body in a banana grove because it resembles human legs. The aswang crawls under homes or flies overhead to look for expectant mothers or children who are their favorite victims. She lands on the roofs of houses and stalks her prey. The aswang usually waits until everybody is asleep. She then makes a little hole on the roof (the roof is made of straw) and lowers its long straw-like tongue onto the abdomen of its victim. The aswang then sucks out the unborn baby or internal organs of its prey.

This aswang is also called aswang na lupad (flying aswang) in East Visayan, mananangal in Tagalog, and bruja in Ilokano. The mananangal during the day usually lives in the woods. The beast hugs a tree branch high atop of large trees
and uses its long hair to cover its face from any visible light.

One can protect themselves from this type of aswang by installing sharp crossed bamboo staves on the roof of their house, or have very steep sloping roofs made of metal. This makes it hard for the mananangal to balance itself on the roof. Metal spikes on roofs and fences pose a danger for the aswang because the spikes can pierce it. One can kill an aswang by stabbing a bamboo spike on its back. The safest way to kill this type of aswang is to find its lower half of its body and sprinkle ashes, vinegar, spices such as garlic, or salt on the stump. This is safe because the lower part of the body is immobile and harmless. This prevents the reattachment of the upper half. If the aswang is not whole by dawn, it dies. Filipinos are very superstitious people. They usually place their bed on the sides of the room because the aswang prefers to victimize people in the middle of the room. Aswangs think this way as they prepare to attack its prey.

"Diak kayat ii nakinigid, Agallugit; Kayatko ti nagtingguga, Agammantika"

"I don’t want the one at the edge, He smells like chicken droppings; I want the one in the middle, He smells like pork kard."

The second saying explains why Filipinos don’t like sleeping in threes.

"Sa butnga saktuton, Sa gilid kibliton."

"I’ll snatch (with claws) the one in the middle, I’ll tickle (with fingers) the one at the sides."

The weredog is a vicious dog, cat or pig-like creature with an appetite for human flesh. This aswang has large razor sharp teeth that it uses to tear apart the body of its prey. It possesses a very tough hide covered by thick and greasy hairs. Weredogs prefer to eat young children. When a child cries too much, a weredog is able to hear them and comes to have the child as its meal. This only occurs from midnight to dawn.

During the day this aswang is a normal looking woman or a man who lives among the community. They are usually loners and tend to stand out in the community as being odd. A person acquires this curse of being a weredog when he eats a green chick that comes out of an old dying weredog. This chick lives in the creature’s stomach.

The weredog is called malalcat (walker) in Visayan and aswang no lakaw (walking aswang) in Bikol. At midnight the malakat changes form its and goes for a walk in the barrio (town). It listens for crying children or anyone who is out at this time and could be their next meal. One can protect them self with sharp objects such as a bob knife or a bamboo spike. A victim’s last resort to escape an attack is to bite the thumb of the creature. If you bite hard enough, the weredog will run away. Women like to grow their hair long because they believe it protects them from weredogs.

The ghouls is invisible but is human when it shows itself. It has horned curved nails and sharp pointed teeth. You can sense the presence of a ghoul because it possesses very poignant and repulsive breath. Ghouls live in groups and at night congregate in large trees near cemeteries. This aswang exhumes newly buried corpses. Ghouls snatch dead bodies during vigils from the coffins and replace them with a banana trunk when the family is not watching. Ghouls have keen ears and are able to listen to moans of the dying, and feed on the dead as well as mourners. While consuming a corpse, an aswang makes audible noises that can be heard from afar.

The ghoul is called balbal (carrion eater) in Tagalog aybanua segben in East Visayan and winir in Apayao. Filipinos perform a vigil for the dead to protect the deceased from this kind of aswang. There are many instances the dead stays in the home and the spouse will sleep with the corpses to prevent the dead from being stolen.

Ghouls are afraid of fire, loud noises, sharp metal objects, spicy foods and gardening tools such as spades, forks and rakes. One can protect himself by putting coins in their pockets to prevent the ghouls from picking them and bringing them home as their meal. Ghouls are known for turning corpses into a pig or large fish and feeding them to human neighbors in order to change them into ghouls too. Areas where aswangs exist, food are seldom accepted from strangers or unfamiliar neighbors.

Witches are the last supernatural beings that fall under the term aswang. Unlike the other four demons, the witch does not eat human flesh. They can either be a man but are usually women. There are two types of witches, one that heals and one that harms people. The wicked witch is called mangkukulam in Pampango and Tagalog, mamumuyag in West Visayan, and manggagamod in Iloko and Pangasinan. Manggagamods are shy loners and are extremely vindictive. They use their powers to cause harm to people who oppose them. They use shells, bones, unhusked rice, fish, insects and parts of animals when performing their spells. One touch or stare is all it takes for a witch to cause harm to a person. Manggagamods are also able to enter a person and possess them. The victim can get extremely sick and if the spell is not reversed, the person will die. Albolario (witch doctor) is called upon to reverse the spell and heal the victim. Witch doctors are witches that heal the sick. An albolario uses the tail of a stingray to thrash the victim until the manggagamod abandons its host. The witch doctor uses herbs,
plants, animals and sometimes their saliva to cure an ill patient. All witches are humans and die as humans do. They die of trauma, illness and even old age. They are humans who can perform black magic. However, a witch can lose their power if the source of their strength is destroyed.

Cinemas in the Philippines play a big role in the culture. Filipinos are very superstitious people and many of these beliefs are displayed in movies and television. A considerable amount of movies in the Philippines are about aswang. The aswang portrayed are usually a combination of the five different types.

The movie that I watched is titled “Aswang.” It was a large hit and considered by Philippine standards as a big budget film. A very beautiful and popular actress played the aswang in the movie. The aswang was an old witch who performed rituals to turn herself into a beautiful woman. At midnight, the aswang uses her beautiful looks to lure men to a secluded area. This is when she feasts on their flesh. She terrorizes the whole town and kills a dozen people. At the end of the movie, the aswang is killed by a brave and intelligent little girl who prevents the monster from entering her home to heal her wounds. At dawn, the demon bursts into flames as the sun rises.

After watching the movie, I started to get paranoid. I flinched at every little noise I heard, especially at night. Visually seeing these devil possessed demons in color adds a certain reality to the myths. Filipino adults love to talk story and chat. One of the favorite subjects is aswang stories. A big reason for this is television and cinema’s effect on Philippine society. Cinema in the Philippines helps perpetuate the belief of the aswang in today’s society.

In order to acquire a different, more current point of view of the subject, I did some research on the internet. Here I found a few newspaper articles on aswang.

The first took place on April 29, 2002 in Bacolod City, Philippines. A news broadcast aired on the radio that an alleged aswang was arrested and being detained for killing and cooking her children. A huge crowd gathered at the police station to get a look at a real aswang. Police calmed the crowd down and told everyone through a megaphone to go home. The police claimed there was no aswang being held there. Police denied any report of an aswang and stated that the reports were only the figment of the townspeople’s imagination.

The second news story took place in July 10, 2003 in Bacolod City, Philippines. A couple suspected of being aswang or witches were beheaded inside their home in the town of Canayan, Negros Occidental. Three men were arrested as suspects of the brutal killing. One of the slayers was the son-in-law of the couple killed in the incident. In a television interview the couple’s daughter, wife to one of the suspects claimed, “It is not true that my parents are aswang.” While the couple’s son-in-law claim to have done the “right thing,” he believed that the old couple was responsible for the death of his child last year. As it turned out the three men robbed the house of the couple. They stole 8,050 pesos from his in-laws who had sold their carabao (water buffalo) earlier that week.

These two articles I gathered demonstrate the strong belief Filipinos have in the aswang. Pinoys (Filipinos) are very curious and desperately want to believe in aswang, but may fall short of gathering concrete evidence to prove without a shadow of a doubt that aswang truly exist.

My final step in uncovering the mystery of the aswang is through interviews. I will use a first name basis only to protect my informants of unwanted attention and ridicule. I found this method of research most entertaining and eye opening.

My first informant was Dwayne. He was born in Hawaii and is a first generation Filipino. His description for an aswang is a “Filipino banshee,” or a howling ghost that flies into people’s homes. Most of his knowledge of the demonic creature comes from his youth. His mother, aunts, grandparents and older relatives warned Dwayne of the flying creatures. He described it as a “boogie man effect.” In his mind the stories were just scare tactics to get him to behave. One of his experiences was of refusing to take a bath as a boy and while arguing with his mother, she told him a story of children in the Philippines who never wanted to bathe. Aswang love odors and are able to smell them from afar. His mother said, “The aswang will smell you then eat you.” This story always got him to take a bath. Now as an adult Dwayne is a skeptic and does not believe in the aswang.

My next informant is Lucena who was born and raised in the Philippines. She is from up north in Ilocos Norte. She hasn’t seen any aswang first hand but has heard a lot of stories. She says most of the aswang stories originate from the Visayan Islands the “home of the aswang.” In her experiences people who know of aswang believe that these creatures are all from Visayan Island and migrate to other parts of the Philippines as bats. She described aswang as beautiful women who use their charm to get close to their victims. Much like female vampires, aswang detach at the torso from the waist down. The lower half of the body is rolled up into a mat and hidden in the closet. The upper part of the body has wings like a bat enabling them to fly. Lucena described these demons as “bats that suck blood.” She added that garlic is placed on the lower half of the body to prevent the aswang from becoming whole again causing it to die. Most of her stories are from fellow coworkers who talk at work. Many of her friends are avid believers of aswang and witches. She is often called un-Filipino because she does not believe in
these Filipino monsters. She said, "I don't believe because I did not see."

My final interview is Maria who is my key informant of this ethnographic study. Maria is a teacher and was born and raised in the Philippines. Maria, who is my mother, told me the story of my great grandmother, Regina. My mother lived with her until she turned twenty-two then she moved away and started her own family.

My mother said my grandmother was an albolario (witch doctor). She helped heal people of their sicknesses. She acquired her ability to heal in a dream. She was commanded to make a certain necklace and this was the source of her powers. She used animal parts and blood, shells, insects, oils and certain herbs to heal. Chants and rituals were performed to cleanse people of all sorts of illnesses such as stomach pains, vomiting and sometimes to break a mangkukulam's (witch) spell. She was popular around town and always tried to heal those seeking for help. My mother speaks of instances when her grandmother requested for an animal to be slaughtered when preparing for a healing ritual, and therefore there was always meat in the house to eat. Cows, pigs, goats and chickens were killed for their blood and organs. This is why my mother concluded that her powers were of the devil. There was one instance where my mother witnessed my grandmother being possessed by the devil. She danced around the house in the middle of the night chanting. Soon after that she became very ill. My mother at the time was active in the Catholic Church asked a priest to come to their home and perform an exorcism on her grandmother. The exorcism failed. She was to be sick for a few weeks and finally her fever subsided. She soon gained back her strength and continued to use her healing powers to heal others. She later died of old age.

My mother also had some knowledge of the weredog aswang. She had a professor in college that came from the southern area of the Philippines. He spoke of many occurrences in his hometown and believed that aswang do exist. He spoke of pig-like creatures that roam the streets. Many deaths occurred but he himself did not witness any of these incidences.

There are many reasons why stories of the aswang are still as popular today as they were in the past. Children in the Philippines today are still being told the same stories of the aswang of the past. Aswang are used as a scare tactic to get children to behave. Almost every person I know who is of Filipino ancestry and knows of the monster heard it from an older person as a way of controlling their behavior. Another purpose of aswang stories is to prevent trespassers from entering private property. Many homes and empty lots in the Philippines claim to be inhabited by aswang or the slaughter of an innocent victim occurred there. This is equivalent to a haunted house here in the United States. The fear of being hurt or even killed keeps solicitors, trespassers and thieves from entering the property. Gossip, story telling, and cinema are other reasons aswang are so popular in Filipino society. These are the most rampant way stories of these evil creatures spread. All of my informants claim that this is how they heard of most of the gruesome stories of aswang.

The last reason aswang are still popular is the need for a scapegoat. Due to the lack of law enforcement and investigative method in barrios of the Visayan Islands of the South, I believe that loners of this town are being blamed for deaths without sufficient proof. It reminds me of the Salem Witch Trials, where people were being condemned for no apparent reason. Even if the true murderer is found, through gossip and lack of knowledge of the people in the area, the accused aswang will always be branded as a demon. These stories will continue to circulate, bringing fear to the hearts of many.

My personal belief on aswang is consistent with all my informants. Filipinos are very superstitious people. I believe that witches do exist, whether good or evil. They perform black magic to either harm or heal people. I am so firm in my belief because my great grandmother was a witch doctor. A witch is considered an aswang according the word's true meaning. However, as far as the aswang monsters that devour human flesh, I do not believe that they exist. I have never seen a weredog, vampire, viscerasucker, or a ghoul that eats people in my life. I am still a skeptic. Until I see these man-eating monsters with my own eyes or true evidence of their existence are found, I will see them in the same light as the "Boogie Man."
Bibliography


Chinese Beauty

What is beauty? What features of a woman’s appearance are considered to be beautiful? How does China and modern day Chinese conceptions of beauty compare? Obviously, times have changed the way we live and perceive things. But does the definition of beauty remain the same? In the next few paragraphs, I will talk about the biography and history of Kuei Fei who was a notorious beauty during the Tang dynasty whose loveliness was far beyond all treasures and gold. Next, I will consider the issue of modern day beauty. Lastly, I will make a comparison between the two understandings of the term “beauty.”

The Tang dynasty lasted from AD 618-907. During this dynasty, the emperor, Hsuan Tsung (also known as Ming Huang) reigned from 712-756. The emperor, whose position and power were supreme, fell in love with the daughter of an official, Yang. Yang Kuei Fei’s (also known as Yang Gui Fei) underlying beauty captured the emperor’s heart and soul at first sight (Most Famous Beauty of China).

According to the site, Most Famous Beauty of China, Yang Kuei Fei was born at Him Yin in the district of Vung Chou in Shensi. It is about 200 miles east of the capital city of Chang An which is now called Ilsi-An.

Kuei Fei was originally married to one of Emperor Hsuan’s heirs but when the emperor saw what a beauty she was, he took her in as his second concubine, after Mei Fei. Although Kuei Fei came in second, she was the emperor’s most prized possession; the emperor eventually displaced Mei Fei.

What attracted the emperor to Kuei Fei was her grace and charm. He was also infatuated by her plumpness and perfect body proportion. Beauty was often depicted as having smooth, glistening, raven black hair, unblemished white skin, cherry red lips, rosy-pink cheeks, and large - almond shaped eyes. He was also infatuated by her plumpness and perfect body proportion. Beauty was often depicted as having smooth, glistening, raven black hair, unblemished white skin, cherry red lips, rosy-pink cheeks, and large - almond shaped eyes.

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Annie Kwan

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, Kuei Fei was one of the few obese women during the Tang dynasty. Yet she was seen as Heaven for her grace and beauty despite her body weight and her lack of thoughtfulness toward others.

From the Sung Dynasty on, perception towards beauty started to change. As seen in the poem, “The Flowers of the Rear Courts,” it mentioned a beauty whose arm were delicately “small” and pretty (347). In the story, “The Taoist of Lao Mountain,” it talks about a beautiful goddess from the moon whose motions were graceful as she moves her “slender” waist to the beat of her singing (789).

In modern China women are being more open minded on how they should present themselves in ways that they are seen to be beautiful. Women’s beauty is changing from China’s ancient sense to a more western style. Modern women are more likely to color their hair in radiant colors which signifies modernity and openness. They also adopted western lip color in various shades. The eyes have a greater importance when it comes to the features of a woman’s beauty. It is where application of mascara is used to emphasize their facial appearance and for eye enhancement. Out of all these features and qualities mentioned, hair is still an attractive feature for women in modern China. According to Quality Chinese Herbs, it stated that beautiful hair is one of the most “striking” beauty features of a woman.

In modern China today, it is difficult to pinpoint who is more beautiful than in the past. Now that there are more professions available for women, it enables them to make a name for themselves in society; for instance consider female singers and actresses. Women who are successful and present themselves well in society are considered to be beautiful. Not only are looks highly judged upon, a woman’s figure is taken into account as well. A prime example would be Zhang Ziyi. She is considered to be beautiful inside and out for the character she portrays and for the success of her career. During an interview,
actor, Chris Tucker stated, "She's a sweetheart, man. So attractive and so sexy." Another beautiful face in China known for the numerous movies she was in is Gong Li. Many critics raved about her performances in acting such as in the movie, "Raise the Red Lantern." One stated that Gong Li is the most purely beautiful woman. Another stated that she possessed a sylphlike beauty.

In ancient China, women who were knowledgeable in history, art music, literature, and other recreational activities were more desirable than others who did not possess them. Chubbiness was seen as being attractive/beautiful. A woman's charming personality and gracefulness in movement were perceived as goddess qualities.

Now, in modern China, women are more likely to be regarded as being beautiful if they are successful and have a model like figure. A good figure not only attracts the eye of the public but also gives women popularity and glamour. Back then, women were considered beautiful if they were educated and if presented adequately by society in forms of their behavior and manners.

In conclusion, beauty in China since ancient times has changed and has accepted and taken in ideas of Western beauty. Being beautiful is not all about the person's looks but for the beauty within. To me, beauty is fashion where changes often occur as time passes by. It's just a matter of time when people will start to perceive "beauty" differently than we do now.

Bibliography


Chinese Taoist Funeral

William Lee

In the Chinese culture, funeral rites and burial customs are very important parts of Chinese heritage. According to their beliefs, improper funeral arrangements could have negative effects on the family's health and fortune, thus it is taken very seriously. Chinese people have the most superstitions about things related to health and fortune. My parents have no religion, yet they are very superstitious. These beliefs were passed down from generations and are continually practiced by modern Chinese families today. The Chinese culture is the most ancient civilization that exists today. Through thousands of years of civil wars, it's incredible how the civilization survived and passed its customs and beliefs.

Living in Hawaii all my life and being Chinese, the only Chinese culture that I experienced was what my parents provided which was little. My father is from Canton and my mother is from Hong Kong. Although they are used to the American life, they still hold their Chinese traditions very sacred. So when my grandmother passed away in December 2003, my parents had to bury my grandmother the traditional Chinese way. It was a very sad time for my family and me, and it was an experience I'll never forget. I've been to American style funerals, but never a Chinese funeral.

There are two types of Chinese funeral ceremonies. They are the Buddhist style and the Taoist style. My grandmother was buried the Taoist way. I was fascinated by the beliefs and practices, as this was all new to me. I vividly remember performing all of the rituals, but I had no idea what they meant or stood for. I felt pretty ashamed being Chinese and not knowing my culture. The opportunity came where I could learn more about my ancient ancestors and myself. This project came after my experience, so my interview was done after the ceremonies.

About a month ago, I set up an interview with Taoist priest Pang. He was the priest whom we hired to oversee the preparations of my grandmother's funeral. Priest Pang is fifty-two now and has been practicing Taoism since sixteen. He is a well known Taoist priest in Hawaii has been hired by many Chinese families to perform their burial ceremonies. He also was born and raised in Canton, China. He believes that if someone follows Taoism, peace and eternal health will follow.

As I asked Raymond, "what exactly is Taoism?" He said that Tao simply means "the way." "The way" could have many meanings such as the way of doing things, the way of nature, and the way of life. He further explained to me the history of Taoism. Taoism is a philosophical and religious tradition that originated in China around 500 to 400 B.C. Taoism beliefs and practices were implanted deep into the roots of the Chinese culture for centuries and have spread worldwide into countries such as Korea, Vietnam, Japan, and here in Hawaii. From weddings to funerals, Taoism is practiced in everyday Chinese life.

I could write an entire book on Taoism, but I was mainly focused on the rituals and their meanings that were performed at my grandmother’s funeral. Taoist believes that the spirit remains nearby until the body is buried. They also believe they are two elements of a spirit which are the spiritual element and the feelings element. Only the feelings element is buried with the body such as passion, grief, and other strong feelings. The spiritual element survives, and goes on, either to peaceful rest or to face punishment from the gods for bad deeds on earth.

Proper rituals can save the dead from divine punishment and therefore can be very expensive. An entire branch of Taoist priesthood exists to manage proper funeral procedures. These priests are called the "blackhead" Taoists. From birth to death, Taoist rituals shape a person's life and work to keep them in sync with the universe. These concepts explained some of the rituals that were performed at the funeral.

As in western culture, my grandmother's funeral service was already paid for in advance. My father also selected a western style coffin. Friends and relatives were informed. The obituary was written and posted up in newspapers. Two weeks before the funeral, my family and I had many things to gather and prepare. I was so busy for those two weeks that I almost forgot to cry for my grandmother. I only cried before I slept during the nights when I was alone.

During the day, many preparations had to be done. Flowers were carefully selected and ordered. Food for the wake was also ordered. These foods consisted of just dim sum because there was a luncheon scheduled after the burial. The seven-course menu for the luncheon was also selected. Certain
foods were essential on the menu. Jai, a Chinese vegetarian dish, was one of the seven selections. No crab or lobster was selected. The foods consisted of many vegetables. Chicken and duck were the only meats selected on the menu. I asked priest Pang, “Why a seven course menu?”

He said that the items needed to be odd number. It could either be five or seven dishes but not nine. Nine item menus were for celebration meals such as weddings. This was a time of mourning so the food needed to be on the bland side. Healthy and hearty foods such as lobster, crab, and steaks were for weddings. Priest Pang also gave us a list of things to buy.

The list included items such as a handkerchief, a fan, paper ghost money, candles, incense, and a pearl. The pearl was the hardest to buy, because the priest said that the pearl had to have no holes. Most of the items were bought at a store in Chinatown called Bo-Wah except for the pearl. Most of the pearls sold in jewelry stores have holes punched into them. We finally found the pearl at a jewelry store in Waikiki. The pearl was to be put into my grandmother’s mouth. It symbolized the light on her way to her journey. The handkerchief and fan was placed in one hand.

We also had to buy the clothes that my grandmother had to wear. The total clothing items had to equal an odd number. We ended up buying seven pieces of clothing. These items were a pair of socks, shoes, pants, bra, an under shirt, a long sleeve button down shirt, and a jacket. The color was important as well. No flashy colors especially red. Red symbolized happiness. If the body was dressed in red, it was believed that the dead would become a ghost wandering on earth and never making the journey to the afterlife. The clothing items also could not be made of any animal products like leather.

We also had to gather many of my grandmother’s personal belongings to be put into the coffin with her burial. Personal items included her clothes, jewelry, pictures of our family, her purse, and her personal phone book. These items were to be used by her in the afterlife.

After gathering all the items, we needed to select the pallbearers. No immediate family members were allowed. The horoscopes of the pallbearers also had to be compatible with my grandmother’s. According to Priest Pang, he told us not to use anyone born in the year of the ram because it would clash with my grandmother. With this in mind, we carefully selected the pallbearers.

During the nights of the two weeks before the funeral, my entire family was instructed to fold the paper ghost money. The money needed to be folded into a nugget shape. These paper nuggets were to be burned at the wake and the burial. We ended up folding enough to fill twenty trash bags.

Priest Pang also had things he had to prepare. He had to fold a miniature paper house, two bags of ghost money, and two paper servants. These items were to be burned at the burial as well. The house represented the house that my grandmother would live in the afterlife. The two servants were to serve my grandmother forever in the afterlife. The two dolls consisted of a boy and girl. They looked to be around the age of fifteen. He also had to prepare the supplies and food that were presented at the altar. These foods consisted of a bowl of rice, chicken, and some dried candied fruit. The food was placed in front of the coffin as an offering to the dead.

The two weeks went quickly as we hustled around town to gather the correct items. My dad dropped off all the items at the mortuary, so they could prepare the body. There was nothing else to do but wait after we had prepared all the necessary things. The morning of the funeral approached as we woke up bright and early. Ceremonies were scheduled to start at 9a.m., but the immediate family needed to be there by 8a.m. Priest Pang gave us specific instructions on what to eat and what to do on the day of the funeral.

My mother woke up the earliest because she had to cook jai for the family. She also had to prepare pomelo leaves for us when we return. Pomelo is a type of Chinese grapefruit. Priest Pang told me that the Chinese people believe this fruit will cleanse bad and evil things. He also told me that washing oneself with pomelo leaves is also done when someone returns home from prison. It is similar to the myth of how garlic is used to fight off evil spirits. Next, everyone had to eat jai for breakfast. After breakfast, we all had to dress appropriately. Females wore all white. The men wore black pants and a white button down shirt. No jewelry or make-up was worn either. After dressing, there were certain things we had to do before we left the house.

The first thing we had to do was turn on the main light outside the house near the front door. This represented a lantern. It was to be left on all day until we return. The light was left on because the spirit might return back to the house. The lantern was there so the spirit wouldn’t get lost if it wanted to return home for a visit. The next thing we did was place three candles and three incense in the ground in the front yard and light them. Then my father bunched a handful of newspaper, rolled it, and burned it outside the front door as we walked out. We all had to walk over the fire one by one and in proper order. The order was my father, mother, older brother, me, younger brother, and finally my niece.

When we arrived at Nuuau Mortuary around 8am, Priest Pang and his band was already there preparing. He gave each of us a black armband. We had to wrap it around our left
arm, which signified the immediate family of the deceased. The altar, flowers, and coffin were set when we got there. I finally got to see what the altar looked like.

A kneeling mattress was placed in front of the altar. A wooden box full of sand was placed in back of the mattress. To the right of the box was a full bag of incense. In the sandbox consisted of incense and two large candles. To the left of the box was a candle standing on a holder about four feet high. In back of the wooden box were some food offerings for the dead. The foods consisted of a bowl of rice with two chopsticks stuck in the middle of the bowl, a cup of tea, a fully cooked whole chicken, and some dried candied fruit. In back of the food offerings, there stood the two paper servants that the priest prepared. The girl was wearing purple and the boy was dressed in black. In the pockets of the servants were stacks of ghost money. Between the servants, there was a picture of my grandmother. The coffin rested behind the picture.

When my family reached the altar, we were instructed to perform kow tow three times, which is Chinese bowing. We each bowed three times in proper order starting with my father. After bowing, we gathered around the coffin and viewed my grandmother. This was the personal time for the immediate family. As I viewed my grandmother, I was amazed at how beautiful she looked. She was properly dressed with the clothes we bought. In the middle of her chest was a sign of the yin-yang. There were stacks of unfolded ghost money surrounding her body.

As we were gathered around the coffin, Priest Pang started his rituals. He had a band of two that played instruments. One played the drums while the other played a trumpet. Priest Pang was dressed in a black robe with a black hat that resembled a chef’s hat. I guess that’s why they are called “blackhead” Taoists. He started singing and chanting a Taoists’ chant. As he chanted, he had started ringing a bell in his hand. I understand Chinese, but I could not understand one word he was chanting. In my interview, I asked Priest Pang what he was chanting. He told me he was chanting the spells for the dead to find their way to heaven. It was also a chant for forgiveness of the dead.

After the personal time, it was time for the guests to arrive. Chairs were placed on the left and right side of the coffin. We were instructed to take our seats according to the order in the family. Females sat on the left side and males sat on the right side. My father took the first seat on the right and my mother took the first seat on the left. My older brother followed my father, I followed my older brother, and my younger brother followed me. My niece followed my mother on the left side.

People came in to pay their respects. My friends took care of the offerings outside as people signed in and gave generous contributions. Each person received a li see of a nickel. Li see is money wrapped in an envelope and is very popular in Chinese culture of offerings. Li see is usually wrapped in little red envelopes, but it is wrapped in white for funerals. White is the color of mourning. Everyone also received a piece of Chinese candy. The candy was given to sweeten the sadness of the event.

The Chinese people understood the rituals and some of them performed kow tow three times and placed incense in the sandbox. As in western funerals, family members greeted each guest with hugs as they offered their words of comfort.

Throughout the wake, we were instructed to burn the paper ghost money that we folded. There was a huge metal barrel about twenty feet away from the coffin. We also grabbed the stacks of money in the coffin and burned them. The burnt money was to provide my grandmother with sufficient income in her afterlife.

After the wake, all were invited to attend the burial at the Valley of Temples in Kaneohe. My father bought pieces of land years ago at the Valley of Temples. This was the perfect place because it was on a hill. Priest Pang told me that this improves the feng shui. Feng shui is an ancient Chinese philosophy of nature. It symbolizes the relationship between nature and ourselves so that we might live in harmony within our environment. The remaining bags of money, the paper house, the flowers, and the servants were all brought to the burial site. We all followed Priest Pang as he sat in the car with the coffin. All of the cars followed. When we reached the gates of the cemetery, I saw the priest throw paper ghost money into the air as the car drove up the hill. I asked him why he did that. He told me that the money was for the spirits at the graveyard. It was money for the spirits to not block our path and to accept my grandmother in her resting place. When we reached the burial site, the priest and his band began playing again. The coffin was brought to the site and everyone gathered as the priest began chanting his spells while ringing his bell. After his chants, he burned some firecrackers. I was surprised he burned firecrackers because I always thought that was only done for celebrations like New Years and weddings. I asked Priest Pang the meaning of this. He told me that the firecrackers were burned to intimidate and scare off the evil spirits that may be around. Food offerings were also present at the burial site. These foods consisted of fish, chicken, shrimp, pork, tofu, rice, and tea. A small metal barrel was there for us to burn more ghost money. My family and I made our three kow tows and placed incense in a sandbox. When it was time to lower the coffin, everyone had to turn away. Watching the lowering of the coffin is considered very unlucky. Priest Pang then instructed us to grab a handful of dirt and throw it into the grave before it was filled.

The priest began chanting again. This time he was
casting his spells on the two paper servants. He told me it was a spell to have them serve my grandmother well in her afterlife. He cast a spell on the paper house as well. After doing this, he threw the house, the two servants, and the remaining ghost money into the barrel.

When the burial was over, it was time to treat the guests to the luncheon. Everyone was invited. It was a good time for old friends to gather and chat. When the luncheon was over, everyone said their goodbyes and went home. We were completely exhausted from the activities and also went home.

It wasn't over when we arrived home. We still had things to do when we got home. First, we had once again had to walk over a fire before entering the house. We then had to wash our hands and face with pomelo leaves soaked in water. Priest Pang told us that we had many encounters with spirits today and needed to wash away anything evil. We had to enter the house the same way we left. My father entered first, then my mother, my older brother, me, my younger brother, and finally my niece. Finally, we could turn off the light that was remained on all day.

Priest Pang told us that the funeral rites are over, but the period of mourning continues for a hundred days. During this period, we could not celebrate anything including Christmas, New Years, or birthdays. This was the first time I can remember not celebrating Christmas or New Years. The family should remain home as the spirit of the deceased will return home to visit.

I learned a great deal about my culture after doing this field study. I am grateful I did the research as it gave me a better understanding of my ethnic identity. It taught me a great deal about myself and what I stand for. Living in Hawaii my whole life, I had no idea about my Chinese culture. I was fascinated in what my people believe in. It may be superstitions, but they were passed down for thousands of years and it still exists today. I thank Priest Pang in sharing of his great knowledge. I asked my parents, but they were not sure what the rituals meant. The death of my grandmother was a sad time for me, but it opened a new door of learning for me. I learned that the Chinese people really care about their dead. They also believe in the afterlife. In a way, I hope the rituals are true. I really wish all that we did for my grandmother worked. I hope the two servants really are there in heaven serving her, and all the ghost money we burned is there with her. If not, I'll be there to serve my grandmother when I die.

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**Works Cited**


The Healing Art of Acupuncture

Michelle Low

In modern day society, Acupuncture is one of many types of treatments available to those who seek medical attention. To my knowledge, Acupuncture heals illness by the insertion of needles into the human body. It is recognized as a natural healing alternative to Western medicine. Being a natural approach to healing with the use of needles caught my interest. Therefore, I chose to do my field study project on Acupuncture to find out how and why this healing technique works. I wanted to unveil the beliefs and concepts that underlie what seems to me, a mysterious approach in healing the human body.

My fieldwork was done within a three-month period. I went to the First Chinese Medicine & Acupuncture College in Waipahu. There I had three formal interviews with Francis Pang, a certified Doctor of Acupuncture who is also on the board of directors at the college. Doctor Pang has been treating patients in Hawaii for the last twenty years. His training took place in Hong Kong during the late 1960's. At the time, Acupuncture was not considered a standard or legal type of medical treatment. As a result, Acupuncture schools in Hawaii were non-existent.

At the college I was able to sit in on three class lectures taught by Benny Fan, another certified Doctor of Acupuncture. During these lectures on the concepts and theories of Chinese medicine, I was able to ask Doctor Fan many questions. On one occasion, Doctor Fan performed a short Acupuncture treatment on me in a room which looked just like a Western doctors office while his students observed and took mental notes.

My fieldwork would not have been complete without an in depth observation, so I received four “hands on” Acupuncture treatments at the World Medicine Institute (Tai ilusan College). I tape-recorded my interviews with Jason Kiyojima, an intern of Acupuncture who performed the treatments on me for curing a common cold.

What is Acupuncture? Acupuncture treatment restores health by balancing the flow of Qi (pronounced chee) which means “vital energy” or “life force” in the human body. In Chinese medicine, it is believed that when Qi moves freely, the body is balanced and healthy, but if the Qi is blocked, stagnated or weakened it can result in physical, mental, or emotional illness (Fan).

Acupuncture is used to treat only functional disorders like toothaches, digestive tract problems, constipation, headaches, and inflammation of nerve endings to name a few.

In one of my interviews with Doctor Pang, he explained that Acupuncture is a specialized healing method based on the philosophy in keeping with the natural order of things. The Chinese believe everything in nature from a plant to the human body is a representation of the universe and are interrelated.

As a result, in Chinese medicine they consider a person’s emotional, physical, environmental, and societal condition. Simply stated, they believe in treating the whole body because one part of the body is interconnected with other parts of the body. Because there is no separation, an imbalance of energy in one part of the body will cause other parts of the body to experience a dysfunction, even if it is minute.

In one case, Doctor Pang treated a patient for constipation. He found out that his patient was emotionally worried and his dietary intake consisted of high sugar foods and carbohydrates. He concluded that these two factors alone taxed the spleen and stomach organs used to digest the foods in the body. Worrying uses up the spleen energy, which creates disharmony and imbalance in the body. By this approach, Chinese medicine treats the cause of the illness or disease not just the symptoms. If you only treat the symptoms, the problem may reoccur.

The most common treatment method is the use of solid body needles. The needles are inserted into the body at specific points, which are dependent upon the patient’s ailment. The needles can vary in length, width of the shaft, and shape of the head. Today most practitioners use disposable needles to comply with the biohazard laws.
Other common treatment methods used are Moxibustion and Cupping. Moxibustion consists of an herb that is burned and placed on the needle head allowing heat to be sent down through the needle. This method is more intense because the heat has a stronger effect on the flow of energy, and is used for treating patients with illnesses such as bronchial asthma, bronchitis, and arthritic disorders (Pang).

Cupping is a method that stimulates Acupuncture points by using a glass cup to create a vacuum. For example, if a person has a low backache or soft tissue injury, the suction will pull the muscle up and moves the energy to stimulate the specific area of discomfort in the body.

Doctor Pang said, Acupuncture also uses methods of therapeutic exercises to promote the smooth flow of Qi in the patient's body. He described two various forms he learned while training in Hong Kong. The first, Tai Chi Chuan, is a group of slow moving exercises performed in coordination with regulated breathing. The exercise consists of thirty-seven movement patterns based on the interaction of Yin and Yang, which I will discuss later. Second, Chi Kung, which is a massage-like therapy also involves deep controlled breathing. It is used to cultivate and move energy in areas of the body where the Qi is not moving freely. At the end of my Acupuncture treatments, the practitioner performed Chi Kung exercises on me, which felt very relaxing. He started by placing his hands on my cheeks and held it there for about a minute. Then he slowly moved his hands towards my upper chest while pushing down with light pressure. Later, he firmly rubbed my arms using long vertical strokes. During the exercise, I could hear him breathing deeply and slowly. He explained that the areas he worked on would assist in the flow of energy and blood in my body to restore my health.

Acupuncture came to Hawaii with the Chinese immigrants over two hundred years ago. As a young man in the 1960's, he remembers hearing of military soldiers going to Chinatown to receive Acupuncture treatments. During this time, little was known about Acupuncture in our culture likewise, it was not an accepted or legalized type of medical treatment. With this in mind, Acupuncture was considered underground and treatment could only be found through "word of mouth" (Pang).

According to Doctor Pang, Acupuncture originated in China about three thousand years ago and was only taught as a family tradition. In Anthropology, this is an example of enculturation where social learning of cultural knowledge is passed from one generation to the next. It was possible for an individual to be adopted into a family and trained in Acupuncture, as this is how he was trained. The techniques vary, depending on where in China a person is trained.

The first written accounts of Acupuncture were found in a text titled the Huang-di Nei Jing (Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine). It is still used today by students learning Acupuncture and as a reference for doctors who teach and practice Acupuncture (Fan).

As Chinese medicine spread to other Asian countries like Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Tibet and more recently to Europe and the United States, practitioners selected and adapted the theories and practices most useful to their respective cultures (NESA). This is a good example that reflects how culture, "the socially transmitted knowledge and behavior shared by some group of people" (Bailey and Peoples 25) can affect on the way medical treatment is used in a given society.

To understand how Acupuncture works, one must understand several theories and concepts that interact together in the diagnosis and treatment of Acupuncture. Chinese medicine rests on the Chinese philosophy called Taoism. It's difficult to explain the exact meaning of the Tao (short for Taoism) in English terms. Walinofer and Rottauscher define Taoism as "the way" or "the path," also "discourse."

But on a more spiritual level it symbolizes the absolute Way of nature, the primeval law that regulates all heavenly and earthly matters (2). The theories of the Tao include living in moderation, living in harmony with nature and obtaining balance. It is believed that living closely to the Tao was the key to good health. During one of Doctor Fan's lectures he said, living in moderation means not living a life of excessive emotional reactions, working too hard, or drinking too much. Obtaining balance would be like drinking a cup of warm coffee, not too hot or too cold.

Another important theory that rests on the Tao and is used in the diagnosis of a patient is called Yin and Yang. It is part of the eight principles in Chinese medicine. The other six are cold/heat, internal/external, and deficiency/excess. Yin is like the night and Yang is like the day, combined they form the complete cycle of a day. Yin and Yang are defined by being the opposite of the other, however, one will eventually lead into another endless cycle. Therefore, they depend on each other for their existence. You can not have one without the other. When Yin and Yang are balanced, they work together and we feel good physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Any disruption from this balance will lead to illness in the human body or natural disasters in nature. During one of my treatments, I was diagnosed with having a lung yin deficiency caused by the invasion of an exterior pathogen resulting in a common cold. This imbalance of yin caused the illness, and to restore my health the practitioner had to rebalance the energy in my body.
Interacting with Yin and Yang is the theory of the Five Elements, in Chinese Wu xing which include wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. These elements correspond with a specific organ in the human body and combine in various ways to form all substances in the universe. Another way to understand the theory starting with water, water generates wood, wood generates fire, fire generates earth, earth generates metal, metal generates water (Wallnofer and Rottauscher 3).

It is believed that the interaction of the five elements influences all living and non-living things. In the human body any imbalance among the five elements can cause illness. For example, I had a common cold with a dry cough and was told that the dry cough was due to an imbalance of excess heat (fire element) in my lungs which was cooking or scorching the fluids (water element) in my body.

Five Element Correspondences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yin Forces/Aspects</th>
<th>Yang Forces/Aspects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dark</td>
<td>Light</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Fire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>Hot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>Exterior of Body</td>
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According to Fan Jing luo, which means meridian in Chinese, are the pathways or channels through which energy and blood flows throughout the human body. There are twelve main meridians, six, which are yin, and six, which are yang, and many other secondary ones, that form a network of energy pathways in the entire body. Each meridian is associated with, and named after specific organs in the body. The main ones are: the lung, kidney, gall bladder, bladder, stomach, spleen, heart, small intestine, large intestine, urinary bladder, and pericardium (heart protector).

Environmental factors like humidity, wind, and heat and life style factors such as wrong diet, excessive sex and exercise, and being overworked can also cause an imbalance in the flow of Qi. To restore the balance of Qi, the practitioner inserts needles in the skin at specific points along the meridian to balance the flow of energy and blood in the body. Doctor Pang said, “each meridian is like a train station, so when a practitioner triggers one station, it starts moving the energy from that one station to the next train station because it’s all interconnected.”

I went to the World Medicine Institute (Tai Hsuan College) for my Acupuncture treatments. When I entered the clinic the smell of herbs and burning incense filled the air. I noticed a small shrine, which had offerings of jabong, the Chinese name for grapefruit, burning incense, Chinese characters imprinted on paper, and Chinese figurines. The shrine indicated a type of communal cult called ancestor worship that is centered around “beliefs and rituals surrounding the interaction between the living and their departed relatives” (Bailey and Peoples 286). After I signed in and sat down, I noticed a huge cabinet with many small drawers. Each drawer had Chinese characters engraved, which I later discovered contained herbs that are used for tea prescriptions that are comparable to a prescription that a Western doctor would give to a patient.

A few minutes later, the intern doctor called my name and escorted me into a room that had three beds covered with tissue paper for sanitary reasons, like a Western doctor’s office. The intern doctor who introduced himself as Jason was another one of my consultants. He asked me to remove any jewelry that I had on, and commented that my loose clothing was appropriate attire for Acupuncture treatments. The reason is that tight clothing obstructs the practitioner from reaching areas of the body where he may have to insert the needles and tight clothing prevents the energy from flowing freely throughout the body. He then asked me to lie down as he placed a heated pouch on the bottom of my stomach. The pouch contained herbs that are used to help move the Qi smoothly and relax the patient.

He washed his hands then sat near my bedside as he proceeded to ask me questions about how I was feeling emotionally, what I did for work, how I was feeling physically, and what brought me here for Acupuncture treatments. He seemed to have a sincere concern as to how I was feeling. Talking to him seemed as if I was talking to a friend. I told him that I came in for two reasons, first I needed to complete my field study and second I had caught a cold.

Jason reassured me that Acupuncture will cure my cold and the number of treatments required will depend on the type, duration, and severity of my cold. He said it was possible that I caught this cold because I had a deficiency of Qi, due to worrying about school. He would help me with the emotional worry by allowing me to interview him for my field study.

In Chinese medicine, they believe the tongue relates to different organs in the human body, so he asked me to stick out my tongue. This felt very awkward and I started laughing. He said a practitioner could diagnose the condition of a person’s organ by observing the tongue. After viewing my tongue, he told me the red spots on the surface shows there is heat in my lungs which is causing my cough and the slight swelling reflects too much dampness in my spleen causing the phlegm in my body.

Another important method in diagnosis is to feel a persons pulse. Each placement of the finger measures a
different organ and again tells the practitioner the condition of the organs. In one of my interviews with Mr. Pang, he said, "my teacher told me to feel all the pulses that you can, maybe after ten years you'll get the idea." Mr. Pang explained that this technique takes years of training, a person has to be able to have a feel and sense of the pulse, and it's not something that can be learned from reading a book.

Jason further explains, "it's important to match the breathing pattern of the person while feeling their pulse" for accuracy. In Acupuncture, the left hand (yin side) is called prenatal and correlates to the Qi that your parents gave you or a person's genetics. It's easier for the body to exhaust the Qi on the prenatal side because genetically each person has been given only a certain amount. The three organs that correspond to the left pulse are the heart, liver and gall bladder, and kidney yin. An imbalance in the flow of energy in the human body can result from emotions such as anger, grief, or stress. In my case, I had a Qi deficiency (related to the liver) caused by excessive worry from too much studying.

The right hand (yang side) correlates to what they call acquired Qi, like the foods you eat and your lifestyle. The three organs that correspond to the right pulse are the lung, spleen, and kidney yang. My lung pulse was slightly full and floating meaning that my body was trying to rid itself of the cold. The lungs correspond with the body's defensive Qi in fighting off germs. As Jason phrased it "almost like fighting off men that you don't want attention from."

He sanitized all the areas on my body prior to inserting the needles. While he put the needles in, he said, "take a deep breath in." Breathing in brings in the Qi and breathing out will release excess Qi. A practitioner will know if more or less Qi is needed as he or she inserts the needle. There were some areas that I felt a quick pinch almost like my body twitched in reaction to the needle placement. He said the sensation is the needle hitting the Qi, and is a sign that the Acupuncturist accessed the energy because the needle touches within the belly of a muscle that surrounds the meridian. The average time for the needles to stay in a person is fifteen to thirty minutes. The theory is to keep the needles in longer if the person has an excess of Qi and needs draining. However, if a person were deficient of Qi then the needles would be left in for a shorter period of time. The practitioner will assess the length of time depending upon how much Qi is needed. In my case needles were left in for fifteen minutes.

After all the needles were inserted in my body, I was told to relax and lay still. He covered me with a blanket to keep warm, but I felt some pain from the weight of the blanket resting on the needles. I asked him to take it off and the discomfort went away.

As I lay there, I noticed any body movement caused a slight discomfort in the areas where the needles were inserted. In some places on my body I felt a constant sensation, it wasn't painful, but a feeling I never experienced. I didn't dare look at where the needles were because I thought the sight of needles inserted into my body might cause me to hyperventilate. I did manage to relax and actually caught myself snoring several times. I was amazed at how soothing the Acupuncture treatment felt. When Jason returned, I told him about the sensation I had felt and he said it was the Qi moving through my body. As he slowly pulled out the needles he rubbed the area where the needles had been inserted to stop the action of the Qi. Each session ended with Chi Kung exercises, my favorite part of the treatment.

First, I can verify from personal experience that Acupuncture works on curing a common cold. The day after receiving one Acupuncture treatment for a cold, I felt much better in contrast to one visit with a Western doctor for a cold. The most outstanding difference I noticed was the loosening of phlegm in my chest which usually takes a few days accompanied by prescription drugs from a Western doctor's treatment.

What I once thought was a mysterious healing concept is simply an understanding of the interaction of Qi forces that enables humans to exist and survive. After my research on the concepts and beliefs of how Acupuncture heals functional disorders, I realize that I've only begun to scratch the surface. The theories of Taoism, Yin and Yang and the Five Elements are multifaceted and are only a few of the principles used in Acupuncture. When time permits I would like to do further investigation on Acupuncture. If you want to verify that this healing approach works, the next time you experience a functional disorder get an Acupuncture treatment and see for yourself As the saying goes, "seeing is believing."

Second, during my field study, I realized the importance of having knowledge in cultural anthropology. Prior to taking this class, I never thought twice about how a society's culture is influenced by that of another society's culture. Acupuncture ties into this arena because it originated in China and has been adopted into many countries globally.
Bibliography


I realized that many Japanese don’t realize what the ideal Japanese mindset is and don’t understand the reasons behind their own behavior. I never imagined that preparing a simple cup of tea could teach me philosophy, shape my sense of beauty and teach me about the Japanese culture.

There are four principles that underlie the tea ceremony: wa (harmony), kei (respect), sei (purity), jaku (tranquility). These values are also valued in Zen philosophy and describe the ideal Japanese mindset. Zen is such a practical philosophy and describing the philosophy can only scratch the surface of understanding. To understand, I needed to participate actively in the ceremony. I will describe my experience.

I pulled into The University of Hawaii with a lot of things on my mind. I would be graduating soon and finals were right around the corner. Thoughts were racing, like they normally do. However, with each step closer to the tea house, I began to be mesmerized by beauty of the garden that I was approaching. My mind slowly began to quiet as I began to focus on the sound of the river, the colorful koi in the pond and the carefully manicured trees surrounding the quaint tea house. It was easier to have a quiet mind (jaku) when I was surrounded by beauty and nature. I walked on a stone path to the tea house. The stones were uneven and it required a certain amount of concentration in order not to trip and fall. The path to the tea house was not straight. According to Suzuki, S. (1970), a curvy path is to remind the practitioner that the road to enlightenment is not straight. I passed by a stone dish intended for me to wash off before I entered the tea house (sei).

Although I was significantly more relaxed in this setting, I was still somewhat preoccupied with thoughts such as, “What kinds of people will be here? Will they like me?” I quickly found the answer to my questions. I found that everyone was friendly and easy going. No one in the group was especially chatty, although they were warm. When we opened up the tea house, everyone seemed to know what chores needed to be done and they worked together quickly to get things accomplished. Although it was an everyday task, I felt that cleaning the tea house represented further purification (sei) from the outside and it was an act of respect (kei) for the environment that we were using. When we first opened the doors to the tea house, it looked so abandoned and desolate. Anderson, J. (1992) said that this is to remind the practitioner about the impermanence of life.
I observed the ceremony for a few times. Then sensei instructed a senior student named Junko to help me fold my fukusa. The fukusa is a ceremonial cloth that is used to symbolically cleanse the instruments. My first thought was, "This isn't as easy as it looks!" It was important that I kept my hands at a certain angle. I realized that when I finally improved upon my technique, there was a practical reason why I needed to keep my hand at a certain angle—the fukusa would fold easier. It also looked more graceful. I realized that every movement in the ceremony is both functional and aesthetic. I worked on properly folding my fukusa the whole class time. It was such a simple task, but it was difficult to master and it required a certain amount of focus in order for it to be done well. I was told that the goal of the tea ceremony is to have "body knowledge" meaning that through repetition, the body would know what angle to be in while folding the fukusa and a practitioner would be able to perform the ceremony in pitch blackness.

I first learned how to be a guest. Sensei and Junko explained to me that everything in the tea house was carefully selected. The scroll that is hung up is chosen with a purpose. The pottery used in the ceremony is selected to compliment the weather outside. For example, if it is summer, pottery that evokes a cool feeling would be selected in order to provide balance (wa). If the ceremony is performed in winter, pottery that evokes a sense of warmth would be chosen for balance (wa). As a guest, I learned that I needed to accept the cup of tea with thanksgiving and after receiving and drinking it, I needed to inspect and admire the beauty of the pottery. Suzuki, S.(1970) describes the interaction between guest and host as a "microcosm of an ideal society." The host is focused entirely on pleasing the guest and the guest is in a state of appreciation for the effort undertaken. As a guest, I was given a tiny, beautiful candy to eat before my tea. It was the sweetest candy I've ever eaten. I was so tempted to take a little bite of it, drink my tea, and then finish the rest. I was told that I could not do this. After finishing the candy, I drank the bitterest tea I have ever tasted in my life. It was thick and dark green. Sensei explained that in chanoyu, practitioners use the ground up leaves to make their tea. By drinking the actual leaves, sensei explained that we would become one with the tea. I was also told that the tea is very healthy. I have to say that the tea is an acquired taste and takes a certain amount of discipline to finish.

After learning how to be a guest, sensei and Junko wanted to teach me the basics of performing the tea ceremony. "Cross over the tatami's with your left foot and always take four steps to reach the kettle." I never realized there were so many rules. Jesus, I felt as if I had to learn how to walk again. It was so difficult to walk and simultaneously try to keep in mind that I needed to cross over each tatami mat with a certain foot and get to the kettle in four steps. It was explained that everyone's stride is different because everyone's size is different. I was told that every instrument was placed in a carefully arranged. According to Castile (1979), there is a line of purity, line of purification, and line of crudity. The line of purity goes from the center of the tray up to the boiling pot water pot. The line of purification goes from the charcoal burner through the charcoal basket to the extra cups. Finally the line of crudity goes from the slop basin into the center of the tray. These lines form a triangle. Every instrument is evenly spaced. When I was carrying the tray into the tea room, I realized that not only did this arrangement allow me to balance my tray efficiently, it was also visually appealing. I performed the ceremony to the best of my ability. It was a very humbling experience. I felt confined and restricted by the rules and felt that if there weren't so many rules, I would be able to move more gracefully. However, I did experience a sense of awe when I watched experts who were able to perform the ceremony and make it look effortless.

If I was asked what I thought was the most beautiful sight that I've seen, I would have to answer that watching Junko perform the tea ceremony was one of the most beautiful sights that I've seen. She moved like a dancer, slowly and gracefully. She ceremonially cleansed every utensil before she served tea. I was mesmerized by her grace and I was forced to enjoy every moment and simple gesture of preparing the tea. The fact that she was so excellent in performing the ceremony, made me feel more humble when I performed the ceremony in front of her. She graciously accepted my tea. She did not make me feel inferior in anyway. This made her all the more great in my eyes. I think that the discipline it took for her to perform the tea ceremony with such grace and ease was the same spirit that taught her humility and patience in relating to others.

Watching and learning about the tea ceremony made me re-evaluate my concept of beauty. My room has tons of useless, sparkly things. I have a personal motto that no woman should go out of the house without makeup. I subscribe to the philosophy that entertaining should be a very sensual experience. For example, when planning a dinner party, there should be music playing in the background. The guests should smell the dinner, the environment should look beautiful and there should be plenty of good food. A good party should be a feast for the senses. Participating in the tea ceremony is the antithesis of what I defined beauty as. Everything in and surrounding the ceremony is very minimal. Because items are so carefully selected, they hold tremendous symbolic meaning. This concept really appeals to me. Every object of beauty also has a functional purpose. In America, I would never have closely admired spoons and bowls as centerpieces of beauty. In the tea ceremony, these everyday utensils become objects of exquisite beauty. The Japanese definition of beauty is inseparable from tranquility, harmony, purity, and respect.

After being exposed to chado, I revisited my memories
of Japan. The Japanese that I observed in the subway display remnants of the values of wa (harmony), kei (respect), sei (purity), jaku (tranquility). They interact with each other in a seemingly harmonious, respectful manner but seem to have placed less importance on the values of purity and tranquility, which are good for the soul. I suppose the same could be said about every modernized society. However, studying chado has clarified what it ideally means to be Japanese. I am better for it.

References


Filipino Ghosts

Jackie Pascual

Do you believe in spirit possessions or hauntings? Do you think people actually get possessed and harmed by ghosts or spirits? If so, how is it possible when these beings are not even here on earth physically? What about the stigmata and the exorcist story? Was everything true or was it just made up for the audience?

From my perspective, I do believe in spirit possessions because I have seen my family go through it. I come from a Filipino family and we Filipino’s are very superstitious when it comes to ghost spirits. We believe in beings that are from the past even though they are not here physically. We still pay our respects to our deceased from the past because we believe they are still here spiritually. Just because a loved one is gone, it doesn’t mean that their spirits are also gone. The question is; who, what, where, and why are they still here and what do they want?

First of all, anyone can experience being possessed or haunted. It doesn’t matter how old you are, how you look, what ethnicity, or gender. When a spirit comes onto you then you are the chosen one. Sometimes there is a reason why the ghost has possessed a certain person and sometimes it is just by random. Even children can get possessed because they are the easiest ones to get to. Children do not really know anything yet because they have yet to learn, therefore spirits or ghosts take advantage of that. Children are also capable of seeing spirits or ghosts roaming around. There are reasons for seeing ghost spirits because they are trying to tell you something.

However, there are different reasons why spirits are still here lingering around on earth. According to Thomas M. Sipos, there are two different kinds of ghosts. There are the ghosts that have the personality of a deceased that has a free will to decide what to do after death.

The other is the shadows of departed people and theft astral body left behind on the journey to higher realms. People that died may have died very abruptly or unexpectedly and they are still here to finish up unfinished business like they did not even pass away. Spirits usually roam around and do what they have to do. It is like a mission for them to accomplish before they can live in peace. These two different types can affect people and possess living beings.

An example would be, that we Filipino’s believe that a person’s soul does not rest in peace until they are done with their missions. If they do not complete what they have to do then their souls will remain on earth and may haunt others telling them that they are in need of something. My mother has experienced this before. It happened one night when mother had a dream about her mother telling her something, but when she woke up she couldn’t remember what happen. Then the next night, my mother had another dream about her mother and this time she remembered it. Her mother was telling her that she missed her and not to worry about her because she is okay and that she wanted something from her. She wanted our family to get together for a prayer and to put out atang for the dead souls (atang is when we set out food for the spirits before ourselves). My grandmother died when she was 99 years old and she didn’t die unexpectedly. She lived a good life and she had accomplished all her goals in her life. Her spirit was the type that had a choice after death and she chose to stay on earth to watch over her children, but she doesn’t harm them in any way. My mother’s dreams are a way for the both of them to communicate even though she is gone.

My sister has also experienced an incident with a ghost. When she was in her kitchen the cabinet doors were swinging back and forth. When she would close them, the cabinet door would open again and again. She told me that it stopped after she said a prayer, but ten minutes later, the refrigerator door opened slowly. My sister was freaked out and she didn’t know what to think. She was so terrified that she didn’t want to go into the kitchen alone. My sister wanted to find out what happened and why it did happen, so she went to a witch doctor. The witch doctor told her that it was her dead relatives who were hungry.
and they were showing her signs. This is the second type of ghost that she experienced. The relatives that haunted her were not living in peace and were still on earth finishing up their mission. They wanted something from my sister so they disturbed her in a way that would cause her to do something about it. The way to solve this was also to put out atang for the dead. These are some examples of what my family went through and the reason why we believe in such things.

Spirit possessions and hauntings are researched by people who are educated in this field. They are the people that may find out what and why it is happening and may also help to stop the situation. These people include psychics, witch doctors, and professional ghost hunters who have the devices to see and hear the ghosts. Priests also come into play because they say the prayers for the spirits to leave the person alone when someone is possessed. The psychics are able to see what has happen in the past or what is to come in the future. The witch doctor may determine what is happening and what can be done with the situation. We Filipino's believe in the witch doctor and psychics strongly. They are those who we turn to when there is a spirit that is involved in the situation. The ghost hunters are people who research the situation and get in contact with the spirits to get some answers. It is quite interesting when they research on ghost spirits, but it is challenging because they need a brave heart for it. Ghost spirits actually do come in contact with the researchers and some of them may get violent when they are disturbed.

When a spirit or ghost is disturbed, they are awakened and may possess or haunt the person disturbing their territory. This means that the ghost may take over your body or it may just show up in your dreams or even in person. When a person is possessed, the person being possessed cannot act like him or herself. The ghost in the body can let the person do anything that the ghost wants. For example: cutting their body, scratching it up, doing abnormal behavior. When this happens, the possessed person is getting weaker and weaker because all of their strength is being used up by trying to fight the spirit off. According to Kathleen, one of the people who I interviewed for this project, the spirit is like a heavy object that forces you to do things that you don’t want to do. It makes you say things that you are not aware of. Being possessed is not easy to get rid of. The spirits come and go and you do not know when it will occur. It can occur anytime, any place, whenever the spirit wants to. It is like they are playing around with your body. Sometimes you do not even have to disturb the spirit, but if it chooses your body, then you are their target.

I strongly believe that this can truly happen because it did happen to my twelve year old niece. It all started when we were having my nephew’s (my niece’s younger brother) birthday party at their house in Ewa Beach. The night was going well and everyone was enjoying their time. After dinner was over, I brought out the cake so we could sing happy birthday to my nephew. I lit up the cake and everyone started singing happy birthday. All of a sudden, we heard my niece singing very loudly that it was very disturbing. My sister (her mom) went to stand by her and told her to sing a little softer. My niece got mad and started yelling “leave me alone,” then suddenly ran into the house and into her room. We continued the cutting of the cake as if nothing just happened. After the cake, I went into the house to check on my niece. I knocked on her room door but she did not answer. I continued knocking on the door, but she still did not answer. I said, “Kat, come on open the door, tell me what's wrong.” Suddenly, her door swung open as if a hard gust of wind had blown it open. I walked into her room and I felt a chill run up my spine. I looked down and saw her lying on the ground with blood all over her body. I started yelling “Manang, manang, manang...” until someone came into the room. I was so terrified when I saw her body lying there helplessly covered with blood. My sister ran in and dropped down quickly on her knees to help her daughter. My brother in-law (my sister’s husband) ran in and he just stood there as if he were frozen. He couldn’t believe what had happened to his daughter. My sister wiped my niece’s body with a towel. She looked so helpless: lying there with her eyes open and not blinking at all. After wiping her down, we saw that there was slices running up and down her arms, legs, stomach... all over. We wondered how she could have done this in a couple of minutes. My sister asked her what happened, but she did not respond. Her wounds were still oozing with blood. My sister was in panic and did not know what to do, so she called the ambulance. Everyone had to step out of the room while the paramedics did their observations. Then, one of the paramedics came out to talk to my sister and to her that they have to take her to the hospital right away. He told her to get dressed while they put my niece into the ambulance. So she got dressed and went with my niece while my brother in-law stayed back with their other two children.

The following day, my sister called from the hospital to give us an update. My sister told my mom that the doctor said that everything was okay. Her wounds were taken care of and they need her to stay at the hospital for a couple more hours to observe and run some tests. My sister said she asked the doctor what may have caused this, and doctor said, “The only person that would know is your daughter.” The doctor did also say something about my niece being suicidal. The doctor also suggested seeing a psychiatrist for any problems.

A social worker questioned my sister about my niece and their relationship as a family. My mother interrupted her and said that it may have been a spirit that did this to her. My mom told her to call the witch doctor over to her house when my niece
was discharged from the hospital so that she could take a look at her. My mother believes strongly in spirits, so she knows a witch doctor/psychic, whom she consults when she feels there a spirit is around.

The next day, my mother and I drove over to my sister's house to see my niece. The witch doctor was also on her way there. I went into my niece's room to see her and she seemed okay. I asked her how she was feeling, she said she feels a lot lighter now, but her cuts are still hurting. Me being nosey, I asked her, what happened last night and if there was something wrong. She looked at me and said that it wasn't her. I looked back at her strangely and asked her what she meant by that. She said, "It wasn't me that night. Something was wrong, but I don't know what it was." I was shocked to hear that because I could not believe it. I asked her how she got all the slices on her body, she replied, "I really don't know, all I know is that I was bleeding, but I didn't feel anything at that time." I just looked at her strangely. Suddenly, the witch doctor wanted in and she said, "Wow its cold in here, it feels like a freezer." She said that, but I did not feel cold as my niece and I were talking. Once the witch doctor walked in, my niece acted so strangely as if she had seen a ghost. She just stared at the witch doctor. The witch doctor tried to hold my niece's hand, but couldn't. It seemed as if there was a barrier between them and it was keeping her away from my niece. The doctor mumbled a prayer and all of a sudden, my niece started yelling. My mother, sister and I tried to hold her down because she was trying to attack the doctor. We could not hold her down, so my brother-in-law came in to help. Something was aggravating my niece to act this way and I think it was the witch doctor or what the she was saying. My niece calmed down for a couple of minutes. The doctor continued her thing. Suddenly, my niece's body flew to the wall across the room and stayed there.

She was on the wall as if she was a magnet attracted to it. I could not believe it, but it was happening right before my eyes. When this happened, the doctor was saying the "Our Father" prayer. We all joined her in saying it, suddenly my niece slowly dropped from the wall onto the ground. My niece stood up and said, "What happened?" She sounded as if she didn't know what was going on. She started talking to the witch doctor as herself, and acting the way she normally would act. She told the doctor that she felt as if someone was taking over her body. She said that she has no control when the spirit takes over her and she does not know what is going on. My niece told us that she has been seeing this little girl that looks exactly like her. She said that this little girl told her she wanted to live her life through her body. The witch doctor asked her, "How long has the spirit been bothering you?" She said, "Ever since I went to lima, in the seventh grade," but has not harmed her until now. My niece said, "If I do not do what she asks, then she gets angry." I was surprised to hear this because I never thought this could happen in real life, especially within my own family. This was like a stigmata movie, but this time in reality. Even the witch doctor seemed a little shocked with what my niece was telling her. The witch doctor told my sister that the next thing to do was to have a week of consecutive prayers. She said that the only way to help my niece is to invite the family to have the prayers for the spirit that is bothering her. The spirit needs prayers for her soul to be free. The doctor said, "Till then, you need to place salt and garlic in her room to keep the spirit away and do not leave her alone because now that the spirit knows, she will even get worse." Salt and garlic is our known Filipino recipe to keep the spirits away.

While my mom and sister were talking over the phone the next morning, I over heard them talking about the witch doctor. I was curious, so I picked up the other phone and listened to their conversation. My sister was telling my mom that the witch doctor found out why the spirit was haunting and possessing my niece. She said that the spirit is from her school (llima). A girl committed suicide at school by hanging herself from a tree, the same tree that my niece always kicks back under. The scary thing is that this little girl had the same birthday as my niece, same age, and they even looked alike. The only thing that was different was her name. Other than that, they had the same habits and likes and dislikes in things. They were both artistic, they could sing, dance... everything was the same. As I listened quietly, I thought to myself, how is this possible? Then, I heard my sister say that the little girl committed suicide because no one gave her attention. She felt as if she was invisible and wanted to see how people would react if she was really gone. All the spirit wanted to know is if someone actually cared about her. It's weird because that is how my niece also feels at times. My niece has talked to me about my sister not being there for her, but I told her not to worry because I will be there for her. I was so concerned about her because she and I are such close friends. The conversation ended and my mother told me that the prayers would start today.

The week of prayers has been overwhelming and it was tiring driving from Kalihi to Ewa Beach every day. My niece was doing fine, but she still was having dreams about the spirit; at least she wasn't getting harmed in any way. She was doing fine until the last day of prayer. On the last day, the spirit fought with all of its might. The spirit took over my niece's body once again. My niece flipped the dinner table with all the food on top. She took the chairs and threw them toward the witch doctor. Luckily the doctor did not get hit. We all started saying the "Our Father" prayer then she calmed down a little. After she calmed down, she looked so weak as if all the energy had been sucked out. She could not even open her eyes or move. The doctor was telling us the spirit was really mad and upset because our prayers were making it weaker. When we were almost done with the prayer, my niece stood up and we stopped the prayer. She stood in front of Mary's altar and she started to speak. She spoke, but it wasn't her voice coming out, it was a little girl's
voice. The doctor told us that it was the spirit speaking out of my niece’s body. Now, totally freaked out. She was saying, “Thank you all very much for helping me realize. I’m sorry for everything that I have caused. All I wanted was to know if someone cared about me. Now I know that someone cares. I’m free... Thank you very much Kathleen for helping me.” After she stopped talking, we saw this white, shadowy figure rise up into the ceiling and it vanished right in front of our eyes. None of us could believe what had happened, but we all saw it with our own eyes. We don’t know if it was our imagination or something else, but we know what we saw.

This was a good yet terrifying experience that I had within my family. My niece had an experience that she will never forget. Till this day we still talk about it and she said that she still remembers everything like it just happened yesterday. My niece said that she still can feel the pain of the slices to her body. Worse yet, she still has some of the scars and every time she looks at them she remembers what happened to her. She told me that she still has dreams about that little girl saying thank you. She feels as if she is now her guardian angel watching out for her.

My niece has had an uneventful life since then and we thought everything was back to normal again. She was fine, until my grandfather passed away. She was really close to her great grandfather and she was really hurt. It took her a couple of days to accept the fact that he was gone. It took almost a month for my grandfather’s burial because there was no opening for the viewing and burial. One night my niece had a dream about him. She dreamt that he was wearing hospital clothes and walking towards her. He was telling her to tell my grandmother that he wanted to rest in peace already and he was getting very cold staying in the freezer. He wanted to go. He also told her to tell everyone not to cry because he was okay. Suddenly, he was gone. She woke up and thought for a moment. She could not believe it, she saw her great grandfather for the last time. She was glad that she dreamt about him because now she knows that he was okay. My niece called my grandmother right away and told her about the dream that she had. My grandmother told her that my aunt had the same dream. When my grandmother found out, she decided to get everything done so that he could rest in peace.

These are some of the experiences that my family had. I did not experience possession personally, but I have experienced it by seeing and helping my family get through it. During this experience, I have learned about how my culture deals with spirits and how it needs to be taken care of before it gets worse. It made me realize that my culture is not as crazy as it sounds because there is a reason for every happening. Everything that I mentioned happened right in front of my eyes therefore, I believe in the Filipino way of looking at the situation.

Now I know why we Filipino’s have a strong belief in spirits because we know that haunting and possessions are possible with anyone. To fight these spirits, we Filipino’s use vinegar, salt and garlic. We believe that the spirits are afraid of them. Ghosts are not just stories; they do actually happen to people. If you ask me if the movies “Stigmata” or “The Exorcist” are based on true stories, I would say yes. I have seen my own niece possessed and it is something that I will never forget. One thing to remember is that, if you get possessed it does not mean that you cannot get possessed again. This wasn’t the only experience that my niece had because she has gone through a lot of different situations. She is like a magnet for the spirits since they seem to be attracted to her. I do not mean this in a funny way, but it is true because even the witch doctor noticed that. Not only one, two, or three spirits possessed her, but about four have taken over her body within a year. She has surpassed this and now she lives a normal life. She will always remember the memories, but at the same time she prays that it will never happen to her again.

Bibliography
