




Progression of Early Japanese-American Organizations into the Postwar Period

Trevor Bogna



Groups or Social Organizations

- ▶ Characterized by four major time periods:
 - ▶ Early Immigration
 - ▶ Pre-War
 - ▶ Internment
 - ▶ Post-War
- 




Early Immigration (Issei)

- ▶ Immigrants, had no formal organizations upon arrival in the U.S.
- ▶ Institutionalized and widespread discrimination
- ▶ Extreme language and cultural barriers
- ▶ Several needs or desires not met
 - ▶ Received some help from Japanese government
- ▶ **Overall lack of ability to expand, both as a community and as part of American mainstream**




Early Immigration (Issei)

- ▶ Most of the groups that formed were self-contained within the community
 - ▶ Received little to no outside assistance
 - ▶ Only existed if they were solving an immediate problem
 - ▶ Often dissolved once said issue was resolved
- 

Fujin Home



- Many Japanese women worked in the sex industry in the northwest
- Some women would try to escape their brothels, only to be chased down and beat, possibly killed
- Fujin Home was an offshoot from the Christian Baptist Church
- Safe haven for many displaced women, orphans, handicapped

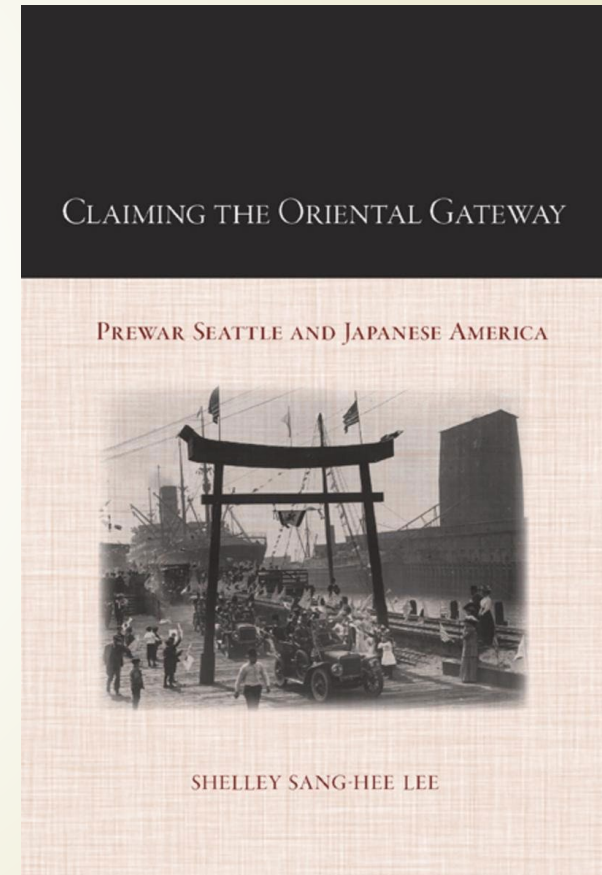


Pre-War (Issei-Nisei Transition)

- ▶ Nisei were placed a position of being “social pioneers”
 - ▶ Barriers from the Issei period still existed, but were more transparent
 - ▶ Nisei had a cultural tie to the U.S. as their homeland
 - ▶ Large population increase=more socially noticeable
 - ▶ Nisei emerged as America’s progression
 - ▶ Nisei came into age during the progressive expansion of education
- 


Fred Kosaka

- ▶ Second grade Japanese boy cast as George Washington in school play
- ▶ Met with large amounts of protest from local community
- ▶ School officially supported the casting choice





Pre-War (Issei-Nisei Transition)

- ▶ Expansion of education used empowering rhetoric
 - ▶ Nisei had strong sense of American identity, yet strong discrimination
 - ▶ Pursued through the empowering environment of education
 - ▶ Brought the tools of education to social groups and turned them into formal organizations
 - ▶ **The Nisei sought to establish the Japanese-American community into the American mainstream once they entered the loosely established roles set forth by the Issei**
- 



Internment



- ▶ The sensitive situation caused the Japanese-American community to split
- ▶ Many became “No-No”, following the empowering nature and spirit they received from the Progressive education system
 - ▶ Small portion had legitimate sentiment for Japan’s victory in the war
- ▶ The majority of the community became “Yes-Yes”, reflecting the original reasonings of the Issei’s groups based on survival and necessity

Post-War

- ▶ The emerging groups of historically scarred Nisei had to find a way to deal with the impossibility of establishing an identity
- ▶ “No-No” group had to deal with the hardships of discrimination from within the community and from external sources
- ▶ “Yes-Yes” group were placed into a position of power/respect in which they could call for activism
- ▶ Both groups gradually coalesced into one group that became the current Japanese-American community

