From the Inside-Out: Social Networks of Migration from Tōhoku, Japan 1872-1937

by

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ABSTRACT

The northeastern area of Honshū Island marked the cultural boundary of the Japanese state from the late Heian era (794-1185) through the Tokugawa period (1602-1868). In the premodern period, the frontier northeast became known as a bastion of sophisticated culture and political power even as it represented a wilderness to be settled. Today, however, the same territory, renamed "Tōhoku," is generally characterized in the Japanese popular press and governmental initiatives as an underdeveloped back-water lagging behind ultra-modern Tokyo and Osaka. This narrative erases Tōhoku's sizeable prewar contribution of migrants to other areas of the Japanese nation, the empire, and farther afield to the Americas. Village, family, and individual networks connected those remaining in Tōhoku with those who ventured beyond, thereby helping to constitute regional Tōhoku identity.

This dissertation examines the creation of Tōhoku identity by analyzing population mobility, focusing on the paradox between (1) the modern imagining of Tōhoku as a secluded provincial hinterland and (2) the historical reality of migration from the region spanning the globe. This investigation begins by examining the conjuncture between Meiji-era political redistricting in Tōhoku, the movement of people to the new frontier in Hokkaidō, and distinctive articulations of the northeast as isolated and peripheral. The second section investigates the migration of residents from the northeast beyond Japanese borders to Canada, the United States, Brazil, and the Philippines. Abroad, Tōhoku transplants produced a more positive regionalism that could anchor their new lives to valued homes in Japan. The third section links Tōhoku to Japan's greater empire by looking at how the relocation of Tōhoku natives to imperial frontiers in Manchuria served to enlist domestic regional identity into the service of the nation.

These three vectors of mobility reveal a deterritorialized regional identity as the essential bond between individuals and the emerging nation-state. The act of living, working, and experiencing cultures beyond their native place not only catalyzed a portable "Tōhoku" identity, but also defined this mobile regionality as the essential glue of their attachment to Japan. These globalized concepts of *furusato* (native place), ultimately, mediated how citizens "inside" Tōhoku experienced modern nationalism.

INTRODUCTION

The Meiji Revolution (1866-1869) marked the beginning of an era in which political, social, and cartographic transformation prompted an unprecedented movement of peoples and ideas both within and without the conventionally understood borders of Japan.[1] In spite of the prevalent stereotypes of tradition and attachment to land, mobility emerged as a key aspect of the modernization efforts in Japan, defining its ascent first as a nation-state and second as a global empire. This dissertation will investigate how mobility and movement reconfigured one particular region of Japan, a region typically inscribed as a bastion of traditional immobility: the territory of northeastern Honshū Island, the Tōhoku region of Japan. This region, known collectively as Ōshū, Ōu, or Michinoku in the premodern period, consisted of the two provinces of Dewa and Mutsu during the Edo era (1603-1868) and comprised the northern border of the Japanese juridical state. As such, this region acted as the frontier between the cultural-cum-administrative heartlands of central Japan and the lands beyond, including not only regions now incorporated into the Japanese state such as the island of Ezochi (today Hokkaidō), but also the Russian Empire, Imperial China, and Chosŏn Korea further afield. Following the Meiji Revolution the leaders from Tōhoku, this erstwhile borderland region which had remained loyal to the now-overthrown Tokugawa government, became reintegrated within the new Japanese state as an internal region situated between the newly annexed island of Hokkaidō to the north and the rest of central Japan to the south. This dissertation examines the creation of a Tōhoku

[1] I use the term "Meiji Revolution" here to describe the transition between the centuries-long rule of the Tokugawa shogunate to the modern Meiji period. From the perspective of Japan's northeast, the area that would be rebranded as the "Tōhoku" region in the 1870s, the actions of the samurai from Satsuma and Chōshū, as well as the rest of the supporters of the Emperor, represented just that: a revolt against the established power of the shogun and bakufu. The act of renaming this event a "revolution" rather than "restoration" is stating my clear bias against a singular narrative of Japanese modernity. Instead, I will argue that the leaders of the Tōhoku region, as well as other outsiders and latecomers to the coup, had to overcome the significant handicap of being viewed as opposition before they could become incorporated into the nation.

identity in the modern period by analyzing population mobility, particularly focusing on the seeming paradoxes of (1) the modern imagining of the Tōhoku region as a provincial hinterland secluded from the world that is also (2) the source of a vibrant migrant population spanning from this putative backwater to the rest of the nation, empire, and indeed the globe. In other words, how could Tōhoku become the site of growing connections throughout the world while at the same time developing the reputation as a location of increasing peripherality within the nation-state?

A combination of internal and external interactions served to re-order the boundaries, borderland status, and ultimately, the regional identity of Tōhoku. While external pressures catalyzed a variety of changes to the political and cartographic landscape, including the redistricting of the new administrative place "Tōhoku," the social and cultural upheaval that followed the revolution also produced a kind of internal pressure wherein the population of Japan's northeast had to reevaluate their individual and collective position within the Japanese state system. For a generation after the revolution, legislative initiatives emanating from Tokyo recast the lands in the northern interior of the state as a perpetually underdeveloped hinterland remote from central power. Over time, this institutional marginalization of the northeast became entrenched in images and ideals of the Japanese nation-state, with the former borderland fixed as a permanent backwater.[2]

This narrative of Tōhoku, however, reinforced by the popular Japanese press and political infrastructure in Tokyo, excluded and occluded the mobile realities of daily life in this northern region of Honshū. Largely ignored or perhaps unknown by the rest of Japan, the population in

[2] Kawanishi Hidemichi, *Rōkaru histori kara gurōbaru histori e: tabunka no rekishigaku to chiikishi* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2005): 207-223; Akasaka Norio, Ogumi Eiji, and Yamauchi Akemi, *"Tōhoku" saisei* (Tokyo: Isuto Puresu, 2011). Nathan Hopson, "Systems of Irresponsibility and Japan's Internal Colony," *Asia-Pacific Journal* 11, issue 52, no. 2 (December 30, 2013).

Japan's northeast did not become isolated from the rest of the nation or the world. In fact, the Tōhoku region provided one of the largest sources of seasonal laborers (*dekasegi*) circulating within Japan's agricultural north, rural migrants to urban centers within Japan proper, colonists to Japan's expanding national borders and empire, and overseas sojourners and settlers in foreign nations.[3] These circulations and interactions with the outside world did not comprise a unidirectional exodus with people fleeing their home region and severing all ties with their ancestral places. Rather, networks emerged throughout the Tōhoku region, at the level of the village, family, and individual, that connected those who remained in the northeast with those who ventured farther afield. These dynamic mobilities and circulations, distinct from but also intertwined with the rise of Japanese empire, played a large role in the constitution of regional Tōhoku identity.

This dissertation seeks to probe a small section of what I term "inside-out ties" that linked individuals and townships in Tōhoku to locations beyond that region's boundaries, the interconnectedness of the oft-marginalized Tōhoku region with the rest of the nation and the world. These bonds of family, village, and region transcended the territorial bounds of the cartographic space of "Tōhoku" as mapped by the Meiji government, expanding the concept of the relationship between one's native place and position within the nation to a portable yet regionally-defined identity-in-motion that defied geographic containment. Regionalism, be it ties to a specific locality, prefecture, or territory, became a self-ascribed category which emerged most clearly when viewed from the inside-out, within the characteristics and traditions embraced

[3] For more on *dekasegi* traditions in the northeast, see David Howell, *Capitalism from Within: Economy, Society, and the State in a Japanese Fishery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). For more on prewar settlement colonialism in northeast Asia, particularly Manchuria, see Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire*: *Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). Statistics and information regarding Japanese migration patterns abroad to foreign sovereign territories will be covered extensively in the following pages of this dissertation.

by those beyond Tōhoku's boundaries who retained an attachment to that place, regardless of the environment that encompasses their current physical space.

This study focuses on three types of outward mobilities that at once carried populations from Tōhoku near and far, but paradoxically, played an indispensable role in redefining the region as the key unit and constituent component of the emerging Japanese empire. The first kind of mobility began directly following the Revolution, when a group of samurai from domains within Ōu continued to resist the impositions of the new Meiji revolutionary government fleeing directly north of Honshū Island to the island of Ezochi. There, these Tokugawa holdouts created a short-lived independent republic, a haven for those who did not wish to submit to Meiji rule.[4] Following the defeat of this group by the Meiji leaders, the new state annexed the island of Ezochi, today called Hokkaidō, and began a campaign to colonize the new northernmost frontier of the Japanese nation-state.

Former Tōhoku residents played a disproportionately large role in the peopling of this newly annexed island, providing the plurality of Japanese citizens who relocated north.[5] This outward migration embodied a kind of frontier-to-frontier mobility, with those who came to people Hokkaidō, the new northernmost edge of the Meiji state control, originating from Ōshū, the former northernmost frontier of the Tokugawa state. At the same time, this new mobility between the territories formerly known as Ōu and Ezochi, (henceforth known as the modern Japanese regions of Tōhoku and Hokkaidō), did more than shape the demographic and traditional foundation of a Japanese-colonized Hokkaidō. When the domains of the Tokugawa state's Ōu

[4] This began the final chapter of the Boshin Civil War (January 27, 1868-June 27, 1869), when holdouts of the Northern Alliance (奥羽越列藩同盟 , Ōuetsu reppan dōmei) fled under the direction of Enomoto Takeaki to declare the Independent Republic of Ezo (蝦夷共和国, Ezo kyōwakoku) in January of 1869. Ōmi Yukio, Kawasaki Hiroyuki, and Nagakawa Seietsu eds., "Zadankei 'Ezo kyōwakoku' no yume to genjitsu," *Nihonshugi: kikan opinion zasshi* 1 (2009): 12-28; Onodera Eikō, *Boshin nanboku sensō to Tōhoku seiken*, (Sendai: Kita no Mori Henshū Kōbō), 2004.

[5] "Hokkaidō and Karafuto: Japan's Internal Frontier," *Population Index* 12, no. 1 (Jan., 1946): 6-13; Matsuki Satoru, *Kita ni ikiru bushidan*, (Hokkaidō: Fuji Purinto Kabushiki Kaisha, 1978).

territory became redistricted into six prefectures of the Meiji state, that very frontier-to-frontier mobility highlighted another phenomenon that impacted the regional identity for those who remained at home. Tōhoku, now an internal territory of the nation rather than frontier space, became a borderland-in-transition. Thus, the movement of Tōhoku natives to Hokkaidō during the second half of the nineteenth century redefined regionalism not only for those moved or relocated to the new international frontier, but also those who remained back at home.

The second kind of mobility of Tōhoku natives is tied to international migration, thereby placing the region as a central node in a vast web of social networks that spanned the Pacific Ocean during the prewar period. While the six prefectures of the northeast did not provide the single largest group of international migrants during the prewar period, there existed a steady stream of émigrés who left Tōhoku to relocate abroad.[6] The connections retained between emigrants with the family members who remained in the Tōhoku region provided a conduit for international influence back to domestic Japan as well as a source of inter-regional schisms within the supposedly homogenous "Japanese" community abroad. Indeed, while abroad, the migrants carried a dual identity. When viewed as a group by their foreign neighbors in those new locations, the migrants were immigrants and thus stereotyped as being "Japanese," a singular identity ascribed to the entire population of individuals claiming citizenship as part of the Japanese empire. The other identity, however, emerged internal to this "Japanese" group which differentiated immigrants based on their former regional origins within Japan proper. An emigrant identity, which in the case of this study will focus on the "Tōhoku-Japanese," emerged in foreign ports and distant farming communities, identities that, while an ocean away from the

[6] That honor went instead, depending on the recipient nation, alternatively to Okinawa, Hiroshima, Okayama, Wakayama, or Yamaguchi prefectures. However, in most international venues populations from Tōhoku (particularly Fukushima and Miyagi prefectures) generally accounted for the third or fourth largest migrant population in destinations like Hawai'i, Canada, the Philippines, the continental U.S.A, and Brazil.

domestic Japanese regions from which their names originated, were founded on the notion that their membership base shared cultural affiliations originating from their native Japanese regionalisms.[7]

Thus, the second form of mobility that emerged in the prewar period of modern Japanese history, international migration, helped differentiate domestic Japanese regional traditions and identity. Over time, prefectural histories back in domestic Japan would pick up on the stories of brave emigrants with ties to their home districts, claiming the suffering and sacrifices, as well as the successes, of these international transplants as an integral part of domestic Japanese history, enshrined and remembered as examples of the region's historical internationalism. The stories of connections between these migrants and their native place became a kind of currency in twentieth and twenty-first century Japan: a way to justify regional and local identities, even in rural areas of Tōhoku. These heroic tales of international sojourns could mark domestic communities as distinctive from their neighbors yet also decidedly similar to the rest of the modern, internationalizing nation.

The third vector of mobility emerged following the turn of the twentieth century, with Tōhoku natives settling and re-settling in two distinct but intertwined locations: urban spaces within Japan proper and the distant colonies in Japan's expanding empire. The incorporation of colonies into Imperial Japan resulted in yet another shift in hierarchical notions of Japaneseness, with the incorporation of other ethnicities and nationalities into the Japanese sphere of influence. While domestically Tōhoku remained a relatively provincial territory within the homeland, in

[7] This regionalization of the emigrant identity, of course, was not limited to those from Tōhoku. Nor was it bounded by Japan regions alone. In most foreign settlements, immigrant communities broke down into even smaller classifications, creating emigrant associations based on smaller geographical territories than region such as prefecture, town, or even municipality. However, in the case of those emanating from prefectures within Tōhoku region, it was not uncommon for prefectural or even village specific emigrant societies to accept as members people that originally migrated from other communities that shared the regional traditions of those from neighboring prefectures. For example, there were members of the Miyagi prefectural association in Canada who hailed originally from Iwate prefecture and Fukushima prefecture, etc. For more, see chapter 2 and 3 of this dissertation.

Manchuria, Korea, Taiwan, and the protectorate of the Nan'yō Gunto (south island seas, today Micronesia), Tōhoku settlers emerged as representatives of the cosmopolitan Japanese colonizer. The Tōhoku region, which some academics in Japan still call an internal colony, became instead the embodiment of the colonizer.[8] In places like Manchuria, for example, Tōhoku residents formed the plurality of Japanese settlers in the broad plains of northeastern Asia. Domestically, individuals from Tōhoku began to consolidate their position within not just the empire, but also their position within the nation. Regional enthusiasts from the northeast began to declare that Tōhoku Japan should lead all Japanese within Tōhoku Asia.[9] Local identity and regional identity became imbued with discourses on the region's historical position as a meeting place between Japanese civilization and the rest of Asia, the site of a vanguard frontier between international and interethnic expansion.

These three kinds of mobilities that emerged following the Meiji Revolution informed and inflected the construction of region as a constituent unit of the Japanese nation and empire. Rather than perceiving domestic Japanese regionalism as an internal story tied solely to Japan's domestic history, this dissertation focuses on the global nature of Japanese regionalism. The history of regional identity construction in Japan, much like the story of Japan during the age of empire, is a global narrative. This can best be seen by highlighting how one region, supposedly secluded from both Japanese and international modernization, in fact played a part in three kinds of diasporic movements: (1) frontier-to-frontier relocation of Tōhoku residents to Hokkaidō as part of nation building, (2) emigration of Tōhoku natives to other sovereign states as part of

[8] For example, Akasaka Norio, a folklorist and prominent proponent of Tōhokugaku (Tōhoku Studies), has long argued for scholars to recognize the diversity of culture found within the Tōhoku region. However, particularly following the 3.11 triple disaster in 2011, Akasaka began to reconsider the location of Tōhoku as a whole within Japanese popular culture and economy. He argues that "Tōhoku was still a colony" of the rest of Japan in the twenty-first century. Akasaka Norio, Ogumi Eiji, and Yamauchi Akemi, *"Tōhoku" saisei* (Tokyo: Isuto Puresu, 2011), 15; Hopson, "Systems of Irresponsibility."

[9] As discussed in chapter 4.

peaceful expansionism and modern Japan's incorporation into the world capitalist system, and (3) Tōhoku residents' settlement of greater East Asia through the colonization of Japan's imperial holdings.

Historiographic Categorizations: Traditional Japan, Modern Japan, Rural Japan, Urban Japan

While movement and mobility, as we shall see, constituted a large part of the story of the development of Tohoky, the extant historiography of Japan has typically focused less on the mobile character of individuals than it has on the formation of the modern nation-state, the creation of a unified national identity and the codification of an aggressive agenda of state-building. This state-building project would see Japan vault into one of the world's greatest powers over a mere fifty years. Most academics and historians can agree with little reservation that in the decades between 1852 and 1906 the nation of Japan modernized and declared autonomy within a complicated international climate of strong empires and dominated colonies. Furthermore, the field of Japanese history has probed the past looking for reasons why Japan seemed to have, with such efficiency and alacrity, made this difficult transformation from "closed country" to superpower.

Early debates over the success of Japanese modernization can be reduced to two different categories: that of modernization scholars and Marxist scholars. In the English language literature which began in the 1950s during the post-Pacific War period, the first studies focused on explaining Japan's meteoric rise to power. This initial generation of scholars, exemplified by Edwin Reischauer, created an explanation known today as Modernization Theory which chronicled a host of issues, among them mechanization and urbanization, economic and political

centralization, the spread of education, and a breakdown of the family unit.[10] By the 1970s, scholars who formed the group Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars argued for a return to a more Marxist understanding of Japanese modernization based on economic determinism, one founded by E. H. Norman that traced the development of modern Japan as a dialogical process developing out of Tokugawa society and feudalism.[11]

Lacking in both of these approaches, however, was a clear understanding of differentiation and regionalism within the narrative of Japan's progress over the nineteenth and twentieth century. Reischauer, a man born to missionary parents in urban Tokyo on the campus of Meiji Gakuin University, interpreted Japanese history through the lens of the city; he marked the Tokugawa period as holding the benign origins of modernization, then traced the subsequent industrial, economic, social, and political advancement of Japan society as the logical outcome of the originality of Japanese culture. E. H. Norman, born of Canadian missionary parents in rural Karuizawa, Nagano prefecture just, one year before Reischauer instead viewed the Tokugawa period in a more sinister light, the ugly feudalistic roots of Japanese society.[12] Regardless of their opinions, be it Marxist or Modernizationist, these men and their students would set the course of Japanese studies in the United States.

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[10] George R. Packard, *Edwin O. Reischauer and the American Discovery of Japan*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 250. Modernization scholars such as Reischauer did not equate modernization with westernization; instead they narrated the rise of Japan using a kind of action-response notion, one in which the forcible opening of Japan by the American "Black ships" set into motion a chain of events beginning with restoration of Japan's imperial ruler in 1868, victory in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese war, defeat following the war in the Pacific in 1945, and reconstruction following the American occupation. By the 1970s, however, a group of younger Japanese scholars emerged to attack this doctrine of modernization theory, arguing that modernization theory had "carefully been constructed to play down…American aggression and exploitation and play up…American benevolence." Edward Friedman and Mark Selden, ed., *America's Asia: Dissenting Essays on Asian American Relations* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971), ix. The final strain of major trends in Japanese social sciences includes the works of the Maruyama Masao and others of the Modernist traditions. Andrew Barshay, *The Social Sciences in Modern Japan: Marxian and Modernist Traditions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

[11] John Dower, ed., *Origins of the Modern Japanese State: Selected Writings of E. H. Norman* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975).

[12] Packard,.253.

By this I do not mean only that they set two master narratives for Japanese history, but that they also embodied a split that would emerge as a constant within the majority of studies of Japanese history: one approach that valued and privileged the narrative of modernization through an investigation of the city, a top down, metropolitan-centric vision of development, versus one from the bottom up, which looked to the countryside to understand the evolution of modern Japanese culture. Instead, academic literature often either uses the case of Tokyo as a synecdoche for the entire Japanese experience, or alternatively, focuses on discrete "rural" experiences as aberrations in the general progression of Japanese modernization.[13] The dichotomization of city and countryside, of modernity and tradition, has prevented us from seeing the synchronous transformations that not only tied these supposedly separate regions together, but also connected them to broader global transformations.

My dissertation moves beyond these deeply ingrained dichotomies to not only recover the issue of region or regionality in the definition of the nation, but to ask how mobility shaped the production of these notions of regionality. Ultimately, "Tōhoku" was not just the creation of the central government or of people in small, putatively isolated villages. It was a global production, made by people who moved to Canada and Hokkaidō, Tokyo and Manchuria. Thus, my dissertation addresses the questions: how did mobility and far-flung circulations influence the importance of region in the nation; and what impact did migrants and diaspora have upon the creation of both a sense of Tōhoku identity, as well as in the production of a properly "national" Japanese identity for subjects residing in the Tōhoku region after the Meiji Revolution.

[13] A notable exception to this rule is the recent study by Louise Young that chronicles the experience of modernity in four distinct "second cities," cities that, while not the urban metropolis of Tokyo, became examples of distinctly urban modernity during Japan's interwar period. Louise Young, *Beyond the Metropolis: Second Cities and Modern Life in Interwar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).

Until now, those studies on region that move beyond the city/country binary have focused less on a wider, global context than on question of domestic influence. The region-specific literature that does exist tells the story of the "winners," the history of the Satsuma and Chōshū cliques like Albert Craig's *Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration* or, notably, texts like Neil Waters *Japan's Local Pragmatists* which reveals a narrative of a region that neither lost nor won. Indeed, by retelling the Meiji Revolution from the perspective of the Kawasaki region, these two works reveal a place where the tides of revolution did little to change day to day life.[14] Recently, in December of 2013, Michael Wert published a new title that further probes the story from a different perspective. This text, *Meiji Restoration Losers: Memory and Tokugawa Supporters in Modern Japan*, delves into the ways that historical memory has recast those who suffered from the violence of the Meiji Revolution, the so-called "losers," into models of action for individuals marginalized from the mainstream in modern Japan.[15] While it does an excellent job tracing the shifting portrayals of overlooked sites of memory, granting a voice to local individuals in the directing national narratives, it does not explore the larger impact of internationalism and global mobility on the development of Tōhoku identity. Japanese language scholarly works focus on the regional importance and specific implications of the Meiji Restoration/Revolution on the development of local society as well.[16] However, these works reflect dyadic frames, contrasting nation versus region, urban versus rural, modern versus traditional, absent a global context.

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[14] Albert Craig, *Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961); Neil Waters, *Japan's Local Pragmatists: The Transition from Bakumatsu to Meiji in the Kawasaki Region*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983). See also Marius Jansen and Gilbert Rozman, eds., *Japan in Transition: From Tokugawa to Meiji* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Paul Akamatsu, *Meiji 1868: Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Japan* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

[15] Michael Wert, *Meiji Restoration Losers: Memory and Tokugawa Supporters in Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

[16] Kawanishi Hidemichi, *Rōkaru hisutori kara gurōbaru histori e: Tabunka no rekishigaku to chiikishi* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2005): 207-223.

My research, therefore, seeks to reevaluate a case of Japanese modernization on the nominal periphery of the modern Japanese nation-state in the intermediary space of northeastern Japan. Tōhoku represents a space that, while imagined in popular media and national stereotype as being a provincial hinterland, a backward and perpetually underdeveloped territory, in fact harbored a vibrant community of internationally-minded Japanese citizens. Indeed, what my investigations into specific case studies throughout the Northeast shows is not just the long history of international interactions, but the deep imprint and influence of those global encounters upon the development of communal identities throughout Tōhoku.

Of course, this does not mean that I can flatten the region today known as "Tōhoku" into a single narrative. This northeastern region of Honshū Island, or Tōhoku, represents the largest in the nation, with an area that covers a vast 67,000 square kilometers of land; yet, during the prewar period, Tōhoku was home to only roughly 10% of the population.[17] However in the spirit of re-centering a narrative of modernization away from the metropolitan machinations of the bureaucrats, intellectuals, and capitalists in Tokyo, I do from time to time of necessity, generalize "Tōhoku" as a single space within the Japanese nation. Moreover, such a perspective reflects the imaginings and ideals of Tōhoku and non-Tōhoku Japanese alike; however variegated and geographically extensive the source materials, regional identity was often portrayed as a coherent, univocal narrative.

What, then, does it mean for scholarly understandings of modern Japanese history that provincial Tōhoku played host to a broad world view fostered by networks of migrants, transpacific business connections, *dekasegi* laborers, religious missionaries, and increased

[17] Statistics provided by the Statistical Survey Department, Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. For example, in 1940, the six prefectures of Tōhoku are listed as listed as having a total of 7,165,000 people, with the population of all of Japan totaling 73,114,000. Sōmushō Tōkeikyoku, "Showa 15nen kokusaichōsa jinkō zenkoku, dōfuken," (accessed online: http://www.stat.go.jp/data/jinsui/).

mobility as Japan modernized its transportation infrastructure? Why is it that the stereotype of Tōhoku remained, or as I would argue remains, driven by narratives of underdevelopment and seclusion? Using the imagery of inside-out, my study reevaluates the implications of historical connections on the development of the internal, "inside" narratives of local history, that which became the foundation of what I call "Tōhoku" identity, in contrast with the popular "outside" stereotyping of the northeast characterized by narratives of provincial seclusion and chronic underdevelopment.

As a study of population mobility as well as identity formation, this dissertation questions the spatiality of the terms "inside" and "outside"; Tōhoku becomes a deterritorialized space, a concept and notion of belonging, rather than a physical location. The individuals who most often are representing an "inside" perspective on Japanese regionalism live beyond the borders of Tōhoku, in metropolitan Tokyo or rural Hokkaidō, in Canadian fishing villages or Hawai'ian plantations, in the burgeoning trade communities of Davao, Philippines, or agricultural settlers along the South Manchurian Railway. Thus, my research provides a voice for these internal members of the greater Tōhoku community, mobile individuals and families that have relocated far from their native ground.

Sources and methods

To foreground the long forgotten regional mobilities and circulations of Tohoku, it is necessary to deploy a mixture of methodologies, theoretical approaches, and source materials that can move beyond individual village studies, the machinations of government officials in Tokyo, or isolated immigrant communities abroad. In particular, this dissertation embraces a multidisciplinary approach to interpret a wide variety of sources incorporating qualitative methodologies from the fields of history, socio-cultural linguistics, and literary analysis. In the

process of collecting the materials for this project, I visited multiple governmental and private archives within Japan including Tokyo, Sendai, Akita, Yamagata, and Fukushima. Due to the transnational scope of my research, I also incorporated textual documentation as well as oral histories from public and private collections in Victoria and Vancouver in Canada, Manila and Davao in the Philippines, and accessed materials in Hawai'i and throughout the West Coast of the United States.

This multi-archival research on Tōhoku migration and mobility spanned the Pacific Ocean and consisted of a three overarching categories of material that roughly correspond to the three vectors of movement I will explore in the pages ahead: official records from federal institutions written during the early twentieth century such as those of the Hokkaidō Colonization/Development Bureau (*Kaitakushi*) or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that illustrate frontier-to-frontier mobility in an age of borderlands in transition; first-person reflections written on either the migration experience or Tōhoku identity published in private periodicals and individual memoires from migrants who settled abroad across the Pacific in the Americas, as well as retrospective publications printed by organizations with an interest in memorializing the history and experience of migration in retrospect such as prefectural histories (*kenshi*) or pamphlets from lobbying groups like the JACL (Japanese American Citizens' League) in the United States; and magazines and periodicals devoted to the constitution of Tohoku as a basic building block for the development of imperial subjectivities in an age of global Japanese empire.[18] After gathering these materials, I formulated and developed my argument using a

[18] I do not wish to assert that the mission and bias of the JACL is representative of all Japanese-American interest groups, or all Japanese immigrant interest groups around the Pacific are structured in similar ways. However, the JACL does represent the most well-known and arguably most influential Japanese American organization in the United States dating back to 1929. For a history of the Japanese American Citizens League, see works by the JACL's in-house historian, such as Bill Hosokawa, *JACL in Quest of Justice* (New York: W. Morrow, 1982).

combination of historical and anthropological approaches that placed each within a chronological framework to discern the author's personal context, mission, and audience.

Beginning in the 1870s, the primary material mobilized for the first chapter of my dissertation starts with the official historical documentation relating to the change of power following the Meiji Revolution, the resultant civil war, and the reorganization of the nation under the policies of the Meiji leaders in their newly named capital of Tokyo. As my research focuses predominantly on the redistricting and expansion of power in Japan's northeast through the annexation and colonization of Hokkaidō, institutions such as the *Kaitakushi* (Colonization Bureau) and cartographic materials form the foundation of my analysis: imperial proclamations, documents concerning governmental modernization initiatives, and commentary on policy proposals published. However, to balance this top-down, Tokyo-centric vision of Hokkaidō development, the archives in Sendai provided valuable insights into how Hokkaidō's annexation impacted local Tōhoku elite while materials from the Yamagata Prefectural Library furnished evidence of how general village associations (*dantai*) organized relocation efforts. By pairing these multiple sources, a vision of the colonization of Hokkaidō emerges that is not simply a narrative of nation building, but also an articulation of the development of the Tōhoku region within a growing Japanese nation-state: Tōhoku's role as a borderland in transition.

The source materials examined in the second sections of my dissertation, or the second and third empirical chapters, reflect a shift in methodology from the examination of official documentary records of Japan to a more socio-cultural linguistics approach to understanding the situated meaning of language within the personal memoires of Japanese migrant communities across the Pacific Ocean. Spanning from the 1870s through the 1960s, these chapters look beyond governmental publications in Japan as well as beyond juridical boundaries of the

Japanese nation-state to explore the production of Tōhoku identity through cultural models and grassroots institutions created by the migrants themselves. These chapters tap into an institutional memory of key organizations that shaped the daily life of migrants: 1) emigrant-focused mutual aid associations abroad, or *kenjinkai*, with membership based on former affiliations to domestic Japanese regionalism, and 2) carefully constructed immigrant narratives by lobbying groups created to aid all Japanese immigrants in the new location as they cope day-to-day with the difficulties of the immigrant experience. This project then combs through these various narratives to discern how the Japanese emigrant community in North America and beyond discovered domestic Japanese regionalisms through the process of remembering, forgetting, and indeed reinventing their Japaneseness while living as immigrants abroad.

Literary analysis, in particular the close reading of the form, structure, and visual presentation of periodicals and essays published by Tōhoku natives, forms the backbone of the final section of this dissertation which returns the reader to the islands of Japan and her colonies. Unlike earlier discussions of Japanese domestic history dating back to the early and mid-Meiji period, chapter four reflects on the way that Japan's expansionary and mobile population became integral to the definition of domestic regionalism and space during the lead-up to the Pacific War between the 1920s and 1930s. This final empirical chapter dissects regional nostalgic publications and *furusato* (native place) literature to establish the ways that individuals from within Tōhoku understood the role of the region within the local, regional, national, and wider Japanese empire. Ultimately, it was during the period featured in this chapter, the turbulent 1920s and 1930s, when Tohoku natives themselves accepted on their own terms the reintegration of the northeast as a distinct yet coherent part of the modern Japanese nation-state.

This dissertation begins to explore how the act of living, working, and experiencing cultures beyond that of their native place not only informs the development of a portable, deterritorialized "Tōhoku" identity, but also how this deterritorialized regionality became the essential glue of their attachment to the nation-state. These evolving, globalized concepts of *furusato* (native place) and region not only played a significant role in the daily lives of the greater Tōhoku community, but also mediated the way that citizens "inside" Tōhoku experienced modern nationalism.

Inside yet Outside: Tōhoku, a Borderland in Transition

Through this mixture of methodologies and sources, it begins to become possible to interrogate the dominant tropes of space and nation in academic literature on domestic Japanese history which occlude a sense of identities mediated by international mobility.[19] For example, rather than focusing on interconnection with currents of circulation and flow, most ideas of region have focused on a host of spatially restrictive dyads. For example, frontier and border space, inside and outside space, center and periphery space all have had significant connotations within the Japanese conception of regionalism during both the pre-modern and modern periods. But how do we understand those deeply held notions of space when we start juxtaposing source material on movement from Tōhoku to Hokkaidō with ideas of "frontier-to-frontier" migration? What does it mean when if historians come to realize that the idea of Tōhoku as a backwater became irrevocably inscribed in popular consciousness at precisely the moment that it ceased functioning as the farthest borderland of the Japanese *naichi*? How does it alter our

[19] Notable exceptions to this literature can be found in the works like those of the contributioners in Nobuko Adachi, ed., *Japanese Diasporas: Unsung Pasts, Conflicting Presents and Uncertain Futures* (New York: Routledge, 2006). See also the recent works such as Kate McDonald, "Intermodality and Beyond: For a New History of Mobility in Japan," *Mobility in History* 5 (2014): 161-169.

understanding of the production of peripherality to realize that borders and peoples themselves were in motion?

The history of imagining Tōhoku as a distant, remote periphery is long. Much of this ideational lineage, unsurprisingly, derives from people who conceived of themselves as being at the center. As early as the seventeenth century, the famous haiku poet Bashō took a "narrow road to the far provinces," recording his travels through a land at the frontier of the Japanese state. His path follows a route to the territory known as Ōu, or what is today referred to as the Tōhoku region. This was, for Bashō, a place still wild and vibrant that, slowly, was becoming tamed. Basho's text chronicles the dual faces of northeastern Japan, as his poems highlighting the rustic wildlife on the one hand, while delineating spaces being colonized and occupied with Japanese institutions like temples and castle towns on the other. In sum, Bashō's *Narrow Road to the Deep North* illuminates a path through the borderlands of Tokugawa civilization, glimmering bits of civilization that thrived at the edges of the state.[20]

Centuries later, following the Meiji Revolution (1866-1869), these spatially restrictive dyads persisted, with their discursive corollaries of civilization and wilderness especially enduring, but the balance shifted from laudatory to deprecating. Rather than celebrating the settlements in the northeast as bastions of Japanese civilization within the wilderness as Bashō did, towns and villages in Tōhoku became popularly interpreted as backwards areas of

[20] Bashō Matsuo, *Oku no hosomichi*, 1689. This text has been translated multiple times by many different individuals. It is important for this study, however, that there is much discussion over the best way to translate the word "Oku" (奥)—as a place name or adjective describing the road. Different authors use the term "Deep North," "Far Towns," "Interior," or simply avoid the issue by leaving the term as "Oku." Because the travelogue is chronicling Bashō's trip through the Ōu mountain range (奥羽), in the area known as Ōu or Tōhoku, I prefer to consider the term as a place name. Nevertheless, the ways in which the term is interpreted by modern scholars does speak to popular connotations regarding that territory during Bashō's time. Bashō, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North and Other Travel Sketches*, trans. Nobuyuki Yuasa (New York: Penguin Group, 1966); Bashō, *Back Roads to Far Towns: Basho's Oku-No-Hosomichi*, trans. Cid Corman and Kamaike Susumu (Hopewell: Ecco Press, 1996); Bashō *A Haiku Journey: Basho's Narrow Road to a Far Province*, trans. Dorothy Britton (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2002); Bashō, *The Narrow Road to Oku*, trans. Donald Keene (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1996).

underdevelopment. In April, 1888, the Society for Political Education launched a publication *Nihonjin* (Japanese People) to historicize Japanese ethnic nationalism (*nihon minzoku*). Prominent intellectuals like Miyake Setsurei and Shiga Shigetaka founded this bulletin to appeal to the urban middle classes and promote the particularity of "Japaneseness."[21] However, it is clear that many contributors continued to regard domestic regionalism and differentiation not as something to be conserved or celebrated, but rather an obstacle to the expression of a singular Japanese ethnicity.

An article titled "Ōshūjin to Kyūshūjin" ran in *Nihonjin* in 1897 and included a long listing of characteristics to distinguish people on the boundaries of the Japanese state during the Tokugawa era—those from Ōshū and Kyūshū—from the rest of their countrymen. In it the author utilizes this assertion of difference between center and periphery both literally as well as figuratively. The article states that Ōshū, topographically speaking, represents the "head" of Japan with Kyūshū being the "tail." This spatial metaphor anthropomorphizes Japan using the obvious cartographical markers of the southern boundary (the island of Kyūshū) with the northern boundary of Ōshū, the historical name for the northern Tōhoku region.[22] The article continues to describe how "in between lies 300 *ri*" that "should be considered the heart and soul [胸服, or kyōfuku, lit: chest and abdomen]" of the country.[23] For the author it is among those periphery regions wherein true Japanese civilization and culture resides because there the men and women possess a high level of "refinement and keen wisdom, enjoying superior virtue

[21] Kevin Doak, *A History of Nationalism in Modern Japan*: *Placing the People*, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006), 194.
[22] Historically, the modern region of Tōhoku overlaps with surprising precision to the pre-modern territory referred to as Ōshu, also sometimes called Ōu, which encompassed the northern-most part of Honshu Island. This name came from a combination of the Japanese kanji character of the two neighboring Tokugawa-era provinces on either side of the Ōu range of mountains: Mutsu province on the Pacific Ocean and Dewa province on the Sea of Japan.
[23] "Ōshūjin to Kyūshūjin," *Nihonjin* 3. No. 4 (January, 1897), 10. Reprinted in *Nihonjin* 14, (1983), 604. *Ri* (里) is a Japanese unit of measure equivalent to approximately 4km or 2.6 mi.

(sagacity)."[24] In direct contrast, the following sentence describes the men and women from the boundaries of the Tokugawa state as being *i-zoku* (異族), a term that translates as beyond the family, meaning a person who has a different blood lineage or tribe. The following pages of the article continue in a similar vein, enumerating a host of distinctions that prove people on the periphery of the state are unique based on their regional positionality within Japanese cartographic space.

Location, in both a metaphorical and literal sense, played a significant role in imagining regional characteristics within early Meiji political and social geographies. "Ōshūjin to Kyūshūjin" is referencing the historical frontier spaces of the Tokugawa state, when Tōhoku (Ōshū) stood at the northernmost periphery of the nation; however, it is difficult to not transfer the long list of enumerated characteristics of those from the historical place "Ōshū" to the modern day subjects residing in "Tōhoku." In fact, the article invokes the term *tōhoku* specifically within its first paragraph when describing the two opposing sides in the Meiji Revolution, those from the northeast (*tōhoku*) and southwest (*nansei*). Whereas in 1897 Kyūshū remained at the southern extremity of what was generally considered to be the Japanese "mainland," Ōshū is overtly identified as a synecdoche for the "northeast" side during the revolution, the land now known as the "Northeast Region (Tōhoku chihō)."[25] Unfortunate for those residing in that territory, being associated with Ōshū is not flattering. To become a cultured gentleman from those periphery areas required a good deal more work and fortitude than for those fortunate enough to live in the interior of Japan.[26]

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[24] Ibid.
[25] Despite the incorporation of Okinawa Prefecture into Japan the Ryukyu Domain (1872), most definitions of the "Naichi" list the four "main" islands of Japan as including only Kyūshū, Shikoku, Honshū, and Hokkaidō.
[26] "Ōshūjin to Kyūshūjin," 604.

By the middle of the Meiji period, paradoxically, growing connections with the outside world intensified the discursive production of Tōhoku peripherality. Indeed, the influx of people from Tokyo, and even from Europe or abroad, prompted a metamorphosis in the image and imagination of this northeastern area of Japan. This area shifted from its old, fluid prefectural identity as "Ōu" into something defined principally in relational terms to the center, as a periphery far removed from the center of the Japanese nation: "Tōhoku," or simply "the Northeast." The geographic marginalization entailed by this shift in name and identity did not emanate from the residents of the regions themselves, but instead from outsiders.

In particular, the idea of "Tōhoku" became reflected and refracted through the perspectives of two categories of so-called outsiders: that of the "insider-outsider," or Japanese living beyond Tōhoku's boundaries, and the "outsider-insider," foreign observers visiting Tōhoku. Both of these groups of outsiders shared a common assumption: they characterize Tōhoku residents as distinct from the rest of Japanese subjects. For example, one foreign observer, Christopher Noss, authored a text for missionaries for the Japanese Reformed (Presbyterian) Church (Nihon Kirisuto Kyokaiwa). In his text he locates Tōhoku within the Japanese state through international comparison. Looking for a similar case study to ground his English speaking readers, Noss turns to the comparative regionalism that is perhaps more familiar; he describes Tōhoku's position within Japan in terms of the physical and figurative location of Scotland within the United Kingdom.[27] His argument is not a purely geographic comparison; he wishes to inform his readers of things that go beyond those accidents of geography, looking toward regionalism's impact on society and cultural temperament.

[27] Within the very first page of his work, *Tohoku, the Scotland of Japan,* he states that "our chief reason for making the comparison is the desire to call attention to the fact that as the Scotch [sic] differ from the English, the people of Tōhoku are considerably different from the Japanese of the Southwest." Christopher Noss, *Tohoku: the Scotland of Japan,* (Philadelphia: Board of Foreign Missions, Reformed Church of the United States, 1918), 15.

> The dialect is peculiar. The older and less educated people of the North use a form of Japanese language that is more or less unintelligible in other parts of the empire. And there is a profound psychological difference between the northerners and the southerners. The great historian Rai Sanyo characterized the northerners as sluggish and boorish. We Americans in contrasting them with the southerners prefer to be more complimentary and call them comparatively steadfast and honest. However that may be, all are agreed that they are somewhat different from the Japanese of the familiar type.[28]

Here Noss clearly articulates the awkward location of Tōhoku within the regionalist discourses of the nineteenth century. Rather than relying solely on his estimation of northerners to paint a picture of Tōhoku as discourse, Noss cites the works of the famous text *Nihon gaishi* (1877) by Japanese historian Rai San'yō to lend credence to his argument. Rai San'yō, whose work became a key component of Restoration discourses that linked Confucian ideas regarding Japanese people's relationship to the Emperor, becomes the authority on the northerners from "inside" Japan in spite of his own positionality "outside" of the Tōhoku region. This subtle inversion of perspective means that for Noss the "inside" perspective, an authentic Japanese perspective, on Tōhoku character declared them to be "sluggish and boorish."

Noss's positionality as an "outsider," or foreigner, also generated some key differences with the "insider" perspective. Noss held a direct interest in explicating and promoting the north to his fellow foreign missionaries to ensure the continued success of future church efforts throughout Tōhoku. Thus, he interposes his belief in the text that Tōhoku residents are "comparatively steadfast and honest."[29] However, his assumptions about what constituted the "familiar type" of Japanese subject nonetheless drew heavily on writers like Rai, which poses the question of where can one locate Tōhoku in modern Japan. While neither Rai, whose writings

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[28] Noss, 15-16. The text Noss is referencing is the *Nihon Gaishi* by Rai San'yō (1780-1832). This unofficial history of Japan, written in the Confucian tradition, became a key component of Restoration discourses shaping the Meiji oligarchy leading up to and directly following the revolution. You can find a copy of Rai San'yō, *Nihon gaishi*, [1877] at HathiTrust http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015022672458.

[29] Noss, 15-16.

inspired original revolutionary ideology, nor Noss, who wrote a decade after the revolution, articulates a definitive normative stereotype of Japanese-ness, one thing remains abundantly clear: whatever may constitute the archetypal Japanese, the residents of Tōhoku were not representative.

Pushing further, the next logical question is what crystalized this Japanese outsider perspective of the northeast during the Meiji period. What was the catalyst for the reinterpretation of the place Ōu, a space occupied by Tokugawa loyalists deeply embedded within the *bakufu* political and intellectual traditions, into a the modern discourse on Tōhoku, the home of an unfamiliar type of Japanese hovering at the edges of Japanese civilization and politics? If one did not have access to a map of Japan, one may guess that, based on spatial politics of the nation-state, Tōhoku must have become a frontier space at the periphery of the new nation-state, a wild territory that needed to be developed and colonized. Indeed, that is the discourse used by state projects over the next decades when discussing the juridical territory of "Tōhoku," characterizing it as a location within the Japanese state while remaining on the edges of the national society. During the first decades of the Meiji period, politicians formed development commissions to investigate how to "reclaim" wasteland in the northeast of Honshū Island, thereby encouraging movement of Japanese settlers from southern and central Japan to help fill in, or develop, the "blank" spaces on the map.

Yet the reality of Tōhoku's cartography does not support this categorization of the region through a kind of frontier-as-periphery analysis. The modern map of Japan, in fact, moved Tōhoku in precisely the opposite direction. Whereas for centuries "Ōu" occupied the physical outer limits of Tokugawa Japan, following the Meiji Revolution of 1868 the central government expanded the boundaries of Japan northward, thereby re-constituting "Tōhoku" not as a

periphery, but as an interior region of the new modern Japanese nation. The map of modern Japan drawn during the first years of Meiji rule defined the *naichi* (内地, inside territory) or the "mainland" of Japan as consisting of four main islands. Honshū Island was the largest, consisting of the site of the new capital Tokyo, the historic home of the emperor Kyoto, and of course, the "northeastern" region that is the subject of this study: Tōhoku. It was no surprise that the islands of Kyūshū and Shikoku became included in Meiji cartographer's rendering of the nation-state as those territories had historically come under the control of the pre-modern government. A fourth island, however, was added into the recognized international boundaries of Japan.[30] When Meiji mapmakers annexed the island of Ezochi directly north of Honshū and renamed it Hokkaidō, they did so largely by fiat.[31] Once recognized by the international community as Japanese soil, it became the northernmost boundary of Japanese sovereignty.

This case of mobile boundaries had innumerable repercussions not just for the political, social, and cultural development of that island, but also for other mainland territories of the Japanese empire farther south. The historian David Howell best expresses the danger of accepting the erroneous Meiji image of Hokkaidō as Japan's eternal frontier, writing:

> The frontier is a product of history. Any discussion of Hokkaido's history that starts with the assumption that it is and always has been Japan's northern frontier necessarily, even if inadvertently, distorts the process by which the island and its people were absorbed into the Japanese polity. The prevailing image of Hokkaido as a frontier was, in effect, superimposed upon the island by the Meiji state and its colonial policies.[32]

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[30] Howell, *Capitalism from Within*, 17.

[31] While it is important, as James Ketelaar asserts, to not "equate the 'declaration' of the Meiji era with its production," the annexation of Hokkaidō cannot be separated that very act of 'declaration.' Following the cartographic appropriation of Hokkaidō by Meiji leaders, active projects of colonization and domination accomplished the incorporation of Ezo-chi into the modern geobody of Japan as Hokkaidō. James Ketelaar, "Hokkaidō Buddhism and the Early Meiji State," in *New Directions in the Study of Meiji Japan,* ed. Helen Hardacre (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 534. Michele Mason makes a similar argument when discussing the suppression of Ainu ethnicity when, by fiat, the "Ainu were abruptly made into Japanese citizens and imperial subjects." Michele M. Mason, *Dominant Narratives of Colonial Hokkaido and Imperial Japan: Envisioning the Periphery of the Modern Nation*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 10.

[32] Howell, *Capitalism from Within*, 17.

For the Meiji state to superimpose a bounded Japanese nation that stopped at the frontier of Hokkaidō, the territory that marked the pre-Meiji frontier had to be elided. In taking on a new physical and intellectual boundary for the Japanese state, these cartographers and politicians unwittingly displaced Tōhoku from its identity as located on Japan's frontier and turned it into an interior region. Twin policies of expansionism into Hokkaidō and domestic redistricting stripped Tōhoku—a region previously at the very tip of the *naichi*—of its previous political prominence as valued defenders of the realm's frontier. The domains of Ōu became that of Tōhoku, enclosed as an internal space and a borderland-in-transition. Ironically, Tōhoku only emerged as a marginal backwater in Japanese national imaginings when it lost its position on the state's periphery.

International Tōhoku

The surprising mobility of seemingly immobile borders, in turn, mirrored the movement of Tōhoku peoples—a double movement that calls into question the idea of regionalism as the study of a bounded notion of space and history, traditions and culture. Indeed, the advent of the modern period and the introduction of individuals' mobility within and without the nation as well as the state, regional identity became something more than just an articulation of local, particularistic societies that remain contained within cartographic boundaries. At the same time that Tōhoku became defined as a region within Meiji Japan, and specifically a region characterized as being decidedly provincial, the statistical and historical record tells a very different story: a story of connections and motion rather than that of isolation. When viewed through the lens of modern migration and diaspora, the history of Tōhoku seems to almost completely contradict the popular stereotype of seclusion and introversion. Rather than leaving behind the culture, traditions, and history of their native places, migrants from the Tōhoku region

discovered in lands far beyond Tōhoku's borders new appreciations of the benefits of maintaining regional solidarity.

At a purely mechanical level, the outward migration of Japanese populations abroad supported and in fact reinforced the importance of emigrant regionalism. From the earliest decades of legal overseas migration, the recruitment of contract laborers both spearheaded by government initiatives and later by private immigration companies tended to recruit migrants from similar regional backgrounds to work and live together while abroad. For example, recruiters from *imingaisha*, or migration companies, tended to work a specific territory from which they would recruit members to work on particular projects.[33] This pattern continued once migrants began to independently migrate, facilitated in part by the way that regional differentiation was reinforced and even institutionalized abroad.

In nations as diverse as Canada and the Philippines, Brazil and the United States, Japanese immigrant enclaves emerged as microcosms of *emigrant* plus *immigrant* ethnicities. Here it is important to distinguish between the English language notion of "immigrant" and "emigrant." In the Japanese language, there is no differentiation between the two, with authors favoring the usage of the single term "imin" to describe both phenomena. And in some ways, the Japanese way would seem to make more sense, as these two different words are describing the same individuals. However, for the purpose of this dissertation, it is critical to understand the English language differentiation that defines "emigrant" as one who leaves a place and "immigrant" as the identity assumed by new arrivals when joining a distant community. An emigrant from Japan is an individual who carries native Japanese regional traditions and histories

[33] Tōhoku imin gōshikaisha gyōmu kankei zakken, Gaimusho record listing: 3.8.2.157; Sendai imin gōshikaisha gyōmu kankei zakken, Gaimusho record listing: 3.8.2.167. For the definitive text in English regarding the imingaisha, see Alan Takeo Moriyama, *Imingaisha: Japanese Emigration Companies and Hawai'i, 1894-1908,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985).

abroad, a person who is not simply "Japanese," but instead *from* a specific somewhere in Japan. An immigrant identity, however, is the identity that is assumed by that same traveler upon entry *to* their new community. The immigrant, upon arriving, is joining a hybrid history that combines popular stereotypes of "the Japanese," as viewed by their new neighbors, with the day-to-day interactions between the migrants who came before them and individual members of the foreign community that have a specific historical lineage based on the social and political context of the receiving nation. Thus, it would appear to be difficult to consider comparing the history and traditions of an immigrant to Canada versus Hawai'i versus Brazil in the same light, as the local context of the immigrant experience was so different in each of these receiving nations. This dissertation, however, does attempt to do just that by tracing not the immigrant experience alone, but instead what could be considered the emigrant-immigrant experience. *Immigrants* from Japan, when setting up new communities abroad, often broke their internal society down based on a common narratives and tropes based on native place, or *emigrant*, regional traits.

This dissertation follows the lives of individuals and groups that, residing far beyond the bounds of their native places, forged a community on foreign soil based on the concept of emigrant regionalism back home in Japan. Labor recruitment abroad took the form of group mobility wherein people from the same native Japanese territory often grouped themselves together and even institutionalized their regional identity through the creation of organizations like *kenjinkai* (self-aid associations which tied membership to the prefecture in Japan from which individuals emigrated) and social networks that encouraged the recruitment of new talent through regionally-inflected chain migration.

An example of how outward migration strengthened the ties between immigrant and their home region can be seen in the case of Oikawa Jinzaburō, natively of Miyagi Japan, who crossed

the Pacific Ocean and started a cannery along the Fraser River in Canada. [34] Oikawa, already a pillar of his community in what is today Tome, Miyagi, decided to stowaway on a ship bound for Canada at the age of 40. Once there, he eventually discovered the wealth of natural resources in the Fraser river, and began a business canning fish and salmon roe. Rather than searching for immigrant laborers at the docks of Vancouver, Oikawa embarked on a project to illegally import a group of men and women from his home community to populate his enterprise abroad. While ultimately his plan proved to only be partially successful, he was able to establish a settlement of Miyagi emigrants in British Columbia that still, over a hundred years later, remembers its Japanese regionalistic roots. In this way mobility and Japanese regionalism served as the foundation for the creation of trans-pacific ties between one small town in Tōhoku and the wider world.

Tōhoku in the Empire

The historical phenomenon that has perhaps generated the most substantial attention to movement and mobility is the advent of empire during the Tokugawa period; yet rarely do scholars consider the implications of this expansionism for the sense of regionality back home.[35] Indeed, the study of empire has long focused on the inherently transnational aspects of unequal power relationships, a phenomenon that highlights the interconnectedness of the Japanese state and nation with territories throughout the Pacific. However, at the same time that the Japanese

[34] See chapter three for a full account of Oikawa and his Canadian venture.
[35] The prewar Japanese empire included but was not limited to the colony of Taiwan (Formosa) in 1895, the annexation of Korea in 1910, mandates over the former German possessions in the south island seas (Nan'yō Gunto) and China's Shandong province in 1919, and the occupation of Manchuria in the 1930s. An early series written in English that deals with both the formal and informal empires of Japan during the prewar and Pacific war period, see the Princeton University press volumes, Ramon Myers and Mark Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Peter Duus, Ramon Myers, and Mark Peattie, eds., *Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Peter Duus, Ramon Myers, and Mark Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

central government was focusing on controlling and expanding the state's reach abroad the act of incorporating new areas into a greater Japan introduced new questions regarding just what it meant to be a Japanese citizen versus subject, to be ethnically versus culturally Japanese. These questions did not only arise in distant colonies or among the populations colonized by Japan. The population relocation that brought cultural and ethnic Japanese to distant lands impacted both the colonized and the colonizer. A number of studies have investigated the impact of colonialism on Japan proper; however, few research the issue of how mobility throughout the colonies could have impacted the development of Japanese domestic regionalism in the *naichi.*[36]

As the imperial, international, and colonial power of Japan following the first Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895) grew, residents within the Meiji state were also consolidating and developing a coherent narrative of domestic identity. Part of this process included not just the imposition and acceptance of a wider, universal nationalism, but also the definition and categorization of particularistic domestic regionalisms. Beginning in the 1910s and 1920s, different scholars began to look into Japan's own historical past to make sense of the joining of widely disparate cultural traditions into a singular understanding of "Japaneseness."[37] At the same time, a regional culture movement emerged, a movement that celebrated regional uniqueness without denying the long standing connections that inherently tie each region to the nation as a whole. *Furusato*, or a notion of native place, grew within Japan proper mediated and filtered by the experiences of Japan's increasingly mobile population.

[36] Studies that focus on the impact of colonialism on Japan have multiplied since the 1990s. Notable early looks at particular colony's relationship with the development of Japan proper can be found in the University of California Press series "Twentieth Century Japan: The Emergence of a World Power" such as Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword: Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998) and Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire*.

[37] This process is detailed in chapter 4.

The population that would settle in the colonies originated from multiple centers in Japan, but the Tōhoku region provided a large number of the total colonists venturing forth to "plant the Japanese flag" for the empire, particularly in the agriculturally rich plains of Manchuria. Within communities that self-affiliated with the Tōhoku region, such as the Miyagi prefectural association in Tokyo, transplants living away from home as well as local intellectuals still residing within Tōhoku's borders began publishing place-oriented periodicals like the journal *Furusato*. These magazines featured not only stories contemplating the importance of native place (*furusato*) in the lives of patriotic Japanese subjects, but also articles pertaining to the wider world of mobile Tōhoku-Japanese living and working throughout the colonies. By the beginning of the 1940s, local chapters of national newspapers such as the Sendai branch of the *Nichinichi Shimbun* held essay contests that asked participants to consider the role of Tōhoku natives within Greater East Asia. Indeed, the imperial mobilities of Tōhoku natives throughout the empire were often imagined through the lens of regional identities, and those regional identities in fact anchored and defined the sense of imperial subjectivity for individuals who called Tōhoku home.

Unbounded Tōhoku: a reappraisal of the region through migration history

This dissertation presents the paradox of the modern Tōhoku region: people, villages, and communities in the region became more mobile and connected to the wider world during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the same time, within national discourses, Tōhoku became increasingly produced as peripheral. My dissertation begins by tracing the earliest production of a newly-created Meiji region of "Tōhoku" through an examination of a process that I designate as "borderland-in-transition."The movement of people out of Tōhoku to the new frontier in Hokkaidō, and the development schemes promoted within Tōhoku's borders itself, fostered

negative articulation of regional identity as isolated, under developed, and peripheral. The second section of the dissertation, consisting of the second and third empirical chapters, reevaluates the internationalism of Tōhoku by investigating the experiences of residents from the northeast as they move well past the borders of Japan to settle in sovereign nations of Canada, the United States, Brazil, and the Philippines. In these distant locales, Tōhoku transplants began to produce their own, more positive, sense of domestic Japanese regionalism that can anchor their new lives abroad to their valued homes in Japan. The third section links Tōhoku to Imperial Japan as a nation and Japan's greater empire as a whole. By looking at how regional culture movements developed in the 1930s and 1940s in national urban centers like Tokyo, tying intellectuals in regional urban centers like Sendai and rural communities throughout Tōhoku to the nation, regionalism became reconnected to nationalism. The active relocation of Tōhoku natives to populate Japan's imperial frontiers in Manchuria and beyond, a relocation that placed those migrants as representative Japanese among a sea of other ethnic subjects of Greater East Asia, tied Tōhoku identity into service of the nation and cemented Tōhoku's role as a region that was also an essential constituent component of Japan. In sum, by exploring three distinct vectors of mobility, this dissertation will help to reveal a deterritorialized regional identity as the essential bond between individuals and the emerging nation-state.

CHAPTER 1

ANNEXING HOKKAIDŌ: NATION- AND REGION-BUILDING ON JAPAN'S FRONTIER

The cartographic shift that incorporated Hokkaidō into the political and social geography of Japan sent rippling repercussions throughout the entire nation-state, but perhaps most important for this study, it became the context for the development of new forms of mobility for natives of the Tōhoku region within Japan. While the new cartographies ultimately do much to explain the discourses emanating from outside the northeast and the re-imagination of Tōhoku in places like Tokyo and Kyoto, the actual processes of historical interaction and transformation on the ground are much more complex. Using the territory of Hokkaidō as an idea and a site of nation-building, this chapter will explore a number of the fundamental underpinnings of what has become considered as modern Tōhoku identity. External forces such as governmental policy and cartographic redistricting gave a new name and form to "Tōhoku," but the boundaries of that regional identity were not contained within the geographic territory alone. The history of the development of modern regionalism in Tōhoku and the settlement of Hokkaidō by Tōhoku natives were mutually constitutive. Tōhoku history, which was at the time just being written/discovered, must take into account not only the events within that borderland-in-transition, but also the experiences of Tōhoku colonists in Hokkaidō history.

Ultimately, Hokkaidō became a hybrid space of sorts, a refuge for those who sought to maintain Tokugawa traditions—and indeed Tōhoku residents—while simultaneously becoming a crucible of modernity. In its haste to impose new centralizing reforms on the majority of the country, the central government in Japan allowed various malcontents and scions of the old Tokugawa families to utilize feudal models of patronage and class hierarchy when settling Hokkaidō. Hokkaidō became a blank slate, a space where those Tokugawa loyalists fleeing

modernization could retreat. Indeed, the government policies in the north often seemed to be backwards-looking and utilized the structures of the Tokugawa era in the name of practicality. Orders emanating from Tokyo intentionally exempted Hokkaidō settlements from a number of modernization measures, actively recruiting individuals and groups from impoverished territories on the mainland to move north. However, Hokkaidō is in fact an example of successful grassroots modernization, a modernization that extended to the south in Tōhoku and poses a marked contrast to the imaginings of traditionalist Confucian historians. A close examination of the settlement history of Hokkaidō reveals that the realities of life on the frontier resulted not in the reproduction of traditional social structures, but rather in the rapid adaptation of many innovations that would be considered "modern," such as a rejection of feudal class boundaries and incorporation of commoners within the Japanese military apparatus.

It was precisely in this crucible, this unintended laboratory for the modernization populated by Tokugawa holdouts, where Tōhoku settlers would discover they shared a unique kind of regional ethnicity. Tracing the role of Tōhoku settlers within three different systems of colonization methodologies—clan patronage, *tondenhei* settlement, and commoner relocation built upon the *dantai* system—this chapter seeks to answer the question: how did the internal colonization of Hokkaidō impact Japanese subjects from the erstwhile periphery of the Edo-era *naichi*, a new borderland-in-transition? Re-centering the story of modern Japan's transition between Tokugawa Japan and Meiji Japan to the north, what many scholars identify as the transition between pre-modern and modern Japan, we can chart how Hokkaidō history became intertwined with notions of Tōhoku regionalism, and how, in Hokkaidō, there emerged a constructed, unbounded Tōhoku identity.

Claiming Hokkaidō: Historical Linkages between Ezochi and the Japanese State

Historians mark the transition from the pre-modern to the modern period as occurring within the middle years of the nineteenth century with the official records dating the political transfer of power from the Tokugawa regime to Meiji oligarchs in 1868. This revolution, done in the name of restoring imperial tradition, marked not only the transition between political rule, but also the advent of great changes that would sweep the nation. The story of the Meiji transition is often related through the lens of powerful elites in either Kyoto or Edo, now known as Tokyo.[1] Alternatively, the narrative often focuses on revolutionaries from the Satsuma and Chōshū area, the men who would form the backbone of the new Meiji oligarchy.[2] However, what would this story look like if viewed from the north? For the Japanese subjects residing in the northeast, two central government policies emerged as the critical factor in the shaping the region that would become known as Tōhoku: the annexation of Hokkaidō and the *shizoku jusan*, or samurai rehabilitation policy.

One of the first acts by the new Meiji government, and perhaps a seemingly insignificant bureaucratic necessity, was to define the boundaries of their political, social, and economic control within the international and domestic community. To do this, they turned to the science of cartography. In 1869, members of the nascent administration asserted Japan's claim to the island of Ezochi when demarcating Japan's formal, internationally recognized northern boundary, and renamed the island Hokkaidō. While Japan had inchoate aspirations toward northern expansionism into Ezochi dating back centuries, in 1869, the Japanese hold on the area

[1] Louise Young, *Beyond the Metropolis: Second Cities and Modern Life in Interwar Japan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).
[2] Edwin O. Reischauer, *Japan: the Story of a Nation*, 4th ed. (New York: Knopf, 1990), 124. Michio Umegaki draws attention to this phenomenon by stressing the influence of the Satchō clique. Michio Umegaki, *After the Restoration: the Beginning of Japan's Modern State* (New York: NYU Press 1988).

only consisted of a limited number of settlements in the southern coast. Thus, these claims amounted to little more than a cartographic construction. In fact, the modern map of Japan as it was drawn following the Meiji Revolution did not represent on-the-ground realities, but instead gave form to a projected, but yet unfulfilled, imaginary of the scope of Japanese political power and control.[3]

Immediately after attaining power, Meiji officials in Tokyo launched an aggressive, and ultimately successful, northern settlement policy in the name of the new emperor. Prompted in part by aggressive European and American programs of imperialism in the Pacific and the fear of Russian encroachment, leaders in Tokyo drew expansive international borders. In August of 1869, a single year after declaring victory over the Shogun's forces, the Junior Clerk Takahashi Kichijirō (高橋吉次郎) warned his superiors in the Colonization Bureau of problems on Japan's shared border with Russia. In it, Takahashi advised the leaders in Tokyo to admonish the Russians for violating Japanese law by ignoring Japanese claims to the island.[4] That month the Colonization Bureau's (Kaitakushi) governor-general, Higashikuze Michitomi **(**東久世通禧**)**, received the following Imperial Rescript outlining the critical role Hokkaidō played within the nation:

> The flourishing condition of the Imperial Power is dependent upon the colonization and exploitation of Hokkaidō. At present there is urgent need of action. We realize the great difficulties of governing this area which lays several hundred *ri* in the Arctic North. On your official tour of duty, do your best to exploit the area and to open the lock on the Northern Gate so that the people may prosper and there may be a firm base for the expansion of Imperial Power. [5]

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[3] David Howell, *Capitalism from Within: Economy, Society, and the State in a Japanese Fishery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 19.
[4] Takahashi Kichijirō, *Kaitakushi Nishi* 4 (September 1869): 9-11.
[5] Yamamoto Sansei, *Nihon Chiri Taikei 10: Hokkaidō, Karafuto hen* (Tokyo: Kaizōsha, 1929), 507. The Meiji Government issued this Imperial Rescript in the name of the Emperor to the Kaitakushi Chokan in 1868. Text also translated in John A. Harrison, *Japan's Northern Frontier: A Preliminary Study in Colonization and Expansion with Special Reference to the Relations of Japan and Russia* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1953), 64. For a

Thus the domination of Hokkaidō became named as a critical linchpin to secure the power of the Imperial state.[6] With this decree, the internal colonization of the island through settlement colonialism began.

The government's desire to populate Hokkaidō stemmed from several practical concerns. Some of these difficulties seem almost universal across multiple empires testing their expansionary power in the late nineteenth century, issues such as securing a physical presence on the new territory and providing protection from competitors and neighboring powers, in this case the Russians. However, some of these practicalities were unique to the evolving Japanese nation. In particular, central planners hoped that Hokkaidō could offer a solution to one of its most pressing domestic problems: how to employ members of the newly obsolete samurai class. The prolonged period of civil unrest following the Meiji revolution when supporters of the old regime formed an independent Republic of Ezo in Hokkaidō, not to mention the Meiji civil war itself, produced the fear that Russia would take advantage of Japan's domestic upheaval and push south.

This fear was not unfounded or without precedent. Under the previous regime, the Japanese *bakufu* and Russian Emperor divided the rights to the islands between the two states with the 1855 Treaty of Shimoda, even though that territory was inhabited by another power, Ainu tribes.[7] While this treaty placed Ezochi (Hokkaidō) under the Japanese sphere of control, it still gave Russia influence on the island: rights to trade in two ports nominally controlled by the

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discussion of the kind of individuals the Emperor identifies those who ideal to relocate, specifically individuals "inheriting a robust pioneer spirit," see Miyagiken kaigai kyōkai, *Kaigai ijū ni hikareta hitobito* (Miyagi: Miyagi-ken Kaigai Kyōkai, 1969), 15.

[6] Yamamoto, *Nihon chiri taikei 10*, 507; Harrison, *Japan's Northern Frontier*, 64.

[7] Harrison, 64.

Japanese, extraterritoriality, and most favored nation status.[8] Additionally, even before this treaty, the two countries had a contentious history regarding these northern islands. For this reason, from the onset of the Meiji period thirteen years later, the specter of Russian expansionism remained a grave concern for leaders in Tokyo. The solution: secure Hokkaidō as a Japanese territory.

New maps also helped secure Meiji rule domestically, codifying structures that could promote centralization. Specifically, the Meiji government redistricted Tokugawa-era provinces and domains from 1871 to 1888 to suit the needs of their proposed system of government, joining all territories under the unified control of the Emperor and ending the confederate structure of the previous *bakuhan* system (幕藩体制). The internal and external reorganization of Japan's administrative geography redefined all territories in the nation, but there were distinct and long-lasting repercussions peculiar to the domains of northern Japan. In particular, the abolition of the class system in 1869, and the dismantling of the domain (*han*) system in 1871, represented a key moment of change.

If this codification of new social and legal structures encouraged centralization, it also produced a potentially destabilizing element: an entire class of samurai and landholders stripped of their status and privileges. When the Japanese state abolished the class system and dismantled the various domains, it set adrift a whole category of elite who no longer had access to perquisites, income, or many traditional outlets for discernible employment.[9] Central planners realized they now must confront a new class of idle and disgruntled *shizoku*. Following the revolution these Meiji leaders issued a proclamation rescinding the restriction on members of the

[8] "Treaty of Commerce, Navigation, and Delimitation between Russia and Japan [Treaty of Shimoda] [sic]," signed by (L/S) C. E. Poutiatine, (L/S) Kawaji-Saemon-no-Jo, (L/S) Tsutsui-Hizen-no-Kami, 26 January 1855, quoted in Harrison, *Japan's Northern Frontier*, 165-170.
[9] Harry Harootunian, "Economic Rehabilitation of the Samurai in the Early Meiji Period," *Journal of Asian Studies* 19, no. 4 (August, 1960): 433-444.

bushi class from participating in other vocations, declaring that "hereafter, samurai and *kazoku*, besides holding governmental positions, may…perform duties in agriculture, industry, and commerce."[10] Most of the unemployed *bushi* around the country were not prepared to live life as commoners and the bureaucratic or military jobs they were trained for remained scarce. This dearth ultimately forced the majority of erstwhile *bushi* to learn new trades. Nation-wide, there was an estimated 400,000 families consisting of roughly 1,800,000 *shizoku*.[11] This number seemed even bigger in places which had disproportionately large number of samurai families.

Among those territories with a big concentration of erstwhile samurai was the one of the most powerful areas of Tōhoku, the lands held by the Date clan of Sendai domain, boasting the third largest number of *shizoku* in the country (roughly 30,000 families).[12] These now former-samurai felt this transition acutely as they engaged in the fierce competition for the small number of bureaucratic jobs within the new Meiji governmental structures.[13] Many in the state identified in these disgruntled elites a potential source of uprisings that could challenge the emperor's legitimacy and authority. To counter these threats, officials advocated creating programs to aid the samurai.[14] Thus, members of the Meiji Counsel of State (*dajōkan*, 太政官) created a *shizoku jusan*, or samurai rehabilitation policy, with one of the cornerstones being the reclamation and development of unused lands in Hokkaidō and even Tōhoku itself. [15]

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[10] Ibid, 434; Nakayama Yasumasa, ed., *Shimbun shūsei Meiji hennenshi* (Tokyo, 1935), vol. I, 417.
[11] Numbers vary widely across sources. This figure is based on the nation-wide statistics in Harootunian, "Economic Rehabilitation of the Samurai," 433.
[12] John Whitney Hall, ed., *Cambridge History of Japan 4: Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 231.
[13] Hall, 231.
[14] Ironically, the final and most violent revolt, the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877, actually came from samurai living in the regions which had supported the Restoration not Tokugawa loyalists.
[15] The policy of *shizoku jusan* in the north was largely implemented through the agricultural resettlement in the northeast, the return of the former samurai class back to the land and reconnecting samurai with their rural roots. The policy was not implemented in the same way everywhere in Japan, however. Elsewhere, this policy was operationalized through other initiatives such as the administration of additional access to higher education, for example scholarships to universities like Tokyo Imperial or the priority hiring of former samurai into the civil service. Kikkawa Hidezō, *Shizuko jusan no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1935).

Merely claiming the island of Ezochi as part of the Japanese territory and proclaiming a number of policies intended to aid former samurai by incentivizing relocation to that island may have eased the path towards settlement of the island, but it did not ensure it. In the beginning, the Kaitakushi (Colonization Bureau) had to combat popular understandings of Hokkaidō in order to aid in the recruitment of pioneers of any class. Asking Japanese families to move north was easy, but successfully enticing them to leave their ancestral communities was no simple proposition. During the Tokugawa period the island had gained the reputation of being an undesirable place to live with an extremely harsh climate and home to so-called savages (the indigenous Ainu).[16] While members of the Matsumae clan, who controlled very northern edge of Honshū Island, also claimed a small amount of land in the name of the Japanese state just north of the Tsugaru straits, the clan's relationship with the state and the status of their territory within the actual Tokugawa polity remained ambiguous.[17] Throughout the Tokugawa era, the *bakufu* maintained a tenuous hold on the Matsumae settlements hugging the southern coast, but they had little influence beyond those contested holdings. Control of the bulk of the land in Hokkaidō remained in the hands of various tribes of the Ainu.

The Ainu, earlier known as the Emishi, were the people to the north who held the lands just beyond the putative control of the Japanese state and Japanese civilization. Over the course of a millennium various rulers of Japan expanded their borders, slowly pushing this indigenous population north and eventually shunting them off of Honshū onto Ezochi, Karafuto, and the Kurile islands. As far back as the earliest works of Japanese history, such as the *Nihongi* from the 8th century, a court historian asserts that the Emperor in the first century C.E. purportedly said: "We hear that the Eastern savages are of a violent disposition…in winter they dwell in

[16] Brett Walker, *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion 1590-1800*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
[17] Ibid, 39-41.

holes, in summer they live in nests. Their clothing consists of furs, and they drink blood." [18] Later texts expand upon these themes, sustaining the myth of the barbarous Ainu (Emishi). By the Meiji period, the entrenched popular perception of the Ainu served to define these peoples as a Japanese "other": violent, uncivilized barbarians.[19] While in truth the Japanese and Ainu generally shared a peaceful coexistence in Ezochi built on trade, there existed periods of sporadic warfare such as the Shakushain War of 1669-1672 and the Menashi-Kunashir Battle of 1789.[20] These military engagements only perpetuated the idea that moving to Hokkaidō was a risky proposition for Japanese colonists.

Aside from the entrenched idea of Hokkaidō as the home of non-Japanese barbarians, many Japanese subjects associated with the island had a reputation as being unsavory characters: people who could not or did not fit in with mainstream Japanese society.[21] The island became a useful place for the government, or *bakufu*, to exile criminals and political dissidents. The institutionalized outcasts who worked in "unclean" professions such as tanners, those who would be called *burakumin* after the Meiji Revolution, moved there to practice their profession and exploit the lucrative fur trade with the Ainu.[22] Even as Buddhist monks attempted to expand their influence in this wild territory, Christians purportedly used the island as a location to escape a society which outlawed their religion. The only other populations on the island, those considered respectable Japanese subjects, were the Matsumae colonists, seasonal workers (*dekasegi*), and

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[18] W.G. Aston, trans., *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, vol. 1, Supplement to the Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1896), 203. Available online at < nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.FIG:004077539>. This text is also known as the *Nihonshoki*.
[19] Richard Siddle, *Race, Resistance, and the Ainu of Japan* (New York: Routledge, 1996).
[20] David Howell, "Ainu Ethnicity and the Boundaries of the Early Modern Japanese State," *Past & Present* 142 (Feb., 1994): 69-93. For more on the Shakushain War, see Walker, *The Conquest of Ainu Lands*, 48-73; and Emori Susumu, *Hokkaidō kinseishi no kenkyū: bakuhan taisei to Ezochi* (Sapporo: Hokkaidō Shuppan Kikaku Sentā, 1982), 183-189. The Kunashiri-Menashi rebellion is summarized well in Kikuchi Isao, *Hoppōshi no naka no kinsei Nihon* (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 1991), 303-313.
[21] Matsuki Satoru, *Kita ni ikiru bushidan* (Hokkaidō: Fuji Purinto Kabushiki Kaisha, 1978).
[22]For a narrative told from the perspective of a master leatherworker, see Matsuki, *Kita ni ikiru bushidan*, ch. 2, pt. 14.

temporarily mobilized soldiers from northeastern Honshū. Other than the members of the Matsumae clan, few mainland settlers including the soldiers sent to live in barrack communities, resided on the island for long periods of time. All in all, the territories acquired the strong reputation as a place of misfits, undesirables, and uncivilized populations.

For the Meiji regime, settlement of Hokkaidō needed to become an attractive option for the displaced *shizoku* class. They turned to history to find some examples of successful relocation. The Tokugawa period did provide a few, albeit uncommon, examples of pioneering settlements by commoners (*heimin*) beyond the bounds of Japanese occupied territories. Notably, most of these groups came from the Ōu region, what is today Tōhoku, thus establishing a historical connection. However, these Tokugawa era emigrant's stories did little to encourage long-term colonization efforts among Meiji era pioneers. For decades, news of the fate of these settlers periodically traveled home to their native communities, although sometimes indirectly, adding to the legends of the dangerous northern lands beyond Japanese civilization. For example, there is a stone tablet in the Hachiman shrine in a village in Miyagi prefecture's Kahoku-machi (now part of Ishinomaki city) dedicated to the local god.[23] This tablet has a long history and was not carved by village residents. Dating back to the mid-seventeenth century, the relic bears an inscription valorizing 55 villagers who moved to a southern island on the Kurile archipelago and was created by those settlers as a way to preserve their cultural ties to Kahoku-machi. Almost 200 years later, in 1808, 22 samurai from Sendai were dispatched to deal with an incident regarding the landing of a Russian ship on territory in Ezochi nominally claimed by the *bakufu.* These men took the initiative to extend their tour of duty beyond their shogunal mandate and explore the north. While doing so, they made a surprising discovery: a stone relic already standing as evidence of a previous Kahoku-machi settlement.

[23] *The Hokkaidō Shimbun* (9/4/1968), reprinted in Matsuki, *Kita ni ikiru bushidan*, 10-11.

The history of this tablet sheds light on two key aspects of the pre-Meiji relationship with the territories north of Honshū Island. The first of these characteristics came from the Tokugawa tradition of declarative map-making, a practice which would form the foundation of later Japanese claims to their historic control of the northern territories. Chiseled on the tablet is a detailed map of the coastline of the neighboring islands, a list all 55 villagers, and a declaration boldly proclaiming that "Kunashiri and Etarofu [two islands in the southern Kuriles] are the territorial property of the Japanese state."[24] Thus, the Kahoku-machi colonists' stone tablet clearly displays how, in the same manner as many contemporaneous imperial powers around the globe, the state assumed that exploration conferred the right to ownership. Mobilizing this localized example of cartographic domination, even 100 years after the incorporation of Hokkaidō into Japan's juridical boundaries, a *Hokkaidō Shimbun* article proudly relates this incident as validation for the 1868 annexation of the northern islands. The article further locates Ezochi as an early-modern nether region between Russia and Japan: a place to explore and defend, a place that must be kept out of the hands of foreign powers, but not necessarily a place to settle at that time.[25] With the continued dispute between Japan and Russia over the rights to Sakhalin Island and the Kuriles, the stakes for historical claims to the region had real modern importance.

For the Meiji planners, unfortunately, this stone also provides a tangible example of the transmission of knowledge between seemingly isolated pre-modern communities. When these Sendai-han warriors returned to their domain in the first decade of the nineteenth century, they presented the tablet to the Kahoku-machi Hachiman shrine, where it remains today. Beyond this example of settlers who returned home from Ezochi to Ōu, seasonal laborers working the

[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.

northern fisheries, as well as networks between Matsumae and Ōu merchants, provided reliable first- and second-hand narratives of the islands. Thus even when the *bakufu* issued an injunction to develop to powerful clans in Ōu a protective perimeter along the shores of Hokkaidō, those clans showed little interest in developing their new holdings.[26] Instead, the experiences of all of these local informants did little more than perpetuate the categorization of the northern territories as undesirable, personal, concrete examples of Tokugawa-era failures which did little to aid the early Meiji endeavors to claim the island physically as well as cartographically. Yet, ironically, the Meiji government did accomplish the goal of colonizing Hokkaidō by mobilizing pioneers from precisely those domains where knowledge of the inhospitableness of Hokkaidō was greatest: the Tōhoku region.

Settling Hokkaidō: Tōhoku families move north

Perhaps the single greatest conjunction of factors impelling families to ignore the negative image of Hokkaidō as a place for family relocation came from the harmful impacts of Meiji modernization project. Poor farmers relocated north to flee an array of social, political, and economic ills. Among these ills were the crushing poverty caused by increasing subdivisions of arable land in the mainland; natural disasters resulting in reduced crop yields and causing large-scale periods of famine; Matsukata deflation which beggared many farming communities; and rising land taxes that resulted in a growing practice of tenant farming and absentee landlordism.[27] Multiple push-factors encouraged migrants from the former territories of Ōu to move north, and

[26] Excellent examples of clans granted power in Ezochi who displayed lackluster interest in developing it included such powerful northern *daimyō* as those in Aizu, Shōnai, and Sendai domains. *The Hokkaidō Shimbun* (9/4/1968).
[27] In a recent article, Steven J. Ericson argues that while the "perfect storm" of natural disasters abroad and Matsukata's financial policies did not result in the "dissolution" of the farming class, he does identify how rural communities suffered from widespread indebtedness, a rise in tenant farming. Steven J. Ericson, "The 'Matsukata Deflation' Reconsidered: Financial Stabilization and Japanese Exports in a Global Depression, 1881-85," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 40, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 12-16.

patterns of group and chain migration at a village, prefectural, and regional level formed a common strategy of populating the island.

By the 1870s, commoners and *shizoku* (those formerly of the warrior class) from northeastern Japan moved north under the auspices of both individual initiative and active governmental encouragement. During the first decades of the Meiji emperor's rule, the majority of settlers in Hokkaidō came from a single region, the northeast area now known as the Tōhoku region. A publication from *Population Index* in 1946 provides aggregated figures from official publications such as registration compilations, censuses, and statistical yearbooks; at the time of the Revolution, the author shows, Hokkaidō was inhabited by only 60,000 Japanese.[28] However, between the Meiji Revolution and the outset of the Pacific War (1868-1932), the population of ethnic Japanese on that island expanded exponentially to 3.3 million people.[29] These colonists overwhelmingly came from the two northernmost areas of Tokugawa Japan's polity, identified in that 1940s document as the "more backward and poverty-stricken areas" of Honshū island, the former borderland region of Tōhoku and some neighboring prefectures in the Hokuriku area along the Japan Sea.[30] Based on the statistics from a 1930 governmental census, the birthplace of about 50% migrants came from Tōhoku, with another 25% hailing from the neighboring region of Hokuriku.[31] Why, then, did so many people relocate from Japan's former frontier region to the state's new frontier in Hokkaidō?

The programs to incentivize the internal colonization of Hokkaidō overlapped with the interests of Tōhoku residents themselves. Migration provided a broad cross-section of Tōhoku

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[28] "Hokkaidō and Karafuto: Japan's Internal Frontier," *Population Index* 12, no. 1, (January 1946): 7.
[29] Iwama Kazuto, "Cultivation of Field Crops," in *Agriculture in Hokkaidō,* ed. Iwama Kazuto, 2nd ed. (Sapporo: Hokkaidō University, 2009). Figures date from 1869 to 1936.
[30] "Hokkaidō and Karafuto," 10.
[31] Additionally, according to this 1930 census, from the total 979,000 migrants, 246 thousand (25%) came from Hokuriku and 73 thousand migrated from Shikoku. "Hokkaidō and Karafuto," 10.

colonists with the opportunity to escape these depravations and flee to the physical and political periphery of the Meiji state. The Edo-era elite also moved north, seeking refuge from Meiji modernization policies which stripped them of their hereditary positions, attempting, and for a time succeeding in reclaiming a measure of their pre-Meiji feudal powers.

The cartographic claim to Hokkaidō served as a convenient buffer between the Meiji state and foreign threats even as it provided an outlet for Japanese subjects who were on the losing side of Meiji political changes. Ultimately, just as maps artificially unite lands through a process of division, separating what is "ours" from what is "yours," they also created new and lasting regional identities.[32] What the Meiji powers did when they included Hokkaidō in the map of Japan was not only claim it for the nation, but also transform the former borderland of Tōhoku into an internal colony.[33]

Patronage and codependence in Iburi

This chapter has discussed the Tokugawa to Meiji transition from a cartographic point of view, a top-down and outside-in perspective of how the politics of map making can reshape and redefine social categories of belonging. However, for every top-down story there is at least one that can be told in the opposite direction. Just as the appropriation and settlement of Hokkaidō

[32] Regarding politically motivated cartographic definitions in Japan's north, see Yonechi Fumi and Imaizumu Yoshikuni, "Chimei 'Sanriku chihō' no kigen ni kansuru chiri gakuteki narabini shakai gakuteki mondai," *Iwate daigaku kyōikugakubu kenkyū nenpō* (Iwate: Iwate University Department of Education, 1994): 131-144; David Howell, *Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); For a broader view of border production in the Tokugawa and Meiji periods, see Kären Wigen, *A Malleable Map: Geographies of Restoration in Central Japan, 1600-1912*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Katō Eiichi, Kitajima Manji, and Fukaya Katsumi, eds., *Bakuhansei kokka to iiki, ikoku* (Tokyo: Azekura shobō, 1989); Neil Waters, *Japan's Local Pragmatists: The Transition from Bakumatsu to Meiji in the Kawasaki Region (*Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); Ronald P. Toby, "Mind Maps and Land Maps " in *Image and Identity: Rethinking Japanese Cultural History*, ed. Jeffery Hanes and Hidetoshi Yamaji (Kobe: Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration, 2004); Kären Wigen, "The Geographic Imagination in Early Modern Japanese History: Retrospect and Prospect," *Journal of Asian Studies* 51, no. 1 (1992): 3-29.

[33] Okada Tomohiro, *Nihon shihon shugi to nōson kaihatsu* (Kyoto: Hōritsu Bunkasha, 1989); Akasaka Norio, Ogumi Eiji, and Yamauchi Akemi, *"Tōhoku" saisei* (Tokyo: Isuto Puresu, 2011), 15; Nathan Hopson, "Systems of Irresponsibility and Japan's Internal Colony," *Asia-Pacific Journal* 11, issue 52, no. 2 (2013).

benefitted the revolutionary government by granting them a broader buffer zone between other international powers and increasing the amount of territory controlled by the nation, the settlement of Hokkaidō also provided individuals from Tōhoku with an opportunity to escape the wave of changes sweeping their nation. This section will discuss an early example of productive settlement in Hokkaidō by a local leader, a former feudal lord who utilized the government settlement initiative to create new ties of loyalty between former subjects through the modern practice of patronage.

During the first years of Meiji rule, some Tōhoku samurai families and their retainers decided that it would be in their best interest to try to relocate north. Between 1869 and 1873, the official development plans for the island shifted a dizzying number of times, but the main objectives of the governmentt included establishing the Colonization Bureau (Kaitakushi), constructing a headquarters in Sapporo, passing of regulations to protect migrants, and inviting consultants to give advice on colonization policies.[34] By no means did these consultants provide a singular vision of what role Hokkaidō could or should serve within the Japanese state; however, the Kaitakushi began to promote a series of policies intended to increase migration and settlement of the island by Japanese natives. While all of these policies were intended to have the same result, they stemmed from wildly different understanding of the merit and value of Hokkaidō within the empire.

The idea that the best usage of the island was to create a stable presence of settler colonists, figuratively planting the blood of Japanese citizens into Hokkaidō's soil, found support

[34] Yamamura Etsuo and Lai Yin Shem, "Keikakuteki jinkōidō to jinkōbunpu ni okeru tochikaihatsu ni kansuru kenkyū," ["A Study on Land Development Policies in Planned Migration and Population Distribution: A Comparative Analysis of Hokkaidō and Malaysia,"] *Environmental Science* 5, no. 2 (1983): 157. http://hdl.handle.net/2115/37134. Another excellent text which describes the administrative policy of Hokkaidō during the Kaitakushi years is the dissertation by David Anthony, "Administration of Hokkaidō under Kuroda Kiyotaka – 1870-1882: An Early Example of Japanese-American Cooperation" (PhD. diss., Yale University, 1951).

within the Kaitakushi. As a result, the Kaitakushi began an initiative to recruit and subsidize agricultural colonists, beginning with farmers in places like Sadaka (now Yamagata), and placed the distribution of land under the control of a Colonization Bureau officials.[35] Other savvy members of the new political order, the nascent Meiji regime, saw value in Hokkaidō as a place to effectively exile discontents, in this case *bakufu* loyalists, that required only minimal incentivization on the part of the government. In November, 1869, the royalist government allowed a number of the Admiral Enomoto's defeated *bakufu* troops to stay in Hokkaidō. Additionally, the *dajōkan* sent a number of samurai families from Ōu to Hokkaidō, removing them as a threat to the mainland government. In total, this program increased the population of Hokkaidō by another twelve thousand, as these former soldiers became the majority group in and around Sapporo.[36]

While the government subsidized those programs for relocation, those initiatives did not mark the only means by which Japanese subjects could settle Hokkaidō. Instead, they reveal the policies and actions for which the central government officials could garner the most support. At the same time, unsubsidized and largely directed settlement in Hokkaidō expanded exponentially even though the Kaitakushi did not provide funds for just every commoner or samurai who volunteered to move north. As early as 1869, requests for voluntary relocation of families and villages swamped the offices of the Colonization Bureau as fishermen, farmers, and samurai clans clambered to gain rights to land and resources at the edges of Meiji state control.[37]

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[35] Nagai Hideo and Ōba Yukio, *Hokkaidō no hyakunen* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1999), 59.
[36] Anthony, "Administration of Hokkaidō," 61. Anthony also notes that while there were restrictions on these dissidents, the government also provided them direct aid. For example, these families received provisions for three years as well as small land grants. In exchange, they had to sign the local census registers and pay taxes, affording the Kaitakushi a level of oversight on these former soldiers.
[37] Yamamoto Sansei, *Nihon chiri taikei* 10 (Tokyo: Kaizōsha, 1929), 507.

This section will examine the impact of individuals and groups who moved with the blessing, but without the direct support of, the central government. Succeeding where government spearheaded initiatives failed, the story of early, unfunded clan settlement in Hokkaidō reveals a case where private interests shaped the future settlement patterns in Hokkaidō. The lack of financial support for voluntary relocation to Hokkaidō provided the catalyst for the practice of group migration--a system of patronage--sponsored by individual clan leaders.

Sendai-han far outstripped all other domains nation-wide in documented, formal samurai group relocation during the first four years of Meiji rule. Taking advantage of Dajōkan Order no. 660, issued on July 22, 1869, clans and samurai groups began to request grants of land.[38] Between 1869 and 1871, the Meiji government divided the northern territory between twenty-six clans, eight samurai groups, one municipality (Tokyō), one government ministry (the Department of Military Affairs), and two temples.[39] Focusing on the samurai groups, the plurality of land grants went to those from the Tōhoku region. Over the course of the 1870s, a total of sixteen groups received permission to move north, with half of these cases occurring between 1871 and 1872 alone. The recipients of every one of those lands in the early years of colonization were branch families from a single clan, the Date clan from Japan's northeast.[40] It is through a close inspection of cases such as those of Sendai-han lords that one can illuminate the mechanics behind the creation of a modern, unofficial patronage system.

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[38] Yasuda Taijiro, *Hokkaidō imin seisaku shi* (Tokyo: Seikatsusha, 1941), 47-8.
[39] Hokkaidō Takushokubu, *Hokkaidō iminshi* (Sapporo: Hokkaidō-chō Takushokubu ,1934); Also referenced in Anthony, "Administration of Hokkaidō," 62.
[40] This is based on the combination of numbers from Anthony, "Administration of Hokkaidō," 62 and David Calman, *The Nature and Origins of Japanese Imperialism*: *A Reinterpretation of the Great Crisis of 1873* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 246.

Sendai-han samurai settlements stand as exemplary cases of long-lasting colonies founded during this early system: Date Kunishige, Date Kuninao, Katakura Kuninori (片倉 邦憲), and Ishikawa Kunimitsu. According to the official local history of Date City (in the Usu district of Iburi, Hokkaidō), in 1869, the Usu district became divided into three large territories each to be held by branch families of the Date-clan.[41] The question, therefore, becomes who did these branch families recruit to move north with them? What can the makeup of those invited to share in a new life in Hokkaidō with former feudal lords of the Date clan tell us about the intentions of erstwhile *bushi* during a volatile transition where all of their traditional rights and privileges were being stripped of them by a modernizing Meiji central state?

The case of Katakura Kuninori clearly displays a common characteristic in how the Date clan branch families recruited to join them into quasi exile in the new north. When Katakura Kuninori relocated to his allotted acres near Horobetsu in Hokkaidō, he did not do so alone. Katakura invited 300 of his retainers, vassals, and commoners from his lands in Sendai-han to accompany him.[42] Date-clan samurai from Sendai-han thus provide us with a clear picture of how some of the lords in the lands that would become administratively Tōhoku responded to the Meiji transition. They populated their territories through a system of patronage, recruiting large numbers of retainers and commoners from their hereditary lands. Because each pioneering family relied on the clan to provide them with the necessary resources to survive in Hokkaidō's hostile environment, a level of indebtedness carried their historical reliance on the local clan

[41] Date shishi hensan linkai, *Date-shi shi* (Date-shi, Hokkaidō: Date-shi, 1994), 254.
[42] For an excellent summary of Katakura Kuninori's settlement in Horobetsu with regards to the impact on the Ainu population and local education systems, see Christopher Frey, "Horobetsu in the 1870s: Japanese Settlement and the Church Missionary Society," *Ainu Schools and Education Policy in Nineteenth-century Hokkaidō, Japan* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2007): 106-149.

support onto Hokkaidō's soil.[43] Effectively, these Sendai-han branch families reestablished their fiefs in the new frontier at the fringes of Meiji control.

Ironically, part of what led the formerly politically influential families of the Date clan to relocate north emanated from the Meiji-era innovations created to discourage continued loyalty between feudal lords and their retainers. Starting in 1869 many daimyō lost entire swaths of their hereditary land and income due to Meiji government redistricting. Newly designated boundaries significantly slashed tax revenue claimed by Tōhoku families. In Sendai, the Date clan's official tax revenue went from 620,000 to 280,000 *koku*.[44] Similarly, Aizu domain's total territory became divided so that, while the domain had previously had a revenue of 230,000 *koku*, the newly sectioned off area of Tonami-han was apportioned just 30,000.[45] This change disproportionately affected fiefs which did not submit to imperial rule before the Ueno Battle of July 4, 1868. This effectively meant an end to the stratified hereditary stipend system sooner than in most of western Japan; financial hardships imposed in that fief meant that all retainers, regardless of status, received rice to support only the bare minimum of living standards.[46] Without a doubt, domains loyal to the Shogun during the Boshin War suffered greater reductions of hereditary stipends than other fiefs.

Thus the Meiji policies of modernization, acutely felt in much of Tōhoku, provided one significant push factor for outmigration to Hokkaidō. Indeed, while the popular vision of life in

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[43] This was the recommendation of a special committee on the "Yesso Problem" which included a number of leading figures in the Meiji Government such as Ōkubo Toshimichi, Hirosawa Heisuke, Yuri Kimimasa, and Inoue Iwami.

[44] Yasuzawa Shūichi and Takagi Misao, *Sendai-han Meiji sannen Hokkaidō ijū shizoku narabini kyū kerai no jinkō bunseki,* Miyagi Kōbunshokan publication: 1-12 (Yasuzawa Shūichi, 2009). Original document located in Miyagi Kōbunshokan , M3-0018A. A *koku* (石) is the standard unit of measurement of rice and defined the han's tax revenue. One koku equals 150kg. It is important to note that these numbers were rarely revised and, thus, did not reflect annual domainal yields. A further challenge for bureaucrats in altering the real *kokudaka* in Tōhoku stemmed from the reality that the climate did not allow for the production of actual rice.

[45] Enomoto Morie, *Hokkaidō kaitaku seishin no keisei* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1976), 22.

[46] For an excellent, in-depth analysis of the economic history of Meiji modernization policies see Nakamura Satoru, *National Unification and Land Reform in the Modernization Process of Japan* (2) (Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1985).

Hokkaidō was negative, it did not deter residents of Ōu, particularly families in the former domains of Aizu, Sendai, Shōnai, and Akita. After the official announcement of the opening of Hokkaidō to colonists in 1869, a significant proportion of requests received came from *shizoku* and commoners from Tōhoku.[47] Perhaps part of this response came from the fact that in 1869 the government-partitioned lands in Hokkaidō were to be administered by those clans, independent of Meiji government oversight.[48] For daimyo in the north like Sendai and Aizu, domains which had already suffered significant territorial losses, expansion of their domainal possessions through the inclusion of land in Hokkaidō was extremely attractive. Just like during the final years of the Meiji Ishin, when the loyalists in the Northern Alliance from Aizu and Sendai joined the movement to create the independent Republic of Ezo, Hokkaidō became a place to retreat from Meiji reforms threatening their hereditary lands.

One such colony, built under the aegis of the Date clan in Hokkaidō's Usu district, can trace its origins as reaction to early Meiji modernization reforms. Hoping to offset the blow to the fief finances caused by Meiji reforms, Tamura Kenin (田村顕允[49]), a chief retainer to the Watari-Date family, advised that it would be in the best interest for the clan if they petitioned the new government for permission to develop colonies in Hokkaidō. Tamura, who went to Edo to study at the highest institution of learning during the Tokugawa period (the *Syoheikō*) when he was 22, had connections with many important men in both old *bakufu* and in the new government. Based on what he saw happening in Tokyō, he sent a letter urging his lord Date

[47] "Ezochi kaitaku shigansha boshū," (July, 1869) Archival Reference M02-0025. For reproduction of the decree see Yasuzawa and Takagi, *Sendai-han Meiji san'nen Hokkaidō ijū shizoku*.
[48] Anthony, "Administration of Hokkaidō," 27.
[49] Tamura Kenin (田村顕允), also known as Tokiwa Shinkuro (常盤新九郎). For an excellent biographical sketch of Tamura, see Ōuchi Kojō, *Usu abuta shi* (Date-shi, Hokkaidō: Ikariseiemon, 1911), 5-10.

Kunishige (伊達邦成) [50] of the Watari-Date clan to think about the position of his fief under the new governmental system. The clan faced the erosion of its tax income from 24,350 koku down to 58 koku.[51] In it he reveals his vision regarding how to preserve the clan in the face of the changes he sees coming under Meiji leadership: "there are foreign threats [to the nation] such as Russia…perhaps we should migrate to Ezochi, as we are all former retainers, to fulfill our duty to defend the north and develop it."[52] Date Kunishige saw the wisdom in this, and sent word to Tamura that he could move forward with his plan.

In the autumn of 1869, Kunishige received word from Tamura that he should come to the capital and appear before a dajōkan committee. There, on August 23rd, he presented the formal petition to the panel for land in Hidaku-kuni, near the districts of Niikappu and Saru. Explaining that the land already granted to the Date clan had been subdivided multiple times, Kunishige expressed his desire to survey additional lands in Hokkaidō and hold those territories in his own name.[53] These districts had desirable topography with excellent tracts of flat land eminently suitable for development. To the dismay of both Tamura and Kunishige, their appeal was denied. However, that didn't mean that the *dajōkan* did not grant any land to the Watari-Date clan that year. Two days after the official rejection of their petition regarding the outposts of Niikappu and Saru, Date Kunishige received another shocking official notification: the central government had decided to assign Date Kunishige control of Usu-gun in Iburi domain, just down the coast.[54] This

[50] Date Kunishige (1841-1904) was the leader of the Watari-Date clan, a branch family of the Sendai-han Date family. He is commonly referred to by his posthumous name of Date Kunishige; however, he also known as Date Tōgorō (伊達藤五郎), which is the name on official petitions regarding Hokkaidō and the bill of sale of Watari Castle. For the purpose of this chapter, I will use the reading standard in archival collections and bibliographical dictionaries: Date Kunishige.
[51] Enomoto, *Hokkaidō kaitaku*, 22.
[52] Date shishi hensan linkai, *Date-shi shi*, 236.
[53] Date Tōgorō, *Kaitakushi nishi*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Harimaya Kiemon, August 1869): 2-4. Parts reproduced in Yokoyama Tsutomu, *Sakuhoku ni idomu: Date shizoku no ijū to kaitaku (*Date-shi: Date-shi, 1980), 23.
[54] This document is reprinted in Date shishi hensan linkai, *Date-shi shi*, 237.

partition of land surrounded Usu Mountain, a substantial portion of which was covered in mountains and volcanic rock unsuitable for farming.[55]

During the Tokugawa period, the region had been marked as a region not worth early colonization attempts because of the terrain. Iburi-kuni occupied a significant section of the southern coastline abutting what some government advisors called "Volcano Bay" (today Uchiura Bay), and it held the dubious distinction of being home to three of Hokkaido's most of the active volcanoes.[56] In fact, in March 1867, just two years before, one of those Iburi volcanoes, Mt. Tarumai, had erupted.[57] Finally, this province gathered one of the largest populations of Ainu on the island. In contrast, the requested district such as Niikappu had excellent land for colonies, including some places which held a small Sendai-han population dating from the Tokugawa period. Advisors to the Kaitakushi, such as Horace Capron, reported in 1875 that the settlement of Niikappu had great potential to become "highly profitable," standing as a "model of neatness and order, and present pleasing contrasts to the other habitations along this desolate coast."[58] Unfortunately, by that time, the control had passed out of the Date clan's hands.[59] The Date family got control of rocky Usu while petitioners from *han* that actively supported the Emperor, such as those from Kōchi domain, received large swaths of flat Hidaka province.

In some ways, the denial of the request to control their previous holdings may not have shocked the Watari-Date samurai. Both Tamura and Kunishige understood that they had lost the

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[55] Yokoyama, *Sakuhoku ni idomu*, 24.
[56] Benjamin Smith Lyman, "Preliminary Report on the First Season's Work of the Geological Survey of Yesso," (Tokei: Kaitakushi, 1874) reprinted in Horace Capron, *Reports and Official Letters to the Kaitakushi* (Tokei: Kaitakushi, 1875), 131. Of the other active volcanoes, two straddled "Volcano Bay" in Oshima [Komagatake and Esan]. The final mentioned in the report was near Iwanai in Shiribeshi.
[57] Benjamin Smith Lyman, "Preliminary Report on the First Season's Work of the Geological Survey of Yesso," (Tokei: Kaitakushi, 1874) reprinted in Capron, *Reports and Official Letters*, 131.
[58] Commissioner Capron to Governor Kuroda, Sept. 29th, 1874, in Capron, *Reports and Official Letters*, 272.
[59] In 1873, this territory was set aside as an Imperial estate and home to an Imperial Ranch. Niikappu is also notable for the relocation of a population of Ainu to serve as laborers from 1888-1916.

revolution, and expected there to be retribution by the government. According to *Date-chō shi* and *Shinkō Date-chō shi,* what astonished both men was that following that denial the government did grant Kunishige Date control of any land; they "were just utterly amazed by this unexpected result."[60] From the beginning, Tamura saw Hokkaidō as an opportunity to prove to the Meiji government of their value. His first appeal for land in Hokkaidō had been written the same month as the formal defeat of the Northern Alliance's resistance to Meiji rule. A fundamental component of his argument to Kunishige stated that "with [migrating to Hokkaidō], we can wipe away the dishonor of [being] an enemy of the emperor."[61] Of course, it is difficult to know how much weight that reasoning had when compared to the other two parts of his position, that a colony in Hokkaidō would "open a new way of life for 7,800 former lords and retainers" and offset the reduction in clan wealth following Meiji financial reforms.[62] Thus, the government rejecting any request by a Sendai-han branch family so soon after the conflict may not have been a surprise.

The philosophy behind the distribution of land stands at the heart of why many colonies from this time period soon floundered. As seen in the case of Usu, part of the difficulties in the initial years of settlement stemmed from a flawed understanding of the appropriate way to dispense arable land. The common wisdom among officials was that "if the more desirable lands are first occupied it would be difficult to induce the settlement of those more remote and inaccessible." [63] The American advisor to the Kaitakushi, Horace Capron, identified the practice of distributing this kind of land to colonists as dangerous in a report filed after an 1873 tour of the south-eastern coast of Hokkaidō:

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[60] *Date-shi shi*, 237. Citing Shigeru Watanabe, Shin'ichirō, Takakura; Yoshishige Hayashi, *Shinkō Date chōshi* (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1972) and *Date chōshi* (Fukushima, Date-machi: 1985).
[61] *Date-shi shi*, 236.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Capron, *Reports and official letters*, 276.

> Nothing could be more detrimental to the work of the Kaitakushi than the reports which must go back from these people to their friends and relatives in other parts of Japan. If settlement had been commenced nearer the coast upon lands more elevated and accessible, but with a soil equally rich, the results would, beyond a doubt, be encouraging, instead of demoralizing and disheartening, as at present. The result of the present policy is depicted in the countenances and is evident in the condition of the settlers, and in the absence of everything which could make home comfortable or a people happy. [64]

Furthermore, he argued that the drive to populate the interior of Hokkaidō was "a great mistake" which "must operate to retard immigration to Yesso."[65] In sum, Capron strongly urged Kuroda to suspend this policy on the grounds that news of the rough conditions and the general discomfort of the colonists would be reported home and discourage future settlement. Ultimately, Kuroda would change this policy; however, it would be too late for communities like those in Usu-gun.

There is no doubt that the politics of revenge informed the partitioning of Hokkaidō. The central government consisted of the triumphant revolutionaries from Satsuma and Chōshū, two domains virulently supportive of the emperor that took a significant role in masterminding the Meiji coup. With the memory of the Boshin War still fresh, as the war had ended only months before, many in power had little-to-no desire to grant any member of the Date family productive land in Hokkaidō.[66] Indeed, some members of the *dajōkan* argued against it. Individuals like Usui Tatsuyuki of the Kaitakushi believed that land should not be awarded to "traitors to the imperial cause" and railed against the final land decision to partition Usu off into Tōgorō's care.[67] Usui further declared that the request itself was "exceedingly objectionable" and that these former rebels "did not know their place."[68] Similarly, Matsuura Takeshiro, the man

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[64] Ibid, 276-7.
[65] Ibid, 276.
[66] Yokoyama, *Sakuhoku ni idomu*, 24.
[67] Usui Tatsuyuki, an advocate for the sonnō jōi movement, worked for the Kaitakushi following the Meiji Restoration. Later, in 1878, he became a judge in the district court of Akita. Yokoyama, *Sakuhoku ni idomu*, 24.
[68] Ibid.

responsible for renaming Ezochi as "Hokkaidō," stated that "it should be noted that [we] are distributing excellent land like Usu-gun to rebels of the imperial cause."[69] In sum, there existed a vocal, if ultimately unsuccessful, faction who saw danger in transferring controlling power to the defeated Shogunal loyalists. The subtext of their objections also reveal their belief in the potential of developing Hokkaidō; any land, even the rocky territory in Iburi, could provide a stepping stone to great wealth and power to *shizoku* brave enough to claim it.

An alternate vision of Hokkaidō's value in insuring the stability of the empire was also an outgrowth of the legacy of the Boshin war. This majority perceived the benefit to relocating samurai from the northeast of Japan as a way to disrupt possible future revolutions, displace *shizoku* as a way to sever ties to their former fiefs, and physically as well as politically relegate the rebels to the outskirts of governmental power. In an 1873 memoranda Kuroda Kiyotaka, the Minister of Colonization, called for the establishment of a soldier-settler, or *tondenhei,* program as a catalyst to promote *shizoku* relocation north. In the official decree, Kuroda enumerated that "samurai from Aomori, Miyagi, Sakata…will be recruited as *tondenhei*," as well as *shizoku* from the former Matsumae domain: all areas loyal to the Shogun during the Boshin War.[70] Ironically, much like the granting of land to the Date clan in 1869, this call was specifically aimed at relocating untrustworthy *bushi*. In that way, "the sovereign achieves a bulwark of the empire's northern gate, and disgraced Date clan can atone for their previous offenses."[71] Fundamentally, these two factions within the government display the two competing ideas of the value of Hokkaidō within the new state. For Takeshiro, the northern island represented large tracts of

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[69] Matsuura Takeshiro [松浦武四郎判官], quoted in Yokoyama, *Sakuhoku ni idomu*, 24. At the time, Matsuura Takeshiro was an assistant district officer.

[70] Sakata 酒田県 was a prefecture formed in 1869 carved out of Shōnai (today Yamagata prefecture). Matsushita Yoshio, *Kindai Nihon gunjishi* (Tokyo: Kigensha, 1941): 190-91. This section of the decree is also cited in Harootunian, "Economic Rehabilitation of the Samurai," 139, fn 25.

[71] Enomoto, *Hokkaidō kaitaku*, 23.

desirable land and the path to securing great wealth. In contrast, Kuroda saw it as a buffer zone between the nation and the Russian threat as well as a place to dispose of impoverished *shizoku* with questionable loyalty to the government.

Regardless of the parallax understandings of Hokkaidō's worth by royalists, Kunishige indeed gained control of Usu. Promptly setting out to survey his new holding he identified land that could support a settlement along the coast. Kunishige then began to recruit retainers and commoners from Watari in earnest to develop lands which are still known today as Date-shi (伊達市). While in later years Date-shi would be touted as an example of success, at times the challenges of sustaining the settlement seemed insurmountable. Difficult living conditions, a harsh climate that undermined the efficacy of widely practiced agricultural method on Japan's other islands, disease, and periods of famine all plagued the settlement.[72] Basically, life there did not mirror life in their home villages and the limited communication with their native place all took a tremendous toll on the pioneers.

The result of these hardships provided practical problems for patrons and required great sacrifices on the part of their founding families. In September 1869, Kunishige had promised the government that he would both gladly recruit people from his *han* to move to Hokkaidō and develop the land at his expense.[73] Unfortunately, the proposition of moving north placed a great financial burden on the settlement's head families, as related in a June 1870 letter from Kunishige to the central government. In it he cited financial difficulties and reduced crop production as the reason he could not expand migration at the levels initially expected.[74] As mentioned above, unlike settlers recruited under the direct auspices of the Kaitakushi, it would

[72] Ōuchi, *Usu abuta shi*, 70-80.
[73] Date Tōgorō, *Kaitakushi nishi* 3 (Tokyo: Harimaya Kiemon, August 1869): 2-4. Also reprinted and transcribed into modern Japanese in Yokoyama, *Sakuhoku ni idomu*, 23.
[74] Miyagi Kōbunshokan: M03-0003. Yasuzawa and Takagi, *Sendai-han Meiji san'nen Hokkaidō ijū shizoku*.

only be three years later that the government would subsidize private groups subsidies as well as housing, food, and other tools. Being denied sufficient aid to keep his colony afloat, Kunishige decided to sell his hereditary clan castle, the symbol and seat of bushi power during the pre-Meiji era.[75] These challenges informed the decision of both Kunishige and Tamura to wait to bring their families from Watari and Tokyō until the third wave of migration in 1871.[76] By that time the fortunes of the Watari-Date clan were indelibly tied to the success or failure of the Usu project, who declared that "we are staking everything on this."[77]

Of course, the Usu-gun settlement also confronted these challenges, yet part of the secret to the success of agricultural communities in Sendai colonies came from the combination of identifying viable land for development and populating the community with settlers accustomed to farming. A number of lower vassals in Sendai had supplemented their hereditary stipends by working the land even though such a practice had been outlawed by the Tokugawa government for centuries.[78] Additionally, Kunishige recruited people outside of the *shizoku* class to populate his lands, although generally these peasants resided within or in close proximity to Watari-Date lands on the *naichi*. The population of the colony of Date-shi ultimately grew, and Usu settlements expanded to incorporate land inland as well as along the coast. While these two pieces of territory were separated by Usu Mountain, and therefore not contiguous, both areas contributed to the overall economy of the settlement. It was most likely these advantages, in addition to the practice of the migration of groups with a shared regional background, which resulted in the viable settlement in Date-shi.

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[75] Date Tōgoro, "Kyū kyokan baikyakuhi wo Hokkaidō ijyū no ateru ken" (1870), Miyagi Kōbunshokan reference number M02-0006. Reprinted in Yasuzawa and Takagi, *Sendai-han Meiji san'nen Hokkaidō ijū shizoku*.
[76] Ōuchi, *Usu abuta shi*, 57.
[77] Ibid. The original document has this phrase in bold for emphasis.
[78] Howell, *Geographies of Identity*, 75.

Without a doubt, the branch families of Sendai-han spearheaded the most successful of these early examples of clan relocation via a patronage system. Furthermore, the experience of Date clan of Sendai-han illustrates a successful strategy for Hokkaidō settlement. In a report filed in Meiji 14 twelve years after the establishment of Date Kunishige's colony this powerful lord from northeastern Japan reflects upon the cultivation of the colony he pioneered. In it, Date Kunishige relates how he transplanted thousands of people from his home fief to this new land, a land again placed under the control of the Date clan.[79] The total number of members of the Kunishige household who moved to the settlement between Meiji 3 and Meiji 14 included 2,651 people.[80] By sponsoring the relocation of so many of his former subjects from his home territory, Kunishige renewed his status as a powerful leader. Forced to sacrifice their hereditary power as lords, they, in effect, replaced their feudal power with the closest modern equivalent; they became local leaders in the north.

In addition to Date Kunishige, there are three other notable Sendai-han affiliates who created successful colonies using the early system of land grants to individual lords. Two of these also received partitions of the land in Iburi and, after withstanding great hardship, developed prosperous communities: Ishikawa Kunimitsu (石川 邦光) in the district of Muroran-gun (室蘭郡), and Katakura Kuninori (片倉 邦憲) in Horobetsu-gun (幌別郡). These *shizoku* employed policies which mirrored Kunishige's administration in Usu-gun. For example, Katakura Kuninori of the Shiroishi-Date family also recruited roughly 300 of his former subjects to settle his several hundred acre partition, creating a space populated by retainers loyal to his rule. In addition, Katakura also invested his entire fortune into the endeavor; in 1870, he

[79] Date Kunishige, *Iburi-kuni Usu-gun kaikon temmatsu*, 1881.
[80] Date shishi hensan linkai, *Date-shi shi*, 253.

auctioned off Shiroishi castle to fund further migration north.[81] Under the partition system, another Sendai-han branch head, Date Kuninao (伊達邦直), received a large allotment in Ishikari province bearing the name of Tōbetsu (当別村). Kuninao shared with Kunishige the distinction of being hailed as an "exemplary" settler upon his death. His obituary in the *Asahi Shimbun* acknowledged his work in creating that Ishikari settlement and cited him as one of the foundational pioneers of Hokkaidō.[82]

This pattern of group relocation was not limited to settlements populated by Tōhoku natives. All across Hokkaidō, settlers from different regions tended to join together based on ties with their native place. A significant number of the remaining migrants came from other regions that would, following the Meiji transition, become identified by the central government as possessing large swaths of depressed and underdeveloped land like rural areas of Hokuriku, the region just south of Tōhoku along the Sea of Japan (including the prefectures of Ishikawa, Niigata, and Fukui). Migrants from these places tended to be from the commoner class or consisted of individual, low-ranking samurai; yet they still followed a pattern of settlement, relocation within group structures. While the numbers from Tōhoku remained very large throughout the Meiji period, the Hokuriku region migrants shared two particular things in common with Tōhoku settlers: their culture and leaders were largely underrepresented or excluded from the new Meiji governmental structures, and they came from areas stereotyped as underdeveloped within the popular imagining of Japanese regionalism.

Of course, Tōhoku and Hokuriku alone did not send men and women north. The remainder of early migrants to Hokkaidō during this first period of independent, voluntary

[81] Miyagi Archives, Microfilm: 2-0007, document 5: Sale of Shiroishi castle to finance the development of Hokkaidō.
[82] "Date Kuninao shi no shikyo," *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, 29 January 1891, 1.

migration originated mostly from royalist regions in the southwest of Japan. Where Tōhoku and Hokuriku migrants were fleeing to the edges of the Meiji state, these southwestern migrants were benefiting from the expansion of Meiji power into Hokkaidō. Kaitakushi employees influenced the administration of land grants, granting petitions to people from their native regions.[83] However those privileged settlers from the royalist southwest often returned home after a few years while Tōhoku and Hokuriku migrants persevered within their transplanted communities.

It is difficult to believe that the leaders in Tokyō foresaw the creation of clan-supported samurai group migration as a path for feudal lords to reestablish elite leadership status in Hokkaidō. To create a modern nation-state, the Meiji modernization initiatives needed to dissolve the confederate feudal system while at the same time creating a national identity which would surpass all previous domainal loyalties. Policies which stripped the samurai class of status and property, as well as the redistricting of feudal domains in such a way as to fracture han affiliations among those clans loyal to the shogun, serve as examples leaders in the government's attempts to do just that. However, in the name of internal colonization of Hokkaidō the same officials ignored the danger of group migration to Meiji modernization efforts in general. Ultimately, early programs intended to develop, defend, and secure Hokkaidō as Japanese territory served to perpetuate *shizoku* power.

As we shall see in the next section, the Date community in Usu, a community which perpetuated Tokugawa systems of clan loyalties and feudal localism, became a template for the Kaitakushi's initiative to import *tondenhei*, or farmer soldiers. Direct governmental programs, recognizing the importance of shared native place among settlers in the creation of viable, long-lasting settlements, began factoring regionalism into their plans to populate Japan's northern frontier with a paramilitary of agricultural settlers.

[83] Nagai and Ōba, *Hokkaidō no hyakunen,* 59.

Mobilizing Hokkaidō: Tōhoku regionalism within soldier-settler villages

Creation of an army of settlers, a project inspired by earlier Tokugawa era efforts to protect the state's outer boundaries and in the tradition of the Chinese soldier-settler colonialism, became one of the primary cornerstones of the central government's vision of Hokkaidō during the Meiji period. As the years marched forward through the 1870s to the 1880s, the call to create a buffer zone between Japan and Russia, to "close" the northern gate, grew in Tokyo.[84] To fill the governmental clarion call to defend the northern frontier, leaders in Kaitakushi (the Development Bureau) began to seek ways to attract and control a greater quota of erstwhile *bushi*. During the 1870s, the Kaitakushi enacted a number of incentives for agricultural colonization directly aimed specifically at *shizoku*; to augment their military strength at strategic points on the island, the Kaitakushi initiated the *tondenhei* (soldier-settler) program. The Meiji government created *tondenhei* villages, structured settlements organized to facilitate the mobilization of a militia in times of crisis.

Over the course of two decades, mainly through trial and error, both private and governmental initiatives began to identify critical components of viable, long-lasting colonies in Hokkaidō: a keen appreciation of settler regionalism during recruitment. Part of the attraction of encouraging *shizoku* from the same region to settle together stems from the practical reality that variations in dialect and local traditions divided different areas of Japan. Different domains from the Tokugawa period had different cultures, making generalizations about any region, including Tōhoku, difficult. Internal differences within the two large Edo-era *kuni* which would become Tōhoku, Dewa and Mutsu provinces, were often significant. However, these two Tokugawa *kuni* often merged the two into one region called "Ōu," "Ōushu," or "Michinoku," underscoring the

[84] Miyagi kaigai kyokai, *Kaigai iju ni hikareta hitobito* (Miyagi: Miyagi-ken Kaigak Kyōkai, 1969).

common belief that those areas often had closer cultural links with each other than with territories in the southwest of Japan. Under Meiji redistricting, these societal ties grew, as many of these communities were forced into new boundaries which resulted in the intermixing of cultural traditions. Furthermore, as domain territory split across different prefectures, the culture of those borderland communities did not evaporate. Thus, government redistribution of *han* lands in fact tied cultures of the north together even as previous co-domainal communities bled through the government-defined prefectural boundaries, creating borderland cultures that knitted the peoples of the Tōhoku region together. This logic resulted in the recruitment of *shizoku* from not only the same prefecture but also across the entire region to populate a single village. Tōhoku natives were considered culturally similar, easing the threat of a fractured social society within the planned villages.

From the very inception of the *tondenhei-mura* (or *heimura*: soldier-settler villages) program, the Kaitakushi focused primarily on recruiting Tōhoku residents. In December 1874, Kotoni (琴似) became the flagship *tondenhei* village and in 1875 the first 198 families (965 people) arrived from Tōhoku as well as other Hokkaidō settlements.[85] The following year, in 1876, Kotoni and the two new neighboring *hei-mura* of Hassamu (発寒) and Yamahana (山鼻), welcomed another 275 families (1174 men and women).[86] In Hassamu, every single pioneer came from northeastern Japan. Yamahana was slightly different; it was this soldier-settler colony where there was some migration from a community outside of Honshū island. While the home prefectures for this wave of migration did indeed include 69 families from Sendai (Miyagi), 54 from Tsugaru (Akita), 53 from Aizu (Fukushima), 23 from Akita, 6 families from Tsuruoka

[85]Hokkaidō-chō, "Hondō no tondenhei," *Shokumin kōhō* 59 (1911): 19. This article implies they only came from Tōhoku. However, Itō Hiroshi, *Tondenhei mura hyakunen* 1 (Sapporo: Hokkaidō Shimbunsha, 1979) appendix shows 7 families coming from other places (195 from Hokkaidō/Tōhoku).
[86]Hokkaidō-chō, "Hondō no tondenhei," *Shokumin kōhō* 59 (1911): 19.

(Yamagata), 3 from Sakata (Yamagata), and 2 from Iwate, there was also a group from Hokkaidō itself; these 31 Hokkaidō recruits came from none other than the Watari-Date territories in Usu-gun. [87] In other words, at first the Kaitakushi actively populated the first *tondenhei-mura* with former samurai from Ōu. However, this pattern, over the years, would change. While earlier settlements did include those from the south, by the last half of the Meiji period migrants from Kyūshū increased dramatically. For example, the soldier-settler village started in Meiji 20, less than 5 kilometers north of Kotoni, did not have a single family from Tōhoku. Within the population of Shinkotoni (literally "new Kotoni"), Kyūshū contributed 187 of the 220 *tondenhei*.[88]

The common wisdom in creating entire villages populated by subjects from the same home region had its roots in successful models dating from the Hokkaidō colonization era characterized by clan administration, particularly the samurai communities built on the structure of patronage. Some of these colonies, such as those of Date Kunishige and Date Kuninao's in Iburi and Ishikari respectively, became integrated into the local militia system even though they were not technically classified as *tondenhei* settlers. Instead, these samurai communities helped fill out the militia with qualified *shizoku* families. As we have seen, these first Date branch-families built their village communities based on Tokugawa era custom of clan-sponsored aid. This perpetuated the confederate system of local dependency rather than national allegiances, a key aspect of the pre-modern feudal power. Instead, the Kaitakushi planners utilized state

[87] Itō, *Tondenhei-mura no hyakunen* 1, 50; Appendix 1: 219-228. This list includes the names of each family recruited, and their native place before moving to Yamahana.
[88] Ibid, 246-254. The 220 *tondenhei* in Shinkotoni included 55 from Fukuoka, 10 from Okayama, 41 from Kumamoto, 61 from Saga, 11 from Kagoshima, 17 from Tokushima, 19 from Ōita, 1 from Shimane, and 5 from Okayama. In other words, 187 moved from Kyūshū island, 17 from Shikoku island, and 16 from the Chūgoku region.

subsidies, displacing the financial ties between retainer and former lords and transferring those linkages to the national government.

However, the Kaitakushi acknowledged that shared cultural ties allowed for community solidarity and cooperation critical to survive in the Hokkaidō frontier, even though that situation provided fertile soil to perpetuate feudal-era, local affiliations. The developers of *tondenhei* barrack communities chose to build upon the customs and conventions of the Edo period, gathering families from the same native villages. Before the Meiji coup, the government strictly regulated exchange between domains, with most commoners and even lower vassals denied the right to move readily within the borders of their own *han*--let alone between domains. While in Edo, the national capital, people from different regions could and did interact with those from different areas, but only daimyo and their entourage shared this experience. This closed system produced profound differences between Japanese subjects at the domainal and even village level; cultural, ritual, spiritual, and dialectical variations made it difficult, sometimes even impossible, for these commoners and low-ranking retainers to cohabit with their fellow countrymen within Hokkaidō colonies.[89] The reasoning behind government-supported group migration of Tōhoku *shizoku* acknowledged the fundamental cultural division between regions of Japan, even as a key dajōkan project was to break down those divisions and create a singular national identity.

On a practical level, the Kaitakushi officials needed to decide upon the location and structure of these new settlements. David Anthony, in his analysis of the administration of Hokkaidō during the tenure of Kuroda Kiyotaka, underlines how military considerations dictated early *tondenhei* planning, with practical agrarian concerns rarely factoring into the equation. For example, in 1874, Kuroda tasked his American advisor Horace Capron to survey prospective

[89]Ibid, 50. Discussion of the difficulty in creating a uniform Japanese language, see Hiraku Shimoda, "Tongues-Tied: The Making of a "National Language" and the Discovery of Dialects in Meiji Japan," *The American Historical Review* 115, no. 3 (2010): 714-731.

sites for military settlements. In his analysis, completed after construction of those settlements was already underway, he identifies those three sites as largely undesirable for large-scale agrarian development, one being located among sand dunes and others on barren hilltops lacking trees or water.[90] While Capron does note nearby locations with fertile soil which could be divided into small grants of land, Capron did not see this kind of land policy as the best way to accelerate Japanese settlement in Hokkaidō.[91] Ultimately, in his dissertation, Anthony argues that the practice of choosing sites based upon strategic military locations proved to be fundamental problem for developing agricultural productivity.

This analysis has long been the conventional wisdom in studies of the *tondenhei* system. However, new research by Yanagida Ryozo and Shigemura Tsutomu makes a persuasive case that more issues did factor into site selection, arguing that practical concerns drove the structure and form of these settlements.[92] While the layout of these planned villages varied based on the topography of the specific site all shared design features intended to promote the psychological wellbeing of the community. In grouping the provided housing structures around a central axis, the planners succeeded in streamlining military communications, aiding in the timely mobilization of troops, and facilitating the supervision of soldiers.[93] Planners also took into account transportation needs of the colonists, placing all of these communities along roadways and eventually the rail system to facilitate travel in times of military mobilization.

On the other hand, these features could aid in the creation of a stable social ecology in the villages. On a psychological level, access routes allowed for communication with the rest of the

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[90] Capron to Kuroda, No. 6 (July 21, 1874), in Capron, *Reports and Official Letters*, 255; Anthony, "Administration of Hokkaidō," 76.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Yanagida Ryōsō and Shigemura Tsutomu, "Tondenhei-mura no kūkan kōsei ni okeru keikaku genre," [Planning Theory of Spatial Structure in Tondenhei-mura] *Journal of Architecture and Planning* 594 (2005): 61-68.
[93] Itō, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 1, 50; Ryōsō and Tsutomu, "Rūraru dezain toshite no tondenhei-mura, 89-96.

island and beyond, reducing the communities isolation from the rest of the world. Planners also arranged housing in tight formations to facilitate solidarity between militia families. Itō Hiroshi, a leader in the study of the *tondenhei* program in Hokkaidō, argues that this central planning further kindled intimacy between all families and protected the settlers from dangers such as bears lurking in "the region's primeval forests."[94] Thus, while one primary objective of the Kaitakushi planning committee was indeed military defense, the Kaitakushi actively encouraged community building both a spatial and abstract sense.

For the recruits, signing up to be a soldier-settler meant just that: to be a soldier as well as a settler. During the summer the *tondenhei* were expected to farm, but in the winter they had to take part in military exercises.[95] Outlined in the *Tondenhei Jōrei* (Ordinances for Soldier-Settlers), militia members must be able-bodied men between 18 and 35 and attend drills at regular intervals.[96] In return for becoming the core of Japan's citizen militia, the Kaitakushi offered these settlers free grants of land, provided appropriate housing for the climate, subsidized the cost of seeds and agricultural tools, and even offered short-term rice rations.[97] Over the course of the entire program, the government dedicated roughly 183,000 acres of land, distributing 92,000 acres to 7,337 families, designating 90,000 acres of public land, and setting aside 1,000 acres for the government.[98] The men in the militia were not only expected to police Hokkaidō; they also could be called up in times of national war. This happened three times over

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[94] Itō, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 1,50.
[95] Hokkaidō-chō, "Hondō no tondenhei," *Shokumin kōhō* 59 (Sapporo-shi : Hokkaidō Kyōkai Shibu, 1911), 19. Also Ann Irish, *Hokkaido: a history of ethnic transition and development on Japan's Northern Island*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2009), 119.
[96] Reprinted in Itō Hiroshi, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 3 (Sapporo: Hokkaidō Shimbunsha, 1979): 234-237.
[97] For an excellent compilation of primary documents outlining the specific rules and regulations for the *tondenhei* system, including the text of the laws regulating the tondenhei (屯田兵条例) written in Meiji 7 and revised in Meiji 24, see Itō, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 3, appendix 4: 234-276.
[98] Hokkaidō-chō, "Hondō no tondenhei," 19. These figures are originally given in tsubo (坪), a Japanese unit of measure equaling 3.31 square meters or 3.95 square yards, and are as follows: land-grant lands, 112,090,970 坪, public lands, 110,915,705 坪, and government lands, 1,259,467 坪. In other words, the government distributed a total of 223,955,143 tsubo of land.

the course of the program; battalions were mobilized to fight in the Satsuma rebellion, the Sino-Japanese war, and the Russo-Japanese war. Of course, fighting the Russians was the very impetus for the creation of military power on Hokkaidō, and the Sino-Japanese war was also an international dispute, but what about the Satsuma Rebellion? How does the history of Tōhoku settlement in Hokkaidō, impact the domestic construction of the modern nation?

The story of the Hokkaidō *tondenhei* in the Satsuma Rebellion, the bulk of whom hailed originally from Tōhoku, offers an untold window into the struggle between modernity and tradition, historic loyalties, and regional animosities. The *shizoku* from Tōhoku who moved to the inaugural *tondenhei* villages of Kotoni and Yamahana could hardly have known that in May of 1877, a mere year or so after they relocated to Hokkaidō, virtually every *tondenhei* from Kotoni and Yamahana would be required to aid in putting down a samurai rebellion in Satsuma.[99] In an interesting twist of fate, in the Satsuma Rebellion the battle lines of the Boshin War (1868-1869) reversed. *Tondenhei* soldier-settlers from Hokkaidō, originally from the anti-royalist Tōhoku region, now defended the imperial system against a schism of the samurai clique who did not wish to lose the prerogatives as ruling warrior elite. Men from Tōhoku, the same men who had been marked as traitors to the Emperor less than a decade before, now fought in the name of the Emperor. In other words, the tale of Hokkaidō within the Satsuma rebellion could be read as a triumph of Meiji nationalism wherein Tokugawa traditionalists altered their allegiances to instead fight for Meiji modernization policies. However, if one were to consider the policies of Hokkaidō, particularly with regard to the *tondenhei* program, a very different view of the motivations behind former Tōhoku *shizoku* emerge.

[99] Nagai and Ōba, *Hokkaidō no hyakunen*, 63; for specific names of the 202 *tondenhei* from Yamahana who served in the Seinan war, see Itō, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 1, Appendix 1: 219-228.

The *tondenhei* system, from the perspective of how the institution was drafted within Meiji law, was the antithesis of a progressive egalitarianism. A fundamental impetus that brought former royalists from the southwestern regions of Japan to stand in defiance of the government they had helped shape came when the reverberations of the impact of Meiji modernization resulted in the stripping of samurai of their traditional monopoly over military service**.** A few years before, in 1873, the dajōkan organized an imperial conscript army outlined in the Conscription Edict (徴兵令 chōhei rei). While the conscription of commoners was indeed the law of the land, the *tondenhei* policies made Hokkaidō a bastion of an all-samurai militia. It could be argued, further, that the leaders of the Satsuma rebellion wished to create a situation similar to the Hokkaidō *tondenhei* system in a new colony: Korea. Denied the mandate to invade Korea, where the military could create a settlement colony overseas that could be administered in fact, if not in name, much like Hokkaidō, the *shizoku* from the southwest rebelled. In contrast, the "Meiji" troops shipped in from Hokkaidō, those Tōhoku natives turned *tondenhei*, had little reason to support southwestern samurai wishing to retain a traditional, Tokugawa era status quo. In Hokkaidō, soldier-settlers retained a monopoly on martial occupations. For Hokkaidō *tondenhei*, the Meiji era status quo entitled them to a relatively elite status that held echoes of Tokugawa privilege.

Meiji policies to inspire equality exempted Hokkaidō from modernization rhetoric of egalitarianism. The *tondenhei* program, as designed and implemented in Hokkaidō, can be singled out as exemplary of how the Colonization Bureau doggedly pursued a campaign built on the legacy of the Tokugawa system. The professed goal of the Meiji government was to lead Japan from this feudal system into the modern age by breaking down the barriers of class. Yet these very distinctions were fundamental to the project of internal colonization in Hokkaidō. Of

course, change could not occur overnight, and it is inescapable that programs like the aforementioned samurai rehabilitation policy (*shizoku jusan)* were needed to shift samurai out of their hereditary positions into their new professions as farmers, land-owners, merchants, entrepreneurs, artisans, etc.—and the reclamation of wasteland in Hokkaidō formed one of the pillars of rehabilitation policy. Within the rest of the nation, the government enacted policies to aid the return of samurai to the land, but integration took many years and the territorial bonds linking master and servant ran deep. While their previous wealth and power sometimes allowed these families to retain power in their lands as local leaders or powerful land-owners, the process became drawn out over decades.

When the history of modern Japan becomes situated in the north, when Meiji history becomes narrated through the nation-building project Hokkaidō, it calls into questions historical assumptions concerning how we define, categorize, and systematically locate Japanese subjects in terms of dichotomous relationships. What is modern versus traditional; how do you define royalist versus loyalist; and how much modernization came from top-down national mandates versus grassroots local pragmatism? Those echoes of Tokugawa era class hierarchy embedded within the *tondenhei* system, fostered and promoted by the so-called progressive Meiji state, did not become emblematic of Hokkaidō society within Japanese modern history. In fact, the case of the *tondenhei* of Hokkaidō provides one of the earliest cases where surprisingly the blurring of class barriers between the peasant and martial classes began. Hokkaidō stands as a place that, despite the government's best efforts, display in practice modern notions of class equality.

The governmental policies of the Kaitakushi preserved the distinction, in name, between warrior and commoner; however, in practice the all-samurai nature of the *tondenhei* militias was a myth. Eminent historians of Hokkaidō, such as Itō Hiroshi, agree that as early as 1875

commoners migrated under the system.[100] From the program's inception, it took little more than stating "my family lineage is *shizoku* from such-and-such [何々] han" to meet the requirement.[101] In fact, members of the samurai class from the Tōhoku prefectures of Aomori, Miyagi, and Sakata (Yamagata) actively recruited commoners to fill out shortfalls in ranks of the military police in the first *heimura*.[102] Yet it took over two decades for the Hokkaidō government to change the qualifications for *tondenhei* eligibility. Early 1890s revisions marks a critical moment when the official categorizations of the Tokugawa class system marks began to institutionally break down in these northern acquisitions. Starting in 1890, eight years after the abolition of the Kaitakushi and the transference of power to Hokkaidō Prefecture's Department of the Interior, officials cited the development of land as a greater priority than national defense. Widening the pool of applicants for *tondenhei* furthered this project of colonization. Thus, the semantic acceptance of an extant practice reflects the shifting priorities of colonization efforts as much as a wish to alter the favored position of *shizoku* over commoners in receiving special aid.

The erosion of caste distinctions in these settlements represents an interesting twist to the standard method of achieving class equality. Rather than having *bushi* transition into being part of the commoner class, commoners claimed positions as *shizoku* by fiat. In fact, the hereditary *shizoku* accepted these commoners into their ranks, a tacit agreement that these men had the right to serve as soldiers. Just by proclaiming themselves *shizoku*, and being accepted as such by the government and their new class of peers, they successfully overthrew a centuries-old system. From the perspective of the samurai, by joining the *tondenhei* project they willingly accepted that "returning to the land" was an integral part of their job description, rather than as a

[100] Itō, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 1, 48. Unfortunately, it is impossible to discern the exact numbers of colonists in the settlements like the inaugural community of Kotoni because all colonists migrated under the title of *shizoku*. Also, surviving first person accounts are limited to those of the educated *bushi* class.
[101] Itō, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 2 (Sapporo: Hokkaidō Shimbunsha, 1979), 12.
[102] Itō, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 3, 279.

punishment imposed by the national legislatures. In other words, the national government's official Hokkaidō policy sanctioned class differentiation in that territory for decades, perhaps long after the settlers themselves abandoned such feudal distinctions.

So far we have been discussing largely the top-down actions relating to the Meiji transition, such as the actions of the central government leading to reactions by Tōhoku natives relocating to Hokkaidō which, in turn, prompted further actions by the central government. However, it would be incorrect to assert that the central government had a singular vision of modernization, or even that most Tōhoku elites migrating north were opportunistically exploiting those policies. When taken in isolation, neither illustrates the contradictions of modernity and traditionalism embodied in Hokkaidō's past. There is another side to this story, a third narrative, that gives shape to a distinctive Tōhoku regionalism during this formative period. Therefore, for the remainder of this chapter, let us move to consider this third perspective, the perspective of Hokkaidō history, and turn to the on-the-ground reality occurring within Japan's frontier region of Hokkaidō.

Pragmatism and the Hokkaidō modern: blurring class distinctions and rising regionalism

The environment of Hokkaidō produced the conditions whereby all members of the community relied upon each other to survive. Of course, this does not mean that social stratification did not exist in early Hokkaidō settlements or *tondenhei-mura*. There existed the prerequisite military hierarchies as well as differing levels of education and private wealth. In independent samurai settlements, the practice of clan-patronage perpetuated a system where the poor townspeople, farmers, and retainers still had to rely upon the benevolence of their feudal lords for fiscal support. And yet the members of the Watari-Date clan acknowledged the

equalizing forces of nature in 1871, asserting that colonists "must stand side by side, master and servant, to defy death [lit: become corpses] in the north."[103] Economically, in *tondenhei-mura*, the even distribution of plots of land, standardized governmental aid, and universal educational facilities for the settler families went far in leveling the playing field despite disparities between private wealth. In this way, the island was a kind of a tabula rasa, a place where everything had to build from the ground up.

The history of Tōhoku farmers colonizing Hokkaidō is long. Beginning in the Bakumatsu period (1853-1868), the *bakufu* divided sections of the island between some northern domains in Ōu, entrusting Shōnai-han (now part of Yamagata prefecture) with the defense and development of northern Ezo and the western coast. During these early days, the majority of commoners from Shōnai did not come as settlers, but rather as seasonal migrant (*dekasegi*) fishermen; however, in 1861 some farmers moved to the northwestern shores of the island near Mashike. While there was preferential treatment towards members of the military class, the Colonization Bureau didn't eschew migration of commoners. After the Meiji revolution, the Kaitakushi identified individuals from that very same region that the Tokugawa government had targeted in the 1860s, recruiting peasants from Shōnai to be the first official Meiji-era agricultural migrants. In July of 1869, the central government declared that "applicants from all domains, *shizoku* as well as commoners, will be awarded suitable land and required to develop it."[104] At the time of the Meiji revolution, some historians have asserted that about 80 percent of the population of Japan was categorized as peasants.[105] Thus, if solving the "northern gate problem" required physical transplantation of Japanese blood onto the island, any Japanese blood, the bureau needed to

[103] Ōuchi Kojū, *Usu abutashi* (Date-machi: Ikari Seiemon, 1911).
[104] Daijōkan, "Shohan no shizoku narabini shomen made shigansha ni ha sōō no tochi wo atae, kaitakusaseru," *Ezochi kaitaku shigansha boshū*, (July, 1869). Miyagi Archives number M02-0025, Sendai, Japan.
[105] Mikiso Hane, *Peasants, Rebels, and Outcastes: the Underside of Modern Japan* (New York: Pantheon, 1982), 11.

create policies to entice and recruit peasants. These invitations set the stage for large-scale interest in the island throughout Tōhoku. [106]

Foreign consultants stressed that, rather than recruiting those unfamiliar with agricultural practices, the island needed "industrious frugal farmers, who feel that they have an interest in the soil they occupy, and in whatever tends to the general benefit of the Island, and the enlargement of its permanent population."[107] Samurai populations proved fast at absorbing and accepting the modern agricultural practices taught in the government-sponsored reeducation programs. But this greater learning curve could not offset an engrained prejudice against being forced to become farmers; that was the purview of the peasants. Thus, the people best equipped to actually develop and reclaim the land in the north in the first decades of colonization came from the commoner class.

While families from many domains took advantage of the opening of arable land to the north after 1869, migrants from Shōnai domain provide a stark example of the mechanisms behind commoner relocation. Not unlike the samurai communities mentioned before, these peasants relocated in clusters based on their native place. In the beginning, these families moved as part of the *shizoku*-initiated settlements or were recruited by the Kaitakushi. However, by the mid-Meiji era, independent group migration, and the resultant patterns of chain migration, aided the impoverished peasant to escape economic destitution in their home villages in the *naichi*. Settling the coastline remained popular for the working poor, particularly relocating to communities built around the fishing industry, but by the end of the 19th century the population of new settlers in the interior of the country began to grow.

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[106] Nagai and Ōba, *Hokkaidō no hyakunen*, 59. Kaitakushi invited 300 men and woman from Sakata ken (today Yamagata) to come north to engage in agriculture. By the following summer 118 households, totaling 394 people, applied to relocate from Sakata ken and Kashiwazaki ken (today part of Niigata) to Sapporo.
[107] Capron, No 7, in Capron, *Reports and Official Letters*.

Part of the reason for this shift came from a concerted effort by the Kaitakushi, and later Hokkaidō's Department of the Interior, to develop an extensive transportation system. From the inception of the colonization program, leaders in the Kaitakushi believed that the only way to lay the foundations for successful agricultural colonization of the interior of Hokkaidō was to build roads. In a retrospective letter which outlined his recommendations during his tenure as a foreign advisor, Horace Capron states that "roads are the veins and arteries of a country, and without them there can be nothing but artificial life."[108] Creating this network was accepted as a priority by Kuroda and the Colonization Bureau, and roads and wagon trails expanded quickly, although, as Capron noted, the enthusiasm to build did not match the willingness to allocate appropriate resources to maintain them.[109] Despite that fact, as scaffolding allowed for greater access to the interior, eventually augmented by railways, so did the agricultural colonization by both civilian agricultural colonies and *tondenhei* settlements.

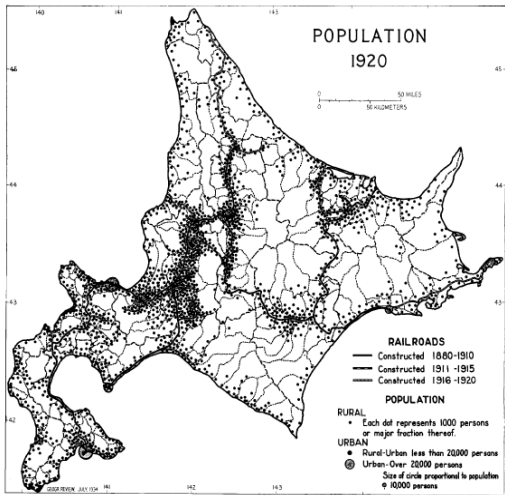

Figure 1: Population in 1920 organized by villages. Darrell H. Davis, "Present Status of Settlement in Hokkaido," Geographical Review, 24:3 (American Geographical Society, Jul. 1934): 388.

Darrell H. Davis, in his 1934 article on the status of settlement in Hokkaidō, displays how the Hokkaidō population growth and distribution followed the railroad. In fact, as displayed in figure 5, by the mid-Taisho period the vast preponderance of towns clustered along the rail system constructed between 1880 and 1900.[110] In contrast, lines built after 1920 generally connected outlying areas to larger villages to further facilitate the movement of goods to market.

[108] Capron to Kuroda. 1875, April 30 in Capron, *Reports and Official Letters*, 652-3.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Darrell H. Davis, "Present Status of Settlement in Hokkaido," *Geographical Review* 24, no. 3 (American Geographical Society, July 1934).

Hokkaidō was one of the first places in the empire to build rail lines. It was the third one to be operational, following the opening of the two lines along the Tokyo-Yokohama and Kyoto-Osaka corridor. It is unsurprising that those were the inaugural lines, as they facilitated exchange between Japan's primary centers of politics, trade, and culture. However, for Hokkaidō to be the site of the third rail line displays great importance central planners placed upon the development and settlement of the northern territories.

For one group of commoners, the completion of reliable access roads in 1886 and 1887, as well as the completing of the railroad by 1891, opened the way for permanent relocation. Between 1891 and 1894 the government created the three *tondenhei-mura* of Bibai, Koshiunai, and Chashinnai on the dry alluvial plain above the Ishikari River. Following in their footsteps, organizations created by farmers from one of the poorer regions of Tōhoku also moved into the area in 1894 to reclaim the wasteland along the Ishikari River. Not all peasant migration to the region came under the auspices of such groups, many families came separately to work as laborers and tenant farmers, but the organizations such as the Yamagata *dantai* also claimed private land where their members could work independent of any landlord.

While the formation of *dantai* was not a new invention, nor were such groups initiated only by peasants, this system became increasingly common in the mid- to late-Meiji era by many seeking northern land as it served as a catalyst for free agricultural migration to the interior of the island. Hirai Shogo, in an article on chain migration between Yamagata ken and Bibai, discusses the importance of studying not only the push factors for outmigration but also the continued links between agricultural migrants and their native place.[111] Using the case of Yamagata *dantai* settlement of Yamagata-*chiku* in the city of Bibai, Hirai outlines the characteristics of *dantai*

[111] Hirai Shōgo, "Hokkaidō ni miru rensaijyū no kōsō—Bibai-shi, Yamagata-chiku wo rei ni," *Nihon chiri gakkai*, 61A, no. 10 (October 1988): 727-746.

migration. The first wave of these farmers came in 1894, when a group of twenty-one families from the Murayama region formed the Yamagata-*dantai* under the 1892 "Rule for Collective Migration" (団結移住ニ関スル要領).[112] These poor tenant farmers colonized the banks of the Ishikari River next to the *tondenhei* settlements of Bibai (美唄), Koshiunai (光珠内) and Chashinnai (茶志内). Along that section of land between the river and the mountains, the government-established *tondenhei-mura* occupied the dry alluvial plain hugging the access roads and rail lines. In contrast, the land the Yamagata *dantai* secured was far less desirable in the lowlands of the Toinuttapu-*genya* (Toinuttapu wasteland). In that district, virtually all of the original settlers came from the land-locked and impoverished territory of Murayama in Yamagata.

Even with the knowledge that transforming this wasteland into productive agricultural plots would be difficult, economic motivations and environmental factors made relocation attractive. By the mid-Meiji period, the situation for farmers in Yamagata's Murayama district was dire. Periods of reoccurring crop shortfalls and famine were endemic throughout the northeast, with prefectures within the Tōhoku region suffering exceptionally bad harvests in 1869, 1884, 1897, 1902, 1905, and 1910.[113] While all of these were not localized solely in Yamagata, the repercussions of these catastrophic famines echoed throughout the Tōhoku region. Economically, a combination of the increasing farming population resulted in greater subdivisions of arable land, deflationary policies from 1881 that immiserated countless farming

[112] Ibid.
[113] Daikichi Irokawa, *The Culture of the Meiji Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 219. This text discusses at length the situation of the rural poor in Tōhoku during the Meiji period. Providing a combination of visceral personal accounts, statistics, and official records, he highlights the abject poverty endemic to the region.

villages, and the general trend towards absentee landlordism and tenant farming created situations where desperate families from throughout the region turned their eyes north. In 1893, the majority of farmers in the Murayama district, between 51% and 53%, were tenant farmers. [114] These figures outstripped the already abysmal prefectural average of 38%.[115]

Impetus for Migration	Households	People
Joining immediate family	580	1338
Recruited by acquaintances or relatives	3193	8724
Members of a *dantai*	172	710
Recruited as tenant farmers	240	660
Personal initiative	195	472
Other	25	95
TOTAL	**4405**	**11,999**

Table 1: This charts the motivation behind agricultural migration through Otaru and Mororan harbors during the first half of 1904, according to a survey published in the *Hokkaidō kōhō*. [116]

Commoner migration by the mid- to late-Meiji period no longer bore the markings of differentiation between Tokugawa peasants and elite. Over two-thirds of emigrants from Yamagata Prefecture's Higashi Murayama village were classified as subsistence-level farmers, with land valued at less than 5 *sen* (.05 yen).[117] It is difficult to estimate how many of these farmers were classed as Tokugawa-era retainers versus commoners; official statistics outlining the in-migration of agriculturalists to Hokkaidō generally do not comment on settler's previous standings. Edo-era class differentiation grew muddled as the stripping of *shizoku* of their status faded into memory and the project of *bushi* "returning to the land" became an accepted fact rather than a new innovation. In other words, throughout the country a system of capitalist accumulation of wealth, rather than hereditary caste, began to define class.

Migration from Murayama exemplifies group migration at the village level, yet a larger picture of prefectural and regional clustering of peasants took place throughout the island. Just

[114] Hirai, "Hokkaidō ni miru rensaijyū no kōsō," 732.
[115] Ibid.
[116] *Hokkaidō kōhō* 24 (Hokkaidō-chō, 1905), 9. Table is also reproduced in Hirai, "Hokkaidō ni miru rensaijyū no kōsō," 728.
[117] Ibid.

like in *tondenhei-mura*, Tōhoku natives tended to congregate within specific Hokkaidō prefectures. The same year that Yamagata agricultural colonists settled the shores of the Ishikari River, settlers arriving from throughout Tōhoku area formed one-third of migration to the island. Prefectural groupings, as exemplified by Aomori prefecture émigrés, were common. According to the colonization division of Hokkaidō's Department of Internal Affairs (北海道庁内務部植民課) figures from the first half of 1894, the province of Teshio (天塩) along the Sea of Japan recorded a large influx of Tōhoku migrants: a staggering 63% from Tōhoku which included 2/3rds from Aomori prefecture alone.[118] It is true that these figures only represent migration during a six month period, and this area at the far north of Hokkaidō had extremely small populations at the time. However, the diminutive extant population of Teshio and the large population movement over such a short period of time reveals a snapshot of how the addition of these new Tōhoku émigrés, many encouraged to move by family already in residence or acquaintances from their home town, could have a significant impact on bolstering the presence of Tōhoku natives in the social ecosystem of Teshio. In other Hokkaidō prefectures, Tōhoku residents made up the largest group of new settlers in five of the total eleven prefectures in the northern islands.[119] Within the other six prefectures, émigrés also congregated based on prefectural and regional affiliations.

This kind of gathering did not happen by chance. In the example of Yamagata-*chiku* in Bibai, the *dantai* aided the first phase of village development. Members of this organization strove to retain their ties to each other and their home region by creating institutions intended to

[118] Hokkaidō, *Hokkaidō imin kokōhyō* 1 (1894): 1-2. In some ways, this migration was out of the ordinary, as the majority of these new settlers clustered along the coast in fishing villages – as similar pattern to the earliest waves of migration. While island- wide almost fifty percent of all migrants to Hokkaidō were farmers, in Teshio 26 families moved as farmers, while 70 families worked the fisheries. The ratio in Kitami is even more unbalanced, fishermen outnumbering farmers 255 to 24. Unlike the prefectures of Miyagi, Yamagata, Iwate, and Fukushima, Aomori fishing families outnumbered farming families three to one over all. Hokkaidō, *Hokkaidō imin kokōhyō*, 14.
[119] Ibid, 1-2.

preserve the memory of their ties to Yamagata. Of course, these families had moved together and shared a legal responsibility as outlined their joint migration contract; however, they expanded on this legal obligation. As Hirai outlines, they grounded their village in shared native place affiliations, founding the Yamagata shrine, forming neighborhood groups, and continuing meetings of the *dantai.*[120] Such institutional and social ties to their homeland aided later colonists through chain migration. A 1904 survey published in *Hokkaidō Kōhō*, enumerates that over 70% of migrants entering Hokkaidō through Otaru and Mororan harbors moved with the encouragement of acquaintances and relatives already in residence in Hokkaidō (table 2).[121]

The long-term effect of community building in Hokkaidō has proven to be enduring. For example, in 1980, 48 families out of a total of 57 residing in the area of Bibai city that had been Yamagata-*chiku* could trace their family lineage to Yamagata Prefecture.[122] Articles published in local newspapers during the 125th anniversary of the colonization of Hokkaidō further highlight the cultural connections between Tōhoku and Hokkaidō communities. Beginning during the prewar period, many organizations began known as *kenjinkai*. These groups bring together families in Hokkaidō who share the same prefectural heritage. Today, many of these kenjinkai still exist, and members celebrate their Tōhoku roots. Speaking of the annual festivals thrown by descendants of Fukushima prefecture, the vice-president of the Hokkaidō-wide Fukushima *kenjinkai* Osamu Shū declared that "once a year, we can revel in the blessings of our native homes."[123] Additionally, following the 3.11 tsunami and earthquake in Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima, the outpouring of aid emphasized the historic ties between the people of Tōhoku.

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[120] Hirai, "Hokkaidō ni miru rensaijyū no kōsō," 727-746.
[121] Ibid, 728.
[122] Ibid, 729.
[123] "Tōhoku damashi tsutaeru kenjinkai: Hokkaidō kaitaku no shuyaku, myakumyaku to," *Hokkaidō Shimbun*, 28 November 2011, <http://www.hokkaido-np.co.jp/cont/311_koete/148497.html> (accessed online 28 November 2011).

Date city in Hokkaidō responded to tragedy by reaching out to aid families in Miyagi prefecture's Kessenuma and Watari cities. The editors of the Miyagi *kenjinkai*'s newsletter in Hokkaidō said that "support of our native place begins now…All of our members must have the same feeling."[124] Hokkaidō settlements began through community building which exploited settlers' shared Tōhoku roots, and these ties continue into the present.

Conclusion

Just as the history of Hokkaidō development and settlement cannot be divorced from the story of Meiji modernization, it must also be considered a part of Tōhoku regional history. The significance of the number of migrants from Tōhoku in the internal colonization of Hokkaidō should not be underestimated. Over the first 25 years of Meiji migration policies, those six prefectures sent almost 50% of the new territory's total settlers. That number is even more impressive if looking at Kaitakushi-era statistics. Tōhoku residents dominated programs to recruit and retain warriors charged with the defense of the northern boundaries under what this chapter terms the patronage system as well as within *tondenhei-mura*. By far, Date clan branch-family leaders, *shizoku* from today's Miyagi prefecture such as Date Kunishige, Date Kuninao, Katakura Kuninori, and Ishikawa Kunimitsu, represent the dominant group of individual petitioners who mobilized their clans during the partition period of Hokkaidō settlement. Over the duration of the *tondenhei* program, from Kaitakushi years through its incorporation into the Department of Defense in 1884, many of the 7,337 families of soldier-settlers who found a new life there came from Tōhoku. While in later decades the regions which populated those *tondenhei-mura* would shift away from the Tōhoku-dominated pattern, there is no doubt that

[124] Ibid.

Tōhoku *shizoku* led the way. Almost every one of the families in the inaugural villages of Kotoni, Yamahana, and Hassamu had roots in Tōhoku.[125]

Meiji maps gave shape to the physical and metaphorical location of Hokkaidō as Japan's frontier even as it forced Tōhoku into the role of a borderland-in-transition. Yet the politics that inspired the cartographic land grab also provided Tōhoku natives a refuge, former samurai and commoner alike, from the political, social, and economic modernization efforts sweeping the rest of the *naichi*. For leaders in domains like Aizu and Sendai, retribution for the Boshin war accelerated this process of political reformism; the earliest redistricting disproportionately reduced land size in Tōhoku, resulting in significant losses in salaries long before similar measures swept through royalists holdings. Thus, in the months following the war, men like Date Kunishige's advisor Tamura Kenin argued that moving north could provide relief from Meiji leaders' prejudice and cushion the impact of the slashing of governmental stipends for his retainers.[126] Lords could grasp an opportunity to claim land at the edge of the modern nation's new juridical boundaries, replacing their lost acres in a hope to retain a measure of local power. In other words, elite families circumvented the complete dismantling of their power by creating a simulacrum of their fiefs in Hokkaidō. There they could perpetuate a measure of status in a nation actively dismantling a confederate system based on social classes. Instead, in these northern holdings hereditary clan affiliations were replaced by new structures of loyalty based on patronage. The central government policies supported the exclusion of Hokkaidō from a number of difficult modernization efforts. Hokkaidō occupied the new geographical liminal space at the fringe of Japan's borders, a space that needed to be populated as soon as possible to provide a

[125] Hokkaidō-chō, "Hondō no tondenhei," *Shokumin kōhō* 59 (1911): 19. For a complete list of the individual families and their respective origins, see Itō, *Tondenhei mura no hyakunen* 1, Appendix 1: 219-228.
[126] Date shishi hensan linkai, *Date-shi shi*, 236.

buffer between aggressive Russian expansionism. Necessity forced the Meiji government to occasionally bend, or even exempt, Hokkaidō from some of its key programs aimed at modernizing the nation.

At the same time, Hokkaidō also represents one of the first places in Japan that achieved some of those very modernization goals. This political grey-zone served as a site of an undirected, grassroots modernization movement initiated by the settlers themselves. During the clan-directed period of migration, the difficult living conditions forced patron and clients into a society where survival required mutual aid – aid to problems that often could not be solved by money. Similarly, the *tondenhei* system, while constructed by the central authorities to perpetuate the dominance of the *shizoku* class over matters of national defense, became one of the first locations in Japan where class barriers broke down. The existence of settlers within the supposedly all-samurai program provided fertile soil for a progressive equalization of hereditary class for both the peasants-cum-*shizoku* as well as *shizoku*-cum-peasants. Against government regulation, yet encouraged by actual former samurai soldier-settlers, commoners became accepted in *tondenhei* villages as warriors. These farmers and townspeople successfully perpetrated a coup against the normative system of hereditary class; just as samurai successfully "returned to the land" as farmers, commoners elevated themselves placing themselves into the ranks of the *shizoku*. In this way, *tondenhei-mura* became a space where a measure of social equality took root. Fundamentally, the island demanded a kind of equality of mutual reliance for survival. Hokkaidō was a place for commoners and *shizoku* to gain a measure of independence from social, political, and economic modernization reforms. On the other hand, the realities of colonization created a space where undirected, and certainly unintended, modernization blossomed.

Hokkaidō did not necessarily provide a blank slate where Japanese modern regionalism would grow, develop, and blossom. However, Hokkaidō settlement did provide a kind of incubator for modern regionalism, a Tōhoku identity flourished beyond the bounds of the physical territory known as Tōhoku. Furthermore, the legacy of Hokkaidō colonization made an indelible mark on further Japanese expansionism and overseas migration. At its core, there is one common thread in the narrative of the settlement of Hokkaidō: successful communities thrived when the settlers shared similar cultural, and thus regional, heritage. Indeed, all three forms of agricultural colonization discussed—clan-sponsored patronage, government-sponsored *tondenhei-mura,* and later *dantai* migration—blossomed when émigrés recreated regionally-based cultural institutions that could lessen the sense of alienation within their new environment.

The internal colonization of Hokkaidō marked the first successful expansionary project of the Meiji government. In the following years international frontier regions, exemplified by Mindanao in the Philippines, British Columbia in Canada, Hawai'i in the United States, and São Paulo in Brazil, enticed large numbers of Japanese to travel abroad. Additionally, the Japanese imperial gaze expanded to include new colonies in Manchuria, Korea, Taiwan, and Micronesia. The successful models of Tōhoku migration to Hokkaidō articulate with the form and structure of future Tōhoku frontier settlements. Just as in the case of Hokkaidō, immigrants in foreign territories banded together according to Japanese regional affiliation. To cope with the alienation and validate the hardships intrinsic to starting a new life far from home, Tōhoku pioneers to North and South America built institutions founded upon the social and cultural ties to their former Japanese region. The following chapter will further explore this theme of regionality by interrogating how migrants abroad harmonized their previous regional identity from Japan with the immigrant experience to create a strong international, yet local community. Thus, chapter

three will explore how the patterns of group relocation so common in the settlement Hokkaidō became the foundation of new trans-Pacific communities.

CHAPTER 2

EXPORTING REGIONALISM: TŌHOKU-JAPANESE IMMIGRANT CULTURE

At the beginning of the modern period in the 1870s, the mobility of people from the Tōhoku region centered on migration into Japan's expanding frontier of Hokkaido. Government officials, policy initiatives, and community-based groups in the northeast recruited former samurai and their retainers to develop the agricultural landscape within Japan's expanding boundaries. Modern mobility in southwestern Japan, however, took a different path. Initially, migrants left their farming communities in the south to relocate to growing urban metropolises, drawn by the allure of jobs within a mechanizing society. Starting in 1885 the first waves of official overseas migration began as private campaigns intended to relocate Japanese laborers abroad to work as contract laborers on plantations in Hawai'i.[1] The individuals recruited for these international ventures did not come from the Tōhoku region, but instead from regions in the southwest like the prefectures of Hiroshima and Yamaguchi to Hawai'i.

Such regional disparity among emigrants abroad would change slightly by the beginning of the twentieth century, when Tōhoku natives increasingly turned their eyes away from relocating to Hokkaidō and instead decided to seek their fortunes in foreign lands, first to the United States and Canada, then later to the Philippines and Brazil. The comparatively late movement of northeastern migrants, in stark contrast to the initial waves of migration from Japan's southwest into the "Japanese" communities created around the Pacific, had consequences for emigrants from the Tōhoku region. The customs and practices of the migrants from Japan's southwest, rather than traditions characteristic of Japan's northeast, would take hold as the

[1] Alan Takeo Moriyama, *Imingaisha: Japanese Emigration Companies and Hawai'i, 1894-1908* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985).

cultural template which defined the "Japanese" within those foreign lands.

Caught between two identities, a notion of the Japanese immigrant imposed upon them by their new foreign neighbors and an identity as emigrants from the domestic Japanese region of Tōhoku, the migrants formed a new, hybrid identity that incorporated aspects of both: an emigrant-immigrant identity. At the same time, intellectuals and politicians in Japan-proper struggled to define what it was to be "Japanese" within their own territory. An increasing awareness of local identities and differentiations began to permeate Japan following the Meiji Revolution (1867-1869); indeed, somewhat paradoxically, the advent of globalization sparked an upsurge in debates in Japan about co-existing, yet competing, collective identities at the sub-national, national, and supra-national levels.[2] The production of collective identity represented the projection or superimposition of traits that are tied to a particular spatial dimension, which are then projected across a group to satisfy the need for roots.[3] The same trend, this chapter will show, swept across the migrant community of Japanese living abroad, simply at a different scale.

One component part of the creation of collective identities internal to overseas Japanese enclaves along the Pacific coast of North America was in fact rooted in Japanese regionalism.[4]

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[2] Tessa Morris-Suzuki, "Lines in the Snow: Imagining the Russo-Japanese Frontier," *Pacific Affairs* 72, no 1 (Spring 1999); Sari Pietikäinen and Jaana Hujanen, "At the Crossroads of Ethnicity, Place and Identity: Representations of Northern People and Regions in Finnish News Discourse," *Media, Culture & Society* 25 (2003): 251-268; Anthony Rausch, "Collective Identity Creation and Local Revitalization in Rural Japan: The Complex Role of the Local Newspaper," *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies* 4, no. 1 (September 2004), http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/articles/Rausch.html (accessed 20 April 2015).

[3] In *Imagined Communities*, Ben Anderson articulates how identity is not simply a construction of the "who," but also the "where" and "when" an individual or group exists: temporal and spatial elements. Pietikäinen and Hujanen pair this fact with Richard Sennett's argument in "Growth and Failure: The New Political Economy and its Culture*,"* that there is a need to satisfy roots results in strong commitments to locality. See Sari Pietikäinen and Janna Hujanen, "At the Crossroads of Ethnicity, Place and Identity: Representations of Northern People and Regions in Finnish News Discourse," *Media, Culture & Society* 25 (2003): 254; Richard Senett, "Growth and Failure: The New Political Economy and its Culture," in *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*, eds. Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash (London: Sage, 1999), 15; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 267).

[4] This phenomenon did not apply to every overseas Japanese community. For example, see Daniel Inouye, *Nine Clouds: A Social History of New York City Nikkei, 1900-1940*, (PhD diss., New York University, 2009). Inouye, in intricate detail, outlines how the New York Nikkei community was in some ways exceptional when compared to

To people in the receiving countries, "the Japanese" was a monolithic construction. But from within the Japanese community itself, significant differences distinguished the immigrants from their fellow countrymen. Divisions riddled the inner structure of these Japanese overseas enclaves, often breaking down along the lines of regional dialect, tradition, and culture.[5] Language differences functioned as the impetus for an initial first schism within the Japanese overseas community, but, over time, the idea of regional difference became institutionalized as migrants began to accept a social structure which separated each group into distinctive sub-communities based on imported—often invented—traditions from a native Japanese homeland. By the time northeasterners began arriving in earnest to Hawai'i, California, and Vancouver, in the 1900s and 1910s, Tōhoku émigrés confronted an international community that already had a set view of "Japanese" culture, tradition, and character based on on observations of first wave of immigrants which came overwhelmingly from Chūgoku and Kyūshū.[6]

This chapter will explore the components of "Tōhoku-Japanese" identity and how émigrés from Tōhoku reconciled these multiple, and sometimes conflicting, traditions. Migrants rallied behind their national identity when confronted with a hostile political and social climate in their new host communities. However, the internal heterogeneous structure of the Japanese community abroad resulted in the creation of a regionally-based emigrant "Tōhoku" identity. Japanese traveling abroad to the United States retained the dual identity of both *emigrant* and *immigrant* while abroad. The first was divisive within the overseas community itself, based on a regional identity that reflected their Japanese, emigrant origins. The second was inclusive, an

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communities in Hawai'i and along the Pacific Coast of the United States; one such factor, he notes, is the lack of kenjinkai in the case of New York; Inouye, 458-459.

[5] For example, see Audrey Kobayashi, "Regional Backgrounds of Japanese Emigrants to Canada, and the Social Consequences of Regional Diversity for Japanese Canadians," in *Albatross Discussion Paper*, Series 1 (Montreal: McGill University Department of Geography, 1986); Yukiko Kimura, *Issei: Japanese Immigrants in Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988); Mie Hiramoto, "Dialect Contact and Change in the Northern Japanese Plantation Immigrants of Hawai'i," *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 25, no. 2 (2010): 229-262.

[6] Mie, "Dialect Contact and Change," 229-262.

immigrant identity that could accommodate both foreigners' external stereotypes of the "Japanese" while still incorporating the day-to-day experience of surviving in a foreign land.

Moving from the outside-in, this chapter will examine how emigrants from Japan's northeast lived within three cultures. First, migrants existed within the socio-political imagination of the receiving country as but one of a sea of immigrant "others." Next, within specific multicultural settlements, each northeastern migrant represented just another stereotypical "Japanese" laborer. Third, and perhaps most important, internal to the Japanese community itself each man or woman became pigeonholed into a stigmatized sub-community based on regional markers. In other words, while living abroad, émigrés had to span regionality and nationality, foreign stereotypes and community bias. Many maintained the dual, and sometimes competing, identity as both *emigrant* and *immigrant*. They became "Tōhoku-Japanese."

The creation and maintenance of this "Tōhoku-Japanese" identity took a tangible form, becoming institutionalized within communities abroad. Kenjinkai, or prefectural associations, emerged that were member-based organizations that aided migrants in adapting to their new lives far beyond the shores of their native places in domestic Japan. These self-aid societies surfaced in Japanese settlements around the Pacific, celebrating, and in some cases discovering, the particularlistic traits that set the domestic regions of emigrant origin apart from other domestic Japanese regions. Thus, this chapter will investigate how international mobility among Tōhoku natives helped sharpen and clarify distinctive domestic regionalism far beyond the bounded space of the Japanese nation.

To be "Japanese" abroad, the hegemonic culture of the first wave Issei

Before the Meiji Revolution, the Tokugawa shogunate had a longstanding prohibition on international exchanges between Japanese subjects and foreign nationals. While the notion that Tokugawa-era Japan was completely isolated from the rest of the world during the *sakoku* (closed country) policy has been successfully challenged by historians for decades, from the 1640s through the 1850s the official law of the land in Japan can be characterized by the limitation of foreign trade, the prohibition of Christianity, the restriction of foreigners on Japanese soil, and the prevention of Japanese subjects from traveling abroad.[7]

Not only did the *bakufu* government try to limit international migration during this time period, but that policy was effective: historical demographers have shown that even domestic migration during the Tokugawa period remained close to home.[8] For example, in his study of Yambe village in northeastern Japan, today part of Yamagata Prefecture, Kinoshita Futoshi enumerates how migration between 1760 and 1870 did not extend past a 10km radius of the village.[9] In other words, Tokugawa-era migration remained a generally localized affair; however, this does not mean that no one traveled at all. In addition to the highly regulated and ritualized system of alternate attendance (*sankin kotai*) that caused members of the *bushi* class and their vassals to make regular pilgrimages between their homes in the provinces to their permanent

[7] There is a vast literature problematizing assumptions that "s*akoku*" was a policy of complete isolation beginning in the 1980s. See Tashiro Kazui, "'Sakoku' jidai no bōeki," *Kikan gendai keizai* (1982): 37-47; Ronald Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Nagazumi Yōko, ed., '*Sakoku' o minaosu* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1999); Kawakatsu Heita, ed.*, 'Sakoku' o Hiraku* (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 2000). However, this literature primarily deals with early modern Japanese interactions with other Asian countries or the Netherlands in Europe. It does not discount the official governmental stance limiting contact with the majority of European nations or the United States.

[8] Kinoshita Futoshi, "Edoki nōmin no jinkō idō patan: Tōhoku nōson no shūmon aratamechō no bunseki kara," *Shakai keizai shigaku* 66, no. 4 (2000): 369-388.

[9] Ibid. This work came from Kinoshita's dissertation on life in Yambe village during the Tokugawa period. For greater detail and a wonderfully rich statistical documentation, see Kinoshita Futoshi, "Population and Household Change of a Japanese Village, 1760-1870," (PhD diss., University of Arizona, 1989).

estates in Edo, the Tokugawa period marked a time of significant growth of cities.[10] Within the rural spaces as well, a tradition of *dekasegi* migration, or "working away from home," provided families with additional income while also providing seasonal laborers for agricultural districts.[11]

A uniform periodization for Japanese international migration is a somewhat difficult task, as historians often base their assessments on both the domestic political history of Japan and the international climate in a particular recipient nation. For convenience, because the chronology of migration to the United States matches many other Commonwealth countries, I will provide a general break down to explain the different periods of Japanese migration in similar terms as historian Alan Moriyama. The first period, between 1868 and 1885, is widely agreed to be a time of nebulous control and uneven regulation of migration by the central government. While technically migration was not permitted, there was a trickle of overseas mobility during this time by contract laborers and even colonists to the Kingdom of Hawai'i and parts of the Americas.[12] For Moriyama, the prewar era featured four other distinct periods defined by the shifting domestic (Japanese) and international (United States) attitudes towards migration: when the Japanese government sponsored migration (1885-1894); when private companies, or *imingaisha*, middlemen organized migration (1894-1908); a period of unassisted, independently organized migration (1908-1924); and finally the period following the wave of anti-Japanese exclusion policies initiated by Commonwealth and former European settler colonies (1924-1965).[13]

The first wave of migrants to countries such as Canada, the United States, and the Kingdom of Hawai'i were not from Tōhoku; however, their reception shaped the experience of

[10] James McClain, John Merriman, and Ugawa Kaoru, eds., *Edo and Paris: Urban Life and the Early Modern Era* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).
[11] Long before the advent of "modernity" with the Meiji restoration, Ōu, and later Tōhoku, had a long tradition of *dekasegi* labor that temporarily brought young men from inland to the coastal fisheries during the winter and helped fill labor shortages for agricultural harvests in the spring and fall. See *Capitalism from Within: Economy, Society, and the State in a Japanese Fishery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
[12] Moriyama, *Imingaisha*, xvii.
[13] Ibid, xvii-xviii.

Tōhoku migrants abroad for decades. In the words of Roger Daniels, author of the canonical text on Japanese immigration to the United States, *The Politics of Prejudice*, "it has been noted by almost every student of Japanese immigration, both to Hawaii and to the United States, that a surprisingly high percentage of the immigrants came from four prefectures in one small area of southwestern Japan."[14] These men and women, the initial groups of legal Issei (first generation migrants), created a double legacy for future Japanese immigrants. From the moment they stepped off the boat, they entered a world where their nationality and race defined them. In those nations, common knowledge of the Japanese people came only from a vague understanding of Japan's place within the larger global community. It was not rooted in personal interactions between every-day laborers and the population at large; therefore, each laborer became a kind of cultural ambassador as they entered the *tabula rasa* conditions of overseas settlements. The personal interactions between Japanese immigrants and Brazilians, Canadians, and Americans formed the core impressions of a Japanese stereotype, particularly in comparison to immigrants from other nations.

Emigrants as embodiments of national prestige

The first trickle of migrants moving abroad traveled between 1868 and 1885, a period when the Meiji government did not officially sanction overseas migration. The earliest encounter between Japanese émigrés and foreigners took place in the Kingdom of Hawai'i when, in 1868,

[14] Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), 5-6. See also the map in Yosaburo Yoshida, "Sources and Causes of Japanese Immigration," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 34 (September, 1909), 161. Based on the number of passports issued by each district between 1899-1903, Hiroshima leads the nation with 21,871 passports issued followed by Kumamoto with 12,149, Yamaguchi with 11,219, and Fukuoka with 7,698. Miyagi prefecture and Fukushima in Tōhoku are tied at 10th with 1,613 passports issued each.

141 men and six women from Tokyo and Yokohama sojourned there as contract-laborers.[15] Japanese officials might have ignored this illegal migration if not for the fact that the foreign contractors in Hawai'i mistreated these workers. The powers in Tokyo could not ignore the implications of these men and women's plight, resulting in official intervention that led to the return of forty two people to Japan.[16]

In the international arena, domestic social class or regional distinctions of individual migrants were not recognized; the negative reception of any Japanese citizen, regardless of the circumstances of emigration or location from which they left Japan, thus, could have lasting diplomatic implications.[17] Politicians in Japan viewed the harassment of Japanese laborers in Hawai'i as portentous of how international powers may come to treat the nation at large. In an international political climate dominated by Western imperialistic nations, Meiji politicians purposely painted a sharp contrast between the Japanese migrants and other Asian coolie labor. In North America, backlash against Chinese and Indian laborers, along with growing calls to legally exclude those migrants from crossing into places, seeped into diplomatic relationships.[18] An article in the Japan Mail lamented that "it cannot be reasonably hoped that a distinction will be made between Chinese and Japanese, when both alike present themselves to the American laboring man under the same aspect, namely, that of outsiders willing to work for wages which, in the case of the American citizens themselves, would be regarded with contempt."[19] An insult to any Japanese citizens abroad, even if they had traveled illegally, became an affront to Japan's

[15] Moriyama, *Imingaisha*, 1.
[16] Yamashita Sōen, *"Gannenmono" no omokage: Hawai nihonjin imin hyakunensai kinen* (Honolulu: Hakubundo Book Co, 1968), 78. Additionally, 40 went on to the USA, and less than 50 remained in Hawai'i after the conclusion of their three year contract.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Daniels, *Politics of Prejudice*.
[19] *Japan Mail* (1892)

international prestige.[20]

The government's anxiety over having any Japanese subject ill-treated, or worse classed with other coolie laborers, resulted in the new government revoking permission for any Japanese migrants to move to Hawai'i, issuing a clear statement that not only did the American Eugene Van Reed propose to "hire a large number of Japanese subjects of the lower class," but "that their situation would be similar to that of slaves."[21] Any laborer working abroad served as a kind of unofficial ambassador of "Japaneseness" in nations around the Pacific.Ultimately, the negative reception of these 147 people to Hawai'i became a symbol of why Japan should restrict migration, a restriction that lasted for seventeen years.[22] Thus, during the first decades of Meiji rule, no Japanese laborers could legally venture abroad—at least without official sanction from the government—yet they still became part of the early Japanese diaspora. Regardless of this official ban on migration, in 1869 a small number of refugees from Aizu-han (now part of Fukushima Prefecture in Tōhoku) started a colony in California; within two years the colony, as described in the next chapter, fell to ruin and disappeared from memory for decades.[23] Ultimately, although few in number, their stories became parables of failure which traveled back home and justify Japan's hesitancy to allow their subjects to live abroad.

After a nebulous period in the legal structures of government sponsored migration during

[20] Daniels, *Politics of Prejudice*, 4.
[21] Japanese Minister and Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs to Sir Harry Parkes, British Minister to Japan, Oct. 19, 1869, enclosure in Parkes to Wodehouse, Oct. 29, 1869. Quoted in Ralph S. Kuykendall, "The Earliest Japanese Labor Immigration to Hawaii," in *University of Hawaii Occasional Papers*, no. 25 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, February, 1935), 11.
[22] Daniels, *Politics of Prejudice*, 4. While there continued to remain a fear concerning how lower class laborers could reflect poorly on the nation, the early years of Meiji did also hold a few stories of success.These narratives came from a different class and population of Japanese subjects, individual students and diplomats. These men proved the exception to emigration rules, as they could travel abroad with official sanction. This gives further indication of the government's quest to represent their population as civilized to foreign powers and to limit overseas encounters with foreign populations to only Japan's best and brightest.
[23] This settlement, the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony, began when a Dutch arms dealer John Henry Schnell, an adviser to Lord Katamori Matsudaira of Aizu Wakamatsu, recruited a small number of people to flee inevitable defeat of their clan in the Boshin war. He rented a small piece of land, populated it with his Japanese wife and other Aizu retainers, in effect bringing in the first Japanese immigrants to America.

the first decade and a half of Meiji rule, the Meiji leadership officially legalized emigration. Pressures, both foreign and domestic, forced the Meiji government's hand and, by 1885, the central government created a legal structure to control international intercourse through emigration. This meant that there was a new class of men and women venturing overseas who would join the ranks of a kind of unofficial cultural ambassadors representing what it was to be "Japanese" to other foreign nationals. Even after the government legalized migration in 1885, allowing common subjects to move beyond Japan's juridical boundaries for one of the first times in centuries, Japanese officials did not lose their concern over how such migrants would represent Japan internationally. Over the span of the next nine years, roughly 30,000 laborers sojourned to Hawai'i as short-term *dekasegi* workers (lit: working away from home) with the hope of returning with great wealth.[24] At that time, the nation still chaffed under the burden of unequal treaties that chipped at Meiji sovereignty within the global order dominated by powerful, imperialistic nations.[25] Therefore, to achieve great power status and regain complete sovereignty, every man, woman, and child needed to present the face of Japan as civilized and modern.

One of Japan's most prominent intellectuals during the Meiji period, Nitobe Inazō, worked tirelessly to promote the stereotype of Japanese as a civilized nation far superior to other Asian countries within the international arena. Nitobe's work was particularly successful as propaganda, as he published works in English as well as Japanese. For example, the thrust of his 1891 English language text, "Japanese in America," proposed that Japanese civilization instilled a unique morality, particularly a "strong sense of personal and national honor."[26] To further drive

[24] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei*: *The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), 40.
[25] The is a large literature on the explicit dialogs about how to transform Japan's international place and cast off the status as a semi-colonized nation to a powerhouse with an extensive empire of its own. For an excellent intellectual history of the redefinition of Japan as separate from China, see Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
[26] Nitobe Inazō, *The Intercourse Between the United States and Japan: An Historical Sketch* (Baltimore: The Johns

home this assertion, Nitobe provides a translation of a letter written from a father to his son as he leaves for America:

> Above all, take it close to thy heart to live worthy of thy country. Remember that thou wilt be thrown amongst strangers of different ideas and customs. With a standard different from that which thou has been accustomed, and with a harsher measure, will they mete thee. Every word thou utterest falls not upon indifferent ears; every act of thy hand somebody watches. Should any action of thine dim in the least the lustre of thy country's glory or stain the brightness of thy family's records, then father me no longer father, I will no more son thee my son.[27]

This anecdote, translated by Nitobe into formal English, subtly implied a high level of education and breeding even among Japanese laboring migrants. Furthermore, Nitobe neatly outlined the important contribution that every Japanese emigrant made on Japan's national reputation, reassuring his English-speaking audience that Japanese citizens were indeed civilized.

Thus, there was a conscious effort on the part of many government officials to limit any possible candidates deemed to have unsavory regionally-based traits that would reflect poorly on the empire. This led some Meiji bureaucrats and scholars to explicitly evaluate the traits of those from different regions, identifying and targeting the best candidates to move abroad. The migrants who moved illegally in 1868 and ultimately failed came from Yokohama and Tokyo in the Kantō; therefore, government officials made sure that the majority of the first waves of post-1885 Issei did not come from those areas. Instead, they drew recruits from a different geographical space, the rural areas of Hiroshima and Yamaguchi in the Chūgoku region, as well as Kumamoto and Fukuoka in Kyūshū.[28]

The American historian Yuji Ichioka provides convincing evidence of how regionalism within Japan proper resulted in this phenomenon. For example, the consul general in Hawai'i,

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Hopkins Press, 1891), 175.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Jonathan Dresner, "Japanese Meiji Government Instructions to Emigrant Laborers: A Study in Documents," *Pan-Japan: the International Journal of the Japanese Diaspora*, 5, nos. 1-2 (Fall/Spring 2007): 27.

Andō Tarō, singled out the migrants from the Chūgoku region as the ideal population for recruitment. Andō based his judgment on his personal bias while also tapping into a common stereotype that people in Japan's southwest paid close attention to cleanliness, displayed great industry, and knew the value of thrift.[29] He also suggested that those from Kyūshū would be acceptable populations to recommend to emigration companies.[30] In contrast, Andō warned against sending too many laborers from the very places that the erstwhile 1868 migrants had called home—parts of Kantō like Yokohama and Tokyo—because he deemed such men as "lazy and self-indulgent" and prone to gambling.[31] Thus, the Japanese community in Hawai'i became organized around Chūgoku natives, that population recruited during the formative years of active, government-sponsored migration.[32]

Andō's personal history may account in part for his hierarchical vision of Japanese regionalism that, perhaps counter intuitively, seems to ascribe "value" to individuals from the southwest and a wish to dub them as perfect migrants to places like Hawai'i. Early in life, Andō had deep attachments to Edo (Tokyo) where he attended and worked at prestigious schools before the revolution.[33] During the Meiji Revolution he sided with the Shogunal loyalists rather than with the Meiji royalists, serving as an officer in the continued resistance against the Meiji regime during the Boshin war. Andō joined Enomoto Takeaki in the resistance to the Imperial army's coup against the Tokugawa regime, escaping to Hokkaidō by boat following the collapse of the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1868. As part of the small remnant of feudal lords and officers in

[29] Ichioka, *The Issei*, 42.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] The periods of Japanese migration abroad is generally divided into three periods. The first consisted of government-sponsored migration—a time when the government controlled, recruited, and facilitated short-term labor contracts. The second began after the privatization of migration following the rise of immigration companies called *imingaisha*. The final period, that of independent migration, represents the time when Tōhoku natives began to migrate in significant numbers to North and South America.
[33] For a very informative and succinct explanation of Andō Tarō's career as it relates to his impact on Japanese-Hawai'ian relations, see Kimura, *Issei*, 132-135.

Hakodate, he witnessed the creation of the short-lived independent state known as the Republic of Ezo (January 1869-June, 1869).[34] In the end, however, the Meiji government squelched the resistance and some members of that secessionist movement in Ezo (Hokkaidō) came to serve in the Meiji government.[35] Andō, depite being on the wrong side of the revolution, was considered to be a genius by many during his student years at Sokuzen Yasui as well as his time working as a principal of the English school in Waseda. Eventually Andō was tapped to join the new Meiji government where he served as interpreter for the Ambassador Plenipotentiary Iwakura Tomomi's 1872-3 visits to the United States and Europe, the consul general to Hawai'i from 1886-1889, and ultimately would enjoy a brilliant career in the Foreign Service.[36]

For Andō, Hawai'i was a place beyond the central sphere of the government power that served as a location of exile, hardly an ideal posting for an individual hoping to move up in the Japanese Foreign Service. In fact, while "he was considered by the Japanese government to be the only man in the diplomatic service who could bring order to the Japanese plantation workers in Hawaii," he viewed his relocation to that eastern Island chain as a demotion.[37] Taking into account his displeasure at being relocated to Hawai'i with his historical ties to the north from the Boshin War, it is possible that, for Andō, the emigration of men and women from Chūgoku could serve as a welcome outlet for royalist commoners from the south.[38] Ultimately, the written record does not substantiate Andō's private motivations behind the regionalism displayed in his recommendations.

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[34] David Forsyth Anthony, "Administration of Hokkaido under Kuroda Kiyotaka, 1870-1882: An Early Example of Japanese-American Cooperation" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1951).
[35] For example, Kuroda Kiyotaka, the influential Meiji politician and elder statesman, suggested that the erstwhile president of the Republic of Ezo himself, Enomoto, should serve in the new government. As a result, Enomoto became the minister of communication under the Meiji regime. Anthony, "Administration of Hokkaido."
[36] Kimura, *Issei*, 133; Franklin Odo and Kazuko Sinoto, *A Pictorial History of the Japanese in Hawaii 1885-1924* (Hawaii: Bishop Museum, 1985), 75-76.
[37] Kimura, *Issei*, 133.
[38] For a very informative and succinct explanation of Andō Tarō's career as it relates to his impact on Japanese-Hawai'ian relations, see Kimura, *Issei*, 132-135.

Regardless of whether or not Andō actually viewed Hawai'i as a place to exile individuals from royalist prefectures or as a location of opportunity for migrants, his recommendations still reflected the generally-held and regionally-inflected stereotypes of his day.[39] Starting from the early Meiji period, articles seeking to define regional markers—like those in prominent journals like *Nihonjin*—or anecdotal writings of eminent policy makers of the day—like Nitobe Inazo—time and again ascribed specific traits to the people based on their native place regionalism.[40] In Hawai'i, the populations of the southwest became those that officials like Andō marked as having qualities as "ideal" for immigration, a fact born out in the demographics of early settlement patterns abroad: a staggering 96.1 percent of all Japanese migrants to Hawai'i were Chūgoku and Kyūshū émigrés.[41] Unfortunately for this study, the official reports from the period of government-sponsored contract labor (1885-1894) had little to say about how the recruiters officially viewed the traits of those from Japan's northeast because during that time, as discussed in chapter one, many Tōhoku emigrants ventured to Hokkaidō rather than overseas. In the case of Hawai'i, those migrants left their homes for many of the same reasons those from Tōhoku moved to Hokkaidō in large numbers—internal dynamics such as rural poverty, environmental conditions, and the active encouragement of migration by certain prefectural governments.[42] However, people from the southwest also dominated overseas migration due to the influence of recruiters and officials with tunnel vision, men who focused on the southwest because of regional stereotypes that painted those from other regions, such as Yokohama and Tokyo, as

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[39] Ichioka, *The Issei*, 42.
[40] This is a significant literature; but just to name a few, see "Ōshūjin to Kyūshūjin," *Nihonjin* 3, no. 4 (January 1897): 10, reprinted in *Nihonjin* 14 (1983): 604; Nitobe Inazo, "Kikoku no jinzai no shūkaku,"(1898), reprinted in *Nitobe Inazo zenshu* 20 (1985): 280-281; or the dozens of texts which identified individuals from "Tōhoku" as being similar to those from Scotland in England as listed in Kawanishi Hidemichi, "Tōhoku ha nihon no sukottorando ka," in *Rōkaru histori kara gurōbaru histori e: tabunka no rekishigaku to chiikishi* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2005): 207-225.
[41] Kimura, *Issei*.
[42] Michiko Midge Ayukawa, *Hiroshima Immigrants in Canada 1891-1941,* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), xviii.

prone to consorting with prostitutes, gambling, and otherwise being "lazy and self-indulgent."[43]

This does not mean that no immigrants to North America during the end of the nineteenth century came from regions surrounding Tokyo, Yokohama, or, more important for this study, the Tōhoku region. There was a loosinging of government oversight of migrants based on regional or socio-cultural stereotypes and those individual's subsequent reflection on national prestige at the very moment when Japan became grudgingly became acknowledged internationally as a great power. In 1894, the government decided to get out of the international migration game and empowered private emigration companies (*imingaisha*) to direct emigration operations and some independent migration began.[44] This resulted in an increase in migration of Japanese from regions like the northeast abroad. Some emigration companies, such as the Sendai Imingaisha and the Tōhoku Imingaisha, specifically targeted the relatively untapped international labor possibilities northeast.[45] Other companies went so far to expand their recruitment base as to hire prominent Tōhoku natives, such as Katsunuma Tomizō, who will be discussed at length in the next chapter, to gain access to this population of willing agricultural workers from the north. Nonetheless, by the first decade of the twentieth century the loosening of control over direct recruitment of specific migrant groups, as well as growing prejudice against immigrants in foreign countries, once again brought the issue of emigration into discussions of protecting Japanese prestige abroad.[46]

From the other side of the Pacific very different, and often conflicting, visions developed

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[43] Ichioka, *The Issei*, 42.
[44] For more, see the definitive work on the mechanism of Japanese migration to Hawai'i during the period of private emigration companies: Moriyama, *Imingaisha*.
[45] Tōhoku imin gōshikaisha gyōmu kankei zakken, Gaimusho record listing: 3.8.2.157; Sendai imin gōshikaisha gyōmu kankei zakken, Gaimusho record listing: 3.8.2.167. Gaimusho, Tokyo.
[46] Foreign prejudice is a major theme in the literature on Japanese migration to North America and beyond. For foundational works, see Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*; Patricia E. Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants 1858-1914* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989).

of "the Japanese." At the same time that non-Japanese neighbors within international host communities began to display a growing resentment towards resident Japanese-as-immigrant, at the national level the foreign elites from those same host nations began to assign positive estimations to the group "the Japanese" based on the rising prestige of Japan-as-nation. For example, it is often asserted that President Theodore Roosevelt was "so enamored" with Nitobe Inazo's classic work of pro-Japanese proselytism, *Bushido: the Soul of Japan*, that he purchased upwards of sixty copies of the text to distribute among his cabinet members, other colleagues, friends, and acquaintances.[47] While this growing respect among American elite did much to temper the growing nativist voices in America calling for more regulation on Asian immigration, it could not silence the xenophobia. Between 1907 and 1908, the two governments exchanged a series of unofficial notes that culminated in the so-called "Gentlemen's Agreement," a set of informal diplomatic correspondences between officials of the two nations that promised Japan would curtail the emigration of migrant laborers in exchange for the United States not passing any exclusionary policies explicitly targeting Japanese.[48]

According to articles published within the American press, Japanese officials regularly attempted to mitigate any damage done to popular opinion of "Japan" based on personalized interactions with "Japanese" immigrant laborers. For example, in a 1908 article in the *Boston Evening Transcript* relates how "leading men, whose voices have influence in Japan," argue that

[47] Tyler Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1959), 35. Figures vary widely with regard to the actual number of texts purchased and distributed. However, it is clear that Roosevelt did read the text, based on discussions of *bushido* between Roosevelt and fellow Harvard alumni Kaneko Kentaro as depicted in Michiko Nakanishi, *Heroes and Friends: Behind the Scenes at the Treaty of Portsmouth* (Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher, 2005). The influence of Roosevelt's positive estimation of Japan on the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth is a standard trope when discussing Japanese-American diplomacy following the Russo-Japanese war. For example, see the webpage, Consulate General of Japan in New York, "President Roosevelt's Mediation of the Treaty of Portsmouth," 150 Years of Shared History, http://www.ny.us.emb-japan.go.jp/150th/html/rooseveltE.htm (accessed 20 April 2015).

[48] The so-called "Gentlemen's Agreement" lasted until 1924 when growing domestic pressure emanating from the Western United States forced the issue of exclusion, resulting in the passage of the 1924 Immigration Act which effectively banned Japanese migration to the United States.

"injury to the prestige of the country [Japan] comes in much greater degree from permitting the emigration of an undesirable class of coolies who misrepresent the nation abroad."[49] By doing this, the paper declared, the "delicate question of Japanese prestige has been comfortably settled."[50] Indeed, this explanation of the reason for poor reception of their citizens in America allowed them to separate those "undesirables" from the rest—those people were not representative of the nation or the Japanese population at large.

Imaging "Japan," discovering the "Japanese"

The reception of Japanese immigrants in Brazil is emblematic of how foreign imaginings of the Japanese held by elite classes coexisted, and sometimes collided, with personal interactions between the population at large and individual migrants. At the turn of the century, most emigrants flocked to established Japanese communities in North America and Hawai'i; however, in 1908 a group of intrepid Japanese set forth to settle a new land. The reception of these migrants in São Paulo represents a formative moment which displays the multiple layers of stereotyping migrants confronted in new lands. While the world diplomatic community had reevaluated Japan as a superpower following the display of international might after defeating the Russians in 1905, it was through personal interactions that the Brazilians formed their image of what it was to be "Japanese." In this way, these first migrants to Brazil remained cultural ambassadors and became the foundation for the vibrant Japanese community for the next hundred years. Additionally, unlike other moments of first settlement in places like Hawai'i or Canada, where Tōhoku was largely unrepresented among *gannen-mono*, in Brazil people from

[49] "Coolies Injure Prestige: Japan's Argument for Checking Emigration," *Boston Evening Transcript*, 3 March 1908, Last Edition.
[50] Ibid.

Fukushima prefecture in Tōhoku was the fourth largest group.[51] In fact, the first seventy-seven émigrés listed on the official boarding registry came from Fukushima prefecture.

When the Kasato-maru steamed out of Kobe on the 28th of April, 1908, to land safely fifty-one days later in Santos, Brazil, the construction of a Japanese stereotype formed around personal interactions as well as perceived notions of race and nationality. Alcino Santos Silva, the Brazilian Consul in Japan, described his initial impression of the migrants as being "not completely unfavorable." However, he also made racialized statements based on the very fact that they were Japanese and thus "of small stature," "appearing weak rather than strong," and "extremely ugly."[52] Physical characteristics, those things readily visible to customs staff and the current residents of São Paulo became the primary basis for judgment of "the Japanese," particularly signs of modernity such as an attention to personal hygiene and sartorial differences.[53]

This racialized definition of the Japanese as Asian competed with many Brazilian elites' opinion that held the Japanese citizens in high regard, placing them socially on equal, if not better, footing in comparison to some European immigrants; this image was bolstered by convincing arguments by Japanese diplomats that their subjects were essentially "white."[54] While race did enter into the discussion through the comparison of "white" and Asian, the

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[51] Kōkoku Shokumin Kaisha, "Lista de Bordo do Kasato-Maru" 1908, in *Kasato-Maru: Uma Viagem pela História da Imigração Japonesa* (Sao Paulo: Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, 2009), 51-74. The first seventy-seven émigrés listed on the official passenger list hailed from Fukushima, with another ten coming from Miyagi. This group included family units and individual men, and was a mix of farmers and members of skilled professions such as carpentry. By far, the largest number of migrants came from Okinawa, numbering 348 individuals. As we shall see, the Brazilian government considered "Okinawa" migrants to be distinct from Japanese, reducing the official number of "Japanese" migrants at a bare majority (446). Of this figure of "Japanese" migrants, Tōhoku residents comprised 20% of the total, outnumbered only by migrants from Kagoshima (133) and Kumamoto (108).

[52] This is outlined in a letter sent by the Brazilian Consul in Japan to Alcino Santos Silva, Diretoria de Terras, Imigração e Colonização (Secretary of Agriculture, Commerce, and Public Works) in São Paulo, "Carta remetida pelo cônsul brasileiro no Japão," (1908), 2 in *Kasato-Maru: Uma Viagem pela História da Imigração Japonesa*, (Sao Paulo: Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, 2009).

[53] Ibid.

[54] Jeffery Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 87.

Japanese seemed to be an exception to many rules. Popular press underscored that positive view of the new recruits in a front-page article in the newspaper the *Correio Paulistano*, published shortly after the arrival of the Kasato-maru, which clearly stated that "the [Japanese] race is very different, but not inferior."[55] On whole, therefore, despite a few reservations, the 1908 perception with the "Japanese migrant" elicited positive reviews from both governmental official and the popular press. Three decades later this assessment still held sway among some Brazilian politicians. In a speech before the House, Federal Deputy Acylino de Leão proclaimed that "Japanese colonists…are even whiter than the Portuguese."[56]

In Brazil, however, while all Japanese subjects on the Kasato-maru were considered to be from "Japan," not all of the passengers were "Japanese." The total manifest of the Kasato-maru drafted by the Kōkoku Shokumin Kaisha (Empire Emigration Company) enumerating the passengers on the Kasato-maru originally numbered 841, although only 781 actually landed.[57] In this case, the definition of which passengers were "Japanese" occurred before they stepped onto the Santos docks and mimicked the racial, rather than regional, prejudices found within the Japanese mainland itself. Among these recruits, the largest group aboard came from Okinawa, a territory that had been colonized and annexed into the Japanese empire just decades earlier in 1879. Okinawans faced ethnic discrimination within the greater Japanese empire, a discrimination that began based on racial and cultural differences as the island was incorporated into the nation-state, then later became coterminous with Okinawan geographic regionalism. While they comprised the greatest percentage of migrants on the Kasato-maru from a single

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[55] J. Armandio Sobral, "Os japoneses em S. Paulo," *Correio Paulistano*, 25 June 1908, 1, excerpted in Tomoo Handa, *Memórias de um imigrante Japonês no Brasil*,(São Paulo: T.A. Queiroz, 1980), 10. Jeffery Lesser, *Negotiation National Identity*, 87.
[56] Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity*, 115.
[57] Kōkoku Shokumin Kaisha, "Lista de Bordo do Kasato-Maru" (1908) in *Kasato-Maru: Uma Viagem pela História da Imigração Japonesa* (Sao Paulo: Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, 2009).

region, numbering close to half of the total passengers, it was not the distinctive Okinawan culture which would define the "Japanese" within Brazil.[58] Indeed, while all of the passengers were technically Japanese subjects, the Brazilian officials identified two races among the passengers: Japanese and Okinawans.

For Okinawans, regardless of their superior numbers, they did not define which regional sub-culture would become the new "Japanese" orthodox. There is a plethora of scholarship about the Okinawan community overseas, from North and South America through to Southeast Asia.[59] In Japan itself, Okinawans were not accepted as cultural or racial equals to those from the main islands. And that discrimination did not end at the water. The first large waves of legal overseas migration began in 1885, less than a decade after the surrender of the Okinawan kingdom and the official incorporation of the island and its peoples into the Japanese *naichi* (mainland). In overseas communities in North America and Southeast Asia, there remained an internal divide between Okinawans and those considered part of the ethnic and cultural Japanese population.[60] At the same time that Okinawans were being integrated into the domestic, national narrative of Japan, Okinawan also comprised the largest group of migrants abroad during the prewar period. Abroad Okinawans continued to be a group that retained a strong communal identity and became insular, which created a significant and long-lasting split within overseas communities of Japanese subjects around the world.[61] The source of cultural power that would set the template

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[58] Based on the fees paid for the passage, the next largest was Kagoshima and then Yamaguchi; Tomoo Handa, *Memórias de um imigrante Japonês no Brazil*, 19.

[59] For example, see United Okinawan Association of Hawaii, *Uchinanchu: A History of Okinawans in Hawaii* (Honolulu: Ethnic Studies Program, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1981).

[60] For a discussion of the divisions between Okinawan and other Japanese subjects, see Yukiko Kimura, *Issei* . In that text, Kimura draws attention to how marginalized regions considered part of mainstream Japanese culture, for example those from Fukushima, felt a kinship with the ostracized Okinawans; I also uncovered anecdotal evidence of how Okinawans were considered distinct from the rest of the Japanese community during oral interviews in Davao, Philippines (2010), and to see a text that deals with the merging of multiple regionalisms of Japanese subjects into a single community through dialectical changes, see Mie, "Dialect Contact and Change," 229-262.

[61] Kimura, *Issei*.

for "Japaneseness" in Brazil was a combination of the second largest groups, settlers from Japan's southwest.

Surprisingly, in the case of Brazil, this division was not only recognized by the immigrants, but by some Brazilians in high government positions. The Brazilian Consul himself distinguished a sharp racial and cultural distinction between the Okinawans and the rest of the passengers. Furthermore, Silva seemed to favor those from Okinawa to those from the mainland, highlighting how they had a more pleasant countenance and appeared to be more strong, resilient, and obedient.[62] Apart from a racial distinction, regional dialect further highlighted for Consul Alcino Santos Silva categories of difference. Silva commented on how Okinawan migrants spoke a different language, and required interpreters even when speaking to other Japanese.[63] They were "Okinawans" rather than "Japanese."

Further subdivisions between the mainland "Japanese," such as distinction between dialects or appearance, went unremarked – or at best viewed as immaterial – to the Brazilian officials. Regardless of regional tradition or cultures, all men and women who emigrated from the main islands of Japan were viewed as a singular cultural entity. The greatest proportion of which were from the southwest of Japan, like Kagoshima and Kumamoto but also which included eighty-seven Tōhoku émigrés and nine migrants from Niigata prefecture in the neighboring Chūbu region.[64] Those from Tōhoku who shared a distinctive dialect from those emigrating from the Southeast totaled 20% of the "Japanese" group.[65] Regardless, those from Fukushima and Miyagi became grouped in the Brazilian reports as "Japanese" and, thus, defined

[62] "Carta remetida pelo cônsul brasileiro no Japão" in *Kasato-Maru: Uma Viagem pela História da Imigração Japonesa* (Sao Paulo: Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, 2009).
[63] Ibid.
[64] Kōkoku Shokumin Kaisha, "Lista de Bordo do Kasato-Maru" (1908), in *Kasato-Maru: Uma Viagem pela História da Imigração Japonesa*, Sao Paulo: Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, 2009).
[65] Ibid.

by the cultural traits of other regions—outnumbered 2:1 by emigrants from Kumamoto or Kagoshima.[66] While externally members of the foreign community considered the entire migrant population of "Japanese" as homogeneous, within those nascent "mini-Japans" regional idiosyncrasies created discord between different factions and dissolved, at least internally, any illusion of a unitary identity.[67] Ultimately, internal divides within mainland Japanese communities abroad created a space for the subgroup of "Tōhoku-Japanese" internally within overseas settlements while at the same time the notion of the "Japanese," as a race, could be viewed by external players as a homogenous group.

To be from both Japan and "Tōhoku," regionalism from the outside

From within the "Japanese" community in multiple locations abroad, as an emigrant region like Tōhoku became an integral component of belonging. By the mid-1920s, Japanese governmental reports recognized the utility of such regional distinctions, stating that "it is an undeniable fact that we retain some emotions for our [native] region. Therefore, it is useful to identify populations by their respective prefectures…"[68] Even as late as the 1930s, at a meeting of the Osaka Mainichi, the prominent newspaperman Yatsutarō Sōga of Honolulu remarked "they came from various regions of Japan. Their respective regional characteristics are reflected in the formation of a mini-Japan [in Hawai'i] and, in general, even their occupations differ by prefecture."[69] The legacy of emigrant place, for the first generation of migrants in particular,

[66] Ibid.
[67] Yukiko Kimura, *Issei*, 28. This phenomenon affected people from Tōhoku and Okinawa in particular, as it amplified the same prejudice internal among Japanese abroad as they had experienced at home. There's extensive literature on Okinawan discrimination at home and abroad. For an emblematic study, see United Okinawan Association of Hawaii, *Uchinanchu*.
[68] *Kanada dōhō hatten shi,* 1, no. 3 (1924): 57 in *Kanada imin shiryō* 1, 317.
[69] Sōga Keihō Yatsutarō, *Gojūnen no Hawai Kaiko* [My Memoir of Fifty Years in Hawai'i] (Honolulu: Gojunen no Hawaii Kaiko Publishing Society, 1953), 144. Because of a pen name, Sōga Keihō is often referred to as Sōga Yasutarō.

marked regionalism as a primary site for identity creation.

The same phenomenon was noted by emigrants themselves living and working abroad. Looking back on the structure of the Japanese-American community over a generation, S. Frank Miyamoto remarked in a pamphlet about the Japanese community in Seattle that "it is only when the Japanese leave their native land and congregate in large numbers in alien places that the differences of *ken* become noticeable and make for a degree of intimacy among those of the same *ken* that has a certain clannishness about it."[70] The division was further exacerbated because these divisive markers manifested themselves as observable traits. Even if immigrants wished to reject their regionality once entering a new country, they could never be accepted simply as "Japanese." This section will investigate how regional characteristics permanently marked northeasterners as a group apart; each migrant became part of a newly found sub-community. They became "Tōhoku-Japanese."

New Tōhoku immigrants entered into a land where their backgrounds isolated them from their fellow countrymen. Their heritage as migrants from Tōhoku could not be hidden. The 1924 publication, *Kanada dōhō hatten shi*, highlights how identification with one's native place remained a critical distinguishing characteristic for immigrants. Indeed, the author explains that "unless you were born in Canada, it should be enough to simply say that your place of birth is Japan," in truth "we retain considerable, deep vestiges of our provinciality [dating from] the era of feudal clan governance."[71] Continuing, the article emphasizes how "observing surface traits, like dialect, customs, lifestyle, feelings about life, activities, and tastes, it is possible to ascertain a person's native place."[72] All of these things, the author concludes, mean that "for better or

[70] S. Frank Miyamoto, "Social Solidarity among the Japanese in Seattle," *Bulletin* 11, no. 2 (December 1939): 117.
[71] *Kanada dōhō hatten shi*, 1 no.3, (1924): 57 in *Kanada imin shiryō* 1, 317.
[72] Ibid.

worse, we each bear such idiosyncrasies."[73]

This recognition of difference began as early as on the boat. Shibuya Shōroku, a *dekasegi* (short-term) migrant from Fukushima who crossed to Hawai'i in 1907, remarked upon the sartorial differences that allowed passengers to quickly distinguish between those from Tōhoku versus Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, or Okinawa. He remembers how his appearance differed from the rest, from the shoes on his feet to the close-cropped hair atop his head.[74] He remarks with disdain how "people from Okinawa wore dirty yukata that were they had outgrown. They wore kimonos that were so short that sometimes you could see their kneecaps."[75] In contrast, people who had already traveled abroad were already dressed in western garb. By their clothes alone, according to Shibuya, "people from Tōhoku, Okinawa, or those crossing back…you could tell at first glance where they generally came from."[76]

However, while outward appearance of each passenger proved to be illuminating when distinguishing different groups on Shibuya Shōroku's boat, those things could be changed over time as each emigrant adapted to their new environment. However, there was one other marker that went deeper than clothes or hair style: dialect. "If they opened their mouth," Shibuya explained, "it was easy to tell [their home region]."[77] Indeed, Yokohama-born sociologist writing in English, Yukiko Kimura argues that in overseas settlements like Hawai'i, "the first and foremost point of encounter was the language."[78] Communication, therefore, represented a key site where Tōhoku migrant confronted a new normative definition of "Japanese-ness."

At the same time that both regions and prefectures were relatively new administrative

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[73] Ibid.
[74] Maeyama Takashi and Shibuya Shōroku, *Hawai no shinbōnin: Meiji Fukushima imin no kojinshi* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 1986), 59.
[75] Ibid, 58.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid, 59.
[78] Kimura, *Issei*, 23.

units, those boundaries became mapped onto certain dialect markers which, in turn, produced regional culture overseas. During the early Meiji period, government officials fast-tracked many language reforms to standardize communication as part of Japan's modern nation-building project. This new standard language, or *hyōjungo*, was a hybrid of the elite, literary forms originating in Kyoto and the day-to-day speech of the "common man" in Tokyo.[79] By the time that Tōhoku migration from Fukushima and Miyagi shifted from Hokkaidō abroad, some of those emigrants had already begun to adapt to the national standardization of language that was based on a Tokyo vernacular. When these same immigrants moved abroad they again had their dialect—and even nouveau standard Japanese—classified as inferior. Thus, even for men and women who did master a level of proficiency in the standard Japanese institutionalized back home, the predominant overseas language which came from southwestern Japan remained foreign.

The eminent linguist Salikoko Mufwene, building upon the work of Harrison et al., refers to this phenomenon the Founder Principle. Essentially, Mufwene conjectures that the language of the first dominant migrant group to a new location created the linguistic template for all those who arrived later.[80] These founder populations did not always speak the predominant dialect in their places of origin, resulting in a phenomenon whereby "some features which might be considered disadvantageous in the metropolitan varieties of the lexifier (because they were rare, not dominant, and/or used by a minority) may well have become advantageous in the speech of

[79] There has been extensive research on this phenomenon. For example, see: Christopher Robins, "Revisiting Year One of Japanese National Language: Inoue Hisashi's Literary Challenge," *Japanese Language and Literature* 40 (2006): 37-58; Hariku Shimoda, "Tongues-Tied: The Making of a 'National Language' and the Discovery of Dialects in Meiji Japan," *The American Historical Review* 115, no. 3 (2010): 714-731.
[80] Salikoko Mufwene, *The Ecology of Language Evolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 28-9. This phenomenon is applied specifically to Tōhoku migrants in Hawai'i, see Mie, "Dialect Contact and Change," 229-262.

the colonies founder populations."[81] Indeed, in the case of Japanese overseas enclaves in many North and South American frontier spaces, the dialects from either the Chūgoku or Kyūshū became the "correct" way to speak Japanese.

In Japan, the standard form of Japanese taught throughout the nation reflected the linguistic markers found within Tokyo dialect; however, in Hawai'i standard Japanese came built from the first settler's southwestern dialect. Back in Japan, however, those same southwestern dialects became stigmatized within Japan itself as parochial, abroad the comprehension of and facility with such speech patterns could prove invaluable. In other words, the dialect of the dominant group of first-wave migrants from the southwest relegated all other dialects—be it those spoken in Tōhoku, Okinawa, or even the nationally recognized standard of *hyōjungo*—to second-class status.

The irony of this situation was that, in general, the migrants from Fukushima in Hawai'i often possessed a significantly higher level of education than their compatriots from Chūgoku. During winter there could be no work in the fields, allowing young men and even women to dedicate more time to study.[82] These Tōhoku émigrés spent significant time studying not only ancient and modern Japanese history, but international history as well.[83] However, because dialect emerged as a critical marker for outward expression of Japanese identity, Chūgoku natives from the southwest of Japan viewed their educated peers from the north as ignorant and, thus, belittled them. In fact, in an excerpt of a 1980 interview between sociologist Kimura and Issei pioneer Goto Umeno, Goto relates how Chūgoku passengers gave travelers from Tōhoku

[81] Mufwene, *The Ecology of Language Evolution*, 9.
[82] Takahashi Kanji, *Fukushima iminshi Hawai kikansha no maki* (Fukushima City: Fukushima Hawaikai, 1958), 271; Kimura, *Issei*, 43.
[83] Ibid.

the derogatory name of 'Tōhoku Tojin' [Tōhoku Chinese] because of their dialect.[84] However, this feeling of disdain was mutual. Goto further recalls how her husband reacted to this slander, complaining that "these Chūgoku immigrants were so ignorant that they did not even know the real Japanese language," which, for him, was his native tongue and therefore the valid form of Japanese.[85]

Some Japanese from Tōhoku did not view those from the southwest completely unfavorably; however, the regional ties did result in a bias that favored members of their subgroup.

> The Japanese who comes to America, a strange land, is [sic] exceedingly happy to meet any other Japanese, and more so when they are from the same *ken*. They feel an intimacy which they did not know when they were in their home land. They feel as if they have known each other a long time and are kinsmen."[86]

For example, according to the aforementioned Shibuya Shōroku (渋谷正六), "the men from places like Hiroshima and Yamaguchi, they were honest men, but the people from Tōhoku were even more trustworthy."[87] The pool of Tōhoku migrants, while significant, tended to remain small enough to encourage larger, region-wide group affiliations resulting in the regional "Tōhoku" rather than prefectural (Hiroshima or Yamaguchi) groupings to become the framework for networks of loyalty and trust. Honesty was by no means monopolized solely by Tōhoku natives, but for people like Shibuya one measure of a Japanese emigrant did spring from that individual's native place affiliation. As we shall see, there were informal systems whereby patrons could vouch for and even enforce contracts between fellow countrymen, even more so if

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[84] Interview of Umeno Goto by Yukiko Kimura in 1980, quoted in Kimura, *Issei*, 30.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Statement by Fumiko Fukuoka in S. Frank Miyamoto, "Social Solidarity among the Japanese in Seattle," *Bulletin* 11, no. 2 (December 1939): 117-118.
[87] Maeyama and Shibuya, *Hawai no shinbōnin*, 59-60. The identification of individuals from the southeast often included breaking down their regional affiliation to the level of prefecture or occasionally city, partially because the large number of migrants lent itself to further differentiation; however, the pool of Tōhoku migrants, while significant, tended to remain small enough to encourage larger, region-wide group affiliations.

they came from your home territory due to the power of the native-place support institutions (*kenjinkai*) that developed in overseas Japanese communities. From the moment that Japanese émigrés started out across the Pacific, their lives began to revolve around regional stereotypes and stereotyping.

These divisions forced immigrants from the Tōhoku region to face a choice. To gain acceptance into that Japanese community abroad, individuals could elect to assimilate into that new hegemonic culture, which, while created by their national compatriots, remained partially foreign. Taking this path, which in essence demanded that immigrants consciously alter parts of their behavior, afforded Tōhoku migrants the possibility of escaping the onus of being identified as a member of an out-group. To assimilate completely, cultural markers had to be elided.

Some people went so far as to relearn how to speak Japanese itself. In Kimura's interview with Goto Umeno, Goto recalls how even when she used standardized Japanese, not Tōhoku dialect, other Japanese from the southwest could not understand her. As the wife of a Methodist minister, to encourage church attendance, she had to consciously modify her behavior to adapt to the dominant Japanese immigrant culture. "When we were on Maui," she recalls, "because I spoke the standard Japanese, some women felt uncomfortable and stopped coming…so I tried hard to learn to speak the Chūgoku-ben. It became so natural to me that it was hard for me to speak the standard Japanese when we had visitors from Japan."[88] Another woman from Tōhoku, Miyagi-native Furuyama Chukichi, also related to Kimura in a 1979 interview that "the people used to notice my Tōhoku-ben and asked me where I came from…but now, because most of my friends and acquaintances are of Hiroshima and Yamaguchi background, I talk the way they do."[89]

[88] Kimura, *Issei*, 30. Interview with Umeno Goto in 1980.
[89] Ibid. Interview with Chukichi Furuyama in 1979.

Day-to-day life within those plantations further exacerbated this distinction between regions, particularly with regard to language. When the Fukushima native, Shibuya Shōroku, arrived in Hawai'i in 1907, he quickly learned he could understand people from other northern prefectures, such as Miyagi, Yamagata, and even Niigata, but that communicating orally with those from Yamaguchi and Hiroshima posed a problem.[90] Fukushima émigrés tended to not have positions as *lunas* [overseers] on plantations, but instead worked for Chūgoku managers.[91] For Tōhoku migrants working in the fields, Shibuya explains, the language barrier was surprisingly great.[92] He just didn't know words common in Hiroshima that directly related to his job as a vegetable grower. His instructions were peppered by regionally specific words. For example, when his Hiroshima overseer wanted him to till a field, he couldn't understand. In the dialect of Hiroshima, they used the verb '*utsu*' to mean 'tilling,' rather than the term Shibuya was familiar with, '*tagayasu*.'[93] Not only did '*utsu'* not mean to cultivate the field for Shibuya, it meant something completely different, to buy and sell something.[94] Thus, dictated by necessity, Tōhoku natives adapted and learned words in other regional dialects for survival.

Life on the plantation created an even smaller mixed community than urban spaces, a kind of micro-"mini-Japan." These Japanese lived side by side with not only people from different regions of Japan, but also those from completely different countries. In some ways that intensified the understanding of Japanese regional distinctions, but it also drew them together as each dealt with the need to communicate with non-Japanese speakers. In those spaces, a new language was born; a kind of pidgin dubbed *happa* [混血語, language of mixed blood/racially

[90] Maeyama and Shibuya, *Hawai no shinbōnin*, 68.
[91] Jinshichi Tōkairin, founder of the Fukushima Kenjin-kai, quoted in Kimura, *Issei*, 35.
[92] Maeyama and Shibuya, *Hawai no shinbōnin*, 66-67.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.

mixed language] constructed of Japanese, English, and native Hawai'ian.[95] The Japanese words did not come simply from dialects in Yamaguchi and Hiroshima, but it also incorporated some terms from Tōhoku-ben.

In some ways, the late arrival of the Fukushima community in Hawai'i resulted in a climate where they were the outsiders; their regional traditions and dialects became subordinated to Chūgoku regionalism, in the process further retarding their social and economic status. Language marked them as less civilized than their fellow Japanese, as they could not understand or be understood by the established immigrant community. Seniority on plantations relegated Tōhoku émigrés to positions of common laborers, while select Chūgoku natives rose to become overseers. Of course, some people from Fukushima did indeed rise to be leaders within the larger Japanese community. However, those from the southwestern provinces, nonetheless, held most of the positions of prominence.

These realities provided another option for Tōhoku migrants: to embrace their newly discovered regionality, celebrate Tōhoku culture and traditions, and create their own support structures. Hotels and boarding houses sprang up to service particular Japanese regional populations. For example, the Tōhoku Ryokan, operated by Jinshichi Tokairin, catered to migrants from the northern Japan.[96] Such boarding houses, as well as group migration enabled migrants to establish themselves in particular plantations such as Ewa on Oahu, provided emigrants the comfort of being able to speak their native dialects freely when among other Tōhoku emigrants. This path, however, came with the cost of being identified as less "Japanese" than their national compatriots.

Whatever track an immigrant chose it remained necessary for Tōhoku émigrés to

[95] Ibid, 69-71.
[96] Kimura, *Issei*, 259.

incorporate at least some aspects of other sub-cultures into their new international, yet regional, identity. It was impossible to remain unchanged in their new world, a world where day-to-day life required compromise and adaption to their new circumstances. The measure of a successful migrant became defined through how closely they could assimilate traits from other prefectural groups as well as Caucasians.[97]

To Be Both Emigrant and Immigrant: The Institutionalization of Difference within Unity

The need to preserve an interwoven relationship between emigrants' Japanese regionalism or native place with the immigrant experience resulted in the creation of institutions that could support their new trans-local identity. While the previous section explored how those outside viewed émigrés as a homogeneous collection of Japanese nationals, this section examines the splits that existed inside that community. According to the geographer Audrey Kobayashi, belonging within the Japanese community broke down into categories that were decidedly regional, whereby sharing a common place of origin proved "the most significant means by which community members are identified."[98] While Kobayashi's research focuses largely on Japanese-Canadian immigrants and sojourners from the Kansai region's Shiga prefecture, this principle can be applied to Japanese communities from Tōhoku relocating throughout North and South America. Immigrants needed a place where they could protect their emigrant identity while accommodating the reality of their day-to-day lives.

Migrants uprooted from their native soil created institutions which could preserve their regional, shared connections. These exclusive mutual aid societies serviced only individuals hailing from the same native place, and were known as *kenjinkai*, or prefectural organizations.

[97] Ibid, 24.
[98] Kobayashi, "Regional Backgrounds of Japanese Emigrants to Canada," 2.

For example, in southern California a community of individuals seeking comfort and aid from fellow immigrant-emigrants from their native Fukushima prefecture in Tōhoku began such a kenjinkai, proclaiming that: "the purpose of founding Fukushima kenjinkai is for the mutual friendship and exchange among members in joy and sadness, happiness and sorrow, and to help each other moving forward to accomplish our ambitions in a foreign land."[99] This prefectural organization, which expanded membership to other former residents from the Tōhoku region over the years, remains active a century later.

To discuss these divisions in the international, yet local, community of migrant enclaves abroad, it is important to remember the methodological approach of the eminent Japanese historian, Tsukada Takashi. Tsukada applies a two-pronged approach to his analysis of outcaste and beggar groups in premodern Japanese history, urging scholars to consider evidence in terms of "layers and combinations" (*jūsō to fukugō*).[100] Just as Tsukada stresses exploring the internal dynamics and power structures, he also takes into account the inter-relationships between that group and other groups in society. Similarly, the form and structure of migrant institutions require analysis of group dynamics at both the intra- and inter-group level. These grassroots associations that recast the internal division of the immigrant community would prove foundational in creating, perpetuating, preserving a micro-community of Tōhoku migrants within

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[99] Shinkichi Koyama, *Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai sōritsu hyakushūnen kinen* (Torrance, CA: Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai of Southern California, 2008), 70.

[100] Seminal works by Tsukada that display his dual approach, see Tsukada Takashi, *Kinsei Nihon mibunsei no kenkyū* [The Status System of Early Modern Japan] (Kobe: Hyōgo buraku-mondai kenkyūsho, 1987); and, Tsukada Takashi, *Mibunsei shakai to shimin shakai: Kinsei Nihon no shakai to hō,* [Status Society and Civil Society: Society and Law in Early Modern Japan] (Tokyo: Kashiwa shobō, 1992). His more recent works continue to complicate and blur the boundaries of groups that do not fit within the simplistic vision of Tokugawa society of a *shi-nō-kō-shō* system. For example, see the specific, textured case studies from Osaka in Tsukada Takashi, *Kinsei Ōsaka no hinin to mibunteki shūen*, [Hinin Groups and Marginal Groups in Early Modern Osaka] (Kyoto: Buraku mondai kenkyūsho, 2007). I would also like to thank Professor Tsukada for his informative and thought-provoking paper "*Hinin* Households and Population Registration in Early Modern Osaka" (presentation, Inaugural Association for Asian Studies-in-Asia conference, National University of Singapore, 15 July 2014). For a succinct overview to the influence of Tsukada on the field of Japanese urban studies, see Daniel Botsman, "Recovering Japan's Urban Past: Yoshida Nobuyuki, Tsukada Takashi, and the cities of the Tokugawa Period," *City, Culture and Society* 3 (2012): 9-14.

international venues.[101]

Leaders of these institutions selected cultural markers of difference from their home while incorporating overseas immigrant experiences to create that hybrid identity of "Tōhoku-Japanese." The socialization and unity among members, strengthened by the belief they were distinct from others in the internal Japanese community, defined their identity based on a celebration of their Tōhoku-ness. At the same time, however, their emigrant identity did not exist in a vacuum. First generation Tōhoku emigrants in strange lands also needed adaptive ways to rationalize their shared experiences as immigrants overseas. This immigrant identity, based on international experiences, had to incorporate things beyond their previous identity which had been based solely on their lives in Japan.

The *kenjinkai* filled three distinctive roles. First, members pledged to provide financial support for struggling immigrants, allowing these men and women a level of protection from the vagaries of the volatile social, environmental, and political climates. Second, *kenjinkai* events and meetings became a way that men and women find camaraderie in their home abroad and preserve their cultural ties to their native place in the face of growing assimilation. Third, these institutions provided a space where Tōhoku natives could commiserate about their trials as immigrants as well as judiciously experiment with the melding of their regional identities with the larger Japanese and international community.

Of course, there were also differences further dividing those from Tōhoku; Tōhoku encompasses all of northeastern Honshu island—an enormous space which is further broken down into prefectures, districts, cities, towns, and villages. As discussed in the previous chapter,

[101] The name *kenjinkai* means "group of people from the prefecture." These organizations were created to service individuals from one specific prefecture (*ken*); however, some celebrating whole regions (*chihō*). Such region-wide institutions generally titled themselves *Tōhoku-jinkai*, but sometimes they took the misnomer of *kenjinkai.* For the sake of this chapter, I will use *kenjinkai* as the general term for all such organizations, regardless of whether they were built around members from Tōhoku at large or were prefecturally specific.

the Meiji government gerrymandered those administrative boundaries in order to lessen the sway of hold-over loyalties from the feudal era. Domestically, those new boundaries aided in a melding of the Tokugawa period cultures: the drawing of one modern prefecture in fact joined multiple clan territories, which forced members with historically different clan to accommodate and merge their traditions. The previous chapter showed how the Meiji government attempted to shift Tokugawa era loyalties by redistricting and dividing the former domainal boundaries into multiple prefectures. Similarly, the mini-Japans that sprang up overseas furthered this domestic phenomenon, as so-called *han* nationalism (loyalty to one's lord) transformed into regional loyalties which then traveled into overseas territories.

The Japanese community abroad largely ignored these smaller subdivisions within Tōhoku, lumping together all men and women from the northeast together, just as their foreign neighbors viewed all immigrants as "Japanese." Often, men and women from different northeastern native places embraced this merger into a single regional group, Tōhoku. These migrants tended to be latecomers to new lands, and being outnumbered by foreigners and compatriots from other Japanese regions, the group identity of "Tōhoku-Japanese" developed. Thus, while it could be said that some immigrants identified as "Miyagi-Japanese" or "Fukushima-Japanese," the greater Japanese community lumped all together as "Tōhoku-Japanese."

Emergence of a *kenjinkai*

During the first decade of the twentieth century, a number of North American-based *kenjinkai* (association of prefectural people) that served Tōhoku emigrants exclusively

emerged.[102] In areas with a large presence of individuals from the same prefecture people could divide their affiliation as being, for example, Fukushima-Tōhoku-Japanese. However, this does not obviate the importance of each immigrant's location within the larger category as having an inherent tie to Tōhoku in general. In areas without a significant presence of Japanese from Tōhoku in general, and even in areas where individual prefectures did a have strong contingent of representatives, Tōhoku-*jinkai* formed. Thus, even while region was sometimes further subdivided by prefecture, the structure of the segregated Japanese community which grouped migrants based upon region, *kenjinkai* embraced their fellow regional compatriots.

Kenjinkai often began as casual meetings of friends, but quickly grew into organized institutions and would have a longevity that resulted in the continuation of many into the present. For example, in California between 1905 and 1908, a few Fukushima natives working at the Rafu Shimpō, a Japanese language newspaper in Los Angeles (known as Rafu-shi by Japanese migrants, 羅府市), decided to create a place where they could expand their network of friends to other immigrants from Fukushima.[103] Following up on this idea, these men opened a temporary office in the Rafu Shimpō building itself as over half of the employees at that time, five of the nine workers, hailed from Fukushima.[104] There, the Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai was born.

The desire to gather together men and women with the same native place traditions, thus,

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[102] Native-place associations are by no means unique to the case of Japanese living overseas; indeed, such associations played a critical role in the development of ethnicity in migrant communities all over the world. There is an excellent and rich literature dealing with native place associations in the case of the Chinese Diaspora. See Wang Gungwu, *The Chinese Overseas: From Earthbound China to the Quest for Autonomy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Aihwa Ong and Donald M. Nonini, eds., *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism* (New York: Routledge, 1997); the four volume series from Liu Hong, ed., *The Chinese Overseas* (London: Routledge, 2006); Madeline Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration between the United States and South China, 1882-1943* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2000).

[103] Koyama, *Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai sōritsu hyakushūnen kinen*.

[104] Unfortunately, I have been able to find very little about the institutional history of Rafu Shimpō, particularly in relationship to the strong presence of Fukushima natives on staff. Further research in this area could go a long way in explaining how regionalism influenced the recruitment and retention of skilled workers within Tōhoku networks.

began organically as an outgrowth of a tacit—and later overt—acknowledgment of the importance of emigrant regionality abroad. The first meeting of the Southern California Fukushima Prefectural Association, created by roughly five men, included only twenty people; however, in just three years, the membership had grown to 172.[105] In other words, these institutions sprang up at the grassroots level.

The creation of other organizations based on the Tōhoku region at large, rather than a specific prefecture, also emerged. For example, in the Sacramento region, people from Aomori, Iwate, Yamagata, Akita, Miyagi, and Fukushima banded together to found the umbrella organization called the Association of People from Tōhoku in Northern California (北加東北人会).[106] This group served the same function as prefecture-specific groups; they invited their cultural compatriots, both those who came to settle and those who only moved to work for a short time, to gather together to provide companionship, commiseration, and mutual aid such as financial resources, credit coops, and labor pools. Elsewhere, on plantations, the small numbers of migrants from one specific place made it even more apparent that those from Tōhoku as a region shared bonds. As previously mentioned, despite local variations in speech throughout Tōhoku itself, people from places like Fukushima, Miyagi, and Yamagata could mingle and understand each other. The discovery of the utility of a region-wide unity further bolstered the development of an overarching category of Tōhoku-ness.

Kenjinkai bylaws explicitly confront the issue of regionality as it relates to membership. Take for instance the Miyagi Kenjinkai of Southern California. Specifically, the *kenjinkai*'s charter clearly states, in article 2, that the organization "will be comprised of people from

[105] Koyama, *Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai sōritsu hyakushūnen kinen*, 70-71.
[106] Yatsu Riichirō, *Zaibei Miyagi kenjinshi* (Los Angeles: Zaibei Miyagi Kenjinshi Hensan Jimusho, 1933), 138.

Miyagi."[107] Similarly, the larger umbrella organizations of Tōhoku-jinkai underscore that target population are emigrants from the six Tōhoku prefectures.[108] The creation of exclusive *kenjinkai* was not limited to Tōhoku-based groups, but had a long history among the first wave of Issei from other locations. Dominant groups, like those from Hiroshima, Kumamoto, and Okayama, formed some of the first *kenjinkai;* however, other out-groups, like the Okinawans, used *kenjinkai* as a way to seek comfort from the prejudiced Japanese immigrant community. In other words, *kenjinkai* served as exclusive clubs to provide emotional support and friendship for particular emigrants groups among the immigrant community in addition to serving other functions such as loan coops, place to make social introductions, providing ready access to labor pools emigrating from the same Japanese regions, etc.

Sharing the wealth

One fundamental aspect of the *kenjinkai* was to provide a safety-net for members in times of need following environmental tragedies, failed business ventures, or even anti-Japanese legislation. This purpose was also clearly outlined in original bylaws, such as Article 3 of the Southern California Miyagi Kenjinkai, which declares that their "purpose is to promote the mutual welfare and friendship of our members as well as come to each other's need swiftly."[109] The same provisions exist in other Tōhoku societies based in Southern California such as the aforementioned Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai. The records of this *kenjinkai* stands as an example of how such institutions embraced their role in supporting émigrés from their native place, both in Fukushima and throughout Tōhoku, financially. For example, when the *kenjinkai* member Kōda Keisaburō, (国府田啓三郎) found himself in dire straits during his earliest foray into the

[107] Ibid, 95.
[108] Ibid, 156.
[109] Ibid, 95.

rice business, the *kenjinkai* offered him aid.[110] For Kōda, the combination of poor harvests, falling rice prices following WWI, and the political discrimination systematized in the Alien Land Law of 1920, bankrupted him.[111] Reacting to that need, the members of the *kenjinkai* offered him a lease to open a vegetable business in Southern California.

While Kōda declined that offer, wishing to remain a farmer rather than become a green grocer, his gratitude and dedication to the society remained. Later in life he achieved great success and prestige both in Japan and America. For Japanese living in America, he served as a powerful example of success as the so-called "Rice King" of California, and upon his death the Governor of Fukushima himself praised him as a man "born with an indomitable spirit."[112] However, even as he gained prestige, he never lost his loyalty to the *kenjinkai*. He requested that his descendants continue to participate as active members of the Fukushima *kenjinkai*, a tradition that his family continues to this day.

The Fukushima *kenjinkai* also supported their regional brothers both within California and back home in Tōhoku. They helped non-members such as Masuji Miyagawa (1916) and Mr. Morinobu (1921), funding their funerals in America and even going so far as to send Morinobu's ashes back to his Fukushima district of Iwase-gun.[113] Additionally, when the Fukushima native Kotaro Watanabi was injured and hospitalized in February 1910, the Association raised funds to

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[110] Ibid, 60, 62.

[111] The Alien Land Law of 1913 limited Japanese leases to agricultural land to a maximum of three years and barred further land purchases by Japanese aliens. However, the loopholes and terms listed in this law proved to be easy to evade. Many of these loopholes were closed with the passage of the Alien Land Law of 1920. Never the less, over time, Japanese businessmen simply found American citizens who would ostensibly hold 51% share in their ventures. Alternately, the land would be purchased in the name of second generation Japanese-Americans who were citizens by birth. Both of these tactics were employed by Kōda Keisaburō during the prewar period. For an in depth analysis of the politics behind the Alien Land Law and other exclusionary measures during the pre-Pacific War period see Rodger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 46-65.

[112] Dedication by Kimura Morie in Kawamura Yūsen, *Kōda Keizaburō den* (Fukushima: Hamadōri Shinbun, 1965).

[113] Satō Issui, *Nanka Kenjin-kai Record*, (1930) in Koyama, *Nanka Fukushima kenjinkai sōritsu hayakushūnen kinen*, 73-4.

help him cover his medical bills.[114] Another instance of outreach to their former Japanese home occurred when the Fukushima Kenjinkai of Southern California spearheaded a fund raising effort to support those in Japan affected by flooding in August, 1913. Ultimately, they raised $444.75 to send to Governor Masahiro Ota.[115]

One fascinating aspects of the Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai came not from the original group, but the groups it spawned. These groups, organized and populated by *kenjinkai* members, expanded the influence of their prefectural association into the larger Japanese community and even influenced further international immigration to Brazil. For example, in California proper, *kenjinkai* members began a *chochiku dantai*, or savings group, in order to fight anti-Japanese movements that discriminated against Japanese in the realm of business.[116] This group not only became a force in the Japanese community, *kenjinkai* members donated $1,000 of interest earned through their savings group to Fukushima to aid the education of the prefecture's low-income families.[117]

Ultimately, money and philanthropy became a way to build bridges between émigrés' native place and their new homes strengthening the growing trans-Pacific community. In his study of local development in southwestern Japan, specifically Yamaguchi prefecture, historian Jonathan Dresner clearly paints a picture of how remittances represented a key avenue for emigrant networks to influence the local, domestic Japanese economy.[118] Over the course of government sponsored migration (1884-1892), emigrants deposited over 1.2 million yen in remittances.[119] What's more, Dresner underscores how many early remittances were not sent to

[114] Satō Issui, *Nanka Kenjin-kai Record*, (1930) in Koyama, 73-4.
[115] Ibid, 74.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid, 72.
[118] Dresner, "Emigration and Local Development," 100-108.
[119] Ibid, 100.

the family of the emigrants but instead to non-family recipients, resulting in a greater circulation of funds could throughout the domestic community and economy at large. Initiatives organized by *kenjinkai* and individuals throughout North America turned their gaze across the ocean to their native Tōhoku, regardless of which of the six prefectures those men and women came from. For example, emigrants rallied to the aid of their native place following the great Tōhoku famine of 1905, a natural disaster that would impoverish huge swaths of Japan's northeast, and prove particularly devastating in Fukushima, Iwate, and Miyagi prefectures. In Fukushima farmers only produced one-fourth of their usual yield; in the district of Shinobu alone, they only harvested 6% of the average annual yield--5,330 *koku* rather than the usual 90,824 *koku*.[120] In Miyagi prefecture, the 87% crop shortfall led to the immiserization of approximately 280,000 of the prefecture's 900,000 people.[121] Tōhoku residents in Canada put forth a plea for funds that they could remit back home.[122] They sent the hardest hit areas that money, and their charity did not go unnoticed; on November 13th, 1906, the Japanese community in Vancouver received a letter from the governors of Fukushima, Iwate, and Miyagi prefectures thanking them for their aid in their native region's time of need.[123]

Standing as one astride two worlds

Another critical function of the institutionalization of communities based on emigrant origins related to socialization. These specific institutions celebrated the traditions of their

[120] A *koku* is a unit of Japanese measurement equal to roughly 5 bushels. Maeyama and Shibuya, *Hawai no shinbōnin* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 1986), 34.
[121] For statistics on crop yield, see Maeyama and Shibuya, *Hawai no shinbōnin*, 34; for population of Miyagi who became destitute, see Daikichi Irokawa, *The Culture of the Meiji Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 219.
[122] "Tōhoku kikin kyūsai no geki," in Sasaki Toshiji and Gonnami Tsuneharu, eds., *Kanada iminshi shiryō* 8 (2000): 1885.
[123] "San-ken chiji no reijyō," (November 13, 1906), reprinted in *Kanada iminshi shiryō* 8, 1893. This letter of appreciation is for a relief donation to the Tōhoku Famine Disaster was co-signed by Governors of Fukushima, Iwate, and Miyagi sent to the Japanese Community in Vancouver.

distinctive regional subgroup and strengthen immigrant memories of home in order to reduce migrant alienation. For the hopeful sojourners and resigned settlers both, the preservation of their roots through *kenjinkai* structures gave them comfort and reduced alienation. The birth of many *kenjinkai*, as mentioned above, came from a desire to meet and socialize with their fellow immigrants. Many can trace their humble beginnings to a meeting of friends, such as displayed in Fukushima Kenjinkai of Southern California. Over time, they published bulletins to members and Fukushima migrants, further expanding knowledge of their offices, activities, and encourage further exchanges between all Fukushima emigrants in Southern California and beyond.[124]

With that in mind, it is unsurprising that one of the most visible expressions of *kenjinkai* activities came through the organization of social functions such as picnics, parties, and festivals. In August, 1917, Southern California's Fukushima Kenjinkai hosted a picnic for all Fukushima residents in the area which was attended by 100 people; the following year, however, that number jumped to 300 people.[125] Indeed, over the course of just one year, there was a three-fold increase in attendance at the *kenjinkai* sponsored event. Such a snowball effect reveals the pull and appeal of such organizations, as well as the importance of kinship within the Japanese community from Tōhoku.**[126]** Such functions enabled immigrant-emigrants from similar backgrounds a convenient place to reconnect with their homeland—their regional homeland—while building new friendships built on shared roots in California.

However, even as *kenjinkai* highlighted the differences between their members and the rest of the Japanese community, they also needed to prove that their members were indeed

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[124] Satō, *Nanka Kenjin-kai Record*, (1930) in Koyama, 69.
[125] Ibid, 74.
[126] This function of a *kenjinkai* was not limited to the Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai or even to California. It was one of the main activities of such institutions around the globe, regardless of which region the prefectural organization represented. An example an invitation to a similar picnic in Southern California, this time organized by the Miyagi Kenjinkai, see Yatsu Riichirō, *Zaibei Miyagi kenjinshi* [History of the Development of the people in North America from Miyagi Prefecture] (Los Angeles: Zaibei Miyagi Kenjinshi Hensan Jimusho, 1933), 124.

"Japanese." Again turning to the Fukushima community in Southern California, many of that organization's sponsored events served to underscore member's dual place in the Californian context as both Japanese nationals as well as Tōhoku natives. In January of 1909, the *kenjinkai* threw a party to celebrate the New Year, attended by over 60 people.[127] Interestingly, while the party was held in the middle of winter, the attendees danced in traditional Japanese Bon Odori circles until late in the evening. Obon, generally celebrated during the summer months in Japan, is a time when people return to their ancestral hometowns to reconnect with their family and reaffirm their dedication to their roots. For the attendees, the incorporation of this dance of reunion into their festivities is telling; it is an act steeped in cultural connotations that inherently link members to their shared native place, in this case both Japan as well as Fukushima. Due to the success of that gathering, the Fukushima Kenjinkai began to utilize New Year's festivities to further cement *kenjinkai*—and Fukushima—unity overseas.[128] Winding up the meeting with calls of "Bansai! Bansai! Bansai!" to toast the long life of the Emperor that was a rallying cry common across all regions, there was little doubt that while Fukushima emigrants came together to celebrate their holiday with others from a shared native place, they also identified themselves as being Japanese immigrants.[129]

Preservation of home

Retaining transnational linkages through community-building served another important, if largely unspoken, function. Such *kenjinkai* activities provided a counter to the threat of assimilation, be it to the dominant regional traditions of "Japanese" culture abroad or to living in an international environment. For most people from Tōhoku leaving their native land the migrant

[127] Satō, *Nanka Kenjin-kai Record*, (1930) in Koyama, 69.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid. This party was thrown in cooperation with the Asaka Doshinkai (安積同志会), a mutual friendship society specific to a particular district of Fukushima prefecture that sent migrants to Southern California, Asaka.

dream did not generally include the aspiration to permanently settle abroad. While many Japanese would ultimately remain abroad, as sojourners turned settlers, the dream of returning home remained alive for the first generation.

There is little doubt that the majority of early migrants from Tōhoku embarked as sojourners, fully intending to return home in triumph with riches that would improve the lives of their family and community. This proved a powerful incentive for the fathers of migration who would become the central node for whole migrant communities abroad. For example, in Canada the entrepreneur Oikawa Jinzaburō, who will be discussed at length in the next chapter, enticed migrants to move abroad by stressing the temporary nature of overseas living when recruiting emigrants from their hometowns.

Buck Suzuki, the son of one such emigrant, relates how Oikawa mobilized this technique to great effect. Recalling conversations with his father, Suzuki stresses that Oikawa would proclaim that "the returns would be great, and that within a few years you could make enough money and return back to your home country and live happily ever after."[130] This dream of immigration as a temporary venture, a way to get rich quick and live happily ever after, proved particularly attractive to families struggling with new-found poverty in Japan proper following multiple years of famine, crushing taxes, population pressures, and the Russo-Japanese war.[131]

This need to retain a deep level of interaction with and understanding of home while abroad displayed itself in many ways in day-to-day migrant life. In fact, the diasporic experience created a tension between the desire to work hard to secure a better future for one's hometown and the incorporation of personal coping methods to combat the hard life and stress of the immigrant experience. Invoking the dream of home, wily men like Oikawa Jinzaburō could

[130] Buck Suzuki Interview (26, April 1973), Richmond Archives, Tape 31, side 1.
[131] Maeyama and Shibuya, *Hawai no shinbōnin*, 33-38; Takahashi Kanji. *Fukushima iminshi Hawai kikansha no maki* (Fukushima city: Fukushima Hawaikai, 1958).

motivate workers, proclaiming "work to return to our hometown in glory, by any means, work."[132] Similarly, Oikawa would use this desire to return as a way to discourage unsavory behavior such as sloth and overconsumption of alcohol. Reflecting back on his youth, Oikawa's daughter Shima relates that she often heard her father chastise workers, saying "you came all the way to Canada; you don't have time to be drunk."[133] In other words, early migrants had to constantly battle their aspiration to succeed and return to Japan with the day-to-day stigma of living abroad.

Oikawa retained a deep connection with his homeland; his cannery on "Oikawa Island" was comprised almost exclusively of individuals from Oikawa's own home village in Japan or neighboring areas in Tōhoku. He eschewed hiring Japanese from other regions because he believed that those from Miyagi prefecture and Tōhoku were simply more trustworthy.[134] In line with this regionalist thinking, Oikawa became one of the original members of his area's Miyagi *kenjinkai*. During the inaugural meeting in 1908, both Oikawa and his business partner, Satō Souemon, were listed as "supporting members."[135] The turnout for this meeting was rather good, with upwards of 110 people attending, and many of them had direct ties to Oikawa through business or blood ties. Ultimately, even as his prestige in Canada grew, his loyalty to his native place and dream of return remained. Finally, in 1917, he returned permanently to Japan where he lived out his final years in the prefecture of his birth.

Kenjinkai provided an organized venue where émigrés, both temporary workers and permanent settlers, could combat the hazardous threat of assimilation. To insure an easy return to their Japanese village, these institutions could provide a structure to remind first generation

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[132] Yamagata Takao, *Ushinawareta fūkei: nikkei Kanada gyomin no kiroku kara* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1996), 141.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Nitta Jirō, *Mikkōsen Suian Maru* (Tokyo: Kōdanshita, 1979).
[135] Miyagi kenjinkai, "Hakkaishiki kyokō," 10 November 1908, in *Kanada Imin Shiryo* 8 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 2000), 1625.

migrants of home and connect children to the parent's native place. In the *kenjinkai*, first generation immigrants could speak their native dialect, the byproduct of this being that their children could then hear, and perhaps gain familiarity with, the language of Tōhoku. However, not all migrants would return home. With this realization, a sea change occurred. Many Issei migrants accepted, and even embraced, that they were no longer sojourners but now settlers.

To gain acceptance and receive acknowledgment as part of the larger Japanese community, there emerged a growing awareness that it would be critical to accommodate other regional traditions into the narrative of Tōhoku culture itself. *Kenjinkai* events provided links to their home region, but also became another space where migrants could experiment with how to merge their immigrant experience with their Japanese identity. *Kenjinkai* sometimes became the springboard for new endeavors intended to bridge the gap between region and nation, even spurring new kinds of internationalism. On January 29, 1927, some members of the Fukushima *kenjinkai* of Southern California, such as Kōda Keisaburō, branched off and created separate organization, the Nanka Fukushima Kaigai Kyōkai (南加福島海外協会). This group, the Southern California Association of Fukushima Overseas, worked to encourage the relocation of Japanese to South America. After an on-site inspection of conditions in South America in 1929, Kōda and association volunteers raised $5,000 from both Tōhoku natives as well as the Japanese public in California at large to aid aspiring Japanese relocate to Brazil.[136]

Kōda continued to expand his activism further into the larger Japanese community, actions that are celebrated today by his descendants as well as his fellow Fukushima emigrant community; "both before and after the war," Kōda Farm's company web page proclaims, "he was a major financial supporter and active member of the JACL (Japanese American Citizens

[136] Koyama, *Nanka Fukushima kenjinkai, 74.*

League), the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights group."[137] Kōda Farms remains family-run, and every year Kōda's descendents honor their ancestor's desire that the company donate rice to Nanka Fukushima *kenjinkai* events. Thus, second- and third-generation descendants, individuals with no memory of a life back in Japan, could still retain a tie to their ancestor's Tōhoku identity.

Immigrant or national, not emigrant: the Nisei and Sansei

Kenjinkai granted immigrants the safety net to get started, and reduced the initial alienation of life far away from home, but many settlers soon began to take steps to become integrated and accepted by the entire Japanese community. Wealth allowed Fukushima natives to gain power within the larger Japanese community, and the plight of the overarching designation of being "Japanese" within the context of national politics and prejudice of the receiving countries demanded activism beyond the myopic internal politics of "Little Tokyo." To put it simply, as emigrants became immigrants and embraced the prospect of permanent settlement, the kinship of a shared nationality began to rival shared regionality.

For the children of first wave migrants, known as Nisei, their place of birth was not Japan. While many were sent back to Japan for schooling and to find a spouse, these men and women had a very different relationship with their parent's homeland.[138] As individuals of Japanese descent, and often holding dual citizenship, this generation began to recast themselves as "Japanese-American," "Japanese-Canadian," or "Japanese-Brazilian." Like second generation immigrants from other countries, particularly as many of these second and third generation

[137] Kōda Farms, "History of Koda Farms," http://www.kodafarms.com/hist_about.html (accessed 20 April 2015). Within the context of the community from Fukushima specifically, Kōda is listed in Koyama Shinkichi's text on the Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai as one of the great men in the history of Fukushima residents in California. The parts of his life that are celebrated are not limited to his work in that specific group, but also as an advocate for Japanese-Americans in general.

[138] K. Goto, "Rokujyūnen," in Onodera Kan'ichi, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku no mura: imin hyakunen to kokusai kōryū,* (Kesennamu-shi: self-published, Kōfūsha, 1996), 318.

migrants came of age during the tumultuous Pacific War, some went as far as to attempt to throw out the "Japanese" aspect of their identity entirely, reject their Japanese heritage, and embrace a status as full citizens in the country of their birth.[139]

Regardless of what path Nisei took, evidence shows that for many second generation immigrants the import of Japanese regionality dwindled in comparison with the Issei generation. In the case of Hawai'i, over time "the Fukushiman immigrants overcame the handicap of being later arrivals and the problems posed for them by their dialect and established themselves in various fields in the Japanese community of Hawaii. The Issei Fukushimans did not expect their Hawaii-born children to be their successors as Fukushimans, but as members of the larger community."[140] This realization marks an important turning point when Tōhoku-Japanese relinquished the dream of the sojourner to embrace their new lives as the settler. Such settlers and their children recognized the need to be immigrants first and emigrants second.

Even among their parents, more and more "Tōhoku-Japanese" Issei expanded their activities beyond regionally-specific organizations *kenjinkai* to become active members of the larger Japanese community. The Japanese community had a long tradition of banding together to create social, political, and economic groups designed to protect the interests of the Japanese population at large. The situation of living abroad, outnumbered and considered outsiders, meant that these organizations became a primary site of political power for "Japanese" within foreign lands. The executive councils overwhelmingly favored those with ties to Japan's southwest rather than those from the northeast.[141] Of course, part of this phenomenon arose organically based on the greater numbers of migrants from Chūgoku and Kyūshū; however, part of the

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[139] Bill Hosokawa, *Nisei: The Quiet Americans* (New York: W. Morrow, 1969); Ichioka, *Issei* (1988); Eric Walz, *Nikkei in the Interior West: Japanese Immigration and Community Building, 1882-1945* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012).
[140] Kimura, *Issei*, 48.
[141] Ibid, 35.

reason for this underrepresentation may also have stemmed from their cultural stigma as being from Tōhoku. To have a voice in their fate in their new homes, "Tōhoku-Japanese" took individual action and joined organizations that could present a unified front for all Japanese descent within those culturally pluralistic immigrant societies.

As northeasterners established themselves as successful and prosperous businessmen and farmers, some became activists fighting for Japanese rights among their increasingly hostile foreign neighbors. For example, when Oikawa Jinzaburō first decided to lease fifteen acres of land in the middle of the Fraser River, he could still receive a license from the government to work as a net man despite his Japanese citizenship. However, soon after he leased that land, the Canadian government began to pass a number of new laws intended to disincentivize Japanese migration to British Columbia. This impacted Oikawa's business both with regard to labor recruitment and access to prime fisheries. First, he needed to find people to populate his island, and he preferred to recruit his workers from his hometown based on a belief that "if you don't have people from your same prefecture and hometown, you cannot succeed in an enterprise in Canada."[142] The tightened migration made it extremely difficult to bring in those new workers, ultimately inspiring him to spearhead the epic journey of the illegal stowaways aboard the Suian-maru.[143] In fact, remembering back to her childhood, Oikawa's daughter Shima recalls that as "immigration restrictions were rapidly becoming strict, and my father seemed to be tearing out his hair" with frustration.[144]

In addition to the diplomatic issues leading to migration restrictions, British Columbia began to enact a number of economic barriers for Japanese businessmen. For example, when

[142] Takada Teruko, *Tōki tabiji no koe: Kanada Nikkei imin kutō* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, Tōkyō Honsha, 1991), 46.
[143] This story of the Suian-maru will be discussed at length in chapter three.
[144] Yamagata, *Ushinawareta fūkei*, 139.

white fishermen attempted to block his boats from prime fishing territory, he refused to back down. He declared that "we will cast our nets here and not give into the spirit of discrimination."[145] Over time, his name became famous among both whites and Japanese, partly from his business acumen but also because, in the words of his daughter, "…father fought. He was fighting in order to defend the life of the people on Oikawa Island."[146] The essence of what Oikawa fought for was his place, indeed the place of all Japanese fishermen, within the fisheries around Vancouver.

This rising tide of discrimination impacted the need of settlers to encourage the retention of their Japanese culture but also the acquisition of skills that would facilitate assimilation and acceptance into the settlement society's multicultural space. Some of the tension between retention of regional identity, "Japanese" identity, and identity within their new homes can be seen in the issue of schooling. Oikawa worked both within the *kenjinkai* structure and individually to help his family and workers navigate their affiliation to Miyagi prefecture and Japan, while at the same time offering them ways to acclimate to their new homes in Canada. For example, his daughter recalls how lucky she was because Oikawa arranged for his children to be taught in a Japanese school while encouraging her to learn some English.[147] He extended this dual approach to language and cultural learning by requiring some of his workers, particularly those who indulged in drinking and gambling, to attend church, a byproduct of which led to an increased understanding of English.[148]

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[145] Ibid, 142.
[146] Ibid, 143.
[147] Ibid, 141.
[148] Ibid.

Conclusion

Across the ocean and a world away from Japan, the definition of what it meant to be "Japanese" from "Tōhoku" was thrown into the crucible. Immigrants had to assimilate a number of things from the customs of other regions in order to become a part of the new Japanese orthodox abroad, formed by the dominant first wave immigrants who set the template for all later immigrants. However, the very act of incorporating such customs identified the idea of difference. Going one step further, the environmental stimuli and context of life abroad further forced changes to what it meant to be a Japanese migrant. Thus, in the case of Tōhoku natives living abroad, their new "Tōhoku" identification emerged as an outgrowth of discovered differences based on their emigrant roots. Additionally, they adopted new cultural traditions to prove their national affiliation at large, adapted to their new environment to promote peaceful coexistence within a foreign socio-political system.

This chapter traced the component parts of Tōhoku émigrés' overseas identity. First, the first wave of immigrants to North and South America served as cultural ambassadors whose actions would define the "Japanese" character within those lands. Government officials in Japan recognized this function, and attempted to mitigate any negative fallout caused by the actions of what they termed "undesirable" class of laborers. Additionally, these men and women, coming predominantly from Chūgoku or Kyūshū, had cultural traditions that were a combination of general Japanese practices as well as regionally specific traits. That blend of regional and national identifiers became superimposed on the external stereotype of "Japanese." Therefore, when migrants from Tōhoku arrived in greater numbers, they confronted an international community that already had a clear view of "Japanese" character through the lens of the regionally specific traditions and culture of Chūgoku and/or Kyūshū.

Second, this social climate resulted in the discovery of regional identity within the Japanese community abroad. The first wave Issei did not only define stereotypical behavior and traits to an external, international audience. This "Japanese" orthodoxy seeped into the migrant community itself. That new norm, built from a hybrid of regionally specific Chūgoku or Kyūshū traditions and nation-wide aspects of Japanese culture, placed Tōhoku migrants as subordinate to the hegemonic groups among the Issei community. Immigrants could not just meld into a unified overseas community. Marked by their region in dialect and culture, they sought comfort and kinship within a sub-community defined by their native place.

Therefore, organizations called *kenjinkai* arose to provide their brother emigrants with social support and aid in times of trouble. Many Issei wished to perpetuate continuity with their native places and preserve their culture while sojourning abroad. This is where the *kenjinkai* could serve their members as the bastion of native place culture. Those who did wish to return home needed to retain their identity to successfully transition back to their lives in Tōhoku. Even for those who had no intention to return to their homeland, such as those who did not stand to inherit land from their families or achieve standing in their former villages, still wished to associate with those who shared an understanding of their native region. Issei began to identify themselves first as being from "Tōhoku" and secondly as being "Japanese."

Finally, the inner divide of regionality broke down for later generations. Even as first generation migrants clung to their "Tōhoku-Japanese" identity, second and third generations did not have the same relationship with their parent's native place. These men and women were planted firmly in North or South America. Therefore, rather than try to perpetuate the regionalist divides of the Issei, many children embraced their duel cultural ancestry as "Japanese" and foreign citizens. In other words, future generations rejected the regionalist identity abroad,

instead embracing the similarities that linked all of those of Japanese descent; they became "Japanese-Americans," "Japanese-Canadians," or "Japanese-Brazilians" not "Tōhoku-Japanese."

But community building that could root immigrants in their new homes could not be accomplished solely through mutual aid associations and social gatherings. To ground themselves in their new world, these transplants needed to develop an immigrant history which form the basis of their sense of belonging in their new world. The next chapter will investigate the creation of a migrant mythos, one built on emigrant Japanese identity while also incorporating immigrant international experiences. The evolving history, manufactured through the mobilization of two narratives, that of the successful "father" of migration and the martyred and ultimately unsuccessful pioneering settlers in a strange land. I will argue that these oral and written histories, often promulgated and perpetuated through the social mechanisms of the *kenjinkai*, provided a sense of stability, constituted group heritage, and rationalized struggles of the immigrant experience.

CHAPTER 3

NORMALIZING THE EXCEPTIONAL: HISTORY, MYTH, AND MEMORY IN IMMIGRANT ETHNICITY

First generation emigrants from territories of the Tōhoku region in North America turned to cultural traditions emanating from shared native-place origins to define the sub-ethnic category of "Tōhoku-Japanese." History of a cultural regionalism, as shown in the previous chapter, divided the overseas Japanese community internally throughout Pacific coast enclaves. However, from the moment these Tōhoku migrants arrived in their new North American homes, a communal immigrant memory began to grow based upon lived experiences and everyday events, a narrative of identity that could accommodate their Japanese regional traditions while also taking into account the new North American surroundings. In this way, first generation migrants were not only borrowing from traditions specific to their emigrant past as Japanese from a particular native place, but they were also pioneers that became the root of a new history: a territorialized, immigrant community of Nikkei (Japanese living overseas). However, the story of these Tōhoku immigrants did not remain contained only within their new immigrant communities; it also became mobilized in Japan proper to underscore the ways that all Japanese emigrants, regardless of their surroundings, embodied the strength of an expansionary and global Japanese nationalism.

In this chapter I will examine how, between 1871 and 2010, communal memories of specific Japanese first-generation (*Issei*) men and women became tools of persuasion for special interest groups on either side of the Pacific Ocean to serve social and political purposes. In these narratives there arose a blending of historically accurate events, an individual migrant memory, with a community memory that brought together the experiences of many to create a unitary

immigrant myth. For the purpose of this chapter, I am using myth to mean history mobilized as a persuasive narrative for a particular purpose.[1] This new kind of myth-history describes the metamorphosis of narratives from reports of migration found within historical records into iconic stories that could embody the immigrant experience for an entire community. However, from the perspective of the development of domestic Japanese regionalism, these narratives of migrant experiences became the basis of regional pride as proof of internationalization, a kind of currency in twentieth and twenty-first century Japan that justified how regional and local identities could in fact be international. Thus, these narratives, which blend history with symbolic meaning, were flexible and could be adapted to suit the needs of multiple narrators.

The case studies discussed in this chapter are exceptional: narratives of *kusawake*, or trail blazers who "parted the grass" for future migrants. While some of these stories have significant historical documentation, the majority of these narratives only became identified as critical to understanding the Japanese migrant experience when re-discovered decades later. For example, in 1871 a girl named Okei, a refugee from the Japanese civil war, became the first Japanese women known to be buried in the continental United States. This case study was covered extensively in the American press between 1869 and 1871, but then fell into silence for almost a century.[2] It was only revived in America in the 1960s by immigrant interest groups such as the JACL (Japanese American Citizens League) and California politicians in time of the centennial celebration of Japanese-American immigrant culture on the one hand and to laud the state's

[1] This is in line with the way Roland Barthes uses the term in his essay "Myth Today" to mean "myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal." Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," in *Mythologies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 142.
[2] Contemporary articles were published in newspapers like the *Daily Morning Call* and the *Daily Alta California*. For example, "Arrival of Japanese Immigrants," *Daily Alta California* 21, no. 7008, (27 May 1869); "Up in El Dorado," *Daily Morning Call*, 1 January 1870; "Failure Analysis," *Daily Alta California*, 6 August 1871.

diversity on the other.[3] In Japan, in contrast, this same story emerged first in the 1930s by proponents of Japanese overseas colonial expansionism in popular press as an example of the Japanese pioneering spirit, then reemerged in the 1980s among high school students and local activists in Aizu-Wakamatsu as testament to the strength of Japanese love of their native homeland as compatible with internationalization.[4]

Another case study began in 1896 when a young man from Fukushima prefecture, Katsunuma Tomizō, became naturalized as a U.S. citizen fifty years before the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.[5] His story was well documented in both the histories of Japanese-Hawai'ian migration between the 1890s and 1924 in both Japan and the United States in personal memoires, prefectural histories, and the archives of the Mormon Church.[6] Similarly, a decade later, there emerged a "father of migration" narrative that linked Miyagi prefecture with British Columbia, Canada. In 1906, sixty five illegal Japanese stowaways landed in the dead of night

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[3] Regarding California Politician's use of the narrative, see Ronald Reagan, Proclamation (Executive Department, State of California: California Office of State Printing, February 3, 1969); Eugene A Chappie and Stephen P Teale, "Assembly Concurrent Resolution"" No. 10, (January 20, 1969). Reprinted in Japanese American Citizens' League Wakamatsu Centennial Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial, 1869-1969, 100 Years of Japanese in America* (Los Angeles, CA, 1969). Again, it is also important to note that the mission and bias of the JACL is not representative of all Japanese-American interest groups. However, the JACL does represent one influential Japanese American organization in the United States dating back to 1929. For a history of the Japanese American Citizens League, see works by the JACL's in-house historian, such as Bill Hosokawa, *JACL in Quest of Justice* (New York: W. Morrow, 1982).

[4] Kimura Ki, *Meiji kensetsu: "eru dorado okei" no monogatari*, vol. 11, Ishin rekishi shōsetsu zenshū (Tokyo: Kaizōsha, 1935); Miyazaki Tomihachi, *Haruka naru Gōrudo Hiru: Wakamatsu koronī no ato o tazunete* (Aizuwakamatsu-shi: Okei Bosandan, 1980).

[5] There existed very few Japanese migrants who could claim full citizenship rights before the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. Katsunuma, however, became a citizen in 1898. This is because while the common understanding of requirements for American citizenship outlined in the 1790 Naturalization Act limited naturalization to only "free white persons,"it was often up to the discretion of local individuals to confer citizenship upon immigrants. Katsunuma was given citizenship by a local judge in Utah, most likely in recognition of his role as a member of the National Guard. Shinji Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro: The First Japanese Mormons," *BYU Studies* 39, no. 2 (2000): 73-106.

[6] For example, see Takahashi Kanji, *Imin no chichi Katsunuma Tomizō Sensei den*, (Honoruru-fu: Suda Bunkichi, 1953); Takahashi Kanji, *Fukushima iminshi Hawai kikansha no maki* (Fukushima city: Fukushima Hawaikai, 1958); Maeyama Takashi and Shibuya Shōroku, *Hawai no shinbōnin: Meiji Fukushima imin no kojinshi* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 1986), 40-44; Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro, 73-106; Hashimoto Sutegoro, "Kugatsu jūichinichi," *Fukushima Shūnjū* 2 (August, 2004): 130-164; and Kōyama Shinkichi, ed., *Nanka Fukushima kenjinkai sōritsu hayakushūnen kinen* [Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai of Southern California 100 Anniversary] (Torrance, CA: Nanka Fukushima Kenjinkai of Southern California, 2008).

along the coastline of British Columbia, recruited by their countryman Oikawa Jinzaburō to fish the Fraser River. This story made waves when it was first reported in the Canadian press during October of 1906, but later fell into obscurity.[7] It became revitalized in Japan during 1979 when the popular fiction author Nitta Jiro wrote a book of historical fiction concerning the bold venture as a symbol of Japan's pre-war internationalism and entrepreneurship.[8] The copy of this Japanese text fell the hands of David Sulz, an English language teacher from Canada working in Tome, Miyagi, who translated the text into English in 1998 and re-introduced it to the Japanese-Canadian community.[9] This re-discovery of Oikawa's story and the drama of the Suian Maru stowaways became celebrated on both sides of the Pacific, as an exemplary tale of the Japanese-Canadian pioneering history.

The final case study discussed in this chapter, that of the immigrant community in Davao in the Philippines, represents an exception to this rule. Due to the trauma of the Pacific War which reduced the Japanese immigrant population through repatriation, those Filipina wives and Nikkei children remaining in the Philippines hid their Japanese immigrant past in closets or burned them entirely. Thus, the paper trail and even oral histories of specific regional founders became occluded. Only in the past decades, with a resurgence of interest in Japanese-Filipino migration, has a national rather than regionally-inflected history of the first generation migrants emerged in the Philippines. In Japan, the only acknowledgement of Nikkei ancestry or an

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[7] "Aspiring Japs," *Victoria Daily Times*, 23 October 1906, 4; "Small Army of Japs Captured," *Victoria Daily Times*, 24 Oct. 1906, 1; "Japanese Captured: Small Army of Mikado's Men Held in Victoria," *Vancouver Daily Province*, 25 October 1906, 6; "Jap was Wily Schemer," *Victoria Daily Times*, 25 Oct 1906, 2; "Contraband Japs were Victimized," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 25 October 1906; "Japanese Master Heavily Fined To-day," *Vancouver Daily Province*, 31 Oct. 1906, 7; "Suian Maru goes Free this Evening," *Victoria Daily Times*, 8 Nov 1906, 4.
[8] Nitta Jiro, *Mikkōsen Suian Maru*, (Tokyo: Kodansha Publishing Co., 1979)
[9] Nitta Jiro, *Phantom Immigrants: Oikawa Jinsaburo, the Suian-Maru, and the Miyagi-ken Japanese-Canadians of Lion Island and Don Island*, trans. David Sulz, 4th ed., (2009), accessed 20 April 2015, https://www.ualberta.ca/~sulz/Phantom_Immigrants_Oct09.pdf; David Sulz, "Japanese 'Entrepreneur' on the Fraser River: Oikawa Jinsaburo and the Illegal Immigration of the *Suianmaru*," (master's thesis, University of Victoria, 2003).

emigrant history in Davao concerning the Tōhoku region is recruited for the purpose of expedited work visas to import cheap laborers. Ignored is the fact that the second largest population of immigrants to the Philippines came originally from Fukushima prefecture.[10] The case of Davao in the Philippines illustrates how Japanese regional ethnicity can be elided in migration narratives due to the geo-political rupture of war on Filipino soil.

These seemingly disparate and extraordinary tales of Japanese migration are the stories that survived or were remembered. In the case of North America, they are memorialized, retold, and cherished by the descendants of the first generation of Japanese migrants in both North America as well as their extended family that remained in Japan. The narratives were mobilized and utilized for different purposes based on the local circumstances in either Japanese or North American society. Therefore, the chronology of these stories do not remain static. While the story of Okei began in both the Japanese and American literature from the moment in 1870s when she relocated to America, the interpretations from there do not overlap. History became bifurcated, with the American stream leaping from 1870s to the 1960s to the present, while the Japanese stream largely overlooked the civil war implications of the 1860s that lead to her travels instead focusing on a nationalist narrative in the 1930s and later an internationalist interpretation in the 1980s. In other words, these historical figures gain a greater power than their mere history would suggest.

Narratives of these *kusawake*, or pioneers, illustrate the malleable quality of history in the production of both myth and memory. For example, Fred Kochi, a fourth-generation Japanese-American and president of the Gold Hill-Wakamatsu board of directors, remembers how as a boy he would "sit enraptured as his grandfather filled him with tales of the Wakamatsu colony"

[10] Hayase Shinzō, *Tribes, Settlers and Administrators on a Frontier: Economic Development and the Social Change in Davao, southeastern Mindanao, the Philippines, 1899-1941* (PhD diss.,: Murdoch University, 1984).

such that "subsequent visits [to the colony] provided him a powerfully spiritual experience."[11] His story, reported in 2009 by local historian Jim Morris in the popular magazine *Sierra Heritage*, underscores how, in local Nikkei communities, the longevity of such exemplary immigrant narratives created a communal identity for generations. For such a narrative to have that kind of power, it could no longer simply be a rendering of past events. Instead, the story of Wakamatsu has become the vehicle of something much larger: it is part of a mythology of the Japanese-American immigrant experience.

This chapter will bridge the divide between the pre- and post-Pacific War period to trace how immigrant history is made, and remade, over generations. The exceptional *kusawake* stories discussed in this chapter have one thing in common: they represent times when the narratives and life experiences of natives from the prefectures of Tōhoku became an important part of the narrative of the immigrant experience in their respective community, be it California, Hawai'i, Vancouver, or the outlying case of Davao in the Philippines. Thanks to the malleability of historical memory, the men and women highlighted here have had their lives identified at various times by historians, museums, state legislatures, and academics as being uniquely representative of the immigrant ethnic communities known as "Japanese-America," or "Canadian-Japanese."

Narrating the Exceptional: History and Mythmaking

Japanese-ness in the Americas is, first and foremost, an ethnicity rather than a national or racial affiliation. Stuart Hall argues that ethnicity is constructed and contingent: "the term ethnicity acknowledges the place of history, language and culture in the construction of subjectivity and identity, as well as the fact that all discourse is placed, positioned, situated, and

[11] Jim Morris, "Hidden History on a Gold Country Ranch," *Sierra Heritage Magazine* (March-April, 2009), 31.

all knowledge is in context."[12] Indeed, using Hall's definition, the cornerstone of Japanese identity abroad in America is the result of an interaction between their emigrant traditions and the new immigrant history. Similarly, Paul Spickard goes further, identifying ethnic groups as being fundamentally "an arrangement of people who see themselves as biologically and historically connected with each other, and who are seen by others as so connected."[13] Thus, classification into an ethnic group such as "Japanese American" implies a kind of intimate natural kinship between all of the members: the recognition of the similarity of "us" versus the difference of "them." Ethnicity is relational, based on categories of self-identification and social ascription.[14] In Spickard's own words, "ethnicity, then, is kinship writ large."[15] It is impossible for there to be a "natural" kinship between all travelers from Japan to America. Instead, the kinship is a construct that has been naturalized and made to look like the organic, and eternal, truth.

To naturalize and legitimize a universalistic narrative tied to ethnicity, history becomes appropriated, emptied of meaning, and repackaged into the migrant mythos. Barthes, in his essay "Myth Today," explains that "myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal."[16] Additionally, to create a mythology, one must first borrow a history with which to anchor it. According to Barthes,

> What the world supplies to myth is historical realities, defined, even as this goes back quite a while, by the way in which men have produced or used it; and what myth gives in return is a *natural* image of this reality...myth is constituted by the loss of the historical quality of things: in it, things lose the memory of that they once were made...a conjuring trick has taken place; it has turned reality inside out, it has emptied it of history and has filled it with nature...the function of myth is to empty reality: it is, literally, a ceaseless

[12] Stuart Hall, "New Ethnicities" in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, eds. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (New York: Routledge, 1996), 446.
[13] Paul Spickard, *Japanese Americans: The Formation and Transformations of an Ethnic Group*, rev. ed. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 4.
[14] Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2008), 249.
[15] Paul Spickard, *Japanese Americans*, 4.
[16] Barthes, "Myth Today" 142.

> flowing out, a haemorrhage, or perhaps an evaporation, in short of a perceptible absence.[17]

In this way, the category of Japanese-America as an ethnic identity was born from the pages of history while at the same time emptied of their historicity, becoming myth and memory. However, if there is a Japanese American ethnicity, and these people are grouped together through an understanding a shared history, just what is that history.

The experience of diaspora shaped the production and reproduction of Japanese-ness among immigrants and their descendants. The stories of first generation migrants inherently include their experiences as both emigrant departing from a particular Japanese homeland and as immigrant to that new home. Their stories do not simply begin when their feet hit new soil; their personal history, cultural tradition, and local heritage stand side-by-side with the experience of travel, relocation, and displacement. Thus, just as Stuart Hall argues that the politics of representation arose from "an awareness of the black experience as a *diaspora* experience," so too did the politics of difference that came to define Japanese-ness within the Americas have its origins in the migrant experience.[18]

As discussed in chapter two, Japanese communities in many international venues began a natural process of self-definition and division based, in part, on native place emigrant affiliations. Hand in hand with this fracturing of the community based upon regionality, with the institution of a distinctive "Tōhoku" identity abroad, there also began the inevitable process of unification that underscored a decidedly "Japanese" community in foreign locales. Stuart Hall, while he admits that he is coining an ugly term, refers to this as a process of cultural "diaspora-ization," which is "the process of unsettling, recombination, hybridization, and 'cut-and-mix'" that alters the ethnicity so that "the relation of this cultural politics to the past…to its different 'roots' is

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[17] Ibid.
[18] Hall, ""New Ethnicities," 447-8. Emphasis is in the original.

profound...there can, therefore, be no simple 'return' or 'recovery' of the ancestral past which is not re-experienced through categories of the present: no base for creative enunciation in a simple reproduction of traditional forms which are not transformed by the technologies and the identities of the present."[19] It is the cutting and pasting, if you will, of categories of the present with historical figures that come to define the pillars of a singular, authentic "Japanese" ethnicity. The result is the creation of a communal Japanese ethnicity in the Americas, one based on history yet molded by the needs of today.

So, this brings us to the following question: how can such unique cases as Okei, Oikawa, and Katsunuma take center stage in the immigrant mythology of the Japanese in North America? Indeed, how can the exceptional become the basis of a uniting, shared cultural heritage? As seen in the prevalence of these stories among the descendants of Japanese migrants on both shores of the Pacific, these admittedly unusual histories have indeed been incorporated into the larger memory—the myth-history—of ethnic tradition. The elevation of certain men into icons of prosperity, such as Oikawa and Katsunuma, occurs through an appropriation and repurposing of their individual histories into that of an archetype of success possible to those pursuing the migrant dream. However, along with exemplars of success, stories steeped in hardship, longing, and nostalgia are also celebrated. One and all, these cherry-picked tales represent a critical component of immigrant experience: each is a myth of trailblazers, or *kusawake,* who first set foot on that foreign soil, or "parted the grass," for all who followed. Regardless of the outcome of an individual story, whether that Japanese migrant was successful or perished, they still represented a historical lineage that, for better or worse, every future migrant traveling to the Americas would join. The memory of their lives became component parts of a kind of "Japanese" history already established to root immigrants to their new soil. The psychological

[19] Ibid.

impact of being but one of many, experiencing the alienation and attempting to adapt to that strange new lifestyle brought with it a unity to the new recruits. They were members of a distinct historical lineage particular to the Japanese immigrants. No longer did being Japanese mean only a national affiliation, but it also meant social membership to a minority ethnicity within that new territory.

Just who were these individuals and how do they fit within the larger imaginary of an immigrant ethnicity? Stuart Hall explains how "we all speak from a particular place, out of a particular history, out of a particular experience, a particular culture, without being contained by that position...we are all, in that sense, ethnically located and our ethnic identities are crucial to our subjective sense of who we are." [20] Thus, by examining the stories of these Tōhoku native as case studies, and particularly the evolution of those stories over decades, lends insight into the malleable nature of historical memory, illustrating how history and myth can be shaped and reshaped. This chapter will attempt to understand this transformation by analyzing the interaction between history, myth, and memory in the case of three extraordinary individuals from Japan's northeast.

Origins: Gannen-mono

Every history must have a beginning, and every myth an origin. The narrative of Japanese migration abroad starts first in Hawai'i. In 1868, without approval from the nascent Meiji government, the first men and women moved to the island kingdom as contract laborers. This group of one hundred and forty-eight plantation workers is known commonly as *gannen-mono*, or the "first year people." The reason for this is simple: 1868 marked the first year of Meiji

[20] Ibid., 447.

power, Meiji 1 or, in Japanese, Meiji *gannen*.[21] Thus, *gannen-mono* refers to these first people (*mono*) arrived in 1868 (Meiji *gannen*).

However, the concept of a *gannen* can be a powerful tool for understanding how overseas Japanese ethnicity is in fact constructed. There is a mystique to the idea of being "first," that at any time a moment can be defined as an epoch. Unlike the western system of dating, which places all time as either before or after the birth of the religious figure Jesus Christ, the Japanese calendar resets itself with every new emperor. The life and reign of a new emperor is a monumental occurrence, at least with regard to official time keeping. It is the beginning of a new era, a *gannen*. While in reality the switching of the date system into reigns had practically no impact on the daily lives of Japanese people, the symbolism remains profound when analyzing the creation of a myth and periodization of history. It is perhaps appropriate that, unlike so many reigns before it, the first year of Meiji actually did bring in a totally new era of governance that would transform Japan into a world superpower in under one hundred years. Meiji *gannen* marked the death of two and a half centuries of political organization; it was indeed a moment of profound change. In their own way, those migrants in 1868 were also revolutionary. They were the first migrants to leave Japan during the modern period, paving the way for all future migrants to the Americas. Thus, while it was not necessarily intentional, it seems appropriate that these trail blazers to Hawai'i became known by scholars as the *gannen-mono*.

While generally scholars of Japanese migration use this convention only to name those few hundred migrants from Japan to Hawai'i that took place in 1868, this chapter will use the term *gannen-mono* to refer to all pioneers who can be traced to the original *gannen* of Japanese presence in a new country: in California, 1869 (Meiji 2); in Canada, 1877; and in Brazil, 1908.

[21] It is important to note that 1868 was the first time that there was a “reign” name change; previously, when emperors changed resulting in a new *gannen*, it marked the changing of an “era.”

This distinction is important as these inaugural men and women would become the central figures from which all Japanese immigrant history would stem. Their stories begin the cycle of all future immigrant history; they mark a new age in the Japanese experience abroad in that lineage. The *gannen mono* experience, those tales of triumphs and failures, provided a kind of living history for every new *Issei* (first generation).

Revisiting the lost colony of Wakamatsu

For migrants to the mainland of the United States, the master narrative of Japan-American history and myth begins with the same moment: the creation of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony in Gold Hill, California, in 1869. The American press greeted these new migrants with interest and excitement, deeming them to be refugee "princes" who brought with them the possibility of new wealth to America's shores.[22] After only two years, however, the colony failed and left little behind to mark its passage other than a lonely grave inscribed with the phrases “In memory of Okei. Died 1871. Aged 19 years. A Japanese girl."[23] From this remnant, however, emerged a legacy. This small, failed settlement is today the marker of the dawn of Japanese-America.

In 1969, the Japanese American Citizens' League (JACL) published a work commemorating 100 years of Japanese in America which unapologetically appropriates the Wakamatsu colony history to create an origin myth for Japanese-American identity. To commemorate the centennial of Japanese immigration to America in 1969, the Japanese community in California reclaimed the story after years of neglect and gave it life through the imagined voice of this common girl, the ghost of Okei. Interestingly, the text unabashedly

[22] "Arrival of Japanese Immigrants," *Daily Alta California* 21, no. 7008, 27 May 1869.
[23] Morris, "Hidden History on a Gold Country Ranch," 34.

fictionalizes the events, retelling of the settlers' experience personified through the eyes of a common nursemaid: Okei. The text reads, "for this 100th anniversary of the first concerted migration from Japan to North America, uniquely appropriate symbol demands our attention, a figure cloaked in just enough mystery that she can represent all who came after her."[24] In this way, the JACL-commissioned author highlights how he will be appropriating this history to tell a more universal story. With such transparency built right into the document, it is clear that Okei and the Wakamatsu Colony have been appropriated as symbols. But why? What does this repurposing of her narrative do for the Japanese American community? To find the answer to that question, we must first look at the history behind the myth.

A survey of the history surrounding this venture back in the mid-nineteenth century is rather straight forward. Following the Aizu clan's crushing defeat in 1869, John Henry Schnell, a Prussian arms dealer during the Meiji Revolution and adviser to Katamori Matsudaira of Aizu Wakamatsu, hatched a scheme to relocate a few families to land in California.[25] It is the first party of organized Japanese to settle on the shores of the United States, consisting of a few former samurai and their retainers fleeing Aizu-han (today part of Fukushima prefecture) following their defeat in the Boshin War (1868-1869). They moved east to California's shores at the same time as the nascent Hokkaidō migration movement discussed in Chapter one, and for much the same reasons. On the 7th of May, 1869, the *Daily Alta California* ran an article announcing the arrival of these Japanese families with Schnell, because Japan was "no home for

[24] JACL Centennial Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial*.
[25] There is some confusion regarding John Henry and his brother, Edward's, nationality. While some news stories such as Cecilia Rasmussen,"Hilltop grave may become a shrine," *LA Times*, 10 June 2007, identifies them as Dutch, he was Prussian from Baden-Württemburg, today part of Germany. Part of this confusion may come from the fact that John Henry Schnell worked for the German legation, while his brother Edward worked for the Dutch legation in Japan. For more on the brothers Schnell, see John E. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850-80* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 117-137; Kawaguchi, Hirohisa, "Henry Schnell and Japanese Immigration to the United States," *Ajia daigaku kokusai kankei kiyō* [Journal of International Relations, Asia University] 1, no. 1 (1991): 343-357; Holmer Stahncke, *Die Brüder Schnell und der Bürgerkrieg in Nordjapan* (Tōkyō: OAG, 1986).

them since the civil war."[26] Further stressing the unrest in Japan and the status of these families as part of an unofficial refugee movement, the paper speculated that other "defeated princes," or Aizu samurai, might be following in Schnell's wake.[27] Just a handful of years following the end of the American Civil War, these new travelers were merely seeking asylum and a better life, not unlike other American immigrants.

Unlike the reception immigrants would face by the turn of the century, the popular press touted the Wakamatsu Colony as beneficial to California's growing economy and society. The local papers viewed the advent of Japanese immigrants on California soil with great hope, proclaiming that "they come with their families; they bring skill and industry to develop our resources."[28] A large reason for this welcome came from the reality that the Wakamatsu colony migrants were free men, not serfs, with a high level of education and refinement who "cannot safely be treated as Chinamen often are," but instead should be given a level of respect.[29] They were individuals of class and refinement. Furthermore, there seemed to be every sign that these intrepid pioneers would succeed with their almost 50,000 mulberry trees and 140,000 tea plants.[30] The Gold Hill Wakamatsu Silk and Tea Colony appeared to be just the thing for transforming that plot of land into a productive business venture.

Within just two years the colony failed. A *Daily Morning Call* article published on New Year's Day, 1870, less than a year after the Gold Hill Colony began, indicates that the Japanese families Schnell brought from Aizu came as simple laborers and, in fact, suffered many injustices at Schnell's hand. The correspondent continued, questioning Schnell's altruism: "let me

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[26] Toyoda Takeshi, *Tōhoku no rekishi* 3 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1979), 42-3; "Arrival of Japanese Immigrants," *Daily Alta California* 21, no. 7008, 27 May 1869, accessed 20 April 2015, http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=DAC18690527.2.5.
[27] Toyoda, *Tōhoku no rekishi* 3, 42-3; "Arrival of Japanese Immigrants."
[28] "Arrival of Japanese Immigrants."
[29] Ibid.
[30] Morris, "Hidden History on a Gold Country Ranch," 32.

correct an erroneous impression that has gained general credence...that Japanese have come here of their own accord to settle and establish a community and that Herr Schnell is their agent. Such is not the case."[31] In fact, the entire venture, according the author, was just a private enterprise funded and undertaken by Schnell, with the Japanese serving only as hired help. An article in August, 1871 in the *Daily Alta California* ascribes the downfall of the colony to a combination of a failed growing season and the discovery by the Japanese of "the right of revolution and the invalidity of contracts for personal service."[32] The fact that these laborers were being paid only four dollars a month "began to disturb them" and "the neighboring workmen incited them to stampede."[33] Thus, after only a brief time, the original colonists left the farm for higher wages elsewhere. Today, scholars and descendants link the downfall of the Wakamatsu colony to drought and the theft of water by gold miners; regardless, "their crops withered and their dreams were dashed."[34]

What is left today is the first grave of a Japanese woman on American soil, and a malleable vessel for an immigrant mythos. In the words of the Wakamatsu Centennial Committee of the JACL, Okei became "a uniquely appropriate symbol demands our attention, a figure cloaked in just enough mystery that she can represent all who came after her."[35] The woman became a legend both in America as a symbol of the Japanese-American immigrant struggle while paradoxically becoming in Japan a representation of migrant loyalty to their nation even in international contexts.

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[31] "Up in El Dorado," *Daily Morning Call*, 1 January 1870, accessed 20 April 2015 http://www.arconservancy.org/atf/cf/%7B297DAEBE-1FFA-413C-8866-6AA8965863F7%7D/Wakamatsu%20Tea%20and%20Silk%20Colony%20Farm%20Newspaper%20Archive.pdf.
[32] "Failure Analysis," *Daily Alta California*, 6 August 1871, Accessed 20 April 2015 http://www.arconservancy.org/atf/cf/%7B297DAEBE-1FFA-413C-8866-6AA8965863F7%7D/Wakamatsu%20Tea%20and%20Silk%20Colony%20Farm%20Newspaper%20Archive.pdf.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Morris, "Hidden History on a Gold Country Ranch," 32.
[35] JACL Wakamatsu Centennial Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial*.

Ghost of Okei and nobility in failure

Originally, Okei had played only a minor role in the communal history of Japanese migration to California. Representing a story of failure it was quickly forgotten, ignored by press, Nikkei associations, and politicians for decades. The ghost of Okei lay dormant in both Japanese and Japanese-American literature until a time came when her story of struggle and martyrdom could provide a useful symbol to embody the agendas of particular organizations. [36] In America, a century after her death, her utility to the Japanese-American Community was bracingly outlined by Jerry J. Enomoto, the national president of the Japanese-American Citizens League (JACL) when the Wakamatsu Centennial Committee outlined how "for the 100th anniversary of the first concerted migration from Japan to North America, a uniquely appropriate symbol demands our attention, a figure cloaked in just enough mystery that she can represent all who came after her."[37] In other words, a century after her death, the JACL identified her as being the perfect vessel to carry the myth of sacrifice for their community.

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) represents the most well-known, influential Japanese American organizations in the United States with an institutional history dating back to 1929. [38] Harshly criticized by some civil rights advocates for its cooperation with the American Government regarding mass exclusion and incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII, in the postwar era the JACL pursued an agenda in the courts to overturn

[36] By the 1930s in Japan proponents of imperial expansion into Manchuria appropriated Okei's story to embody the true settler spirit and her story became a "trailblazer in the formation of two communities—ethnic and national." Eiichiro Azuma, "'Pioneers of Overseas Japanese Development': Japanese American History and the Making of Expansionist Orthodoxy in Imperial Japan," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 67, no. 4 (November 2008): 1187-1226. Kimura Ki, *Meiji kensetsu: "eru dorado okei" no monogatari*, (Tokyo: Kaizōsha, Ishin rekishi shōsetsu zenshū 11, 1935).
[37] JACL Wakamatsu Centennial Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial*.
[38] For a history of the Japanese American Citizens League, see works by the JACL's in-house historian, Bill Hosokawa.

discriminatory legislation even becoming a key player in the Redress Movement demanding compensation for internment.[39] Historian Cherstin M. Lyon writes that "one of the most enduring contributions the postwar JACL leadership had was on the historical memory of the meaning of Japanese Americans' incarceration during the war." To shape this memory, the JACL has employed and funded writers like in-house historian Bill Hosokawa. Lyon asserts that texts like Hosokawa's book *Nisei: The Quiet Americans*, for example, is part of an active campaign to promote Japanese-American's loyalty to the United States, particularly the concept of recasting Japanese immigrants as so-called model-minorities.[40] However, recasting Japanese Americans during the war as "loyal" Americans does not represent the JACL's only foray into shaping the historical memory of Nikkei in the United States, only the most well-known. At the same time as *Nikkei: the Quiet Americans* was published a JACL centennial committee was searching for a symbol to underscore the struggle of pioneering Japanese migrants in America.[41] They found that figure in the story of Okei.

Okei was such a "uniquely appropriate" figure for the very same reason that she had been an unremarkable part of the Wakamatsu Colony during her lifetime. She had been the nurse to Schnell's children and the maid to Madame Schnell, nee Sakurai Matsunosuke. Okei arrived in America at the age of 17 as a refugee of war, and then became set adrift once more within that new country following the colony's failure.[42] After the Schnells left California, she was

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[39] Some of the most notable legislation overturned included laws banning interracial marriage, segregation, race-based migration quotas, and restricted rights to citizenship.

[40] *Densho Encyclopedia Online*, s.v. "Japanese American Citizens League," by Cherstin M. Lyon, accessed 17 February 2014, <http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Japanese%20American%20Citizens%20League>; Bill Hosokawa, *Nisei: The Quiet Americans*, rev. ed. (Denver: University Press of Colorado, 2002). Lyon is a history professor at California State University, see Cherstin M. Lyon, *Prisons and Patriots: Japanese American Wartime Citizenship, Civil Disobedience, and Historical Memory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011).

[41] Additionally, the story of Okei served another purpose; her story was representative of a kind early Japanese female migrant that did not emphasize the more common historical narratives that emphasized pioneering women's role as either sex workers on the one hand or picture brides on the other.

[42] Kawamura Yūsen, *Karifuornia kaita ibun* (Tokyo, 1932), 59-64.

effectively abandoned by her patrons, and would die soon after. Her youth, as well as her background as a political refugee, fit the mold of a tragic heroine. Indeed, she was "cloaked in just enough mystery" to represent both no single person, yet everyone at the same time.[43]

This is made even clearer in the JACL's publication *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial, 1869-1968, 100 Years of Japanese in America.* In a ten page fictionalization, these JACL authors stress a number of critical themes that wind their way through Japanese-American myths: persecution and martyrdom, the importance of heritage but dedication to new homeland, and differences between Japanese migrants and other immigrants. Part of the allure of Okei is the feelings of nostalgia, loss, and connection with her homeland. As a tragic figure, "homesick and lonely in a foreign land," Okei is said to have walked alone "to the top of the tallest hill on the ranch and tearfully sing children's lullabies, looking toward her native Japan as the evening sun set in the West."[44] In fact, a tour group of Japanese visitors to California published in their bulletin a lullaby written by Sekisui Minoru (積水みのる) and Tone Ichirō (利根一郎) titled *Okei no komoriuta*, or Okei's Lullaby (おけいの子守唄).[45] The words to this children's melody highlights a few of the key aspects of Okei's legend that is so attractive for an origin myth for the Japanese-American community:

> Okei's Lullaby
> Refrain of rock-a-bye, heard in faraway land,
> Okei, just seventeen, why did she cry?
> As she quietly sang the lullaby
> Of her native land, why did she cry?
>
> Refrain of rock-a-bye, distant clouds swept by,
> In the lonely sunset, her heart searched afar,
> Only in her dreams could she return home,
> Towards her beloved Aizu, she watched the stars.

[43] JACL Wakamatsu Centennial Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial*.
[44] Morris, "Hidden History on a Gold Country Ranch," 34.
[45] Miyazaki Tomihachi, *Haruka naru Gōrudo Hiru: Wakamatsu koronī no ato o tazunete* (Aizuwakamatsu-shi: Okei Bosandan, 1980), 13.

> The song of rock-a-bye, she sang as she cried,
> Gentle Okei, longing and waiting in vain,
> As winter fled and spring arrived,
> For glad tidings from home, which never came.[46]

This song, thus, displays a great amount of nostalgia for her motherland of Japan. Sitting on that distant hill, the ghost of Okei reclaims her birthplace, "her beloved Aizu," and yet it was "only in her dreams could she return home." Instead, she cries and, in the end, her body remains forever separated from that land.

The themes of separation and disconnection, written into Okei's saga over a century after her death, merits further investigation as the myth of return underwrites so many travel journals and documentation left by first generation migrants.[47] The historical figure of Okei did not return home; similarly, the mythic representation of Okei in contemporary Japanese-American immigrant history emphasizes her role as representing an authentic Japanese past firmly rooted in American soil. While the dream of the migrant often included returning home in triumph, a large number of migrations would never realize that aspiration. This community is the root of Japanese-America. While Okei could be considered exceptional because she knew she could never go home, she is also emblematic of the reality of settlement for so many future migrants. Her exceptionalism, therefore, is only in the eyes of Japanese natives. For later generations, the settlers rather than the sojourners, Okei harkens back to a classic, authentic Japan before the Meiji Revolution – a Japan which can never return.

These members of the Wakamatsu Colony represent one ripple effect of the Meiji coup,

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[46] For original words and melody, see Miyasaki, *Haruka naru Gōrudo Hiru,* 13. Interpretation and translation by Henry Taketa in Joan Barton Barsotti, *Okei-san: The Girl from Wakamatsu*, (Camino, CA: Barsotti Publishing Company, 2006), 73.

[47] For example, see works such as Jonathan Dresner, "Instructions to emigrant laborers, 1885-94: 'Return in triumph' or 'Wander on the edge of starvation" in Nobuko Adachi, ed., *Japanese Diasporas: Unsung Pasts, Conflicting Presents and Uncertain Futures* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

the moment identified with the beginning of Japanese modernity. It is the tale of martyred loyalists, adherents to a now by-gone feudal nationalism. Nostalgia, however, is not for the Japan that existed after the revolution, but instead very human ties of love and kinship that transcend time. The trauma of displacement is magnified one hundred fold, as those from "Aizu Wakamatsu became pariahs in our homeland."[48] They could never go home, but they could bring a bit of home away with them. The centennial volume on the Wakamatsu Colony vividly demonstrates this metaphor of relocation and transplantation. Because "it was the hope to those who planned our exodus to transplant a bit of our homeland into this strange new world," the Wakamatsu colonists brought with them the seeds of the Zelkova tree, in Japanese known as *keaki*, which grew next to her grave on that Californian hill.[49]

Thus, the roots of the Japanese *keaki* tree, a familiar part of the landscape of the forests of Aizu, Japan, becomes a kind of tether for this new Japanese history that is decidedly American. Struggle, hardship, and displacement is fundamental to the myth of the American migrant; these pioneers represent just another of the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free." The centennial committee explains their ancestors as being individuals who "came to America for many reasons: because life had become intolerably where we were, because there would be no life at all unless we fled…because something beaconed in the new land…Freedom."[50] Fleeing a homeland, refugees and martyred, those of Aizu-Wakamatsu who settled briefly in America were not the normal tale of Japanese first generations. However, their story provides a kind of symbolic equivalence useful in the definitions of Japanese ethnicity in America. Again, turning to the words of the author of that centennial volume, "these were people, individuals. These were not Japanese; these were Americans, for the same reason that I am American: Because I gave my

[48] JACL Wakamatsu Centennial Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial*, not paginated.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.

flesh and blood to the land. Meet Okei, the American."[51]

The recognition of the Wakamatsu Colony as the touchstone for Japanese America extends beyond the Japanese or Japanese American community. The very similarities, the common themes of loss and struggle, made it an ideal vessel for the general public to celebrate the contribution of Japanese-Americans to California. To mark the centennial celebration of the Japanese in California, the Japanese-American lobby mobilized the story of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm colony as a symbol of the Japanese-American experience in California. Of course, the use of this story was only logical, as *gannen mono* from Fukushima were the first to migrate to California, the moment of first contact. However, at the same time, it drew upon a subconscious narrative of the foundational American Experience. Just as European colonization in North America began with the tragic fate of Jamestown, the narrative of the Wakamatsu Colony is predicated on a moment of failure. Furthermore, the foundation of Californian history comes from stories of intrepid pioneers who set out to make a life for themselves in the Wild West, often to be greeted with failure as equally as success.

A closer investigation of the way that the Wakamatsu *gannen mono* are remembered in the U.S. provokes a number of questions about the function, mobilization, and adaptation of all *kusawake* narratives by migrant institutions. In a 2010 press release, the American River Conservancy Directory Alan Ehrgott drove home the need to preserve what was left by the Wakamatsu colony, declaring that

> America derives its strength and its character from the diversity of its people...the Wakamatsu Colonists were the last of the Tokugawa samurai defeated in the Boshin civil war of 1868-9. They also became the first, the vanguard of Japanese emigrants to arrive in California as skilled workers that advanced American agriculture, medicine, engineering, and other fields. The Wakamatsu Colony story is every bit as compelling as the story of Jamestown or the Mayflower and Plymouth Rock.[52]

[51] Ibid.
[52] Press Release: Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony Acquisition, American River Conservancy, 2010.

Japanese-American organizations such as the Japanese American Citizens League have lobbied to preserve any evidence of this "critical" moment in their history as Wakamatsu is their Jamestown, their Plymouth Rock.

Thus, highlighting the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm colony inserts Japanese into California's settlement roots. In 1969, both the executive and legislative branch of California's government recognized the importance of the Wakamatsu colony for California as a whole. When the then Governor, Ronald Reagan, enjoined "all Californians to study the contributions of the Japanese to our California way of life," he expressly referenced erstwhile Wakamatsu plantation while highlighting the Japanese pioneers' "patience, perseverence (sic), and industry."[53] Similarly, to emphasize the importance of Japanese migration to California, the text of the California Assembly Concurrent Resolution no. 10 declares that "although this pioneer project [the Wakamatsu colony] was doomed in less than two years," it marks the advent of the community.[54] Continuing, it quotes the Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee's 1966 report, proclaiming "descendants are carrying on the work of their pioneer forebears with the same devotion, determination, and skill."[55] In other words, this *gannen mono* narrative proved useful in underscoring the sacrifices of Japanese immigrants and merging these pioneers within American expansionism.

The power of nostalgia and longing embodied in the narrative of Okei transcends the Japanese-American community, drawing contemporary Japanese pilgrims from Fukushima prefecture to Gold Hill. In 1980, a contingent of Japanese from Aizu-Wakamatsu traveled to

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[53] Ronald Reagan, Proclamation (Executive Department, State of California: California Office of State Printing, February 3, 1969).
[54] Eugene A Chappie and Stephen P Teale, "Assembly Concurrent Resolution," No. 10, 20 January 1969, in JACL Wakamatsu Centennial Committee, *Wakamatsu Colony Centennial*.
[55] Ibid.

California to visit the grave of Okei. A booklet published to commemorate their trip, *Haruka naru gōrudo hiru: Wakamatsu koroni ato wo tazunete* [Memories of Gold Hill: Visiting the Wakamatsu Tea Colony and Okei's grave] contains not only the original lyrics and score of *Okei no komoriuta*, but also a number of reflections written by the twenty-two Japanese natives. Indeed, local historian and Sacramento attorney Henry Taketa explained the motivation for the trip, highlighting how "the story of the colony and the girl have become quite popular in Aizu over the years; it's part of history there now."[56]

For modern Japanese pilgrims, Okei displays the remnants of a proud heritage, a testament to traditional Japan. Thus, today, the grave of Okei represents the site of the figurative merging of America soil with Japanese migrant. For Japanese-Americans, she is a member of the first organized movement to the United States by Japanese subjects, yet her reason for leaving Japan is quite different from the standard narrative. She was a refugee, a young girl torn from her home, family, and friends to live in a new world. Not a sojourner, she knew the rest of her life would be as a transplant. She did not flourish, but pined away for the romanticized Japan of her youth. And yet her legacy is decidedly American. Unlike so many early contract laborers who traveled as sojourners, Okei was a settler. She would always love her homeland, but she would be buried across the ocean –a person who would never forget Japan, but never leave America. She, as her tomb proclaimed, was simply "a Japanese girl." However, she was also something more. In the words of Alan Ehrgott, the director of the American River Conservancy, "the history of Wakamatsu is, in part, the history of us. It helps define who we are, where we have come from, and to a large part where we are going."[57]

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[56] Walt Wiley, "Japanese Visit Gold Hill Grave," *Sacramento Bee*, in Miyasaki Tomihachi, *Haruka naru gōrudo hiru: Wakamatsu koroni ato wo tazunete* (Aizu wakamatsu-shi: Okei Bodansan, 1980), 84.
[57] Morris, "Hidden History on a Gold Country Ranch," 35.

Fathers of migration, pioneers of success

Where Okei's tragic tale became the backbone of the Japanese-American story of sacrifice, narratives of success can be similarly powerful in creating a myth-history for migrants. Lineage and kinship carried tremendous power in creating an ethnic identity for Japanese living in the Americas at the turn of the century. In the Western tradition, individuals conceive their ancestry as a tree, with the trunk standing in the present with many branches that extend backwards in time to parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and so forth. However, in Japan, the imagination of lineage is different. The reckoning of family does not originate from present, but with one key figure from whom all members then followed. In other words, everyone in the present is but one of many who share an individual patriarch of that lineage. The import of lineage in Japanese society is undeniable, and tied to the physical location that their ancestors called home. Thus, leaving Japan required emigrants to divorce themselves both physically from their native place and psychologically from the comfort of their extended family. However, within their new homes abroad, a new conception of family emerged. This family, rather than being based on hereditary genetics, shared culture links. Sub-communities formed among Tōhoku migrants who came to identify one such patriarch, a man whose life story stood out as worthy of becoming the progenitor and honored ancestor of their migrant chain.

Just as origin stories such as Okei and the Wakamatsu silk colony provided a history and roots for the Japanese-American ethnicity in the United States, another key component in the migrant mythos is the dream of success. This section investigates the lives of two Tōhoku natives who became institutionalized as the patriarch of a cultural, and regionally specific, lineage in North America: Miyagi native Oikawa Jinzaburō, who engineered a settlement in Canada, and Fukushima-born Katsunuma Tomizō, who recruited a large number of Tōhoku emigrants to seek

work in Hawai'i. Modern literature, as well as texts written in the prewar period, identify these men as *imin no chichi*, or "fathers of migration." Patriarchs shared a few characteristics. First, they validated the migrant dream, standing as examples of men who both achieved wealth abroad. Second, they successfully started a process of chain migration that ultimately transplanted a significant number of their regional, cultural compatriots to those new lands. Finally, they were figures who learned how to adapt to their new environment enough to gain acceptance from the larger Japanese community while still maintaining and preserving their distinctive regional identity.

As the name suggests, *imin no chichi* became the metaphorical patriarch–a shared ancestor who could reduce the common feeling among immigrants of alienation from their traditional, and hereditary, family structures. Instead, settlers were adopted into an established "family" lineage abroad. Second, these *imin no chichi* validated two central components of the migrant dream: they achieved prominence and wealth abroad, balancing a level of assimilation to new circumstances, without betraying their Tōhoku roots. This served as a powerful tool in the recruitment of new laborers from their home communities and, ultimately, resulted in the formation of institutions abroad intended to help perpetuate the link between migrant communities and their native place. *Imin no chichi* provided an example of an individual who did not, in fact, completely sever ties with their Japanese family or friends. Finally, just as they served as the psychological fathers of a new lineage abroad, these men also spawned new networks of chain migration. Ultimately, the stories of such men became adapted by prefectural associations (*kenjinkai*) which were formed by immigrants to support and preserve their members – individuals who shared the same regional culture. Their lives became mobilized as parables to lend strength and preserve regional difference. These men transcended the boundaries

of "home," becoming the foci of a transnational village. Particularly gaining strength in the post-globalization period of the 1970s and 1980s, tales of *imin no chichi*, or "fathers of migration," became the norm in prefectural histories and local legends.[58] These tales of regional pioneers of internationalism highlight the very global history of the seemingly isolated and disconnected rural territories throughout Japan.

Katsunuma Tomizō, progenitor of a migrant network

Katsunuma Tomizō (勝沼富造) represents a pioneer in multiple social, political, and cultural realms. He led an extraordinary life, one which bridged two cultures, and the contribution he makes to the imagining of Japanese-America is that of belonging and inclusion. Katsunuma represents an immigrant who flowed between worlds with seemingly little difficulty. While he was not the first to venture onto U.S. soil, he represents a world of "firsts." He was one of the few hundred Japanese subjects who, although born and raised in Japan, achieved American citizenship before the Pacific War.[59] He is also remembered fondly by the Church of Latter-day Saints as the first Japanese Mormon. As he was the first face they saw upon arrival to Hawai'i, most new Japanese migrants knew him from the turn of the century until the infamous exclusion act of 1924. Thus, Katsunuma influence as being a bearer of "firsts" extended beyond

[58] For an exemplary article outlining the rise of internationalization (*kokusaika*) and regionalist nostalgia (*furusato*) during the latter third of the twentieth century, see Jennifer Robertson, "Empire of Nostalgia: Rethinking 'Internationalization' in Japan Today," *Theory, Culture, Society* (1997): 97-122. In this chapter, I will be building on Robertson's concepts through an analysis of regionalism and internationalism as viewed through Japanese migration history in the Philippines.

[59] While the common understanding of requirements for American citizenship are as outlined in the 1790 Naturalization Act, aliens eligible for naturalization had to be "a free white person." However, it was often up to the discretion of local individuals to confer citizenship upon immigrants. Katsunuma was given citizenship by a local judge in Utah, most likely in recognition of his role as a member of the National Guard. Shinji Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro: The First Japanese Mormons," *BYU Studies* 39, no. 2 (2000): 73-106. For the original language on the 1790 Naturalization Act, see Act of 26 March 1790, ch. 3, 1 *Stat.* 103, in The Library of Congress, *American Memory: Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates*," accessed 18 July 2013, http://rs6.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=001/llsl001.db&recNum=226.

his personal experience as a new migrant. He was well-loved and respected by the Japanese emigrants from all over Japan, as well as those of different race or nationality.

The story of Katsunuma is well documented in both Japan and America, as he worked as a Japanese recruiter for a private company in Tōhoku and later as an American immigration officer. Katsunuma was instrumental in creating networks of migration between Fukushima and the United States. Thus, he is not just a metaphorical patriarch, but also a progenitor of Japanese migration from Fukushima prefecture to the United States. Accepted in America, yet fiercely proud of his Japanese heritage, Katsunuma embodied the realization of a dream: he was a true Tōhoku-Japanese-American. Fukushima histories written today in Japan laud him as the *imin no chichi*—father of migration—and publications by Japanese Americans point him proudly as a model ancestor.

Born in 1863 in Minharu domain, what is today part of Fukushima, he came from a good family background, being the third son of Minharu clan samurai, Naochika Katogi.[60] Highly educated, he graduated not only from his clan schools, but also studied English at the Sendai Foreign Language School and completed three years of a liberal arts program at the University of Tōkyō Preparatory School in Hitotsubashi. Due to financial difficulties, Katsunuma left Tōkyō and returned home, becoming an elementary school principal and later an English teacher in a local middle school. However, he returned to higher education in 1885, attending the Tōkyō School of Veterinary Science and the Imperial College of Agriculture in Komaba, graduating in 1888.

When he was twenty five, his brother Shigenori left Japan to travel to the United States to investigate the state of the electric power industry in the American West. Katsunuma Tomizō

[60] This bibliographic information comes from Maeyama and Shibuya, *Hawai no shinbōnin*, 40-44; Hashimoto Sutegoro, "Kugatsu jūichinichi," Fukushima Shūnjū 2 (August, 2004): 130-164; Takahashi, *Imin no chichi*; and Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro," 73-106.

accompanied him, arriving in California on May 10th, 1889. Over the next few years, Katsunuma lived and worked in California, Idaho, and Utah. While in Utah, he enrolled in Brigham Young College, and became the first Japanese to convert to Mormonism, baptized and confirmed a member of the Church on August 8, 1895 and ordained a deacon on January 25, 1896.[61] He even became naturalized as a U.S. citizen in time to vote for William Jennings Bryan in 1896.[62] While in Utah, the Hiroshima Emigration Company approached him to work as a recruiter, and he relocated to Honolulu in 1898. In the spring of 1898 Katsunuma returned to his home in Fukushima, reunited with his wife, and returned to Hawai'i with roughly one hundred laborers.[63] Soon after relocating to Hawai'i, Katsunuma was appointed a United States Immigration officer. He held that position until the passage of the Johnson-Reid Immigration Act of 1924, which codified Asian Exclusion laws that barred migration of people ineligible for citizenship.[64]

Over the years, Katsunuma Tomizō, sometimes referred to simply as "the doctor," became widely respected throughout the Japanese community in Hawai'i and beyond. Soga Yasutarō, the editor of the Hawai'ian daily newspaper the *Nippu Jiji* and personal friend, recalls how Katsunuma was comfortable with everyone, from Caucasians and Chinese to native Hawai'ians and Portuguese.[65] He was also known as "Doctor Parties" because, while he did not drink himself, he could be found at all of the social gatherings reciting humorous *dodoitsu* verses.[66] He was a charter member of the Rotary Club of Honolulu, as well as the first non-Caucasian member, a confidant of Japanese consuls in Hawai'i, a director of the Japanese

[61] Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro," 77.
[62] Ibid.
[63] For a list of the names, including their village, see Takahashi, *Imin no chichi*, 266-7.
[64] Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro," 79.
[65] Takahashi, *Imin no chichi*, 1; Kimura also translates the same passage in Kimura, *Issei*, 43.
[66] Takahashi, *Imin no chichi*, 1.

Benevolent Association, and served on the Prince Fushimi Scholarship Committee for Nisei Education.[67] In the words of the historian Yukiko Kimura, "Dr. Katsunuma was unconventional, unpretentious, and had an open and direct way of doing things. Japanese residents of Hawaii, rural and urban, accepted him with affection and respect."[68]

Perhaps it is unsurprising, therefore, to find Katsunuma buried within memories of Fukushima emigrants in Hawai'i and beyond. Identified time and again as an *imin no chichi*, or father of migration, the life of Katsunuma has been reproduced and retold in migrant histories on both sides of the ocean. This duel identification, both as a prominent Japanese personality at the international level and as a local Fukushima resident living abroad, makes Katsunuma an ideal character to embody a paragon of success. He emerges time and again throughout the literature on Fukushima migration in Hawai'i in specific, but also Tōhoku migration abroad more generally, as an ideal in terms of his moral economy, integration, love for his native place, and success.

Katsunuma Tomizō, widely identified as being the progenitor of overseas Fukushima migration, was responsible for recruiting the two first boatloads of Japanese laborers from Fukushima to Hawai'i in 1898-1899. While initially he was approached to work as a recruiter by the Hiroshima Emigration Company, he brought in these new Tōhoku migrants as an agent of the Kumamoto Emigration Company. While we do not know the precise reasons why Katsunuma left the Hiroshima Emigration Company to recruit on the behalf of the Kumamoto Emigration Company, it is clear that he was a wonderful fit for the Kumamoto Emigration Company mission. As outlined in chapter two, most migrant laborers in Hawai'i that arrived under the auspices of either the government or private immigration companies came from Japan's

[67] Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro," 79.
[68] Kimura, *Issei*, 42.

southwest. The Kumamoto Emigration Company, however, was the first major emigration company to target the Tōhoku region in the northeast in particular.[69] Katsunuma held many desirable traits for what historian Alan Moriyama identifies for individuals working as mobile recruiters.[70] He had previous experience with the emigration process, personal knowledge of life abroad, as well as status within his home community in Japan. As the task of many local agents was to move from town to town in a small circuit, Katsunuma's affinity for the area made him exceptionally valuable in a new push to recruit laborers from Japan's northeast.

Katsunuma's regionality served as a powerful a powerful tool to persuade new migrants to try their luck abroad. Katsunuma was not just a recruiter, but a neighbor, someone who had first-hand knowledge of life overseas but could turn that foreign into something familiar. He could connect with his fellow Japanese neighbors in Fukushima and the surrounding districts in a way that other Kumamoto Migration agents could not. Katsunuma gave "speeches in *zuzu* dialect" which "opened the eyes of those slumbering people from Tōhoku" to the possibilities of Hawai'i as a migrant destination.[71] For example, Katsunuma's official biographer, Takahashi Kanji, cites how one of the first men to sign up with Katsunuma, Okazaki Otoji (岡崎音治), did so based on a recruitment speech.[72] Takahashi relates how Katsunuma's speech had a personal resonance which deeply impacted Okazaki, a man who was down on his luck due to drought and personal injury. While Okazaki may have not entered the meeting intending to relocate to Hawai'i as a contract laborer, as he heard the sounds of Katsunuma's impassioned speech fill the air, he found himself sharing the dream of overseas travel.[73] By the end of that meeting, purportedly due largely to the persuasive power of Katsunuma's rhetoric, Okazaki cast his gaze

[69] Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro," 78.
[70] Moriyama, *Imingaisha*, 59-67.
[71] Takahashi, *Imin no chichi*, 264.
[72] Takahashi, *Fukushima iminshi Hawai*, 264.
[73] Ibid.

beyond Japan's shores. In fact, as shown by Katsunuma's biographer Takahashi Kanji, Okazaki would become an anchoring member of the Fukushima community in Hawai'i; he remained in Hawai'i after the end of his contract period, opening a tailor shop on Hotel Street in 1902, a gathering place for people from Fukushima passing through the city.[74]

Katsunuma's influence within migration networks went far beyond the few hundred people he convinced to sojourn to Hawai'i. Of course, the first wave of contract laborers from Fukushima had direct ties to Katsunuma Tomizō, as he was the agent of the Kumamoto Emigration Company who recruited them. Katsunuma also worked to personally bring in a second Fukushima group; however, his term working for the company was rather short lived. Instead, it was in his role as an immigration inspector that placed Katsunuma as one of the first faces that practically every new immigrant saw in Hawai'i. Indeed, Katsunuma fulfilled another paternal role in the community, prevailing upon new migrants and old alike to comport themselves well in public and private.

Katsunuma Tomizō had a strong moral compass, and served as a forceful personality for new émigrés. Indeed, he highlighted how the person who goes overseas will "be proceeding to a foreign country with a barrier of countless thousand *ri* between yourself and your dear home" and, thus, will confront a whole host of new problems.[75] He specifically warned against alcoholism, gambling, and sloth as dangerous social issues that would harm not only a migrant's prospects of being successful but also the national prestige of Japan. "It is essential that you carefully and sincerely learn" Katsunuma wrote, "so that you will not become an embarrassment

[74] Kimura, *Issei*, 36.
[75] 1 ri is roughly 4km or 2.6 miles. Katsunuma Tomizō, "Hawai dekasegi imin no Kokoris" [A directive on dekasegi migration to Hawai'i] *Fukushima Minpō*, 13-14 May 1898, quoted in Maeyama Takashi and Shibuya Shōroku, *Hawai no shinbōnin : Meiji Fukushima imin no kojinshi* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 1986)

to all of Japan."[76] Instead, he implored immigrants to work hard for their employers, hold to the laws of their new country, and guard their health. In fact, his biographer Takahashi asserts that this is but one example of "his constant passion for the improvement of younger immigrants."[77]

This was true for all migrants, but Katsunuma stressed it even more for émigrés from his home region: Tōhoku. In his 1953 biography, *Imin no chichi Katsunuma Tomizō sensei den,* Takahashi Kanji reflects on Katsunuma's deep ties to Fukushima, reflecting that "from the bottom of his heart, *sensei* had was passionately devoted to the people from his dear home."[78] His work as a recruiter in the Tōhoku region in general, and in Fukushima in particular, perpetuated his ties with his native region. Katsunuma did not turn his back on his regionality, nor did he abandon his distinctive Tōhoku dialect. In fact, just as that dialect was what first brought him to Hawai'i as a regional recruiter it also continued to shape his persona within the Japanese community. Soga recalled how, even in Katsunuma's writings for the *Nippu Jiji*, his style mimicked the Tōhoku dialect; he was forever switching the order of his 'e' and 'i.'[79]

As a public figure and personality within the Japanese community, Katsunuma retained an emigrant identity as man from Fukushima. Highlighting one story of Katsunuma, his biographer Takahashi relates one incident that touches on his high standards for Fukushima migrants entering the United States:

> When we arrived at Honolulu harbor, Mr. Katsunuma told us to gather together, so we all went upon the deck. This man [from Adachi County] came up considerably late. He was wearing an unlined summer kimono with splashed patterns, and walked up pattering his wooden clogs of medium height, with a tobacco case hanging down from his waist. Even we could tell that he was in trouble. Furious with anger, Mr. Katsunuma ran up to that man, kicked him with the shoe, trampled him two or three times when he fell, yelling, "Where do you think you are? You are a disgrace to Fukushima."[80]

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[76] Katsunuma, "Hawai dekasegi imin no kokoroe."
[77] Takahashi, *Imin no chichi*, 13-14, translated in Takagi, 80.
[78] Ibid, 13.
[79] Ibid, 1; Takagi, 80.
[80] Takahashi, *Imin no chichi*, 13-14, translated in Takagi, "Tomizō and Tokujiro," 80.

It is apparent from this anecdote that Katsunuma believed that Japanese immigrants, and even more so those from his native region, needed to comport themselves with culture and discipline.

One hundred years later, Katsunuma Tomizō is listed in the Japanese language prefectural histories as the father of Fukushima migration to America. His story is retold as one of success; he is a man of vision who encouraged, and then aided, his fellow northeastern emigrants in their new life overseas. In America, Katsunuma is remembered as a pioneer, a man who succeeded in assimilation while retaining his identity as a Japanese man. In other words, Katsunuma has been marked as an *imin no chichi*, both metaphorically as a father figure and based on the mechanics of migration networks as he spawned a new Fukushima-American migrant lineage. Just as Okei was the tragic ancestor of Japanese-Americans, in Fukushima, Katsunuma has become the patriarch of the Fukushima-Hawai'ian community. Katsunuma exemplifies the narrative of a man who successfully bridged two cultures; for the American immigrant community he was a Japanese man who became fully integrated into American society while in Japan the prefectural histories hammer home how he never forgot his place of origin, his Tōhoku-Japaneseness.

Oikawa Jinzaburō, patriarch of a trans-Pacific village

The influence of Katsunuma Tomizō on the Hawai'ian community was tremendous, crossing regional divides within the Japanese immigrant society and even bridging racial barriers between the Japanese community and the rest of Hawai'ian society. However, such patriarchal figures do not need to influence the entire Japanese overseas population to be immortalized. Oikawa Jinzaburō, for example, represents an individual who became a central node linking a small village in Miyagi, Japan to another town in British Columbia, Canada. Katsunuma and

Jinzaburō Oikawa had several things in common. Both had family ties that linked them to influential families within their respective communities. Neither relinquished ties to their native place after leaving the shores of Japan, returning to their home districts to search out new families to join them overseas. However, where Katsunuma was an intellectual and government official, Oikawa was a venture capitalist. Katsunuma recruited migrants on the behalf of the Kumamoto Imingaisha, whereas Oikawa sought out fellow villagers to work for him in his business. Finally, while Katsunuma represented the hand of official migration within the corporate world of emigration companies and the legal role as immigration inspector, Oikawa flouted the law and attempted to circumvent it. Regardless of these differences, both of these men emerge in narratives of family and belonging for migrants from Japan's northeast to North America. In many ways, the story of Oikawa replicates the key aspects of the narrative of the successful patriarch embodied in Katsunuma, albeit on a smaller scale.

Oikawa Jinzaburō, born Onodera Ryoji, has become a prominent face of pre-war Miyagi prefecture migration on both a national and international scale. His life began in 1854, when he was born in the small village of Masubuchi (鱒淵村), today part of the Tome district of Miyagi prefecture, the third son of the prominent community leader.[81] After Onodera Ryoji entered his twenties, he married into the respected Oikawa family, taking the name Oikawa Jinzaburō (及川甚三郎), sometimes called "Oijin," and his father-in-law began grooming him to inherit control of the management of the Oikawa family's silk business.[82] Over the next ten years, he converted

[81] Masubuchi, Oikawa's hometown, is a mountain village in Yonekawa, what is today in Towa-chō, Tome-gun, Miyagi prefecture. Geographically, it sits on the border that currently divides Iwate and Miyagi prefectures; however, during the Tokugawa era, the towns on both sides of this modern cartographic construction belonged to Sendai domain.

[82] For an excellent biography of Oikawa, see Yonekawa sonshi hensan linkai, *Tome-gun Yonekawa sonshi* (Sendai: Tōhoku Insatsu Kabushiki Kaisha, 1955), 470-473. Also, while generally Japanese names are written beginning with the surname, in the case of Oikawa Jinzaburō this convention is often dropped when the source is in English. I refer to him as Oikawa in this chapter; however, as his family and descendants play important roles in his narrative as

his adopted family's silk company from a "primitive household industry" (原始的な家内工業) into an industrialized factory run on hydraulic power which employed sixty workers by 1886.[83] By 1893, his factory expanded to 150 workers and he established offices in Ishinomaki and Sendai in Miyagi which inspected raw silk from multiple other factories for shipment to Yokohama for export.[84] Oikawa's mill became the first mechanical silk-reeling factory in Miyagi, and local histories cite Oikawa's innovations as invaluable to the development of that industry in the prefecture.[85]

Oikawa showed a knack for identifying new sources of revenue by exploiting previously untapped natural resources. At the same time Oikawa modernized his family mill, he founded what would become a lucrative side-business: the production and marketing of ice to the growing urban center, Sendai. During one of his commercial trips down the Kitakami River, Jinzaburō stopped in Oginohama port, a key node in Tōhoku trade networks linking the region with Hokkaidō in the north and Yokohama in the south. There, according to legend, he overheard a group of Hokkaidō merchants talking about how the use of ice was "all the fashion in Tokyo and Osaka."[86] Oikawa seized the opportunity to transform Miyagi prefecture's climate, characterized by long, harsh winters, into a financial positive. He became the first ice merchant in Miyagi, introducing a new and locally-sourced luxury good; Masubuchi Ice became famous in Sendai within three years of the company's founding. Additionally, just as his factory provided new

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well, I will sometimes refer to him simply as Jinzaburō when appropriate. Furthermore, the Romanization of this name varies according to source. It is written as Oikawa Jinsaburo by the scholar that reintroduced the character of Oikawa to the English-language academia, David Sulz , as well as in Michiko Midge Ayukawa, *Hiroshima Immigrants in Canada 1891-1941* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008). However, Fukawa Masako also lists him as Jinzaburo in the book, Fukawa Masako, *Spirit of the Nikkei Fleet: BC's Japanese Canadian Fishermen* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2009).

[83] Shudō Seiki, *Kanada mikkōsen monogatari*, 1966, in Kanichi Onodera, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku no mura*, (Towa, Miyagi: self-published, 1996), 341.

[84] Sulz, "Japanese 'Entrepreneur' on the Fraser River," 23.

[85] *Tomegun Yonekawa sonshi* (Miyagi: Yonekawa-mura, 1955), 471; quoted in Nitta, *Mikkōsen Suian Maru*, 79.

[86] Nitta, *Phantom Immigrants*, 28.

kinds of jobs to Masubuchi, Oikawa encouraged local farmers to store their own ice, which he then purchased and marketed downriver. Due to these two successful ventures as well as his affiliation with prominent families in today's Tome-gun, by the age of forty he achieved a high level of social status as an industrialist and innovator. In fact, he even earned the nickname of "new-fangled Oijin" because of his willingness to adopt modern technological ideas and fads into his business models.[87]

However, it is not these achievements that stand out to mark Oikawa Jinzaburō an important figure in the history of Miyagi prefecture. It is true that the provincial governor publically lauded Oikawa as a pioneer in modernizing the silk industry and credited him as foundational in securing Miyagi's reputation as a successful silk-reeling area.[88] Instead, he is best remembered for his role as a father of Miyagi emigration to Canada. Indeed, while historical volumes like *Tome-gun Yonekawa sonshi* celebrate his influence on sericulture, silk-reeling, ice, and charcoal, he is first and foremost identified as an *imin no chichi*.[89]

Multiple things drew Oikawa, by then in his fourth decade, to start a new life in Canada. From a young age, Oikawa's horizons extended beyond his village borders. When he was fourteen, around the same time as the Meiji Revolution, he began transporting charcoal down the Kitakami River to the commercial port of Ishinomaki. Later, he would regularly travel to Yokohama to trade. These trips, argues the local historian and Oikawa's distant relative Onodera Kanichi, kindled an irresistible yearning to travel abroad and caused him to decide "I want to go and see America!"[90] The prospects of wealth available to migrants to North America's shores also drew Oikawa's interests. Accounts vary concerning how he first learned of the tremendous

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[87] "Oijin" is a contraction of Oikawa Jinzaburō name which takes the first character of each: 及from 及川 and 甚 from甚三郎 David Sulz, "Japanese 'Entrepreneur' on the Fraser River, 21.
[88] *Tomegun Yonekawa sonshi*, 470-3.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Quoted in Onodera, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku*, 341.

opportunities for fishing the Fraser River for salmon. Many modern retellings of his life claim that a letter from Satō Souemon (佐藤惣右エ門), a fellow Tome native and future business associate, first informed this phenomenon to Oikawa.[91] Other accounts, such as that from Shūdo Seiki, assert that that Oikawa discovered this fact while in Canada, working as a fisherman.[92] Regardless, Oikawa's interest was piqued, and by 1898 he began making all of the necessary arrangements to head to Canada.

After working a number of jobs in Canada, he moved to the Fraser River that he had heard so much about before leaving Tome. The wealth of the fisheries lived up to his expectations, but most importantly, he noticed an important phenomenon. Canadian fishermen, after catching a fish treated the salmon roe as a waste product and discarded it. Just as with his ice business, Oikawa saw the means to make a profit off of something that Canadian fishermen overlooked. He began plans to gather and export it back to Japan where that roe, or *sujiko*, was considered a delicacy. Joining into a partnership with another native of Tome-shi, Satō Souemon, they secured a lease on land in Sunbury from the Ewen Cannery. These acres encompassed Don and Lion islands in the Fraser River, islands which became known as Sato-jima and Oikawa-jima by local Japanese. But Oikawa was not satisfied, and his next major entrepreneurial endeavor pushed him beyond the boundaries of northeastern Japan into the uncharted waters of international manufacturing in Canada. This overseas business was, in fact, the culmination of his previous endeavors: the mechanization of his inherited silk factory showed his openness to new technologies, and his flirtation with the ice trade displayed considerable gift in adaptation of unappreciated local resources into treasure.

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[91] Fukawa, *Spirit of the Nikkei Fleet*, 17; "Bankūbā Shinpo sōkan 30 shūnen tokubetsu kikaku," *Vancouver Shinpo*, 2008, accessed 20 April 2015, http://www.v-shinpo.com/08special/48special/special.html; Gordon G. Nakayama, *Issei: Stories of Japanese Canadian Pioneers* (Toronto: NC Press Limited, 1984), 45; Nitta, *Phantom Immigrants*, 10-12

[92] Seiki, in Onodera, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku*, 342.

To efficiently net and process salmon and salmon roe, he returned to his home district in search of additional laborers. This may seem strange, as Oikawa had only to seek workers from the many Japanese lining the Yokohama docks or, even more conveniently, already residing in Vancouver. The reason for his choice to return home came from the divisions within the Japanese community in Canada. As highlighted by scholars such as Takada Teruko in *Tōki tabiji no koe: Kanada nikkei imin kutō*, common wisdom at the time dictated that "if you don't have people from your same prefecture and hometown, you cannot succeed in an enterprise in Canada."[93] Indeed, during his first years in Canada, Oikawa noticed that the Japanese community abroad was divided by regional affiliation, with one of the standard greetings among strangers being the question "What part of Japan are you from?"[94] Thus, he returned home to find men who would sign on to his fish cannery scheme, believing that "first and foremost, I need to get people from my own village to work for me because the Japanese here [in Canada] are so insular."[95] He looked to his home district in Tome, Miyagi to recruit other like-minded friends, family members, and neighbors.

Part of the significant mystique that surrounds the story of Oikawa Jinzaburō, making his immigrant story particularly attractive to descendants in both Japan and Canada as an *imin no chichi* narrative, comes from the manner in which he imported workers to populate his new colony in the Fraser River. In 1906, Oikawa organized an epic expedition of the *Suian Maru*. It is the story of this voyage which, in later years, would capture the imagination of community members on both sides of the ocean. The *Suian Maru* narrative marked Oikawa not only as a bold leader and visionary; it also shrouded Oikawa with the glamour of a rebel who would pursue his dream regardless of bureaucratic hurdles. In effect, Oikawa became a model of two

[93] Takada Teruko, *Tōki tabiji no koe: Kanada nikkei imin kutō* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1991), 46.
[94] David Sulz, "Japanese 'Entrepreneur'", 27. *Phantom Immigrants*, 52.
[95] Ibid, 59-60.

classic idioms: “local boy makes good” and “fortune favors the bold.”

The *Suian Maru* set sail without official sanction by the Japanese government and most passengers did not have passports.[96] They departed illegally from nearby Ishinomaki, just down the river from Tome-gun and, after a long and arduous passage, the boat captain eventually dropped off 65 of the passengers along the coastline of British Columbia. Carrying meager rations and dressed in cast-off hand Japanese uniforms left over from the Russo-Japanese War, these passengers set off in search of Oikawa's settlement.[97] The standard fee to join in this venture was 100 yen, often funded by the passenger's families or the community.[98] All were eventually apprehended by the Canadian authorities, customs agents fined the ship $800, and the courts imposed a further fine of $2275 ($35 for each of the 65 passengers who illegally landed in Beecher Bay).[99] However, they left an impression on the media and spurred a debate among officials regarding migration policies and practices.[100]

The reaction to the incident in English-language press and among Japanese officials makes it difficult to believe that the *Suian Maru* story or Oikawa Jinzaburō could ever be heralded as a positive role model in the Japanese community in Canada. Directly following the *Suian Maru*'s landing, some sensationalist stories emerged, speculating that the immigrants were in fact the vanguard of an invasion, stories titled "Small Army of Japs Captured" and "Japanese Captured: Small Army of Mikado's Men Held in Victoria."[101] A writer for the *Victoria Daily Times* published an article declaring that "the Japanese descent upon our coast is undoubtedly

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[96] Morikawa Kishirō (森川季四郎） to Viscount Hayashi Tadasu (子爵林薫殿), 5 Nov, 1906, in Onodera Kanichi, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku no mura: imin yakunen to kokusai kōryū* (Kesennamu-shi: Kōfūsha, 1996), 476-484.
[97] "Contraband Japs were victimized," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 25 October 1906.
[98] Some of these emigrants could not raise the funds themselves due to impoverishment following the environmental disasters and in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese war. Therefore, occasionally exceptions were made.
[99] "Japanese Master Heavily Fined To-day," 7.
[100] Canada, Central Registry of the Immigration Branch, GR-1547, reel B1083, vol 401, file 574351, G.L. Milne, Victoria, B.C., "Escape of Japanese from Schooner Suian Maru," copy of National Archives of Canada RG76 Imm. Series 1-A-1, vol. 401, reel C-10292, File 574351.
[101] "Small Army of Japs Captured," 1; "Japanese Captured: Small Army of Mikado's Men Held in Victoria," 6.

one of the most mysterious things that ever happened."[102] The press placed blame on Oikawa himself, calling him "wily schemer" who exploited the passengers "by means of ingenious misrepresentations, successfully palmed off [cheap army uniforms] on the passengers for exorbitant sums" and used his "characteristic craftiness" to protect himself.[103] An editorial went so far as to proclaim that "Oikawa is undoubtedly a sinner...fortunately, perhaps, for him, we do not punish people on general principles in this country; otherwise, he would be very apt to get what is coming to him."[104] None-the-less, after two weeks of intense coverage, the story was finally put to bed. The *Victoria Daily Times* characterized the affair as having "caused a mild sensation at the time," but it was soon forgotten by the general public in Canada.[105] The final word on Oikawa was surprisingly positive, depicting him as a property owner and someone with "a good standing among his fellow countrymen in the province."[106] The treatment of the *Suian Maru* affair by the Canadian English-language press alarmed the Japanese Consul in Victoria, Morikawa Kishirō (森川季四郎). He identified an anti-Japanese subtext in the *Suian Maru* stories and warned the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hayashi Tadesu (林董), of growing frustration by Canadians regarding migration Japanese policies.[107] Nevertheless, Oikawa emerged from the scandal with his character intact among the Japanese community in Canada.

The case of the *Suian Maru*, and Oikawa's life experience as a Canadian resident, highlights a number of crucial factors that allowed him to become enshrined as a patriarchal figure in the history of Miyagi-Canadian migration. First, he recruited laborers from a narrow pool limited to his home village and a few surrounding communities. While he was not the first

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[102] "Aspiring Japs," 4.
[103] "Jap was Wily Schemer," 2.
[104] Editorial, *Victoria Daily Colonist,* 26 October 1906, 4.
[105] "Suian Maru goes Free this Evening," 4.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Morikawa Kishirō (森川季四郎） to Viscount Hayashi Tadasu (子爵林薫殿), 5 Nov, 1906, in Onodera Kan'ichi, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku no mura: imin yakunen to kokusai kōryū* (Kesennamu-shi : Kōfūsha, 1996), 476-484.

to move to Canada, he proved extremely adept in enticing neighbors to move abroad. In doing so, he began the process of emigration which relocated individuals who shared the same native place customs and traditions. In Canada, they could then recreate a kind of simulacrum of their home village culture abroad. Of the total 83 *Suian Maru* passengers, Oikawa's Tome-gun provided 71 settlers; almost to the man, all of the rest came from a neighboring district in Iwate prefecture or elsewhere in Miyagi.[108] While not all of these *Suian Maru* passengers ultimately came to work on Oikawa-jima, he remained the catalyst and progenitor of a new migration chain.

The other critical piece of lore the Oikawa narrative brings is proof of that the immigrant dream did not require having to give up ties to one's native communities. Oikawa embodied an example that a hard-working Japanese migrant could attain financial success to prospective migrants back home in Tōhoku at the turn of the century. The opportunity to attain work in Canada by joining the *Suian Maru* voyage came on the heels of multiple years of crop failure, famine, and the Russo-Japanese war. Farmers and villagers, many from the middle-class, saw an opportunity to rebuild wealth and financial security by sending family members abroad. These two components can be seen in the first-hand account of *Suian Maru* passenger Gotō Kimpei. As a young man he heard a rumor of Oikawa's business in Canada. His father encouraged him to consider joining Oikawa in Canada, secretly informing his son that forty or fifty people from his village were planning on applying, including his uncle, cousins, and other relatives.[109] Gotō Kimpei further recollected how his father gave him his blessing to leave home temporarily: "with the expectation that you will return when it is time for your Army medical examination, it's OK

[108] There were five men listed as being from Kanagawa. *Suian Maru jōsen meisaihyō* [水安丸乗船明細表Suian Maru Manifest], *Gaimushō shiryō*, Miyagi-ken, Tōwa-chō Public Office, Reprinted in Takada Teruko, *Tōki tabiji no koe: Kanada nikkei imin kutō*, 42-44.
[109] Gotō Kimpei, "Rokujūnen wo kaikoshite" in Onodera, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku*.

if you go."[110] He modeled how individuals could retain connections with their native place even after moving abroad. The reality that migrants did not have to leave home completely, in conjunction with the promise of success abroad, kindled enthusiasm throughout the community. Buck Suzuki, the child of a Japanese fisherman based on Satō-jima (Don Island), conjectured that Oikawa recruited others from his area by invoking the idea that Canada "was a very rich country, that the returns would be great, and that within a few years you could make enough money and return back to your home country and live happily ever after."[111] Therefore, when the 68 Tōhoku natives aboard the *Suian Maru* left Ishinomaki harbor, they did so together as a community of neighbors, friends, and family.

Oikawa Jinzaburō could serve as metaphorical patriarch due to his hereditary and personal social status within his native community. Contrary to common wisdom, many of the early migrants to North America did not come from the impoverished classes.[112] This is true of Oikawa. Being originally an Onodera, he inherited the status of his birth family that purportedly founded and later served as a leader of Masubuchi (鱒淵) village.[113] After the Meiji Revolution, his father retained his status as political elite, or a *chihō meibōka* ("local notable" or "man of local influence"). Unfortunately, as the third son, he did not stand to inherit control of the family upon his father's death. At the age of 20, he married into a merchant family, took the name Oikawa Jinzaburō, and was adopted as heir. In the following years, as his adopted father's

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[110] Ibid., 308-9. However, in Ito Kazuo's Issei, this same passage appears on page 81 and is cited as being part of Rokuro Goto's *Kanada Mikkoki*. Ito translates it as "Why don't you go...under the condition that you come back when it is time for your Army medical examination."

[111] Buck Suzuki Interview (26, April 1973) Richmond City Archives, Tape 31, side 1, Richmond, BC, Canada. I would like to thank David Sulz for providing me with a transcript of this interview.

[112] This pattern was not limited to the case of Tōhoku, or indeed the case of Japan. For example, John Bodnar's ambitious text, *The Transplanted*, unravels the myth that migrants were merely "impoverished peasants abandoning underdeveloped, backward regions." See John E. Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 54. Andrea Geiger highlights similar patterns in Japanese immigrant structures in Canada. Andrea Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion: Transpacific encounters with Race, Caste, and Borders, 1885-1928* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 31.

[113] Yamagata Takao, *Ushinawareta fūkei: nikkei Kanada gyomin no kiroku kara* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1996), 143.

business grew, his family became widely respected and provided many villagers with jobs. Indeed, it seems almost predestined that he would become the leader, founder, and patriarch of those he gathered to populate his island in Canada. Reflecting back on her father's tenure as leader on Oikawa island, his daughter reflects that "perhaps it was not surprising that he [Oikawa Jinzaburō] took upon himself the duty [to be] the father of Oikawa island."[114] His social status further lent weight to his success story, further enticing others to risk relocating abroad.

While not all migrants from Miyagi prefecture, or even Tome-gun, came at the direct behest of Oikawa Jinzaburō, his role as a Meiji-era Issei (first generation) immigrant remains significant. Over the years the total number of people who immigrated from Tome-gun numbered 437, many of whom followed other family members or neighbors already in Canada.[115] Above everything else, Oikawa's venture in Canada secured for him a kind of immortality in the annals of local Miyagi history. In 1955, the history of Yonekawa village named Oikawa Jinzaburō as the Meiji-era "*imin no chichi*" for the district. Going further, Oikawa is declared a "man with few peers [whose] hard work and effort will live forever."[116] The authors continue, noting him as a man who "exerted himself for the benefit of his village and country," for his work within the Tome district and beyond.[117]

Tracing the afterlife of his story opens a window onto how modern Japanese and Canadians reproduce emigrant history and immigrant mythologies. The import, and even knowledge of Oikawa's story, has not remained static over the last hundred years. It has followed a crooked path, ricocheting back and forth across the Pacific, transcending language barriers. In Canada, for years the story of the Suian Maru was forgotten by all but those who were directly

[114] Ibid.
[115] Kanada tokōsha shimei shirabe, in Onodera, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku no mura*, 465-75.
[116] *Tomegun Yonekawa sonshi*, 473. Also referenced in Sulz, "Japanese 'Entrepreneur,'" 52.
[117] *Tomegun Yonekawa sonshi*, 473.

related to the people and events. However, the story was resurrected sixty years later, in 1967, and be featured in the Japanese language newspaper, *The New Canadian*. The paper ran a series of articles titled "The Nice Guy from Tōhoku: Jinzaburō Oikawa" (*Tōhoku no kaidanji Oikawa Jinzaburō*) which reprinted excerpts from the memoir: *Kanada mikkō monogatari* (The Story of Stowaways in Canada**)**.[118] However, being published in a Japanese-language press, there is little doubt that within Canada it reached a very limited audience of first generation Japanese. It fulfilled the role of a commemorative human interest story for Japanese-Canadians, tying nostalgia for home with themes of Japanese contributions to Canada, the hardships endured, and the ultimate success granted to the bold.

The major resurgence of interest in Oikawa came from within Japan, when, in 1979, the popular author Nitta Jiro wrote a story *Mikkōsen Suian Maru* [The Stowaway Ship Suian Maru] which traced Oikawa's *Suian Maru* venture, based on a mix of historical documentation and a compelling fictionalized narrative. In Nitta's estimation, the migrants on the *Suian Maru*, almost all of them farmers from rural Miyagi who traveled across the ocean in search of economic self-betterment. They left to escape the crushing environmental disasters that had gripped northern Miyagi such as the 1905 famine. They left hoping to return wealth to their relatives who remained behind. And indeed, many would return during the Taishō period to Tome to live in the new family homes built using funds remitted by the emigrants.[119] Nitta spins a compelling tale, bringing to life the grassroots internationalism of the Meiji era for Japanese during a period of when Japan was successfully reestablishing itself as an economic powerhouse. Policies promoting internationalization became the key. The publication of Nitta Jiro's text amidst the internationalization movements brought the story alive again for those back in Japan.

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[118] "Tōhoku no kaidanji Oikawa Jinsaburō," *New Canadian*, 18 February 1967, 5
[119] Personal conversation with Sato family, March 2009.

Another way that the internationalization movement figures into the meandering journey of Oikawa's promotion to becoming known as a father of migration in Japan is the government's project to educate all Japanese youth in English, the language believed to be the *lingua franca* for the twenty-first century. In 1987, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIC), the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) cooperated with local authorities to create the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. Their mission was clear:

> The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme aims to promote grass roots internationalisation at the local level by inviting young overseas graduates to assist in international exchange and foreign language education in local governments, boards of education and elementary, junior and senior high schools throughout Japan. It seeks to foster ties between Japanese citizens (mainly youth) and JET participants at the person-to-person level.[120]

Today, twenty-three years later, the JET program has brought over 55,000 people from 62 countries to localities in Japan.[121] An interesting phenomenon, however, is the fact that local boards of education make the ultimate decisions for placement. Therefore, due to the local memory of Oikawa & continued linkages between the Suian Maru families, officials in the small town of Tome, in Miyagi prefecture, decided to recruit Canadians to serve as their foreign language teachers. By way of this, David Sulz from a small town near the Fraser River in British Columbia, Canada became placed as an assistant language teacher in Tome city, Miyagi. There, he would be given a copy of Nitta Jiro's book. His translation and study of that text, in turn, brought the story of Oikawa back home to Canada.

Thus, the story of Oikawa Jinzaburō remerged in Canada based upon the pre-existing

[120] Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR), "The Goals of the JET Programme," accessed online 18 July 2013, http://www.jetprogramme.org/e/introduction/goals.html.
[121] In the interest of full disclosure, I should note that I am an Alumni of the JET Programme. I worked in the city of Iwanuma, Miyagi Prefecture from 2003-2004.

international kinship ties of history and memory. Programs such as the JET Programme were organized to internationalize its hinterland, David Sulz found a piece of Canada already waiting for him in Japan. He would ultimately translate Nitta Jiro's text into English as *Phantom Immigrants* in 1998. The story remained of interest to Sulz, who methodically investigated the components of Nitta Jiro's tale using historical documentation, interviewing descendants, and completing exhaustive research. In 2003, he introduced Oikawa to scholars of Japanese migration in his Master thesis at the University of Victoria titled "Japanese 'Entrepreneur' on the Fraser River: Oikawa Jinsaburo and the Illegal Immigrants of the Suian Maru." Interestingly, Sulz found that the narrative put forth in *Mikkōsen Suian Maru* could be substantiated largely by the extant historical record, certain aspects of Nitta's fictionalized retelling had become taken as truth by the Japanese-Canadian community even when proven as inaccurate.[122]

In fact, Oikawa's risky entrepreneurial venture created linkages between rural Miyagi and British Columbia that proved enduring for over a century. I came to know of this story from Kan'ichi Onodera, local historian, descendant of Oikawa's Onodera ancestors, and the author of the self-published book *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku no mura* [The Tōhoku Village that Crossed over to Canada].[123] He informed me of the long history and continued ties between Tome and British Columbia, inviting me to the local community theater production that would take place the next month in Tome. Over one hundred years later, an adaptation of the story of the *Suian Maru* premiered in a Tome community building, starring local talent and with the guest star of none other than David Sulz. It was a cause for celebration, including a display of family relics and the screening of a film by the extended family of Satō Soueman, Oikawa's business partner, who returned to Tome in the 1910s. Even long after his cannery ceased production, the

[122] Sulz, Japanese 'Entrepreneur' on the Fraser River."
[123] Onodera, *Kanada e watatta Tōhoku*.

connection between Tome and Canada remained in the form of family ties. Oikawa, no longer just a migrant, became a component part of Japanese-Canadian mythology. He was someone who, struggling over adversity succeeded. He embodies an international history that just happened to underlay a rural area of supposedly parochial Japan. A century later and an ocean apart, localities in Miyagi and British Columbia celebrate their mutual heritage.

Oikawa's story was born in his trans-Pacific venture and then brought to life in Japan as anecdotal evidence of internationalism of how a small, seemingly secluded Tōhoku town had long ties to the greater world beyond Japan's borders. Without a local pride in Oikawa and his Canadian connections, the Tome Board of Education would never have specifically requested to have Canadians assigned to their schools as native English speakers. Made famous by Nitta Jiro's fictionalization, the story was then passed into the hands of a Canadian scholar who translated the tale and introduced it, in translation, to the Japanese-Canadian community in Vancouver. While this story would have always held resonance for direct decedents, the power of the fictionalization has grown to the point where it has reached a nation-wide audience in Japan through an NHK documentary. It has also been picked up as an important part of the oral and written traditions of Japanese-Canadians, with the Japanese-Canadian National Museum holding exhibitions dedicated to the Suian Maru.

Remembering to forget: Filipino-Japanese community through the fog of war

The creation of myth-history requires memorializing the exceptional. Only such stories have the power to become the foundation of an origin story for an entire community's immigrant ethnicity. The exceptional is aspirational, but as displayed in the case of the Philippines, it is also contingent. No two nations have the same immigrant narratives, yet certain tropes do tend to overlap regarding Japanese migration to North America. The tale of Japanese in the United

States and Canada is one of people relocating to a nation controlled by European immigrants. These émigrés faced prejudice and hardship on the frontier spaces of these rapidly expanding nation-states, with the question of balancing assimilation and adaptation with the discovery that to be Japanese was to have an ethnicity. A collection of stories evolved, becoming tantamount to an immigrant mythos and the basis of a myth-history for that nation. In other words, even though exceptional, the lives and works of particular individuals became part of a universalistic historical lineage that unified nationals emigrating from Japan into a group known as the "Japanese" of that area.

The Philippines is one area of mass migration during the prewar period that tells another tale, both from the perspective of native (Japanese) and overseas (Nikkei) community myth-history narrative production. Due to the trauma and historical legacy of a war fought locally, the story of Japanese ethnicity in the Philippine island of Mindanao is that of silence. Following Japan's defeat in the Pacific War, most Japanese were repatriated, and those who remained, as well as the children or Filipino wives of migrants, hid their heritage and ties to the Japanese. In the Philippines, the disruptive epoch of war severed native place associations for the vast majority of first generation migrants. In fact, it left very few first generation migrants behind to continue that legacy. Apart from the distinction of "Okinawan," a category recognized throughout Japanese settlements abroad, from Micronesia to Brazil and beyond, native place regionalism and Japanese ties to home plays little into the immigrant experience. The silencing of Japanese place the Philippines, replaced by a stress on Filipino space, further displays the amputation of residents of so-called "Davao-kuo" from their hereditary homelands in Japan. Ultimately, the story of Japanese immigration to the Philippines is one of disconnect between space and history, place and memory, and clearly displays the contingent nature of memory in

the construction of belonging.

Of course, that does not mean that there is no narrative of Japanese migration in the Philippines, or no mythic figures whose life histories are appropriated and folded into a myth-history. For example, tales of Ōta Kyōsaburō, who served as an agent for recruiting Japanese laborers and the pioneer of the first and one of the biggest manila hemp companies in Davao, and Furukawa Yoshizō, his rival and the founder of the Furukawa Plantation Company, Inc. (Furukawa Takushoku Kabushiki Kaisha), can certainly be viewed as archetypal progenitors and patriarchs.[124] During the height of the Pacific War, all ethics textbooks for elementary schools in Japan recounted the tale of Ōta, the "father of Davao's development," whose grave is still today a site of pilgrimage for Japanese-Filipinos.[125] When Ōta Kyōsaburō died in 1917 he left no memoires and his story became appropriated much like Okei's as vessel for an origin myth that could ride the winds of time.

The stories of Ōta and Furukawa, as demonstrated in Japanese textbooks in the *naichi* during the 1930s and 1940s, became universal stories of men who would shape the social landscape of Davao rather than individuals tied to a particular Japanese regionality. Following the war there began a volatile period of redefinition of what it was to be of Japanese ancestry living in the Philippines. In the Philippines, the end result was a severing of the importance of native place affiliations for those who remained; back in Japan, domestic memory elided stories of the Japanese settlement of "Davao-kuo" from the Japanese diaspora. That the "founding father" of Japanese in the Philippines was a Kobe merchant dwindles; instead, the legacy of Ōta

[124] Perhaps the most famous trailblazer in the Philippines is Ōta Kyōsaburō, whose surname is sometimes transcribed as Ohta or Ota. For an excellent, concise yet in-depth look at the life and perceptions of Ōta, as displayed in an ethics textbook used in elementary schools in Japan during the war, see Lydia Yu-Jose, *Japan Views the Philippines, 1900-1944* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1992), 14-16. Regarding Furukawa Yoshizō, and particularly a narrative of his views regarding problems in Davao, see Yu-Jose, *Japan Views the Philippines*, 80-87.
[125] Ibid., 15.

Kyōsaburō is firmly planted on Filipino soil. Nikkei accept Ōta as a universal, rather than regionally inflected, father of all Japanese development in Davao.[126] Thus, while some first generation migrants do stand out of the pages of history, there lacks the rich panoply of local heroes who endured hardship or triumphed over adversity that can be found in North American settlement narratives. Instead, the record feels truncated, flattened. This final section, therefore, will investigate the modern narratives of Japanese migration as remembered in the Philippines and Japan. The trauma of war resulted in not only the destruction of personal collections of documentation and repatriation of many men; it also fuelled a stigma that was placed on Filipinos who also claimed Japanese heritage.

Part of the reason for the anger felt by many Filipinos towards the Japanese immigrants could date back to before the Pacific war. Davao occupied an unusual place in the imagination of the Asian business community throughout the Japanese Empire before the war. In the publication *Dabao hōjin kaitakushi*, a Taiwanese newspaperman utilizes such phrases as "Davao is not a foreign country" and "Davao is a Japanese village."[127] In fact, by the 1920s Davao did not just have a section of its city named “little Japan,” the entire settlement had earned the nickname of “Little Tokyo.”[128] The economic penetration of Davao by Japanese interests was significant, due to their domination of the abaca industry. Scholars of the Mindanao, such as Patricio Abinales, have uncovered old maps that clearly show Davao as being marked as a domestic Japanese port by Japanese shipping maps.[129] Local Davao historian Macario Tui emphasizes how, in the 1920s and 1930s “Davao Gulf had become a Japanese lake, with most ships entering Davao being

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[126] Ibid., 14-16.
[127] Kamohara Kōji, *Dabao hōjin kaitaku shi* (Davao: Nippi Shimbun-sha, 1938), 663.
[128] Macario Tiu, *Davao: Reconstructing History from Text and Memory* (Davao City: Ateneo de Davao University, 2005), 117.
[129] Patricio N. Abinales, *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State*. (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000).

Japanese-owned."[130] Perhaps most disturbing to some, following the Japanese aggression in Manchuria, which became known as Manchu-kuo, Davao received a similar nickname, Davao-kuo.[131]

Before the war, first generation migrants considered native place to be extremely important in their identity construction. As historian Hayase Shinzō clearly states in his dissertation, "the high concentration of Japanese immigrants from a few prefectures indicated that news of the boom in the Davao abaca industry was carried back by chain link immigration to their home communities."[132] Davao was home to the largest population of Japanese living in Southeast Asia during the prewar period.[133] Due to the war, however, connections were severed with those back home. Following the war, almost all first generation Japanese repatriated to Japan; yet many left behind wives and children, both of Japanese and Filipino descent. How do those people view their Japanese heritage? The answer is complicated.

Among the Nisei (second generation) octogenarians interviewed, few could remember their neighbor's native place affiliation if they were from mainland Japan. One interviewee simply took a very long pause, tilted her head, and recalled that perhaps one of her friends in school had a strange accent. "Yes, I think she could have been from Fukushima," she commented.[134] However, members of the Japanese community in Davao never hesitate to state that of those men and women, the largest contingent of migrants (21.6 percent) hailed from

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[130] Macario Tiu, "Japanese Presence in Davao," (Paper presented at 3rd Philippine and Japan NGO International Symposium on Social Development, Davao City, 25-27 August 2010).
[131] Tiu, "Japanese Presence in Davao" ; Patricio Abinales, in his collection of notes held by Ateneo de Manila University for the text *Making Mindanao*, also collected multiple references to this phenomenon. For example, the souvenir program by Ernesto Corcino, "Japan in Davao; Adventures in Partnership," *Araw ng Dabaw*, 55th Anniversary, City of Davao, refers to Davao as "Davao-kuo."
[132] Hayase, *Tribes, Settlers and Administrators on a Frontier*, 161.
[133] By 1941, the population of Japanese in the Philippines numbered roughly 30,000 individuals. Grant Goodman, *"A Flood of Immigration": Japanese Immigration to the Philippines 1900-1941* (University of Kansas: Center for East Asian Studies and the Center for Digital Scholarship, 2011). Accessed 15 November 2011, http://hdl.handle.net/1808/7984.
[134] Personal interview, the Davao Japanese Museum, Oct 2010.

Okinawa.[135] Even today, anecdotal stories and personal interviews with second- and third-generation Filipino-Japanese revealed that generally members of the Japanese community still residing in Davao did not hesitate to explain how the largest contingent of migrants hailed from Okinawa when discussing Japanese regionalism.[136] As I show elsewhere in my dissertation, the existence of a regional distinction that singled out "Okinawa" as a group is unsurprising.[137] What did surprise the people I interviewed in Davao was that the next largest group came from Japan's northeastern Fukushima Prefecture.[138] To these children of war, abandoned by repatriated fathers in a land that had suffered great degradation at the hands of the Japanese during the war, their childhood playmates were simply "Japanese," or possibly "Okinawan," but almost never from "Fukushima," "Hiroshima," or "Fukuoka."[139]

Today, Nikkei in the Philippines associate themselves more readily with their birth-country, the Philippines, rather than their ancestral country of Japan. Japanese domestic regionalism, something historically important to the first generation in other settlements like California or Vancouver, should still be found to underwrite the myth-history. In the Philippines, the tide of migration that pushes Filipinos of Japanese descent to claim their heritage has a lot of the same underpinnings, if in reverse. There is not a long tradition that ties individuals to their ancestral region, the hometown with which their family shares an international connection. Instead, there is a movement to prove any kind of Japanese ancestry. With this ancestry, individuals from the Philippines can accelerate their visa applications to attain work permits in Japan. Among the Filipino-Japanese students questioned, I didn't find anyone wishing to return

[135] Hayase, *Tribes, Settlers and Administrators on a Frontier,* 161.
[136] Ibid.
[137] See the case of Brazil in chapter 2 where both fellow Japanese and foreigners alike viewed Okinawans as being a distinctive group from "the Japanese".
[138] Ibid.
[139] Personal interview, the Davao Japanese Museum, Oct 2010.

to Japan to live permanently. Instead, there was a hope to go to their ancestral land in search of moneys which could then be sent back home to the Philippines. In time, these young Nikkei hoped to return to their homeland, now the Philippines.

In Japan, memory of Nikkei pre-war presence in Davao has become elided. While there are many tales of globalization that link migrants to locales throughout North and South America with their native place, the fact that Japanese had a large settlement in Davao remains known, but depersonalized as a trans-local mythology. The resurgence of internationalization narratives so indicative to the 1970s and 1980s in Fukushima omit the legacy of Davao, leaving behind hardly a trace of nostalgic ties that connected Fukushima, the territory which sent the second largest number of migrants to the Philippines, to Davao. Indeed, within domestic Japan, there is little-to-no knowledge of the deep ties between their home prefecture of Fukushima and Davao, let alone knowledge that the Japanese ever migrated en masse to the Philippines at all.

The narrative of Filipino-Japanese Nikkei in Japan is that of silence. While there is a general acknowledgement that in the Philippines there are those of Japanese ancestry, few ties remain between specific migration groups and their Japanese native place. That history of linkages is largely forgotten. This seems difficult to believe as the guest-worker programs in Japan actively recruit Filipinos of Japanese descent to come to Japan and work in factories. There is an acceptance that such men and women, much like the Brazilian Nikkei, will fit in better to Japanese society because of their Japanese ancestry. However, prejudice in Japan dictates that, more often than not, these Nikkei are seen as "less" than Japanese, and many Filipino-Nikkei speak out about experiences of abuse and discrimination suffered within their ancestral lands.

The legacy of war and resulting alienation of relations between kin on either side created

a situation where, perhaps, it is easier to forget than to remember. This resulted in forging in the Philippines an outlying case which, while proving the enduring nature of Japanese ancestry among Filipino-Japanese, did not reverberate back home. In other words, the suppression of *Issei* regionalism in the immigrant experience in the Philippines removed domestic memory in Japan of regional connections between Fukushima and Davao; the immigrant experience in Davao, thus, did not have a lasting impact on the production of regional, and therefore national, identity in the Tōhoku region.

Conclusion: Memorialization and Mobilization

Stories told and retold of the historical ties between Japan and other nations abroad have been mobilized for multiple purposes over the past century. In Japan, the stories of international intercourse remains bound by region, with local governments and the descendants of return migrant families utilizing those historical linkages as propaganda to boast of a particular place's internationalism. For scholars interested in Japanese migration narratives, one need only look within the official *kenshi* of prefectures that had large out-migration to discover out just who represents that prefecture as an *imin no chichi*.

On the other side of the ocean, in North or South America, and even in the Philippines, the history is primarily used as the basis of a migrant mythos, a collection of stories that underwrite an ethnic community. The stories tend to be viewed as universalizing and communal, with the importance of native place in Japan diminishing over the generations. Over the years, the import of different migrant stories ebb and flow, as institutions mobilize each narrative to suit the needs of contemporary situations. Not all of these stories of pioneering *gannen mono* or the fathers of migration were legends in their time. That, however, does not decrease these stories

importance within the modern Japanese community on either side of the ocean.

Part of the power of these *kusawake* avatars, be it those of the *gannen mono* or the patriarch, lay in their versatility: modern institutions can draw from the different narratives as needed. The stories are now highlighted in the Japanese-American or Japanese-Canadian histories often represent "rediscovery" of such moments and people, stories that only gain prominence after their utility is identified. In the case of Southern California, the so-called lost colony of Wakamatsu has become a cornerstone in the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) institutional memory, being mobilized in a number of ways in the post-war period. The tales of the historical *gannen-mono* life provided an intellectual and communal vessel which could contain a vast array of lessons for contemporary migrant. That is why, in the decades following the American internment of Japanese in World War II, Okei's narrative could serve as a narrative of triumph over adversity, highlighting the resiliency of the Japanese-American community.

Ultimately, immigrant identity is tied to the acknowledgement of a shared history and the acceptance of communal memories as the framework for a distinctive ethnicity. This chapter displays the way that three individuals stories, that of Okei, Katsunuma, and Oikawa, have been mobilized by various players on opposite sides of the Pacific, particularly during the post-war period. In contrast, the Philippines stands as a time where the historical framework of post-war memories was directly influenced by violence that played out locally, overshadowing any native immigrant myth-history with the weight of international conflict and the resulting decades it took for Nikkei to reconcile their dual heritage as both Japanese aggressor and besieged Filipino.

The significance back in Japan of these exceptional stories of Tōhoku natives living, working, and struggling while abroad serves as a way for localities within the supposedly

secluded northeast can claim a history of local internationalism. The active retelling of father of migration stories, the inclusion of them in the annals of prefectural histories, underscores the things that those from the Tōhoku region have in common with the other regions of modern Japan. As discussed in the first chapter, Tōhoku settlers played a significant role in the settlement of Hokkaido and, as analyzed in chapter two, overseas Tōhoku populations recognized both their unity with other Japanese immigrants while embracing their distinctive emigrant regionalism. A mobile, engaged population native to the Tōhoku region, and the resulting creation of a regional identity, comes home in these stories of the immigrant experience.

CHAPTER 4

TŌHOKU IN GREATER EAST ASIA: DISCOURSES OF NATIVE PLACE AND THE LOCAL CULTURE MOVEMENT

This chapter examines transitions and transformations in the local identities in the Tōhoku region during the period of total empire beginning in the 1930s through a study of the local culture movement (*kyōdo bunka undo*) and the development of the notion of *furusato,* or native place. In particular, this chapter will argue that Tōhoku affinities and subjectivities did not fade away with the onset of hyper-nationalism. Instead, the central state in Tokyo partially harnessed local and even regional identity to its project of expansionism, resulting in an intensification of an affective sense of home and belonging among individuals who self-identified as being from "Tōhoku." In fact, in the case of Japan's northeast, a growing body of public intellectuals and educators mobilized the long tradition of localism to articulate the central role that the northeast in general, and each Tōhoku native in particular, could and should play a role within the emergent project of empire. Thus, this chapter moves away from a narrative of the fracturing of the international Japanese diasporic community into regional sub-communities to refocus on the merger of local with national pride. The 1930s and 1940s witnessed a parallel development of a strongly particularistic local identity that, rather than being displaced or even subsumed within a unitary and nationalistic love for an increasingly militaristic state, in fact mediated that connection and linked Tōhoku identity to Japanese imperial expansionism.

Throughout Japan there exists a long tradition of localism whereby one's identity was intrinsically tied to the earth upon which one's ancestors lived, a uniquely personal *furusato*.[1]

[1] Irokawa Daikichi, *The Culture of the Meiji Period* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), 29-30. Irokawa argues that with the Meiji period, the traditional view that ones "home village was ordained by heaven and could not be changed" was altered, allowing for individuals to contemplate the possibility or relocation.

Individual prefectures, towns, or villages in Tōhoku were not alone in this turn towards understanding personalized nationalism.[2] However, patriotism in the 1930s was embedded in concentric relations of belonging, beginning with the individual, then family, village, town, prefecture, region, nation, and finally empire. How did these multiple notions of belonging interact? If scholars expand their study beyond the metropole, beyond the experience of the Tokyo native, could academics discover a new way of understanding modernity in Japan—a personal modernity defined by nationalism, but also reflected and refracted through localism? What then does this individually understood notion of belonging do to an idea of Japan tied to notions of homogeneity, of patriotism, of unity, of nationalism? Not everyone shared the same constellation of affinities; native place has no single articulation. How, then, did individuals from the provinces relate to their nation?

This chapter will investigate the way that one group of Japanese made sense of their place in the growing militaristic climate of the 1930s, their place as Japanese citizens, through a lens of the local. By the early 1940s, as the nation of Japan hit the decade-long mark in their fifteen year war in Asia, the context of patriotism shifted. The local became one's region, in this case Tōhoku, within the larger entity of Greater Asia. The journal *Furusato*, over the decade of its publication, printed mission statements, invited local contributions, and elicited commentary by scholars to investigate just what it meant to belong to their shared "native place." The question posed by the editorial board was not to define their shared place or to create a single

[2] The local history movement was not a phenomenon of the Tōhoku region. Focusing on other regions such as Okinawa, Tze May Loo has emphasized the importance of building up local culture to "building up local culture (*kyodo bunka*) was not a return to old Okinawa, but rather to develop central Culture (*chuō bunka*) to enable a stronger 'Japanese spirit.'" Tze May Loo, *Heritage Politics: Shuri Castle and Okinawa's Incorporation into Modern Japan, 1879-2000* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 133. Similarly, geographer Kären Wigen calls for a reexamination of the educational role in the elementary school system of *kyōdoka*, or "native-place studies," which made the study of local regions the foundation of the geography curriculum in prewar Japan. See Kären Wigen, "Teaching about Home: Geography at Work in the Prewar Nagano Classroom," *Journal of Asian Studies* 59, no. 3 (August 2000): 550-574.

articulation of *furusato*. Instead, the journal represents the fundamental intersections between the local and the global, the regional and the national. *Furusato* displays how people did not define themselves through a standardized identity of "The Japanese," but instead how they negotiated nationalism from the lens of the particular.

This chapter will pay particularly close attention to the way mobile Tōhoku residents fashioned a portable and deterritorialized sense of local belonging that could sustain them as they traveled along the pathways of empire from the capital of Tokyo to the colonial frontiers of Manchuria. Over the course of the turbulent '20s and '30s, Japanese nationalism and regionalism became amplified as the government in Tokyo expanded its gaze both outward towards the colonies and inward towards crafting unity. However, as we shall see in this chapter, individuals in the provinces did not access nationalism via Tokyo culture, that ideal "universal" culture imagined by political theorists and intellectuals in the capital; instead, individuals from Miyagi, whether in the prefecture itself or travelling beyond its borders, envisioned their place within the nation through articulations of the local, the familiar, the tangible. Belonging was a multilayered experience, and for these Miyagi prefecture natives, community could be characterized in the term *furusato,* the articulation of inherent, eternal, and often ineffable linkages between individual citizens and their native place.

To illustrate this creation of mobile *furusato* identities in the service of total empire, this chapter will focus on two specific case studies: the contributions to the Tokyo-based, Miyagi prefecture-themed periodical *Furusato* of Atōda Reizō and Matsuda Mitsuo, and a 1941 Essay Contest sponsored by the Sendai branch of the national newspaper the *Nichinichi Shimbun.* The first of these episodes demonstrates how the imperial milieu of Tokyo reproduced and reconfigured extant narratives of Tōhoku as temporal and spatial markers of backwardness and

authenticity. The second example, featuring essays from individuals throughout Tōhoku, will show how individual people rejected ideas of Tōhoku backwardness even as they deepened their participation in and attachment to discourses of both *furusato* and empire. In sum, this chapter will demonstrate the complexities of how individuals of Tōhoku simultaneously fashioned their own narratives distinct from a normative national discourse promulgated in Tokyo, but nevertheless became active subject participants in the project of empire.

Regional history in interwar Japan: "Tōhoku" as local history

Modernity and the resultant anxieties over of a loss of tradition stand as a critical point in the construction of regionalism in Japan. Marilyn Ivy, in her seminal text *Discourse of the Vanishing*, outlines the national-cultural phantasms that emerge at the interstices of history making, subjectivity, and the crisis of modernity. Tracing how contemporaneous intellectuals started to imagine tradition "through tourism, folklore studies, education, and mass media—and through everyday moments of national-cultural interpellation and identification—Japanese of all generations seek recognition of continuity that is coterminous with its negation."[3] Indeed, the rise of activities focused on preserving the "traditional" sought to tether "today" to a past that seemed to be slipping farther and farther away, a drive to "seek a recognition of continuity" with that which modernity is rendering irrelevant and obsolete. Ivy argues that this anxiety arises and heralds both the beginning and end of the transition into the modern period: the act of remembering to forget is as traumatic—if not more so—than the act of forgetting itself. Or, in Ivy's own words, "the loss of nostalgia—that is the loss of the desire to long for what is lost

[3] Marilyn Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing Modernity, Phantasm, Japan*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 10.

because one has *found* the lost object—can be more unwelcome than the original loss itself."[4] It is the contemporaneous need to grasp hold of a past even as society moves inexorably forward, this quest to tether progress to a familiar, if strangely alien and provincial, past which spawns the discontent among those seeking Ivy's vanishing world.

By the 1910s and 1920s, anxieties born of the apparent loss of tradition that accompanied modernity resulted in a growing crisis of identity among intellectuals and politicians within Japan proper. Some of the greatest minds of the period began to focus scholarly attention on a territory they assumed to be decidedly poor and underdeveloped, Tōhoku. Minzokugaku scholars, intellectuals studying folklore who decried the loss of Japanese tradition to modernity, shaped a history for "Tōhoku" that could serve as a vessel or a geographic embodiment of an authentic, if incomplete, articulation of a vanishing Japanese culture. This group of scholars and politicians, disenchanted with Japan's rapid internationalization, utilized a history of underdevelopment in Tōhoku as the starting point for their assertions that Tōhoku's value within Japanese society sprang from its very lack of modernity. To these men tradition and culture seemed under perpetual attack by the forward motion of progress, resulting in what some academics like Marilyn Ivy have called a "discourse of the vanishing."[5] Projects to preserve a shared past, to reclaim tradition before it became irrecoverably lost to the sands of time, became an obsession. For Minzokugaku scholars, "Tōhoku" was shorthand for physical place that had its own distinctive temporality. Traveling to Tōhoku provided these ethnographers with the opportunity to witness in their present a shadow of true Japanese traditions from the past before it was destroyed by the imposition of modernity. Tōhoku became a sanctuary for authentic

[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid. Similar language has been utilized by other scholars to highlight the intellectual rupture that accompanies modernity, such as Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); and, Harry Harootunian, *History's Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice, and the Question of Everyday Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

tradition and, therefore, these nativists valorized and celebrated Tōhoku because of what they viewed as purity.

These historical actors were responding to a critical component of creating the modern nation-state: to create a singular Japanese identity. Each distinctive regionalism needed to be bound and categorized; only then could regional particularities be subsumed into a national identity. As seen in other modern nation-building projects around the world, universal nationalism can result when local variation becomes transformed from a divisive marker of difference into a constituent part of a unified whole.[6] With the rejection of inherited professions, such as the samurai, as the legitimate foundation to differentiate social class, a new taxonomy emerged that could simplify the heterogeneous cultural pasts and historical distinctions between people into a singular, national identity. At stake in the competing projects of local history creation was the character of Tōhoku citizenship as a constituent part of the larger nation building project. A boom of regional, prefectural, district, and town histories flourished in the public and academic spheres.

Different internal and external factions mobilized and shaped the history of the Tōhoku region to create a master narrative that could situate "Tōhoku" as a constituent part of a unified

[6] A modern day example of a state that claims unity is rooted in its diversity can be found in the Indonesian concept of Pancasila which enumerates five general, but interrelated, principles that must be held inseparable by all Indonesians. Pancasila is most clearly articulated in Indonesia's national motto, *bhinneka tungal ika*, which means "many, yet one" or "unity in diversity." The concept of Pancasila was popularized by the first president of Indonesia, Sukarno, on 1 June 1945, and then enshrined in the 1945 Constitution: 1) a belief in one supreme God, 2) national unity, 3) a just and civilized humanity, 4) democracy through representative deliberation, and 5) social justice. While scholars like Dwight King argue against accepting Pancasila as a true "ideology," the use of the five principles as a catch-phrase allowed for a single nation to be forged out of a multi-ethnic state. See Ken Ward, "Soeharto's Javanese Pancasila," in *Soeharto's New Order and its Legacy: Essays in Honour of Harold Crouch*, eds. Edward Aspinall and Greg Fealy (Canberra, Australia: ANU Press, 2010): 27-39. There is an extensive literature in Southeast Asian studies, for a foundational work on Pancasila, see Michael Morfit, "Pancasila: The Indonesian State Ideology according to the New Order Government," *Asian Survey* 21, no. 8 (1981): 838-51; Dwight Y. King, 'Indonesia's New Order as Bureaucratic Polity, a Neopatrimonial Regime or a Bureauratic-Authoritarian Regime: What Difference does it Make?", in *Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate*, eds. Benedict Anderson and Audrey Kahin (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1982), 104-116.

nation, "Japan." Focusing on notions of home and belonging that undergirded the self-identification as a constituent part of "Tōhoku," residents mobilized often conflicting histories to create their regional identity first during prewar Imperial Japan and then again in the postwar period. The tradition of *furusato* literature, written both at home and abroad, holds the key to understanding the native articulation of "Tōhoku," a dynamic and changing concept of belonging that looks forward while drawing from the past, yet also evolved over a century to incorporate both the stereotypes imposed externally by other Japanese and the manufactured unity telegraphed home by immigrant networks.

Starting in the first decades of the twentieth century, scholars both within and beyond the Tōhoku region attempted to concretize a history of every cartographic area of Japan to rationalize multiple divergent regional histories within a master narrative of the nation.[7] These individual narratives categorized each region as a part of a whole, giving each region an identity. The eminent Japanese intellectual historian of Tōhoku, Kawanishi Kidemichi, outlines these intellectual projects at the turn of the twentieth century, projects which he argues ultimately cemented the narrative of Tōhoku as a backward region.[8] Kawanishi argues that, within Tōhoku, a nascent historical self-consciousness awoke, flourishing in the wake of the First World War, leading to the production of historical texts by local authors, for example Iwate-native Asano Gengo and Takeuchi Unpei from Aomori.[9] These native publications, however, would be

[7] Kawanishi Hidemichi, "Regional History and International History: From Hara Katsurō to Ellsworth Huntington," trans. Hiraku Shimoda, *Asian Cultural Studies*, 39 (March 2013): 33-48.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid, 33. The first of these texts was published in 1915 by Iwate-native Asano Gengo titled *Tōhoku oyobi Tōhokujin*. The second was the 1918 text by Aomori Prefecture's own Takeuchi Unpei, *Tōhoku kaihatsushi*. Both are available on HathiTrust at <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015065900162> and <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015065899000> respectively.

overshadowed by voices originating from outside the region such as those from the Nihon rekishi chiri gakkai (Japanese Historical and Geographic Association, or NRCG).[10]

The NRCG's project merged historical narratives with geographic classifications, providing a scientific structure that could enable scholars to realize a single history of the nation by recording the distinctive, separate histories of each of Japan's constituent regions. In 1915, the NRCG convened their annual summer conference in Hiraizumi in Iwate Prefecture, the first meeting in the association's history to be located within Tōhoku's borders. Despite gloomy predictions of a lack-luster attendance, the conference was a tremendous success, attracting about 700 general attendees, an additional 300 officials, and national press coverage.[11] The conference served as a way to provide some distant visitors with the opportunity to "discover" the glorious past of Hiraizumi in situ, even as many of those same travelers remarked upon Tōhoku's stagnant present; for example, the *Iwate Nippō* published a quotation from an attendee from Nagano, Ogiwara Takehira, who noted "the lack of vitality" in contemporary Sendai as evidence of the central government's policies which "do not take the Tōhoku region into much consideration."[12] The resultant publication *Ōu enkakushi ron* (*Theories on Ōu history*) created a text which, while redefining the importance of the Northeast on Japanese culture starting in the Middle Ages and laying the foundations for a field of study now known as "Hiraizumi Studies," also concretized a vision of Tōhoku as a stagnant periphery region in the present. This

[10] One of the most influential theorists at the first Hiraizumi Conference was Hara Katsurō (1871-1924), the man who gave the plenary talk of the conference titled "Nihonshijō no Ōshū." Hara was actually a native of Japan's northeast, the eldest son of a former domainal elder of Morioka Domain. However, after his early schooling in Morioka Middle School relocated to Tokyo to attend Tokyo Imperial University. He also studied traveled widely throughout the Japanese empire and abroad. While Kawanishi acknowledges that Hara's academic outlook was influenced by his Tōhoku origins, he still categorizes the overall nature of the NRCG's articulation of Tōhoku history as an outsider interpretation. Kawanishi, "Regional History and International History," 35.
[11] Kawanishi, "Regional History and International History," 34.
[12] Ogiwara Takehira, "Tōhoku kyōikuka shokun ni," *Iwate Nippō,* 17 August 1915. This interpretation that Ogiwara is contrasting a stagnant Tōhoku to the glory of Hiraizumi culture is also made in Kawanishi, "Regional History and International History," 34.

articulation of Tōhoku became the most common, pernicious, and widespread, placing the region at the physical as well as metaphorical edge of Japanese culture and society. By placing Tōhoku as a component region within the historical narrative, rationalizing its relative position and function within Japan as a modern nation, the scholars of the NRCG relegated the divergent regional histories into the past, making space for a unified and singular history of modern Japan moving forward.

Conceiving and articulating furusato

Standing in opposition to these radically different external, yet domestic, estimations of Tōhoku's worth—on the one hand as a constituent part of a larger nation and on the other as the only true representation of true Japanese culture—came the internal narrations fashioned by individuals who claimed insider knowledge of Tōhoku and viewed it as their *furusato*, or native place. Interestingly, as discussed in previous chapters, this often occurred beyond the physical boundaries of Tōhoku by migrants to other areas of the Japan state, empire, or to independent nations around the Pacific. These people can best be identified as "from" Tōhoku and "of" Tōhoku, but reside anywhere but within Tōhoku. For many of these transplants "Tōhoku" embodied nostalgia for their *furusato*, an imperfect memory of home trapped in amber, the basis for a regionalistic ethnicity that is eternal even as it being invented and reinvented through the immigrant experience.[13] Due to the growing exclusionary policies of the 1920s in former British settlement colonies in North America and the South Pacific, a thriving community of Japanese already had taken root and developed ties to migrants traveling throughout Japan's expanding borderlands in northeast Asia. These insider perspectives, while developed "outside" of the territorial space of Tōhoku elsewhere in Japan and even in far-flung migrant settlements, played

[13] See chapter 3 of this dissertation.

a crucial role in constituting insider discourses of local identity. The dual motor of diasporic identity among these Tōhoku representatives abroad—an identity defined by the celebration of internationalism on one hand, and an emphasis on the distinctive character that shaped individual communities on the other hand—thus began to return home and animate a new sense of regionalist pride in northeastern Japan itself.

If much of native Tōhoku identity was fashioned by the intellectual labor of Tōhoku residents who moved abroad, the international-insider, it also has its roots, paradoxically, in the negative perceptions elaborated by people from within Japan who did not come from Tōhoku, the national-outsider. The national-outsider perspective deconstructed the politically influential traditions of the domains of Ōu, a pastiche of intellectual projects by academics and intellectuals, validated through central government policy initiatives and parroted by national popular press. That territory was then reconstructed Tōhoku, an underdeveloped hinterland in the northeast. In Tokyo and throughout the rest of the *naichi*, the most common interpretation of Tōhoku's location within the modernizing Japanese nation-state defines the region as being plagued by underdevelopment, mismanagement, inhospitable weather, and a lack of civilization; in other words, the least positive aspects of the Northeast's history.[14] The national-outsider imagination of Tōhoku's present is predicated on its history as a frontier space within the perpetually marching boundary of Japanese culture, a continuation of the unsavory status quo of underdevelopment. This leads to predictions of a dismal future of parochialism, provincialism, and eventually marginalization.

By the end of the Meiji Period (1868-1912) several opposing historical traditions from both the international-insider and national-outsider camps emerged which sought to define the

[14] Rai San'yō, *Nihon gaishi* (1877), accessed 20 April 2015, at HathiTrust http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015022672458.
Ōshūjin to Kyūshūjin," *Nihonjin* 3, no. 4 (January 1897), 10, in *Nihonjin* 14 (1983): 604.

role of the Tōhoku region within the Japanese nation-state. However, whether championed by politicians, intellectuals, or the popular press, these often contradictory metanarratives of Tōhoku had one thing in common: they de-territorialized northeastern Japan, separating Tōhoku from the realm of physical space, creating instead a portable notion of an ethnic-identity "Tōhoku." These stories were crafted by those who consider themselves to be from the "inside," people who identify themselves as being "from" a particular place. *Furusato* narratives were often written by those who left, those who wished to preserve a nostalgic tie to a home in which they no longer reside. However, that was not always the case. *Furusato* could be created by anyone considered to belong to a particular hometown, including those who remain in that location. While these narratives of *furusato*, the imagined hometown, emerge with regularity in emigrant diaries and publications, by no means is physical distance from a particular place required. Instead, *furusato* literature is tethered not to a specific location but to the emotion of belonging, a means to capture the symbols and images evocative of a shared, but distinctive "home." It is this flexibility of physical versus imagined space that makes the genre so useful when considering regional identity construction. "Home" is an intellectual creation of belonging, a concept that can travel with individuals anywhere even as it describes a native place.

Others throughout Japan looked to the Northeast in search of the authentic, essential but disappearing past for all Japanese. These external voices, while technically within the *naichi*, approached Tōhoku ethnographically. An investigation of the term *naichi* can be illustrative when trying to understand the distinctions between "inside" and "outside." *Naichi* translates into English as "inner lands" and are defined by the Common Law (*kyōtsūhō*) of 1918 as the parts of Japan's "mainland" territories that are distinct from Japan's greater imperial holdings of Chōsen

(Korea), Taiwan, the Kwantung Province, and the Nan'yō Gunto (modern day Micronesia).[15] However, when refugees from the ultramodern domestic city attempted to recover a sense of the essential, they turned to a fellow "interior" place that was far removed in time rather than space from themselves. Descriptions of Tōhoku, while legally part of the *naichi*, became the site a historical other for folklorists from around the nation—a place that existed in the contemporary world yet was emblematic of the past. Similarly, individuals that migrate far beyond the boundaries of the *naichi* could write *furusato* narratives. The reason for the construction of *furusato* narratives, not the location where they are created, therefore becomes the central concern of analysis in this chapter.

Not every imagining of Tōhoku's past interpreted the region's underdevelopment in a negative light. In the 1920s a *furusato* movement emerged in many local communities throughout Japan, including Miyagi prefecture, which mobilized local actors to highlight the notion of "native place" as a fundamental tool to foster community pride and bolster tourism.[16] Concurrently the realities of the modern world that demanded fluidity and mobility among its

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[15] Tōki Gakkai, *Genkō tōki hōrei taizen:shōgyō keitō hōrei* (Tokyo: Tōki Gakkai, 1918), 320-321, accessed 24 February 2014, http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/918830. This clause is most often mentioned in works about Japan's larger colonial empire, for example see Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire Building: An Institutional Approach to Colonial History* (New York: Routledge, 2008) and works looking at contested border regions such as Karafuto or even Hokkaidō during the prewar period like Tessa Morris-Suzuku, "Lines in the Snow: Imagining a Russo-Japanese Frontier," *Pacific Affairs* 72, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 57-77.

[16] *Furusato* (alternatively transliterated as *kokyō*) has been translated into English in a number of ways, including but not limited to "home," "hometown," "old home place," or "native place." I will use these translations largely interchangeably; however, generally I prefer "native place" when discussing the issue of *furusato* and population dislocation for clarity. Migrants in particular develop multiple affiliations, or "homes," but the use of the term "native" implies a genealogical linkage to a particular place of origin. For general discussions of *furusato*, see Narita Ryūichi, *"Kokyō" to iu monogatari: toshi kūkan no rekishisgaku* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai hyōronsha, 1986); Jennifer Robertson, *Native and Newcomer: Making and Remaking a Japanese City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Marilyn Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Irwin Scheiner, "The Japanese Village: Imagined, Real, Contested" in *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*,ed. Stephen Vlastos (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998): 67-78; Stephen Dodd, *Writing Home: Representation of Native Place in Modern Japanese Literature*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004). For a specific case study of *furusato* in Tōhoku, see Sug-In Kweon, "Politics of Furusato in Aizu, Japan: Local Identities and Metropolitan Discourses," (Stanford University: PhD diss.,, 1994). *Furusato* has also been directly applied to trans-Pacific communities, for example see Martin Dusinberre, *Hard Times in the Hometown* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012).

population resulted in the creation of the concept of a "native place" that denoted a geographical location in Japan while also becoming de-territorialized as a concept and therefore portable. The emergence of the periodical *Furusato,* a publication produced in Tokyo by Miyagi natives, is representative of this movement. Through a close reading of the content, form, and structure of *Furusato,* this chapter will examine one way that local actors from Miyagi navigated the sometimes conflicting layers of identity among its readership: the local, regional, national, and international. In other words, *Furusato* reveals one perspective on how to resolve the dissonance between a unifying national identity and adherence to regional identity founded upon strong ties to their hometown.

An investigation of the Miyagi-themed periodical *Furusato* displays one example of how, over the course of a decade, one unbounded Tōhoku community imagined their particularistic local identity as a component part of a unified national and international Japanese identity within a growing, ultra-nationalist climate. At the turn of the century, the progressing wave of modernization resulted in cultural reformulations throughout Japan's domestic country-side.[17] The redistricting of domains into prefectures and the institutionalization of symbols of unity like the national flag or anthem created structural markers of national identity.[18] However, Japanese subjects did not sacrifice all differences at the altar of a standardized nationalism. A growing market emerged to celebrate particularism over the universal. At the heart of this movement stood the notion of *furusato*, the idea that belonging, be it real or imagined, was rooted in one's native place or hometown.

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[17] Recently scholarship has begun to unravel the singular, urban-centric narrative of Japanese modernity that uses Tokyo as model for all modernization following the Meiji Revolution. For example, Louise Young in *Beyond the Metropolis* argues that "the so-called standard-bearers of the modern are themselves outliers and exceptions." Louise Young, *Beyond the Metropolis: Second Cities and Modern Life in Interwar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 10.

[18] Two landmark studies of this phenomenon can be found in Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985) and Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

The periodical Furusato*: nostalgia, native place, and the Miyagi modern*

The periodical *Furusato* represents an instance where local identity became harnessed to the imperial project. Based in Tokyo, the prefectural association of Miyagi (Jyōhoku Miyagi kenjinkai) first published the periodical in 1932, and the philosophy and purpose of the editorial board is clearly articulated at the beginning of each issue. In a sampling of issues between 1932 and 1942, the mission statement of *Furusato* is repeatedly printed on the inside of the front cover, and reiterated in articles concerning the meetings concerning the *kenjinkai*. Under the title of "Shushi" [Our Purpose], the editors printed the following declaration:

> The term '*furusato'* means truly loving life; the spirit of *furusato* comes from a yearning, the yearning from deep within our hearts for harmony. It means utilizing (drawing on?) our ancestors and countrymen with a true heart who appreciated the blessings of our country; *furusato* is becoming united with our compatriots while exulting the eternal prosperity of the imperial reign.[19]

The editors of this periodical are infusing into the term '*furusato'* far more than what could be found within any dictionary. It becomes an idea with a history and morality; it is something individual yet shared, something intrinsic yet created. By defining *furusato* as the epitome of harmony and unity, these authors combine the distinctly local with the regional, the regional with the national. Native place encompasses the past and the future, one's ancestors and compatriots throughout the nation and world. *Furusato*, as outlined by these Miyagi natives, is an emotion that is fundamental to each Japanese citizen, represents truth

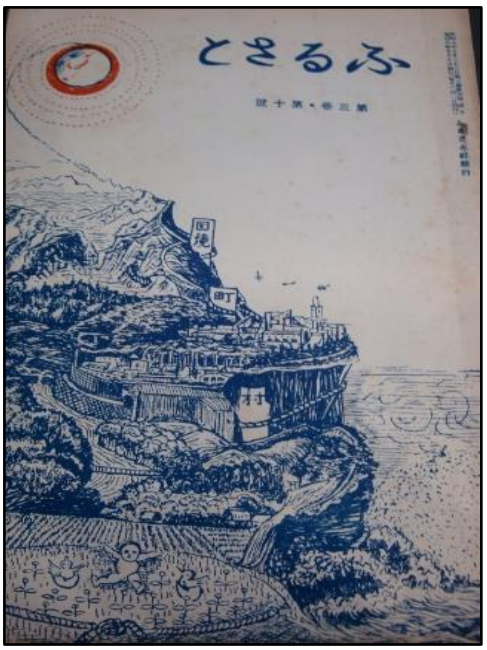

Figure 2: Cover of Furusato vol 3 number 10 (October, 1933).

[19] "Shushi", *Furusato* 4, no. 2 (February 1936).

and virtue, and celebrates the eternal prosperity of the Japanese empire.

The cover itself provides a visual representation of how the editors imagined the layered identity of their readership, men and women with overlapping allegiances to families and home communities, the prefecture of Miyagi, all located within the Japanese nation. Through the cover art, the publishers of *Furusato* convey visually their message that adherence to a particularistic localism does not negate the possibility of enjoying a unitary nationalism. The editors chose the image that would become the face of *Furusato* by March of 1933: a baby sitting in a field at the edges of a coastal village that is part of city which resides within the nation.[20] To further clarify this multiple layers of identity represented within the pages of *Furusato,* by October of 1933 the cover art expressly labeled each level of belonging by including the character for village/hamlet (*mura),* town/city (*machi*), and ending with the word *kokkyō*/*kunizakai* (国境) which means "frontier" or "national boundary." This portrayal of native place implies that the horizons of Japan do not simply end at that nationally recognized border, but also includes the colonies. The imagery not only includes the Pacific Ocean, the land at the northern boundary trails into the sky to become a stylized red sun. This sun, the only section outlined in red within the otherwise unbroken cover of blue ink on white, holds in its center a map of Asia in blue with the Japanese Empire marked in red. In other words, the cover artwork that would bound the circular reflected the editor's belief in the connections between villagers and their region that extended beyond the national boundaries; for the Japan-based Miyagi *kenjinkai*'s publication *Furusato*, the local was

[20] In the beginning, the editors of this circular favored a cover design best identified by a stark simplicity: four simple but stylized kana proclaimed the title, "Furusato." This minimalist design remained in effect for the first nine issues of 1932, but in October 1932 a redesigned cover premiered that featured behind the iconic title word an indistinct but bucolic town nestled within a valley. While this vision of a local township is repeated in subsequent issues, in the first issues of 1933 the cover imagery featured instead a seafaring ship in favor of the earthbound village. In the end, the cover art of this Miyagi journal that invoked "Furusato" as its name would draw from some combination of these two visions—that of the village abutting an often turbulent ocean.

not hermetically sealed off from the rest of the world, but could only be situated within the context of a broader world.

The contents of several representative issues of the periodical reinforce how the editors and authors fundamentally envisioned local Japanese citizenship within global and imperial terms. Articles in the publication jump from topic to topic, shifting the reader's perspective from a domestic discussion of the meaning of local pride to an internationally focused article discussing the state of affairs of Japan's expanding empire in Manchuria and Mongolia. For example, the July 1932 issue of *Furusato* features an article titled "Considering Manchuria and Mongolia" in which Ogi Naosada (小木直定) writes an impassioned appeal to his audience of Miyagi natives to not rush to any decision based on the fragmentary evidence of Japanese aggression in Manchuria presented in news reports of the Mukden Incident.[21]

Although Harbin (Mukden) in northeast Asia is separated from Sendai by roughly 1,500 km, Ogi Naosada draws on the historical and contemporary bonds to add weight to his argument that what happens in Manchuria and Mongolia is of vital interest to his regional audience. Drawing on memories from the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), Ogi reminds audiences of the "billions of yen and tens of thousands of lives" that have been lost in northeast Asia over the past forty years.[22] Indeed, the demographic landscape of Miyagi and all of Tōhoku still bore a visible mark of losses of men from wars on the continent, with the Second Division of the Imperial Japanese Army, one of the oldest divisions in the nation and garrisoned in Sendai, having suffered substantial casualties.[23] At the time when Ogi wrote

[21] Ogi Naosada, "Manmō o kaerimiru," *Furusato* 1, no. 7 (July, 1932): 7-8.
[22] Ibid., 7.
[23] Rikusenshi Kenkyū Fukyūkai, *Dai ni shidan no chichiharu kōryaku* (Tokyo, Hara Shobō, 1967). The Second Division of the Japanese Imperial Army, garrisoned in Sendai, became famously known as the Courageous Division (Isamu heidan) and included the six regional commands of Tōhoku which ranged from Fukushima prefecture to Aomori. They fought in the Sino-Japanese war, the Russo-Japanese war, and the Pacific War. For a discussion of

his article for *Furusato* the Second Division had already been assigned to the Kwantung Army since April 1931 and had taken an active role in the Mukden Incident.[24] Thus, Ogi is not only invoking the ghosts of fathers and sons who died during the Russo-Japanese war but also the sacrifice of the military personnel currently in residence in Manchuria.

Ogi's passionate discussion of the personal significance of Manchuria and Mongolia is at once both regionally-specific and nationally-minded. On a practical and visceral level Ogi emphasizes how Manchuria and Mongolia could supply food for the *naichi*, a critical problem in Miyagi where residents faced the reality of endemic, seemingly perennial, crop failures throughout the modern period.[25] Making the case for national security, Ogi enumerates the importance of retaining a foothold on the continent to ensure Japanese self-sufficiency and to defend against possible threats to Japan's colony of Korea. Appealing to advocates of Japanese expansion on the Continent, he requests that his readers "turn your gaze to the fertile fields and the boundless expanse of land along the South Manchurian Railway (Mantetsu)'s lines" and consider the economic possibility Manchuria and Mongolia hold for the Empire. [26] Further, Ogi identifies the critical population that would be abandoned, one with blood and cultural ties to Miyagi natives: Japanese migrant settlers. The lands in northeast Asia, for Ogi, hold the key to future vitality of Japan, both economically and militarily.[27]

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factors impacting the demographics of Miyagi at that time, see Fujiwara Ainosuke, ed., *Meiji 38 nen Miyagi-ken kyōkō-shi* (1916).

[24] General Honjo Shiregu, the commander of the Kwantung Army during the Mukden Incident, testified that the 10,500 men participating in the Mukden Incident came from the Railway Guard Battalions and the Second Division from Sendai. Exhibit 2403, International Military Tribunal for the Far East, (Tokyo, 1948); also referenced in "Japanese - German - Italian Collaboration," Inventory of the Personal Papers of Frank S. Tavenner and Official Records from the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, 1945-1948, MSS78-3, Box 14, Folder 2, Special Collections, University of Virginia Law Library; Takehiro Yoshihashi, *Conspiracy at Mukden: The Rise of the Japanese Military* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 137.

[25] For more on the issue of food shortages in Miyagi prefecture, see Fujiwara Ainosuke, ed., *Meiji 38 nen Miyagi-ken kyōkō-shi* (1916).

[26] Naosada, "Manmō o kaerimiru," 7.

[27] Ibid.

The collection of articles that populate a given issue of *Furusato* range widely in scope regarding topics addressed as well as the geographic location of contributors. This periodical about "home," meaning Miyagi prefecture, printed stories of those living in the prefecture and abroad together in the same pages. Whether sojourning for a brief time, joining the urbanization movements that drove the population boom in urban spaces like Tokyo or Sendai, serving as soldiers posted overseas, or as expatriates living abroad, the periodical provided common ground, a place and space, where all could meet. In essence, the portable idea of place and home embodied by *Furusato* collapsed space and time.

Using *Furusato* as the forum, individuals residing in diverse physical locations could find a common meeting place to revel in and make sense of their love of Miyagi. The articulation of a mission statement and cover design, however, is only the first instance of the preoccupation with the term *furusato* that seemed to grip the editors, contributors, and readers of the journal. Despite having a mission statement that explained the meaning of the term *furusato*, in issue after issue, it becomes clear that the members of this organization did not seem to be satisfied with any single articulation of the meaning of *furusato.* Contributors submitted, and the editorial board printed, multiple articles that probed the meaning of the term from a historical, social, economic, cultural, traditional, and even personal perspective. A close study of the journal over the course of these ten years yields scores of submissions that deal expressly with the difficulty of pinpointing the meaning of the titular term "*furusato*."[28]

The obsession with the notion of belonging and native place, as displayed in the representative Miyagi-themed but Tokyo-based periodical *Furusato*, extended beyond mission statements, which implored all good citizens to love their native place, or think-pieces, which

[28]"'Furusato' ni chinamite," *Furusato* 1, no. 7 (July, 1932): 4; "Furusato ni daishite," *Furusato*, 2, no.4 (April, 1933); "Furusato," Furusato 2, no. 7, (July, 1933); Matsuda Mitsuo, "Furusato no genron," *Furusato* 5, no. 8 (August 10, 1935), 12-14; Matsuda. "Furusato." *Furusato* 3, no. 3 (March, 1934).

pondered the modern implications of a growingly mobile Japanese society on the notion of *furusato*. The first issues of *Furusato* debuted at the same moment when Japan was becoming embroiled in the Fifteen Year War (1931-1945), a project of total war that would shape the direction of Japanese national and international policy for decades. Researchers can trace in the publication *Furusato* how local articulations of identification rode the shifting winds of internationalism following the 1930s aggressive expansionism into Asia. Articulations of home, of *furusato*, became both historical and localized, moving backward in time and looking inward for uniqueness, while also being progressive and international, projecting national unity forward in time and outward in scope.

For example, in July of 1932 a person publishing under the pseudonym of Tamiya Shin (民家真) wrote the article titled "Connecting with '*furusato*'" which meditates on the evolution of the term, both in meaning and usage.[29] Beginning with the usage of the word in the classic tome of Japanese poetry *Hyakunin-isshu*, Tamiya illustrates how traditionally the term has served as a place-holder, an abstraction of the notion of a village that at once marks a place long-inhabited while underscoring a present vitality.[30] However, Tamiya is not simply invoking the word's prestigious origins as a part of the *Hyakunin-isshu;* the author is also drawing on the vernacular understanding of the term developed over generations as the text had been adapted

[29] Ibid. The name 民家信 has several possible readings, and I will be Romanizing the name as Tamiya Shin. In Japan there is a long tradition of authors choosing pen-names when they write, and often these names build upon puns or other plays on words. Here, the author chose to write as 民家 which, while a common family name Tamiya or Tamiie, has the literal meaning of "private home." Similarly, Shin 信 has multiple other readings including but not limited to Nobu, Makoto, Akira, or Yuki. The literal meaning for this given name is closer to "honesty; trust; fidelity."

[30] The *Hyakunin-isshu* is a collection of one hundred verses written by one hundred authors dating from the seventh to thirteenth centuries. Tamiya is referencing the usage of *furusato* in the 94th verse, a poem authored by the State Councilor (*sangi*) Masatsune (1170-1221). The text was introduced to an English-reading audience during the nineteenth century. Frederick Victor Dickins, *Hyakunin is'suiu or Stanzas by a Century of Poets* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1866).

into a popular parlor game among the general, educated population of Japanese elite.[31] Thus, placing the term *furusato* within the context of the 94th verse of the *Hyakunin-isshu*, this Miyagi-native is invoking the long distinguished, yet also popular, history of the word.

The illustrious history of the term *furusato*, as reflected in its inclusion within of the *Hyakunin-isshu*, however, only matters to Tamiya Shin to the extent that he can reflect upon how, at its core, the word is deeply entwined in the traditional concept of Japanese belonging. [32] With that revelation as a spring board, Tamiya moves on to explain the radically different, yet largely similar, meaning of *furusato* for the modern men and women in the 1930s. In comparison with older generations who remained planted in their places of birth, modern Japanese, Tamiya explains, seem to be constantly moving from place to place. [33] What, then, does this term of *furu-sato* mean today? Using personal pronouns, Tamiya includes himself with his audience as he explains the modern attachment to "places of old" despite the reality of highly mobile lives. In fact, Tamiya invokes the popular idiom *kokyō bōjigatashi* (故郷忘じ難, "it is hard to forget your hometown") to illustrate how, for the twentieth-century Miyagi native, being physically separated from one's *furusato* results in a deepening of the connection. [34] The memory and pride in the place of one's birth remains lasting, durable, and ultimately portable.

Apart from individual contributions that ponder the term, such as the above article by Tamiya Shin, two authors emerged who, through the medium of the journal, attempted to put into words that elusive, emotional articulation of *furusato*. These men, Matsuda Mitsuo (松田三

[31] Asiatic Society of Japan, *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 27, Issue 4 (Tokyo: Z. P. Maruya & Co, 1899): xii. During the Genroku period (1688-1703) the text became used as a text-book for private female education, a common part of a bride's dowry, and even transformed into a popular card game in elite families for all members young and old, male and female.
[32] Tamiya Shin, "'Furusato' ni chinamite," *Furusato* 1, no. 7 (July 1932): 4.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid. The characters 故郷 are generally pronounced as *kokyō* in this phrase; however, they have another common reading: *furusato*.

男) and Atōda Reizō（阿刀田令造）, spent a considerable amount of time and pages of the journal attempting to clarify a definition of "*furusato*," a notion that both men considered to be a fundamental and organic part of themselves, yet also mysterious and ineffable. Atōda Reizō, the head of the prestigious Nikō higher school in Sendai, a scholar of international history, and a pioneer in the field of local history (kyodōshi), contributed his musings to the journal while residing within Miyagi prefecture itself from his home in Sendai. Matsuda Mitsuo, also a Miyagi native, was an author and poet resident in Tokyo and the president of the organization responsible for the publication of the journal *Furusato*. Over the course of a decade, these two men use the pages of this nostalgic "native place" monthly publication to spark a passion for a locally inflected nationalism and patriotism. However, that is not to say that their brand of patriotism was unique to people from Miyagi; instead, these two men display how, regardless of local physical residency in Tokyo, Sendai, or the Miyagi countryside, all people could understand their layered, national identity through the vocabulary of localism.

The monthly contributions of Matsuda Mitsuo, the Tōhoku native living in Tokyo and editor of *Furusato,* ranged from the practical, such as the minutes of the meetings of the *kenjinkai* and scripting a local anthem for Miyagi prefecture, to the abstract such as articles encouraging his readership to consider the enigmatic meaning of the term "furusato" within their daily lives. The philosophical nature of his interpretations of the term are perhaps best seen in an article published in 1935, "A discussion of *furusato.*"[35] He begins his conversation with the readers by moving away from the strictly tangible, challenging this audience to reevaluate the term "native place" in relation to the life of the soul. For Matsuda, a discussion of *furusato* broaches a fundamental question of humanity, to confront the question "how should humans go

[35] Mitsuo, "Furusato no genron,"12-14.

about living?"[36] In the modern parlance of his times, Matsuda sees modernity as dehumanizing the individual, stating that "it is currently popular to make people into objects or opportunities and forget about [human] existence."[37] The purpose and value of preserving and protecting his love of Miyagi, for Matsuda who at the time resided in Tokyo roughly 350 km away from his *furusato*, is an attempt to look deeper into spiritual nature of his human soul by understanding the implications of hardship and depravation on growth.[38] "The human body," writes Matsuda, "develops by taking the bad together with the good. It is also the ability of the soul to develop through hardship and privation."[39] Thus, for Matsuda, the recent famines that had swept throughout the Tōhoku region in 1934 and the continued advancing of Sendai's second divisional army in North China represented trials by fire, strengthening each and every person who calls Miyagi their "native place."

Another perspective on *furusato*, one based in practical historical examples, emerged with the writings of Atōda Reizō, born in Shimo-masuda, Natori City, Miyagi Prefecture. Atōda, by trade a scholar of European history, had deep roots in Tōhoku and a passion for his native place. Specializing in the study of Napoléon Bonaparte at Tokyo Imperial University, he later graduated from Law School and became an educator. After graduating, Atōda returned to Sendai and began working at Nikō (Second) Higher School (第二高等学校), the institution he had attended as a youth and now would serve for 33 years as teacher then headmaster.[40] While books like *Seiyōshi Gaisetsu* (An Outline of Western History) became texts for student instruction, his interest in the past also included a fascination with the local.

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[36] Ibid, 12.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Miyagikenshi kankōkai, *Miyagi kenshi* 29 (Miyagi-ken Sendai-shi: Miyagi Kenshi Kankōkai, 1954), 132. For more on the "Education and Cultural Geography" of cities beyond Tokyo in prewar Japan, including a mention of Sendai's location within the higher school system, see Louise Young, *Beyond the Metropolis,* 39-44.

The Meiji Revolution of 1868 had a profound effect on the Atōda family, prominent members of the religious community in Miyagi Prefecture. At the time Atōda Reizō's grandfather, Atōda Keichū (阿刀田契中), lived at the Buddhist temple Hōrenji and was serving as the head of the Shinto Shiogama Shrine just north of Sendai.[41] Until the end of the Edo period, Hōrenji was a site of worship as Buddhist temple as well as Shinto shrine, a syncretic practice called *shinbutsu shūgō*, literally the joint learnings of the kami and buddhas.[42] When the Meiji Government enacted the *Kami and Buddha Separation Order* (*shinbutsu hanzenrei*) in 1868, Reizō's grandfather lost much of their property during violent anti-Buddhist *haibutsu kishaku* attacks.[43] By October of 1869 they were forced to relocate south to another temple, Tōkōji in Shimo-masuda, where Keichū would spend his final years. Atōda Keichū retired in 1880, and the head of the household became the husband of his adopted daughter, the disciple Atōda Yoshitomo (阿刀田義潮). Yoshitomo, Reizō's father, held a great amount of local political power; in 1889 he became the headman of Shimo-masuda and would ultimately become the mayor of Natori city.[44]

From this illustrious background came Atōda Reizō, the man who began his academic career studying the emperor Napoléon, but ultimately, together with Hiroshi Ogura, pioneered the field of local (Japanese) history (*kyōdoshi*) in Miyagi.[45] In addition he also sponsored local school tours and became active in community associations. In 1930 he became the committee

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[41] Miyagikenshi kankōkai, *Miyagi kenshi* 29, 132.
[42] Joseph Kitagawa, *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).
[43] Haibutsu kishaku means to "abolish Buddhism and destroy Shākyumun," and references the violent anti-Buddhist activities following a series of separation edits issued by the new Meiji government in 1868-9 intended to reduce the power of the Buddhist priests in society. Tens of thousands of Buddhist temples were closed or destroyed, sacred texts and art burned or sold, instruments of worship such as bells or statues melted down, lands confiscated, and the forcible return of many priests and nuns to their lay lives. For a comprehensive treatment of the haibutsu kishaku movement, see James Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and its Persecution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).
[44] Miyagikenshi kankōkai, *Miyagi kenshi* 29, 132.
[45] Ibid.

chairman and head of the Sendai Native Place Research Association (Sendai Kyōdo Kenkuyukai), helping to publish *Sendai kyōdo kenkyu.* Following the Pacific War, in November of 1946, Reizō became the founding director of the Sendai community center. He died surrounded by friends in his home on May 21st, 1947 at the age of seventy one. What Atoda Reizō is perhaps best known for is not his knowledge of international history, but instead the significant contribution he made to the study of Miyagi prefecture, Sendai city, Sendai's Second Higher School, and his treatment of the concept of "native place."[46]

Atōda Reizō became a dominant voice in the publication *Furusato,* often contributing the opening article of each issue. His fascination with defining the fundamental, but undefinable, notion of *furusato* meant that almost everything he wrote contained yet another small piece of the puzzle, another aspect he felt must be understood to fully comprehend what, for him, it meant to come from Miyagi. For example, in his expansive article "Important Points in the Regional Culture Movement," first published in *Furusato* in 1942, Atōda looks closely at the multiple, layered, and overlapping aims of the local historian.

In this piece, Atōda balances the particularistic and local focus inherent to the Regional Bunka (Culture) Movement with the movement to unify the nation behind a singular patriotism built upon uniform adherence to "mainstream culture," the culture he defines as emanating from the center of the nation (Tokyo).[47] Atōda creates an alternative lodestone for dedicated patriotism, a historical and local notion of the *miyako*, or "capital," that dates back before the creation of a centralized national capital in Tokyo (formerly Edo). Instead, a burning love for one's "capital," what Atōda expresses in using the term "miyako shitawashi," is specific to one's personal history,

[46] For example, see Atōda Reizō, *Sendai Jōka ezu no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōyō Shoin, 1936); Atōda Reizō, *Nikō o kataru* (Sendai: Daini Kōtō Gakkō Kyosaibu, 1937); Atōda Reizō, *Kyōdojin to shite* (Sendai: Sendai Kyōdo Kenkyūkai Shuppanbu, 1943); Atōda Reizō, *Kyōdo kikin no kenkyū*, (Sendai: Sendai Kyōdo Kenkyūkai, 1948).
[47] Chihō bunka undō no yōtai, *Furusato* 10, no. 11

and thus the same *miyako* need not be shared among all Japanese patriots across the nation. For Atōda the *miyako* generally refers to the geographic seat of power of local governance instead of the centralized government's capital in Tokyo or the historic capital of culture in Kyoto. A love for, in his case, Sendai, thus, does not exempt Atōda or other readers of the Miyagi-themed publication from also being patriotic to the Japanese nation. Instead, it is a personalization of that patriotism.[48]

Written a decade into Japan's openly militaristic expansion onto the continent, Atōda begins his veneration of local pride carefully, couching his particularistic localism in an ultra-nationalistic expression of Japanese unity, the government-promulgated the *kokutai no hongi*, or Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan, in 1937. After reiterating the common phrases lauding the Emperor as the root of Japanese-ness, he assures his audience that "it fills our hearts to the brim when we revere the Emperor as one [unified nation], the foundation of our enduring culture."[49] However, with that admonition aside, a clear declaration of national patriotism, Atōda wastes no time in linking a love of the emperor with the love of a particularistic localism.

The article is paced to allow Atōda and his fellow enthusiasts of local history look further back into their regional past to underscore how specific territories have traditions, legends, and history that can enrich the nation as a whole. Rather than separating a distinctive regional pride from nationalism, he creates a system wherein localism is itself an articulation of national unity. "When considering the history of our hometown," Atōda boldly notes, "the sincerity of the unity of our local peoples with the emperor is displayed through the veneer of '*miyako shitawashi*.'"[50] "*Miyako shitawashi*," he continues, is evident in the "earnest sincerity for a regional-istic

[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.

awareness of regional history, traditions, and legends... [which] should not be seen as something of bygone days."[51] Instead, it is something very much alive, present, and useful to the forward progress of the nation.

To have a regional consciousness, therefore, does not negate any generalized expressions of patriotism. Instead, it can help guard against the dangers of the loss of tradition: "sometimes it [*miyako shitawashi*'s earnest desire for a regional consciousness] is nothing more than mainstream culture getting nostalgic and other times the relationship is reversed and it becomes a persistent cover to revise mainstream culture."[52] In other words, for Atōda, there is not only room for local as well as national pride, but members of the Regional Culture Movement can provide the important service to the nation as a corrective to being overcome by modernity, embracing fads that might wear away the traditional foundations of Japanese culture.

Atōda expounds on the long historical importance of his home culture, "Tōhoku culture," on the development of Japan as a civilization. Connecting historical ruins within Tōhoku with famous figures like Emperor Yōmei, Emperor Keitai, Prince Yamato, Himiko, Fujiwara no Fujifusa (courtier to Go-Daigo), and Prince Morinaga (son of Go-Daigo & Minamoto no Chikago, excecuted by Ashikaga Tadayoshi in 1335), Atōda is linking the history of Tōhoku to the fundamental progress of national history of imperial Japan. Thus, loving Tōhoku, Atōda argues, is just reflects his love of his nation and does not exclude the history of the entire nation.[53] Instead, to love the local is to acknowledge the active part in the development and veneration of the imperial household and the enduring history of Japan as a singular nation.[54]

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[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.

Other of Atōda's contributions combined an understanding of internationalism with the notion of an intrinsic native belonging in Japan. He mobilized his knowledge of local history in his writings, but he also enjoyed placing Miyagi within an international framework. For example, the March 1933 issue opens with an article by Atōda on the global, and thus universal, importance of native place on great men's lives. Atōda, the Napoléonic scholar, draws parallels between provincial Miyagi prefecture and Corsica, the location of Napoléon's home and exile. Titled "*Furusato* Welcomes You," this article explains the historical importance of a seemingly insignificant place, the town of Ajaccio, located on the west coast of the island of Corsica; rather than merely a hinterland with a small population, Atōda argues that Ajaccio should be remembered as the *furusato* of the emperor Napoléon, a place that shaped one of the most influential men in European history.[55]

A love for one's hometown, thus, is not a particular trait held only by those in the Tōhoku region, or Miyagi prefecture. Instead, it is something that transcends borders and nations, an inherent part of all people regardless of class, nationality, or creed, a fundamental part of humanity. Further, by stressing the impact of the seemingly insignificant town of Ajaccio in the hinterland region of Corsica as the hometown of the emperor, Atōda is commenting on the intrinsic rather than particularistic quality of *furusato.* Juxtaposing that revelation with his other writings on nationalism, it becomes clear that Atōda is advancing a theory of identity that naturalizes something largely distant and abstract, in this case national unity, with something instinctively known and recognized, a love of "home."

Divided villages: a bridge to Greater East Asia

Manchuria became a space that both supported and tested the emerging nexus between

[55] Atōda Reizō, "Furusato ha nanji wo mukaeru," *Furusato* 3, no. 3 (March 1933), 1.

imperial nationalism, discourses of *furusato*, and local subjectivities. The belief that different stages of civilizational development could exist within a single present spurred a quest to identify and preserve distinctive regional differences as indicative of either modernity or "backwardness." There, a contradiction emerged; as Tōhoku became increasingly linked with a romantic notion of Japan's heartland within the Japanese nation-state, in Manchuria Tōhoku migrants became the plurality of settlers. In comparison with other "Asian" cultures, Japanese culture was widely considered to be modern when placed side-by-side with other Asian cultures. Yet, within Japan itself, Tōhoku was considered parochial and provincial. Thus, Manchuria can serve as a test case to elucidate the contingent historical nature of different kinds of regionalism in the 1930s and 1940s.

The application of creative spatial and temporal rationalization, logics that defied the inherent dissonance of unity through division, can be seen in the policies promoted by migration advocates and governmental officials in the years before the Pacific War. Perhaps one of the starkest examples of such a policy, the government-sponsored *bunson undō* (village-division campaigns) project developed during the 1930s by a dedicated group of agricultural migration advocates. Proponents of the "village-division" campaign proposed a practical approach to create unity across the expanding Japanese imperium, the physical relocation of large numbers of her subjects into newly annexed lands. Activists and politicians asserted that the way to bring colonial periphery into harmony with the Japanese center was to physically dislodge large numbers of Japanese from the mainland and send them thousands of miles from their native villages, in effect transplanting large chunks of Japan into Manchurian soil. Villages in Japan deemed "over-populated" and agreeing to take part in the village-division campaign (*bunson undō*) agreed to recruit roughly one-third of their neighbors to build a new "branch" village in

Manchuria or Mongolia with the remaining two-thirds of the population staying in Japan as part of the "mother" village.[56] These "Little Japans" scattered throughout Manchuria would no longer be simply pockets of settlement within a wilderness of other ethno-nationalisms, but be transplanted Japanese villages that would retain traditional bonds of community. The affective affinities of *furusato*, of attachment to native place, could overcome physical separation from the Japanese mainland by tying together "mother" and "branch" villages together, thereby, forging unity across the greater Japanese empire. Each of those divided settlements, communities with one foot in Japan and the other in Manchuria, formed a bridge between the frontier of Empire and the traditional domestic cartography of Japan proper: the *naichi*.

Tōhoku in Greater Asia, an essay contest

As the 1930s became the 1940s, the local spirit, nationalism, and international empire continued to coalesce into a powerful motor for war-time expansionism. Combatting war fatigue, and encouraging citizens to harness international unity through pan-Asianism, a collection of essays were published in 1942 by the Sendai branch of the Tokyo Nichinichi Shinbun. This volume called for contributions that promoted the notion of a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" through the merger of local history with transnational action: an investigation of Tōhoku's relationship within Greater East Asia. This book, which begins with a dedication by Atōda Reizō, presents the winning essays on the topic written by Tōhoku natives with varying levels of interaction with the greater empire.

In the dedication to the text *Tōhokujin to daitōateki hatten: kenshōronbun nyūsenshū*, Atōda highlights the importance of the spirit of native place pride as a linkage with both national

[56] For an authoritative overview to the village-division system, with a particular focus on the model village of Ohinata, see Anke Scherer, "Japanese Emigration to Manchuria: Local Activists and the Making of the Village-Division Campaign," (PhD diss., Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 2006).

and international pan-Asianism. Arguing against those who perceive pride in one's native place as in opposition to the forward progress of the Japanese nation, Atōda writes "the cresting wave of [emotion for] the native place cannot be contained and, thus, it is not feudalistic to pray for the revival of [emotion for] the old domains."[57] For Atōda, writing during the last years of Japan's fifteen year war, dedication to his native place is a kind of nostalgia for the past that, while harkening back to pre-Meiji era policies, does not stand in opposition to a strong, fervent nationalism. Instead, Atōda sees the essays in the volume as representing an authentic documentation of Tōhoku spirit, one cultivated within each person who spent their youth within the boundaries of Japan's northeast. Local pride and a historical memory, rather than being a divisive quality that threatens the unity of the nation at war, holds the key for Atōda and the other contributors to Japan's problems leading Greater East Asia. Informing the rest of the nation, those from other regions of Japan, about the proud past of the northeast, therefore, is a singularly patriotic act: the way that the citizens of Tōhoku also can contribute to the empire.

Atōda's sentiment is shared by other contributors to the volume, voices outlining with pride the role that Tōhoku regionalism can play in the expansion of Japanese power and prestige throughout Greater Asia. In the first essay in the text, Kajima Saburō (鹿島三郎) declares that "it is our Tōhoku that could carry out an important role within the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere and it is the indomitable and enduring Tōhoku spirit that must provide a complete foundation for this long-term construction."[58] Kajima utilizes the history of the Tōhoku region as a whole to draw clear links between northeast Japan and northeast Asia: the Manchurian incident, the war in China, American and British imperialism, and the development

[57] *Tōhokujin to daitōateki hatten: kenshōronbun nyūsenshū* (Sendai: Tokyo Nichinichi shimbunsha Sendai shikyoku, 1942), dedication by Atōda Reizō.
[58] Kajima Saburō, "Second Place Essay," *Tōhokujin to daitōateki hatten: kenshōronbun nyūsenshū* (Sendai: Tokyo Nichinichi shimbunsha Sendai shikyoku, 1942), 2.

of a Greater East Asian family. Thus, for Kajima, lessons from the history of Tōhoku hold the key to Japanese dominance in Asia.

Indeed, Kajima Saburō, a man with experience living overseas, has a personal history that supports his stalwart belief in the contributions made by people from Tōhoku throughout Asia. Born in Sendai, he graduated with a degree in history and geography from Tōhoku Gakuin higher school in 1933.[59] He spent the next seven years living in Japanese-occupied Korea teaching junior high school before returning home to Furukawa, a city just south of his native Sendai also in Miyagi prefecture. Thus, for Kajima, the language of a "Greater East Asian family" was not just something imagined through the pamphlets and propaganda of the central government in Tokyo. He had lived, worked, and traveled widely within Greater East Asia.

Kajima's background in geography as well as history punctuates his argument about the value of Tōhoku to the development of Greater East Asia, both for the Japanese nation and as well as the world. He frames his entire narrative using a metaphor of civilizational progress, writing that "from time immemorial, the Tōhoku region has been seen and acknowledged, both by ourselves and by others, as a place of meeting in our home country (邦国の「邀土」)."[60] He invokes familial language for Asian nations, calling for Tōhoku residents to provide once more a class of defenders of the borders, the pioneers and settlers that create and preserve bastions of civilization along a new "Road to the Narrow North" that now, rather than being limited to the wilds of northern Honshū as it was in Basho's time (1644-1694), extended into to the broad expanses of the Asian continent.[61]

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[59] *Tōhokujin to daitōateki hatten: kenshōronbun nyūsenshū* (Sendai: Tokyo Nichinichi shimbunsha Sendai shikyoku, 1942), 1.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Kajima, *Tōhokujin to daitōateki hatten*, 1-2.

The notion of Tōhoku as a borderland, a meeting point of culture, becomes the resounding theme that emerges within the volume of essays. Kajima likens the historical role of Tōhoku as the borderland of the "home nation" from time immemorial, the people entrusted with guarding the space in Japan's where different cultures coexisted. While he does invoke the other stereotype of Tōhoku, the association of provincialism tied to the notion of sharing a dialect of "zuzu-ben," his main conclusion is that Tōhoku holds the key to Japanese dominance within the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The history of Tōhoku becomes the fodder for the reinterpretation of Japan's northeast as fundamental to the expansionary vision of the nation.

Kajima and his fellow essayists turn time and again to the recurrent theme of powerful rulers and warriors from the Edo era who resided in the region, individuals like the cultured warlord of Date Masamune and the international diplomatic mission of his retainer, Hasekura Tsunenaga. The Date clan, for Kajima, represents the perfect example for an outward-looking, worldly patriot. The Date family, headquartered in the castle town of Sendai, was instrumental in defending Japan's expanding borders and retaining powerful connections to central Japan on the one hand, while also maintaining, creating, and expanding international relationships with foreigners in the Americas and throughout Europe.[62] Kajima's essay echoes the larger movement discussed above by Atōda Reizō and other members of the Tōhoku Bunka Movement, the incorporation of historical narratives that can tout the dual characteristics of Tōhoku as the home of both warrior and gentleman. This is a theme picked up by the essayists in the 1942 volume, for example when Kajima not-so-subtly reminds his readers of Tōhoku's illustrious history with the section title "People of Tōhoku! Open your Eyes!" The history of Tōhoku, for Kajima and

[62] Ibid.

other *kyōdoshi* scholars of the northeast, is that of cultured gentlemen rather than the backward narrative of provincial farmers.[63]

One of the strongest pieces of evidence explored by Kajima, evidence that he believes highlights the ancestral linkages between the domestic region and the larger world, builds on the history of the northeast as a progressive border region. Impressing upon his audience that he is merely drawing from a wide pallet of historical examples, Kajima conflates the history of the entire region with the history of a single retainer of one clan, that of Hasekura Tsunenaga. Considered by many to be the first ambassador of Japan to Europe and the Americas, Hasekura Tunenaga was the retainer of Date Masamune who led the Keichō Embassy to the Vatican in Rome. This diplomatic journey took seven years, spanning from old worlds to new, from courts throughout Europe, across to the colonial outposts of New Spain in the Americas, and eventually back across the Pacific to Spanish-held Manila in Southeast Asia.[64] This history, which had been buried or overlooked by many Japanese nationals for centuries because of its problematic connection to Christianity, reemerged during the 1930s and 1940s—although largely sanitized of any references explicitly to Christianity—by *kyōdoshi* scholars and *furusato* enthusiasts.[65] Kajima thus provides evidence that the people of Tōhoku, with their history of eastern-looking internationalism, must now turn their eyes west to the Asian continent.

Examining the issue of international relationships from a slightly different angle, another essay in the volume that received an honorable mention points to the long history of the region

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[63] Ibid, 10.

[64] Ibid. Hasekura is also known by his baptized name of "Francisco Filipe Faxicura" as well as "Faxecura Rocuyemon" in European sources. The mission stopped in the new world ports of Acapulco and Velacruz in Mexico as well as Spanish-held Manila in Southeast Asia, today the capital of the Philippines.

[65] The main purpose of this diplomatic mission was for the Date clan to pay its respects to the Vatican. Thus, following the national ban on Christianity by Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu which began a decade following Hasekura's return, as embodied in the Sakoku edicts of 1623, 1635, and 1651, Hasekura's impressive seven year voyage across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, including visits to the Americas, Southeast Asia, and Europe, remained largely ignored by national scholars during the Edo period.

with the broader world in the form of transnational migration. Oikawa Katsuji/Katsuharu (pen name 及川克治, real name 及川勝治）outlines the role Tōhoku migrants have played first as settlers in the development of Hokkaidō and Karafuto (today part of Sakhalin Island, Russia), second, as emigrants relocating to international settlements in Hawai'i and the Americas, and finally as colonists throughout the empire in locations such as Taiwan and Manchuria.[66] Another essayist born in Hokkaidō who then returned home to Fukushima, also underscores the expansionary history of Tōhoku in the development of the Greater East Asia war.[67]

Indeed, a unifying theme that runs through the winning essays is Tōhoku's long-standing role influencing events beyond Japan's shores. At their core, each essay chosen for publication in the Nichinichi Shimbun text dispels the notion that the prefectures and townships within Tōhoku as being isolated or removed from the flow of national and international development. Explicit references to the settlement of Tōhoku immigrants span the globe, from the domestic examples of Hokkaidō and the development of Tōhoku itself through to the Americas, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. History of famous figures from the region tie the history of the northeast to the progress of the Japanese state. This volume transforms Tōhoku from the site of historical leaders into a place that can provide the future leaders of a Greater East Asia.

Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the domestic manufacturing of "Tōhoku" history during the first four decades of the twentieth century. Regionalism was consolidated as a component part of nationalism with the rise of regional histories in the 'teens and 'twenties. Minzokugaku scholars, or folklorists, sought to identify and chronical Japan's vanishing tradition, with individuals like

[66] Oikawa Katsuji, (pen name 及川克治, real name 及川勝治）"Kazaku," *Tōhokujin to daitōateki hatten: kenshōronbun nyūsenshū* (Sendai: Tokyo Nichinichi shimbunsha Sendai shikyoku, 1942), 67-105.
[67] Hasegawa Masatomi, *Tōhokujin to daitōateki hatten: kenshōronbun nyūsenshū* (Sendai: Tokyo Nichinichi shimbunsha Sendai shikyoku, 1942).

Yanagita Kunio looking to the mountain villages in the rural Tōhoku region as a way to record a disappearing Japanese uniqueness. Other groups, such as the Japanese Historical and Geographical Association (NRCG), began a massive nation-wide project intended to publish a series of regional histories that become the basis for a singular national meta-history, a narrative wherein divergent regional characteristics could become melded into a single vision of Japan moving forward. In narrative such as that of the NRCG, despite a glorious past, the modern Tōhoku region was best characterized by stagnation and parochialism. For intellectuals forging the new field of folk studies, the Tōhoku was the site of a vanishing, but authentic Japaneseness at risk of becoming overcome by modernity.

However, these external voices were not the only groups who, by looking to the past, were attempting to make sense of regionalism and localism within the parameters of a growingly militaristic and aggressive nationalist and imperial discourse. Offsetting this nation-wide stereotype, there emerged the voices of local scholars, members of nostalgic native place (*furusato*) organizations and the local history movement (Tōhoku Bunka Undo) which embraced the history of the northeast's brilliant past while rejecting the notion of the region's provincialism. Through a close study of the evolution of how one group of Tōhoku natives conceived of the notion of *furusato*, or native place, within their titular publication *Furusato* over the span of Japan's turbulent, decade-long war in the Pacific, this chapter demonstrates that local Tōhoku residents fashioned their own attachments to the emerging Japanese military state quite distinct from anything promulgated in Tokyo. For example, in March, 1937 when officials in Tokyo released the *Kokutai no hongi*, a document intended to unify Japanese subjects into the state as well as to put the nation before the self, the reaction of one Miyagi educator was to write

an article in *Furusato* that asserted that the love of localism, in fact, was a love of the nation.[68] Attaching national patriotism to something local, yet inherent to their identity, Atōda Reizō was packaging the Ministry of Education's pamphlet on nationalism as an articulation of something already incorporated in their sense of self: localism.

As the war in Asia intensified, a discourse that linked Japanese subjects to not only to the Japanese nation but also to a kind of pan-Asianist identity emerged which harnessed domestically regionalistic pride in Japan's Tōhoku to a sense of a broader mission throughout the entirety of the northeast of Asia: Japan's greater empire in Korea, Manchuria, and northern China. One example of this turn was the 1941 Essay Contest sponsored by the Sendai branch of the national newspaper the *Nichinichi Shimbun*, which, while directed towards a nation-wide audience, placed the history of Tōhoku in global Asia, posing the question "what role should Tōhoku play in Greater East Asia?" The resounding answer, written by individuals from throughout Japan's northeast, some of whom also had experience living abroad in Japan's growing empire, was that Tōhoku Japan's role in Tōhoku Asia was to lead. These men, individuals who affiliated their personal identity with the culture and history of the Tōhoku region, had resided throughout the nation, empire, and world. To them, as expressed in a patriotic essay contest winner's words, "from time immemorial, the Tōhoku region has been seen and acknowledged, both by ourselves and by others, as a place of meeting in our home country (邦国の「邀土」)."[69] According to these writers, Tōhoku's past record displayed an early understanding of the importance of internationalism, as evidenced by Hasekura Tsunenaga's mission to Pope Paul V in 1613 and the domestic meeting between the native Japanese people

[68] Atōda Reizō, "Chihō bunka undō no yōtai," *Furusato* 10, no. 11 (November 1941), 2-6; Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*, 283.
[69] *Tōhokujin to daitōateki hatten: kenshōronbun nyūsenshū* (Sendai: Tokyo Nichinichi shimbunsha Sendai shikyoku, 1942).

and the northern barbarian Emishi. This essay contest winner articulated, a decade after the publication *Furusato* began featuring the image of publishing its cover that showed the concentric circles of belonging embodied in each Miyagi citizen, that localism and regionalism did not stop within the boundaries of Japan proper. Indeed, Tōhoku, rather than a backward and isolated space within Japan's hinterland, stood at the center of a global web of historical encounters as well as modern-day transnational exchanges.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation argues that regionalism and nationalism, rather than one being a subset of the other, are mutually constituted. Indeed, people in the Tōhoku region understand their nationalism via their regionalism. By approaching the question of Japanese identity through an off-center perspective using the Tōhoku region as a focus, a region so often overlooked as a bastion of tradition rather than modernity, parochialism rather than internationalism, my dissertation proposed that nationalism, or to be more specific the understanding of individual relationship to the nation-state, cannot be flattened into any kind of top-down dialogical process. Central powers in Tokyo did not dictate to individual subjects the manner in which they embraced their national identity. Each individual, based on his or her personal context and particular relationships to fellow friends, family, and other Japanese citizens, interpreted and made peace with their position within their communities, regions, nation, and the world. Collectively, in the case of many localities within the six prefectures of the Tōhoku region, this began at the personal, family, or village level and then expanded to encompass a wider community of belonging. Regionalism, which borrowed heavily from long traditions of a love of one's native place (*furusato*), became the glue that pulled together Japanese subjects with wildly disparate local histories into dialog that could encompass a unified national identity.

Chronologically, this research follows the story of the transformation of two territories (*kuni*) in the northeastern corner of Honshu Island from the well-respected frontier regions of Dewa and Mutsu (collectively called Ōu, Ōshū, or Michinoku during the Tokugawa period) into the six prefectures that are classified as part of the modern region of Tōhoku. The wounds of Japan's civil war, a war that separated the losing loyalist northern domains from the triumphant

revolutionary southern ones, continued for generations and set the path for modern understandings of regional differentiation within domestic Japan proper.

This story of transformation and unification at a cartographic level of Japan's northern region, however, must be accompanied by a parallel story of Japanese modernization and, more broadly, its development as a nation-state. Following a key signifier of modernity—modern mobility—this dissertation highlights three ways that individuals from the Tōhoku region participated in the broader narrative of the nation and indeed modern Japan's growing expansionary vision throughout the world. Individuals, groups, and communities throughout the prefectures of Japan's northeast became the physical embodiment of the Japanese state, tools of colonization both within Japan's own boundaries and abroad. Tōhoku provided significant numbers of migrants who took part in the two different kinds of expansionism characteristic of Japan as a state during the modern period, non-aggressive participation in the world capitalist system, sometimes referred to as internationalism, as well as more confrontational policies that physically relocated Japanese subjects into frontier and colonial spaces within the empire, altering both the metaphorical as well as physical networks that spanned the nation and globe.

This dissertation began by charting the shifting fortunes of a few local *daimyō* (domainal lords) in Japan's northeast at the end of the Meiji Civil War. In the face of unprecedented changes in the social, political, and cultural priorities imposed by the nascent government of the Meiji victors, some families from the formerly prominent domains such as Sendai-han and Aizu-han turned their gaze away from their ancestral seats of power on Honshū Island to the newly annexed territories in Hokkaidō. The Meiji government incentivized migration and colonization of this new frontier of Japan, a region referenced as the "northern gate" of the fledgling nation-state. For these defeated clans, Hokkaidō represented another kind of opportunity, a place at the

furthest distance to Meiji reforms and Meiji governmental intervention. Men and women relocated in mass, reconstituting branch villages wherein former lords could translate their social power into local prestige through a system of patronage. Over time, due to the success of local community relocations that transplanted large populations from villages in Tōhoku to the new frontier of Hokkaidō, the Meiji government further encouraged the group relocation of Tōhoku natives through projects such as the construction of *tondenhei-mura*, or soldier-settler villages, and independent group migration using the *dantai* system. The harsh climate and difficulty of settling the new northern frontier, however, broke down class distinctions and eventually created a new kind of modernity Hokkaidō, a modernity wherein class hierarchies dissolved in many settler communities on the border sooner than they did back in the remainder of the modernizing nation-state.

The peoples residing within the prewar Tōhoku region have a history of interconnections to multiple independent nation-states throughout the Pacific world beginning as a slow trickle in 1869, growing steadily between 1886 and 1924, then decreasing until the outbreak of the Pacific War, links that have been established and strengthened through the practice of international migration. While not the largest contributor to overseas migration in the prewar period, natives of the Tōhoku region, particularly the prefectures of Fukushima and Miyagi, became a central node in networks of migration. Rather than abandoning their emigrant regionalism from Japan and melding seamlessly within the larger Japanese immigrant community in North and South America, Tōhoku natives embraced and indeed institutionalized regional characteristics that distinguished their community from the larger, supposedly homogeneous, "Japanese" community abroad. At the same time, however, the reality that their new foreign neighbors did indeed lump all "Japanese" together into a singular stereotype demanded that each migrant from

the six prefectures of the northeast had to stand abreast two identities: an external immigrant identity as "Japanese" and an internal emigrant identity as being from "Tōhoku." An unbounded Tōhoku identity emerged overseas, one not contained within any particular cartography but instead tied to the belief in a portable, and eternal, notion of belonging to one's native place. The strong connections to family and village that linked communities back in Japan with migrants resettling abroad, be it because of chain migration, employment opportunities, or group migration schemes, became a conduit for international influence within domestic Japan's Tōhoku region during the prewar period.

Notions of regionalism as a cultural ethnicity crystalized within mainland popular culture during the 1920s driven by a combination of a domestic rise in the local *bunka* (culture) movement and the heightened awareness of the distinctive characteristics of Tōhoku migrants living beyond the bounds of the northeast. However, at the same time, internal migration to Japan's growing urban centers and overseas imperial holdings increased as Japan entered into a period of prewar expansionism. As the notion of Japan as a leader with an Asian Empire grew domestically, Tōhoku residents shifted their gaze away from the increasingly restrictive migration laws of other independent nation states in Euro-America. Colonization efforts within Greater East Asia became the focus of the currents of migration from the northeast. The incorporation of multiple Asian ethnicities and nationalities within the Japanese sphere of influence, which began as early as Japan's colonization of Taiwan in 1895 and grew as Japan annexed Korea and settled in Manchuria and northeast China, resulted in a shift in hierarchical notions of Japaneseness in those new colonies. The Tōhoku region, sometimes referred to as an internal colony of Japan, became a primary recruitment pool mobilized to physically settle the colonial spaces in Northeast Asia. Voices within the Tōhoku community began a rallying cry to

have northeastern (*tōhoku*) Japan serve as the vanguard of Japanese leadership in northeastern (*tōhoku*) Asia. Ultimately, this consolidation of Tōhoku's position within the empire challenged the notion of Tōhoku as a regional backwater within Japan proper.

The development of Japanese regionalism in the Tōhoku region is global in nature, and should not be understood as simply an internal part of Japanese domestic history. Following three inside-out examples of modern mobility during the prewar period 1) frontier-to-frontier relocation of Tōhoku residents to Hokkaidō as a part of nation building, 2) international migration and community building in foreign sovereign nations in North and South America, and 3) settler colonization throughout Japan's empire in Greater East Asia Modern, this dissertation has proved that mobility, be it within the nation, empire, or world, altered the social and cultural landscape of Japan's northeast. Ultimately, this dissertation challenges the fallacy that the prefectures of Japan's northeast, Miyagi, Fukushima, Akita, Aomori, Iwate, and Yamagata, remained outside of the stream of modernization during the prewar period.

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