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Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga and the Early History of Doyo Buyo and Bon Odori in California

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Dance

by

Linda Cummings Akiyama

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The thesis of Linda Cummings Akiyama is approved.

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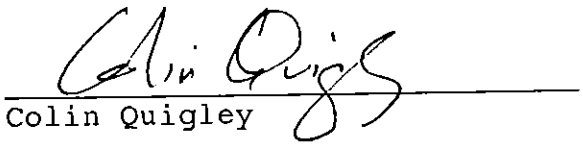

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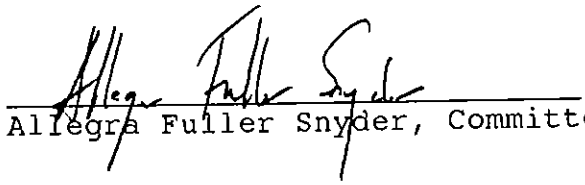

Allegra Fuller Snyder, Committee Chair

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga and the Early History of Doyo Buyo and Bon Odori in California

by

Linda Cummings Akiyama
Master of Arts in Dance
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Professor Allegra Fuller Snyder, Chair

This study presents an historical survey and analysis of Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga's work in dance. Primary source material was gathered from interviews with Reverend Iwanaga's widow, his former dance students, Jodo Shinshu Buddhist reverends and other members of the San Francisco Japanese American community. Written materials, government documents and photographic records were also researched.

Reverend Iwanaga introduced Japanese cultural meanings to Nisei children through his teaching, choreographing and presenting of dances accompanied by Doyo music. He also re-established bon odori, the dance component of the Buddhist observance of Obon, at over twenty Buddhist temples in the Western United States.

The first section of this study is an overview of Reverend Iwanaga's career as a Buddhist missionary and dance teacher. This is followed by a detailed description of his Doyo Buyo classes, dances and recitals. A brief history of Obon Festival and bon odori is provided that includes a review of Reverend Iwanaga's successful effort to re-introduce bon odori to temples in California. The study examines the adaptations and innovations that Reverend Iwanaga made in both Doyo Buyo and bon odori and traces the social and cultural conditions that may have contributed to the initiation of these changes. The concluding section focuses on the effect that Reverend Iwanaga's work had on one individual, a religious organization and two forms of Japanese American cultural expression.

INTRODUCTION

Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga, a Buddhist missionary reverend, dance teacher and choreographer came to the United States in 1930 to teach Doyo Buyo[1] and bon odori[2] to the Nisei[3] members of the Buddhist Mission of North America. He taught and produced children's dance recitals for twenty years at Buddhist temples throughout California, Oregon, Washington and Western Canada. He also expanded the Japanese American observance of Obon[4] in California to include bon odori, the dance component of Obon in Japan which had rarely been performed on the Pacific Coast of the United States before Reverend Iwanaga's arrival.

This study describes the various aspects of Reverend Iwanaga's work in dance and examines the effects that this work had on the Japanese American Buddhist community in California. In order to understand Reverend Iwanaga's role in disseminating Japanese cultural meanings through dance and song, and in providing adaptions and innovations in Doyo Buyo and Obon Festival, Reverend Iwanaga's work will be looked at in relationship to individual community members, the community's forms of cultural and religious expression, and the community's largest religious organization.

Very few written references exist that discuss Reverend Iwanaga or the early history of Doyo Buyo and bon odori in California. The written material that there is includes articles from Buddhist newspapers, newsletters, and anniversary books, choreographic notes written by Reverend Iwanaga, documents such as passports, visas, government questionnaires and ministerial records in addition to Reverend Iwanaga's song books. Much of this material is included in scrapbooks belonging to Reverend Iwanaga's widow, Mrs. Helen Chizuko Iwanaga. These scrapbooks also include photographic material documenting Doyo Buyo recitals at different temples in which Reverend Iwanaga taught and photographs of early Obon Festivals led by Reverend Iwanaga in Sacramento during the 1930's. Other photographs include pictures of Reverend Iwanaga's students that he taught in Japan. Selected photographs are included in the appendix of this study.

The main source of material for this thesis came from personal interviews with second generation Japanese Americans who knew Reverend Iwanaga. Mrs. Helen Chizuko Iwanaga, herself an important historical figure in the development of music within the Buddhist Churches of America, consented to give several extensive interviews over a period from May 1988 until June of 1989. Mrs.

Iwanaga met Reverend Iwanaga when he first came to the United States in 1930. As his first vocal and piano accompanist, she helped him plan how to introduce Doyo Buyo and bon odori to American Nisei. She played piano and sang while he was choreographing new dances, as he was teaching his students in Stockton and during the Stockton Doyo Buyo recitals. Five years after their first meeting, they were married. After their marriage they continued artistic collaboration. Mrs. Iwanaga often travelled with her husband, accompanying his dance classes. Together, they were named the first heads of the Music Department of the Buddhist Churches of America. Mrs. Iwanaga also taught Reverend Iwanaga's Doyo Buyo choreography to hundreds of participants at a major Buddhist conference after her husband's death.

The close personal and professional relationship that Reverend and Mrs. Iwanaga shared provided access to information and understandings which would only have been available had the late Reverend been interviewed himself. Unless otherwise noted, the biographical descriptions of Reverend Iwanaga's life came from interviews with Mrs. Iwanaga. She was able to give background information about her husband's early life in Japan and his dance work and missionary work prior to coming to the United States. She knew his method of

choreographing and his feelings about his work in relationship to his religion. She had discussed with him his reasons for choosing certain music to use in his dances and why he didn't use others. She remembered the choreography of most of the dances and demonstrated or taught a selected group to me, descriptions of which are included in Chapter Two and Chapter Three. As a musician, she understood the musical dimensions of Reverend Iwanaga's work. She also shared the same network of friends and associates as her husband and therefore received much feedback from his former students at temples all over the Western United States, their Issei parents, and the people who participated in the Obon festivals that he produced. Mrs. Iwanaga, like her husband, travelled to temples throughout the country teaching gathas and directing Buddhist choruses. This gave her a wide overview of the impact of her husband's work throughout the Buddhist Churches of America.

A total of nine interviews were conducted with Mrs. Iwanaga along with numerous informal telephone conversations. During the informal talks, Mrs. Iwanaga would answer specific questions that I had or would relate information that had been given to her by others. The interviews that were not done by telephone were always held at her home and lasted from one and a half to two

hours. The interviews were taped. Afterwards, we would take a lunch break at which time there was often more conversation about Reverend Iwanaga and his work. After lunch, Mrs. Iwanaga and I worked in a number of ways. On some days she would teach or demonstrate Doyo Buyo dances and play and sing Doyo music. Other times she would show me photograph albums and documents or help to translate her husband's notes and articles written about him in Japanese. Visits to her home usually lasted between four to five hours.

The interviews began with a non-directed interview approach. I would bring up a general topic and Mrs. Iwanaga would speak about it. I also prepared a list of questions which I later asked if they had not been covered through the non-directed process. After each interview, I would transcribe the tapes at home and then write down questions which came from listening to the previous interview. The focus of the interviews was always Reverend Iwanaga's work in dance and music but expanded to include his personal life as it related to his dance work. The socio-cultural context of his work was described naturally in Mrs. Iwanaga's as well as other informants' recollections and all informants seemed conscious of a dynamic that existed between the times and the dance. This may be particularly true in

the case of Reverend Iwanaga since he was specifically asked to come to the United States to help meet the needs of both Nisei children and the Buddhist Mission of North America through his teaching of dance.

The numerous interviews and telephone conversations which I had with Mrs. Iwanaga provided opportunities to verify information gained in previous interviews and to discuss differences of opinion between informants when they infrequently occurred. When I had questions that Mrs. Iwanaga could not answer, she would contact other people who knew her husband and try to find out the answer.

In order to provide a better understanding of Reverend Iwanaga and his relationship with the Japanese American community, several other people were interviewed. These included four former Doyo Buyo students who took class with Reverend Iwanaga in the 1930's. Mrs. Yaeko Hanyu came originally from Stockton and Mrs. Kiyoko Kuroda, Mrs. Tomoye Takahashi and Mrs. Kimiko Toyooka are from San Francisco. Mrs. Kimiko Toyooka was a Japanese Language School teacher at Soko Gakuen when she learned Doyo Buyo and the other informants were older children or teenagers when they learned. Telephone interviews were also conducted with two women, Mrs. Eiko Ono and Mrs. Mary Shimamoto, who watched

Reverend Iwanaga's classes but did not participate. Two other members of the Buddhist Churches of America were interviewed, Mrs. Misako Iwase and Mrs. Jane Imamura who had not taken Doyo Buyo classes but who had known Reverend Iwanaga through his work in Obon Festival and bon odori. Dr. Ryo Munekata provided a description of Reverend Iwanaga's work in recording Japanese American Buddhist music. He and Mr. Takeo Utsumi, as former members of the Young Buddhist Association, gave their impressions of Reverend Iwanaga in the 1930's and 1940's. They along with Mr. Noboru Hanyu and Mr. Seizo Oka provided valuable historical information.

The interviews with Reverend Iwanaga's former students differed in length and approach from those conducted with Mrs. Iwanaga. A set of interview questions was asked in the same order to all students. This was to allow comparison among the students' perceptions and to check on historical accuracy if there were differences in opinion as to when or where an event occurred. In answering the questions, all informants provided answers rich in personal and social context when describing their participation in Doyo Buyo and bon odori. Through their narratives, they provide a picture of how Reverend Iwanaga's Doyo Buyo classes and the dance event of Obon Festival were interwoven into the fabric of daily life

that make up their childhoods. Whenever possible excerpts from these interviews are used since they give insights into the significance of Reverend Iwanaga's work as understood by the people with whom he worked.

In Section Four, one student's experiences, that of Mrs. Tomoye Takahashi, was chosen to illustrate the relationship between an individual personality and Japanese cultural meanings as symbolized in Doyo Buyo and bon odori of the 1930's; and to show how Reverend Iwanaga as a cultural disseminator through his teaching of dance played an important role in the appreciation and understanding of these cultural perceptions.

Three Jodo Shinshu ministers, Reverend Ken Yamaguchi, Reverend Masao Kodani and Reverend Hiroshi Abiko, were interviewed either in person or by telephone concerning the meaning of Obon and bon odori for Jodo Shinshu Buddhists.

Certain limitations were placed on this study because Japanese was not my field language. Scholarly work in Japanese which might have been useful for background information about the history of Obon, Doyo, and bon odori could not be consulted. However, materials written about Reverend Iwanaga in Japanese and his own notes were translated into English by Mrs. Iwanaga or other people in the Japanese Buddhist community.

Reverend Iwanaga's former Nisei students are bilingual so that interviews in English did not present a problem. Two Issei informants provided information through interpreters.

Most Issei (first generation immigrants) who knew Reverend Iwanaga are no longer living. Most Sansei, children of the Nisei, were too young to have met Reverend Iwanaga. For these reasons, the viewpoints which emerge in the following chapters reflect those of American Nisei.

The first section of this study provides an historical survey of Reverend Iwanaga's work in dance. The second section is a detailed description of Reverend Iwanaga's Doyo Buyo classes within the socio-cultural context of Japanese American Buddhist communities on the Pacific Coast during the 1930's and 1940's. Included in this section is a comparison of Reverend Iwanaga's America students with his students in Japan, a description of his Doyo Buyo classes, the music that he used, the various kinds of dances that he choreographed and taught and his Doyo Buyo recitals. Section three examines Reverend Iwanaga's role as a cultural disseminator and innovator through his work in re-establishing bon odori as part of the Buddhist observances of Obon at many west coast temples. Background information about the textual

origin, history and Jodo Shinshu interpretations of Obon and bon odori are given. A description of how Reverend Iwanaga shaped the Japanese American performance of Obon Festival is provided. Also noted are the adaptions and innovations that he made in the dance event with possible reasons for these changes.

The thesis concludes with an analysis of the effect that Reverend Iwanaga's work in dance had on one individual, on the religious organization of the Buddhist Mission of North America and on two Japanese American forms of cultural expression.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Doyo are Japanese children's songs first written during the Taisho Period (1912-1926) in a Western song style by Japanese musicians and poets. Buyo is a Japanese term which has been most often used since the Meiji Period (1868-1926) as the translation of the English word "dance" (Kozo 1983:105). In the United States, Reverend Iwanaga used the compound term, Doyo Buyo, to describe the dances that he taught. These were dance movements to Doyo songs. While dance movements accompanied the performance of Doyo in Japan, the compound term, Doyo Buyo, was not commonly used here to describe those movements.

2. Bon odori are several types of folk dances which are performed during the observance of the Buddhist celebration of Obon.

3. Nisei refers to the second generation of Japanese in the United States. Nisei are the children of immigrants who were born in Japan.

4. Obon is a Japanese Buddhist religious observance which occurs in either July or August. It is a time to express gratitude to ancestors and to honor the dead.

SECTION I

AN HISTORICAL SURVEY OF REVEREND IWANAGA'S WORK IN DANCE

Throughout his adult life, Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga served Jodo Shinshu Buddhist organizations by teaching, producing and choreographing dance. His involvement in dance began in the 1920's and paralleled his reconversion to Buddhism. From that period of his life until his death in 1950, his commitment to his religion and his commitment to enhancing the lives of young people through dance were closely connected and it was this connection that gave continuity and direction to his work.

1. EARLY LIFE IN JAPAN

Yoshio Iwanaga was born into a Buddhist family in Miyauchi village, Kamimashiki County, Kumamoto prefecture on April 29, 1900. He was the youngest child of an older businessman and his wife. His parents had him late in their lives so that Yoshio Iwanaga was known in Miyauchi as the last child of the village.

After attending local grammar school, he left Kumamoto and enrolled in Tokyo Trade Language School where he majored in Spanish. His father had not been

prosperous in business so Yoshio Iwanaga had to support himself by working while he was in Tokyo. Reading books and listening to music were two of his favorite pastimes. He listened to Bach, Beethoven and Mozart as well as traditional and popular music of Japan and was well versed in Japanese theatre, pottery and ikebana. Although he loved music and dance, at this stage in his life he had no intention of making a living teaching dance and expected to become a businessman after graduating. Part way through his studies, however, an unexpected illness caused him to postpone his schooling and led him to re-evaluate his plans for the future.

Sometime during his stay in Tokyo, Yoshio Iwanaga became ill. Years later, he recounted to his wife how his lengthy illness, coupled with the loneliness of being away from his family caused his to become deeply depressed (Iwanaga 11/30/88). He spent much of his time alone and while nursing himself back to health he began a religious search that led him to Christianity and then back again to Buddhism.

His reading materials began to include religious doctrine. He had been born into a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist family, but like many young people in Japan in the 1920's, he had only a superficial understanding of the beliefs of his religion.[1] He first studied Protestant

Christianity and for a short period, he became a Christian convert. However, there were aspects of Christianity that troubled him and he asked for many meetings with the church clergy at which time he brought up his reservations. His constant questioning put him in disfavor with some of the ministers and he came to feel that there was too much in Christianity that he could not accept as his personal belief (Iwanaga 11/30/88). He then turned to the study of Buddhism and eventually re-converted to the religion of his parents.

Although little is known about Yoshio Iwanaga's dance activities prior to his reconversion to Buddhism, he was no doubt exposed to a diversity of dance styles both Western and Japanese. When he was eighteen he was chosen one of four dancers to perform Kagura on New Year's Day at the Shinto shrine in the town of Kosa near the village of his birth. Kosa Jinja is a beautiful shrine built on the bank of Midori Gawa, a river filled with trout. Kagura is a religious shinto ceremony which includes music and dance. Yoshio Iwanaga performed a sword dance and as Joe Akahoshi, who came from the same village remembers, Yoshio Iwanaga was the envy of all the people of Miyauchi for having been chosen to perform this ceremonial dance (1/24/89). Mr. Akahoshi believes that it was this experience which first interested

Yoshio Iwanaga in dance.

Western social dances were introduced as part of the school athletic program in Japan at the same time that Yoshio Iwanaga was attending public schools. Square dances, round dances, marches, Cotillion and Reigen Tanz are on record as having been taught (Ikema 1981:27).[2] By the 1920's, American and European social dancing was popular in cities all over Japan and imported dance manuals were translated into Japanese, then widely distributed throughout the country (Ikema 1981:25).

Every year in October or November, schools would hold Gaku gei kai (class day), then Undo kai (athletic meets) where besides the usual literary recitations and running races, students would demonstrate their past year's accomplishments by performing plays, dancing minyo (Japanese folk dances), and singing Doyo (children's songs) which were accompanied by dance movements (Oka 9/6/88). The minyo taught in the schools were the most standardized, popular folk dances from different prefectures of Japan (Oka 9/6/88). At the high school level, girls would perform to the Shoka and Doyo songs of the Meiji, Taisho (1912-1926) and early Showa (1926-1989) Eras.[3] Sometimes the students would dance as they sang, or one group would dance while another group ac-

companied them with song (Oka 9/6/88; Ikema 1981:28). It was this Japanese school dance which accompanied Doyo and minyo that Yoshio Iwanaga later taught.

After his physical recovery, Yoshio Iwanaga turned his attentions to working within the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist organization. He enrolled in Kyushu Buddhist Seminary in 1925 and received the first level of ministerial ordination, tokudo in 1927.[4] He became a leader in the Young Men's Buddhist Association and trained as a kindergarten teacher. He helped to establish the first Buddhist Sunday Schools and kindergartens in Kumamoto Prefecture.[5]

Part of his training as a teacher was to learn how to teach Doyo. He enjoyed teaching these songs and movements to his students who would perform for their parents on special occasions (See Appendix A, Plate III, p. 166). Because of his interest in music and his natural dance and singing abilities, he was successful at choosing music and choreographing his own dances to accompany the lyrics of the songs.

After completing his studies at Kyushu Buddhist Seminary, he then brought his knowledge of Buddhism, teaching and dance to a different setting. During these early years of industrialization, the cities of Japan contained textile and food processing factories which

employed young girls from poor rural families. In 1930, 750,000 girls ages twelve to nineteen worked in textile factories (Wilkinson 1965:105). These girls worked in exchange for a small wage, room and board and usually some kind of evening education.[6] They ate, worked and slept at the factory, far from their homes. The hours were long and the conditions poor. Many social and religious organizations in Japan worked to improve the conditions of these workers (Oka 8/4/88).

Reverend Iwanaga moved to Kyoto and became the leader of the Young Men's Buddhist Association for the Nishi Hongwanji Temple. He and Reverend Seiya Kai, Sr. travelled together from factory to factory, visiting each workplace twice a month. They would lecture on Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and then Yoshio Iwanaga would teach Doyo Buyo and minyo to the factory girls. These dance lessons were given to lift the spirits of the workers and to ease the dreariness of their everyday lives. In working with the teenagers in the factories, Reverend Iwanaga expanded the age group that he taught and to some extent, the level of sophistication of the dance movements. Doyo songs were chosen that would appeal to young adults. Most of the songs he used had been written during the Taisho Period (1912-1926) especially for people in their teens and early twenties,

although they became popular with adults as well.

2. TEACHING DANCE IN AMERICA: THE 1930'S

In July of 1930, Yoshio Iwanaga attended the first Pan Pacific Conference of the Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA) as one of the Japanese delegates. The conference was held in Hawaii, with over 170 delegates from Japan, Hawaii and the United States attending.

Through his work with impoverished factory workers, Yoshio Iwanaga developed a dance program that combined the propagation of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism with the enrichment of young people's lives through dance. When he demonstrated this program at the conference, it made an immediate impression on the leader of the United States delegation, Reverend Tansai Terakawa. Reverend Terakawa guided the formation of a national organization of young Buddhists in the United States in 1926 (Buddhist Churches of San Francisco 1978:20, 41). He was a Stanford graduate and was one of the few Buddhist ministers in the United States who spoke English as well as Japanese. Considered by his contemporaries as broad-minded, he was among a growing number of members of the Buddhist Mission of North America (BMNA)[7] who were concerned about the young Buddhist Nisei generation and who worked to integrate the Nisei into the BMNA organization.

Unlike their parents, the Nisei were born in the United States. They spoke fluent English but often were not fluent in Japanese. They were educated in American public schools and shared the interests of their non-Japanese classmates.

Reverend Terakawa saw how Mr. Iwanaga's approach to dance could benefit the Buddhist churches in the United States and their Nisei members. The Buddhist churches were losing some of their young members to Christian churches (Buddhist Churches of America 1974:101). Reverend Terakawa thought that if Nisei girls were offered free Doyo Buyo classes through the Buddhist church they would want to continue attending their own Buddhist Sunday Schools. Mrs. Yaeko Hanyu, one of the Mr. Iwanaga's first students, remembers the problem:

> Doyo Buyo was something that was added on that we could look forward to. It was an incentive to go. Also, when children heard that there was going to be a dance festival and everyone was going to dance at Obon, they would want to learn the dances and participate. They were less likely to go with their friends to Christian Sunday School. So many parents sent their children to Christian Sunday School even though they were Buddhist (Hanyu, 11/22/88).

Reverend Terakawa must have reasoned that children who remained in the Buddhist church would eventually come to understand and embrace the religion of their parents. He was also aware that for many Nisei chil-

dren, their church was the only place that they could go for recreation and to gather socially.

The 1920's and early 1930's were periods of extreme discrimination against Japanese in the United States. Many Japanese American children were not welcomed or felt uncomfortable participating in extra curricular activities available to other young people in their neighborhood. For them, the Buddhist and Christian churches that served the Japanese community and the Japanese language schools were the only places that they could go for organized recreation (Utsumi 4/17/88; Hanyu 11/22/88; Hosokawa 1969:164). Doyo Buyo seemed like an ideal activity to offer Nisei girls especially when it would be taught by a dedicated Buddhist like Reverend Iwanaga. It would appeal to young Japanese Americans and would also be appreciated by their parents (Hanyu 11/22/88). Parents were sure to approve of the classes because Doyo was considered an appropriate part of Japanese children's education. They would be pleased to see their children performing to the songs that they themselves grew up with in Japan.

Although the Buddhist church was beginning to offer sports programs and Japanese martial arts to young Nisei boys, there were very few activities for the girls. The Buddhist church had always sponsored secular activities,

and since its inception in 1898, served as a Japanese community meeting place, so teaching what was primarily secular children's dance was not seen as unusual. Buddhist children performed some form of entertainment during Hana Matsuri (Festival honoring the birth of Buddha) and a Doyo Buyo performance would add to this celebration.

Reverend Terakawa invited Reverend Iwanaga to come to California and offered to find him work teaching dance to children who attended Buddhist Sunday Schools and Japanese Language Schools.[8] Reverend Iwanaga eagerly accepted. The offer combined the excitement of living in another country with the chance to fulfill his personal commitment to Buddhism. He became one of several young ministers who came to the United States in the 1920's and 1930's because of their dedication to Buddhism. Mrs. Imamura, whose father and whose husband were both Jodo Shinshu ministers at that time, spoke of this group of reverends:

> Those early ministers from Japan, their whole attitude was like a monk with a begging bowl. They were bringing what we call the Treasure of all treasures. In all of them, in their own different ways, they put their heart and soul in it. There was no salary, everyone gave what they could. The ministers really gave their lives (Imamura 1/16/89).

Each minister contributed his special abilities. Some stood out because of their Buddhist scholarship. Reverend Tansai Terakawa was known for his intellectual and organizational skills. Reverend Iwanaga was the artistic one, valued for his talent in music and dance (Imamura 1/16/89).

Reverend Iwanaga obtained a temporary visiting visa while still in Hawaii and sailed directly to the United States, arriving in San Francisco on August 6, 1930 (Headquarters Western Defense Command, 1945). He first stayed at Reverend Terakawa's home in Stockton. He asked Reverend Terakawa if he knew of anyone who could play the piano accompaniment to the Doyo songs. Reverend Terakawa suggested Helen Chizuko Okamoto, the sixteen year-old Nisei girl who played the organ for the Stockton temple. Yoshio Iwanaga had been told in Japan that Nisei couldn't even speak Japanese and he couldn't believe that a Nisei would be able to sing and play Doyo. He told Miss Okamoto, who five years later became his wife, that he had held out little hope when he was first introduced to her as his accompanist. But Helen Okamoto knew far more about Doyo than Yoshio Iwanaga could have imagined. Her mother loved Japanese music and art and Helen Iwanaga grew up listening, singing and playing the classic Doyo songs. She had studied piano

since she was four and began playing organ for the temple when she was twelve. She later received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music from the College of the Pacific.

During the first Doyo Buyo classes Yoshio Iwanaga and Helen Okamoto worked out a method of introducing the songs and dances to his Japanese American students. She would first play and sing a song, then he would explain the words of the song and what it meant to people in Japan. She would then play phrase by phrase as he taught the dance phrase. Rather than expecting the Japanese American students to both sing and dance, Miss Okamoto would sing and play while the students danced. This approach was later duplicated in other towns and cities with other accompanists (Iwanaga 1/24/89).

The first Doyo Buyo recital occurred in Stockton in 1930. The first photograph of a Doyo Buyo class records a recital in San Jose in April of 1931. The next is a recital during the same year in San Francisco in July and this is followed by still another recital in 1931 at the Los Angeles Betsuin.

While each temple had its own set of conditions that determined when Mr. Iwanaga taught, for how long and to whom, his classes at the Buddhist Church of San Francisco will serve as an example of how he began adapting his work which he started in Japan to fit the

social environment of the United States.

Mr. Iwanaga was not the only Doyo teacher to come to San Francisco. Mr. Tomita came to teach for a month, but his classes were not very well attended (Toyooka 11/29/88).

From the very beginning of his teaching in the United States, Mr. Iwanaga's classes were popular. A photograph of the 1931 San Francisco Doyo Buyo recital shows seventy-nine girls from five to eighteen years old participating. These girls either attended Buddhist Sunday School or one of the Japanese Language schools in San Francisco. Japanese Language School teachers from all over the San Francisco Bay Area also took his classes with the idea of teaching these dances to their students. However, except for the younger kindergarten dances, no one continued to teach Doyo Buyo at the scale that Reverend Iwanaga did after he left the area (Toyooka 11/29/88). While most of his students were Buddhist, Christian children and Christian Language School teachers attended as well (Iwanaga 5/2/88).

For the first recital in San Francisco, classes were held every Saturday during the summer in the auditorium of the old church building at 1881 Pine Street. Children were separated into classes by age, with the dance music changing to fit the age level of the stu-

dents. Each age level learned a couple of dances to perform on stage. Often, the older girls would learn all the dances and help to teach the younger children (Takahashi 8/4/88). Although the classes were open to anyone, only girls attended.

At the end of the session, Mr. Iwanaga produced a Doyo Buyo recital. Children, wearing silk kimono or a costume that fit their specific dance, performed what they had learned on stage. The dances ranged form mimetic movements done to nursery songs for young children to more sophisticated movements accompanying the "classic" popular Doyo songs of Japan. Mr. Iwanaga also adapted Doyo Buyo to reflect American interests by choreographing a baseball dance to the music of "Coming through the Rye", in which children performed in baseball uniforms. He also choreographed two dances in an interpretive, modern dance style and another modeled after the Virginia Reel.

Parents were recruited to help in the recital by painting Japanese landscape scenes and working the lighting. A musical accompanist sang the songs and played the piano while the children danced.

Yoshio Iwanaga also incorporated minyo dance (Japanese folk dance) into his Doyo Buyo classes. At first they were used as a type of group warm up for all the

children to do together and as processional dances to be performed by large groups of children on stage. These minyo were the popular folk dances representing different prefectures in Japan that were taught in Japanese public schools nationwide. Mr. Iwanaga probably learned them either as a high school student or when he trained as a teacher. These were also the minyo that he eventually incorporated into the American observance of Obon.

In Japan, bon odori are various styles of folk dance which have been performed during the observances of the Buddhist festival of Obon for hundreds of years. While other aspects of Obon were observed on the Pacific Coast of the United States, bon odori except for sporadic, rare instances was not until Reverend Iwanaga's arrival (Iwanaga 5/2/88; Buddhist Church of San Francisco 1978:63; Ono 11/21/88; Hanyu 11/22/88; Toyooka 11/29/88; Kanagawa 1988:1; Abiko [by 1975]; Imamura 1/16/89; Iwase 4/4/88; Takahashi 8/4/88).

It is unclear when Yoshio Iwanaga decided that he would reintroduce bon odori into the Pacific Coast observances, but it must have been soon after his arrival in the United States. By 1931 the first Obon Festival in San Francisco that contained bon odori was held.[9] In Japan at that time the dances performed in a certain

locality, whether village, small town or section of a city were dances most often unique to that locality. These folk dances were performed at Obon as well as on other occasions. Yoshio Iwanaga did not teach minyo from areas in his native prefecture of Kumamoto. Instead, he taught a more eclectic group of about ten dances from several prefectures, the same dances that he taught to children in his Doyo Buyo classes.[10]

The first Obon Festival in San Francisco was held in the auditorium of the Buddhist Church and was sponsored by the Fujinkai, the Buddhist Women's Association (Buddhist Church of San Francisco 1978:64; Toyooka 11/29/88). Most of the dancers were children from Mr. Iwanaga's classes although the dances that he chose were simple and everyone was encouraged to join in. By 1936, as the number of participants grew, the festival was moved to what was then the center of Japantown on Buchanan Street between Post and Sutter. In just a few years the festival had hundreds of participants and thousands of spectators who came from all over the San Francisco Bay Area (Buddhist Church of San Francisco 1978:64).

Yoshio Iwanaga was only in San Francisco for a few months in 1931, 1932, and again in 1934, but his impact in terms of bon odori was great. The same increase in

participation in Obon Festival occurred at other temples that Mr. Iwanaga visited and bon odori became an important aspect of the obon observances throughout the West.

Although his Doyo Buyo classes were extremely popular and there was an attempt to continue to teach Doyo Buyo in Buddhist Sunday Schools and Japanese Language Schools after Mr. Iwanaga left San Francisco, no one carried on Doyo Buyo at the scale Mr. Iwanaga did. This was true throughout the state of California.

From late 1931 until 1933, Yoshio Iwanaga used the Los Angeles Betsuin temple as his home base. A newspaper article from that time indicated that he also taught and produced a Doyo Buyo recital in conjunction with the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Los Angeles (Iwanaga's personal scrapbook).

Yoshio Iwanaga also enjoyed Western styles of dance. He did ballroom dancing and while in Los Angeles, he took ballet at the Ernest Ryan School of Dance from Miss Eaton. He did not mix Western dance movements with his Japanese Doyo Buyo choreography, although he did choreograph improvisational, modern dance pieces to Doyo music.

From 1930 until 1950, Yoshio Iwanaga travelled to at least twenty temples and their surrounding areas to teach including: Fresno, Garden Grove, Guadalupe, Hol-

land, Lodi, Los Angeles, Pismo, Placer, Portland, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo, Seattle, Stockton, Tacoma, Vacaville, Vancouver (British Columbia), Walnut Grove and White River (Washington). When he taught at farming centers as he did in Sacramento, people from the surrounding communities such as Penryn and Vacaville would come to the temple to learn.

As news of his classes spread, temples wrote to him requesting that he come to teach their children Doyo Buyo and bon odori. The temple usually offered him room and board and an honorarium, the amount of which was set by the host temple. The temples also benefited financially since parents often gave large donations to the temple at the recital. Mr. Iwanaga would stay for about a month, and much as in San Francisco, parents and friends of the students would cooperate by painting stage sets, making costumes, setting up the lighting, and contributing paraphernalia such as parasols, fans and paper blossoms.

In 1933 Yoshio Iwanaga returned to Japan for about one year, at which time he was ordained a Jodo Shinshu minister at the Kyoshi level, qualifying him to be a minister overseas (Buddhist Churches of America Ministerial Records). While in Japan he also took lessons from the Hanayagi School of Classical Dance (Iwanaga

11/30/88). This was the year that the song "Tokyo Ondo" written by Shimpei Nakayama and Yaso Saijo (Ikema 1981:96) became a great success and dancing to the song was soon the craze in Japan. An urban version of bon odori was by that time being performed in many of the cities in Japan. When Reverend Iwanaga returned to the United States in 1934, he added "Tokyo Ondo" to his repertoire of dances.

Reverend Iwanaga went back again to Japan in 1935. He came back to the United States in the same year and married Helen Chizuko Okamoto. She later became a leader in the gatha movement and choral music for the Japanese American Jodo Shinshu Buddhist churches. Reverend and Mrs. Iwanaga had two boys, Mutsumi born in 1938 and Ryo, born in 1941.

Reverend Iwanaga was assigned to the Stockton temple as one of the resident ministers from 1936 until 1940. While the additional responsibility of ministering in Stockton gave him less time to teach dance elsewhere, he was still able to travel to temples up and down the Pacific Coast and would try to honor requests from other temples to teach for short periods of time. If a temple did not have its own accompanist, then Mrs. Iwanaga would travel with her husband to play piano and sing. She also played for her husband as he choreo-

graphed new Doyo Buyo. By the late 1930's he had taught over fifty dances.

In Stockton, both boys and girls attended bon odori practices and adult men and women would join in at the actual event (Hanyu 11/22/88). In San Francisco, boys did not attend practices and at Obon Festival mostly girls and women danced (Hanyu, Nobi 4/20/88).

During the 1930's and 1940's, modern ondo, a new type of ondo folk music was being composed in Japan and as new recordings came to Japanese community stores in California, Reverend Iwanaga would listen to them and would choose those songs with lyrics that he felt were appropriate for Obon to incorporate into his bon odori teaching. Ondo of the 1930's and 1940's often had modern, Western orchestration sometimes including guitar and saxophone. Many of these records came with dance instructions written by choreographers in Japan. They were written in a standard stick figure notation demonstrating the different movements of the dance. If Reverend Iwanaga liked the choreography, he would use it. But if he liked the lyrics and music but not the dance, he would choreograph his own dance or change the dance so that it fit with his sense of aesthetics, and his criteria of being simple enough for anyone to be able to join in, yet possessing a natural grace and flow

(Iwanaga 5/2/88). He added one or two new dances a year.

In 1934, the Buddhist Musical Association of the Jodo Shinshu headquarters in Japan (Bukkyo Ongaku Kyokai) also issued a song, "Bon Odori" with modern orchestration and a religious theme (Onishi 1938:56). Reverend Iwanaga choreographed a dance to "Bon Odori" that was incorporated into the Obon Festival as the first and last dance of the evening. In Northern California today, Reverend Iwanaga's choreography of "Bon Odori" still frames the dance portion of Obon Festival and was referred to at one temple as "the most traditional dance that we do" (Abiko 8/7/88).

Obon Festival dancers were always led by Reverend Iwanaga when he was at a temple during the festival. Dressed in modern, American clothes, he danced in the center of the circle (See Appendix C, Plate XVI, p. 188). Sometimes, he would also accompany the dancers on the taiko, a Japanese drum that is often played along with recorded music.

Those who participated in Obon Festival varied from temple to temple. In all locations, girls, both children and teenagers, made up the core of the dancers. In both urban and rural areas, younger and older women also joined in. Men and boys performed too, but more in ru-

ral areas than in the cities. A 1934 photograph of the Sacramento Obon Festival showed 40 dancers; 13 were male, 27 female. All of the females were dressed in Japanese clothes, 4 of the men were dressed in Japanese yukata and 9 were dressed in Western slacks and shirt.

During the early 1930's in Sacramento, a Doyo Buyo recital was held on the same night as Obon Festival (See Appendix C, Plate XVII, p. 190). The congregation lined up chairs on one side of the temple parking lot, a moveable stage floor was put down, banners were hung from the side of the building, the yagura was built along the edge of the lot, a piano was rolled out and the parking lot was transformed into a stage. After the recital, the ministers led the Obon dancers into a circle, everyone did gassho[11] and repeated the Nembutsu[12] and then bon odori began. Doyo Buyo dancers, dressed in their Doyo costumes were joined by men, women and boys from the community as they danced bon odori.

All through the 1930's Reverend Iwanaga taught Doyo Buyo and bon odori and every year each temple held an Obon Festival on a Saturday or Sunday night in July or August. By the end of the decade, several thousand people at temples from Vancouver, British Columbia to Garden Grove, California were performing the dances at Obon Festival that were introduced to the United States

by Reverend Iwanaga. Many people were now learning the dances from the Buddhist Sunday School teachers of their temple who in turn had leaned them from Reverend Iwanaga himself or from one of this students. In 1940, Reverend Iwanaga was assigned to his own temple in Watsonville. Not having the time to travel as he did in the 1930's, he turned to teaching dance through workshops for Sunday School teachers.

The same year that Reverend Iwanaga and his wife moved to Watsonville, officials of the International Exposition on Treasure Island asked the Buddhist Mission of North America and the California Young Buddhist League to organize a Buddhist Day as part of the summer fair commemorating the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge and the San Francisco Bay Bridge. Two days in August were chosen, the first was designated "Young Buddhist Day" and the second, "Buddhist Day". Young Nisei from Pacific Coast temples were to be in San Francisco at that time to attend the Young Buddhist Summer Session and a National Conference of Buddhist Sunday School Teachers. As a finale to the two days of festivities, Reverend Iwanaga decided to hold a mass bon odori. Members of temples from all over Northern California were invited to join together and dance in a celebration of Buddhism in America.

On the day of the event, Reverend Iwanaga had no idea how many dancers would participate.[13] Everyone knew the dances and had been performing them at their own temples for several years so other than a rehearsal or two, there were no large practice sessions where all the dancers had to be present. The Nisei that Reverend Iwanaga began teaching as children were now in their twenties; enthusiastic about his plan, they lent their support through preparing for and participating in the celebration. Young men that Reverend Iwanaga worked with in the Young Buddhist Association helped by doing such things as setting up bleachers for the observers, taking care of the public address system and building the yagura.[14]

"Buddhist Day" drew ninety-seven thousand people to the fair, twenty-five thousand of whom were Japanese Americans (Buddhist Churches of America 1974:60). The afternoon began with a parade of approximately one thousand Japanese American Buddhists, led by Buddhist ministers dressed in their koromo[15] and ceremonial headwear. Those who marched through the streets of Treasure Island that day included women and young girls in their kimono, the Bishop of the Buddhist Mission of North America, the Bussei Queen and her court, American style marching bands and Buddhist Boy Scout units. At 2:30

p.m. a service was held in the Temple of Religion courtyard (Buddhist Churches of America 1974:60). Buddhist choirs sang gathas and the service included traditional Buddhist chanting.

By evening, between 750 and 1000 dancers gathered to perform bon odori. Reverend Iwanaga was amazed at the response and for him, this event symbolized the climax of his efforts in bringing bon odori to Japanese Buddhists of America.

Both observers and participants remember the event as visually stunning, spectacular, an incredible experience to see hundreds of dancers from all over California coming together and dancing the same dances together. Mrs. Iwanaga explained the feeling of spiritual unity, how it all came together--the music, dance, and religion. "It was really, really, thrilling and I thought, my gosh, this is it!"

This physical expression of community encompassed the diversity of geography and generations that made up the followers of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in America and it symbolized the successful adaption and growth of Japanese Buddhism in this country.

On the personal level, bon odori at the International Exposition was Reverend Iwanaga's greatest accomplishment, a capsulation of years of work travel-

ing, dancing, teaching and caring for the needs of young Nisei Buddhists. With an assignment to his own temple coming in the same year, 1940 seemed to signal the maturation of Reverend Iwanaga's work as both a minister and artist within the Buddhist Mission of North America. For the Buddhist Nisei that he faithfully supported, the success of "Buddhist Day" at the Exposition demonstrated their capabilities as leaders.

Reverend Iwanaga and the young Buddhists that he worked with had only a short time to enjoy a sense of achievement and pride in their contribution to the growth of their religion in the United States before World War II and the subsequent relocation of all people of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast created a crisis for the entire Japanese American population which turned everyone's attention toward the tragedy of internment.

3. THE WAR YEARS: 1941-1945

Civilian Exclusion Orders were issued to all men, women and children of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast of the United States beginning in March of 1942. This resulted in the mandatory relocation and internment in camps in the interior of the country. Reverend Iwanaga, together with his wife, and two young children,

and his Watsonville congregation was taken first to Salinas Assembly Center, then to Poston II Camp in Arizona. Here, Reverend Iwanaga served as the minister of the Jodo Shinshu congregation.

His wife does not recall if Reverend Iwanaga held bon odori as part of Obon observances while at Poston. The emotional pain of being incarcerated by a country that he loved and was loyal to plus the sudden change in diet and climate took a toll on Reverend Iwanaga's health. His eyesight deteriorated rapidly, a condition that an eye specialist later attributed to malnutrition.

Bon odori had definitely been performed at some of the Relocation Camps and Assembly Centers. Tuck in his history of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in America relates the importance of bon odori to Buddhists at the Tulare Assembly Center during the first summer of relocation:

> That summer, the Obon service and the joyful dancing of the Jodo Shinshu community helped them to rededicate themselves to their way of life and to reflect upon the love, compassion and virtues of parents and former members of their religion...Music and dance helped them to endure the suffering and live with thanksgiving and compassion (Tuck 1987:84).

At Topaz, Utah, a classical dance teacher took over teaching and leading bon odori (Iwase 4/4/88; Takahashi 8/4/88). Obon Festival with dancing was also held at the relocation camp at Gila, Arizona (Hanyu

11/22/88).

Some Japanese Americans were given the option to leave camp and settle in areas in the Central and Eastern United States at the end of 1943 (Kashima 1975:61). Others moved to these areas after the camps were closed. Several young women who learned bon odori from Reverend Iwanaga before the war moved to cities such as Denver, Chicago and Philadelphia (Iwanaga 5/2/88). Those who were active in helping teach bon odori in California helped in teaching the dances that they knew for Obon Festivals at their new locations. In this way the dances that Reverend Iwanaga taught on the West Coast during the 1930's were dispersed to areas throughout the country.

4. RETURNING TO CALIFORNIA: 1946-1950

Reverend Iwanaga returned to Watsonville with his family after the war. The Watsonville temple was converted to a hotel for returning families who had lost their homes and possessions during internment and he and his wife helped to run it. Many of the congregation who had nothing left in Watsonville to return to moved to other areas in the United States. Those who did return had little and there was no money to pay for a minister, so Reverend Iwanaga ministered his temple without pay.

Eleanor Johnson, in a history of Japanese and Japanese Americans in Pajaro Valley, described the climate in Watsonville immediately following the war. "Police Chief Matt Graves provided constant vigil over the hostels so that no harm would come to the evacuees...Evidence of discrimination was openly displayed in signs in some of the of the restaurant windows--'No Japs'" (1967:30).

Given the tension in the community, Watsonville Buddhists like members at many other temples, felt it best to stay quiet and not hold Obon Festival or dance bon odori during the first summer following their return (Iwanaga 5/2/88). However, in a year or two temples throughout the West Coast including Watsonville began holding the festival again and bon odori resumed. Participation grew even larger than it was before the war.

The Golden Jubilee, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Buddhist Churches of America, was held in San Francisco in 1948. It was a nine day celebration and the first major event for the Buddhist Churches of America since the end of the war (Buddhist Churches of America 1974:67). The celebration ended with one thousand dancers performing bon odori in the plaza of the San Francisco Civic Center. Notices went out before the event that on a certain Sunday each temple in

Northern California was to send representatives to a workshop led by Reverend Iwanaga at which time the dances would be reviewed (See Appendix C, Plate XXI, p. 198). Like Treasure Island, it was another spectacular event marking the survival and growth of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism after the devastation of relocation.

Two years after his return to California, Reverend Iwanaga had a major heart attack and was hospitalized for fifty-three days. After his recovery, he continued to be minister of the Watsonville church and also conducted workshops in bon odori for representatives of other temples. He and his wife had been appointed head of the newly formed BCA Music and Recording Department. Despite his fragile health, Reverend Iwanaga worked arduously to complete the first American Buddhist recordings of Buddhist gathas. Dr. Munekata described the process that Reverend Iwanaga went through in order to produce the first set of recordings. Reverend Iwanaga bought the recording equipment and set up a studio in his home where he would make the first print of a record. He would cover all the walls of a room in his house with blankets in order to improve the acoustics. Singers performed the gathas to Mrs. Iwanaga's accompaniment. When a record was complete Reverend Iwanaga would bring it down to professional recording studios in

Los Angeles. He would take a Southern Pacific train on a Sunday night from Watsonville and arrive at Central Station in Los Angles at six the next morning. Dr. Munekata, who was then in his twenties, or his father would come to the station and pick up Reverend Iwanaga. They would drive to the studio where the initial recording would be checked to see if it was of high enough quality to make a master print. They would go to other studios for editing. After they made the rounds of studios, Reverend Iwanaga would return to the Munekata home for a meal and by evening he would return to the train station for his overnight trip back to Watsonville. On a few occasions Reverend Iwanaga's original had to be rerecorded and the process for that recording would begin again.

Altogether Reverend Iwanaga produced seven records as part of the first edition of gatha music. He wrote about his reasons for producing the records in the "Apology, Appreciation, and Request", which accompanied the records:

> If these various records and the subsequent ones can be of any aid to the propagation of Buddhism in America and if they can accomplish at least a portion of the desires expressed by Bishop Shigefuji in his words of encouragement, it will be my greatest happiness. I feel it will be my responsibility to work towards the realization of this goal (Iwanaga, Rev. Yoshio 1950).

The set was completed in February of 1950. Three months later, on May 26, Reverend Iwanaga suffered another heart attack and died within minutes.

Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga's funeral was one of the largest and most elaborate ever held for a Japanese resident in California and testifies to the great number of people who cared for him. One thousand people attended the funeral. The year after his death the Nisei organizers of the Western Young American Buddhists of America conference dedicated the conference to his memory. The following year in Fresno, California, a new dance, "Fresno Ondo", was also dedicated to Reverend Iwanaga. He had choreographed this dance to the music composed by a Japanese American Buddhist, Mrs. Chieko Taira, just before his death (Iwanaga 1951b). "Fresno Ondo" may have been the first bon odori choreographed and performed to original music by a Japanese American. Had Reverend Iwanaga lived longer, he might have encouraged the development of Japanese American bon odori music and dance further.

For five years after his death, temples continued to dance the bon dances that Reverend Iwanaga had taught. Gradually each district[16] of the BCA chose for their own temples how they would continue with the Obon Festival. Mrs. Masako Iwase, who has organized,

planned, taught and performed bon odori since the 1940's, described the evolution of the dance in San Francisco since Reverend Iwanaga's death (Iwase 4/4/88).

First the church asked Japanese classical dance teachers to choose and choreograph dances for Obon; but the dances were too difficult and fancy for the young people to learn and perform so the Obon planners took another approach. They began using dances from Japanese minyo (folk music and dance) records. Japanese choreographers would choreograph dances to new minyo music and stick figure notation of their choreography was included with the record. Women who were active in the planning of bon odori would volunteer to select a dance, reconstruct it and teach it at bon odori practices. Sometimes Japanese minyo teachers were also invited to teach one or two traditional dances from specific prefectures in Japan.

For about ten tears, representatives from each temple in the Bay District were asked to bring one dance to teach the other temples. The bon odori organizers met to exchange dances, learning and writing down what the members from the other temples brought. The lay representatives were encouraged to choreograph their own dances and some chose to do so. Others brought dances that they learned while attending Obon Festivals at tem-

ples outside of their district. It wasn't important for the steps to be remembered exactly as they had been originally performed (Iwase 4/4/88).

Over the years a large number of dances have become a part of a pool from which the dances of a given year can be chosen. At Obon Festival in San Francisco in 1988 only one dance, "Bon Odori", was performed from the dances which Reverend Iwanaga originally taught in the 1930's and 1940's.

A revival of interest in teaching Doyo Buyo occurred in 1967. At a conference of Buddhist Sunday School teachers in San Jose attended by over six hundred delegates, Mrs. Helen Chizuko Iwanaga reintroduced approximately twenty songs and dances that her husband taught in the 1930's. Individual teachers may have gone back and taught their students, but there were no school recitals on the scale of Reverend Iwanaga's nor did Doyo Buyo become a regular part of the Buddhist Sunday School's activities (Iwanaga 5/2/88).

NOTES TO SECTION I

1. Mrs. Iwanaga explained that her husband, like most young adults in Japan during the 1920's, was only familiar with the funeral observations that were followed in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and had never studied the religious principles of his Buddhist Sect. Embree's ethnographic work in Suye, a village in Kumamoto Prefecture, during the 1930's supports this observation. Embree commented on the fact that young people hardly knew the temple which their family belonged to since Buddhism as it was practiced in rural areas was primarily concerned with funerals and memorial services (1939:230). Tuck also states that since the Tokugawa Reforms of the nineteenth century, many lay people have associated funeral and memorials for the dead with Buddhism (1987:222).

2. The Cotillion is a ballroom dance danced by couples, similar to a quadrille. Reigen Tanz is a term referring to any number of German round dances, also danced by couples.

3. See Chapter Two for an explanation and history of Shoka and Doyo music.

4. A candidate must pass examination in Jodo Shinshu Buddhist doctrine, general Buddhism and Buddhist history in order to be granted the rights of tokudo. The level above tokudo is kyoshi which Reverend Iwanaga received in 1933. One must be a kyoshi in order to receive the rights to do missionary work in a foreign country (Kashima 1977:73). Therefore, Reverend Iwanaga was an authorized minister of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in Japan by 1927 although he was not able to be a minster of an American temple until he reached the level of kyoshi in 1933 and then received rights to do missionary work. This may account for the uncertainly among his former students who were interviewed as to whether or not he was a minister when he first began teaching in the United States.

5. Sunday Schools and religious kindergartens were Christian methods of spreading religion that were borrowed by Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in Japan during the early part of the twentieth century (Kashima 1977:152).

6. The factory girls usually worked until they were married, at which time many returned to their village (Embree 1943:15; Wilkinson 1965:105).

7. The Buddhist Mission of North America (BMNA) later became the Buddhist Churches of North America, the largest Japanese Buddhist organization in the United States. Members are of the Jodo Shinshu sect.

8. Reverend Terakawa also brought over another Japanese Young Men's Buddhist Association delegate at the same time Reverend Iwanaga came to the United States. That delegate taught kendo to girls and boys in Stockton (Hanyu 11/22/88).

9. Paul Radin, "Japanese Ceremonies and Festivals in California." Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, II (Summer, 1946), 173. The material for his article was gathered from interviews with older Japanese residents of Berkeley and Oakland in 1934 by a researcher identified only as Miss N.I. The researcher reported that "about three years ago [1931], the feature of the group dance was, for the first time in America, added to the celebration of the Festival of the Dead (Obon)."

10. During the Meiji Period (1868-1912) bon odori was suppressed because the government felt it encouraged public indecency. In some rural areas in Kumamoto, bon odori had not been revived by 1930 (Embree 1939:285).

11. To gassho is to put one's hands together at mid-chest level as a gesture of reverence and gratitude.

12. Jodo Shinshu is based on the realization of the Nembutsu. The name of Amida Buddha is repeated in the phrase, "Namu Amida Butsu."

13. In a 1984 videotape of bon odori held at the Japanese American Community Center in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, a Jodo Shinshu minister commented that it was typically Buddhist that no one ever had any idea how many people will show up to participate in an event, yet when the time comes, there is always an outpouring of help and participation (Buddhist Churches of America, 1984).

14. The yagura is a raised stand located in the middle of the circle of dancers during bon odori. Usually musicians play on the yagura but sometimes dancers will lead the others from on top of the raised stand.

15. Koromo are Buddhist ministers' vestments.

16. The Buddhist Churches of America is divided into geographical districts. Temples within a district meet on a regular basis. There are eight districts within the mainland of the United States.

SECTION II

REVEREND IWANAGA'S DOYO BUYO CLASSES

Reverend Iwanaga initially developed his Doyo Buyo classes for Japanese kindergarten children in Kumamoto Prefecture. He then adapted his classes to accommodate a new group of students--Japanese teenage girls who were raised in farming communities but worked and lived in urban factories and dormitories. When he came to the United States in 1930, he was faced with the problem of teaching an entirely new and very diverse group of students who differed in major ways from his students in Japan.

5. JAPANESE AMERICAN STUDENTS

Reverend Iwanaga's Japanese American students ranged in age from three to eighteen years old. They were born in the United States and were growing up in a cultural and social environment quite different from the rural communities of his former Japanese students. His Japanese students had been a homogeneous group, raised in similar circumstances and sharing similar social and economic backgrounds. In the United States, Reverend Iwanaga's Japanese American students lived in different

kinds of communities all over the West Coast. Some were growing up on rural farms, others were being raised in large towns and still others were living in major cities. Of the urban dwellers, some lived in Japanese towns within the city and others grew up in non-Japanese neighborhoods.

One of the fundamental differences between his Japanese students and his Japanese American students was language. All of Reverend Iwanaga's Japanese American students spoke English. Many also spoke a regional type of Japanese that was particular to America which they used when they were at home or among their Japanese American friends. Mrs. Takahashi, a native San Franciscan and former student of Reverend Iwanaga remembers this shared language and the circumstances that she and other Japanese Americans found themselves in during the 1930's in the United States:

> Going to Japanese School, I learned to speak Japantown Japanese. Now this is a dialect that they (the Issei) recalled speaking in their childhood and in their youth before they left from Japan--already antiquated in Japan because language is a living thing and favorite phrases and also slang and fashionable phraseologies come and go. But they brought the language of their province that they spoke before coming to America. And it was some years later, when we started to grow up and heard them speak this mixed Hiroshima--because so many of them came from Hiroshima--this mixed Meiji Era, Hiroshima dialect adapted to American living, mixed with English words pronounced with <u>katakana</u>

> sounding, and its very picturesque, warm, interesting and sometimes funny vocabulary that was used in Japanese communities all up and down the coast. This particular dialect I choose to call "Nichi Bei Go", which means Japanese American lingo. It reflects the times. It reflects the effort that the Issei went to try to adapt English words into their everyday living...a kind of philosophy of the immigrant Japanese that had the courage and the spirit of do-or-die stick-to-itness. Accept all this, the degradation, economic denial, the acceptance of meager jobs, the suppression of their own ability, education culture, whatever they had that might have been superior to even their white consorts, sometimes their white employers and next door neighbors (8/4/88).

Reverend Iwanaga's students also faced segregation from mainstream American society. The economic depression of 1929 had intensified an anti-Japanese sentiment in California. The anti-Japanese movement had been continually fueled by propaganda from the Hearst newspaper and from certain California politicians since the formation of the Asiatic Exclusion League in 1908.[1] In 1913 the California Legislature banned Issei from owning land in California. The Immigration Act of 1924 excluded Japanese from the list of people who were eligible to immigrate to the United States. In the early 1930's, the Japanese American community was again under attack for supposedly taking away jobs that could be held by white workers.

> I must say, those were the years of the depths of depression following the crash

> of Wall street 1929, October and the impact and the consecutive waves of deeper and deeper depression, unemployment, the kind of gray, heavy, depressive atmosphere that settled over the country became worse year after year...It was also a time and a result of the Depression I think, of this strong hatred toward Japanese and Chinese people, especially here in San Francisco where the streets were filled with unemployed. In my distant memory I remember headlines about executives jumping off of the Russ Building that was supposed to be the tallest building along Montgomery Street at the time.
>
> It was a tragic time. But it was especially tragic for those of us who were of Oriental heritage because we were the victims of the Hearst Newspaper's "Hate Jap" campaign...The orientals were supposed to contribute to this sad vista of the unemployed by being willing to take menial jobs at inconsequential salaries, thus contributing further to unemployment. But you certainly couldn't blame the Oriental immigrant for taking the jobs of the managerial staff of financial institutions that found themselves out in the street from their Montgomery Street jobs. It seemed to be that everyone blamed the Orientals for everything (Takahashi 8/4/88).

The opponents of Japanese living in the United States tended to portray Japanese in America as all alike. But Reverend Iwanaga found that although his new students shared a common Japanese ancestry, their parents had come from diverse geographic, educational, social and economic backgrounds. The majority of parents were from one of six provinces, either Hiroshima, Kumamoto, Yamaguchi, Fukuoka, Niigata or Wakayama

(Buddhist Churches of America 1974: 459). The parents of some of these students were from middle income merchant families. Others had been clerks, craftsmen, salesmen, or fishermen. The majority had been farmers (Hosokawa 1969:55). Many continued to farm in the United States, but others ran businesses. Those who did farm varied in their economic success. The Depression hit some Japanese American families harder than others. Despite their differences, they formed communities in the United States that gave some sense of protection and self-direction in an often hostile and discriminatory environment. Mrs. Takahashi elaborates:

> Even among the Japanese there was a terrific variation in their background and education, upbringing, rearing, philosophical outlooks, attitudes, and everything else. But they tried to make a harmonious community here of mutual aid and commiseration, encouragement and sharing of happy occasions (8/4/88).

The Japanese community in the United States did make a distinction between generations. The Issei and Nisei generations had grown up in different physical and cultural environments. They spoke a different dominant language. For many of Reverend Iwanaga's Nisei students, Japan was a part of their parent's generation, something far removed from their own interests and experiences (Hosokawa 1969:189).

When they met Reverend Iwanaga, however, many students had their first look at "modern Japan". Mr. Iwanaga was younger than most of their parents and had gone to school in Tokyo during a period that welcomed the influx of new ideas from outside of Japan. He mirrored the blend of Japanese and Western lifestyles found in urban Japan during the late 1920's. He listened to both classical Japanese and Western music. He enjoyed Japanese classical dance and Western ballet, modern and ballroom dancing. He had studied a European language and dressed in stylish Western clothes. Although Mr. Iwanaga came from the same country as their parents, he represented to his students, a modern, new Japan (Iwanaga 1/24/88).

> He was a very modern Japanese man...We related to him, we really did. Much more so than we did our older generation. I think spirit wise, attitude wise, he was so close to us (Takahashi 8/4/88).

Few of Reverend Iwanaga's American students had the same familiarity or understanding of Doyo songs as a child would who grew up and went to school in Japan. Reverend Iwanaga found that when he taught in American farming communities most of his Nisei students were unfamiliar with Doyo songs (Iwanaga 5/23/88). Mrs. Hanyu, a native of Stockton, California and one of Reverend Iwanaga's first students remembers that "Most of the

Doyo songs were new to us. In Stockton, not many had Japanese records except for a record of children's songs and not everyone could afford that" (Hanyu 11/22/88).

The songs were better known in urban areas. Mrs. Kuroda, who grew up in San Francisco's Japantown explains:

> Most girls who lived in Japantown were familiar with the songs. Japanese music would be played at bookstores. The songs were popular and parents would buy them. Japantown was really Japantown then. People lived in the neighborhood. There were businesses that were all Japanese (Kuroda 11/16/88).

Even in the cities where students may have heard the more popular songs, very few had knowledge of the historical and cultural context to which the Doyo of the Meiji, Taisho and early Showa Era referred (Hanyu 11/22/88; Iwanaga 5/23/88; Kuroda 11/16/88; Shimamoto 11/8/88; Takahashi 8/4/88).

There was little opportunity for Nisei girls to take Japanese classical dance classes during the early 1930's. Only a small number of Japanese classical dance teachers were teaching in the United States then and most were located in Japanese towns in the major Western cities (Hanyu 11/22/88; Iwanaga 5/2/88; Shimamoto 11/16/88; Toyooka 11/29/88). Piano and koto lessons were more accessible and some students in San Francisco

and Stockton took these (Hanyu 11/22/88; Kuroda 11/16/88; Shimamoto 11/8/88).

Some of his students had other kinds of movement experiences either during or after taking Doyo Buyo. Mrs. Kuroda took tap dance in Junior High School (Kuroda 11/16/88), and Mrs. Takahashi took a non-Japanese children's dance class. Mrs. Hanyu took kendo class, offered by the Buddhist Church, as did other girls in Stockton, until her father told her to quit because he felt it was not becoming of a girl to study martial arts.

6. DOYO BUYO CLASSES

When Reverend Iwanaga came to a temple, announcements were sent out to parents at all the Japanese Language Schools and the Buddhist Sunday School that free Doyo Buyo classes were being offered to any child who would like to attend. Parents were anxious to have their daughters participate after news of Reverend Iwanaga's early successes in Stockton, San Francisco and San Jose spread to other Jodo Shinshu temples.

Children were instructed to come to the Buddhist Temple gymnasium or multi-purpose room after their public school classes. Reverend Iwanaga then divided into four age levels: 1) pre-kindergarten/kindergarten,

2) early elementary, 3) older elementary, and 4) high school. He would choose two to four dances for each group to learn and assigned the groups a time to learn and practice their dances. All classes were held after school and on Saturdays. Normally his students would attend Japanese Language School at the time, but the language school adjusted their schedules during the period that Reverend Iwanaga taught Doyo Buyo.

The dance session was anywhere from two weeks to several months long and ended with all the groups coming together for a Doyo Buyo recital. Although each group had a special time to learn their dances, other children were always around watching and the older children would pick up steps from the younger children's dances and often would help to teach the younger ones (Takahashi 8/4/88).

Parents who lived in the rural communities surrounding the Buddhist temple would make a special effort to bring their daughters to the temple for Doyo Buyo lessons (Hanyu 11/22/88; Iwanaga 1/24/89). When he taught in Walnut Grove, children from Isleton came. In Sacramento he drew students from Penryn, Auburn and Newcastle. Mountainview children took the class in San Jose. Students from as far away as Gardena and Pasadena came to the Los Angeles Bestuin.

In addition to the children's classes, Reverend Iwanaga taught the same dances to Japanese Language School teachers who wished to teach Doyo at their schools. Teachers from outlying areas which were often miles away would come to the Buddhist temple to learn (Toyooka 11/29/88). Among the Japanese Language School teachers were also Christians (Iwanaga 1/24/89).

Doyo Music

Ichiro Nakano describes the history of Doyo music and places it in its political context in his book, 101 Favorite Songs Taught in Japanese Schools. According to Nakano, Doyo came about as a reaction to the shoka or government school songs, first instituted by the Japanese Ministry of Education in 1881 (Nakano 1983:249). Reverend Iwanaga used both Shoka and Doyo to accompany his dances.

During the Meiji Era, the Japanese government made an all out effort to introduce Japan to Western ideas. As part of the newly instituted compulsory education system, "Singing Exercises," modeled after those of the United States and Western Europe became part of the curriculum. Mr. Luther Whiting Mason, a Superintendent of Music of Public Schools in Boston, Massachusetts was invited to Tokyo to help the Institute of Music decide

how to present music to Japanese students. He and his staff decided that European music would be better than Japanese music to be taught in the schools because, 1) European music could be written down in a standard notation system, whereas Japanese music at that time could not, and 2) the majority of Japanese traditional songs which were popular at that time dealt with "deep love affairs and were full of risque language, therefore they were not appropriate for primary education" (Nakano 1983:245).

The consequences of these findings and their subsequent approval by the government resulted in the evolution of a new Japanese music written in a Western European musical style (Nakano 1983:245).

According to Nakano, the Japanese Ministry of Education published three volumes of "Primary School Songs" to be used in public schools. The majority of songs were written in a Western European song style by Japanese traditional musicians who studied some Western music. In addition, several European and American songs were included. However, the original lyrics were replaced by lyrics written by poets and scholars of classical Japanese literature. These songs and the ones that followed in revised editions were known as Shoka. "Musunde Hiraite" is a Shoka song which Reverend Iwanaga

taught that was originally a French air (Nakano 1983:268). Reverend Iwanaga used the music to "Coming Through the Rye" to choreograph a "Baseball Dance" and this melody was also in the "Primary School Songs" texts but with Japanese verses and titled "Sky Over My Home Town". Reverend Iwanaga also choreographed to Shoka that were written by Japanese musicians. One such song was "Kojo-no-Tsuki" composed by Rentaro Taki. The words were written by Bansui Doi, a poet who had studied British, Japanese and Chinese literature. He used the image of a ruined castle to describe the beauty of transient things in contrast to the eternal moonlight (Nakano 1983:246). This concept of the impermanence of all things, mujo, is basic to Buddhism and has become deeply rooted in Japanese culture, often symbolized by cherry blossoms and falling autumn leaves (La Fleur 1983:181).

Around 1920 a group of poets started a literary movement in reaction to the governmental and instructive attitude of the Shoka songs and the use of classical Japanese instead of a more colloquial language (Koshiba 1983:280). The poets published their own poetry for children in the magazine, "Akai Tori" (Red Bird). A few more magazines followed suit and the poets of these magazines eventually approached young music students from

Tokyo Music School to help them write their own songs in a European song style. The students later became famous musicians. Together, the poets and musicians created songs which were loved by children, parents and teachers. The movement is referred to as the "Akai Tori Undo" ("The Red Bird Movement") or "Sosaku Doyo Undo" ("Original Doyo Movement"). "Doyo" is used to refer to songs written for children in contrast to "Shoka", songs composed for classroom use (Koshiba 1983:280).

Reverend Iwanaga used many of the Doyo written at the height of their popularity during the 1920's. These songs were written in colloquial verse; the verses and music reflected the romanticism and idealism of the Taisho Era (Ikema 1981:28). They were also composed with piano accompaniment. This created a great demand for pianos in Japan which led to the development of the Japanese piano and organ industry (Nakano 1983:250).

Doyo songs were eventually incorporated into the government music textbooks so that there is no longer a distinction between Shoka and Doyo. The songs were written for children and teenagers; yet, they were also popular with adults who had learned many of the songs while in school. They were composed in a Western musical style, however, as Nakano puts it, "...the spirit of their lyrics appeal to the heart of the

Japanese" (Nakano 1983:iii).

Reverend Iwanaga's students enjoyed learning about the songs as much as they did performing the dances:

> We thought he was just wonderful and we loved the songs. What children don't? But then we could move to the rhythm of these songs. Some of the songs were really cute, and some of them were beautiful, and some of them were elegant (Takahashi 8/4/88).

Many of the songs for the younger children describe animals--a family of cows, blackbirds, the turtle and the rabbit, the acorn and the fish. In one song the rabbits are pounding rice to make mochi, a glutinous rice cake made yearly before the New Year. There are songs about one's home village, ancient ruined castles, and references to the days of the samurai.

Other verses were more contemporary, alluding to the West's influence on Japan. During the 1920's, school children from Japan and the United States exchanged dolls as an expression of friendship between the two countries (Takahashi 8/12/89). "The Blue-Eyed Doll" is a song about a doll that comes to Japan from the United States. She is crying because she does not speak the language of the country that she finds herself in. The lyrics of "Red Shoes" relate a story of seeing a little girl standing on the dock at Yokohama Port in her red shoes, ready to sail to a foreign country. Red

shoes were not worn traditionally in Japan and in this song they symbolize the highest European fashion (Nakano 1983:272).

Through the songs, Reverend Iwanaga's students were introduced to the natural environments of Japan by the use of nature as metaphor in Japanese poetry. Plum blossoms, cherry blossoms, camellias, willows in the rain, red dragonflies, sand dunes, wild geese, shells on the beach--all filled the poetry that became lyrics of the Doyo songs. Areas in Japan--Yokohama Port, Sado Island, Shojoji Temple, Kiso--were also introduced to the students through the songs.

The Dances

Doyo Buyo is a children's dance genre in which song texts and dance movements are closely linked. When children and teenagers perform Doyo in Japan, it is as much a singing performance as a dance performance and the term, Buyo does not follow the term Doyo. Buyo is a Japanese term which since the Meiji Period (1868-1926) has been most often used to translate the English word, "dance" into Japanese (Kozo 1983:105). Since Reverend Iwanaga highlighted the children dancing and not singing in his Doyo recitals, he used the compound term, Doyo Buyo to describe the dances which he taught.

Most of Reverend Iwanaga's Nisei students, particularly those living outside of urban areas, were unfamiliar with the music that he used. Rather than attempting to teach them to perform both the singing and dancing in a short period of time, he usually had an accompanist sing while the children danced.

Even though he focused on dance, his choreography still followed the Doyo tradition of having the dance movements interpret the meaning of the songs (Ikema 1981:28). The dances that he taught can be divided into four categories which reflect the close connection of song and dance:

1) dances that accompany Doyo songs for young children,

2) dances that accompany Doyo songs written for older children and popular with adults,

3) dances from the Japanese classical dance repertoire,

4) miscellaneous dances which include a) dances to Western music, b) interpretive, modern dance to Doyo music, c) dance movements to religious Buddhist Sunday school songs, and d) formation dances to Japanese marching music.

The core of his dance program was made up of dances that were performed to Doyo music. In choreographing for this music, Reverend Iwanaga had three qualities that he strove to achieve: simplicity, gracefulness, and naivete (Iwanaga 5/23/88). These qualities were basic

to traditional Japanese aesthetics and highly valued in Japanese culture (Ueda 1983:19). Using fundamental movement motifs from Japanese dance, Reverend Iwanaga made slight variations in such things as the path of the gesture, the tilt of the head, the twist of the torso. Or, when he created a new movement that represented the words of a song, he followed Japanese dance conventions such as having the eyes follow the motion of the hands and keeping the thumb tucked close to the palm.

Reverend Iwanaga did not choreograph complicated footwork and complex arm and body movements. When choreographing, he paid close attention to the mood of the music as well as what the words meant (Iwanaga 5/23/88). Except for a few dances from the classical Nihon Buyo repertoire that he taught older girls with previous classical dance training, his dances did not require any knowledge of Japanese dance technique nor any sort of prior dance training.

The songs he choreographed to were usually short, anywhere from one minute to two minutes long. They were sung two to four times in a row, each time a new group of six to eight dancers would come to the front of the stage to perform the same dance.

Dances for young children. For three to six year old children, Reverend Iwanaga choreographed to nursery

songs. He felt that these children were too young to be able to perform both arm gestures and footwork, so most of the dances were done in place, gesturing only with the upper body with some change of level and an occasional turn. Children performed rhythmic, stylized mime to the words of the songs.

One of the dances taught to the youngest children was "Oushi Momo". It is danced to a song about a family of cows. The first line introduces the father cow. The dancer uses her forefingers to make the horns of the cow which she places on top of her head, first the right hand and then the left. The "bull" looks down at his family and tilts his head side right, middle, then side left. The second line is about the mother cow. The dancer bends her knees until she's at a middle level so that she appears shorter than when she was the father cow. She tilts her head form side right, to middle, to side left and gazes straight ahead. The baby cow is introduced in the last line. The dancer bends so she is very close to the ground. The "calf" moves her head from side to side, looking up as if she is looking back and forth from the mother to the father.

The dance is then repeated. This is followed by "Karasu Kaka", a song in which the young child dances as a blackbird, then a sparrow and finally a large bird

that turns as it spreads its wings.

Dances to Doyo for older children. For children from ten to eighteen, Reverend Iwanaga used Doyo songs popular with older children and adults to accompany his choreography. He added footwork although he kept traveling on stage limited to a small space. When the dancer did travel, she usually returned to the same spot from which she started, perhaps taking three steps forward, then three steps back, or two steps side right then two steps side left. While overall the dance still told the story, there were also gestures that did not mime the words but were movements that were non-literal and abstract. The choreography was meant to be performed by six to eight persons at one time doing the movements in unison. As many as twelve other dancers could be waiting on stage to perform.

Some dances used props. A parasol was popular, as were fold out fans. The dances had to be ones that could be learned in two weeks to a month, two to four dances in about twelve hours of class.

The music that he chose for the older girls were songs that conveyed a sense of beauty. To capture this feeling in his choreography, Reverend Iwanaga choreographed movements that flowed one into another. He also alerted his students to subtle details such as an inward

twist of the wrist when pointing, and a slight twist and tilt of the head when looking in any direction. These were subtleties which came from the Japanese classical dance tradition. He also created his own ways of embellishing movement to give a sense of flow. He had hands travel in circular paths and kept the arms moving even when there was a pause int he step pattern. The counterpoint to this flowing motion came through varying the speed in which movements were performed and changing the directions in which the dancer travelled.

When Reverend Iwanaga decided that he wanted to teach a new dance to a temple that he was visiting, he would look through his books of Japanese song scores until he found a song that was appropriate for the group of students that he planned to teach (Iwanaga 5/23/88). He had brought books from the musical series, Gesammelte Werke Der Weltmusik (The World Music Collection), published by Shunshu Publishing Company in Tokyo which included The Popular Song Collection, Japanese Doyo, Japanese Folk Music and Japanese Shoka Music. The words of the song were always his first priority, then he considered the melody and if it would appeal to the age group. He and his wife worked together during this choreographic sessions. She played the piano and sang while he listened for the mood of the music that he then

conveyed through dance.

He would often take a basic Japanese dance movement and then do an improvisation from it (Iwanaga 5/2/88), adding a curved path of an arm gesture, a body tilt, or a step pattern. If he wasn't completely satisfied with a section of his choreography, he would have his wife repeat the phrase on the piano, over and over until he felt the choreography was the way that he wanted it (Iwanaga 3/14/89).

"Ano-machi Kono-machi" ("This Town, That Town") is an example of one of the dances taught to the ten to thirteen year old group (See Appendix D, Figure 4, p. 201). The first verse tells how it is getting dark in this town and that one. Reverend Iwanaga had his students imagine that they were looking down into a village hamlet from a hill above. During the first measure the dancer points her right forefinger towards a place at a low level in front of her. Her hand travels on a curved path as she points. At the same time, she steps slightly side right with her right foot, then her left foot touches slightly behind her right. She looks forward low at the imaginary place that she is pointing to. For measure two, she repeats the same movements to the left. Next she does the same step pattern to the right but crosses her arms in front of her body as they travel

down. Then she brings her right hand up to touch just above her eyes as if she is looking at the imaginary town. This time the movements take twice as long to complete. She repeats the looking sequence to the left.

The chorus is then sung. The lyrics speak about "the road that you've just travelled down." The dancer's right foot touches behind then she steps on the right foot while pointing behind her towards the ground. She then touches her left foot behind and holds. Moving side left, the dancer then steps left, right, left, touch right while her hands trace a circular path in opposition to one another on a horizontal plane, the left hand clockwise, the right hand counterclockwise. She looks downward over her right shoulder. She then reverses the step pattern to the right but keeps the hands moving in the same direction.

The second verse says, "the houses are getting farther and farther away." The dancer repeats the movements of the first verse but points in the middle and looks straight ahead instead of lower front. She then repeats the looking sequence, focusing in the same direction as the point. The movements of the chorus are always the same.

The lyrics of the last verse tell of the evening stars coming out. The dancer repeats the movements of

the first verse but points high and looks at a place high diagonal front.

In this dance the choreography mirrors the musical technique of repeating phrases, one which came originally from Warabe Uta, traditional Japanese children's folk songs and games. This technique was often used by the composer of "Ano-machi, Kono-machi", Shimpei Nakayama (Nakano 1983:272).

"Hanayome Ningyo" is a dance that was taught to the oldest classes. The song is about a young girl who is reenacting her older sister's preparation for her wedding. Mrs. Iwanaga explained that the song captures the sentiment that every Japanese bride feels on her wedding day (3/14/89).

The music begins with two strong chords. On the first chord the dancer steps side right and touches her left foot slightly behind her right foot while her arms move in a semi-circle from side left to place low to side right high with elbows slightly bent. The focus is on the fingertips of the right hand. On the second chord this movement is repeated to the left.

The first line of the song describes the brocade of the wedding kimono and the obi sash. The dancer steps forward with her right foot and touches left in place as she sweeps her arms from lower side left to forward

right high. Then she steps back on her left and sweeps her hands to rest just in front of her. She then repeats this sequence to the left. In this way, the dancer displays the fabric of the long sleeves of her kimono.

The chorus comes next. The lyrics refer to the made up face of the young girl's bridal doll and then the little girl wonders, "why is the bride crying?" The dancer steps right and touches left in place as she brings her hands to each side of her face, palms out, to create a frame. Her focus is to the right, forward diagonal. She repeats this movement phrase to the opposite side. Then she steps back on her right foot, her left arm is straight in front of her and her right hand moves from in front of her to brushing against her right cheek with the back of the hand as she wipes away the tears. This step and gesture is repeated on the left.

The dancer then crosses her left foot in front of the right and does a pivot turn on both feet, starting from a low level and then ending facing forward with straight legs. The arms begin low to the left of the body and when the dancer arrives to face the audience, she brings her hands to the level of her lower chest and then rests them front, place low.

For the third verse, the dancer looks in two mirrors to see the elaborate hair dress that is worn by the bride. The right foot touches in front, the right arm is out straight at middle level with palm down. The left hand is behind the left ear as if it is a mirror to reflect the image of the back of the hair. On the third count of the measure, the dancer turns her right palm to face her. It then becomes the second mirror. She then steps back on the right foot and repeats to the other side. The entire chorus is then repeated.

The dancer then steps side right with three steps: right, left, right. Then she touches left as her hands trace circles on a horizontal plane, the left hand moving clockwise, the right moving counterclockwise. As she moves to the right she focuses to the left. Then she repeats the step pattern to the left, keeping her arms moving in the same direction.

During the final verse, the dancer puts her feet together facing the audience. The lyrics describe the pattern of the kimono. The dancer takes hold of the right kimono sleeve in the right hand, then the left sleeve in the left hand. She then steps forward: right, left, right, together. She sways her arms and head from side to side as she walks with a slight rotation clockwise and counterclockwise of the torso.

She repeats the chorus with a turn. The music ends with the same two chords that it began with and the dancer repeats the first movements of the dance, holding the final pose.

Classical Japanese dance. In 1934 Reverend Iwanaga returned to Japan for almost a year at which time he took classical Japanese dance lessons. When he came back to the United States, he taught two dances which were from the classical Japanese dance repertoire. He only taught these dances to students who had previous training in classical Japanese dance. The dances that he taught were "Yanagi no Ame" and "Ume wa Saitaka". These dances required prior training and an ability to perform Japanese classical dance technique. They were usually performed solo and were mixed into a program recital to give variety. Reverend Iwanaga never did an entire recital of classical dance, he did not consider himself a classical dance teacher, nor had he gone through the years of training needed to become one. He was not concerned with developing talented dancers nor did he treat the better dancers as "stars". The intent of a recital was to let each child have an opportunity to be special, regardless of their abilities as dancers. The music, scenery and the subtlety of performing very simple movements combined to give an aura of stateli-

ness. Mrs. Iwanaga explained her husband's feelings about the dance that he taught in relationship to classical dance:

> There's beauty in the classic dancing and there's beauty in the simplicity (of the children's dances). He taught very simple things but at the same time there was grace and there was, what shall I say, 'lots of class' (5/23/88).

Miscellaneous dances. Reverend Iwanaga carefully planned his recitals so that they would hold the interest of the audience. He interspersed among his Doyo dances, other kinds of dance that added variety to the overall performance. One such dance was the "Baseball Dance" to the music of "Coming Through the Rye".

The music of "Coming Through the Rye" was first introduced to Japanese children nationwide in the first "Primary School Songs" textbook issued by the Japanese Ministry of Education in 1881 (Nakano 1983:267). The lyrics were replaced in the Japanese version by words deemed more educational for Japanese youth. Reverend Iwanaga choreographed a dance to this music which included the motions attached to playing baseball. The dancers wore baseball uniforms as they performed.

Reverend Iwanaga also included two dances in an interpretive, modern dance style of the United States and Europe. One was a solo to the Japanese song,

"Suzuran" (Lilies of the Valley). Reverend Iwanaga choreographed the dance by doing improvisations to the music. He then took the movements from his improvisations and set them into a dance which he taught to a girl who enjoyed modern dance (Iwanaga 1/24/89). The dancer performed in bare feet wearing a flowing dress of chiffon which she used in her dance. The dance travelled around the entire stage and had runs, leaps and turns. The style was quite different from that of Doyo Buyo which has very little travelling and never leaves the ground.

The other modern interpretive piece was to the music of "Tsuki no Sabaku" ("Moon Over the Desert"). Up to eight dancers performed in costumes that looked like a Hollywood movie version of Middle Eastern women's dress--long chiffon skirts with flowing head wrap (See Appendix B, Plate VIII, p. 174 for photograph). The dancers were also barefoot. This dance had less travelling on stage than did the solo in "Suzuran".

During the 1930's the songs taught in Japanese schools changed and became an expression of the rise in ultra-nationalism which was sweeping the country. Many marches were introduced into the schools and physical education classes turned into drills (Ikema 1981:28). Reverend Iwanaga used two of these marches in his later

Doyo Buyo recitals. One was "Gunkan March". The children marched on stage carrying the American and Japanese flags. They did drill team-like maneuvers. In one march, the girls dressed in sailor suits, moving in lines around the stage and doing salutes besides other hand gestures. These dances very much reflected the music and dance in schools in Japan during the decade of the thirties.

Although he did not use them on stage, Reverend Iwanaga also taught Sunday School teachers dances to Buddhist children's songs which were used in Sunday School instruction. He showed the teachers how to interpret the words of the songs into dance movements, interspersing abstract movements from Japanese dance traditions with movements such as circling the arms on both sides of the body and ending with the hands meeting in front of the chest in gassho.

Figure 1 on page 78 is a partial list of the dances which Reverend Iwanaga taught to different age levels of students. Figure 2 on page 81 lists the miscellaneous dances which he taught by types of dances.

Figure 1

Doyo Buyo Taught by Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga

Dances for Three to Six Year Olds

Chiyo gami

Oushi Momo (Cows)

Karasu Kaka (Blackbird)

Satsuki Odori (Azalea Dance)

Musunde Hiraite (a hand play)

Doguri Koro (Round Acorn)

Usagi to Kame (Rabbit and the Tortoise)

Ogawa no Medaka (Minnow in the Creek)

Dances of Six to Ten Year Olds

Yuyake Koyake (Scarlet Sunset)

Usagi (Rabbit)

Ashita (Tomorrow)

Haru ga kita (Spring has Come)

Kutsu ga naru

Kingyo no Hirune (The Napping Goldfish)

Nantsu no Ko (Child of Seven)

Shojo-ji-no Tanuki Bayashi

Roji no Hosomichi

Akai Kutsu (Red Shoes)

Higasa (a parasol dance)

Oboro Otsuki-san

Figure 1 (continued)

Jugoya Otsuki-san (Moon of the 15th Night)

Aoi-me no Ningyo (Blue-eyed Doll)

Dances for Six to Ten Year Olds

Ano-machi, Kono-machi (That Town, This Town)

Usagi no Mochi-Tsuki (Rabbit Pounding Mochi Rice)

Teru-Teru Bozu (paper doll to pray for fine weather)

Dances for Eleven to Thirteen Year Olds

Ehigasa

Komori Uta

Takara Bune (Treasure Boat)

Hanayome Ningyo (Bridal Doll)

Sakura (Cherry Blossoms)

Dochu Sugoroku (Samarai's Entourage)

Ame-furi Otsuki-san (Moon in the Rain)

Dances for Thirteen to Eighteen Year Olds

Tubaki (Camellia)

Kasa Odori (Parasol Dance)

Kojono no Tsuki (Moon Over the Castle Ruins)

Otsuki-san (Lady Moon)

Gunkan March

Akagi no Komori Uta (Lullaby of Akagi)

Suna Yama (Sand Dunes)

Figure 1 (continued)

Aka-Tombo (Red Dragonfly)

Oka o Koete (Over the Hill)

Dances for Thirteen to Eighteen Year Olds (continued)

Suzuran (Lilies of the Valley)

Kimigayo (Japan's National Anthem)

Yanagi no Ame (Willows in the Rain)

Hama-chidori (A Plover on the Beach)

Tsuki no Sabaku (Moon Over the Desert)

Ume wa Saitaka (Did the Plums Blossom?)

Baseball dance to "Coming Through the Rye"

Figure 2

Miscellaneous Dances Performed
at Doyo Buyo Recitals

Japanese Classical Dances

Yanagi no Ame (Willows in the Rain)

Ume wa Saitaka (Did the Plum Blossom?)

Processional Dances

Sakura Odori	Venice no Funa Uta (Song of Venice)
Tennen no Bi	Oka o Koete (Over the Hill)
Hanasaka Jiisan	Kiso Odori (Dance of Kiso)

Interpretive, Modern Dances

Suzuran (Lilies of the Valley)

Tsuki no Sabaku (Moon Over the Desert)

Marches

Gunkan March	Aikoku Kyoshin Kyoku

Dance in the Style of Japanese Court Dance

Kimigayo (danced to Japan's National Anthem)

Operetta

Shita-kiri Suzume (Tongue-slit Sparrow)

Dance to Western Music

Baseball Dance (to "Coming Through the Rye")

7. APPROACH TO TEACHING DANCE

Reverend Iwanaga's personality, the motivation behind his teaching, the way that he taught and the types of dances that he chose to teach were all intertwined to produce a teaching style that left a lasting impression on many of his students.

Perhaps the most important element in Reverend Iwanaga's success as a dance teacher was how his students responded to him personally. Individuals who were interviewed for this paper shared similar memories of Reverend Iwanaga:

> He was thin, graceful. He liked children and everyone liked him. I remember him always with a smile. Reverend Iwanaga's personality made it [Doyo Buyo] so popular (Toyooka 11/29/88).

> There was nobody that had two left feet. He had all levels of dancing so he had children of all levels of ability. They were all led in a gentle and kindly and very patient way by this smiling teacher who seemed to love everyone and who seemed to have no end of patience and kindness and interest in us...He had an easy and casual way of imparting his love of dance and I think all the children got swept up by his nice mannerisms. He also had a nice voice...(Takahashi 8/4/88).

> We liked having a young, handsome minister as a teacher. He would add the subtleties. His body was so agile. He was also a good storyteller. Most ministers would teach children by telling them stories. Reverend Iwanaga was an interesting storyteller and was good at presentation (Hanyu 11/28/88).

> I'll always remember Reverend Iwanaga's smile, his big smile. He danced and bounced around. You couldn't help but join in (Imamura 1/16/89).
>
> He liked children and he had a talent of getting the people to like him. So when he taught everyone just loved him (Iwanaga 5/23/88).
>
> He was warm and open-minded. He never acted like he was above anybody. His smile was like a magnet, it drew people to him. The young people really liked him because of his openness (Munekata 4/15/89).

A congenial, kind, patient, good-looking, graceful and agile young man, as Mrs. Takahashi put it, "he was our idea of the perfect dance teacher!" (8/4/88).

Reverend Iwanaga's motivation for teaching dance stemmed from his commitment to serve Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. Reverend Tansai Terakawa gave him a concrete way of doing so when he invited him to teach dance in the United States. The Buddhist Mission of North America was looking for ways to keep its Nisei members interested in attending Buddhist Sunday Schools. Some of the young leaders were also looking for opportunities to bridge the gap between the Issei and Nisei generations of the Buddhist churches. They were also concerned with providing wholesome recreation for Japanese American girls who looked to their church as a place that they could go to socialize without fear of discrimination. Reverend Terakawa convinced Reverend

Iwanaga that he could serve both the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist organization and its young membership by teaching Doyo Buyo to Nisei children at American Buddhist Churches. Reverend Iwanaga was strongly motivated to make his classes successful for it meant much more to him than the personal satisfaction of doing well at teaching dance or even of developing good dancers. It meant fulfilling his personal commitment to his religion by enriching the lives of young people through dance.

Reverend Iwanaga had been trained as a teacher and had experience teaching dance to children in Japan. By the time he came to the United States, he had developed teaching methods that helped his students to learn his dances quickly and to feel successful in performing them. He introduced a dance by first having his students listen to the music (Kuroda 11/16/88; Iwanaga 5/23/88). He then explained the words of the song and any background information needed to fully understand it. Then he taught the choreography phrase by phrase. The accompanist would sing and play the first line and Reverend Iwanaga would demonstrate only the step pattern, he would add the arm and hand gestures. Then he would go to the next phrase. After he had taught the entire dance, he would go back and explain where the dancer's focus should be, how she should tilt her head,

point her fingers, twist her upper torso and move with fluidity.

> First he would teach in a very basic way, "Ano-machi, Kono-machi", just as long as you got the movement. Then he would say, "Instead of just pointing, bring your hand around and your eyes follow." Then he would embellish it, and show how to do it gracefully (Iwanaga 5/23/88).

Reverend Iwanaga often used humor in his teaching (Hanyu 11/28/88); Iwanaga 5/23/88; Takahashi 8/4/88). He would imitate an awkward pose, jerky movements, a funny stare, having students laughing at their own mistakes. His own natural abilities also inspired his students who tried to capture his simple, graceful style (Iwanaga 5/2/88; Hanyu 11/28/88; Takahashi 8/4/88).

Reverend Iwanaga had the attitude that everyone could dance, it was just a matter of a student applying herself. For those who picked up quickly, he helped them to perfect the movements. Even for those with no dance experience and without a natural inclination toward dance, his step by step explanations combined with the simplicity of movements allowed all the students to perform well enough to feel comfortable on stage. Given his reasons for teaching dance it was important to him that every girl felt comfortable performing and that the classes and recital were enjoyable experiences.

8. THE DOYO BUYO RECITAL

Reverend Iwanaga's Doyo Buyo classes always ended with a recital. Toward the end of the teaching period the dancers began to rehearse the recital itself. Reverend Iwanaga would work with the students showing them how to move on and off stage, exchange places between songs, and how to follow the musical accompaniment. Sometimes he would teach the older children a processional dance which they performed to enter the stage. These were usually minyo, Japanese folk dances or dance choreographed by Reverend Iwanaga in the style of minyo (See Appendix B, Plate XV, p. 185). In Stockton, one of the favorite dances that he choreographed to the music of "Tennen no Bi" was used for this purpose. This dance was later used by Reverend Iwanaga during Obon Festival and was the only dance that was to Doyo music and not folk music that he used during Obon.

Reverend Iwanaga also choreographed a processional dance in a style approximating the Virginia Reel, an American folk dance in which a line of couples face each other and take turns performing a series of dance figures. The Doyo song, "Oka o Koete" ("Over the Hill"), accompanied the dance. The composer, Masao Koga, and his song were very popular in both Japan and Japanese American communities at the time that Reverend

Iwanaga choreographed the dance. In "Oka o Koete" the dancers performed wearing full Western skirts with white blouses. They entered from back stage holding their partners' hands and in four counts danced right toe-touch back, right toe-touch front, step forward on right, slide on left, step forward on right. This was repeated on the other side, alternating until all the dancers were on stage where each couple would perform a figure and then split apart and go to the back of the line while the next couple moved forward.

The whole family was involved in Reverend Iwanaga's recitals. Adult members of the Buddhist temple were asked to volunteer their time to paint sets, make costumes, set up lighting and sound. The set usually consisted of a backdrop with a painted scene of a Japanese landscape--trees, a mountain, cherry blossoms, a town gate, the rising moon (See Appendix B, Plate VII, p. 172). It would cover the back wall of the stage. Parents would also decorate the stage by hanging Japanese lanterns or paper cherry blossoms from the ceiling.

Parents were also responsible for supplying the costume for their child. Most often this costume was a Japanese kimono. The kimono had often been brought to the United States by the mother of the student and for

many women, this was the first opportunity that their daughter had to wear it. Some parents even sent to Japan for a child's kimono if they did not have one (Iwanaga 5/2/88). Those who didn't have kimono would wear their best Western dress with dress shoes.

Some dances required special costume. In "Dochu Sugoruku", the girls dance a boy's part, so they dressed in short pants, shirt and happi with a cloth wrapped around their head like a head band (See Appendix A, Plate III, p. 166). There were also the baseball uniforms, sailor suits, flowing chiffon dress, and "Middle Eastern" costumes of the miscellaneous dances.

Lighting was determined by whatever system was available at the temple. Many of the recitals took place on a stage in the temple auditorium and so there was some stage lighting already in place. Reverend Iwanaga would instruct an adult on how he wanted the lighting for each dance.

The recital was a special event for the community. Sometimes it occurred as part of the end of the year ceremonies for the Buddhist Japanese Language Schools and sometimes it was held as part of Hanamatsuri, one of the major holidays of the Buddhist calendar celebrating the birth of Buddha. At other times it was sponsored by the Buddhist Mother's Club of Fujinkai (Women's

Association) and was a big affair in itself.

Early on a Sunday afternoon, parents brought their daughters to the auditorium dressed in their costume. There were between thirty and eighty girls performing, depending on the size of the temple. Chairs or benches had been placed on the gymnasium floor to accommodate the audience. The entire auditorium was usually filled with parents, brothers and older sisters, aunt, uncles, friends and church members. As people entered the auditorium, it was customary to leave a donation for the temple.

The master of ceremonies began the recital by welcoming everyone and then introducing the kindergarten class and announcing the dances that they were about to perform. As many as twenty, three, four and five year olds would come on stage. They would bow and then the first group of six to eight children would perform a dance while the other twelve or so waited behind them. After the first group performed, they would move back and the next group of the youngest children moved to the front of the stage and performed the same song. This rotation occurred until all the kindergarten children had a chance to perform all the dances; each child highlighted in the small group of six to eight. The audience had an opportunity to see their daughter,

sister, niece or friend perform three of four dances on stage with several other girls. The dancers did the same movements in unison and resembled several soloists performing at once. In some dances there was partnering, and then the dancers performed as several duets on stage at the same time, performing the same movements. The use of live music made it possible to repeat the songs several times in a row, and when the accompanist was a trained pianist and singer, the beauty of the songs and music added to the audience's experience.

As the recital progressed, the master of ceremonies announced each class and just as in the kindergarten performance, all the children had an opportunity to perform with a small group of children. Reverend Iwanaga varied the program by interspersing solos, interpretive, modern dance, marches and dances with Western themes between the group Doyo dances.

Reverend Iwanaga had a format that he followed in presenting a recital although he was flexible and altered his programs to suit the occasion of the recital and the talent of the temple membership. In Stockton, he taught Hideo Ito to perform to the song, "Akagi no Komori Uta". This was a well known lullaby about a warrior who comes back home after fighting battles to find his wife gone. He carries his baby on his back as

the story is related (Iwanaga 5/23/88). Mr. Ito was known in Stockton for his Japanese drama performances. After learning the dance, he performed at Doyo Buyo recitals in Sacramento, Stockton and communities in outlying areas.

In the Holland Delta area near Sacramento a group of temple members came from the same area in Kumamoto Prefecture as did Reverend Iwanaga, so a group of eighteen men and four women performed dances which were native to Kumamoto as part of the recital (5/2/88).

Reverend Iwanaga did one of his Doyo Buyo recitals in Stockton as part of Hanamatsuri. Mrs. Yaeko Hanyu described how Doyo Buyo became part of the already established program for that day:

> For the Hanamatsuri performance, all the girls would get new dresses and shoes. It was like the Christian Easter. Some children performed in kimono but not everyone had them so some performed in their new dresses. After the children performed then the older people would put on Japanese plays. There was always entertainment for Hanamatsuri, even before Reverend Iwanaga came. Doyo Buyo was just added to it (Hanyu 11/22/88).

In Los Angeles, Reverend Iwanaga held one of his Doyo Buyo recitals as part of the festivities going on in many parts of the city that year to celebrate Los Angeles' one hundred fiftieth anniversary.

The dances that Reverend Iwanaga taught also reached an audience outside of the Japanese Buddhist community. Mrs. Kuroda and a group of Japanese American Nisei girls performed Doyo Buyo as part of a school program at John Sweat Junior High School using recorded music for accompaniment. Mrs. Takahashi danced for a program at Girls' High School in San Francisco, together with other Japanese girls and non-Japanese friends who learned the dance from her. She later taught several dances to classmates at the University of Berkeley. They performed at the International House on campus as part of the Japanese festival.

Both Mrs. Hanyu and Mrs. Iwanaga remember Doyo Buyo students who performed to recorded music during t several International Days in the public schools in Stockton. It's likely that other students in other parts of California did similar performances.

On one occasion, Mrs. Hanyu was chosen with one other girl to perform a Doyo dance for the Japanese patients suffering from tuberculosis at Wemar Sanitorium outside of Stockton. This was part of an annual activity in which people from the temple made calls to all the hospitals. She performed a dance to a Chinese song sung in Japanese that Reverend Iwanaga had taught to his class.

In conceiving of and producing the Doyo Buyo recital, Reverend Iwanaga created a celebration of Japanese culture that brought all segments of the Japanese American community together. The impression that a Doyo Buyo performance left on the dancers and audience members interviewed for this paper was so strong that it is still fondly remembered fifty years later.

NOTES TO SECTION II

1. See Bill Hosokawa's Nisei pages 83-113 for a detailed description of the anti-Japanese movement in the Western United States.

SECTION III

REVEREND IWANAGA AND OBON: CULTURAL TRANSMISSION AND INNOVATION

Every weekend beginning in late June and going through August, Obon Festivals are held at Jodo Shinshu temples throughout the United States. Thousands of people attend the festivals nationwide, either as participants or observers. The focus of the festival is bon odori, a dance event which usually takes place in an outdoor space, on a street adjacent to the temple, in the temple parking lot or occasionally in the heart of an urban Japantown. Fund raisers such as a temple bazaar or carnival are often held in conjunction with the dance event.

Obon Festival is part of a larger observance of Obon, a time for Jodo Shinshu followers to express their gratitude to all those who have died before them. In remembering the deceased through memorial services and the dancing of bon odori, participants take time to reflect on the Buddha Dharma and are provided with an opportunity to "deepen their understanding of the Dharma in thought, speech and action" (Kodani 1984a).

All Japanese Buddhist sects in the United States observe Obon although not all hold bon odori as part of

the observance. Each Buddhist sect interprets the meaning of Obon and the reason for the rituals according to the basic premises of their sect. Many Japanese Americans, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist, participate in Obon as a celebration of their Japanese heritage (Abiko 4/19/88). It is a reoccurring topic of discussion at Jodo Shinshu temples as to what extent Obon should represent Japanese American culture and to what extent it should be viewed as strictly a religious observance.

When Yoshio Iwanaga came to Northern California in 1930, Obon Festival had not been practiced regularly in Jodo Shinshu temples in the northern part of the state, nor had it probably been performed on a regular basis at any of the larger temples on the West Coast (Iwanaga 5/2/88; Hanyu 11/22/88; Kanagawa 1988:1; Iwase 4/4/88; Ono 11/21/88; Toyooka 11/29/88; Imamura [by 1981]; Buddhist Church of San Francisco 1978:63; Abiko [by 1975]). Memorial services were held at temples and at the cemeteries but Obon Festival was not a part of the observances of Obon for the vast majority of temples. Since Issei parents were the ones who usually attended the Obon memorial services, without the festival, there was no opportunity for Nisei children to participate in Obon.

Within a year after arriving in the United States, Reverend Iwanaga had reintroduced bon odori as part of Obon observances in Northern California. There were differences in the way Reverend Iwanaga organized Obon Festival in California and the way that it was practiced in rural communities in Japan. To understand these differences and to provide for the possible reasons for Reverend Iwanaga's choice of dances, costumes and structure of Obon, it is important to first present a brief history of Obon and bon odori and the interpretation of the Obon Festival ritual by Jodo Shinshu followers.

9. OBON

Obon Festival has its roots in festivals from India and China. The most widely accepted theory of the etymology of Obon is that the term is derived from the Sanskrit word, Avalambana which translates to "hanging downward" (Fujitani 1980). This is in regard to "the suspended state of souls in hell who are waiting to be released by priestly prayers" (De Visser 1935:60). In Parkrit or Indica dialects the phonetic pronunciation would be Olambana which Chinese Buddhists transliterated as Yu-lan-p'en. Yu-lan-p'en became Urabon in Japanese which was eventually shortened to Obon[1] (Fujitani 1980).

Textual Origins

The origination text for the observance of Yu-lan-p'en in China and Obon in Japan is the story of Mokuren[2] in the Urabon-kyo[3], a sutra that was translated into Chinese between 266 A.D. and 313 A.D. While there is some variation in the translation of the text by various Buddhist sects, where the sects differ most is in their interpretation of the meaning and significance of the story.[4]

In the Jodo Shinshu version, Mokuren, a disciple of Sakyamuni Buddha attained the six divine powers. Wishing to repay his parents for the favors that he received from them as a child, Mokuren used his divine power of seeing beyond this world to find out his mother's condition and was shocked to find that his mother was suffering as a Preta (Hungry Ghost). She was skin and bone and had neither food nor water, and when Mokuren offered her food it burst into flames as soon as she took it to her mouth.

Mokuren was deeply saddened. He went to Sakyamuni Buddha and told him what he had seen.

Sakyamuni told him, "your mother's roots of crime are deep and complicated. You alone cannot save her." Then Sakyamuni told of a way that Mokuren's mother could be saved. On the fifteenth day of the seventh month[5]

Mokuren was to hold a memorial for the parents of seven generations and for the parents that were presently suffering. At this time he was to offer all kinds of food, scented oil, sheets and clothing to the priests of the ten directions.

"If you do this, your present parents and the parents of the past seven lives and all other relatives will be freed," instructed Sakyamuni. Mokuren followed Sakyamuni's teaching and his mother was freed from her sufferings. Mokuren then asked if all the followers of Buddha in the future would also be able to save their parents and that of the seven generations. The Buddha responded that all people who practice filial piety must offer up the Ullambana on the 15th of the seventh month on behalf of their parents and the seven generations. If they do so, then the lives of their present parents will be without illness, and the parents of the past seven lives will be freed from their suffering and will be born in heaven where there will be endless happiness (Hanayama 1970; De Visser 1935:68-71).

When Mokuren heard this good news, he spontaneously jumped up and began to dance and was soon joined by the other disciples.[6]

Mokuren's dance is said to be the first bon odori.

Brief History

The Yu-lan-p'en festival in China is the predecessor of Japanese Obon Festival. Yu-lan-p'en has been observed in China since early in the sixth century A.D. and was brought to Japan in the seventh century. It is a mixture of Indian, Taoist and Confucian traditions (Kodani 1983:2; Teiser 1986:47). During the seventh century in China, Yu-lan-p'en brought all people of a community to the Buddhist temples and markets at a time when the monks ended their summer retreat and welcomed lay members into the temple grounds (Teiser 1986:57).

Teiser described the importance of the Buddhist temples as community centers during that time: "these centers were the locus of festival life and they integrated a broad range of communal, economic, theatrical, diversionary and religious functions" (1986:57).

Yu-lan-p'en was the public aspect of the cycle of mortuary rituals which took place during the year. According to Teiser, it reintegrated the dead into the community as ancestors and was a public display of filial piety. By this time in Chinese history it had become part of the State religion, practiced at the imperial court and blending Buddhist symbols, myths and rituals with Chinese ideas of society, filial piety and local ritual practices (1986:51).

One aspect of Japanese Obon Festival which was not present in Yu-lan-p'en was non-professional, community dance. By the Tang Dynasty in China, dance had become the domain of professional and semi-professionals except for dance performed by non-chinese peoples living within borders of China (Eberhard 1952:16).[7]

In 657 A.D., the first Avalambana Festival (Urabon-e in Japanese) was held in Japan. It became an official annual observance of the court in 733. Obon was a court rite during the Nara (710-794 A.D.) and Heian (794-1184 A.D.) Periods of Japanese history. Eventually the general population outside of the court developed their own Obon observances. One theory is that the Japanese tradition of Welcoming the Spirits during Tamamatsuri combined with the Buddhist observance of Urabon as well as with certain local agricultural rites to make the present day form of Obon Festival (Kimura 1983:160; Matsunaga 1974:231).[8]

The first record of bon odori, that is, folk dance performed during the observance of Obon, appeared in the 15th century (Hoff, 1983c:161). Obon observances including bon odori became a widespread practice in villages and towns throughout Japan during the Tokugawa Period (1603-1868) A.D.). However, from the tenth century through the Tokugawa Period, public dancing like

bon odori had from time to time been suppressed by local rulers who feared that the mass gatherings might turn into farmer's riots (Ikema 1981:33).

At the time that Reverend Iwanaga left Japan to come to the United States, Obon was usually held for three days during the seventh month of the lunar calendar, starting from the night of August 13th and going until the night of the 16th. Anyone living away from their home tried to return for those three days. Customs varied in different villages, towns and cities, but followed a general pattern of cleaning the graves and home altars, lighting Welcome Fires and Last Day Fires, holding special services for families who had a death in the past year, and in many areas, there was the Obon Festival, including bon dancing.

Some days before Obon, family members cleaned the family altar and grave sites. On the evening of the 13th, the Mukaebi (Welcoming Fires) were lit at temples, houses or graves. These lights were said to welcome back the spirits of the deceased ancestors who were believed to dwell among the living during the three days of Obon observances (Kodani 1983:2)[9]. In Suye, a village in the same prefecture where Reverend Iwanaga was born, Embree recorded the activities which occurred during Obon in the 1930's. Water, flowers and incense were put at the

graves and all people of the community visited houses where a death had occurred in the past year, bringing gifts of money or lanterns, rice the local drink, candles or somen, incense and cake. As visitors, the gift givers received feast food from the family (Embree 1939:284).

Buddhist monks held special services for the families that had a death in the past year. In many areas, these services were followed by bon odori, a communal dance event which occurred in a large public space within the community. Usually men and women, young adults and older, danced. The dancers also joined in singing the refrain of each song. In a few places, only young women danced.

On the night of August 16th, the last day fire, or Okuribi, was lit to guide the spirits of the ancestors as they left the living world (Kodani 1983:2). In some areas, straw boats were made with candles and offerings and put in a nearby river to accompany the deceased on their return.

10. BON ODORI

Bon odori has roots in several different dance forms.[10] Hoff believes that bon odori evolved from Nembutsu Odori, chants and dances for the invocation of

Buddha that were popular during the late Heian (794-1185) and Kamakura (1192-1333) Periods (Hoff 1983c:161). Honda classifies Nembutsu Odori as a subgroup of Furyu (Hoff 1983b:374). Honda gives an explanation of the type of dance from which Furyu evolved and which may have also led to bon odori. This type of dance was performed in order to avoid natural disasters or to bring rain:

> ...Many people would assemble and dance about more or less randomly, beating on drums or ringing bells and singing, perhaps songs popular at the time, improvising if they wished. Or they would dance ecstatically, chanting the nembutsu, Buddhist prayer, praying for salvation in the life to come (Honda 1983:100).

As Buddhist music and dance mixed with local folk music and dance, regions in Japan developed their own bon songs and dances. In most regions, songs and dances which were performed during Obon could also be performed at other times of celebration such as following the building of a new house, after a good harvest (Ikema 1981:32) or during transplanting and the weeding of rice (Embree 1939:105, 285-286). During the Meiji Era (1868-1912), the Japanese government adopted many things from the West including Western public morals codes. Public singing and dancing of bon odori during Obon Festival was prohibited or strongly discouraged during the Meiji reign on the grounds that it had a bad effect on public

morals (Embree 1939:105; Ikema 1987:50). Obon Festival in many rural areas died out by the end of the Meiji Era and many of the local songs and dances were lost as a result of the ban.

There was a revival of bon odori in Japan during the 1920's and 1930's. Beginning in the 1930's, Obon Festival which had usually taken place in rural communities became very popular in the urban areas of Japan as well (Ikema 1939:39). Towns and cities began to sponsor Obon Festivals, attracting people to a commercial area not only to dance, but also to buy goods (Embree 1939:105).

Obon Festival in Japan today is more a reflection of a cultural identification with a village, town or sector of a city than it is a reenactment of a Buddhist ritual (Abiko 4/19/88). Few adults under the age of forty know the religious significance of Obon (Hosokawa 4/19/88). Kodani points out that the more religiously active a Jodo Shinshu temple is in Japan, the less likely they are to observe the festival aspect of the Obon observance (Kodani 1984a).

11. JODO SHINSHU INTERPRETATIONS OF OBON

While all Japanese Buddhist sects celebrate Obon, Jodo Shinshu clergy differ in some respects from members

of other sects in their interpretation of the Mokuren story and the meaning of Obon Festival. Their interpretations of what Obon is also differs from the popular beliefs about Obon held by many lay members of Jodo Shinshu.

Reverend Iwanaga was no doubt exposed to the commentaries on Obon by Jodo Shinshu scholars when he was studying to be a Buddhist missionary at the Buddhist seminary in Kumamoto. He was influenced by his Jodo Shinshu beliefs when he produced Obon Festivals in the United States. Therefore, it is important to examine Jodo Shinshu interpretations of the festival in order to gain insight into the religious concepts which guided Reverend Iwanaga, either directly or indirectly when he re-established bon odori as a regular part of Obon observances in Northern California.

The most popular explanation of Obon is that it is a time when the spirits of ancestors are welcomed back to the community with bon odori being performed for the benefit of these spirits. However, this explanation is not accepted by Jodo Shinshu scholars, for the concept of an external spirit that can be helped by offerings or rituals is not within the logical constructs of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism (Kodani 1984a). According to Jodo Shinshu beliefs, it is beyond the power of an individual

to save another or change another's karma; only Amida Buddha's infinite compassion can be relied upon (Shibata 1974:15; Kodani 1984a; Yamaguchi 3/29/88).

Like all religious rituals, the how and why of Obon Festival for Jodo Shinshu believers must be consistent with the basic precepts of the religion.[11] Participation in Obon and the ensuing discussions which follow the event bring into dialogue such ideas as the truth of interdependence, faith in the great compassion of Amida Buddha and gratitude and humility. These subjects as well as others are addressed as the clergy provide answers to "Why do we celebrate Obon," and, as was the case with Reverend Iwanaga, "How should we celebrate?"

Obon is a "time out" of the every day when participants reflect upon the interrelatedness of those who have come before, those who are living, and those who will come after. The Buddhist concept of karmic relations, that "we are all related both spatially and temporally in all places at all times" (Yamaguchi 3/29/88) is brought into focus. Bon odori becomes a physical expression of one's gratitude to ancestors for all the sacrifices they had made and to whom one's very existence is owed (Yamaguchi 3/29/88).

Among Jodo Shinshu followers Obon is also referred to as "Kangi-E", the "Day of Joy". There are several

explanations of why the festival is referred to in this way. One is that the joy of the festival comes from the awareness that the participants have of the knowledge of the infinite compassion of Amida Buddha. Faith in Amida Buddha's infinite compassion is basic to Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. Jodo Shinshu Buddhists recite the name of Amida Buddha as an expression of gratitude to the all embracing compassion of Amida.

Jodo Shinshu has always served the common people of Japan--those who have no hope of escaping the round of birth and death through their own practices. It's founder Shinran Shonin, unlike most Buddhist monks of his time, married and raised a family, ate fish and meat and lived among the people. Since the founding of the sect, the leaders of Jodo Shinshu have emphasized the social and religious concerns of everyday people (Tuck 1987:196).

For hundreds of years, bon odori was a dance form performed by the lower classes and was not the interest of members of the upper class (Ikema 1981:34). There were no professional dancers of bon odori; anyone whether a farmer, storekeeper or fisherman could participate. Dances were usually simple and repetitious, an expression of the community, not of individual dancers.

In bon odori, the popular conceptions of who should dance and how, were harmonious with religious conceptions within Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. For in Jodo Shinshu, dancing bon odori, like the recitation of the Nembutsu, is something that anyone can experience, a natural expression of being (Abiko 4/19/88), a spontaneous act of gratitude.

12. CULTURAL TRANSMISSION AND INNOVATION

Reverend Iwanaga grew up in Japan during the end of the Meiji Era and throughout the Taisho Period. Bon odori had gone through major changes during this time. The prohibition of local Obon Festivals during the Meiji Era resulted in some villages discontinuing the celebration and the performance of their Bon songs and dances (Embree 1939:105; Ikema 1981:38). Reverend Iwanaga never mentioned an Obon Festival in his village and his wife doubts that he'd ever seen one held in Miyauchi. At the same time that the government was discouraging bon odori during Obon Festival, the Ministry of Education was introducing popular folk dances that they carefully selected from various regions in Japan to teach through the school system. Some of these dance were already popular throughout Japan. They were to folk songs that often praised a geographical area or

described a particular kind of work. Students would perform them at the end of the year during Gaku Gei-kai (Class Day) or as part of the yearly athletic meet (Oka 5/2/88).

By the 1920's, bon odori was being revived and altered in Japan. The Taisho Era was a period of intellectual and artistic freedom. New music evolved that combined the traditions of both Japanese and Western music. Obon Festivals were no longer suppressed and they became popular again. More festivals were being held in towns where they had previously been celebrated in the village. Bon odori also caught on in the cities. Ikema refers to these new festivals in towns and cities as the modern bon odori (Ikema 1981:112). At the beginning of the revival and prior to the introduction of modern ondo songs and dances in the early 1930's, it is difficult to find documentation about what kinds of dances Reverend Iwanaga might have seen performed. He travelled to many different areas in Japan and given the regional nature of bon odori, the dances that were performed no doubt varied from one locality to another. Had he seen entire festivals made up of the popular minyo like those he had learned in school? A survey of bon odori in Japan (Ikema 1981:41) showed that in 1980, villages, towns and cities throughout Japan performed

their own local folk dances, certain modern ondo standards like "Tokyo Ondo", plus several folk dances that were popular throughout Japan although they originated in a specific region. No literature in English could be found that told whether or not this last group of "popular minyo" had become part of Obon Festivals during the 1920's. Determining whether Reverend Iwanaga was following a trend which began in Japan when he used pan-regional, popular minyo for an entire Obon Festival or if the transference of popular minyo for an Obon Festival was an idea that he conceived of himself is difficult to document. Were the Obon Festivals that Reverend Iwanaga produced examples of cultural transmission, cultural innovation or something in between?

A review of bon odori as led by Reverend Iwanaga in the 1930's and 1940's suggests the latter. Reverend Iwanaga selectively chose which bon dances he would use. He put them together in the context of Obon, restructuring the way that they were learned, adding some elements to the event and deleting others, and adapting Obon Festival to fit the social and cultural environment of Japanese Buddhism in the United States. He also created new forms of cultural expression through his choreography of bon dances, modeling his choreography after the traditional forms.

Reintroducing Bon Odori

Reverend Iwanaga's direct responsibility for the successful reintroduction of bon odori into the Obon observances throughout California can be understood by reviewing the articles written about him by those who participated in bon odori in the 1930's and 1940's.

Reverend Giko Abiko wrote an article about Reverend Iwanaga's role in bon odori during the 1930's:

> As I look back at the beginning days of Bon Odori in America, I recall that it was the late Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga, while serving as a resident minister of Stockton Buddhist Temple, skillful in the art of Japanese dancing, travelled far and near to teach the art. That was the beginning of Bon Odori in America (Abiko [by 1975]).

From the newsletter of the Los Angeles Young Buddhist Association published in 1950 came this account:

> Reverend Iwanaga was particularly interested in music and dance. He is greatly responsible for popularizing the Bon Odori Festival. Tours of different cities up and down the coast were made by Reverend Iwanaga to introduce the many beautiful and graceful ondos and dances (Sangha 1950:2).

The history of Obon in San Francisco is chronicled in a book commemorating the 75th anniversary of the San Francisco Buddhist Church. Regarding Reverend Iwanaga's contribution to Obon:

> The Obon Festival as observed in San Francisco dates back to the Thirties when the late Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga taught many traditional and contemporary dances

> to Buddhists so that the occasion could be celebrated in the same manner as it was in Japan for many centuries. It might be added that Reverend Iwanaga traveled the length and breadth of California teaching and leading Obon dancers at their respective temples. Reverend Iwanaga choreographed and taught many dances such as "Bon Odori", "Bussei Koshin Kyoku", "American Ondo", "Tokyo Ondo", "Shin Okesa", "Tennen no Bi", "Kirameru Seiza", and numerous other dances still being danced today as old standbys (Buddhist Church of San Francisco 1973:63).

Most recently, Mrs. Elso Kanagawa wrote about the Iwanaga's contribution to American Buddhist music and dance:

> ...At this point, in order to travel hand in hand with the accomplishments of her husband the late Reverend Iwanaga, let me bring to mind the extensive work which sensei himself had brought into the temple. He was THE, I emphasize THE sensei who brought about the existence of what we now call the "bon-odori". Through this media, we associated ourselves more closely to what "o-bon" and its festivities meant...What we owe sensei cannot be measured in any way possible. Music still exists in various forms today in our temples, but the most satisfying is every summer when the drums beat, songs fill the night air as all young and old shuffle along remembering the dances sensei taught--his graceful motions, the ever-present smile. Not many of the original dances remain, but the beginning and end of the odori is always his "bon-odori" the slow methodical steps (February 1988:1).

Interviews with Nisei who were active in either bon odori or the Young Buddhist Association during the 1930's support the written material in recognizing

Reverend Iwanaga as the main contributor to bringing bon odori to the West Coast of the United States. None of the Nisei interviewed for this paper had seen or heard of bon odori being performed in the mainland United States prior to Reverend Iwanaga's arrival. However, they lived in either San Francisco, Stockton, Guadalupe, California or Tacoma, Washington during the 1920's and 1930's and therefore, together do not comprise a representative sample of all temples on the West Coast. Mrs. Iwanaga had travelled extensively to temples throughout the Pacific States either assisting her husband, leading choirs or teaching gathas and she had never seen nor heard of any West Coast temple performing bon odori prior to the time that Reverend Iwanaga began organizing the festivals.

There is some evidence that bon odori may have been danced occasionally on the mainland before 1930. Combs sites two Issei resource persons, who in interviews in 1978, remembered bon odori being performed in 1925 on Central Avenue in Los Angeles (Combs 1979:57). This would have been before Reverend Iwanaga came to the United States. Reverend Iwanaga did organize Obon Festival and lead bon odori at the Nishi Hongwanji Betsuin Temple in Los Angeles from 1931 until 1933.

Reverend Kodani had heard of bon odori being performed sporadically at a few temples before 1930, but knows of no Jodo Shinshu temple that had made bon odori an annual event prior to that time (Kodani 1/12/88).

Choosing Dances

In the United States, a Japanese folk dance is referred to as bon odori if it is performed during Obon Festival. If it is performed on a different occasion, it is called minyo (folk dance).

Reverend Iwanaga taught minyo during Doyo Buyo classes, as both a way to warm up a large group of dancers and as processional dances to be performed during a Doyo Buyo recital. Since most minyo are line dances, Reverend Iwanaga took advantage of their processional quality by using them to bring the dancers on or off stage. He also added them to recitals when he wanted all the older children to perform a dance together. Reverend Iwanaga had taught minyo before he came to the United States as part of the classes that he taught to factory girls in Kyoto. However, he never mentioned to his wife that he ever organized an Obon festival in Japan or taught minyo for Obon in Japan.

Reverend Iwanaga's original intentions for coming to the United States had not included reinstating bon

odori. However, soon after arriving, he realized that establishing Obon Festival as an annual event in California would serve several purposes (Iwanaga 5/2/88). First, and most important to him, it would give young Nisei an opportunity to participate in one of the most important observances of the year for Buddhists. It could also become an event where both Issei and Nisei could come together to express their joy as Buddhists; and it was a way of bringing young people to Buddhism through music and dance.

There are several possible reasons why Reverend Iwanaga chose to use the minyo that he taught during his Doyo Buyo classes as bon odori and why he had his Doyo Buyo students for the core of the dancers during the early Obon Festivals. Logistically, it was obviously the easiest way of organizing the event. Reverend Iwanaga was usually at a temple for only two to four weeks and he could not be at every temple during their Obon observances. By using the minyo that his students learned and performed for Doyo Buyo, he was able to teach a group of teenage girls, who had never heard of nor seen bon odori, enough dances so that they could form the core of participants during the event. While teaching the girls, he also taught the Buddhist Sunday School teachers, who were given the responsibility of

organizing practices and reviewing the dances with the students just before Obon.

While these dances would not have been performed all together at an Obon Festival in Japan, many of them were performed as bon odori in their place of origin. Buddhist temples in California rural areas served many small Japanese communities spread out over a large geographic area. Issei Buddhists at any one temple were usually from several different prefectures in Japan and from numerous localities within each prefecture. Therefore, they would not have known the same bon dances. The average age of the Issei when they came to the United States was seventeen (Kodani 1984d), so even if an Issei came from a community in Japan that held bon odori, he or she may very well have not danced. For all these reasons, it is unlikely that any of the temples that Reverend Iwanaga visited had developed their own Obon Festival tradition or transplanted one from Japan. Therefore, the dances that Reverend Iwanaga used would not have replaced or supplemented an already established Obon tradition in a Japanese American Buddhist community.

Individuals that may have remembered the bon dances of their youth would have come from different areas in Japan that had performed different dances. Dancing only

one region's dances would be problematic. Reverend Iwanaga travelled to areas all up and down the coast and needed to use dances that would be accepted by everyone, regardless of their original home in Japan.

Another reason why Reverend Iwanaga may have used school-taught minyo is that he felt he should use dances to songs which he believed were morally decent (Iwanaga 5/2/88); that is, songs which did not have sexually explicit lyrics or references to drunkenness or gambling. This had always been the first criteria he used when he chose modern ondo music to accompany his choreography for a new bon odori. The Japanese public education system had the same criteria in mind when it chose the minyo to be taught in the public schools.

Minyo that were taught in Japanese public schools fit Reverend Iwanaga's perception of proper dances for Buddhist children, they were dances that Reverend Iwanaga already knew, they were dances anyone could learn and they could be taught to Nisei children during Doyo Buyo rehearsals. They came from all over Japan so they symbolized the country of Japan, not just one region within its borders. All these reasons could have come into play when Reverend Iwanaga began organizing Obon Festivals. However, how many of his decisions were made as a conscious plan and how many just happened as

circumstances presented themselves is difficult to say.

Reverend Iwanaga also included a new type of bon odori that was emerging from Japan during the early 1930's. These dances were choreographed to music now referred to as modern ondo. Ondo is a style of folk song that usually has a lead soloist who is answered by a chorus. The modern ondo of the 1930's often had Western orchestration and were composed by contemporary musicians. Ondo songs, and later the dances which accompanied them, became popular during the late 1930's and new bon odori were choreographed to accompany the songs. The choreography of Japanese choreographers were printed in stick figures and included in the record jackets with the music. These dances were performed during Obon Festivals held in cities. They helped to make Obon Festivals popular in urban areas. Reverend Iwanaga had returned to Japan in 1933 and 1935. He brought the new ondo dances back to the United States, adding dances like "Tokyo Ondo" to the repertoire of bon odori performed in California. These new dances appealed especially to young Nisei dancers. He also added new ondo dances every year. He listened to recordings sold in Japanese record stores in the United States and chose music that he thought was appropriate. Then he either choreographed a new bon odori or used the choreography

from the record jacket. Sometimes he would alter choreography from the record if there were movements that he did not like.

Reverend Iwanaga completely choreographed "Bon Odori", "Bussei Koshin Kyoku", "American Ondo", "Fresno Ondo", "Stockton Ondo", "San Francisco Ondo", "Sacramento Ondo" and "Tennen no Bi". "Bussei Koshin Kyoku" and "Bon Odori" were religious in nature. "Tennen no Bi" was a Doyo Buyo dance to Doyo music done in a procession. The music was a waltz. It was the only Doyo Buyo to Doyo music that Reverend Iwanaga used within the framework of Obon Festival. "Tennen no Bi" was also more difficult than any of the other bon odori that he used. It was a favorite dance of his Doyo students and was considered very beautiful. He may have included it to please his students.

"Tanko Bushi" and "Hanagasa Odori" were dances that Reverend Iwanaga taught after World War II. "Tanko Bushi" is one of several bon odori depicting the work of coal miners. It has become extremely popular with people in Japan and with Japanese Americans and is performed on social occasions such as Japanese American picnics as well as during Obon Festivals. The song and dance was also popular among American soldiers in Japan after World War II.

"Goshu Ondo" comes from Toyosato village in Shiga Prefecture. Since the reconstruction of the Senju Temple in 1586, people of Toyosato are said to have danced to the musical singing of Buddhist scriptures (Ikema 1981:106). "Goshu Ondo" like "Tanko Bushi", is popular throughout Japan.

Reverend Iwanaga followed the Japanese tradition of creating regional bon odori when he choreographed "American Ondo", "Fresno Ondo", "Stockton Ondo", "San Francisco Ondo", and "Sacramento Ondo". "Fresno Ondo" was the first bon odori in California choreographed to original music written by a Japanese American, Mrs. Chieko Taira of Fresno. Reverend Iwanaga choreographed the dance just prior to his death, and its first performance was dedicated to his memory at the Fresno Obon Festival in 1951. Bon odori had become so popular by that time that five thousand spectators watched the dance which was performed by four hundred dancers (Iwanaga 8/8/51).

Reverend Iwanaga chose between seven and twelve dances to perform at each Obon Festival. Figure 3 on page 122 is a list of some of the bon odori that Reverend Iwanaga taught for Obon Festivals.

Figure 3

Bon Odori Taught by Reverend Yoshio Iwanaga

Bon Odori	Hanagasa Odori
Bussei Koshin Kyoku	Fresno Ondo
American Ondo	Gion Kouta
Tokyo Ondo	Nozaki Kouta
Shin Okesa	Oshima Bushi
Tennen no Bi	Heiwa Odori
Kurameru Seiza	Tachi Agari Ondo
Goshu Ondo	Ruten
Hiroshima Ondo	Ishimatsu Tabi Odori
Sakura Ondo	Aizu Bandai-san
Kiso Bushi	Nagoya Yoitoko
Tanko Bushi	Kagoshima Ohara
Tenryu Kudarebu	Sacramento Ondo
Riku Kouta	Fresno Ondo
Kagoshima Ohara	San Francisco Ondo
	Stockton Ondo

13. STRUCTURING OBON FESTIVAL IN STOCKTON

Reverend Iwanaga started organizing the first Obon Festivals in Northern California soon after he arrived there to teach Doyo Buyo. He began by teaching minyo to his Doyo Buyo classes. He held the first Obon Festival in Stockton where he organized practices of the same minyo that he taught to his Doyo Buyo students. Practices were held two to three weeks before Obon and his Doyo Buyo students as well as some boys from Buddhist Sunday School and Sunday School teachers attended (Hanyu 11/22/88). In later years, when Reverend Iwanaga was not in Stockton, the Sunday School teachers organized the practices and reviewed the dances with the children.

Dancing bon odori was mostly for children and teenagers in Stockton, unlike in Japan where most participants were adults. Reverend Iwanaga envisioned bon odori as a way to involve Nisei in the observances of Obon. Although they were too young to fully understand the meaning of Obon, they could be introduced to this important observance and feel themselves a part of the Buddhist community through their physical involvement.

Adults were also active in creating the event. Issei women helped lead the children in dancing. Men of the temple built the yagura which was placed in the center of the dance circle and which housed the musicians.

Under the guidance of Reverend Iwanaga, they set up the record player and public address system. Live shamisen and taiko music played by talented church members was played along with the recordings. Although they usually did not come to practices, Issei men and women who wanted to dance joined the other dancers during the festival. The dances were simple enough that anyone could just join in.

Reverend Giko Abiko, in an article written over twenty years after Reverend Iwanaga's death described the roles that girls, women, boys and men had in bon odori:

> ...It just so happened that I resided at the same temple as Reverend Iwanaga did during those years [of the beginning years of bon odori]. Each year I joined in Bon Odori which was held on the street right next to the temple complex. Truly, it was a dazzling event. Assisted by the first generation Japanese Americans who yearned to see their native customs, we saw many young girls dancing in most beautiful outfit of exquisite Furisode-Kimono, wearing specially made decorated Geta and extra long Darari-Obi. It seemed as if the dancers made a row of Japanese dolls. Amidst such gathering, boys and men joined in the dance, dressed in bathrobe-like yukata, attempting to show some masculinity. However, it was apparent that we were completely overshadowed by the number and the dazzles displayed by the girls of all ages (Abiko [by 1975]).

Children clearly had a more central role in bon odori that they had in Japan. From the beginning, bon

odori served not only as a statement about religion but also as a symbol of Japanese culture. Mrs. Hanyu describes the festive nature of those early Obon Festivals:

> In the 1930's in Stockton, there was live music accompanying the bon odori at Obon Festival. It really seemed like old Japan, at least like the way they show it on the movies and television. It was very merry and noisy. We would dance from eight o'clock until midnight. I remember my mother scolding me for dancing all night without stopping. When Reverend Iwanaga was in Stockton he would lead us. He was very graceful and everyone tried to be as natural and graceful as he was.
>
> ...At that time we had Issei women who could play the shamisen, and there would be taiko. Usually one of the women who played the shamisen would sing too. Reverend Iwanaga taught the modern ondo too, because he had to appeal to the young people (11/22/88).

The temple rewarded the children for their participation by giving them free soda drinks. This gesture of a small gift of food or drink to the dancers has become a tradition at Japanese American Obon Festivals throughout California.

Providing a Religious Framework for Bon Odori

Reverend Iwanaga worked with ministers and lay leaders of the temple to plan the Obon Festival event. In the 1930's, Obon Festival began with the ministers of the temple, dressed in their Buddhist robes, leading the procession of dancers into the dance circle. One

minister would then lead everyone--dancers and audience--in gassho, a gesture of gratitude, and the reciting of the Nembutsu, repeating the name of Amida Buddha. After the Nembutsu, the dancing would begin.

The first dance performed was "Bon Odori", a dance choreographed by Reverend Iwanaga to a song written in the modern ondo style with Western orchestration by the Buddhist Musical Association in Japan (Onishi 1938:56). The verses of the song, "Obon Ondo", were religious in nature and the song itself was written to offset the influence of the secular ondo songs (Onishi 1938:56). "Bon Odori" was also the last dance of the evening, followed by the recitation of the Nembutsu at the end of Obon Festival. This dance continues to be the first and last dance performed at Obon Festival in Northern California. It was referred to as the most traditional of our bon dances at the Palo Alto Buddhist temple Obon Festival in 1988 (Abiko 8/7/88). "Bon Odori" has become a traditional, unauthored dance to the thousands of people who dance or see it, for only those people who learned it from Reverend Iwanaga in the 1930's and 1940's, or who have read the few articles which give him credit for the choreography are aware that he choreographed it.

"Bon Odori" illustrates how Reverend Iwanaga was able to capture in his choreography, those elements of Japanese folk dance which were in harmony with his Jodo Shinshu religious beliefs. The dance is very simple. Following the line of direction, the dancer holds a flat fan in the right hand. Each dancer moves slowly, stepping on the right foot with slightly bent leg, facing away from the center of the circle. The dancer then touches the left foot in place while straightening the right leg; at the same time each hand traces a half circle, arms moving from low to side to place high on both sides of the body ending with palms facing up. This is a traditional minyo movement motif and is performed three times, first on the right foot, then left and right. When the dancer steps right she faces away from the center of the circle and when she steps left, she faces the center. Next, all dancers step left and face the center of the circle. The dancer touches right foot in place as the hands are brought close to the body at waist level, palms up. The dancer pauses momentarily then steps forward on the right foot, sweeping the fan toward the center of the circle, then stepping back of the left, followed by the right foot stepping in place as the free hand claps the fan in front of the body and then to the left. The dance then begins again.

The slow, short dance phrase is repeated over and over. Midway through, as everyone is moving together, there is a sense of community, of being carried along by the motion of all the other dancers. Even those who have never seen the dance before or who don't consider themselves good dancers are able to join in during "Bon Odori". The number of dancers swell when "Bon Odori" is performed for the last time. In Northern California, this is the time when people from the audience, both Japanese and non-Japanese are most apt to join in the dancing.

"Bon Odori" reminds the members of the temple that the dances are also a part of a larger religious observance. The music and choreography have a reverent quality. While the audience talks and jokes during the other dances, there is a sense of attentiveness during "Bon Odori" even though very few people today understand the lyrics. It leads everyone into the festival, and then, at the end it provides a sense of closure. Following "Bon Odori", a minister of the temple leads the participants in the Nembutsu. The event is thus framed in religious ritual.

14. CHANGING OBON FESTIVAL TO REFLECT A NEW CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Turner, in his examination of celebrations, points out that cultural celebrations like that of Obon Festival, provide "an opportunity for personal inventiveness within the culturally defined frame" (Turner 1982:12). Reverend Iwanaga's participation in re-establishing bon odori as part of Obon observances in the Western United States provides an example of the relationship which develops between an individual innovator and a specific form of cultural expression within an immigrant community.

Several factors were key to Reverend Iwanaga, as one individual, having a major role in the framing of the religious and cultural celebration of Obon Festival on the West Coast of the United States. First of all, bon odori was not a part of Obon observances in almost any of the Japanese Buddhist communities on the West Coast when Reverend Iwanaga arrived. Most immigrants had left Japan during a time when Obon Festival was either banned or discouraged in many parts of Japan. Many of the immigrants were teenagers or young adults when they came to the United States so that a large number probably had not participated in Obon Festival in their homeland. Bon dances were partly rooted in local

dance traditions and thus they varied from one locality to another. Since the early immigrants came from villages, towns and cities spread over several prefectures, even those who knew bon dances would not have known the same ones as someone grew up in a different locality.

The immigrants settled over a large geographic area when they came to the United States with small pockets of populations separated from one another in the rural counties. Many faced a hostile, anti-Japanese attitude from non-Asians in their community. Any or all of these factors could have contributed to the result that the public celebration of Obon Festival was not part of the early observances of Obon in most communities.

The communities that Reverend Iwanaga worked with to revive bon odori were made up of the first generation immigrants who had memories of bon odori in Japan, but who had not performed it in the United States, and their Nisei children, most of whom were unfamiliar with bon odori. These communities were spread out over thousands of miles from Vancouver, Canada to Garden Grove in Southern California. However, they were connected through the federation of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist temples within the religious organization of the Buddhist Mission of North America (BMNA). The BMNA, through its communications network of ministerial and lay

delegations, conferences, meetings and written correspondences, provided a structure which Reverend Iwanaga used to bring bon odori to hundreds of Japanese Americans at over twenty temples. The organization was putting much of its resources into activities which involved its youth (Tuck 1987:8).

Reverend Iwanaga travelled and taught bon odori and helped organize a temple's first Obon Festival. The Buddhist Sunday School teachers and members of the Buddhist Women's Association, the Fujinkai, were then asked to review the dances with those who wished to participate and to organize the event annually with the help of temple Obon committees. The reaction to bon odori was extremely positive. At the time of Reverend Iwanaga's death in 1950, thousands of people were dancing and tens of thousands were observers.

Working within the Buddhist Mission of North America at a time when it was developing as a national organization allowed Reverend Iwanaga to introduce a uniform way of celebrating Obon Festival at Jodo Shinshu temples spread over a large geographic area. Twenty years before, without the organization, it would have been unlikely that any individual could have been invited into so many communities. At the same time, resource persons who participated in bon odori in the

1930's credit Reverend Iwanaga's kindness, likability, energy, talent and religious devotion as reasons why bon odori became so popular. Someone less charismatic, less willing to make the personal sacrifices of constant travel and little renumeration could not have met with as much success in gaining the support of so many Japanese American Buddhists.

Social conditions in the United States in the late 1920's and early 1930's may have also contributed to the success of bon odori. The Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924 brought an increase in membership in the Buddhist temples as it became clear to many Japanese Americans that they needed to band together and assert their rights to religious freedoms which other groups enjoyed (Ogura 1932:13). The Economic Depression beginning in 1929 increased anti-Japanese sentiment and caused more and more Issei to look for solace in their Japanese culture. Extreme prejudice also contributed to many Nisei's need to search for what it meant to be a person of Japanese ancestry in the United States (Hosokawa 1969:171).

Mrs. Takahashi participated in the early Obon Festivals in San Francisco and pointed out the importance of Obon to the psychological well-being of the participants:

> They [Obon Festivals] were wonderful times, happy times. There were so few occasions for the Japanese to come out of their shell. We were supposed to be quiet and restrained and keep in our place. We really couldn't be anything but retiring and be mouse-like, I guess, in our social relationships, in our daily living; except to go to Japantown and be among ourselves and then we could relax (8/4/88).

Reverend Iwanaga was considered broad-minded and understanding of the needs of the Buddhist community, particularly the youth. He was willing and capable of adapting bon odori to the social and cultural environment of Japanese people in the United States. One major organizational innovation that he used was to have the Japanese American Buddhist Sunday School teachers disseminate bon dances to members of their temple to ensure their continual performance year after year. The Sunday School teachers along with members of the Fujinkai taught bon dances to the young people and led everyone in performance. They became the main decision makers in matters concerning bon odori and still are so today.

Reverend Iwanaga planned Obon Festival especially for the Nisei children. This varied from what was the norm in Japan where participation was more likely to begin at young adulthood. Children were the ones who went to practices and learned the dances prior to the event in California. They were given food and drink for their participation in Obon. The girls were often

dressed up in their kimono that they wore in the Doyo Buyo recital.

The focus on children was in no way at the exclusion of adults who helped in planning the event, setting up the yagura and public address system, playing music and joining in dancing during the festival. Bon odori brought both generations together in celebration.

There was a difference in costuming between Obon in Japan and Obon in the United States in the 1930's. Many female dancers in the United States, particularly the young girls, wore formal kimono rather than the simpler, less expensive yukata. There are several reasons why this was so. Most of the young girls were also Doyo Buyo students and the wearing of kimono for the Doyo Buyo recital no doubt influenced the costuming for bon odori. In at least one instance, the Doyo Buyo recital immediately preceded the Obon Festival and the Doyo Buyo students danced bon odori in their Doyo Buyo costumes (See Appendix C, Plate XIX, p. 194). Also, Issei women and their female children had no other opportunity to wear kimono, often a woman's treasured possession which she brought with her from Japan. The weather in San Francisco was a major factor in the wearing of kimono there since it was too cold in the summer to wear the thin yukata. Yukata as well as kimono were worn in

rural areas like Stockton, Sacramento, and Guadalupe. Men and boys wore either yukata or American street clothes.

Changes were also made in the religious framing of Obon Festival. Reverend Iwanaga along with other Japanese American Buddhist leaders had more control over what was included in Obon Festival than did the Buddhist clergy in Japan. A village or town's bon odori in Japan had roots in local non-buddhist dance traditions as well as Japanese ondo. In the United States, Reverend Iwanaga could select any dances that he wished, keeping in mind the religious purpose of Obon and the need to appeal to two generations of Japanese in America that had grown up in two separate cultural environments. He chose only dances and music which he felt were appropriate for a religious function and for performance by children. He included modern ondo, but only those that met his standard of public decency.

Reverend Iwanaga, along with those who helped him plan Obon Festivals shaped the event in such a way that it sent a clear message, "This is a Buddhist celebration." They did so by having the Buddhist ministers lead the procession of dancers into the dance circle, followed by the recitation of the Nembutsu. They then began the dancing with a bon dance choreographed by

Reverend Iwanaga to the modern religious music of "Obon Ondo". By finishing the dance event in the same way, Reverend Iwanaga provided a religious frame which surrounded the dance. This frame still exists in Northern California. Currently, Obon Festival in the United States is considered more of a religious event than it is in Japan (Kodani 1984a:2). However, how much Obon Festival should represent Buddhism and how much it should represent Japanese culture is now an often debated topic at temples in the United States.

The distinction between Obon as a Buddhist religious practice and Obon as an expression of Japanese culture did not seem an issue to those who participated in bon odori during the 1930's, including Reverend Iwanaga. Whether consciously or unconsciously, Reverend Iwanaga seemed to choose for bon odori, those elements of Japanese cultural expression which were in harmony with Jodo Shinshu beliefs. It was important to him that dances for bon odori were simple so that anyone could join in and experience dancing at Obon. The songs accompanying the dances praised different regions in Japan while at the same time, the hundreds of people who danced the same, simple dances together were symbols themselves of interdependence, humility, spontaneity and joy--all basic elements of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism that

were also rooted in the rural folk culture of Japan.

The celebration of Obon was simultaneously a religious festival and a celebration of Japanese culture. The symbols presented in music, costume, dance and the dancers themselves spoke to people of Japanese heritage, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist. They spoke of Buddhist ideals and they spoke of the beauty of Japan. This religious celebration was also an affirmative statement of being of Japanese heritage. As Reverend Kodani explained of the Issei, "they were not welcome in the United States. The one thing that rooted them to the past that was supporting was this one festival of Obon" (Kodani 1984d).

Reverend Iwanaga also used bon odori as a way to celebrate Buddhism in America at Buddhist Day on Treasure Island in 1940 and at the fiftieth anniversary celebration of Jodo Shinshu in the United States. During these two events, bon odori reached an audience of not only Japanese people but also thousands of non-Japanese as well. Dancing at these events brought participants from all over Northern California. Hundreds of people who had never met were able to experience dancing together in celebration of their religious faith because Reverend Iwanaga had taught the same dances to members of all the temples that he had visited. On

these occasions, bon odori became both celebration and spectacle.

Significant changes occurred in the way that Obon Festival was practiced in Japan during the first three decades of the twentieth century. This was due to its suppression during the Meiji Period, its subsequent revival in the 1920's and the creation and infusion of modern ondo folk songs and dances into the festival in the 1930's. More changes took place when Reverend Iwanaga reintroduced bon odori to the Western United States, arranging, adding and altering elements to adapt it to the social and cultural environment of Japanese Buddhists on the West Coast. Yet in this period of change, the very practice of Obon Festival provided a tangible, physical link between Japanese Americans and their ancestral past. Regardless of the variation between locations or change through time, dancing bon odori was still something that had been done in Japan for hundreds of years. It connected the present reality of the 1930's in the United States to the past and present lives of those who had danced in villages, towns and cities throughout Japan.

NOTES TO SECTION III

1. "O" is an honorific attached to the term bon.

2. Mokuren is the Japanese name for the disciple known in Sanskrit as Maudgalyayana, and in Pali as Moggalana.

3. Urabon-kyo is the Japanese name for the Avalambana Sutra (Sanskrit).

4. An example of a textual variation was given by Chief Abbot Archbishop Nitten Ishida of the Nichiren Hokke Buddhist Church. He explained the Nichiren version of the Mokuren story which differed from the Jodo Shinshu version in that the study and chanting of the Lotus Sutra, the most important sutra to the Nichiren Sect was responsible for the saving of Mokuren's mother (Ishida 4/26/88). The Lotus Sutra is not mentioned in the Jodo Shinshu text.

5. The fifteenth day of the seventh month is the end of the Indian rainy season and the last day of the summer retreat of Buddhist monks.

6. There are several versions of the ending of the Mokuren story. In one version of this last paragraph, Mokuren and the disciples do not actually dance, but receive the news with joy and then go away (De Visser 1935:71). In another, Mokuren claps his hands with joy and this is said to be the legendary origin of bon odori.

7. Yu-lan-p'en Societies were seasonally formed to organize a lion dance as part of Yu-lan-p'en in Northern China. This dance is performed by a small group of people and is said to have originated in Central Asia.

8. Tamamatsuri used to be held twice a year, at the end of summer and on the last day of the year (Matsunaga 1974:231). According to Matsunaga, ancestral spirits of the natural world of fields, water, etc., were welcomed into the community. By doing so, the community hoped for conditions that would produce a good harvest. Tamamatsuri on the last day of the year eventually disappeared and the summer ritual was incorporated into Obon observances.

9. Jodo Shinshu Buddhism does not believe that spirits of the ancestors return to the living. See Section III, Part 11 for a further explanation.

10. See Jo Ann Combs, The Japanese O-bon Festival and Bon Odori: Symbols in Flux, pp. 89-93 for a discussion of the various theories on the original function of bon odori.

11. See Moore's discussion of doctrinal efficacy in religious rituals in Sally F. Moore and Barbara Myerhoff, Secular Ritual, 1977:12.

12. At the San Mateo Buddhist temple during the 1988 Obon Festival, several older men and women of the temple danced only to "Bon Odori" at the beginning of the festival. These men and women were dressed in dress clothes from the previous Obon temple service. They left the dance circle and joined the audience as soon as "Bon Odori" was over. In Palo Alto during the same year, the number of dance circles needed to accommodate all the dancers increased from three large circles to five during the last "Bon Odori" when people from the audience, particularly Caucasians joined the dancing. The same influx of dancers during "Bon Odori" also occurred in Oakland, California, and to a lesser extent in San Francisco.

SECTION IV

CONCLUSION

From 1930 until 1950 Reverend Iwanaga brought Buddhism and dance to Japanese communities in America. The impact of his work on the communities in which he taught can be examined on several levels. This concluding chapter considers his influence on an individual community member, on a major religious organization and on two Japanese American forms of cultural expression.

15. INFLUENCING THE LIFE OF ONE INDIVIDUAL

Reverend Iwanaga's students shared a common cultural heritage but varied from one another in age, family background, residence, personal temperament, interests and perceptions. All were members of a cultural group that faced legal and social discrimination, although the individual experiences of that discrimination differed in magnitude from child to child. How each child related those experiences to herself also differed.

Nisei children had to carve out an identity from two separate cultural systems, one brought to the United States with their parents' generation, the other learned

through the American public school system (Hosokawa 1969:171). In such a circumstance, exposure to Japanese cultural meaning systems[1] through the songs and dance of Doyo Buyo and bon odori could have had a significant effect on the way that students viewed their cultural heritage, however, those aspects of personality, all the factors that make up personhood at any given moment in an individual's life, make the interpretation and significance of bon odori and Doyo Buyo highly variable from one student to another.

D'Andrade points out that there is an interplay between the world of personal experience and that of cultural meanings. "...In some cases cultural meanings have the potential of giving form and depth to private experience, in some cases cultural meanings may conflict with the individual's experience and in some cases there may be no relationship established by the individual between particular experiences and cultural meanings" (D'Andrade 1984:114). Certainly, one individual's experience cannot be used to represent the impact of Doyo buyo and bon odori on all of Reverend Iwanaga's students. An examination of the effect that Doyo Buyo and bon odori had on one person's life does reveal the interrelationship of social environment, personal experience, and cultural meaning systems expressed in the

form of song and dance. It also points out the role that individuals like Reverend Iwanaga play in disseminating cultural meanings.

Mrs. Tomoye Takahashi was sixteen and living in San Francisco when she first enrolled in Doyo Buyo classes with Reverend Iwanaga. Her memories of Doyo Buyo and bon odori are vivid. She credits her introduction to Doyo Buyo as being a turning point in her life.

Mrs. Takahashi's parents came from Yamanashi Prefecture, bordering the southern Japanese Alps. Her father came to the United States in 1901 at age nineteen. He came as a student to further his studies of English and had hoped to become an engineer. Mrs. Takahashi said of her father, "He loved chemistry, physics, mathematics and English. He was enamored with the modern age and the influence of foreign studies coming into the country [Japan]" (8/4/88).

Her mother's family owned a silk mill in Japan. Much of the silk that they made was exported to Lyon, France, although some silk was sold domestically to Kyoto.

Mrs. Takahashi grew up on the west side of San Francisco, several miles from Japantown. She was the only Asian student at her elementary school and remembers how difficult it was for her at the time:

> The usual day for me as the only non-white student in Grattan Grammar School was to be called Chink-Chink Chinaman or be thrown horse manure on my head and face on the way home and so on...It was almost an unwritten law in grammar school that children had nothing to do with an Oriental child at recess, lunch time or after school...
>
> It was a very lonely and unhappy time, my school days were. My mother always reminded me that I had to do well in school because we didn't want anyone to think that Japanese children didn't do well in school. I took that very seriously. I thought I represented all the Japanese children that ever went to school in myself.
>
> By 1932 and 1933 I was attending Girl's High School and there there were people of different racial heritage. I was impressed that the Spanish consulate should send their two daughters; but aside from the Spanish girls there were girls whose last names were Zellerbach, Haas. I was delighted. I was impressed. I found that these girls were like the others. I came to enjoy their friendship and then high school became a wonderful place and I guess I started to bloom you might say (8/4/88).

Mrs. Takahashi began taking Doyo Buyo classes in 1931. It was in the midst of a world depression. Anti-Japanese feelings were fueled by editorials in the Hearst papers in San Francisco and newspaper articles attempted to link unemployment with Asian immigration to the West Coast. How did Doyo Buyo fit into Mrs. Takahashi's life at that time?

> I know that Doyo contributed a great deal to my interests and the activities of my leisure time during that period of my

life, and also it certainly enriched immeasurably my appreciation of Japanese culture from the standpoint of Doyo. I was exposed to the songs and made aware of the change of pace and living, the change in festivals, and the change of the tempo of living, the outlook from the time of the origins or popularity of those songs contrasted to San Francisco, California, U.S.A. in the period of the early thirties--'32, '33, '34. There's already a tremendous contrast between the thinking and the pace and culture of our ancestors, of our heritage and the one in which we were born. And we were, all of us, products of the American school system, especially the ethnic community of San Francisco at that time. I must say, that was the years of the depths of the depression following the crash of Wall Street, 1929, October. The impact of consecutive waves of deeper and deeper depression, unemployment, produced a kind of gray, heavy depressive atmosphere that settled over the country (8/4/88).

How did she perceive Reverend Iwanaga?

He came as a dance teacher. Here he was, a bachelor, and he was young and he was always smiling. I always think of him as a man that had very white teeth and he was smiling openly as though he was enjoying every minute. And he welcomed everybody and expected to be welcomed in return. He always looked so happy. Now this was like a spear of sunshine breaking through gray clouds. Actually, during these times everything was dispirited and gray and dismal and depressing and sad. Well I want to tell you--Here comes this man who introduced music and dance and was willing to share it with us. We were only children! But we certainly flocked to him...We thought he was just wonderful and we loved the songs.

He brought so much happiness to our lives at that time when we needed it so badly. In reflection, I think he was responsible for our cultural awakening and

> appreciation. Japanese School wasn't much more than babysitting, but activities like odori and flower arrangement and singing and participating in plays to prepare for various festivals, these were the highlights. Our participation in them was only because we attended school. All this was definitely enrichment of our childhood and for that as a group I think we owe Iwanaga Sensei really a tribute (8/4/88).

Mrs. Takahashi also believes that it was her exposure to Doyo Buyo and bon odori that sparked her interest in Japanese Studies in which she later majored at the University of California at Berkeley.

> As a result of triggering my interest in things Japanese, by the time I went to college, I majored in Japanese Studies. I became a part owner of a travel agency after that and I designed tours of Japan other than the Japanese Travel Bureau Tours which were quasi-governmental and only wanted foreigners to see the part of Japan that they wanted to show. I designed the first arts and crafts tour of Japan...
>
> I am very grateful for that short but crucial turning point in my life. In that I was the only non-white child in my very impressionistic years, I could have turned out to be a Charleston dancing flapper, smoking cigarettes at the end of a long cigarette holder. I came from that era! (8/4/88).

One of Reverend Iwanaga's goals in teaching Doyo Buyo and bon odori was to help keep Buddhist children interested in Buddhist Sunday School until they became old enough to understand and accept the beliefs of <u>Jodo Shinshu</u> Buddhism. Mrs. Takahashi attended Buddhist

Sunday School and Japanese Language School because it was a chance to be with other Japanese children and because she loved the activities like Doyo and bon odori. However, staying in Buddhist Sunday School did not lead her to joining the Buddhist Church as an adult. Her parents were Buddhist but she did not have any positive religious attitudes when she was enrolled in Doyo Buyo. She also participated in Obon Festival although she does not think that it brought her any closer to understanding Buddhism. For her, it was a festival just to be enjoyed.

Mrs. Takahashi was one of several girls in San Francisco who performed a dance that she learned from Reverend Iwanaga in her public school. By this time she was attending Girl's High and was in an environment more accepting of cultural diversity.

> There were many groupings that studied under him [Reverend Iwanaga] and some performed in their own grammar school and high school as a result of this so that non-Japanese became aware of Japanese dancing. And then Iwanaga Sensei became very much in demand in other nearby communities who requested his lessons for their girls...
>
> I enjoyed the fact that I could contribute to the International occasions through my own contribution and background. I even taught one little group at Girl's High School and we participated in a program with a Japanese number. Some of the girls that I taught that were in this group of eight still remember because I ran into a Girl's High School fellow alumnae and she

> said, "Do you remember you taught us a Japanese dance? You taught me how to hold a fan..." (Takahashi 8/4/88).

Mrs. Takahashi has continued a close association with Japan. She is president and owner of Takahashi Imports, a large company that imports Asian arts, home decor, crafts and furnishings. She makes frequent business trips between the United States and Japan, and also collects Japanese art porcelains which are sold in her gallery.

Mrs. Takahashi, as well as other informants considered learning about Japanese culture as the way that Doyo Buyo and bon odori most influenced the lives of Reverend Iwanaga's students (Kuroda 11/16/88; Hanyu 11/22/88; Toyooka 11/29/88; Iwanaga 5/23/88). This included learning about Japanese history, lifestyle, attitudes, aesthetics and perceptions of nature, as well as the proper way of doing things. Children were taught how to dress in Japanese clothes, how to move like a Japanese girl, what was considered correct carriage and demeanor.

Reverend Iwanaga enhanced his student's willingness to learn about the cultural meanings represented in Doyo Buyo and bon odori. He was a warm, caring teacher as well as a young, modern Japanese man. His students responded as much to him as they did the dances and songs.

Mrs. Takahashi's response to Reverend Iwanaga's classes was dramatic. She took classes during a transitional period in her childhood beginning in the last year of being in a racially discriminating environment of her grammar school followed by attendance at a culturally diverse and racially accepting high school. She credits her introduction to Japanese culture through Doyo Buyo and bon odori as the catalyst which sparked her interest in Japan. "It was sharing Doyo with my peers that I enjoyed. It was music and song and companionship that completely captured me" (Takahashi 8/12/89). This led to her majoring in Japanese Studies at the University of California of Berkeley and her eventual work with Japanese arts and crafts. Fifty years after her introduction to Japanese culture through Doyo, Mrs. Takahashi continues her participation in Japanese traditional art through the practice of calligraphy and sumi painting.

16. SERVING THE BUDDHIST MISSION OF NORTH AMERICA THROUGH DANCE

Leaders of the Buddhist Mission of North America (BMNA) by the late 1920's were faced with the problem of transforming from a religion serving Japanese settlers to an American religion that could also appeal to the American born and raised children of Japanese ancestry.

Under the leadership of Bishop Masuyama, the BMNA searched for ways to keep their young members interested in the Buddhist Church (Tuck 1987:7). As it had done for the Issei, the BMNA attempted to meet the social and psychological, as well as spiritual needs of the Nisei generation. This new commitment to youth was institutionalized by a restructuring of the organization into six departments, four of which directly benefited the Nisei. Although the BMNA was suffering from economic difficulties because of the Depression (BCA 1974:55), they put much effort into developing youth centered activities (Tuck 1987:7).

Reverend Iwanaga was invited to come to the United States to teach dance with the expressed purpose of serving the BMNA by working with its youth. Reverend Iwanaga had already been involved with the relatively new missionary work among Buddhist youths in Japan; he helped to form the first Buddhist kindergartens in his native province and he worked with other ministers to bring Buddhism to young factory workers through lectures and dance. Working with Helen Chizuko Okamoto, who later became his wife, Reverend Iwanaga adapted his dance programs to meet the multiple needs of the BMNA of the 1930's.

His Doyo Buyo classes, as well as the re-established Obon Festival, provided direct participation for hundreds, and later thousands of young people in Buddhist sponsored activities. While it is unlikely that participation in these activities alone persuaded children to continue to attend Buddhist Sunday Schools, they did provide Japanese American girls with social and recreational experiences denied to many of them outside of the Japanese community.

Buddhist parents were also excited about their children dancing Doyo Buyo and bon odori. Reverend Iwanaga's Doyo Buyo recitals helped to bridge the gap between generations within the BMNA. Reverend Iwanaga was active in the Young Buddhist Movement, related well to the Nisei and encouraged them to take leadership roles within the organization. He provided opportunities for Nisei to physically participate in performances of Japanese dance, something that their Issei parents enthusiastically approved of. The coming together of Issei and Nisei for Doyo Buyo and Obon Festival was important to the BMNA during a time when there was friction surrounding the passing on of leadership from one generation to another (Tuck 1987:227).

Both Doyo Buyo and bon odori were flexible dance forms that were easily adaptable to allow for expression

of new ideas and reaction to new experiences which were part of the lives of Japanese Americans in the United States. Both forms during the 1930's reflected Japan's encounter with Western ideas and the mixture of Western and Japanese music with Japanese lyrics seems to have appealed to Japanese American youths without turning away their Issei parents. The Issei's acceptance of modern ondo and a mixture of Doyo Buyo and Western modern dances was partially due to Reverend Iwanaga's careful selection of music and dances which he taught to the youths.

Reverend Iwanaga made participation in what was perceived as traditional Japanese dance seem exciting to his students. He, himself represented to his students the urban, educated youth of Japan during the Taisho Era. He had a positive attitude towards Japanese culture which was coupled with an interest and desire to participate in the performance arts of the West. His hobbies included baseball, football, tennis, world music (Iwanaga [by 1950]) and bonsai. He also enjoyed learning about Japanese traditional arts and aesthetics. His recitals incorporated what he saw as positive forces from both Japanese and Western culture, both traditional and contemporary.

Through Doyo Buyo recitals, Reverend Iwanaga was able to provide free Japanese dance classes for Buddhist girls and generate money through donations at the door to help the finances of several churches during the economic Depression of the early 1930's (Iwanaga 5/25/88). This allowed him to reach many more youths than he would have been able to reach had the classes carried a fee or had the individual temples needed to find money for the classes from other sources.

At the same time that leaders of the BMNA were grappling with ways to bring Nisei members into the temple they were also developing into a national organization. Reverend Iwanaga played an important role in unifying the celebratory expression of Obon, a major religious observance of Jodo Shinshu Buddhists on a personal, organizational, and metaphysical level.

Reverend Iwanaga introduced to non-Japanese the fact that Jodo Shinshu Buddhism was a major religion in the Western United States with thousands of followers by staging a mass participatory bon odori at the well attended International Exhibition in 1940[2] (Kanagawa 1988:2). The active participation of Nisei in the planning and carrying out of that event signalled their move from a liminal state of leadership in the 1930's (Tuck 1987:276) to an institutionalized recognition as

leaders in the 1940's.

Reverend Iwanaga's dance work continues to influence the American Jodo Shinshu Buddhist organization through the yearly reenactment of bon odori at Obon Festival. Obon Festivals have become public events witnessed by thousands of Japanese American Buddhists yearly. It affords an opportunity to discuss the meaning and significance of a shared religious and cultural experience and thus creates the possibility of a deeper understanding of Buddhism, Japanese American culture and self. On an organizational level, individual temples must decide as they plan Obon Festival how they will balance the religious and secular, providing a presentation representative of the middle path (Abiko 4/19/88).

Is Obon Festival a way for Jodo Shinshu Buddhists to communicate to themselves about their religious beliefs and their culture or is it a time to communicate about Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and Japanese culture to others? What does the present day Obon Festival say about being a Japanese American Buddhist in a predominantly non-Buddhist society? These types of questions surface whenever a temple is actively involved in deciding, "How will we hold Obon Festival and how will we dance bon odori?" The discussions take place through

church newsletters, sermons, in youth study groups, at temple board meetings and informally among temple members. By popularizing Obon Festival, Reverend Iwanaga provided many temples with an occasion to reflect upon Jodo Shinshu Buddhism within the American context, to express shared religious principles and cultural values, to reenact ideas from religious texts, to reaffirm beliefs and to physically express gratitude and faith.

Reverend Iwanaga implanted a statement, "This is a religious event", when he along with others created a frame for bon odori of having ministers lead the dancers into the dance circle, followed by gassho, the Nembutsu, and the religious dance of "Bon Odori" which Reverend Iwanaga choreographed.

Since Reverend Iwanaga's death, people outside of the Buddhist temples, particularly Japanese classical dance teachers and members of the Japanese business community have had input into the content and structuring of Obon Festival. Obon Festival and bon odori continue to function simultaneously as both religious ritual and cultural celebration. Now, however, some Jodo Shinshu clergy feel that Obon as a Japanese cultural celebration is overshadowing the religious significance of Obon in the minds of many of the dancers and observers (Abiko 4/19/88; Kodani 7/12/88; Yamaguchi 3/29/88).

The perception of bon odori as an artistic expression of Japanese culture began about six years after Reverend Iwanaga's death. At that time, several temples began having classical Japanese dance teachers teach dances for Obon Festival. The result was a tendency toward more difficult dances which were considered more like staged dancing with a classical Japanese dance stylization of folk dances that included a criteria of correct performance. It became increasingly difficult for observers to just jump in and join the dance. The larger and larger audiences from outside of the Japanese American community also played a part in making bon odori become something to be seen and enjoyed as an aesthetic experience removed from its religious meanings.

In the 1980's, some ministers and lay people have worked to return bon odori to the type of event that it was when it was first introduced to the United States. In a newsletter of the Southern District temples, Reverend Kodani pointed out that there is now a returned emphasis on simple dances which are easily learned by everyone:

> In a swing back to a more religious base, Obon and Bon Odori have developed in America in a way truer to Buddhist ideas than the popular originals in Japan. There is now in fact, a uniquely Japanese American form of Obon and Bon Odori

(Kodani 1984a:2).

Reverend Iwanaga's success in re-establishing Obon Festival as a religious celebration put the planning of Obon Festival within the domain of Buddhist temples and thus influenced its unique development in the mainland United States.

17. TRANSMITTING, ADAPTING AND POPULARIZING JAPANESE FORMS OF CULTURAL EXPRESSION

American Buddhist temples were social centers for Japanese Americans as well as religious centers during the 1930's and 1940's. Reverend Iwanaga was a Buddhist minister, his classes were sponsored by and held at Buddhist temples, yet attendance was open to anyone within the Japanese American community. Mrs. Iwanaga remembers children from Christian families and teachers who taught in Christian Japanese Language Schools who attended her husband's Doyo Buyo classes. Reverend Iwanaga made no distinction between his Buddhist and non-Buddhist students. He also had many friends and acquaintances who were not members of the Jodo Shinshu faith. His friendliness and warm personality attracted people to him. Even after his death, Mrs. Iwanaga was approached many times by non-Buddhists who introduced themselves as one of Reverend Iwanaga's former students

or a parent of a child who performed in his Doyo Buyo recitals. As Mrs. Iwanaga explained:

> A lot of parents talk about it too, that those were the days, the happiest moments of their lives when they saw their children doing the Japanese dances. It was far away from the way that they were living, the American way. And to see their own children doing Japanese dances! It was really something for them because in those days there were no Japanese dancing teachers. Of course now there are many. It was a really happy time. He brought a lot of happiness to Japanese families (Iwanaga 1/24/89).

The recitals were special events in the Japanese communities in which they were held. This was especially true in the smaller cities and towns. Dr. Ryo Munekata, who was a child when Reverend Iwanaga taught Doyo Buyo in Tacoma, Washington remembers watching his sisters perform and how happy his parents were to have their daughters dancing Japanese dance. It was the first time anything like a large Japanese dance recital had happened in Tacoma. It was a big affair, Reverend Iwanaga was looked upon almost as a celebrity and the whole hall was filled with people (Munekata 3/30/89).

Reverend Iwanaga adapted the performance of Doyo as it was done by Japanese children so that it would work successfully with Japanese American girls. He changed it from primarily a singing performance with accompanying movement to dance performance with an accompanist

singing. He added the term buyo (dance) to the term Doyo (children's songs) to explain this change of emphasis. The recitals reflected the many dance expressions that were being performed in urban Japan during the 1920's, and in this respect they represented both traditional and contemporary Japanese dance. The core of the dances were to Doyo music, written in a Western song style by young Japanese musicians and poets. The lyrics were romantic looks at Japan's past and present. Interspersed between the Doyo dances were other dance styles. A recital might include a Japanese classical dance piece, a Western style modern dance or folk dance, several Japanese folk dances, a march, a baseball dance to Western folk music or a piece in the style of Japanese court dance to the music of the Japanese National Anthem.

Although the majority of the people who attended the recitals were Buddhists, non-Buddhist friends, parents and relatives also came. Doyo Buyo functioned for non-Buddhist participants in much the same way that it did for Buddhists. Through the songs and dances non-Buddhists were exposed to Japanese cultural meanings, shared folklore, aesthetic values, relationships with nature, customs and history. Reverend Iwanaga developed an appreciation of Japanese culture among his students

by providing a positive, enjoyable means of learning about Japan through dance and song (Iwanaga 5/23/88; Takahashi 8/4/88; Hanyu 11/22/88; Kuroda 11/16/88; Toyooka 11/29/88). For some students such as Mrs. Takahashi, this led to a desire to learn more about their cultural heritage.

Doyo Buyo recitals were public acknowledgements of acceptance and appreciation for Japanese culture. While this was particularly true for the Buddhist community, which by its historical ties and organizational structure had a closer association with Japan than Christian denominations, it also served this purpose for the many non-Buddhist parents who wished their daughters to have a better understanding of their cultural heritage.

Reverend Iwanaga's Doyo Buyo recitals, as cultural performances did not continue after his death. The impression that they made exists now, only in the memories of the students who learned from him or with family members who attended the recitals. The other aspect of his dance work, bon odori, continues to function as both a religious and cultural form of expression within the Japanese American community.

All religious festivals contain symbols of the culture from which they developed. Reverend Iwanaga recognized the dual nature of Obon Festival and while he

strengthened the religious aspects of the festival, he also valued Obon Festival as an expression of Japanese culture, the part of Japanese culture that mirrored the belief systems of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism or at least was not in conflict with them. Bon odori expressed gratitude to ancestors. Obon Festival was a time out period, not only a time to reflect on the Buddha Dharma but also to relax and step out of the pressures that confronted Japanese Americans living in a society where they were scrutinized and often looked upon with suspicion. Bon odori praised various locations in Japan, described their beauty, the work of their people. Reverend Iwanaga did not try to downplay the cultural aspects of Obon Festival; but he was careful in choosing which songs and dances he would include as an expression of Obon. Bon songs and dances which he felt were incongruent with the religious intent of Obon Festival were simply not included, regardless of their popularity in Japan. By deleting symbols that were contradictory to the religious symbols of Obon, Reverend Iwanaga and the many people who helped plan the early Obon Festivals in California, created a type of Obon Festival that became a lens through which to view Japan. It was during the period that Reverend Iwanaga taught that the Jodo Shinshu temples had the most control over what was ex-

pressed through bon odori.

Reverend Iwanaga's choreographed dance, "Bon Odori", is most symbolic of his contribution to the early Obon Festivals in California. "Bon Odori" is a reverent, simple dance that anyone can perform, choreographed to modern ondo music with a Japanese Buddhist theme. "Bon Odori" is performed in Northern California today, as it was in Reverend Iwanaga's time, at the beginning and end of the dancing so that it strengthens the event's religious frame.

Reverend Iwanaga brought Obon Festival and bon odori to over twenty Japanese American communities in the United States during the 1930's and 1940's. Because of his work in choreographing, teaching and producing Obon Festivals, the celebration became firmly established as part of Obon observances in Japanese American communities throughout the Western United States.

NOTES TO SECTION IV

1. The concept of cultural meaning systems is taken from D'Andrade's "Cultural Meaning Systems," in Richard A. Shweder and Robert LeVine's Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self and Emotion: 88-119. D'Andrade defines culture as "learned systems of meanings communicated by means of natural language and other symbol systems, having representational, directive and affective functions and capable of creating entities and particular senses of reality..." (1984:116).

2. Kashima conservatively estimates that 46,289 Japanese Americans were Jodo Shinshu Buddhists in 1942. He believes this is an underestimate, however, since it was based on government statistics gathered in relocation camps, the collection of which was flawed (Kashima 1977:142-143).

APPENDIX A

PHOTOGRAPHS--JAPAN, 1920's

PLATE I: ORDINATION OF YOSHIO IWANAGA, TOKUDO LEVEL, 1927

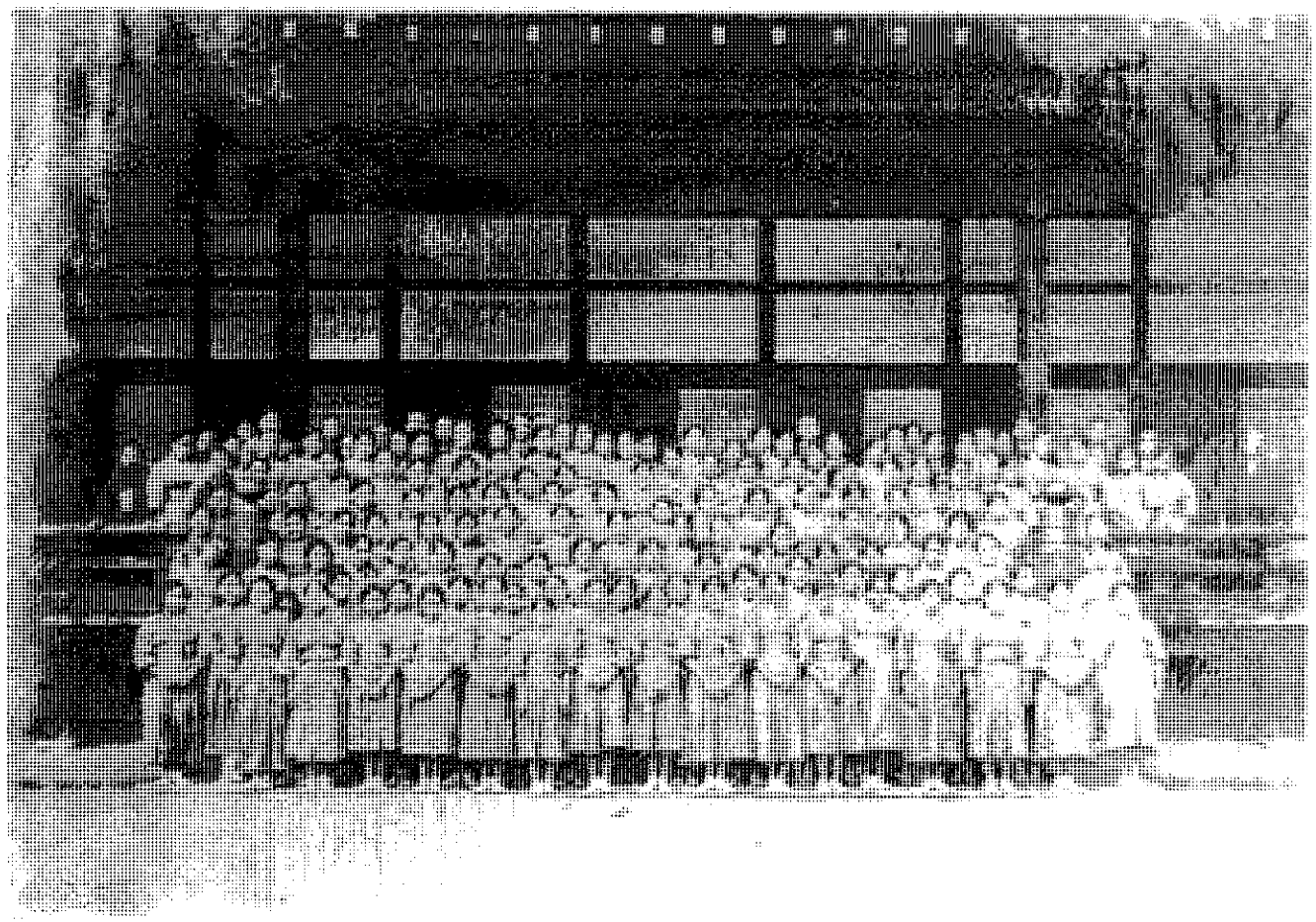
PLATE II: YOSHIO IWANAGA (FAR RIGHT) WITH KINDERGARTEN CLASS KUMAMOTO PREFECTURE, 1920's

PLATE III: YOSHIO IWANAGA'S JAPANESE STUDENTS POSING FOR PERFORMANCE OF "DOCHU SUGOROKU", 1920's

PLATE IV: YOSHIO IWANAGA'S JAPANESE KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS PERFORMING OPERETTA, "SHITA-KIRI SUZUME"

PLATE V

FACTORY WORKERS WHO LEARNED DOYO FROM YOSHIO
IWANAGA KYOTO, JAPAN, LATE 1920's



APPENDIX B

PHOTOGRAPHS--DOYO BUYO IN THE UNITED STATES

PLATE VI

DOYO BUYO STUDENTS WITH YOSHIO IWANAGA (FAR RIGHT)
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA, APRIL 4, 1931

PLATE VII

DOYO BUYO RECITAL, LOS ANGELES
SEPTEMBER 4, 1931


念記会大師尊導指生先永忠
寺積本西市日四月九年一三九一

PLATE VIII

DOYO BUYO RECITAL WITH YOSHIO IWANAGA IN TOP ROW, FOURTH FROM RIGHT, LOS ANGELES, FEBRUARY 21, 1932

PLATE IX

DOYO BUYO WITH YOSHIO IWANAGA AND PIANIST
VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1933

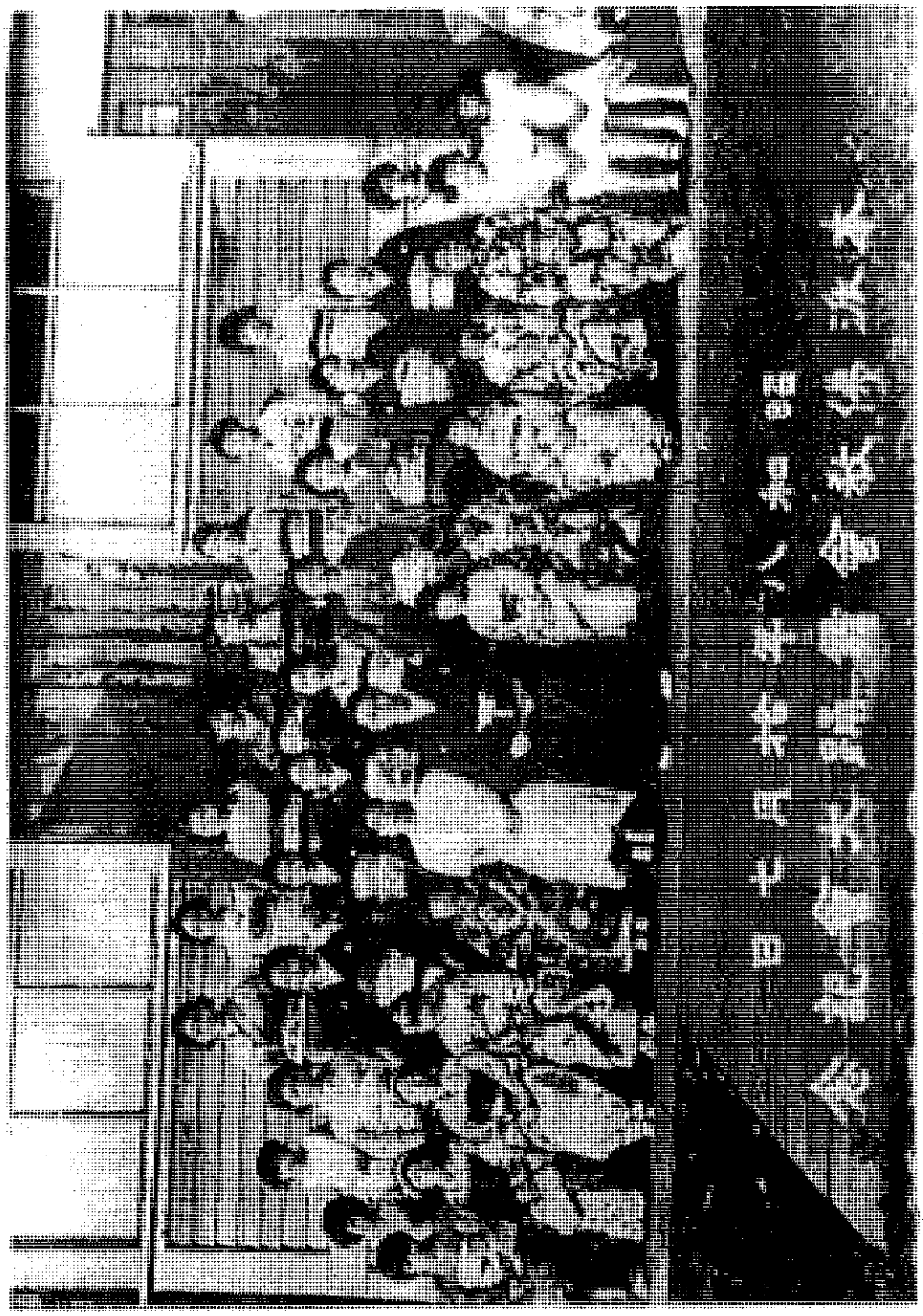


PLATE X

SOLO DANCER FOR JAPANESE CLASSICAL DANCE, "YANAGI NO AME" DOYO BUYO RECITAL, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1933

PLATE XI: ADVANCE DOYO BUYO CLASS WITH REVEREND IWANAGA AND PIANIST, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA
OCTOBER 8, 1933

PLATE XII: DOYO BUYO PERFORMANCE OF "HANAYOME NINGYO" STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

PLATE XIII

ADULTS FROM SAME AREA IN JAPAN AS REVEREND IWANAGA
PERFORM AS PART OF DOYO BUYO RECITAL, HOLLAND
DELTA AREA CALIFORNIA, 1930's

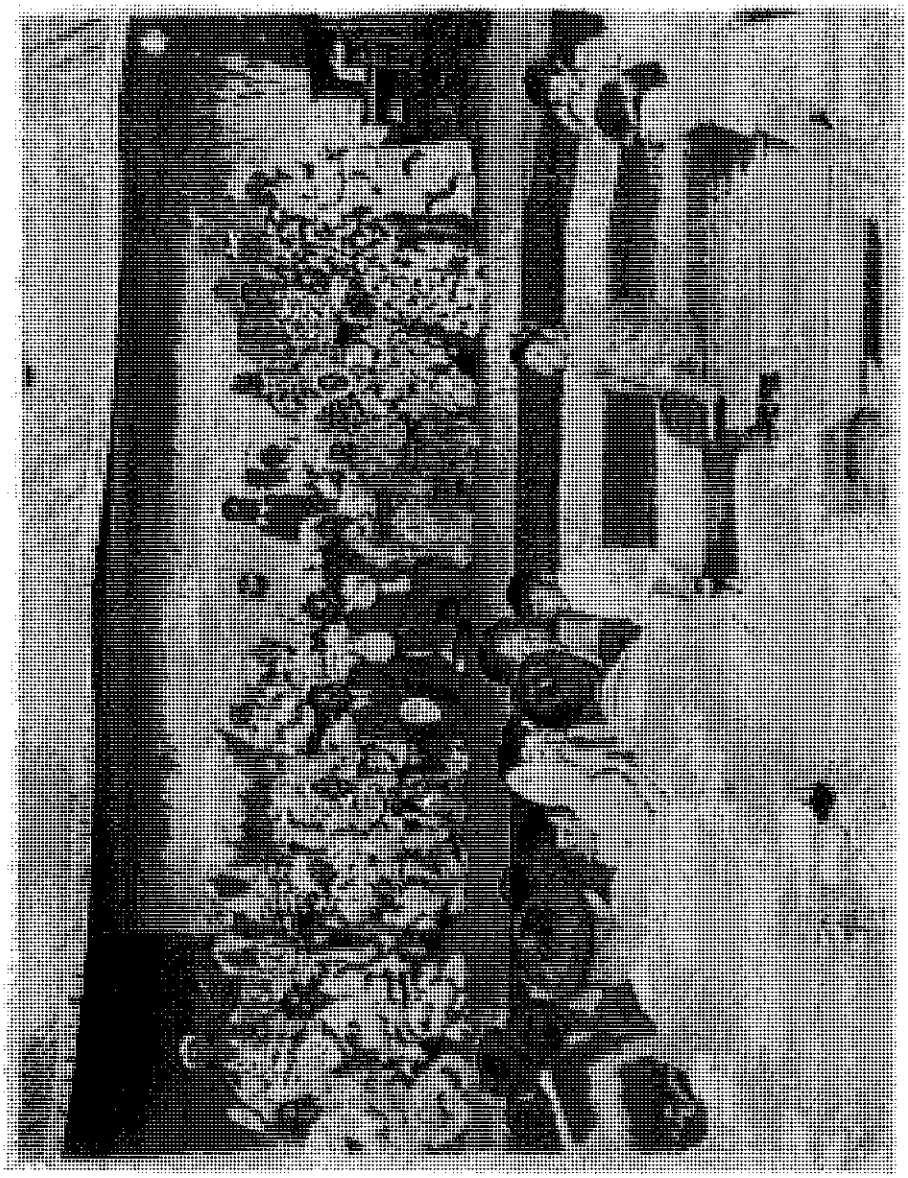


PLATE XIV

DOYO BUYO RECITAL, SAN FRANCISCO, 1934

PLATE XV

STUDENTS PERFORMING MINYO AS PART OF DOYO BUYO RECITAL STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

APPENDIX C

PHOTOGRAPHS--BON ODORI IN THE UNITED STATES

PLATE XVI

REVEREND IWANAGA LEADING BON ODORI, LATE 1940's

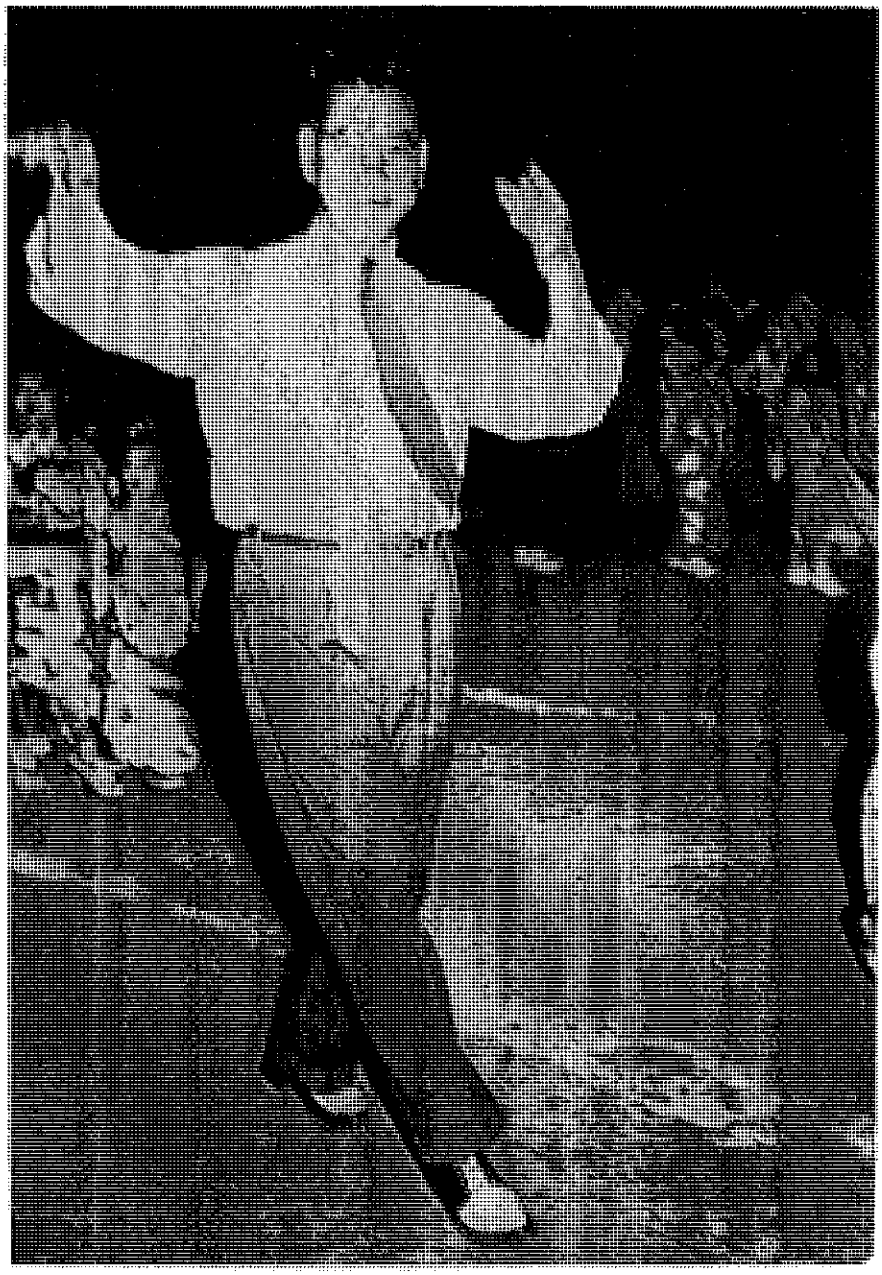


PLATE XVII

DOYO BUYO RECITAL HELD ON SAME EVENING AND AT SAME LOCATION AS OBON FESTIVAL, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, 1930's

PLATE XVIII

SACRAMENTO OBON FESTIVAL HELD AFTER DOYO BUYO RECITAL, 1930's

PLATE XIX

SACRAMENTO OBON FESTIVAL, 1930's

PLATE XX

BUDDHIST DAY PARADE, INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION
TREASURE ISLAND, 1940

PLATE XXI

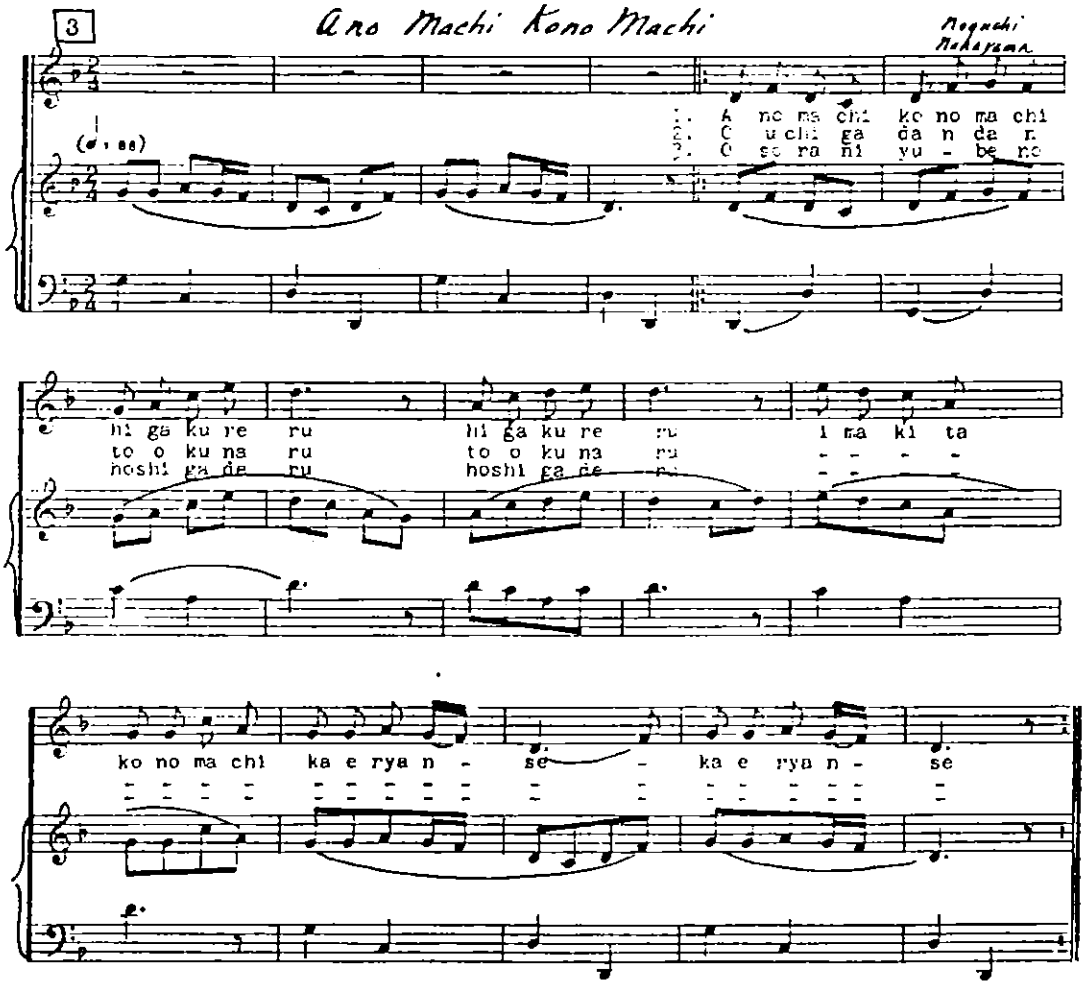
REVEREND IWANAGA LEADING BUDDHIST SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN A BON ODORI REHEARSAL FOR THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BCA, SAN JOSE, 1948

APPENDIX D

DOYO MUSIC

Figure 4

Doyo Song, "Ano Machi, Kono Machi"



(Figure 4: courtesy of Buddhist Churches of America)

Figure 5

Doyo Song, "Hanayome Ningyo"

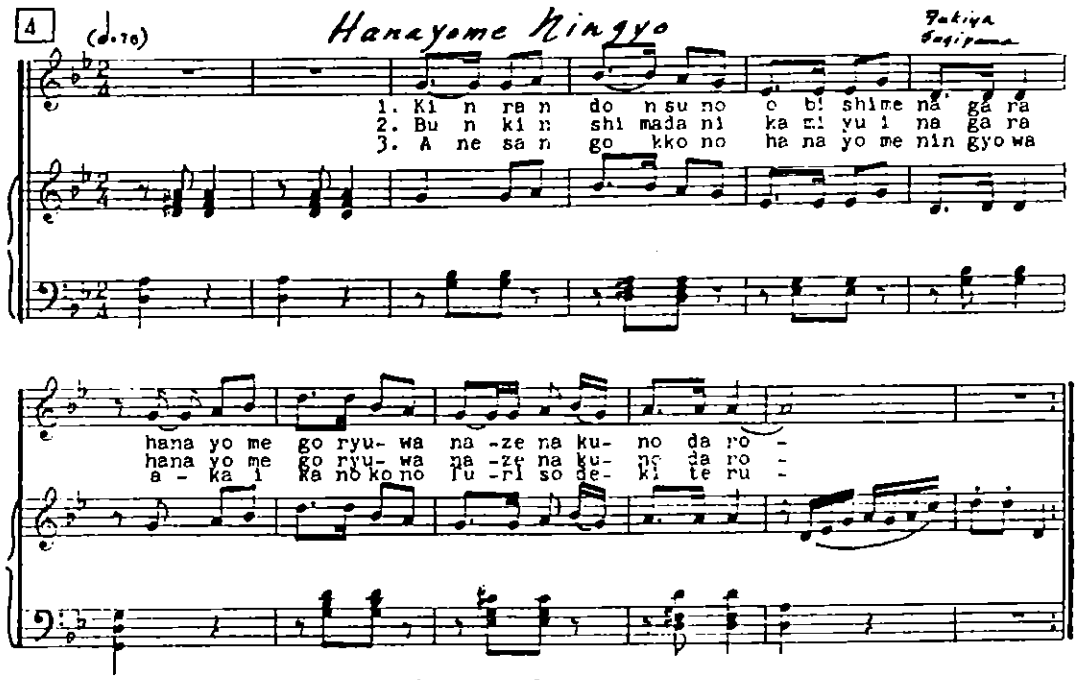
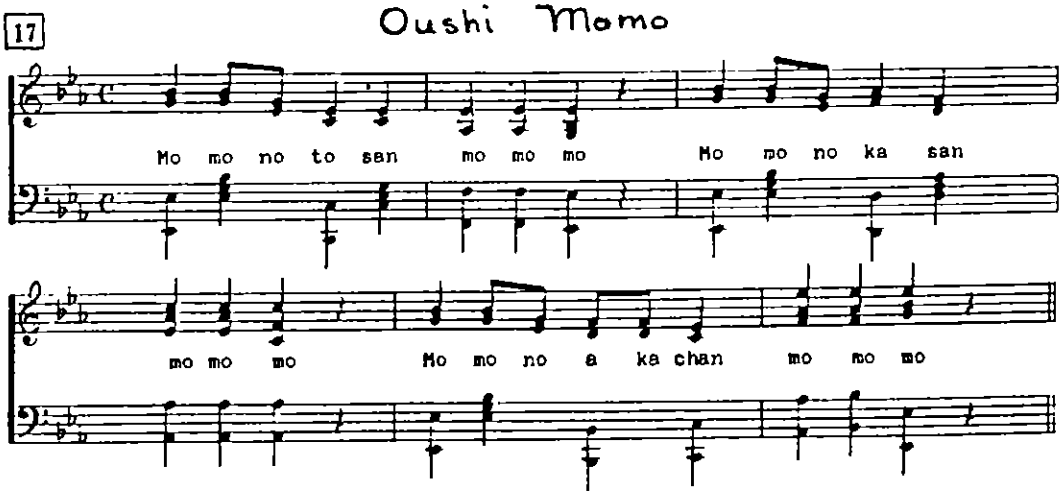


Figure 6

Doyo Song, "Oushi Momo"



(Figure 5 and 6: courtesy of Buddhist Churches of America)

GLOSSARY

AMIDA BUDDHA: Buddha of Infinite Life and Immeasurable Light. In Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, "Amida Buddha is Wisdom and Compassion, the ultimate principle of enlightenment" (Yamaoka, 1974:10).

AVALAMBANA: Sanskrit word meaning "hanging downward", symbolizing suffering. The most accepted theory of the etymology of the term Obon is that it derived from the word, Avalambana. Avalambana is also the name of a Buddhist sutra.

BETSUIN: In the United States, a Jodo Shinshu temple with a large membership in which the honorary title of betsuin (branch temple) has been conferred.

BON ODORI: several types of folk dances performed during the observance of Obon.

BUDDHA: one who has attained enlightenment. "Buddha means a Fully Awakened One', perfect in wisdom and compassion" (Tsuji, 1979:28).

BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA: the religious organization of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist temples in the mainland United States, formally called the Buddhist Mission of North America. Most members are of Japanese heritage.

BUDDHIST MISSION OF NORTH AMERICA (BMNA): in Japanese, Hokubei Bukkyo Dan. See Buddhist Churches of America.

BUSSEI: abbreviation of Young Men's Buddhist Association of Young Buddhist Association.

DHARMA: the Truth, ultimate law of Buddha

DOYO: children's songs first written during the Taisho Period (1912-1926) by Japanese poets and Japanese musicians trained in Western music. These artists wanted children to have songs written for them that were of a high artistic standard yet were easily understood because they were written in colloquial Japanese. The Doyo movement was a reaction against Shoka, songs written to be taught in the schools.

DOYO BUYO: dance movements which accompany the performance of Doyo songs.

FUJINKAI: Buddhist Women's Association.

FURYU: performances of dance and music, often with elaborate decoration, which were originally performed to avoid pestilence, or to bring rain, etc. (Honda, 1983: 100). A subgroup of Furyu is Nembutsu Odori.

GAKU GEI-KAI: class day. A day when Japanese school children demonstrate their abilities including the performance of music and dance.

GASSHO: to join palms together in a gesture of reverence and gratitude.

GATHA: Buddhist hymns whose musical compositions are in a Western musical style, usually with piano or organ accompaniment.

HANA MATSURI: a religious observance to honor the birth of Buddha. April 8 is the day of observance for Jodo Shinshu Buddhists.

HAPPI: a short jacket which is belted and tied in front.

IKEBANA: Japanese flower arranging.

ISSEI: Immigrants from Japan to America. Considered the first generation.

JODO SHINSHU BUDDHISM: True Pure Land Sect. A sect of Japanese Amida Buddhism founded by Shinran Shonin (1173-1262 A.D.)

KAGURA: invocation of gods at Shinto shrines followed by the performance of dance or song or both (Hoff, 1983:106).

KARMA: the concept in Buddhism that everything is a result of past deeds and every action has a bearing on the future (Tsuji, 1979:26).

KATAKANA: a non-cursive, syllabic writing system used to symbolize the sounds of Japanese. Most often used to write words borrowed from European languages.

KENDO: a Japanese martial art.

KIMONO: traditional Japanese garment worn by both men and women. Kimono are made of long panels of cloth with rectangular sleeves.

KOROMO: Buddhist vestments.

KUMAMOTO PREFECTURE: located in the western portion of the island of Kyushu, Japan. Agriculture is the principal occupation of the prefecture.

KYOSHI: a level of ordination in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism above the level of tokudo.

MA: a term used in the performing arts to indicate an intentional pause in time or an empty space. The term has come to represent an aesthetic concept used in other arts as well.

MAUDGALYAYANA: Sanskrit name from which the Japanese name, Mokuren is derived.

MEIJI PERIOD: period in Japanese history from 1868 until 1912 corresponding to the rule of Emperor Meiji. Characterized by the Japanese government's move to rapidly industrialize Japan and introduce the country to Western culture.

MINYO: generic term used to refer to Japanese folk music as well as Japanese folk dance.

MOGALLANA: The name of Maudgalyayana in the Pali language.

MOCHI: pounded glutinous rice cakes.

MOKUREN: the Japanese name of one of the ten leading disciples of Sakyamuni Buddha. The story of Mokuren's attempt to release his mother from her suffering in the hell of hungry ghosts is the origination story for the observance of Obon.

MUJO: the impermanence of things

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU: "In Jodo Shinshu, the link between Amida and man is the Name of Namu Amida Butsu" (Buddhist Churches of America, 1974:28).

NEMBUTSU ODORI: dances performed while chanting the Nembutsu or singing Japanese Buddhist hymns as an expression of joy in the awareness of Amida's infinite compassion.

NISEI: American-born children of Japanese parents residing in the United States. Considered the second generation.

NISHI HONGWANJI: a sect of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in Japan and the largest Japanese Buddhist sect in the United States. The Buddhist Churches of America is the religious organization in the United States that represents the sect.

OBI: wide sash wrapped at waist and lower chest level and worn with kimono.

OBON: Japanese Buddhist religious observance. A time to express gratitude to ancestors and to honor the dead.

OBON FESTIVAL: in the United States, Obon Festival refers to the public celebration aspect of Obon observances which has the dancing of bon odori as its focus.

ODORI: Japanese dance with light, almost air-born movements that are closely tied to the rhythmical accompaniment. Odori originated from dances for the common people.

OLAMBANA: corrupted form of Avalambana.

ONDO: a style of folk song which usually has a lead soloist who is answered by a chorus (Kodani, 1984a). Ondo music is often used to accompany bon odori. Ondo is also a modern, secular style of bon dance and music, often with Western orchestration which first became popular in the 1930's.

PRETA: term meaning hungry ghosts.

SAKYAMUNI BUDDHA: honorary name of Siddhartha Gautama, founder of Buddhism.

SENSEI: a title of respect used in addressing a teacher or scholar. In the United States, "Sensei" was also used by lay members in addressing Jodo Shinshu ministers.

SHINRAN: founder of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

SHINTO: the indigenous religion of Japan consisting of a complex system of practices, ideas and institutions existing at both a loosely structured local level and as an organized religion at the state level. Shinto venerates the spirits existing in all of nature (Grapard 1983:129-130).

SHOKA: Songs written for Japanese students and compiled into textbooks during the Meiji and Taisho Era. Shoka were composed in Western song style by Japanese musicians with lyrics written in classical Japanese by Japanese poets.

SHOWA ERA: Historical period corresponding to the reign of Emperor Hirohito from 1926 until 1989.

SUTRA: records of sermons and dialogues of Sakyamuni Buddha.

TAIKO: Japanese horizontal drum whose uses include accompanying bon odori.

TAISHO ERA: historical period corresponding to the reign of Emperor Taisho from 1912 until 1926. The period was characterized by increased democratization and changes in Japanese culture due to an increased contact with Western nations.

TAMAMATSURI: "Welcoming the Spirits" Festival which was assimilated into the Buddhist festival of Obon (Matsunaga, 1974:231).

TOKUDO: first level of ordination in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

UNDO KAI: annual school athletic meet.

URABON: Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese Buddhist observance of Yu-lan-p'en. "Bon" is the shortened form of Urabon.

YAGURA: raised platform for musicians which stands in the middle of the dance circle during Obon Festival. Musicians, the announcer, and sometimes the dance leaders occupy the yagura during Obon Festival in the United States.

YUKATA: summer cotton kimono worn by both men and women.

YU-LAN-P'EN: Chinese transliteration of Olambana. A Chinese Buddhist Festival for the dead which also has roots in Confucianism, ancestor worship and Taoism.

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