

## Young Japanese in Seattle: Solidarity of Issei Immigrants in the Early 1900s

Kenji Tanaka

### [要約]

本論は 1900 年代のアメリカ、シアトル港行き日本人移民年齢構成を、乗船名簿から調べた。その結果日本人移民の平均年齢は 25.2 歳と判明した。このことから未知の国アメリカにおいて、若き日本人移民は人生経験乏しいなかで、どのように若夫婦として家庭を築いたのか、資金を持たない日本人移民がどのようにして商売を定着させていったのかを考察した。

また Seattle City Directory をもとに、1909, 1915, 1920 の各年における日本人の商売定着状況を調べた。抽出事例として洗濯業を選び、同一人物がどれだけ洗濯業に定着しているかを調べた。それによると利益率が良いとされる洗濯業でも日本人移民は頻繁に職を変えていることが分かった。このことから日本人移民はより高い利益率の商売に向かったと推測される。上昇志向であった日本人移民についても考察した。

## 1. Introduction

Young Japanese immigrants or Issei Japanese in the United States of America (USA) started their small businesses in the 1900 and 1910. Kazuko Itoi, a protagonist in the novel *Nisei Daughter* written by Monica Sone (1953, 1, 8), shows us how her father, an Issei, established his small business in Seattle and continued in that business thereafter. These Japanese immigrants were able to begin their small businesses in the USA by initially gaining menial work as laborers in railroad section hand, sawmill and canneries where they earned and saved enough money to establish their own businesses. There was the strong desire on the part of nearly all the Japanese immigrants to escape from the dependent position of the wage earner (Millis, 1915, 57). One of the reasons for this was that Issei entrepreneurs did not have to have a large amount of money to start their barbershop, restaurant, or laundry. Bonacich (1980,46) writes, “The most common Japanese businesses as of 1909 were lodgings and restaurants, with about 300 concerns of each kind in California. Their average capitalization was \$680 and \$585, respectively.”

The author of this paper wants to discuss, as a case study, the situation for young Japanese immigrants in Seattle before they started their businesses, and how they embarked on their lucrative businesses after working in railroad section hand or sawmills as wage earners. Japanese immigrants found that, as Murayama (1989, 149) reports, “average incomes for independent operators are \$1,457 for business operators and \$1,243 for farmers, while average incomes for wage laborers vary from \$444 to \$642.” It seems obvious that operating their restaurants or any other small shop was what early Japanese immigrants were aiming to do. The primary motive for Japanese emigration was economic success and it has been noted that the Japanese had not enjoyed economic opportunities at home like those in this USA (Ichihashi, 1932, 88).<sup>1</sup>

The author of this paper also feels that young Japanese immigrants must have helped each other doing their business economically and mentally, and that they must have developed their solidarity within the Japanese community in the face of unfavorable conditions experienced by the Issei Japanese.<sup>2</sup> Nurturing solidarity among them was the basic and prime factor underpinning their success in pursuing small business in the USA, although the Issei would not have joined their hands each other back in their native country, Japan. As Miyamoto (1984, 1) stresses Issei’s powerful internal solidarity,<sup>3</sup> this paper places an emphasis on the cooperative attitudes and activities of the Issei through their business and

daily experiences in Seattle.

Through the information derived from the *Passenger Lists of Vessels*, the average age of Japanese immigrants when they sailed is known. Therefore this paper asserts that the young Japanese immigrants in the USA needed solidarity very badly because they were young and had little wisdom for living in a foreign country. As well, they were not able to consult with Japanese elders as a reliable source of information they could depend upon. This paper uses the *Passenger Lists of Vessels* (1985), *Seattle City Directory* (classified business directory 1909, 1915, 1920), books; and articles as sources of information to gain a better idea of how the Issei Japanese were struggling to survive in a hostile land in the early 1900s (Ichioka, 1988, 1).

## **2. The youthfulness of the Japanese immigrants when arriving in the USA**

It was decided that it was important to identify the average age of the Japanese immigrants who ventured to sail to the USA with their hopes and ambitions, because it was considered that any immigrants who had no relatives or business acquaintances in the target country would be young and brave. Ichioka (1988, 51) writes about Japanese immigrant numbers counted by the American immigration authority, “From 1901 to 1907, the second phase, 42,457 more persons were admitted,” but he does not mention their average age or age brackets of the Japanese emigrants. This paper calculated the average age of the Japanese who sailed from Yokohama to Seattle, by checking the Japanese passengers’ age and gender through the *Passenger Lists of Vessels*. This provided access to data showing how youthful or how old Japanese emigrants were at the time, although the lists include not only Japanese immigrants but also business travelers. Considering the environment of the year of 1907 when Japanese emigration zeal was intensified, it is confidently asserted that most of the passengers written in the lists were Japanese immigrants.

The following table shows the numbers of Japanese people sailing from Yokohama to Port Townsend (Seattle) in 1907 and their average ages.

Table I : Descriptions of the Japanese passengers Sailing to Seattle in 1907

date, captain, vessel's name	number of Japanese passengers	average age
January 10, K. Kawara	72	26.6
Mar. 7, M.G. Curnow. s.s. Kaga Maru	124	24.4
Hacks Austin, Minnesota	49	23.4
Mar.20, K. Kato, Tosa maru	139	26.1
Apr.6, Shinanomaru	206	24.7
Charles Austin, s.s. Minnesota	95	24.6
Aug. 22, F. E. Cope, Kaga Maru	52	26.1
Sep. 5, J. Nagao, s.s. Tosa Maru	53	27.1
Sep.? 1907, Shaun Austin, s.s. Minnesota	174	24.3

s.s. : steam ship

(The *Passenger List* of Vessels contains only name, sex, age, and information of married or single, so the author calculated average ages after summing up all the passengers' ages)

The following table identifies two vessels and their time of sailing, the “K. Kawara, January 10, 1907” and the “Minnesota, September, 1907” as examples to sort out Japanese immigrants by age brackets; namely, teens, twenties, thirties, and forties respectively. The resultant numbers are as follows:

Table II : Age brackets of Japanese passengers arriving at Port Townsend (Seattle) in 1907

name of vessel, month	teens	twenties	thirties	forties
Kawara, January	13 (18%)	36 (50%)	19 (26%)	4 (6%)
s.s. Minnesota, September	52 (30%)	80 (46%)	32 (18%)	9 (5%)

It can be seen that the average age of the Japanese immigrants when they reached Port Townsend was 25.2 years old. The data also shows, from age brackets above, that the Japanese immigrants were definitely young. That is, the group of “twenties bracket” constitutes the biggest portion of Japanese immigrants and the group of “forties bracket” was almost negligible. This shows a noticeable tendency for Japanese at that time to emigrate to the USA in their younger age. Therefore the focus of the following discussion is on the problems that the youthfulness of the Japanese immigrants might have posed in the USA in the early 1900s.

Some of the Japanese immigrants, who flooded to the USA as manual laborers in the 1890s and 1900s, and worked hard and saved money, subsequently became owners of their small businesses.<sup>4</sup> The reason behind it was that wages paid to the Japanese laborers were increasing year by year. Ichihashi (1932,141) explains; “So it is found that with the shrewd bargaining ability of the contractor as an active factor, the rate of wages of Japanese advanced more rapidly than that of other races until in some instances the same rate of pay obtained for all races even before the restrictions upon further immigration were imposed in 1907.”<sup>5</sup> Now it is known, as an example, how young Japanese immigrants were at the time of their arrival on the American shore in 1907 as an example, we go on to the next question of how the immigrant families got along with their new environment.

### **3. Difficulties Japanese immigrants experienced starting their new life and small businesses**

The Japanese regarded unskilled jobs as temporary stopping points, for their compelling motivation was to advance in the world as quickly as possible into individual entrepreneurship. They leased farms or opened shops and offices in the city of Seattle as their savings and opportunities permitted (Miyamoto, 1972, 222). The Japanese were thrifty, and this was shown in their willingness to work long hours in getting the whole family to work in the business as unpaid family labor (Bonacich, 1980, 47). It seems that the Japanese laborers managed to earn and save the money required for their businesses but the question arises as to how they were to operate their small businesses without the experience and knowledge necessary to start them.

Since the majority of Japanese immigrants were drawn from the farming classes (Ichihashi, 1932, 97), Japanese immigrants definitely had to have at least minimum knowledge of a particular business they were going to enter. That is where cooperation given from fellow Japanese immigrants became an imperative. Bonacich (1980) elaborates on a cooperative system among a Japanese community when they started their business to be a *petit bourgeois* in the USA.<sup>6</sup> He argues, "Family, prefectural, and ethnic ties provided the basis for this cooperation." "Family" here means unpaid family labor in doing their trade, and "prefectural and ethnic ties" mainly refers to *kenjinkai* or *tanomoshiko*, which were other

forms of Japanese-style cooperative organizations. Their function was to pool the money collected by a group of participants within the same *kenjinkai* and to lend a larger sum of money to the same *kenjinkai* member and provide the new members with enough knowledge needed to start his trade. These mutual benefit-seeking associations were maintained with a rotation system within the society. With the help of the same *ken* fellow members, the young Japanese people managed to build the foundation of their business.

This paper would like to point out that, as well as the economic cooperation given by the institution of *tanomoshiko*, young Japanese couples must have required personal and private helping hands when they were living in a foreign country, where they experienced almost no friendly treatment from the local white residents. In forming a Japanese immigrant community in the USA, young Japanese couples were not able to get help from their own parents or elders in their homeland, which means they lacked guidance or useful tips handed down from their Japanese ancestors. For example, when a young Japanese man and a woman met as “picture marriage” in the Seattle port and started their new life as a couple, they must have expected that they would have children and because of this lack of support from their elders these young Japanese couples experienced difficulties during pregnancy and childbirth.

Young Japanese couples experienced a hard time having childbirths and rearing their babies in Seattle.<sup>7</sup> There were few experienced Japanese experts in delivering Japanese women in the USA, and so midwives or *sambas* as they are known in Japan, would have been present and helped the Japanese women a great deal, although the number of them was limited. Takeuchi records the number of *sambas* helping young Japanese women in Seattle; there were four *samba* practicing offices in Seattle in 1908. Therefore midwives should be acknowledged as great contributors to the Japanese community in the USA at that time. Smith (2005, 61) discusses that “midwives, moving in and out of their (Issei’s) homes and those of their clients, contributed to the creation of Issei women’s culture and community. Young immigrant women, most of whom had left both mothers and mothers-in-law behind in Japan, were especially eager for the emotional and social support provided by midwives during pregnancy and childbirth.”

Miyamoto (1984) furthermore stresses a fact that young Japanese community in Seattle lacked its supervisory people in their community:

“Living as most of these families did in a crowded transition area, the children had only

the busy streets and the vacant lots to play in. Moreover, they were in the center of Seattle's worst criminal zone, the notorious "Profanity Hill" of this city. The parents themselves were in most cases busy during the day earning the rather limited incomes possible from their small shops, and they had little time to give to their children." (*Social Solidarity*, 40)

Miyamoto identifies another point to be addressed in this paper. That is, young Japanese husbands and wives were busy managing their trade, and so they had almost no time to spare for their children. And yet young Japanese parents could not depend upon grandparents for bringing up their children in the USA. Japanese Issei parents depended only upon a few helping hands in having a child in Seattle, and they had no mental and social support in rearing their children. Japanese cultural traditions were consequently not handed down from grandparents to the younger generations including the grandchildren in the USA, therefore it is clear that the first generation of the Japanese immigrants in the USA had to live without the mental and physical help from relatives. Because Japanese immigrants in 1907 were young and inexperienced in life, they could not have been successful both in their small business and everyday life without significant help from prefectural organizational forms of *tanomoshiko* and *samba* women.<sup>8</sup>

"Whatever differences and difficulties arose, they [Japanese immigrants] were settled within the group. If any member got into trouble, the colony was back of him to the fullest extent," writes Steiner (1917, 133) to illustrate a function of the Issei organization and solidarity of the Japanese immigrants. Even if they received enough support with money and information from a mutual-assistance community, they must have also needed group solidarity among themselves, economically or psychologically.

Figure, Young Japanese husbands and wives in Seattle, 1910



Young Japanese couples after going through picture marriage procedures in Seattle: Minezo Tanaka, the author's grandfather (second from the right) in the back row, and Masa Tanaka, the author's grandmother (second from the right) in the front.

This notion of solidarity is vague, but Miyamoto (1984, 25) makes it clearer by reporting a tendency of the Japanese in the USA. He explains,<sup>9</sup> “Not only is there this urgency for buying within the Japanese community, but there is further a recognition of *ken* differences and a pressure upon a *ken* member to buy from those of his own *ken*. There is a tendency for this to follow more or less naturally since in-group conceptions among *ken* members become very strong because of the extensive social intercourse that develops on the basis of this single relationship.” Miyamoto's description is right in that in-group economy sometimes worked out to sustain the Issei's newly-established businesses. To put it in another way there was a presence of particular types of cultural and social organizational forms (Fugita, 1991, 50). It is worth remembering that there must have been Issei's solidarity, which could be considered as a kind of lubricating oil among the Japanese, making their personal relationships and businesses smooth and successful.



#### 4. The Japanese immigrants' energetic pursuit of economic success

It is widely known that Japanese people in Seattle were running a variety of small businesses in 1908, and the total number of different kinds of businesses amount to forty-two according to the table compiled by the Immigration Commission Reports.<sup>10</sup> Examples of kinds of businesses Japanese immigrants were operating and the numbers of shops in each of the business category include: provision and supply (26), meat and fish (5), barbershops (46), hotels and boarding houses (72), laundries (37), restaurants (American meals 36, Japanese meals 51), billiard parlors (25), confectioner (5), employment agent (17), magazines and newspapers (12). Murayama also reports the number of Japanese who were involved in those independent small trades in Seattle in 1908 as being four hundred and thirty-one. Considering that the year of 1908 was only the beginning of a comprehensive phase of Japanese immigration, we can say Japanese immigrants were energetically seeking economic success even in the early stage of immigration. Murayama's idea is supported by Millis, and he argues, "In the strength of their ambition one reason is found for the more rapid advance, other than occupational, of the Japanese than of any other race conspicuous in the population of the Western states."<sup>11</sup> The author of this paper takes up one particular small business in tracing the way the Japanese exerted themselves to gain wealth.

The following tables (III in 1909, IV in 1915, V in 1920) show the names and addresses of Japanese proprietors who opened and operated their laundry businesses in Seattle.<sup>12</sup> What the author of this paper tries to do is to ascertain whether those Japanese proprietors were persevering or not. In other words how long did they continue their small businesses in a particular genre and whether or not they desisted in the laundry business in a very short time.

First the result of 1909 (Table III) and 1915 (Table IV) are considered. None of the Japanese proprietors in 1909 continued in the laundry business through into 1915, which means 11 Japanese proprietors were running their own laundry business in 1909, but somehow they all quit this trade for reasons unknown. One of those reasons may have been that they changed the business target into another profitable one. Second, we see the same tendency of the Japanese proprietors from 1915 (Table IV) through 1920 (Table V), although only one proprietor, the Hashidate Laundry, did continue from 1915 through 1920, and remained in existence for at least for five years in Seattle.

Table III Seattle City Directory, the Item of “Laundries” (Japanese names), 1909

Amimoto Y	813, Yesler way
Fujita J	104, Dearborn
Hamanaka T	104, 5th av. S.
Hasegawa Y	416, Washington
Ito Chiusaburo	207, Washington
Kamei K	111, 5th av. S.
Moriwaki M	623 1/2, Main
Nippon Laundry & Bath Co.	220 1/2, Washington
Noguchi R	510, 1st av. S.
Okamoto U	518, Jackson
Oki Y	720, Dearborn

Table IV Seattle City Directory, the Item of “Laundries” (Japanese names), 1915

Haismoto H	1003, Weller
Hamanoka T	412 1/2, Main
Hashidate Lndy	302, 6th av. S.
Igi K	506, Maynard av.
Kadoshima K	515, Yesler way
Kazita M	659, Lane
Mayeda I	204 1/2, Main
Miyao G	509, Washington
Moramoto J	1040, King
Morita K	1216, 1st av. S.
Muramoto S	219 1/2, Washington
Nakatani N	416, Washington
Nakatani S	813, Yesler way
Nishimoto T	509, 7th av. S.
Ohashi S	515 1/2, 6th av. S.
Ota Y	604, King
Sagiyama Toyokichi	1229, Jackson
Sato Kujiro	506, E. Pine
Shokyu S	210 1/2, Main
Tanaka Y	922, Main
Uchimura Tsugie	414, 5th av.
Waki E	815, Maynard av.
Yamamoto Y	302, 2nd av. S. basement
Yokohama Lydy	657, Main

Table V Seattle City Directory, the Item of “Laundries” (Japanese names), 1920

Hamada K	659, Lane
Hara T	219 1/2, Washington
Hashidate Lndy	602, 6th av. S.
Hinode Lndy & Bath	515, 6th av. S.
Hotta Oi	716 Dearborn
Kato M	118 5th av. S.
Kayasuga M	702, Yesler way
Kisaka S	210 1/2, Main
Kojima Z	657 Main
Konishi K	212 1/2, Occidental av.
Koura N	666 1/2, Jackson
Kuniyuki K	415, Yesler way
Mitsumori Y	654 Dearborn
Moto Hase	1003, Weller
Nagashima J	506, Maynard av.
Naito S	120, 4th av. S.
Oiwa K	1040, King
Samura S	519, James
Sao I	1044, Jackson
Shinya Y	813, Yesler way
Taguchi K	705, 6th av. S.
Takahashi S	702, Dearborn
Tamura Seitsu	416 1/2, Terrace
Tanaka M	517, 5th av. N.
Tanaka Risa Mrs	922, Main
Tomoeda Y	510 1/2, King
Tomura S	815, Maynard
Uchida Suyenori	112, 5th av. N.

What can be observed from these tables is that it is not right to conclude that the laundry business was such a waste of labor that the Japanese immediately left the business. Rather, laundry was one of the sources of big income for Japanese immigrants. Murayama (1989, 123) elaborates on what lucrative Japanese small businesses in Seattle were: “among other things hotel, boarding house, provision and supply, barbershop, laundry and restaurant were lucrative businesses, for the Japanese were discriminated against in the white society so that they had nothing but relying on the fellow Japanese to get such services.”<sup>13</sup> He also adds that those paying businesses were expanding their management into the white community as

well. Of course starting a small business, for the Japanese immigrants, was not a passing fad at that time.

Therefore laundry business was something that the Japanese people targeted for their wealth. We might say that the Japanese immigrants got into the laundry business and made enough money to become *petit bourgeois*,<sup>14</sup> and then they may have hopped along Seattle's Skid Road to look for another lucrative business.<sup>15</sup> Japanese Issei were very energetic in pursuing economic success and they must have placed a great deal of value on a mind-set of making money. That is why the names of Japanese listed in the business directory of 1909 had completely disappeared from the directory of 1915. This trend could be called job-hopping, which is not easily understood as a real mentality underpinning their business practices. One thing is certain, Japanese Issei took it for granted that they should pursue wealth with whatever means they could employ. They had dynamic behavioral patterns in managing their businesses and executive talents for earning money.

In order to support the idea of Issei's job-hopping in Seattle we have to also consider the other side of Japanese movements at this time. Since Japanese immigrants had been freed from the special and peculiar conditions of Japan on account of their emigration, they began to make remarkable progress under the most severe handicaps of prejudice and hostility (McWilliams, 1944, 78). However they rarely thought they would be there to stay. They wanted to be *dekasegi* workers and ended up being birds of passage.<sup>16</sup> Their mentality was that they were interested only in earning money as quickly as possible and returning to Japan (Ichioka, 1988, 147). In other words, they were indifferent to the land they had migrated to and they were just sojourners.

The Japanese immigrants proved that they had strong *dekasegi* mentality in their lives as migrants. This is known from USA census, which Gulick (1918, 164) introduces us to in his book.<sup>17</sup> When we think of the Japanese *dekasegi* people, we have to check the numbers of those who left the USA and returned to Japan. Gulick explains that after the "Gentlemen's Agreement" went into effect, 39,645 men and 33,812 women were admitted into the USA. In this same period, however, 54,786 men returned to Japan and only 11,819 women (Gulick, 1918, 164), which means that the Japanese male population of the USA diminished by 15,141, while the Japanese female population increased by 21,993.<sup>18</sup>

Table VI-1: Movement of Japanese Male Immigrants

Total Japanese male departures (1909-1916)	54,786
Total mail Japanese arrivals (1909-1916)	39,645
Decrease of Japanese males in the U.S.	15,141

Table VI-2: Movement of Women Japanese Male Immigrants

Total Japanese female entered the U.S. (1909-1916)	33,812
Total Japanese females departed (1909-1916)	11,819
Increase of Japanese females in the U.S.	21,993

Source: Gulilck, *American Democracy and Asiatic Citizenship*, 165

These Japanese people, who worked for several months or years in the USA and saved some money, left the USA like any transient visitors would do. This would also be one of characteristics of Japanese immigrants who were energetic in their small business and never stayed at one place even when they found their source of fortune.

However there were a few other possible explanations for the decline of male immigrants in the USA. On the one hand, there is a presumption that there were also many Japanese male immigrants who ventured to run their business in the USA but failed to accumulate as much money as they had hoped and quickly returned to Japan. On the other hand, some of them may have given up running small business because they may have indulged themselves in immoral pleasure such as prostitution and gambling.<sup>19</sup> In any case it is clear that the number of Japanese-men-returnees exceeded that of new comers from Japan to the USA.

It is evident that there was a complex dynamism in the Japanese pursuing wealth through small businesses in the USA and there were a lot of returnees that outnumbered Japanese emigrants to the USA. These facts characterize the mobile and energetic Japanese behavioral patterns for about ten years right after the Gentlemen's Agreement in 1908. This means that there were many aspiring Japanese people in the early stages of immigration to the USA and unfortunately many cases of failures as well.<sup>20</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Other scholars also say that the main motive of emigration was economic betterment. Boddy, 1921, 142; Miyamoto, 1984, vi; Ichioka, 1988, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Miyamoto (1984, x) asserts, "In other aspects of community life, although no institutionalized Jim Crow system existed that explicitly defined areas from which members of the Japanese minority would be excluded, there were many social groups and situations where they were not welcomed." Fugita (1991, 47) also writes a reason of Japanese small business, "As is true of these other groups, the choice of this kind of economic accommodation was made in part because of their exclusion from other types of economic activity."

<sup>3</sup> Miyamoto further asserts that the need for an intimate study of the Japanese community cannot be too much emphasized. *Social Solidarity*, 1.

<sup>4</sup> About small business run by the Issei, see Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States*, 116-136.

<sup>5</sup> This seems to be Roosevelt's executive order to stop migration of Japanese laborers from Hawaii and Mexico on March 14, 1907.

<sup>6</sup> See Bonacich, *The economic basis*, 37-63.

<sup>7</sup> Miyamoto (1984) points out an important problem connected with youthfulness of the Japanese immigrant parents. He argues, "Living as most of these families did in a crowded transition area, the children had only the busy streets and the vacant lots to play in. . . . The parents themselves were in most cases busy during the day earning the rather limited income possible from their small shops, and they had little time to give to their children (*Social Solidarity*, 40)." Since many of the parents worked during the day, they faced the problem of providing care for their children during those hours. The Christian churches provided the means of meeting this problem with their kindergartens (*Social Solidarity*, 47-8) . . .

<sup>8</sup> The term of "social organizational forms" was used in Stephen S. Fugita's book, *Japanese American Ethnicity*, 50.

<sup>9</sup> He also introduces other incident that occurred in Seattle in terms of Japanese-locals business transaction: "The earliest developments in the economic organization of the Japanese took place in the central district of their community. Quite early, however, seekers for greater profits tended to move outward with such businesses as hotels, dye-works, produce-houses, markets, and restaurants, in which they frequently came into direct competition with American entrepreneurs. The result was anti-Japanese agitation in which the tactics used by the Americans in their efforts to quash this Japanese invasion lay in threats of boycott against any wholesalers who sold goods to the Japanese. But as Summer points out, 'Nothing so easily establishes solidarity within a group as an attack from without.' The Japanese had latent within the community all the forces enabling quick mobilization of their members into such groups as their business associations. Therefore, these attempts to drive out the

Japanese were never successful, for the Japanese themselves formed associations and returned the fight by threats of boycott against any who refused to sell to their people (Miyamoto, *Social Solidarity*, 22)."

<sup>10</sup> About the details of trades see Millis, *The Japanese Problem*, 62-63.

<sup>11</sup> Millis, *The Japanese Problems*, 57.

<sup>12</sup> The author checked Classified Business Directory (category of "laundries"—Chinese and Japanese) in *POLK's Seattle City Directory 1909, 1915 and 1920*, at the Seattle Public Library in 2013. Therefore Japanese names listed in Tables were picked out by the author to narrow down all proprietors to the Japanese management.

<sup>13</sup> Miyamoto also writes that hotels, groceries, laundries, and other similar services were much in demand in the Japanese society in Seattle. Miyamoto, "An Immigrant Community in America," 223.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen S. Fugita uses this expression of "petit bourgeois" to mean the Japanese people who entered small businesses and made much money in western states of the U.S. *Japanese American Ethnicity*, 47.

<sup>15</sup> In *Nisei Daughter* the writer uses the word "Skid Road" or "Skidrow" to mean the notorious area of Japantown in Seattle. Monica Sone, *Nisei Daughter*, 8

Miyamoto refers to this area as "Seattle's worst criminal zone, the notorious 'Profanity Hill' of this city." S. Frank Miyamoto, *Social Solidarity among the Japanese*, 40.

<sup>16</sup> Ichihashi uses the expression of "birds of passage." *Japanese in the United States*, 65.

<sup>17</sup> Gulick illustrates Japanese population in the U.S. referring to the Japanese departing from the U.S. *American Democracy and Asiatic Citizenship*, 162-74.

<sup>18</sup> This paper does not go into a discussion of "picture bride" and "picture marriage" practiced by a Japanese man and a woman. See the details of picture bride in Kenji Tanaka, "Forming the Foundation of the Immigrant Society in America: Picture Bride's Arrival before the Gentlemen's Agreement," 31-51.

<sup>19</sup> Yuji Ichioka writes about Japanese prostitutes and gambling in detail. See *The Issei*, 28-40 and 176-79.

<sup>20</sup> As to "energetic in pursuing economic success," the chapter's title, the author of this paper is happy to inform the reader that Japanese students at the University of Washington in Seattle were also energetic in their academic activities as early as 1912, although they were not concentrating on trades. The author of this paper was lucky enough to take a close look at the *Year Book of the Associated Students of the University of Washington for the Year 1912-13*, it was discovered that Japanese students organized a Japanese Students' Club in the University of Washington in 1912.

In terms of ambitious young Japanese in the USA outward- or upward-looking Japanese students in the academic world in the *Year Book*. They were as energetic in their university life as Japanese proprietors in the small businesses were, because they organized the Japanese Student's Club of the University of Washington as early as in 1912 when most Japanese immigrants were managing to get as much money as they could in order to make a monetary foundation in life.

Considering a situation where the Japanese people were presumably not able to get enough training

in oral English in Japanese educational institutions before coming to the USA, those Japanese students stand out for their academic endeavor and their activities to let other students know about the Japanese Students' Club. This indicates that young Japanese in the University of Washington were trying to get a wide recognition of their entity from other students of the university. Those Japanese students were examples of studious Japanese people who came to the USA to turn their eyes to the western nations at the time and they tell us that not only working class Japanese people but also young Japanese students were energetic and active in their students' life.

This *Year Book* is open to the public in the Special Collection Room of Suzzallo and Allen Libraries of the University of Washington. We can see the item of "Japanese Students' Club, organized in 1912" in the *Year Book*. M.K. Nakamura was President of the club, and other members' names of the club are written down in this section, that is thirty-one members of them.



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### **Summary**

This paper explores the age of Japanese immigrants when they reached the American soil, specifically the Port of Seattle in the early 1900s, and also discusses how the Japanese people managed to not only survive a hostile and foreign environment but to actually prosper in the small businesses they developed in Seattle. From the data contained in the *Passenger List in 1907* it becomes clear that the average year of the Japanese immigrants was twenty-five years old when they sailed to the United States of America. This leads itself to supposition that, because of the youthfulness of the Japanese people, they would have had little knowledge or expertise regarding the particular trade as a small business they were about to embark on, nor would they have had access to the Japanese wisdom traditionally handed down from their elders about life experiences such as marriage and childbirth. However, young Japanese couples did learn how to support one another by adopting practices from their homeland such as interdependencies with the ethnic solidarity.

This paper also discusses the hidden aspects of the Japanese immigrants' behavioral patterns when they started their own businesses as moneymaking enterprises following their initial wage-earning position as unskilled laborers. What this paper found in checking the details of *Seattle City Directory* is that the Japanese immigrants did not stay long in one particular trade, but presumably moved to other lucrative trades seeking greater profits. These findings show that the Japanese immigrants were energetic in establishing and managing their small businesses and consequently their "petit bourgeois" flourished in the USA between 1900 and 1910.