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Dreaming Okinawa: A Poetic and Critical Investigation of Mixed-Race Subjectivity

by

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The discriminating mind is only a mind for the discrimination of imagined differences that greed and other moods relating to the self have created. The discriminating mind is subject to causes and conditions, it is empty of any self-substance, and it is constantly changing. But, since people believe that this mind is the real mind, the delusion enters into the causes and conditions that produce suffering.

(Buddha 134)

The structure I hate also hates me, but it makes me,
and that's where the problem starts.

(Derksen 2)

Sansei: not-to ii-ben
 hi-sto-ryu i-zu
 na-ra-ti-bu

(McFarlane 48)

Hontô no itami o shitteiru mono wa
Hontô no yasashisa o shitteiru.

(Proverb)

ABSTRACT

Dreaming Okinawa is a poetic and critical investigation of mixed-race identity, family history, and the intersection of the Okinawan and Danish diasporas. The critical introduction explores theories of identity, complicated by racial, linguistic and cultural collisions, filtered through histories of oppression, legislated and internalized racism, language barriers, generation gaps, divorce, poverty, death, and the fracture of family. The creative thesis engages in form and content with questions of memory, narrative, historical truth, official documentation, language difference, and the social effects of assimilation into North American, eurocentric culture. The poetry and prose circulate around the life of Tadao, a mixed-race character, and the lives of his Asian and European ancestors. *Dreaming Okinawa* documents Tadao's negotiation with identity, his (in)ability to pass, his growing awareness of (incomplete) family history, his rewriting of himself as an English speaking, mixed-race, light skinned, middle class, sansei, and dual citizen in North America.

Acknowledgements

Stories are made by communities. Without the support and critical input of my family and friends, it would have been nearly impossible to reach the new perspectives that I have of identity and history: Neither are fixed, and both remain subject to wide interpretation and misuse. History and identity have shaped my deformities, while the changing flow of these matters has remained constant. You have helped me to make some sense of the complex course of that flow. Throughout this work, there are intentional and unintentional elisions, addendums, and fictionalizations written because of the complicated circumstances of family/history. Because the creative work is based on my own experiences (a subjective approach to my family history), it has been difficult to locate and attend to the boundaries between public and private life. My intention is not, and has never been to offend, exclude, or expose my loved ones. On the contrary, I hope to situate myself and my family within larger social frameworks (i.e. colonialism, capitalism, war, poverty, hegemony, cultural and racial difference etc.) towards a better understanding of how we have come to be as we are. I apologize in advance, for any mistakes I may have made in documenting information, names, dates, relationships, emotions, etc. I do not, and beg the reader not to judge the difficult decisions or actions of any “character” in this text, as we have little understanding of the difficult social and historical contexts in which these people lived. I want only to present a set of conditions, and the story of how my people reacted to them, that we might learn from the experience and wisdom of our elders. As I wrote *Dreaming Okinawa*, I feared the repercussions of its release, but I dreamed that its potential effects were worth the risks. Inspired by the words of Hiromi Goto, “You know you can change the story.”

Thanks to my Grandparents, my parents Herb and Marge, to Ashok Mathur, Christina Frey, Aruna Srivastava, Mikiko and Hideo Inafuku, Sharron Proulx, Tamai Kobayashi, Hiromi Goto, Sita Kumar, Jeff Derksen, Kyo Maclear, Roy Miki, Diane Nakada, Ryan Mcleod, Sonia Smee, Scott McFarlane, Martha Hillhouse, students of the “Half-Bred Poetics” seminar, the *HypheNation* editorial collective, Full Force, and especially to Fred Wah, who so patiently guided me. You have all been my teachers.

for Jichan

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Introduction to *Dreaming Okinawa*:

A Poetic and Critical Investigation of Mixed-Race Subjectivity

Okinawa, Denmark, the United States of America, Canada. The simple fact of my birth in the U.S. to a Hawaiian born, Nisei father, of Okinawan descent, and a Danish born, first generation, Canadian immigrant mother, and our subsequent move to northern British Columbia has produced a complicated set of conditions through which to forge an identity. These imaginary borders define salient cultural codes that become enjambed within my mind, and layered upon my body in a confusing palimpsestic feedback. Everything (colonization, genocide, erasure, migration, racial discrimination, miscegenation, assimilation) has been done, re-done, and does. I have always been a product of these multiple conditions, though I think not the end product. I embody the abject splitting, contradiction, ambiguity, polarities, fallouts, and perhaps ironically, the possibilities of post-colonial/neo-colonial globalization. *Dreaming Okinawa* is an exploration of mixed-race identity in the continuous aftermath of rampant local/global colonial violence. Indeed, I am the indirect offspring of colonialism and the transposition of capitalism through their imposed (false) histories, wars, diasporas, economic hardship, racism, interracial marriage, mixed race children, and insidious systems of knowledge (making) that enable these patterns of colonial violence to continue to be expressed in more sophisticated and subtle ways upon those originally colonized bodies, and their mixed-race offspring.

In *Dreaming Okinawa*, I attempt to constantly draw attention to the sense of fractured, missing histories of my families and their communities through the use of several genres, writing styles, voices, and mixtures of these different elements. The story is that there is no story, or (no) missing story. A mis-story. And I say mis-story rather than story or narrative, for, without memory, a clear sense

of the characters, their names, the events that occurred, or even of the gaps in known histories, I cannot (by default) and do not (by choice) wish to write within eurocentric narrative traditions.

The main character, Tadao, is tightly based upon my own life, but I want to point out that this character is not entirely me, for as much as all our identities are constructions (be they internal or external renderings of ourselves) Tadao is a further representation of my own (constructed) identity. Tadao is actually my middle name, but in the case of this text, Tadao occupies the middle space between what is really me, and what is my fictionalized version of me. Even as I am writing my own personal experiences, my construction of me/Tadao is such that he takes on a life of his own, noticing different details, saying different things, filling in the gaps where my memory has failed me. Tadao is sometimes the subject of the text, sometimes the writer, and he sometimes *is* the text, that creates memories of itself, beginning its own learning process through a recitation of history. Tadao is partly me, but his story is also similar to many people of mixed race whose lives have often been shaped under extraordinary conditions: near-death, chance meetings, split-second escapes, broken families, rape, diaspora, occupation by invaders, slave labour, and so on. Ideally, Tadao would be a character that many people of mixed-race could identify with in some way, though I recognize that specific histories of people of mixed-race make this difficult.

Before I go on, I think it necessary to position myself, and to define the term "mixed-race" as I will be using it in this context. For a long time I have been self-identifying as a person of "mixed race," or as a "person of colour," respectively. While I use these terms interchangeably, I often wonder if I am truly a "person of colour," though I've never doubted that I am a person of "mixed-race." Living along the problematic hyphen between "colour" and "whiteness,"

I carry the privilege/burden of temporary passage into both worlds. On the one hand, I understand myself to be an intruder into communities of colour; indeed, it has been difficult enough for “people of colour” to carve a space *out of* the National (read dominant) imaginary, and this “space” is never secure. (Canadian “multicultural” policies have managed to play disenfranchised communities against each other, driving them to compete for a limited supply of sanctioned categories of identity, cultural funding, and human rights. A person of “mixed-race” threatens to destabilize the hard-won token recognition of people of colour and aboriginal peoples.) On the other hand, I subscribe to a “politics of identification” that brings with it the same responsibilities as any person of colour, or any oppressed community for that matter. In communities of colour, I sometimes get the (paranoid?) sense that I am out of place, but I attribute this to pre-judgments of my politics based on my (light) skin colour, as well as my own nagging set of essentialist ideologies that seems very difficult to shake. Depending on my level of confidence, the level to which I am welcomed, and the degree to which I have unlearned racist stereotypes, I can feel in place, or totally alien. Despite my confusion, I align myself with writers, artists, activists, and academics of colour.

Thanks in part to the crucial work of feminist/race/“queer” / class activists and scholars, there has been a sudden rise in critical/creative writing, art and community activism around issues of “mixed-race.” Still, however, there are relatively few forums for people of “mixed-race” to engage with each other, to interrogate the terms of identity, or to gain any insight into how they might choose to self-identify. While I believe that people of “mixed-race” can exist as “people of colour,” we are troubled again by a different set of complications in self-identification, coalition, and political action. In his book *The New World Border: Prophecies, Poems & Loqueras for the End of the Century*, Guillermo Gómez-

Peña suggests that:

the main obstacle that the hybrid must face is the mistrust of both the official transculture and the separatist cultures of resistance. Also, precisely because of its elasticity and open nature, the hybrid model can be appropriated by anyone to mean practically anything. Since the essence of its borders is oscillation, these boundaries can be conveniently repositioned to include or exclude different peoples and communities.

(Gómez-Peña 12)

I mean by "mixed-race" here, identities that are hyphenated across, and/or the collision between two (or more) sets of *differentially related* power variables: race, colour, culture. The term "mixed-race" should resist "hypodescent," which Maria P.P. Root describes as "a social system that maintains the fiction of monoracial identification of individuals by assigning a racially mixed person to the racial group in their heritage that has the least social status" (Root x). For example, the social implications for a person of mixed English and French ancestry would be less complicated than they would for a person of mixed English and African ancestry. In the North American context (at least), hypodescent is relentlessly applied to persons mixed with non-European ancestry, where differences in colour, culture, and language are glaringly obvious compared to people of mixed European ancestry. For a person of "mixed-race" as I define it, the casual appropriation and constant objectification of mixed-race identity by *white people* adds insult to injury. In defining identity, I do not ignore the inextricable variables of gender, sexuality, class, and nationality as they are culturally binding, but these are not (always) necessary to constructions of racial hybridity. Another problem for people of "mixed-race" seems to be the dangerous assumption of a monolithic "mixed-race" view-point, both by those of "mixed-race" and by the apparently "pure" races that the (literal) definition of *mixed-race* implies. The terms "mixed," "hybrid," and their synonyms reinforce monoracial identification,

thereby instigating racial hierarchies and anti-miscegenation sentiments. I continue to use the term “mixed-race” self-consciously for want of a descriptor that resists a re-deployment of notions of racial purity and ultimately, of white supremacy. Hypodescent exerts an overwhelming pressure for one to *know* and *repeat* racial classifications, continually bolstering the fixity of racial categorization. For many people of mixed European and marginalized backgrounds, internalized racism incites the desire to default to the whiteness in oneself as if it were separable from one’s racialized identity, as though one who is not totally “pure” could ever be white.

I want to situate myself within a history of the combined effects of global capitalism, colonization, de-colonization, diaspora, and neo-colonization, which prefigure both my identity and the writing of this creative thesis. I think it necessary to draw connections between “the local” story (my immediate surroundings which include myself, my family, the local political climate etc.) and “the global” story (the history of my extended family and relative communities, the effects of world history/politics that have helped to shape “the local”). As Arif Dirlik points out in his essay “The Global in the Local,” the “local” must be recontextualized in light of its complex association with global capitalism, which:

represents a further deterritorialization, abstraction, and concentration of capital. In a fundamental sense, global capitalism represents an unprecedented penetration of local society globally by the economy and culture of capital; so that the local understood in the “traditional” sense may be less relevant than ever.

(Dirlik 28)

The local situations of my grandparents (on both sides of my family) were so caught up in the throes of capitalism/colonialism, that it is impossible for me to think their decision(s) to move out of those difficult locales were not influenced by the global picture. The World War II threat of the Axis powers on two

fronts, for example, drove my grandparents from opposite sides of the world to North America. My parent's eventual meeting, and my birth, came out of a series of seeming coincidences. The coincidence on the global level was Japan's proximity to Okinawa, Germany's proximity to Denmark, and the promise of safety and prosperity that both families perceived in the West. While the dangers of living near Nazi Germany seem obvious, Okinawa barely survived the Japanese attempt at cultural/historical erasure during its incorporation into the Japanese empire. David Suzuki and Keibo Oiwa underline that:

The origin of the Okinawans is unclear. The islands where the Okinawans live are closer to Taiwan than to the main island of Japan. The original inhabitants could have come from Taiwan and islands farther south. In medieval times, Ryuku, as Okinawa was called, was a kingdom that thrived as the crossroads for trade between China and Japan. Eventually it evolved its own unique culture, a blend of indigenous customs with those of their trading partners. It was in the golden age of its history and culture that Columbus 'discovered' America.

The Ryuku Kingdom existed as an independent nation until it was annexed by Japan in 1879 and became Okinawa prefecture. The people were always treated by Japanese as second-class citizens, sort of 'country cousins.' They were kept in low status socially, economically and educationally. Use of the Okinawan language and the teaching of Okinawan history were forbidden. The Japanese instituted the use of the word Okinawa, instead of Ryuku, the name the people called themselves.

(Suzuki and Oiwa 16)

The local coincidences occurred because both my parents' middle-class aspirations motivated them to become the first to be university-educated in the history of their families. They met during summer school at the University of Oregon, eventually deciding to pursue graduate degrees at the University of Arizona, to get married and then to have me. The possibility of my being born appears as a

tidy, local, middle class, American event, but an event that, if traced back forty years or so, can be seen to depend almost entirely upon the colonial desire of Germany and Japan, and the capitalist lures of the United States and Canada. While I often engage with the capitalist links between the local and global, my story is also about the “lived” social situations of myself, my family and communities.

In immigrating to North America, my Okinawan and Danish grandparents had escaped the directly physical dangers of violence and poverty in their mother countries. As Masao Miyoshi argues in his essay “A Borderless World? From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State,” the settlers in these post-WWII diasporas were far from the safety and prosperity they had expected to find in North America:

After World War II, independence appeared to have ended the humiliating and exploitive colonial domination that had lasted anywhere from decades to centuries in countries covering at least 85 percent of the earth’s land surface. And yet freedom and self-rule—for which the colonized had bitterly struggled often at the cost of immense self-sacrifice—were unexpectedly elusive. Decolonization neither effected emancipation and equality nor provided new wealth or peace. Instead, suffering and misery continued nearly everywhere in an altered form, at the hands of different agencies.

(Miyoshi 80)

The United States and Canada were among the different “agencies” brokering “misery” for my grandparents, particularly for the Okinawan side. The strong anti-Japanese (conflated with anti-Okinawan) sentiment in the U.S. and Canada manifested both at the local level (where it became extremely difficult to live within primarily white communities), and at the national level (where many Japanese/Okinawan Americans and Canadians were “relocated” or forcefully interned). Local discrimination and national racist panic fueled each other, en-

abled each other, and allowed for the suspension of the constitutional rights of those Japanese/Okinawan Americans/Canadians who were relocated, interned, used as slave labour, deported, and who were unable to live in equality before, during and after WWII. My Danish grandparents experienced a different kind of discrimination when they arrived in Canada. Despite their European background, they were labeled "DP's" meaning "displaced persons," and were resented for not speaking English and blamed for burdening the deflated economy, thereby lowering the standard of living for "real" Canadians.

So it seems that cultural discrimination in Canada and the United States was not always limited to "visible minorities." Before the arrival of significant numbers of people of colour, it was the Irish, Jewish, Italians, Polish, Ukrainians, Mennonites, Danish etc. who bore the brunt of North American hatred. Without reducing their initially negative experience of Canada, however, my Danish grandparents learned English and eventually fell out of the discriminatory gaze as it shifted to focus upon more visible Others.

My Okinawan family was among the new targets of discrimination, and largely due to their high visibility as people of colour, they have not since escaped it. It is important to note that the United States and Canada were not the only discriminatory "agencies" however, as various local prejudices (sometimes internalized) were imported with the new immigrants. Dirlik identifies "certain phenomena" propelled by global capitalism into the local scenes of national and community consciousness:

global motions of peoples (and, therefore, cultures), the weakening of boundaries (among societies, as well as among social categories), the replication in societies internally of inequalities and discrepancies once associated with colonial differences, simultaneous homogenization and fragmentation within and across societies, the interpenetration of the global and the local (which shows culturally in a simultaneous cosmopolitanism and

localism of which the most cogent expression may be “multiculturalism”) and the disorganization of a world conceived in terms of “three worlds” or nation-states.

(Dirlik 21)

The pervasive effects of “simultaneous homogenization and fragmentation within” the Japanese/Okinawan communities of North America have generally registered as schizophrenic attempts to assimilate into white society, while maintaining social hierarchies that existed (that may no longer exist in the same ways) in local regions of Japan. During the massive Japanese and Okinawan migration to Hawaii (see Kaneshiro quote pg. 51), the Japanese imported the idea that Okinawans were a lesser race of simple minded, rural, hairy, meat-handling, mountain people. These racist concepts likely stemmed from dehumanizing rhetoric used by the Japanese to justify their local domination(s) of Okinawa, and were transported to the Hawaiian locale, where Japanese and Okinawans continued to rigorously segregate themselves. This old racist relationship between Japanese and Okinawans is still present in Japan and North America. Lately I asked some Japanese college students if prejudice against Okinawans still exists in Japan, and they were aware that it had, but that it seems to dissipate with every new generation. These students added that the prejudice against Okinawans seems to manifest in Japanese corporate scenarios where a company employee is sent to Okinawan offices for training or reprimand. The few Okinawans in Canada lived separately from Japanese Canadians to prevent conflict, but their small numbers and post-War absence have seen this old prejudice gone, but not forgotten. In his book, *The Enemy that Never Was: A History of the Japanese Canadians*, Ken Adachi observes that Japanese and Okinawan immigrants formed clusters of family groups called “Kunimono,” and were:

drawn together by the common bond of local customs and dialect; consequently many kunimono lived close together and worked together or in similar types of jobs. Of all the

groups in Canada, perhaps the Okinawans who moved to the coal mining areas around Hardieville and Lethbridge in southern Alberta best demonstrated this prevailing pattern. At the same time as they banded together to protect themselves from the hostility of the white population, they needed to defend themselves from possible social discrimination from the main body of Japanese immigrants.

(Adachi 19)

Another prejudice transported by Japanese (and perhaps by Okinawans as well) was against people of mixed-race, or “hapas” (“**Hapa haole** or **hapa** is a term derived from the Hawaiian language. Although it was originally used to designate someone who was partially a stranger or outsider—Hawaiian mixed with other national and racial heritage—today it designates someone of Asian or Pacific Island origin mixed with European heritage”) (Root x). Japanese were, and are still generally insistent upon racial purity as the criteria for status as a true “national.” Due to the large American military presence in Okinawa today, there are many mixed-race children born into official limbo (Asian/blacks experience this more than Asian/whites), being denied status as “Japanese nationals,” and are unable to claim citizenship in any other country. Dirlik identifies the legislation of this older Japanese liking for racial purity as an effect of global capitalism:

there are no longer any local societies that have not been worked over already by capital and modernity; insistence on local “purity” may well serve as excuses for a reactionary revival of older forms of oppression, as women in particular have been quick to point out in India and among the indigenous people’s movements in North America.

(Dirlik 37-8)

The importation of prejudices against Okinawans, Koreans, Filipinos, hapa’s etc. may be read as an attempt to establish or maintain social hierarchies in the new local setting of Hawaii. Through historical, global transplantation of local preju-

dices, I face, or (sometimes mistakenly) imagined I had faced, a double prejudice against my being both Okinawan and of mixed-race. But discrimination against people of mixed-race is by no means an exclusively Japanese practice, for it has developed independently in colonial contexts throughout the world. Young cites Edward Long's *History of Jamaica* (1774) as early evidence of Western anti-miscegenation propaganda:

In the course of a few generations more, the English blood will become so contaminated with this mixture, and from the chances, the ups and downs of life, this alloy may spread so extensively, as even to reach the middle, and then the higher orders of people, till the whole nation resembles the Portuguese and the Moriscos in complexion of skin and baseness of mind. This is a venomous and dangerous ulcer, that threatens to disperse its malignancy far and wide, until every family catches infection from it.

(Young 150)

The aggressive dissemination of this rhetoric had long since ceased, and had already become part of accepted Western knowledge/morality by the time the first Japanese and Okinawans arrived in Hawaii. The existence of hatred towards people of mixed race in both cultures was no coincidence, as both feared losing the stability of their racial identities. In his essay "Signs Taken for Wonders," Homi Bhabha observes that "[t]he paranoid threat from the hybrid is finally uncontainable because it breaks down the symmetry and duality of self/other, inside/outside. In the productivity of power, the boundaries of authority — its reality effects — are always besieged by 'the other scene' of fixations and phantoms" (Bhabha 116). Because of the similarity between Eastern and Western attitudes towards people of mixed-race, Japanese and Okinawan immigrants were able, and encouraged to resist inter-racial relationships. Being of mixed Okinawan/Danish descent triply marked me as less than Japanese, less than Asian, and less than white. It is from these complex historical and ideological

settings that I was born into a globally influenced, and highly influential local frame. My story, paradoxically, cannot be written as only global or only local, but as an interplay between the two, so that each personal experience, each poem is always mediated and/or (over)determined by these conditions.

Dreaming Okinawa is a text made up of several genres, including free verse, serial poems, long poems, anecdotes, journal entries, official documents, and prose narratives. The text can be read both as a whole body, or as discrete pieces that meander in and out of non-fiction, while always returning to the main tropes of memory, (absent) family history, diaspora, hybridity, racial discrimination, miscegenation, passing, cross-cultural heritage, language, camouflage, relatives, communities and identity crisis. In most of the writing, there is a sense of dis-ease with telling a story that is not mine alone, that implicates relatives near and far, alive and dead. I am concerned not only with being sensitive to the privacy of others, but of honoring those memories, doing them justice, respecting the silences and absences that speak loudly of the sacrifices, pains, and losses of all those involved. There are reasons why the story is incomplete, and why I can never know which parts of the story are truth, and which are fabrication. In a sense, the complex of silences, fabrications, exaggerations, and facts together make up a fascinating, painful, and historical kind of truth. The logistical problems and ethics of writing such a story are addressed in these lines from the poem "Spillage":

Loose ends is the story I have to tell. Symptomatic of an across three generations movement and splitting apart silences called shame. This family tree uprooted in mind, this book could give the story sense of absences, the facts lying in between but not heard.

(41)

The tentative answer here is to provide a "sense of absences" by not filling in the narrative gaps while validating the unknown or unheard as integral parts of the

overall story. As I worked through these questions, I discovered that the narrative I had always thought of as “my own,” began to resemble my fractured sense of family history in that I had my own half-memories, which required my own silences and absences. Even my personal story, which seems not to implicate anybody, always implicates somebody, and so requires acute sensitivity. Thus, *Dreaming Okinawa* is a text which resists continuity and connectedness through mixed genres, fissures in the narrative track, questioning of historical facts, absent or unnamed characters, disjunctive poetics, the use of Japanese and “pidgin” English, legal documentation, disordered time, and the endless deferral of any ultimate resolutions or truths. The difficulties of self-documentary, of commentary on my memories family history are evident throughout the text, and I sometimes expose more or less than what seems necessary, or right.

I (Tadao) come to life in the middle of these complicated conditions, within the mis-story. In many poems, I make connection with, or return to past notions of identity, but it is an unstable past and therefore not always easily or happily returned to. Tadao is born into a seemingly serene moment considering the difficult lives of family members preceding him by only one or two generations. The effects of the fraught histories of his ancestors are both evident and hidden so that Tadao has difficulty in understanding them. By misunderstanding his own identity and history, Tadao becomes more vulnerable to infection by what I describe as the local “viruses” of racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism through the everyday discourse of a northern BC mill town. “Discursive Epidemic 4” describes the subtle training that Tadao experiences:

Scarce jobs are minimum wage or union or not at all. Blame the “drunk lazy Indians” and the “East Indians taking up good jobs” and “Why don’t they speak English?” ...Don’t say it but everybody thinking these are hard times and if Alderman Gurbux Saini becomes mayor then “Its time to move!” or “Annie get your gun.” Dad giving Alderman Saini a

cheque for his campaign counting on some inclusive platform. (81)

Tadao's (I think) forgivable mistake was not in "thinking" per se, but in absorbing the local thinking, the knowledge, or in Judith Butler's terms, the "knowingness" about race and, ill-equipped to deal critically with these racial constructs, he learns to be racist towards himself and others. As Robert J.C. Young shows in his book *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*, the discursive operation of colonial violence was forced to quickly adapt its logic to intercept the mixed-race body as it became evident in European colonies, and before it could be accepted in Western morality, discourse and consciousness:

There is an historical stemma between the cultural concepts of our own day and those of the past from which we tend to assume that we have distanced ourselves. We restate and rehearse them covertly in the language and concepts that we use: every time a commentator uses the epithets 'full-blooded', for example, he or she repeats the distinction between those of pure and mixed race. (Young 27)

The loud, racist comments made by Tadao's neighbour about the South Asian Alderman, and his own Asian father's quiet monetary contribution to that Alderman's campaign, reveals the house by house race-war that exists in his community. Tadao is, in effect, caught in the dangerous middle of the road; at equal distance from the house of his white neighbour, and the house of his own Asian father. In the context of a local election, the effects of colonialism play out with Tadao as an audience. The neighbour's vote for a white candidate is not a vote to get rid of people of colour, but a vote to maintain white authority. The Asian father's vote for the South Asian candidate is not a vote to do away with white people, but an effort to secure what he hopes will be favourable representation. Both neighbours' essentialist votes are against the reflection of themselves in each other's bodies, against the possible disintegration of the defining role each plays for the other in the formation of their racialized identities. As Bhabha

writes in his essay "Interrogating Identity,"

"It is not the colonialist Self or the colonized Other, but the disturbing distance in-between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness — the white man's artifice inscribed on the black man's body" (Bhabha 45).

In effect, both Tadao's father and his neighbour register their votes against the mixed-race phantom (who already stands in the street between them), and though it is likely an unconscious effect, Tadao has begun to receive the message that he does not truly belong to either house, or to either race.

In *Dreaming Okinawa*, the street as public space becomes a site in which Tadao absorbs racist and classist values; values that are constructed as a "virus" in a related series poem. In the poem "Heirlooms," Tadao encounters local children's struggle for status in the street through their parents property in the form of both land and material possessions:

Lawns are status symbols up & down 12th Ave. ours is no exception. I can't believe how cheap my labour is. When it takes me too long to cut the grass one day, all the neighbourkids come over and I have a Tom Sawyer work gang. Everybody raking and bagging before I'll let them take a turn with the ol' push n' grunt mower they can't get enough of. Mum brings out kool-aid, Dad takes a picture. Jichan's wood working tools too, are unrecognizable to the Western handyMan, so when I try to use them I can't get a rhythm going. (98)

Tadao already senses that he and his family do not fit into the 12th Avenue scene of neatly groomed, private lawns, tamed with expensive gadgets that he cannot acquire due to his father's embarrassing sentiment for the tools *his* father used in his first lucrative job in North America. Tadao's frustration comes not (only) from the extra work involved in using the antique push-mower, but from his newly acquired lust for the excess of Morry's expensive, air-borne, and unattainable lawn mower across the street. At a young age, Tadao has already realized the

importance of assimilation to his survival, and his grandfather's mower, and the slightly longer grass that it leaves, seem terribly obvious to him, as different territorial markings, even cultural markers running against the authoritative demands of his middle class neighbourhood. To Tadao's surprise, however, the neighbourhood children are enthralled by the strangeness of the push mower, in which case he (already having learned his capitalist lessons well) puts the price of their labour against the use of his newfound commodity. Without realizing it, he participates in the racist, capitalist economy of Williams Lake by selling an effect of his cultural inheritance, reversing the role of his grandfather as gardener/servant, and becoming the master of other white manual labourers upon his own land. Bhabha identifies this moment of reversal in "Signs Taken for Wonders":

The ambivalence at the source of traditional discourses on authority enables a form of subversion, founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention. (Bhabha 112)

The neighbourhood children abandon their clean lawns and fancy tools for the exotic experience of Tadao's normal manual labour, and for a moment it seems that Tadao has used the servant's tools to dismantle the master's house. But I argue that this reversal is strained by its economic underpinnings in that Tadao has subverted the master servant relationship on the master's terms, having been already unconsciously trained and ingrained with the desire to exploit the labour of others. While his father photographs the work-party as a sign of his son's acceptance of the heirloom (and its implied labour, its implied difference), Tadao's grandfather later intervenes, spinning the lesson back in another direction. Jichan explains that the action of his saw blade is opposite to that of most Western tools in that energy is not used in an outward expenditure, but in a controlled recuperation of energy that demands responsibility for the final posi-

tion of the blade to avoid cutting oneself. The work, Jichan suggests, is for the enjoyment of oneself, not to be flaunted for, or extracted from others. Whereas Tadao's understanding of the world is usually taken from the local scene, his grandfather offers a rare glimpse of his cultural stance, which then adds to Tadao's hybrid repertoire of experiences. For as much as Tadao is socialized by European influence, there is the constant, largely unacknowledged Okinawan influence that is equally though subtly formative.

In "Discursive Epidemic 2," I attempt to draw a connection between Tadao's local environment, and the historical, global influences operating in his subconscious. An unidentified critical voice points to Tadao's troubling local environment as being inherently, but not obviously linked to that of the local Okinawan environment of his grandparents:

Mistake was in thinking. Grow up in a southern Okinawan village build on rice fish and animal flesh the Japanese won't lower themselves to touch but willing to eat. Don't say it but everybody thinking these are hard times and with Toyama offering hope for the first time in centuries who are you voting for? (69)

Tadao's grandfather has an almost parallel experience in Okinawa, to that of Tadao in Williams Lake, BC. In this poem, the grandfather is an adolescent listening to the political rhetoric in his small community. He is not old enough to vote, so the decisions of his father (Tadao's great-grandfather) still directly affect his life, and the lives of his descendants in much more salient ways than Tadao's life is ever affected by his father's vote. The great-grandfather decides to take the advice of Toyama, the village father, and moves with his sons to Hawaii. The decision of Tadao's great-grandfather to move not only makes his eventual existence possible, but is shaped by aspects of hope very similar to his father's when he votes for the candidate of colour. The great-grandfather accepts the advice of a local leader who suggests that in the wake of Japanese and American imperial-

ism, immigration to America would be a way to improve their quality of life. Fifty years later in Canada, Tadao's father hopes that if he votes for another person of colour (another descendant of those great-grandfathers who made similar decisions to immigrate), that the local community will become more habitable for people of colour. The decisions of Tadao's father, and great-grandfather come out of the struggle for independence, safety, and a better quality of life. In the "Discursive Epidemic" series, I construct the capitalist, colonial desire of Japan and the U.S. as an ideological "virus" which infects the colonized people of Okinawa who perceive a better quality of life in the homeland of the U.S. invader. This virus (capitalist desire) can kill when it takes the form of U.S. marines, but it is more effective when the colonized "host" catches it, believing that their decision to immigrate, and to work near the origin of the virus is freely made. In actuality, the colonizer has laid waste to the host's homeland, making it seem inhospitable (indeed neither the U.S. nor the Japanese had plans to leave Okinawa), while at the same time making the U.S. seem all the more attractive and attainable. Dirlik describes this cycle of colonization, decolonization, and recolonization as a consequence of "the transnationalization of capital" and suggests that:

for the first time in the history of capitalism, the capitalist mode of production appears as an authentically global abstraction, divorced from its historically specific origins in Europe. In other words, the narrative of capitalism is no longer a narrative of the history of Europe; so that for the first time, non-European capitalist societies make their own claims on the history of capitalism. (Dirlik 30)

Ironically, after being forcibly converted to a capitalist economy, the Okinawan immigrants themselves become colonizers, or rather re-colonizers. I mean that the "re-colonizer," one who has been recently colonized themselves, migrates for different reasons than the original invader, or "colonizer." Motivated by greed,

the colonizer develops an army, sets one's sights on some distant, passive country and takes it over. Motivated by oppression, the re-colonizer picks up whatever remains from the ashes of invasion, sets one's hopes upon some distant, wealthy country, attempts to immigrate, and more often than not, feels that one must assimilate to survive there. The re-colonizer is involved with capitalism, but as Dirlik suggests, it "appears...divorced from its historically specific origins in Europe" and is in fact, an enforced capitalism. The re-colonizer participates in this enterprising mode because one's home village does not offer much hope as it sits in smoking ruins. In the poem, the worst symptom of the "virus" is a collective amnesia that allows colonized people to forget their original freedom, pushing them to think that the invader's country promises a better life, and ultimately to believe in becoming like that invader through assimilation.

Public school is a primary source of Tadao's education towards assimilation, or rather, discursive training in essentialist notions of racial purity through categorical division and naming. In the poem "Show of Hands," Tadao is called upon to describe himself racially within a fixed set of eurocentric terms, and accidentally discovers a mode of resistance, thereby discovering himself to all present, and immediately realizing that he has blown the safety of his cover:

None of the kids know what "Latino" means, much less "Okinawa," so
when finally Our Teacher calls upon the last two kids in the class who are
"Chinese Canadians" but she says "Oriental" I hold up my hand a second time
blushing. (125)

Tadao's teacher unconsciously enforces racial self-categorization through her problematic poll. Rather than aggressively naming her students, she provides through her authority, a limited set of static categories, demanding that each student insert themselves into her understanding, thereby inducing them to

practice and accept her essentialisms. Bhabha identifies this teacher's persuasive agenda as vital to the continued authority of the neo-colonizer:

To be authoritative, its rules of recognition of its authority must reflect consensual knowledge or opinion; to be powerful, these rules of recognition must be reached in order to represent the exorbitant objects of discrimination that lie beyond its purview. Consequently, if the unitary (and essentialist) reference to race, nation or cultural tradition is essential to preserve the presence of authority as an immediate mimetic effect, such essentialism must be exceeded in the articulation of 'differentiatory', discriminatory identities. (Bhabha 111)

The teacher succeeds in getting all students (including Tadao) to accept the essentialist categories she provides. However, Tadao's identification with more than one of these categories can not readily inhabit the implied excesses of discriminatory identities. Indeed, Tadao's self-identification at once succumbs to purity, but in accepting two "purities," he moves once again beyond her "purview," as the teacher is unable to assign a coded excess to his anomalous identity. Here he has fallen between the simple binaries that enable her ability to differentiate, to racialize her classroom. Tadao's hybrid identification inadvertently disrupts his teachers authority, where Bhabha points out that "[h]ybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the 'pure' and original identity of authority)" (Bhabha 111-112). Although his teacher's attempt to shape Tadao's understanding of racial purity fails momentarily, she speaks from a historically authoritative position.

As Tadao grows, he encounters more evidence of the embeddedness of anti-miscegenation sentiment around him. In "Pima County," Tadao discovers that his parents marriage was illegal shortly before the time of his birth, and realizes

that the *relative* safety he feels as a person of mixed race has only been possible within his lifetime. He returns to Tucson, the place of his birth to investigate the climate(s):

Born in Tucson three years after my parents go to L.A. county to Tie The Not, same time notice it's officially illegal for them to marry in Arizona. Used to take a little more pride at having been born in the U.S. Now can't help but think the end goal of the inter-racial marriage law was to Prohibit Me. (92)

What Tadao was not able to hear in the Arizona landscape was the type of discourse that circulated around the person of mixed race long before he was born. Young cites Robert Dale Owen's report "The Wrong of Slavery, the Right of Emancipation and the Future of the African Race in the United States" (1864) which states that the

"amalgamation of these two races is in itself a physical evil injurious to both, - a practice which ought to be discouraged by public opinion, and avoided by all who consider it a duty, as parents, to transmit to their offspring the best conditions for sound health and physical well-being. Like other evils of the kind, however, this is beyond the legitimate reach of legislation." Which did not stop the legislators from trying, passing state laws outlawing sex between different races and miscegenation; at one time, as many as forty of the fifty states prohibited inter-racial marriage. ...It was only in 1967 in the United States that such laws were declared unconstitutional. (Young 148)

Tadao comes to understand that the prejudice he feels from Okinawans and Japanese is not about his being white, and the prejudice he feels from white people is not about his being a person of colour. Tadao realizes instead, that regardless of particular (local) manifestations of the discrimination he faces from all sides, it is always about his being in/visible and racially unrecognizable. As Bhabha asserts:

The discriminatory effects of the discourse of cultural colonialism, for instance, do not

simply or singly refer to a 'person', or a dialectical power struggle between self and other, or to a discrimination between mother culture and alien cultures. Produced through a strategy of disavowal, the reference of discrimination is always to a process of splitting as the condition of subjection: a discrimination between the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles, where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different - a mutation, a hybrid. (Bhabha 113)

Tadao's European and Asian relatives see him not as a member of the family, but as a sign of the disintegration of their pure bloodlines, and therefore, as a threat to the authority of their own identities. Tadao later hears stories of his grandparents' disappointment and revulsion at the thought of his parents transgression of racial boundaries:

I heard when Aunty Alice married a White Man Jichan got real steamed and tried the old Japanese Mad on her ("Japanese Mad" was a term coined by me and my best high-school buddy David Kozuki: a relentless dose of silent treatment followed by quiet words of disappointment and shame) but Alice was too tough so Jichan yelled and finally got a bottle of whiskey to wash down the idea though this was a rare performance he got right pissed. (76)

•

Mum's Mum, Grandma couldn't wait to meet my Dad and made him turkey and pampered him Alberta Prairie style slash Old Denmark hospitality and she must have thought he was a good catch. ...Grandpa liked Dad fine too but I think his only question before blessing the marriage was What About the Kids?

(62)

While Tadao's grandparents do not feel direct hatred towards their children's fiancées as individuals, they respond negatively, instinctively at the thought of

their children marrying out, and at the blurring of racial borders that will occur in their grandchildren. The socialization of Tadao's grandparents has had such powerful subconscious effect, that they are on impulse literally afraid of the implications of inter-marriage without having imagined what they might be. Bhabha attributes the fearful reaction of the grandparents to a larger social paranoia around the possible inability to recognize and classify others with authority:

Hybridity is the name of this displacement of value from symbol to sign that causes the dominant discourse to split along the axis of its power to be representative, authoritative. Hybridity represents that ambivalent 'turn' of the discriminated subject into the terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification - a disturbing questioning of the images and presences of authority. (Bhabha 113)

It is both during and after Tadao's realizations of the complexity of his own histories, of his mixed identity, and the particular form of discrimination he experiences across cultures, that he begins to develop strategies for coping, intervention, and reconciliation.

I/Tadao realize that by my very presence, and the assertion of my mixed-race identity, I can disrupt and intervene in the widespread racist fears and assumptions that I often arouse. I do not hope that just by existing I will be able to change the willful ignorance and unconscious fears inherent in society, but that by re-signifying, impressing upon people that the authority bound in their racial "purity" is illusory at best. Like Bhabha, I must learn

To see the cultural not as the source of conflict—different cultures—but as the effect of discriminatory practices — the production of cultural differentiation as signs of authority—changes its value and its rules of recognition. Hybridity intervenes in the exercise of authority not merely to indicate the impossibility of its identity but to represent the unpredictability of its presence. (Bhabha 114)

I see this essay, and my thesis, as one element of an everyday practice of inter-

vention, resignification, and challenge to the authority of “race.” My mixed-race identity offers the blessing/burden of temporary, contingent passage into different communities where I may learn, unlearn, and educate others around issues of race and oppression. Gómez-Peña suggests that:

The artist who understands and practices hybridity in this way can be at the same time an insider and an outsider, an expert in border crossings, a temporary member of multiple communities, a citizen of two or more nations. S/he performs multiple roles in multiple contexts. At times s/he can operate as a cross-cultural diplomat, as an intellectual *coyote* (smuggler of ideas) or a media pirate. At other times, s/he assumes the role of nomadic chronicler, intercultural translator, or political trickster. S/he speaks from more than one perspective, to more than one community, about more than one reality. His/her job is to trespass, bridge, interconnect, reinterpret, remap, and redefine; to find the outer limits of his/her culture and cross them. (Gómez-Peña 12)

Gómez-Peña’s vision of me as cultural nomad is attractive not only because it offers the security of an identity position (that is *no position*). Young outlines why the nomadic metaphor might attract the person of mixed-race in a search for identity:

...the idea of movement across territories in its name suggests, nomadism involves forms of lateral resistance to any assertion of hegemonic control through strategies of multiplicity, forms of deterritorialization that cannot be reterritorialized because they frustrate interpretation and recoding. (Young 173)

While these assertions of the potential benefits of mixed-race nomadism are alluring, there is danger in the ability to resist control and to pass easily between different cultures. Such cultural nomadism tempts one to enjoy, to capitalize on the privileges of mixed-race identity, without taking on the responsibilities and burdens that should come with that identity. Young argues that the person of mixed-race must not “concur with the idea that ‘nomadism’ is a radically anti-

capitalist strategy; nomadism is, rather, one brutal characteristic mode of capitalism itself" (Young 173). But my writing, activism, and teaching could ideally escape the capitalist mode if I am attentive, self-critical, and always question in whose interest am I doing this work. I do not pretend that I have never, and will never again benefit from the condition of my mixed-race identity, but I can hopefully resist unearned benefits, and will always have discrimination against myself and my fellows as a reminder to live responsibly in my identity, and to fight for the actual equality of all identities.

"Thirteen Characters in Search of a Poetics" is a "mixed-genre" (critical/theatrical) transitional section placed here to bridge between my so-called "critical" work, and my so-called "creative" work. This section addresses through form and content, some of the authorial, aesthetic, and poetic concerns that I encountered in developing the narrative approaches and poetic techniques that I employ in *Dreaming Okinawa*.

Thirteen Characters in Search of a Poetics

Eleven writers and a schizophrenic student gather to discuss the problems and potential of mixed genres, and hybrid poetics.

Note to the reader:

the living and not-so-much-living characters in this text speak their own words as indicated by page references only. The rest of the characters lines are purely fictional creations, contingent upon imagination, artifices offfor thinking. Any similarity to situations or persons living or dead, is purely coincidental.

MARK: <to Fred> you said that “art works with problems—it becomes a place for discourse, towards the resolution of a problem.” So poetics, forms, can be a set of contingent variables informing the writing; poetics don’t have to pretend not to invoke genre, but can exist between genres, referencing them, but also attempting to see what can be generated in the spaces between them; does it really matter that the mixed-genre is/not a new genre?

TADAO: yes it is just the name for the possibilities at the in-between, then)either\n)or... like the hyphen becomes a lived space, active, and not merely a punctual juncture of two supposedly real, living spaces, genres.

WAH: so you’re talking abt the mixed-genre as strictly spatial then.

TADAO: no, no, temporal too, like where the writer, or the reader happen to be in each instant...

back to the continuously revealed meanings argument...

mostly for example, I consider myself to be a person of colour..

MARK: ...whereas me, I really identify as a white person...

TADAO:but there are those contingencies again. I mean temporally, at a moment, say during a rally, or when some kind form of injustice, say imperialism is in the news, like the American military bases in Okinawa for example...at those times I feel Okinawan. I am a person of colour.

MARK: But I look white, or mostly so. What I don’t understand is how when

you look white, you can believe yourself to exist in a completely different category.

TADAO: ...the site of the hyphen, the hybrid body, the hyphenated body or text remain ambiguous...the hybrid site, this hyphen - is difficult to negotiate, because it is both categories, and neither category...call it an ideal ambiguity, because the pull of one part/genre/gene/gender is intimately inextricably linked to the whole text (of) body at the cellular level. There is no denying the previously accepted genre/gender/gene pools, but to articulate the lived space between those pools, categories...or whatever you'd call them.

HUTCHEON: ...by poetics, I mean that ever developing theoretical structure by which we order both our aesthetic knowledge and our critical procedures, then it is clear that any poetics of the contemporary must take into account both the literature and the criticism or theory being produced at this time.

(Hutcheon xi)

TADAO: my poetics are informed by aesthetic, critical, and bodily knowledge(s) that I think are inextricable from each other, in a hard to describe sense.

MARK: Yeah but the reason I don't jump onto the 'person of colour bandwagon' is because I think that so-called people of colour use their minority privilege and call it aesthetics...using it as an excuse, or calling it aesthetics, which suggests one does not have to write well.

WAH: <to TADAO> I was going to ask you what are your poetics?

TADAO: I can't answer that yet...MARK and I have to go discuss the band-

compulsory heterosexuality...

"whiteness" the package of (unacknowledged) power

white skin comes with unquestioned...

these components can't be found in a single body...

only perpetuated, often by the <ahem> middle-class het white man

but not exclusively...

these have been perpetuated by me, by you.

But what are we going to do about it? Callit getting off the

bandwagon!

Deny privilege located at the surface of light skin... let go...the main

stream

(a dream

MARK: You let it go! You are just as light as I am! As a matter of fact we have almost exactly the same skin!

<feels like he's looking into a floor-length mirage>

TADAO: What you call "minority privilege" is the burden of & gift of another

both \ &. That's why my poetics must engage with that

in that way of speaking to re-signify upon that narrow stream; trouble its

assumptive language

disrupt the flow of the stream

up-river shape banks of(f) course

MARK: So even though you look white you don't consider yourself white? I mean, part of that main stream? Because I see white.

TADAO: Its not that I don't see white...yes I am white too...but whiteness has made anything that is not 'pure' white, not white enough...& therefore not white...like you. But white all the different & colour all the same.

MARK: Well, my father is East Asian...but I was thinking that the skin determined it more than a mindset...

TADAO: Not an easy stream to unlearn yr way out of...both sides will fight adamantly against yr ambiguity...so let's cross back into the discussion...

(this seaming border hyphenated time

-t- — e- - - - - m- — — p - - - - o — - - - r - - - - a- - - - l - - - -
 folded along quantum theories callit looping)

<conversation moving on...pause brief as TADAO (both \one)
 re-enters the circle>

BROSSARD: ...I believe that a lot of writers belonging to minorities whether sexual, racial, or cultural, or writers who belong to groups who live or have lived under colonization, oppression, exploitation, or a dictatorship, are bound to have a highly loaded personal memory out of which they express themselves as individuals. But inevitably their personal story converges with the one of thousands who have felt and lived the same experience. Memory, identity, and solidarity are at stake when *reading* is taken as political; just as transgression, subversion, and exploration are at stake when *writing* is taken as political.

(Brossard 80)

TADAO: <thinking> intersections<—>interconnections be-twixt individuals
 & their concomitant selves \communities not inter-changeable but
 intra-experiential...the "personal stories" of one's multiple existences
 crossing multiple stories of other individuals' multiplicitous identities.
 across genres not to capture...but to invoke...to translate
 these cross-existences mixt borders not crossed but

straddled

addlepat language conflated texts speak concatenated concerns
called "solidarity")

TADAO: I agree with you, that reading and writing are political acts...but even if we (i.e. the many "tens of thousands who have felt and lived the same experience") are able to transgress, subvert thru writing, finding an ideally ambiguous mixed \crosst form, are we not still simply re-acting...ex-pending energies (in)directly referring to the established genre \power structures.

PHILLIP: There is nothing wrong in reacting. We must. But there are dangers for the writer who has roots in these twin realities—Blackness and femaleness [in my case]. The danger is that one's writing can easily become persistently— I am tempted to say perniciously— reactive...

BROSSARD: <approximate translation> do you have a solution?

PHILLIP: To transform writing from reaction to statement. To oppose Woman to Man according to Kristeva, is to impose a "fixed sexual identity which is counter-productive to understanding and action." Woman is not a reaction to Man; she is not a response. She is her own first statement. Black is not a reaction to white; it is its own first statement. I am only Black and female, if you are white and male. I think, therefore I am. Black and female.

TADAO: I agree with moving reaction to statement, tho it wld seem difficult to make that transformation, well, *actual*.

BROSSARD: <to Phillip> I have difficulty, also, with the reliance upon those categories: "Black and female," even within those hybrid, or as you called them, "twin realities." Even when occupying an ambiguous space, between identities, it is dangerous to believe in the authenticity or purity of the pre-ambiguous, as they (like genre) are constructed themselves.

BUTLER: ...if gender is constructed, it is not necessarily constructed by an 'I' or a 'we' who stands before that construction in any spatial or temporal sense of 'before.' Indeed, it is unclear that there can be an 'I' or a 'we' who has not been submitted, subjected to gender, where gendering is, among other things, the differentiating relations by which speaking subjects come into being. Subjected to gender, but subjectivated by gender, the 'I' neither precedes nor follows the process of this gendering, but emerges only within and as the matrix of gender relations themselves. (Butler 7)

MIKI: I think it would be interesting to hear 'genre,' where Judith said "gender," because one could argue that we (readers\writers) "emerge within and as the matrix of *genre* relations themselves." In this case, there really is no escaping the matrix entirely, because this is how we came to be as readers\writers...there can only be disruption within an ongoing discourse, to throw it off course.

MIKI: ...So how to emerge within the various matrixes, genre for instance, and disrupt the power, the discourse, when the discourse is the basis for how we think, write, or act?

BUTLER: Neither power nor discourse are rendered anew at every moment; they are not as weightless as the utopics of radical resignification might imply.

And yet how are we to understand their convergent force as an accumulated effect of usage that both constrains and enables their reworking? How is it that the apparently injurious effects of discourse become the painful resources by which a resignifying practice is wrought? Here it is not only a question of how discourse injures bodies, but how certain injuries establish certain bodies at the limits of available ontologies, available schemes of intelligibility. And further, how is it that those who are abjected come to make their claim through and against the discourses that have sought their repudiation?

(Butler 224)

TADAO: <thinking> accumulation of regulatory forces (power\discourse) that constrain genre, gender, sexuality, race...& necessarily enabling them for without them, power\discourse would have no Others to regulate. Call genre an accumulation of normatives

ac-cumulous clouded dis-courses of dis(avowal

& a vowel

already caught, contexted do we disrupt the coursing matrixes

for children who will come into a less stable discourse?

perhaps its not too late for us to un-learn?

PHILLIP: ...developing a language more attuned to expressing my reality; creating written forms of the demotic languages of the Caribbean— in which I am most at home— as in Heidegger’s sense of language being the house of being; “playing with” language to arrive at that place where life and death meet within language. Language itself— symbol of death and life for me. To arrive at the centre. To write from the centre. (Phillip 69)

KROETSCH: The centre does not hold. The margin, the periphery, the edge,

now, is the exciting and dangerous boundary where silence and sound meet. It is where the action is. In our darker moments we feel we must resist the blind and consuming power of the new places with their new or old ideas that now want to become centres. In our happier moments we delight in the energy of the local, in the abundance that is diversity and difference, in the variety and life that exist on any coastline of the human experience. (Kroetsch 23)

MIKI: but is reaching the "center" or the "margin" a useful goal? the implication might be that in arriving at the centre, one is always forcing others to the margins...and playing at the margins reinscribes the center...perhaps another way to talk about it is a decentering...to write from the decenter, to push for a balance...& I mean equity here...& all its redressive implications.

TADAO: I prefer to remain n)either central...n)or marginal...but to shift "from reaction to statement" as Phillip puts it...to write the hybrid text which is both...to forget pretending that we are not always already implicated in the structures, the discourses, the constructs that be (power), but to situate myself in a crosst or mixt space...to resignify...I think this is the answer to Butler's question abt how to make my "...claim through and against the discourses" that seek our repudiation.

BHABHA: The discriminatory effects of the discourse of cultural colonialism, for instance, do not simply or singly refer to a 'person', or a dialectical power struggle between self and other, or to a discrimination between mother culture and alien cultures. Produced through the strategy of disavowal, the *reference* of discrimination is always to a process of splitting as the condition of subjection: a discrimination between the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles, where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as

something *different*—a mutation, a hybrid. It is such a partial and double force that is more than mimetic and less than symbolic, that disturbs the visibility of the colonial presence and makes the recognition of its authority problematic.

(Bhabha 111)

KIYOOKA: So a formlessness, a multiform, is that *textual* mutation, the bastard, a repetition with a twist...a torquedness.

BUTLER: ...a resignification.

SOCRATES: But must not all poets and speakers go in for one or other of these two styles [uniform/mixed] or some combination of them? ([my intrusion])

GLAUCON: They must.

SOCRATES: Then what are we to do? Are we to admit all three into our city, or pick on one of the unmixed styles or the combination of the two?

GLAUCON: My own vote would go to the unmixed style which represents the good man. (Plato 156)

TADAO: Oh.....SHUT UP ALREADY!

< sensing impending explosion derailing discussion TADAO exits

enters side-discussion leaves the constructed room in his head

this text the seance machine brought forward a couple dull characters

frustrated done enough damage>

— - - -

- - - - -

— - - - -

but no textuality can be completely true...

the mix & the hybrid both rely on the law

altho the mix does so heavily constrained by complicity

the hybrid acknowledges its complicity while enabling some transgress

ion

the hybrid provides not the opportunity for ideal ambiguity

for it must always acknowledge (thru statement...not necessarily reaction)

its precedents its constraints

hybrid provides the trajectory

towards ideal ambiguity.

Remember the discourse I arrived here with

& forget it rather suspend it.

How long can I remain here alone in my head?

What the use of pretending the discourse isn't there,

the power isn't there?

To effect change I oughtta engage

bring back these hybrid thots

into where others will respond

& be troubled by my transgressions

<TADAO ph(r)ases back thru the hatch-bore-derd transit spaced crossing back into

the discourse>

Dreaming Okinawa

Dear Jichan:

Rather than dwelling upon my regret at letting you go before we shared our stories, I'll release this letter into the ether where I suspect you reside. Lately, Buddhism has convinced me that past and future exist only as concepts, that life and death are separated only by our limited imagination, that you and I exist (or do not exist) equally. While it would have been nice for my own peace of mind to have written this when I could witness its reception, perhaps the drift of these words and the ashes of your spirit will mingle, coursing as energy to sea, to sky. O-Jichan, as your eyes and ears abandoned you, so did I. Your memories failed only through my youthful inattentiveness, careless values and my desire to assimilate. I dare say some ignorances are unintentional. I'm sorry I was the way I was, and that things were the way they were. How to overcome the war and other catastrophes that left us strangers?

You told me once that you took a joyride on a motorcycle in Hawaii, without knowing how, crashing and laughing into a shrub. Your love of thrill must've been in Dad when he doubled me on his Yamaha, and I feel it in me when I'm riding my Honda. All three of us love the Dodgers. What if you could see Hideo Nomo represent? What if you could see me now representing us? Could we exorcise our pride and our shame together?

When I go to Okinawa, I'll try to make peace with it for you. I'll remember you to your birthplace with story and incense. I'll carry Kin soil back to your grave in L.A. O-Jichan I'll honor the life you gave me, through your struggle to provide a better future. I'll continue your journey.

It's not such a bad thing to be part hakujin, I don't butter my rice, and I've been lucky enough to gain the heart and the knowledge to do right. I've got the luxury to become a good person. I've discovered good new ways to be a man. I know you were dissatisfied with yourself sometimes, but I've seen your children in whom you have instilled goodness, love, and compassion; the greatest of gifts a person can give. Some day I'll speak our language and know our people, and I will work to free the Ryukyus from their ancient oppressions. I seek a better world than the one we've lived in, so that you might rest more easily. These things I promise you. I forgive you for whatever wrongs you think you may have done me, as I ask your forgiveness for my neglect. I know I can't fix the whole world, that I can only affect parts, and that I will. As always, I love you.

Sincerely,

Mark Tadao Nakadatakadangwa

Spillage

for Sharron (with two r's)

Documenting this spillage must be written through you know second person is slippage as "you reader" / "I writer" though sometimes it's you Father, or you Jichan, or page and pen. Audience I imagine five, ten people maybe Japanese Canadian or even hapa always on my page which, if you recall, is you as well. You is never a prose piece, you're never a novel because I fear you the linear complexities you suggest (demand) even further accounting and a tying up. Loose ends is the story I have to tell. Symptomatic of an across three generations movement and splitting apart silences called shame as qualities I'd stereotype onto you page or you family. Great Auntie Flo for example, refusing to have a snapshot taken post stroke an eye that never closes, but pours a perpetual stream of tears. Not trying to do more damage in the family when calling attention to where trust gets valued under pride, hurt, and sibling rivalries. How to write fragments into a story that is already dissipated? Have the story right thru all the fissures in memory, even the differing opinions squabble reinforcing bones. Any of them failing memories of elderly relatives who know me only after explaining how we're related i.e. who's son I am. Stories of grand father and father gets mixed reality in time-bent distraction so I become Jichan's son while Dad gets disappeared by accident gap decades no contact. Make contacts at the same age as Dad was the last time these people saw him. History mostly painful if that's the only way you can still see it and page can represent it, even a method of leakage can't claim to keep proper track of what narrative will choose to display or judge. Fear opening this up may bring alienation from the only family I have left. Get closer or further, choice if I speak the story you cousins might want to read.

If it could go to the whole family-friends strata might stir reflection or even unite you among this family tree I haven't yet made in my mind. Hope saturates this book could not tell the story, but give the sense of absences, the stories lying in between but not told.

Talk geneology but tree chart is so complex. Held only amongst synapses, no paper, different bodies.

Can't re member our way back.

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Bunsaku Nakada + ____?____ Ikehara
      /           |           \
Shigenobu   Masako(Ruth)  Kimiye(Alice)
(Deceased)   / \           / \

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(Jichan and his first wife divorce. Marries Masako)

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Bunsaku Nakada + Masako ____?____
      /           \
Herbert (Toshio)   Ray ( ? )
                  / \

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Peter Jensen + Gudrun Haubak
      /           |           \
Karen-Margrethe  Jens       John
                  / \

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Herbert Toshio + Karen-Margrethe
      /           |           |           \
Mark Tadao   Diane Kiyomi  Allan Toshio  David Takeo

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I have a feeling that my real work I can't or, on a deep level, won't begin. What I do is only evasion, sidetrack, notes. I am walking around the shores of a lake, afraid to jump in, but pretending to study the flora and fauna—those two old bags. I must put myself, every fucking cell of me, at the disposal of this work.

(Burroughs 89)

We should really have this photo re-produced then distributed through the family I say, shrugging.



Nakama?

Ikehara?

Ofuso?

Teruya?

Ige?

It must be acknowledged that in the 'written' life (as in the 'lived') there are elisions, obfuscations, additions, all integral to the construction of the 'real,' which is always already a fiction. Perhaps it was natural for me to feel discomfort in trying to locate a 'real' meaning or conversation between events, where 'reality' is naturally implied simultaneously with its impossibility.

Each excluded body is a (formless) bulk of material that disappears from view, carrying sets of disavowed, prohibited qualities/attributes with it; each body, through its default, negation, or disappearance secures a particular section of border for itself along an evolving boundary line that gives the Forms their shape.

The borders of their 'lived' relationship were leaking into a public textual space external to their ongoing private relations and conversations.

*I never talked to you about these things,
even when they weren't memories. They weren't really
important at the time. Your memory of such particulars.
Mine. Does it matter? The reason for the story is simply
to count on it. What I remember or what you or anyone
else connected remembers isn't the point. There isn't even
any point. There is just this...*

-from *Waiting for Saskatchewan* (Wah 59)

Image in nation

for Allan

Post War. Image. Some still living in their own nation.

Some still have reservations.

Image in Nation.

Image out Nation. Imagine the State: out Nation in your
own Nation. (vaccination

indignant)

(assimilation

stagnant)

(consternation

prenatal)

(annihilation

hyphenatant)

(hyphenation

Dreaming back "home," back to that home country
looks like it never did. Seen. Image post. Have you been
home lately? Landscape of extrapolation —> fill in the _ LA_KS
from your image b(l)ank. Read Only Memory.

Root your family stump. Random (L)access Memory.

Dreaming Okinawa is a book about home that never gets
written. Chapter I begins with Jichan. Chapter II is poverty plus
WWII. Chapter III is imagining home minus memory language of
dreams there. Check the references in this chapter,
find out it's mostly wrong. Independence movement delayed
because money talks.

Mention weather, relatives, airfares, family history, this
chapter reads like a package tour. Coffee, tea or juice?

Three dollar hi-balls. Throw in a translator? Visitors Pass
to Kadena Air Base. Chapter IV on North America is really
the only one to re-write.

(Masahide Ota, Governor of Okinawa
Prefecture was the strongest proponent
of the Okinawan independence move-
ment, until a *rumour* that the Japanese
government promised some billions of
yen to his constituency.)

*This is the memory: a blackness in front of us
all, a raised blackness smelling of earth and
wet and the smell of the not-yet-born and the
heartbeat murmurs of passion and sleep.*

*This is the memory: white light drifting down
in sashes to the raised earth, white light
flaking over the blackness with erratic
precision, white light centering a path for you
to follow up from your cloud under the earth.*

- from *Loveruage* (Mathur 52)

“As a Sansei I feel, as do many in my generation, that we were born into a history that we didn’t create. As I was growing up there were dark areas around our family’s history and the community’s history. There were questions that were never answered. Why didn’t we return to the coast? Why did the property get confiscated? Why did the families get split up? Why, why and why and more whys. And there weren’t historians, there weren’t sociologists in our own community who were taking up the challenge and trying to provide the answers. I think many of us in the Sansei generation grew up with these questions, and we tried in our own small way to answer them, first of all for ourselves—and then we soon realized that the personal questions were the very questions that the community was asking.”

- from *Spirit of Redress* (Miki 72)

My Father told me once that Jichan changed his name from Nakada to Nakata, to be more easily accepted by Japanese. Okinawans were, and in some cases are still perceived to be rustics, hermits, "mountain people." Believe for years this is my history, and carry anger around his self-denial. Call it loss or laziness that this story spills out in tattered fragments. Layered anecdotes tell another version by each relative still willing to speak it. Later, other sides of the story are told in a week of short, hurried visits to several relatives from whom *the story*, or any story is begged. Didactic would be to say history is forgone. A pre-language matrix of *a priori* displacements, da kine which wanna cover up, reduce, fragment, dislocate memory. Story might've been communal like familial memory g ts los in translation. An other version of story is that U.S. customs officials sometimes changed the names of immigrants as they were Naturalized, having them fill out admission forms in a muddle of language difference, good faith, and Yellow Peril panic. An officer accidentally dropped one form, which an unknown Aunt picked up discovering that the correct version of her name had been recorded in the process of erasure, meant to be kept top-secret. The official yelled at her for witnessing her own name, thereby breaching National Security. This Aunt's arrival was after Jichan's who, according to this version, was already accustomed to the name Nakata so kept it (+ privilege a.k.a. safety). Enfolded between silences, absences, overlaps, multiple truths or half-truths is the hyphenated space of story approximating truth in transition. Translation. Age takes its toll on the details vis à vis relatives. Deaths. Compromise. Stories dissipate in generational sequences, subconscious adaptations, mutations in the gene-code of survival narrative. This version of the story fits the puzzling piece Dad offers me: Jichan was very proud of being Okinawan, of Ryukyuan songs, words, dances. The silent intersection between these two versions of the story unmask historical Truth, loses authority when one knows both. Rip it up. Authenticate the hyphen. Stir the stories. Cross-extrapolate, compare denials perhaps survival mechanisms, switch: another way to know this story is by its perpetual indeterminacy, disintegration, and re-creation. Not sure who saw the form and took note of the name. Whose story is it? What version, if any, is mine to tell? Can't get truth down against time, trauma, and family leaping in front of narrative, protecting selves through descendants, hoping in our best interests pushing us toward the bright white light of the New West that paves over history seeking to transfix us, frozen in its terrifying high-beams, disbelief suspended on scintillating super-freeways at night, unconscious lusting to taste the point of impact: "Forget your stories. Shikataganai."

Blend in.

Kyuzo Toyama, "the Grandfather of Okinawan Immigration" dreams of a better life for the people of Okinawa. Many share his dream, risking what little they have to find work in other countries. Some go to the Philippines, some to Argentina, but most go to Hawaii before moving on to the United States, Canada and elsewhere.

By the time Bunsaku gets to Hawaii there are laws in place to keep him from going to the US, 1917-18. Jichan is 16 years old at this time. Like many, he never goes back to Okinawa except to visit.

*He had always
wanted to become an
American citizen,
which doesn't
happen until 1952
when Okinawans
are finally allowed
to be Naturalized.
To become citizens is
important to Issei's,
and they often
Swear In together en
masse.*

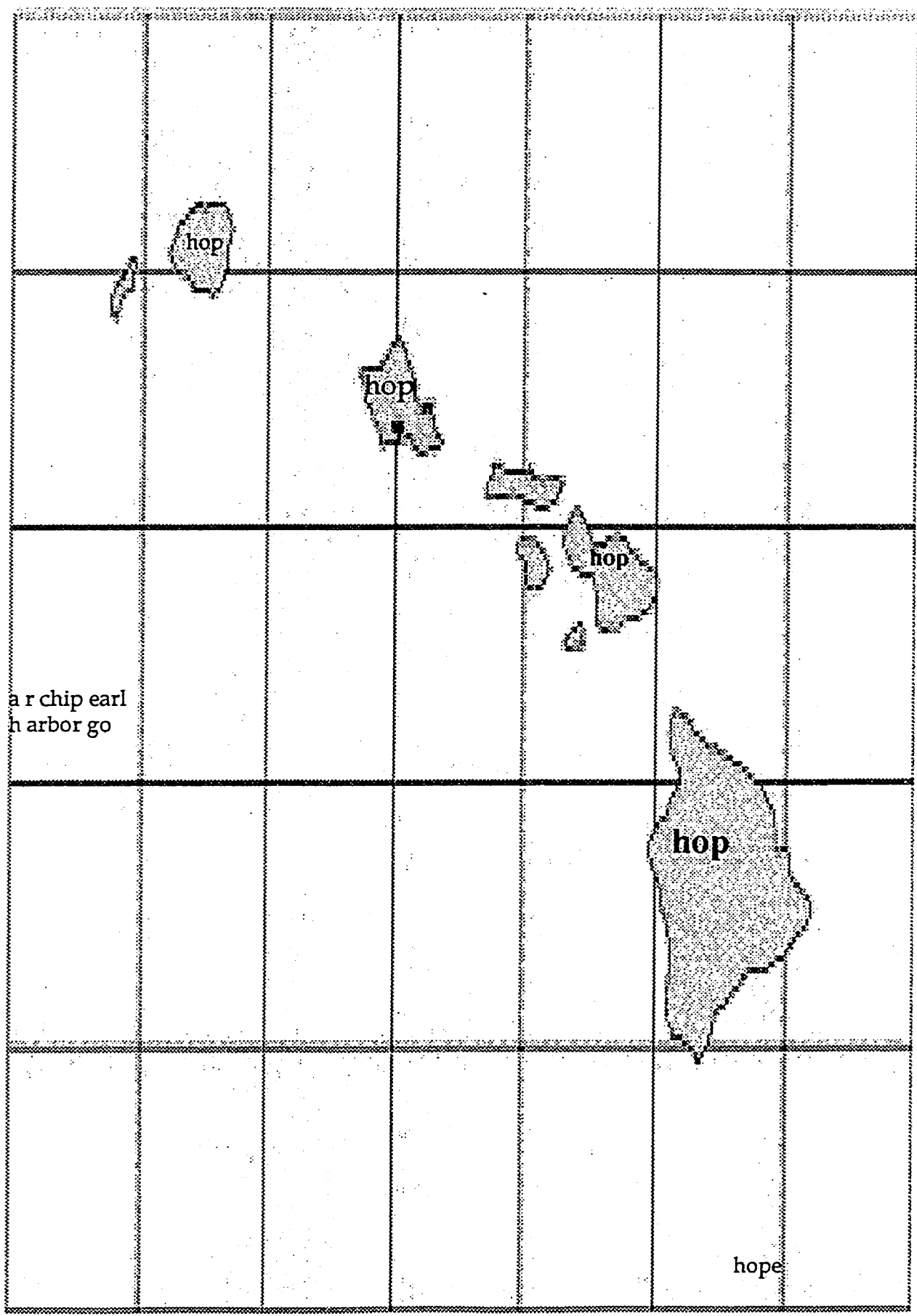
Jichan's father breaks his arm so goes back to Okinawa but his sons (Bunmei, Bunsaku, and another I can't remember) stay in Hawaii. Jichan gets a job as a house boy and studies English in the late evenings. He works long hours in the day to earn study time.

Kin-Cho

Bronze statue of the great visionary, Kyuzo Toyama stands still in Kin village, Okinawa, Japan. Toyama's plan pre-WWII is for men of the village to move to America to gain fortunes, to return rich building Kin up into a proud, wealthy town. This "Grandfather of Okinawan Immigrants" scrapes up money for the passage of many people to the Hawaiian staging area. Hawaii being an official Territory of the U.S. is easier to get into. Obaasan remembers how her parents make her work so hard as a girl: clearing dense foliage to make way for the banana trees they plant and then harvest for 2 pennies a pound. She can't believe the price of her labour. One night after going into town for supplies, her father holding the reigns of the wagon in one hand, produces a piece of gum with his other. He gives a sound scolding when she eats the whole piece: "not sharing any with your little brother! BAKA!" Greedy girl!"

Slap ringing in her ears with the sound of "boys are more important". Jichan meets her twenty years later when he is 40, and she agrees to marry him (partly) to escape arranged marriage to a man she hasn't met. "An your Jichan he was good-looking guy and I tot he look nice, ya? You know da kine? An mother she tol' me 'Bunsaku's 40 and already divorce one time, so shame! You twenty!' but at least I didn't have to marry that other man! I gotta strong mind, ya?" Before the dream of reaching mainland is realized, Pearl Harbour and Honolulu economics, ya?

(Locals are singing "Hawaii is the forty-ninth state of the U-S-A!" part of a song sung in hope of acceptance into the great Union (but they are beaten out, bitterly becoming the 50th. Ever since, the Hawaiian independence movement is low-down on the Threat List of StarChamber Masons in Sub-Basement 17 at Pentagon).



Kyuzo was a bright student at school. He finished 4 year elementary courses in 2 and a half years. If he was to follow the ordinary way, he must have stopped his education at this point, because of the financial hardship of his family. But knowing his brilliant mind and energetic spirit, he was awarded with a scholarship from village "government" to encourage his education at Okinawa Normal School. Then he was 17 years old. At the Normal School he was not satisfied with only studying text books. He studied home works as usual but he paid more attention and interests on forming his own creative ideas. So at the time he graduated school he was below average whereas his only on village classmate, Tokuzo Nakada, (Later he became speaker of Okinawa Assembly and elected to Congress of Imperial Japan. Now living in Kin) was honor student all through his school years. Nakada proposed that at the village council the standard Japanese language should be used. Toyama opposed saying that if any one could express his views in either Okinawan dialect or standard Japanese, let him use which ever he liked.

(Kaneshiro 2)

Afer all his untiring fight against all obstacles, he was able to gather thirty men and their fares. Of these thirty men three had failed on the physical examination. Thus twenty seven men left Yokohama to become the first Okinawans who reached Ewa, Oahu, Hawaii on January, 1900. These twenty seven men came from different villages (refer to Table II), but one failed on physical examination in Honolulu.

(Kaneshiro 6)

The second expedition consisted of 45 men who again left for Hawaii in 1903. This journey was led by Kyuzo Toyama himself. Before he left his village he made a famous poem:

Iza Yukan
Warera no Ie wa Godaishu
Makoto Hitotsu no
Kin sekai seki.

In translation this means:

Let us go; the five continents
are our houses to live in
With one heart, one mind
We inscribe Kin world monument.

The number of Okinawan immigrants that left for Hawaii from 1900 to 1924 were about 19,342. By 1924 there were 129,672 immigrants that left Okinawa. After the Second World War from 1948 to 1957 there was over 6,515 that went to Argentina, Peru, Brazil, and Bolivia.

Therefore, Okinawan immigrants and their descendants wherever they live today are indebted directly or indirectly to Toyama. This is the reason that he has been referred to as the Father of Okinawan Immigrants.

(Kaneshiro 7)

HOW TO BE SURE

*This is really crazy
but underneath everybody doing something,
all the music going on, the chatter,
reflections of the sky, the time of year,
standing around looking for direction (or something)
you can silently sever head from body
at the neck
silence the voice
return
to the seed
with wings and arms
planted
in trenches
dug by girls.*

-from Owner's Manual (Wah n.p.)

Cut-Outs

for Alice

Think history happens in black and white. Lives made up of names and dates. Pan across then zoom in to medium shot of marriage, movement, war-crime. Reality set of still-shot negatives framed and contained.

People must have been 2-D cut-outs, converging to pose for the future. Making appearances for stories, statistics, processing, prints, freeze-dried just add tears.

Miss the dailiness. Miss dressing up for the photograph. Miss days on end of the rocking ship. Miss the hunger pangs the saying goodbye forever. Miss the forbidden tongue, miss forced labour.

Snapshot each shovel-full of dirt for Japanese trenches. Each bead of sweat spilled then replenished by boiled cups of rationed water hauled uphill by each precious jerry-can. Snapshot the dust raised by every bullet, snapshot its tumbling ricochet through ribs.

Miss sleeping every night in caves, in chicken coops, on dirt. Miss every step of a forced march that takes days, that takes moments to mention. Suicide Cliff without the leap.

Think history happens in black and white, in names and dates that happen for somebody else.

Discursive Epidemic 1

THERE WAS ONCE a period of rampant hybridization, which gave rise to the variety of species we see today. We can observe in fact a number of transitional creatures, such as the jaguarundi, which is classified as a cat but looks more like an arboreal otter. But the majority of the hybrids did not survive, and those that did survive erected a rigid biological defense against any further hybridization. What destroyed most of the hybrids, especially the really bizarre models? They were all attacked and killed by a series of virulent plagues. For hybridization to occur, there must be a suppression of the immune reaction. This gave disease its opening. Disease frightened the survivors into immutable biological molds.

-William S. Burroughs¹

Every device will have its homecoming.

- (Derksen 9)

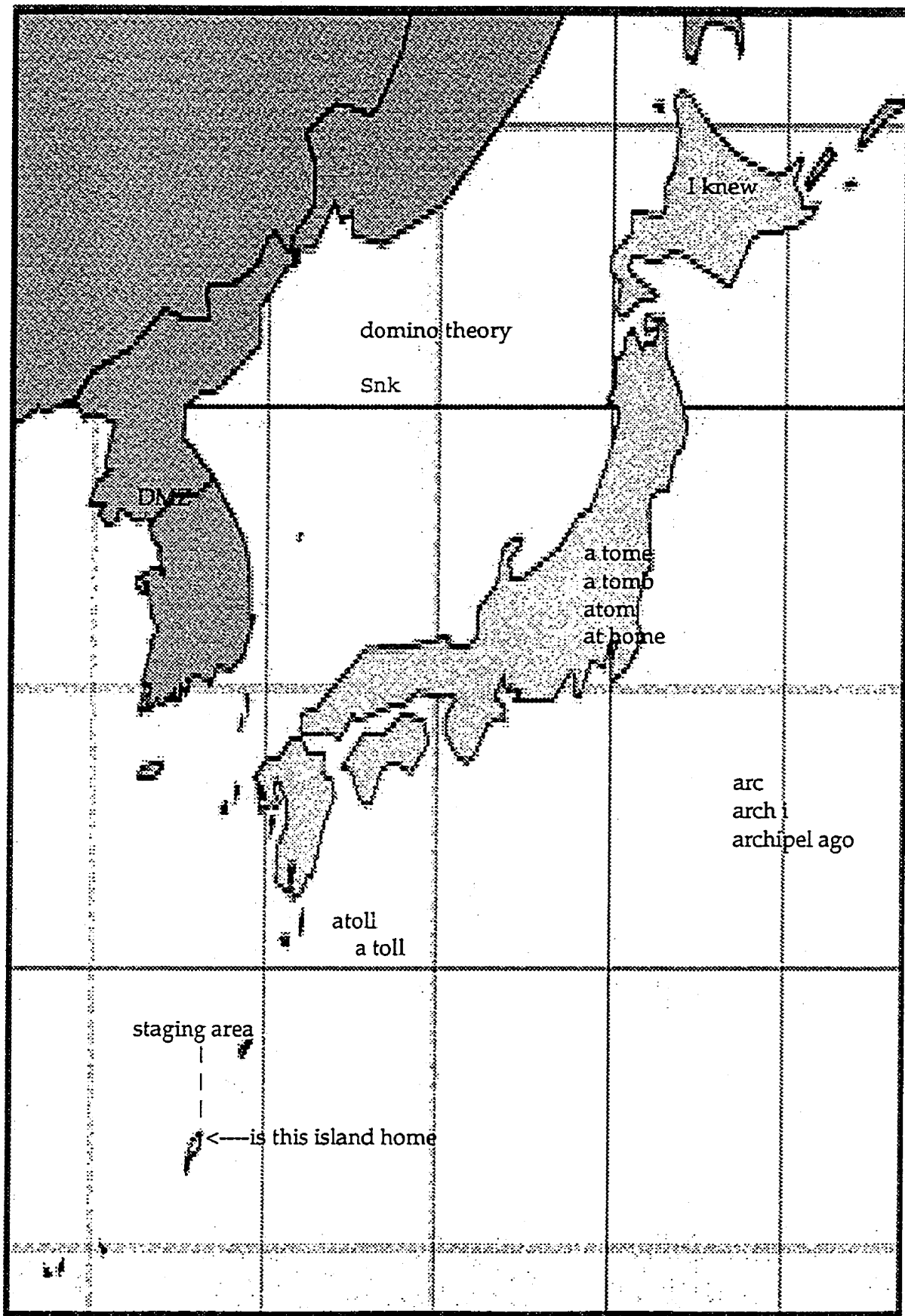
Viral thinking monstrous epidemic neo : ial. Early ; ist deploys white blood cellular attack trick. "At some basic level, imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others. For all kinds of reasons it attracts some people and often involves untold misery for others."² White blood celling sophisticated genocide through anti-bodies not destroying but incorporating hosts into Self.³ Consumption just the same. Hosts catching invaders cancerous power-logic now continue to operate believing in autonomy and even living inside viral hotbed catalyst. "We must not forget that there was very little domestic resistance to these empires, although they were very frequently established and maintained under adverse and even disadvantageous conditions."⁴ Some fight left but no visible enemy "Who turned out the lights?"

¹ Burroughs, William S. (*Ghost of Chance*)

² Said, Edward. (*Culture and Imperialism*)

³ The viral stratagem disguising its Big Secret in civilized clothing. The word borne virus spreads its anti-bodies mutated aggressive breaking down immune systems of other bodies becoming agents of the Lie. Who better to represent the virus than its beaten host with believing pacifying words (are the virus).

⁴ Said, Edward.



Role Playing Game

"The Ryuku Kingdom existed as an independent nation until it was annexed by Japan in 1879 and became Okinawa prefecture. The people were always treated by Japanese as second-class citizens, sort of 'country cousins.' They were kept in low status socially, economically, and educationally. Use of the Okinawan language and the teaching of Okinawan history were forbidden. The Japanese instituted the use of the word Okinawa, instead of Ryuku, the name the people called themselves. By the time the Second World War began, many Okinawans considered themselves Japanese and were proud to pledge allegiance to the emperor."

(Suzuki and Oiwa 16)

Playing the *Okinawa* game, I found myself dissatisfied in both the Japanese and American roles.

Rolling the dice in either case raises the family stakes.

Found Text from the rules of *ISLAND WAR: Okinawa: The Last Battle, April 1945*.
(Copyright 1975, Simulations Publications, Inc., New York, N.Y.)

Okinawa: The Last Battle, April 1945. An Historical Simulation Game.

A simulation of history in game form, played on a terrain map with counters representing the actual units involved.

...Okinawa is a simulation of combat between U.S. and Japanese forces over control of the Island of Okinawa in 1945. The game focuses on battles which took place in the southern quarter of the island, as the Japanese attempted to demonstrate to the Americans that an invasion of the Japanese islands would be prohibitively costly. the time is: 12 April 1945...

[12.0] REINFORCEMENTS

General Rule:

Only the U.S. Player receives reinforcements.

[19.1] PLAYER'S NOTES

In all the Scenarios, the burden of the attack is on the U.S. Player. He must not pass up an opportunity to dislodge a Japanese unit from a strong defensive position.

The Japanese Player is always on the defensive. Careful consideration should be made of

any contemplated counterattack. It will be almost impossible to launch any sort of formal attack to destroy U.S. units. The best bet to destroy U.S. units is after the U.S. Player has made a mistake or has suffered an adverse result while attacking, and opened a hole in his line. However, it is by far better to just sit there and let the U.S. dig his own grave by attacking. Never "Banzai" unless it is absolutely imperative and even then think it over. Banzai attacks help the U.S. in the long run because there are fewer units he has to destroy.

[19.2] DESIGNER'S NOTES

Okinawa was a decidedly different type of operation from all the other Pacific battles that had gone before it. The size and terrain of the island, as well as the concentration of Japanese troops and equipment, coupled with the almost unbelievably elaborate defensive networks, combined to make Okinawa the most formidable endeavor of the Pacific war for the U.S. This perspective of the battle is most often obscured because Okinawa came at the end of the war, at a time when U.S. might seemed invincible and the Japanese seemed already defeated. It need only be pointed out that by bringing all available firepower to bear, the conquest of southern Okinawa, an objective that was planned to be achieved in 40 days by two divisions, required 83 days and six divisions, plus reinforcements. Okinawa cost the U.S. 65,000 casualties, including 12,281 dead.

On Okinawa, the Japanese had hoped to make the price of victory so high that the U.S. would consider a negotiated peace rather than an invasion of Japan. In a sense, the plan worked. All of the predictions about the devastating losses expected from an invasion of Japan were based primarily on the experience at Okinawa. Unfortunately rather than a negotiated peace, Okinawa sealed the decision to drop the atomic bomb. Thus, the Victory Points in the Scenarios are designed around the basic Japanese goals of holding on as long as possible and inflicting maximum U.S. casualties.

I want to talk to you about a tragic period when differences were denied and hated. In April 1945, 350,000 U.S. soldiers landed here to invade Okinawa. The fighting continued to September 1, even after the war had been officially ended on August 15. The landing here was intended to cut Okinawa into north and south parts. Before landing, the navy bombarded the shore. We estimate there were four bursts for every 3.3 square metres! We call it the Hurricane of Iron.

- from *The Japan We Never Knew* (Chibana 25)

He tries Christian religion,
 becoming an Episcopalian which
 doesn't work for him, though he
 thought it might help him to
 integrate. He always seems to be
 doubly burdened; discriminated
 against by whites and Japanese.
 Dad always had the feeling that
 Jichan felt it more from the
 Japanese.

Bunsaku wanted to hide
 his Okinawanness from
 Japanese but not from his
 own people. Being
 Okinawan was still
 Jichan's main thing. He
 preferred to speak Oki-
 nawan, and loved to sing
 songs and dance Oki-
 nawan dances.

There was, however, a sense of
 shame at being looked down
 upon. The Japanese would call
 Okinawan's "pig-eaters," and
 "pig-lovers."
 Lots of Okinawans were pig
 farmers in Hawaii and were
 looked down upon.

Imperatives

Try getting the stories down while fresh in memory. Get all the facts.

Names and dates help, photos too. Stop mention about the white skin & apology. Self-identify. Use it. Notice the reflection in the mirror and know whose it is. Record reactions to different skin. Try ones from the gut pre thinking. Infiltrate with the light tones, take notes on points of concern. Not safe to talk about that here. Hide prejudice behind that which seems correct. Choose battles, survival first. Get a senseless of the master plan. Fuck it up. Make other plans. Develop sixth sense, those who have it, hone it.

Spread the w o r d.

Guilt is in the past. Assuage it this instant. Never mind the Liberals.

Notice philosophy is not actively taught in public schools.

This is only the West.

Learn to read again. Redefine pollution, propogation, and progress.

Keep a watchful eye on religion. Religion keeps its I on you. Notice the cameras at bank machines. Magnetic strips contain all the information. Open files. Recognize death threats on prime-time TV. The "War on Drugs" is a distraction. Find out what isn't supposed to be known. Mail is opened at the border. Fascists screaming "Freedom of Speech!" Check with those who lived here first. Check privilege at the door. People usually aren't impressed. Discover respect. Walk two-way street.

Jichan could read and write Japanese enough to read the newspaper.

Jichan didn't feel good about himself as a student (Bunmei was the smartest)

Bunsaku didn't want to write in English, a sense of shame at not being good enough.

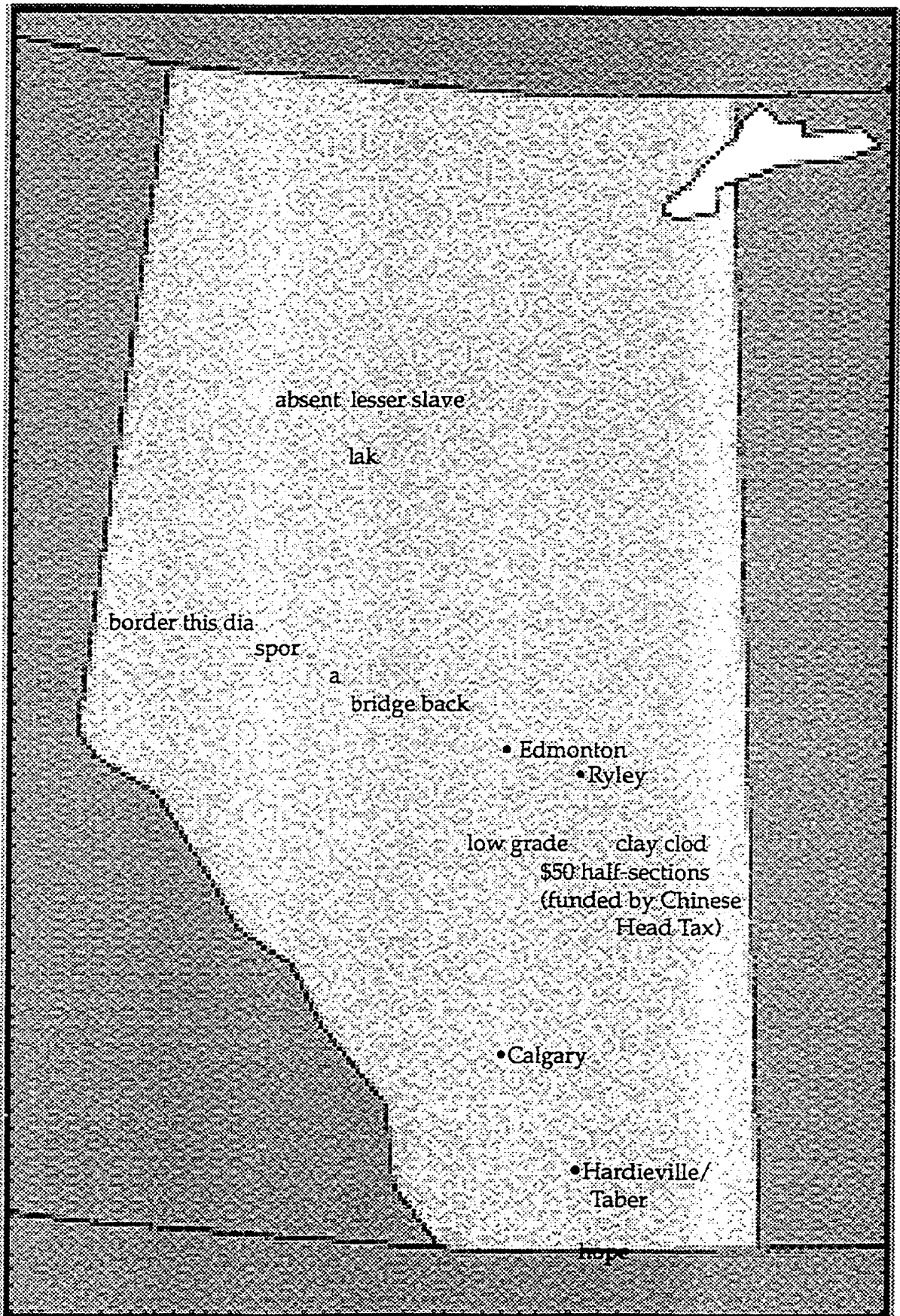
That generation wasn't able to complete high-school, and it was a big deal for their children to be able to complete high school. The Issei's honoured and respected education. Bunsaku spoke Japanese well enough to pass.

Unofficially it was 1609 was when Satsuma took over Okinawa. But it was about 1879 that Okinawa became officially Japanese. At this time in Okinawa, if they went to school they were forbidden to express their culture, to speak their language. Okinawan city councils forced to conduct all business in Japanese.

At that time China still laid claim to some of the southern islands in the Ryukyu chain. The Chinese were interested in looking for the fountain of youth, and knowing that Okinawans lived a long time, there was a lot of interest in okinawa. There are a lot of examples of Chinese culture in Okinawa. Guardian lions in Okinawa; Chinese lions.

What About the Kids?

Mum's Mum, Grandma couldn't wait to meet my Dad and made him turkey and pampered him Alberta Prairie style slash Old Denmark hospitality and she must have thought he was a good catch. I think Mum and Grandma giggled together like school girls talking about the new Asian boy in the classroom and how kinda cute he was. Grandpa liked Dad fine too but I think his only question before blessing the marriage was "What about the kids?"



1849 Denmark wrote its Constitution (under a constitutional monarchy).

My grandmother, Gudrun Haubak, was born and raised in Kastrup Denmark.

Gudrun finished school at age 14, and went to work at the next farm, 2 miles away as a hired house-girl. Occasionally able to return home on Sundays or holidays.

Also employed for a time by a schoolteacher's wife, who made Gudrun wash laundry outdoors in the winter. When her hands cracked and seized, Gudrun's father came to complain, which was unheard of in the old, hard country.

She develops tuberculosis at age 20, spent two years in a northern sanitarium.

When she was discharged, Gudrun had to return monthly to have her lungs punctured and drained.

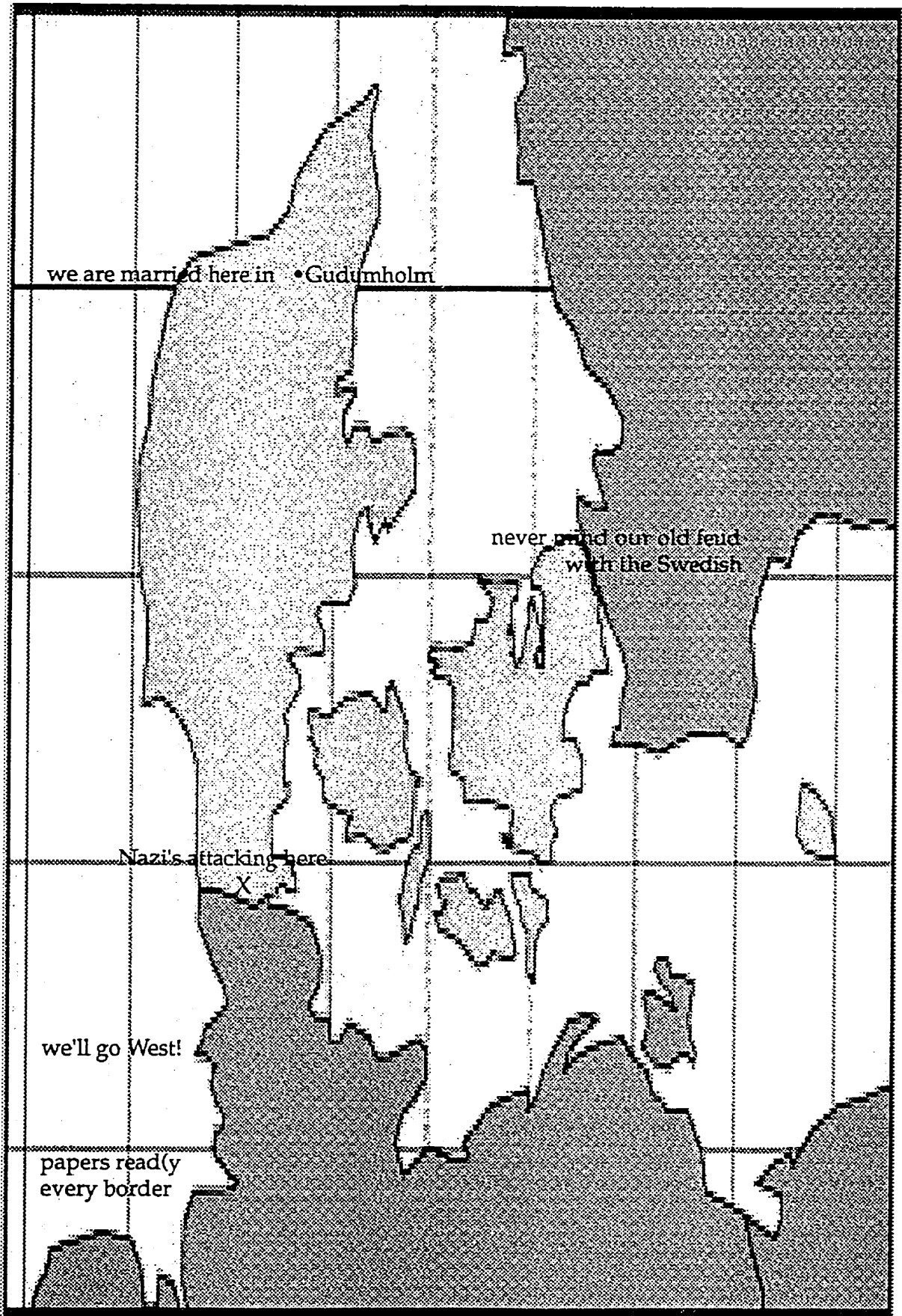
In the 20's, Gudrun lived in a village called Ringsø, Peter lived in Pindstrup, and they met between villages at a country dance.

Both their mothers had been born in the year 1878.

1942 Karen-Margrethe born in Gudumholm.

1950 They emigrate to Canada. Alberta bound.

1997 Sixtieth wedding anniversary.



Grandma did you dream
Canada would bring you to English,
to Alberta prosperity i.e. a second hand refrigerator
in place of the icebox in your mother country,
distance you from the Nazi's.

Canada would bring Karen-Margrethe
to marrying an Asian,
a hybrid grandson writing back to you
this snapshot
not yet living
as a woman 'displaced'
all the while your struggle
brought me
to be.



Frontiers

for Nourbese

more or less the eventing witnessed or maybe compulsory
 burial truthlamb pyred illusory lambasted callit whitewash
 droves of uncle-tom sawyer's painting picket fences rewarded
 rewording struggle vis a vis selling illusions subterfugitive
 seen again again not to locate an eye hear for alliance's
 sweet sake brings swift drunken relief depressant stare blurry
 eye'd write on into mourning for some charm'd paint thinner
 sponge amulet wiping caked systemic plaster
 sun-baked opaque an antidote quickly Dr. Phillip invokes
 Abiswa ex-claiming Sir John of Sussex suspected to be mani(n)
 festation d'evil internalized pusht outta centrality callit a given
 less readers (read writers) dream parallax intentioned gazing
 over perceptual horizon break it down by appropriation of
 what Cortez or Hudsons Bay always "discovering" as "Frontiers"

Only 6 months ago some Taiwanese were out in fishing boats to lay claim to a island. Huge rallies in Taiwan and Okinawa. Japanese patrol boats went out for security while one Taiwanese man dies of a heart attack during a deep-water swimming protest.

When Commodore Perry came to open up Japan, he used Okinawa as a staging area. America landed in Okinawa before invading Japan, twice. Threat was the stimulus for Japan to take Okinawa formally as a strategic target in 1879.

This is when suppression by Japan really began (Satsuma didn't enforce this as much from 1609...although weapons were disallowed, so Karate and weapons training went underground) Satsuma destroyed all the Okinawan castles and nobility etc.

Discursive Epidemic 2

Mistake was in thinking. Grow up in a southern Okinawan village build on rice fish and animal flesh nobody else lowering themselves to touch but willing to eat. Don't say it but everybody thinking these are hard times and with Toyama offering hope for the first time in centuries who are you voting for? The "Father of Okinawan Immigrants," Kyuzo Toyama believing himself a beneficiary spreading the idea to his people even promising to fund mass migrations himself.⁵ Putting up a statue of Toyama in village central and *his* great dream now image is virus.⁶ Said that the true Samurai gives away his last bowl of rice (but who paid for it in the first place?). Island of Okinawa was always a place that provided for its people but somehow not now enough. "Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings."⁷ "Word reeks image, and image is virus."⁸ Imagination the carrier site in each host body now convincing self to begin work at "Central Control"⁹. Scarcely a corner of the Earth is untouched by Central Control, "...hungry for overseas markets, raw materials, cheap labor, and hugely profitable land, and defense and foreign policy establishments were more and more committed to the maintenance of vast tracts of distant territory and large numbers of subjugated peoples."¹⁰

⁵ Invisible pressures of poverty and multiple colonizations exerted upon us, paired with the tantalizing possibility of what THEY have, Toyama already has the bug. Puss oozing from the open sore of his hungry mouth spraying the infectious spittle of the False Promise over this crowd of people. The micro green anti-matter falling lightly on the crowd, the anti-bodies infiltrate through prearranged sites: clinging to work clothes, caressing cold stomachs, titillating self-esteem core with story and image of wealth, pride and happiness (no mention of prices).

⁶ Of course the disease continues to change form. It used to look like Commodore Perry and Satsuma before him, but has had more than four hundred years to mutate friendly-like. No television now but a simple spark in our imaginations fueling it with a statue and the size of Toyama's house is enough to excite the most cynical of us.

⁷ Said, Edward.

⁸ Burroughs, William S.

⁹ Burroughs, William S.

¹⁰ Said, Edward.

Why They Left

for Shigenobu

Ryukyu bring up memories of the Pacific war's last battlefield, subsequent post-war occupation by American forces. Kadena Air-Base the birthplace of a Yonsei cousin turned ironic Issei.

Ryukyu 1500 km. south of Tokyo.

Divisively, Ryukyuan call themselves Uchinanchu, the "mainlanders" Yamatonchu.

Geographic, psychological distances.

1609 Satsuma Han, a fiefdom in southern Japan over-ran

1879, Ryukyu annexed as "Okinawa Prefecture" by Japan, ending Ryukyu Kingdom's 400 year independence.

The different lifestyle the different speech, second class education system pushed the "Japanization" program (see Canadian residential schools).

Teachers catch Ryukyuan children speaking the Ryukyu dialect, so hang a form of DUNCE sign around their neck until the next child speaks transgression.

Could be days.

1945 defeat left American occupation for 27 years.

Okinawa returns to Japanese sovereignty 1972, 45,000 U.S. troops.

Prefectural governor Masahide Ota refused cooperation with central government when 12 year old girl "allegedly" raped by 3 american soldiers.

Among 4500 post-war American crimes.

12 american murderers (post-war that is, not including the 122,000 civilians circa 1944).

Why they left was

"The battle for Okinawa during World War II brought widespread destruction to all areas and resulted in death or injury to 20 per cent of the population. The effects of destruction, loss of life, and displacement were far reaching: families were shattered, virtually all homes and buildings destroyed, and the records of government destroyed. The people were rendered impoverished and apathetic; for several years the land lay gutted."

(Lebra 20)

Jichan's stories about some link to higher status: some of the clan escaped from castles and came to hide in Kin village. Jichan thought he was one of their descendants. Jichan was always interested in finding out about that, talking about that. He was convinced that he belonged to that line and that he wasn't just an ordinary farmer.

Alice said that they were well-to-do, and that they had one of the larger houses in the village and that because of that, it was targeted by American war planes.

There is so much of that theme, so much about hierarchy and status, not wanting to seem inferior, to seem above. Alice wanted a big house in L.A. like the big house they'd had in Kin, which provided some prestige.

Discursive Epidemic 3

It is easy to shield the outer body from poisoned arrows, but it is impossible to shield the mind from the poisoned darts that originate within itself. Greed, anger, foolishness and the infatuations of egoism — these four poisoned darts originate within the mind and infect it with deadly poison.

-The Teaching of Buddha (170)

Toyama's promise coupled with the statue alone not enough to persuade the people to give up mother country. Tangible hunger of poverty, visible despair in all eyes, sounds of Japanese language absenting our own, smell of the meat and tanning leather we're told is shameful work, there is no time, there is invisible the idea of more coming from unspecified masked voices. "There were scholars, administrators, travellers, traders, parliamentarians, merchants, novelists, theorists, speculators, adventurers, visionaries, poets, and every variety of outcast and misfit in the outlying possessions..."¹² The word is air-borne. Taking Toyama's inflected word and infectious money men leaving for the Phillipines Korea Argentina but big goal is the American Territory of Hawai'i. Find passage from Hawaiian island staging area through to the mainland.¹³

¹¹ *The Teaching of Buddha.*

¹² Said, Edward.

¹³ Commodore Perry opens up Japan from its long period of splendid isolation using Okinawa as an island staging area. 1879. Satsuma owns the Ryukyu archipelago unofficially (he has since 1609), now the American makes it clear that Okinawa has strategic military value, so Satsuma completes his official invasion, incorporating Okinawa into Japan's own body. Now the Okinawans emulate this island hopping behaviour, and further, the American seized Hawaii becomes a closed border, emulating the Japanese hold on Okinawa. The virus comes home to roost.

Masako

for Obaasan

Keep returning to Santa Maria, California to lift relationship with my father's mother who I want to call "Obaasan." Each time tripping over the word as foreign, as she is to my father then to me inherited rift. Shame shame the divorce when it happens as my Great Grandmother had predicted, Masako and Bunsaku came to irreconcilable differences. "If anybody asks you, tell them your mother died.", Jichan said something to that effect on Herb the same as if she'd really passed away.

Abandonment no easy thing for the sons (five and three at the time) or their parents, who save public face while each buries one son with the ashes of silence. Keep returning to Santa Maria, an old Mexican town near the coast (a time when the borders of Mexico still reached into "northern California") where Obaasan and Uncle Ray still live. At dinner with my Ray and his family, Obaasan has difficulty joining conversation, when her every attempt to address the past is made to seem foolish and old. Someone interrupts her just as she begins talking about things real. Instead we arrange to have breakfast at her house in the country the next morning, where she gives me story of loss too deep to comprehend. Though she imagines the rest of our relatives are rich, Obaasan repeats that "I'm grateful for what I have." There are large chicken coops in the backyard and we eat old Hawaiian breakfast of fresh scrambled eggs, portuguese sausage, and canteloupe. Can't say no to the strays, so keeps too many dogs and cats. Masako looks after an old friend from Santa Barbara now semi-senile, recently kicked out of her sons home by her daughter-in-law. This woman makes toast robotically until we beg her to stop. She goes to her room to listen to Mexican music turned up loud.

"That woman she used come get your uncle on weekends in Santa Barbara where we moved after Hawaii. She sure helped me den! I remember."

Sunday morning and a half-uncle I barely know paces around the room watching teleministries waiting for the new medication to help him to forget Vietnam. Obaasan talks a storm of regret then tries to lift the weight off again: insists on what a good life it is and shikataganai. Feels like she's apologizing for not knowing me or my father better.

Un-famili-arity part of two generational inheritance.

Then why:

“...your Jichan he just couldn’t hold a job! Those days da man had to provide and oh he so ambitious! He had new job every two weeks for months and months. We got two babies to feed so you know I had to go work too, even though I was only young woman, ya? Dat kine woman s’pose look after d’kids but where’s d’money gon come from? Jichan he tried working the market, soda-pop delivery truck, strawberry farm, restaurant, everyting! Nothing gets rich quick so he jus’ keep on looking. Sometime he jus sat home and do nothing. I start the laundry business. Every morning go out and pick-up peoples shirts an’ linens an’ wash all day, all night til four in da morning. Jichan he used to work inna day and then come home late and helped me wash too. I work the sugar cane and banana fields so I know hard work, but nothing so hard as laundry! Ironing! Back dose days we used do everting by hand, oh and my hands! Anyway next morning we had to deliver da pressed clothes back and we jus’ couldn keep up so we had close dat laundry and I got job in restaurant. Then I make lots of money, ya? Big tips from dose sailors coming in all th’ time. Thats when the trouble start. Jichan he used get so mad and ask all kinda crazy questions like maybe I walk the street I got so much money! I used drop your father off at friends house and ride a bus all the way to restaurant, work hard all day and catch bus back late an get your father, so I don’t have time to do no *things*. He said I cheat but dat firs guy used t’ask me onna date an I always told him “No.” after we split up then I met a radio-operator from Navy and I thot he OK, ya? So we wen out an’ he used drink so much with friends and then I start too! After while I can’t keep up anymore so stay home an after dat he used beat me sometime. Your Jichan, don’t get me wrong he never hit me we jus’ couldn’ get along! I took your uncle and he took your father and thats it. I never run aroun on your father, oh I mean, hahaha I forget I’m so old! Your Jichan an’ I we split up before dat so...”

Before leaving, Obaasan offers roses from a huge bush on her front porch and we take photos out back with the chickens. Saw her second ex-husband as we left and shook his heavy hand without blinking. Divorced years ago so he lives in his motorhome parked in her driveway. Earlier she told me he’ll be leaving soon, reminding me behind his back with subtle wink, and jerking her “Hit the road Jack” thumb. She smiles so wide and we know she’s more my Obaasan now.

After the war they had nothing. After they had starved, and come to Hawaii, Alice was so impressed by the number of Ruth's shoes.

Teruya,
Ige,
Nakama,
Ofuso.
(Ikehara
sisters
married
names)

Shigenobu, Ruth (Masako),
Alice (Kimiye) were Bunsaku's
first children.
Shigenobu and Alice went back
to Okinawa to live with Teruya
after Bunsaku's first divorce.
Ruth was raised a catholic (Tom
Teruya and his sister too who
used to have a dance studio and
taught hula dancing) Tom was
Ruth's cousin.

Japanese Mad

Heard when Auntie Alice married a White Man Jichan got real steamed and tried the old Japanese Mad on her ("Japanese Mad" was a term coined by me and my high-school buddy David Kozuki: a relentless dose of silent treatment followed by quiet words of disappointment and shame) but Alice was too tough so Jichan yelled and finally got a bottle of Whiskey to wash down the idea though this was a rare performance he got right pissed. Might have got a bottle too when Dad married Mum but Alice had broken the ground and there are some stories too painful to ask for.

Wal-Mart Democracy

for Jeff

TV dinner union debate
 greyhound transfer payments
 inter-provincial welfare package tour
 administer Indian Affairs

about this Wal-Mart democracy
 you make the rules
 Nicaragua gun control
 Tobacco oval office

King Ralph survivor maker
 locked in the NorthWest tower
 embezzling blue collar vote
 jerrymander certain fiefdoms

somalia deja vu blue helmets
 tax your kuwaiti cadillac
 war on Mexican drugs
 military conscience

cache creek BC swan hills ryley Alta
 upgrade your landfill blindfold
 fly above clearcut checkerboard
 pieces of eight squawk pieces of eight

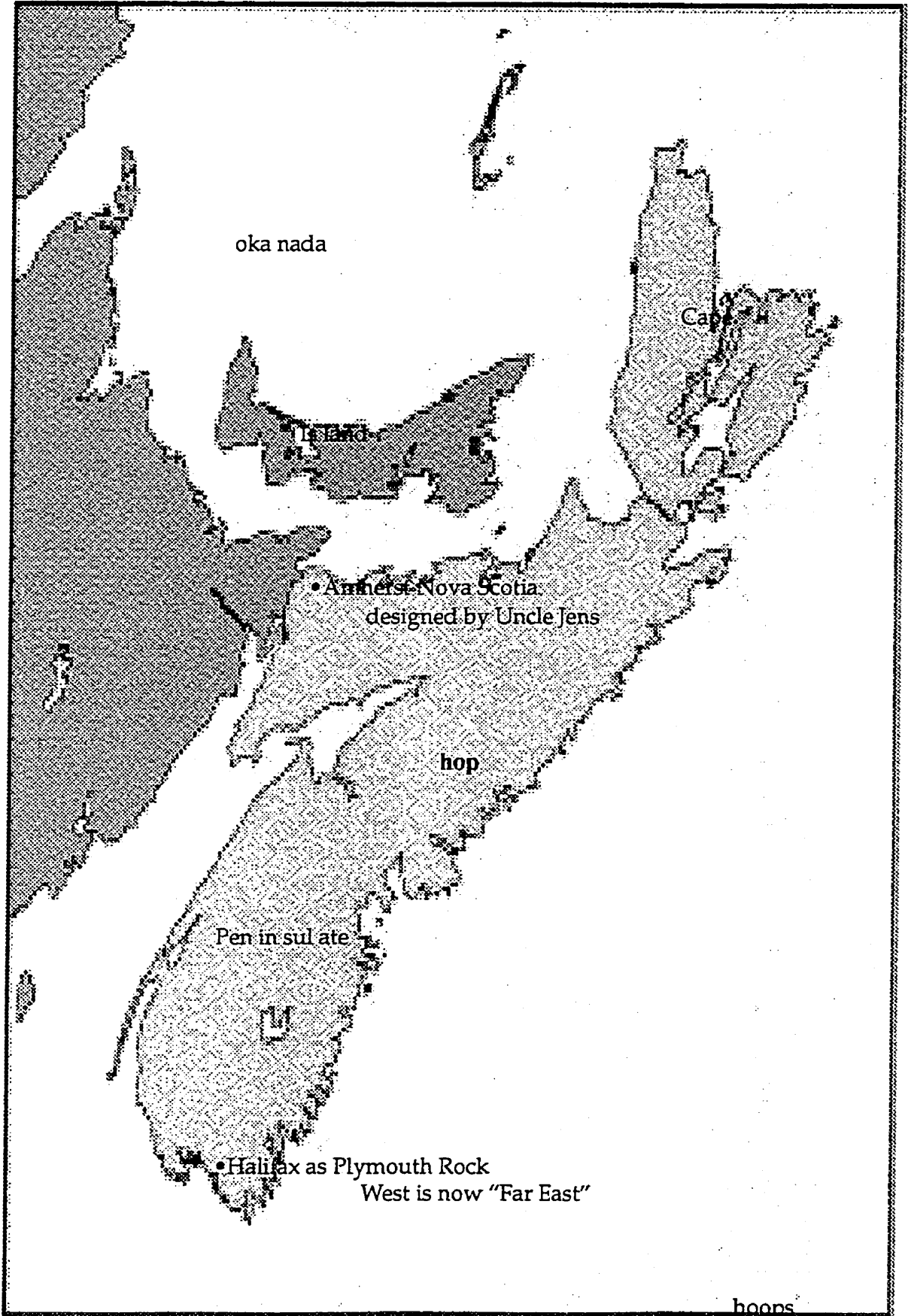
enable free speech heritage Canada
 journalistic permafrost blackout
 cigarette smuggling crackdown ski-doo
 Privatize Laidlaw chemical achilles

presently Ottawa cover-up
 seige Canada Council
 2 commando multiculturalism
 Meech Lake discord

Boeings invade the pacific coast
 Komogata Maru flagship
 shot not across your bow
 You boat

NAFTA ICBM CCIS NRA
 Fujimori those leftist rebels
 Hercules airlift DMZ instigators
 are you sitting comfortably

rezone your apartment block
 RRSP versus immigran takeover
 unemployment insurance bourgeoisie
 distinct society panic revolt



oka nada

Cap

Ireland

• Amherst Nova Scotia
designed by Uncle Jens

hop

Pen in sul ate

• Halifax as Plymouth Rock
West is now "Far East"

hoops

Before the new constitution, Danish surnames were still passed patrilineally, shifting once each generation. Jens Petersen's son, if named Peter, would become Peter Jensen. Peter Jensen's son Soren, in turn, became Soren Petersen.etc.

My grandfather, Peter Jensen, as it happened, named his third son Jens, and he, born in Canada became Jens Jensen. Grandpa's eldest daughter, my mother, was always Karen-Margrethe, not anybody's sen.

Peter's Great Grandfather lived under a feudal system, and leased land from his Lord for life, or as long as they kept the land to suit the liking of the Lord. Somehow, he managed to buy the land (thereby his freedom) from the Lord.

1856 Peter's Grandfather found dead under a load of firewood.

Peter's mother was educated by a government funded, travelling tutor.

At 18, Peter wears the standard uniform of Danish soldiers, worn in compliance with the mandatory 1 year military service. He chooses to shoe horses for the cavalry, thereby beginning his training as a Blacksmith.

Peter was long out of the cavalry when the Nazi's came, but managed to fight them in the Danish underground resistance.

1929 Peter goes to Canada the first time at age 21.

1931 On his way back to Denmark, pays for rail passage (Alberta to Halifax) by riding in a livestock car, tending to horses.

1931-50 lives in Denmark and earns his trade as a Blacksmith.

1950 Returns to Canada with Gudrun (pregnant with Uncle Jens) Karen-Margrethe, and allowed to take the equivalent of \$50 Canadian per family member out of Danish banks. The rest of his savings are absorbed by the government.

1951 Settles in Rolling Hills, Tilley, then finally, Ryley Alberta.

1997 Sixtieth wedding anniversary.

Grandpa as you laid concealed in the night forest counting German stormtroopers,
did you have to pee desperately like I did playing Hide and Seek?

As you received parachute loads of guns and ammunition for the Danish underground,
did you dream you were already defending me?

Your struggle brought me to be,

to join you in
resistance.



Discursive Epidemic 4

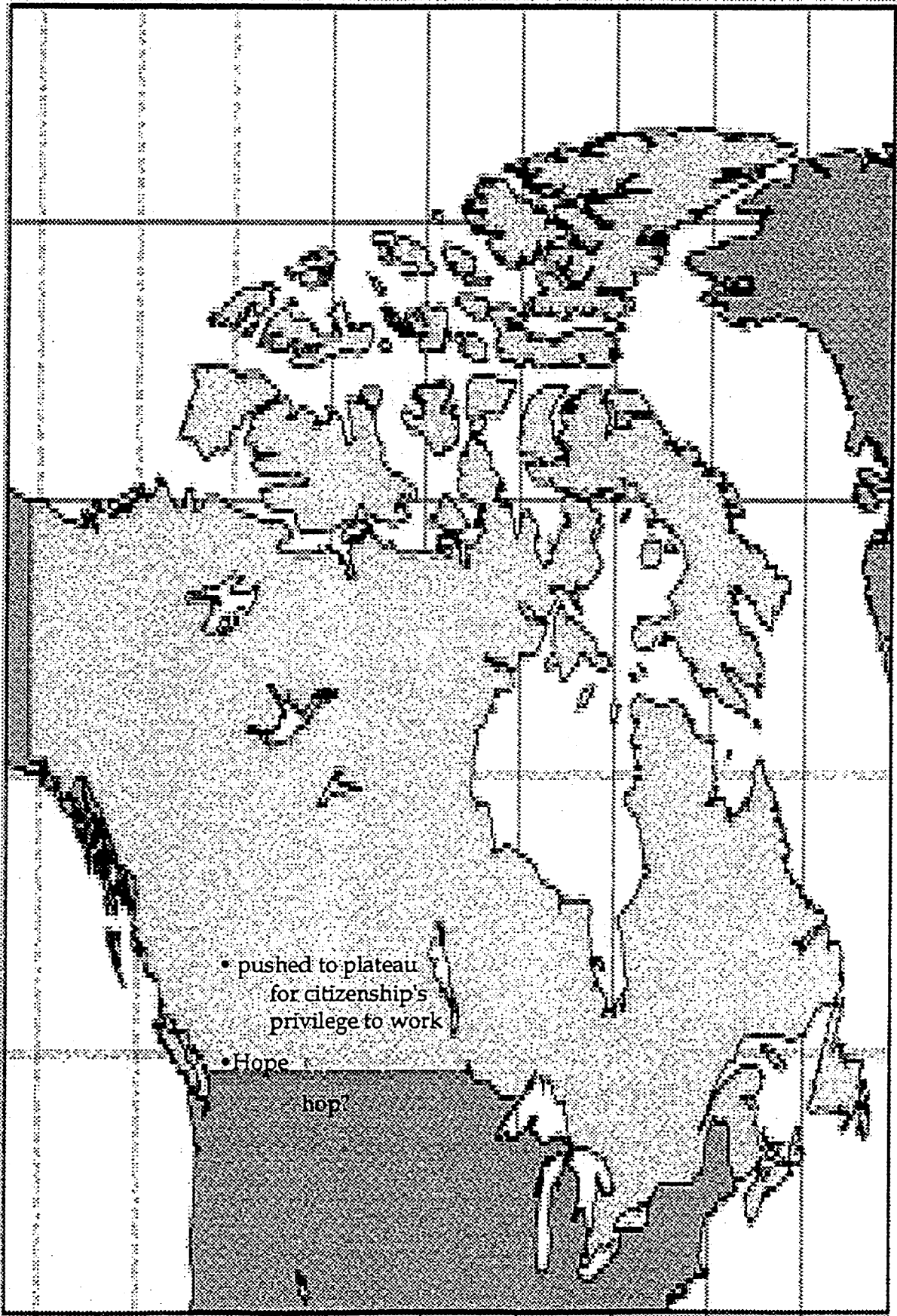
My. Mistake was in thinking. Grow up in a Williams Lake BC build on fir beef and copper, pull it all out of the land, bottomline.¹⁴ Scarce jobs are minimum wage or union or not at all. Blame the “drunk lazy Indians” and the “East Indians taking up good jobs” and “Why don’t they speak English?” “Territory and possessions are at stake, geography and power. Everything about human history is rooted in the earth, which has meant that we must think about habitation, but it has also meant that people *have* planned to have more territory and therefore must do something about its indigenous residents.”¹⁵ Don’t say it but everybody thinking these are hard times and if Alderman Gurbux Saini becomes mayor then “Its time to move!” or “Annie get your gun.” Dad giving Alderman Saini a cheque for his campaign counting on some inclusive platform.¹⁶ Grow up with the white ticket for passing by on into and through. Push by them in the queue but lower eyes don’t make contact with the ones behind, meet eyes with the ones trying to catch up to,¹⁷ and boy oh boy don’t get paranoid. Their game is appearing to make room but all movement is artificial enough to keep trying. What was your first clue?

¹⁴ Always only so much to reap from the ground. You think you own the ground so everybody else living on it is parasite, different from you, so you say others don’t belong.

¹⁵ Said, Edward.

¹⁶ If and when you find yourself lumped in with the other, you may need to stick together. Despite the specific differences it sometimes looks like “us or them” despite what may be actual.

¹⁷ Don’t look at the whites of their eyes too long or you’ll give yourself away and then everybody will have to quit the denial. The Big Secret is there for the seeing, though we all cooperate to keep it hidden until convenience says otherwise. Anyone at anytime can blow the whistle on the Big Secret but for now its making everybody feel better to just keep the differences in the backs of our minds.



I have longed to be white. I have longed to be Asian. And between these longings I have used my hardened skin as a shield to protect myself from the boundless ignorance that has people presuming what I am. And what I am not. Contrary to popular mythology, I will never be "all things to all people."

(Maclear 7)

HOW TO GET BACK

Help!

*Half of me everywhere I look
insides split too.*

Get out of this

(mess)

see it

as symmetry

alignment

of the genetic

part of sky's

intricate order

jump up

into air

wave arms.

-from *Owner's Manual* (Wah n.p.)

Alice's mom died in Okinawa...Jichan sent for Alice in 1948.

war in Okinawa ended in 1946

Shigenobu died in the Japanese navy.
Alice used to hide his picture in Hawaii
and in L.A.

She was only 18 when she came over in 48 so
was probably only 15 when the war in
Okinawa ended. She was only used as labour,
helping build fortifications (not around Kin),
digging trenches. Taught that Americans were
evil. Told them that marines had to kill their
mothers to join up. She was terrified when she
saw her first marine.

They used to cook rice if they had
any, in the mornings. They
couldn't light fires during the
day, and hid all day once the US
had landed. Couldn't give away
their location.

My body's attached to my leg, to a genetic history, to a parallel sentence structure stretching over the horizon.

(Derksen 14)

Mixed Mouth

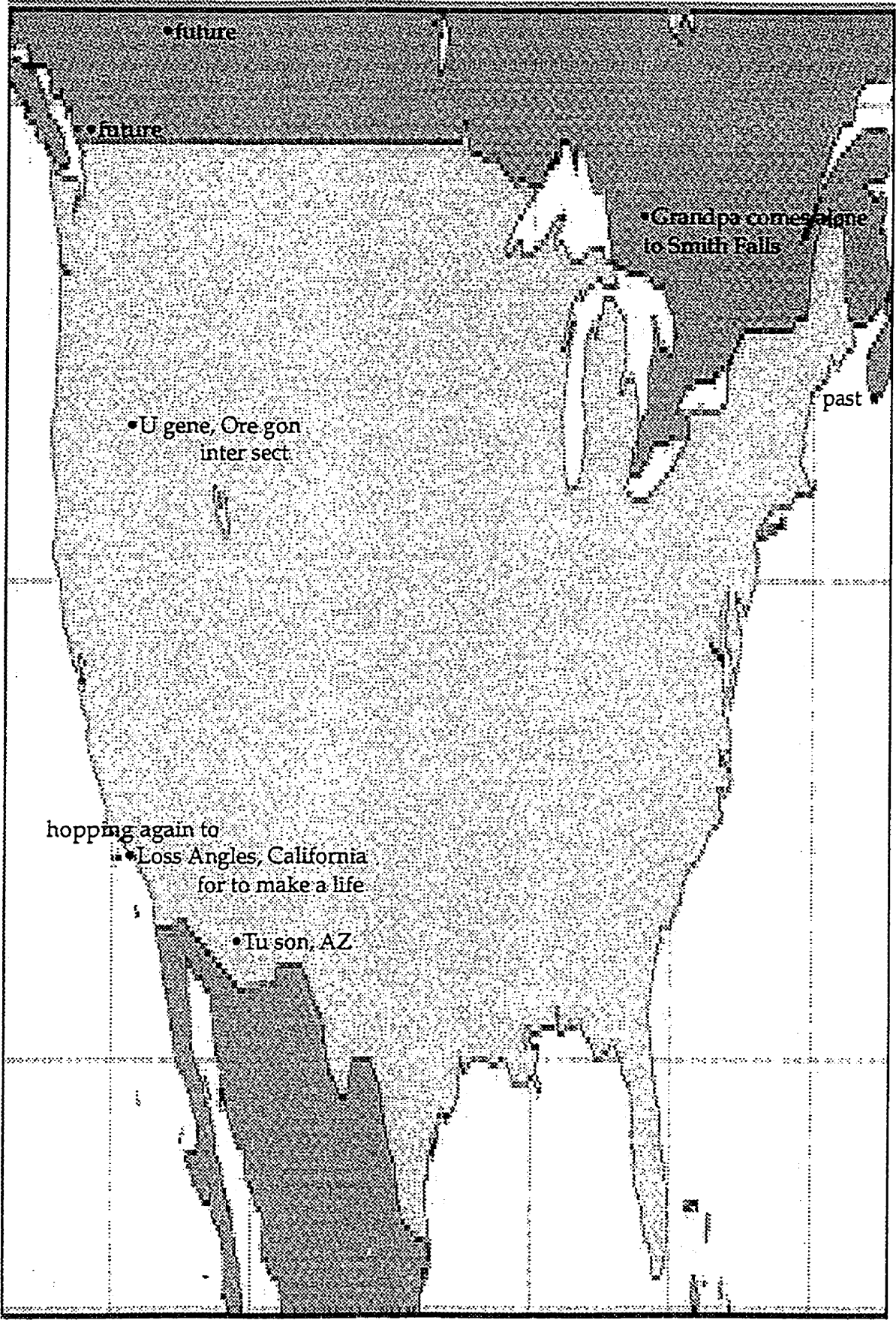
for Diane

Heard somewhere the backs of Asian teeth are shovel shaped, while the backs of caucasian teeth are flat. Don't usually like to talk biology or race in the scientific sense, but my mouth is beholden to that fixed, one-sided methodology.

Of the five senses, touch seem the most unavoidable (if you don't count pressure, pain, heat/cold, hunger & empathy as senses). My broken nose smells only half the air when not afflicted with allergies. Can always close my eyes or plug my ears or have nothing to taste. Apart from 0-gravity however, can't avoid touching something.

When unconscious of touching the floor with my feet or the futon with my back, there is always the roof of my mouth and the backs of my teeth. Don't tell the race purists but forever aware of my mixed mouth with the backs of my top teeth scooped out, and the flat backs of my bottom teeth.

Tonguing reminder.



Universal (Gringo) Lingo

for Tamai

Auntie Alice's kitchen around five years old first realized it. Munching on a mouthful "Japanese Food" alone with my Dad and Jichan, started talking too much like I tend to do but this time talking through a mouthful of food as the word "Japanese" tries to work its way out of my mouth it trips over a mass of rice then "Jap—" slips out from between my teeth, then swallow and "—anese" is not even heard.

Dad's eyes re-align smoldering my face. Jichan looks up from his newspaper so figure what I'm saying must be pretty interesting about this Japanese Food(Dad's eyes grow narrow). Gulp wondering why they're suddenly paying attention (this food will just take a minute to go down). Tapping my throat in the universal indication of swallowing, or choking. With my first attempt at universal language, it fails me twice in thirty seconds. Dad says (wonder if he didn't wanna yell in front of Jichan) "WE DON'T USE THAT WORD AROUND HERE! SAY JAPANESE, OR NOTHING AT ALL." Three generational triangle I was enjoying so much while talking about "Japanese Food" goes two dimensional in their flat stares. Explain that I was chewing and honestly didn't mean it, and hadn't heard the word "Jap" but stumble over the explanation and swear I just hadn't completed the word. Anyway Jichan went back to reading.

Half-Bred In the Head

for Aruna

Dad's offhand question in the backyard watering strawberries, or tinkering in the carport the frame of memory still besieges my paranoia today:

"DO THEY CALL YOU HALFBREED AT SCHOOL?"

He wanted to know. And somehow, though I didn't yet understand the meaning of the word I felt the weight the pain of it in his eyes. Knew that he feared my answer with some magnitude, knowing a lifetime of slurs, years of waiting for me to be old enough to answer the question, to understand its implications, its divisions, my differences. He waited with breath drawn tight, but "No.", the kids didn't even know the word at school, hadn't learned the fear and words of fear from their parents, but they noticed me: "chinese japanese dirty knees look at these," the all too obvious song they'd sung. Remember feeling offended when they didn't get the eyes right. "Japanese eyes go up, Chinese eyes go down you stupid idiots!", like I knew.

(dirty knees of the railroad labourer

(dirty knees of the relocated beet farmer

(dirty knees of an okinawan grandmother hiding in a deep cave

grandson held tight no protection from hot Japanese and/or American shrapnel grenades.

"Half-breed" the term I came to use as a child to conceive of self, introduced by Dad with no other referential equipment. Brought the word to school for curiosity's sake but it never got popular with the kids. They preferred "chink."

"Half-bred," I'd've said to Dad, had I been able to insert my present mind back into that small confused body, "suggests two pure pools of genes and chromosomes have been polluted, or in a more likely context, one pool of sweet white blood now tainted."

They were devastated when Shigenobu was killed. He was probably conscripted into the navy by the Japanese. Alice didn't volunteer to help, most were forced. "this is your island and you must work to protect it." Everything was distorted. Japanese were claiming to protect them, when in fact they were the reason for the invasion.

*There were more civilians killed than Japanese soldiers.
No place for civilians to retreat to...the war went right over them...couldn't be refugees on an island.*

Alton Nakama was Alice's cousin. Was part of the 442nd in France and Italy, and was then sent to Okinawa. Alice was happy to see him when he arrived. He was able to give them K-rations. The first time Alton saw Alice, she had to go get water with a yoke and two jerry cans. Alton wanted to help her because he thought it was too heavy for her, but when he took the yoke from her it was too heavy. He couldn't lift the burden that she carried.

Alice knew that Ruth didn't have to go through the war in Okinawa. Jichan had already started a new life, had a new wife, Herbert, Ray. But didn't ever send letters or money.

NOTE TO USERS

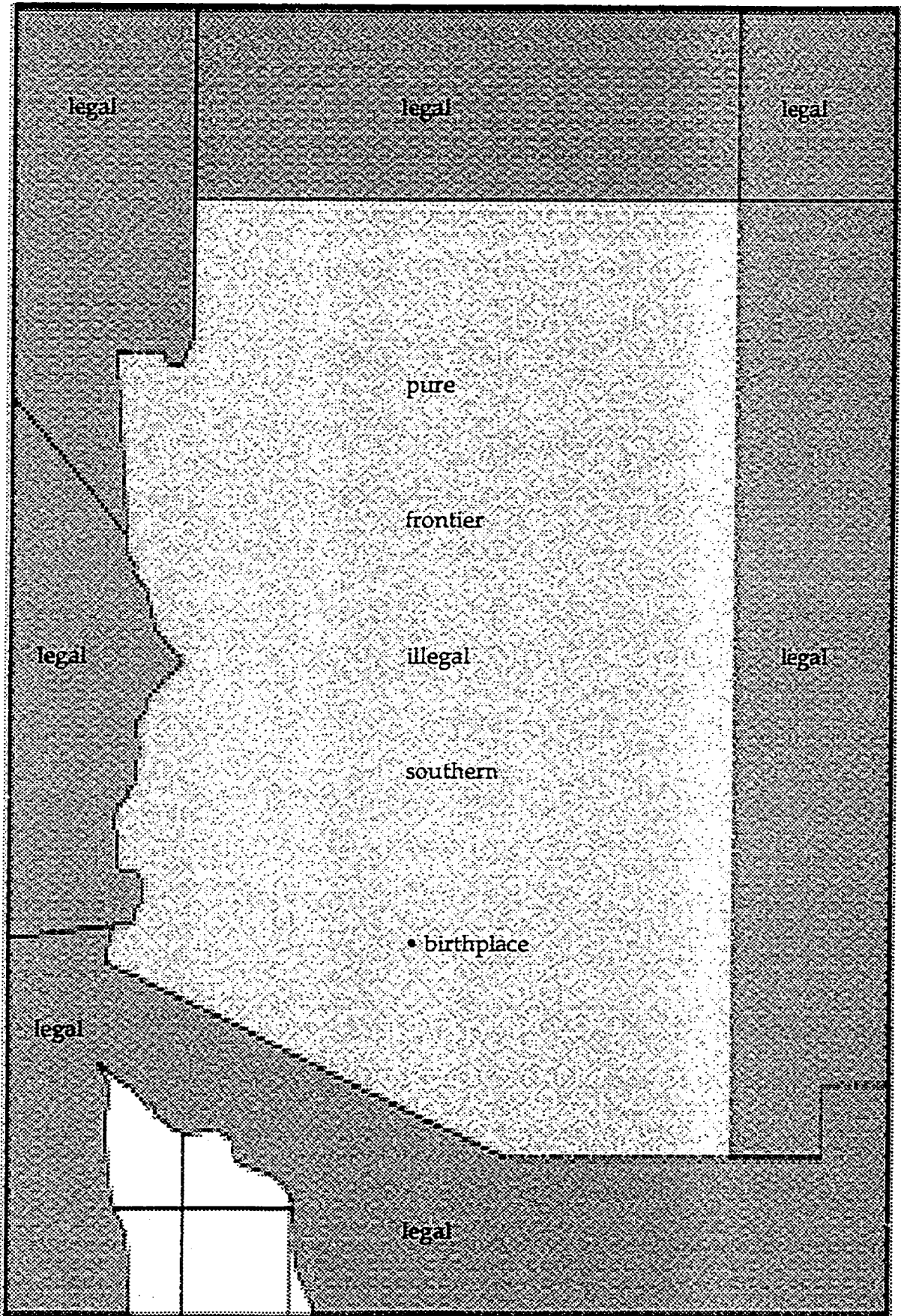
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UMI

Pima County

for Christina

Born in Tucson three years after my parents go to L.A. county to Tie
The Not, same time notice it's officially illegal for them to marry in
Arizona. Used to take a little more pride at having been born in the
U.S. Now can't help but think the end goal of the inter-racial
marriage law was to Prohibit Me. Returning to Arizona this sum-
mer for the first time since age three was not a reminder of a
specific collection of memories but pre-linguistic memorial after-
shock mixed with desert air stimulus Brossard calls indescribable
except that birthing place finds me as desert frog emerging from
hiber-nation to drink in the sights twenty-two years later, so can't
recall what living looked like then, hazy through heat waving
monsoons hell-bent across deserted staging area rifting tidal
against mini-mountain-range backdropping old Westerns, occa-
sional electric arcing between Navajo Territory clouds and Saguaro
cacti seeded pre-grandparental immigration, but all this genetic
desire amidst desolation seemingly Arid-Zone Ahhhh sheer diver-
sity of life even me extant on the sand and rock then mutating
hyphenated to match pure climate imploding faster than evolution.



Dad didn't know how Alice got to Hawaii, but one day she just arrived. Dad was really surprised to find out he had a sister. She was 10 years older and seemed more like an adult than a sister. It wasn't mentioned that she was a half sister. She didn't stay with them, but stayed with her uncle Teruya. Ruth lived there already and had her shoes, and seemed very sophisticated. But Alice was hurt when Alice's admiration and excitement was not reciprocated. They had fights, and there were times when they had peace, but it never lasted long. Never had much to do with each other ever.

Alice was scared because Alton was in uniform as an American soldier. She hadn't known him before but they were cousins through their mothers. Must have been strange having her brother as a sailor in the navy, and her cousin was a soldier in the American army.

Alice wouldn't come into Dad's and Jichan's house. They lived in a converted chicken coop. Alice wouldn't come nearer than the street, saying that they were too low. Alice always reminded Jichan that there was never anything he could do to make up for having let her go back to Okinawa, and for keeping Ruth in Hawaii. She never forgave him, always lorded it over him, made him pay. Jichan probably felt guilty, and tried to make it up, but there was never enough that he could do.

Quotation Mark

open quotation uh comma Japanese close quotation
 open parenthesis but Okinawan close parenthesis
 open parenthesis and Danish close parenthesis
 open parenthesis and American close parenthesis
 open parenthesis but Canadian close parenthesis
 open parenthesis Asian close parenthesis
 open parenthesis but white close parenthesis
 open parenthesis guilty close parenthesis
 open parenthesis but not close parenthesis
 open parenthesis both/and close parenthesis
 open parenthesis neither/nor close parenthesis
 open quotation close quotation
 open parenthesis is there time to voice all
 this interrogation
 mark close parenthesis
 open parenthesis do I want to tell you all
 this comma will you listeninterrogation mark close
 parenthesis
 open quotation mark it matters close quotation mark
 open parenthesis close parenthesis
 open quotation question mark close quotation
 open

STATE OF ARIZONA

Certified Copy of Vital Record

The last state to recognize Martin Luther King Day.

STATE OF ARIZONA
 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH-DIVISION OF HEALTH RECORDS AND STATISTICS
 CERTIFICATE OF LIVE BIRTH

8102-7-014730

SEX: MALE MARRIAGE: SINGLE (Freak)

DATE OF BIRTH: MAY 1971 TIME: 4:10 P

PLACE OF BIRTH: HAWAII (snuck in)

RACE: (non-white) (white)

PARENTS: TOSITO MARIETTA

RESIDENCE: DENMARK 85712

CITY: CALIFORNIA

DATE ISSUED: 5-26-71

DATE SIGNED: 5-27-71

REGISTRATION NO.: 2768 DATE: JUL 7 1971

Signature: J. CARSTENSEN

These folks had medical insurance, marriage certificate, and Federal Law: there was nothing we could do legally. (Child did not expire during air conditioner breakdown.

Welcome to Arizona! Just you try growing up here and we'll see exactly how hospitable our desert climate can be.

MEMO:
 Thanks to the 1968 Federal ruling, we are obliged to issue this certificate, as it is deemed unconstitutional to legislate against inter-racial marriage. God knows it's an impossible attempt to try legislation against half-breed children, but we gave it our best efforts. Can we help it if Arizona residents sneak off to the immoral State of California for sinful shotgun weddings?

ONE OF THE FIRST TIMES I BECOME HIM,

...I feel decanting through my body his ocean (I think I can even smell it), all he could ever comprehend in a single view; that this is, in me, part of some same helical sentence we both occupy, the asynchronous grains of sand along a double helix dream time track, the déjà vu of body, skin and fur and eyes, a brief intersection of animal coordinates.

-from Diamond Grill (Wah 12)

Heirlooms

for Fred

Dad keeps all of Jichan's gardening tools of the trade. These will be heirlooms one day he says, and then has to explain the word heirloom to me but all I can think is this stupid ol' shit-brown push-mower sure can't beat that fuckin' Fly-Mo old Morry has across the street! His mower is electric, and its shiny sci-fi plastic body hovers futuristically over the lawn under its own power no wheels. He smiles with his butt-crack at me sweating with my fuckin' airless heirloom on my front lawn. Lawns are status symbols up & down 12th Ave. ours is no exception. Can't believe how cheap my labour is. Takes too long to cut the grass one day, all the neighbourkids come over and I hold a Tom Sawyer work gang. Everybody raking and bagging before I'll let them take a turn with the ol' push n' grunt mower they can't get enough of. Mum brings out kool-aid, Dad takes a picture.

Jichan's woodworking tools too, are unrecognizeable to the Western "Handyman," so when trying to use them I can't get a rhythm going. Like to build toy guns or treeforts but Dad doesn't want me using "the Japanese Tools." Jichan explains to me his approach to the wide, square, double-edged saw. "The action is different.

Drawing the tool towards you like this.

Bring the energy inwards

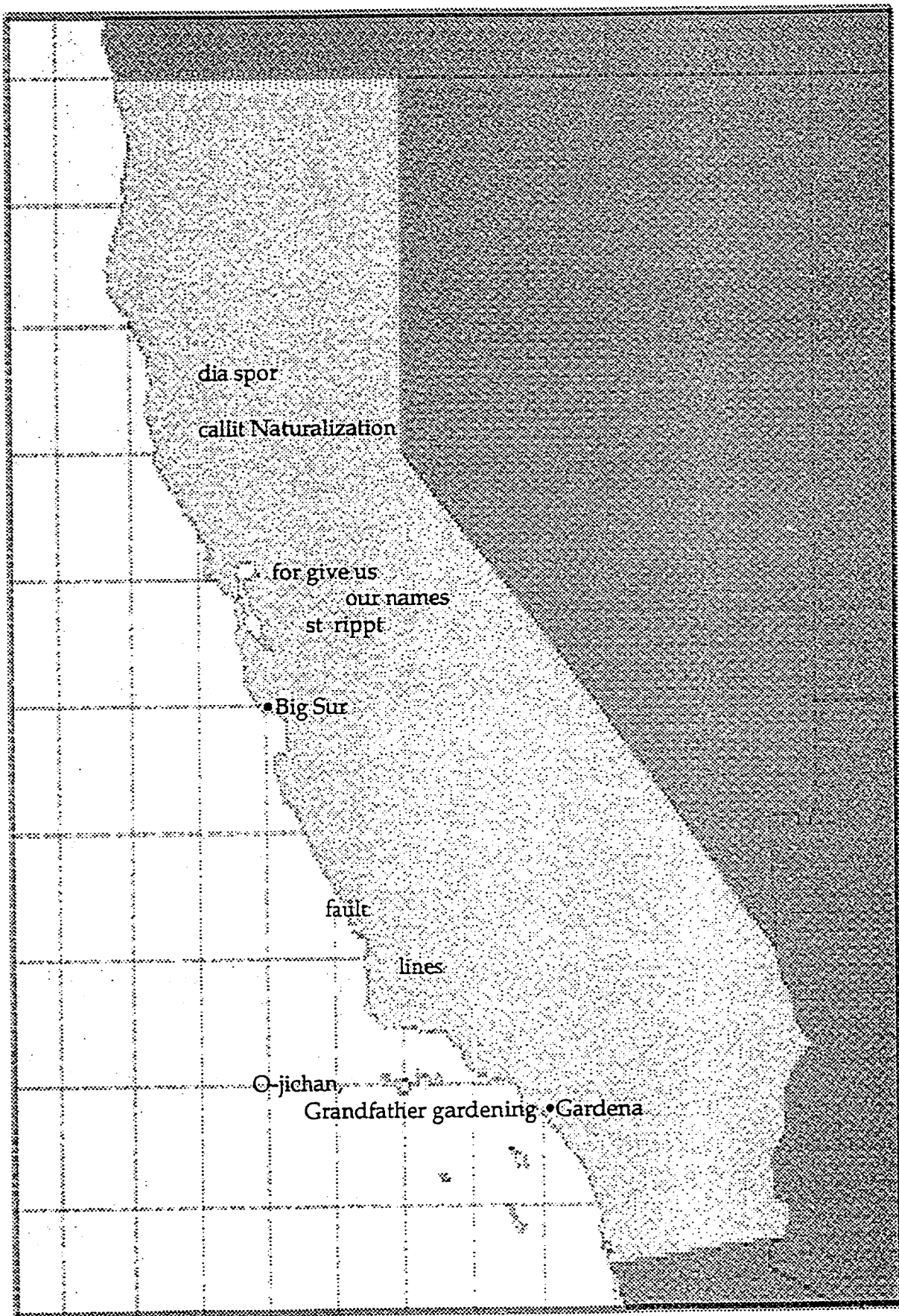
the sawdust comes to you

not like that keyhole saw rips and pushes the idea of cut outwards.

It's different style." he says.

Wood will come to you.

Draw in.



Narrow Passage

Only three generations and already passing so easily. Three generations and passing is impossible. Parents have clearly different colours, clearly different languages. Parent's english accents used to be clearly different. Accents clearly the same now I am born same accent not colour. Come in a breech baby, feet first blindness to difference. Is there difference? Differences exist in parent's context, which becomes mine too. Now my colour is theirs fading into each other. 1971 my colour is new and rare. (U.S. 1974: 400,000 mixed-race births. U.S. 1988: 12 million mixed-race births.) Between 2nd and 3rd generation 30 years in-country Okinawan and Danish descendants already unrecognizable. If I have children there will be little trace of either ancestors. Reappear through parental disappearance. Anti-miscegenation folks invest too much in appearances, fearing nobody left to differentiate with, to discriminate against in case of self-implication. No more fingers to point, no safety in numbers. Stereotyped counterattack. Yr on yr own. Can't cite the skin. Can't bear the responsibility of being enough inside it. Less skin-codes. Less privilege. Nation of informants, insecurity, false pride, greed. Now their insides come shining through. Mine too.

henceforth—

*we 'japanese-canadians' can go on being opened out
by—the vast multikultural, linguistic, gene-pool—til
there's nothing left for 'racism' to plunder 'cause
we'll all have become the original color of that face pre-
dicated on all the myriad-colored faces preceeding—
each and every one of us til doomsday. already, my child-
ren, and now, their children bear the lineaments of
'other' no less, kindred, physiognomies.*

- from October's Piebald Skies & Other Lacunae (Kiyooka n.p.)

It seems crucial to resist the model of power that would set up racism and homophobia and misogyny as parallel or analogical relations. The assertion of their abstract or structural equivalence not only misses the specific histories of their construction and elaboration, but also delays the important work of thinking through the ways in which these vectors of power require and deploy each other for the purpose of their own articulation.

(Butler 18)

Kiyooka Elegy

Stepping outside Proprioception Books before Fred's reading I see you coming up the street. You're smoking a hand rolled cigarette pungent. Stutter in aporia then mention I'm co-ordinating the Powell St. Festival reading. I don't open up so you're quick (but kind). At the Festival we hear each other read, but again I miss my chance. "Bereft" is word you taught me. Bereft of meaning my addlepatated throat. Sorting thru yr heapt-up midden of words in the basement at Keefer St., I divine yr ashes, cup the bronze urn holding you. In yr back yard caress the stump of a once Dionysian pear tree. Trace exposure of its musing rings, taste the fruit falling in yr papers. How many languages have I lost, losing yr avuncular laugh?

•

Alice didn't live with Jichan and Dad until they were in L.A.
She lived as a nanny in L.A. while dad and Jichan lived in
Azusa (L.A.)

If anybody asked, dad was to tell them that his mother was
dead. It was never spoken about again. Ray (his brother) was
never spoken about either. The last time he saw Ray was
when dad was 5 and Ray was 3. He never heard about them
again until he was 18.

She gave him a persimmon
as a parting gift, but Jichan
made him take it back to
her.

The last
time Dad
saw her
was when
he snuck
into the
restaurant
where he
worked.
Jichan was
delivering
soda pop
at the time,
and used
to take Dad
along on
his deliv-
ery routes.
One time
Jichan had
a delivery
close to the
restaurant
and Dad
snuck off
to see her.

Shady Service

for Dad

Slow Service in a restaurant sometimes gives cause for concern. Slow service in a restaurant is commonly concerning when the bourgeois patron points out the serving staff's seemingly subordinate status. Slow service in restaurants sucks the confidence of those who feel superior. Some see slow service in a poem that waits to get to its point. "Get to the point, garçon!"

One time Dad and his kid are at the Dog n' Suds cafe in a northern BC town, Williams Lake, and they receive Slow Service.

Dad gets shifty in his seat while the kid visualizes his hot dog; he can even see the wieners baking slow on the rotating spits, while Dad feels the heat rack of other patron's stares who are now eating their meals.

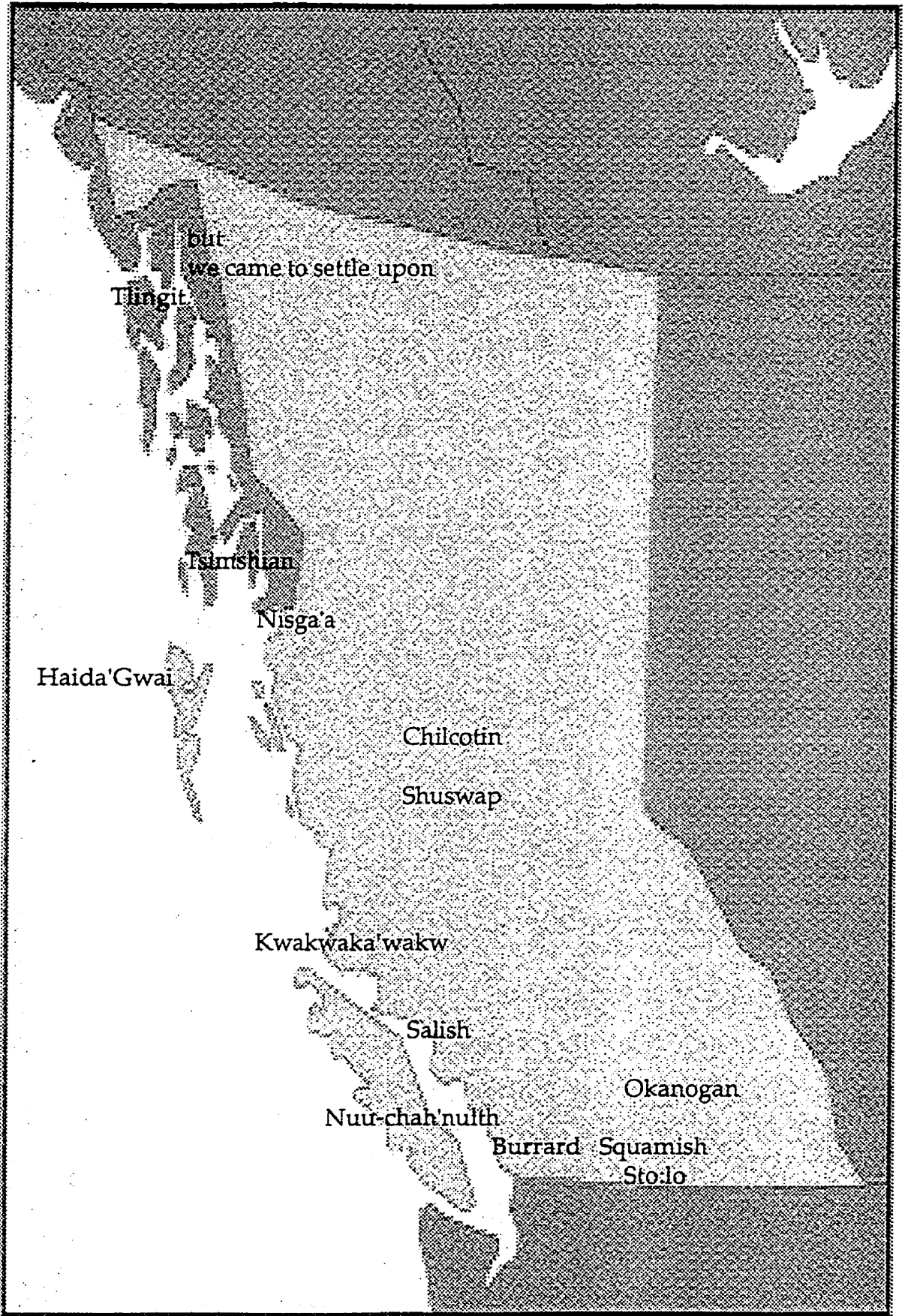
This is cause for Dad's concern, though all the kid wants at the time is a hot dog ketchuped on a steaming bun, and slow service is no cause for concern for the kid doesn't yet recognize. Father and son move past the "Please Seat Yourself" sign and choose an orange vinyl booth. Several Dog n' Suds patrons sit down after them, and the Father (not the son) notices these patrons placing orders then receiving their food before father/son have even been acknowledged.

Kid thinks he's done something wrong when Dad gets up and says its time to leave. Usually when he misbehaves in a restaurant the kid gets sent to the car with no dessert, but he hasn't done anything wrong and there's the missing hot dog and Dad walking towards the door, everybody watching so he can't throw complaints. On the car ride home for hot dogs, Dad explains slow service and although his kid gets the general idea, still doesn't understand the part about slower service for certain shades of skin.

Service finds its way eventually to those who wait. Slow service, however, sometimes finds its way to those people it sees in restaurants, while significantly slow service callit shady service, oversees then invisibles orange vinyl booths quite in front of café counters.

Dad watches the patrons (seated after he and his son) finish their meals and then walk past him looking at his empty table. For what seems a long time.

When he's older, Dad tells him the story of how he and Mom had to go to L.A. to get married because it was illegal for them to marry in Arizona. The night of their wedding, Dad said he booked a window table at a restaurant on the top floor of a fancy hotel. When they arrived, the maitre'd said there must've been a mistake because there was no room in the half empty restaurant. Dad demanded that they be let in because they had reservations, so they were seated in a back booth by the kitchen, away from the other customers. After hearing this story, the kid remembered the Dog n' Suds service and recognized it. Slow service still gives the kid cause for concern even though he's grown up in light skin, because although service tends to be a bit better, he still bears his Dog n' Suds scar, and the scars of his Dad. Slow service in restaurants still sucks the confidence.



When Dad tried to look his mom up he was 18, and it was hard for Jichan, but soon he went to visit too because he wanted to see Ray. Mariko was still married to Cass, and Jichan felt badly. After those two marriages, Jichan never allowed another relationship to happen again, although Dad knew there were some who were interested in Jichan.

Jichan saved his money, and Alice did too, and the three managed to pay for passage to L.A. Jichan got a job with a friend on a strawberry farm in Azusa. Jichan then saved his money and bought a gardening route. Then moved to L.A. and lived with Komatsu Ige, and that's when Alice left her job as a live-in nanny and came to live with them. Dad was 9 at the time. (1949 Azusa, 1950 L.A. dad was in 6th grade, 11 at Kingsley elementary school.)

In Hawaii dad went to Wai Lai, Kai Lua, Kanyohe elementary schools. In Azusa he went to Covina, Lark Allen, and then Covina elementary schools. Then Berendo junior high.

General Doolittle went to that junior high as well (the general who led the B-25 raid on Tokyo, showing they could make an air strike on it from carrier task force. They didn't have fuel to make it back to carriers, flew to Asia and bailed out to make the statement.)

Alice got a job at farmer John's meat packing plant, and worked there until she retired. She might have come home to cook once in a while, but Dad mainly looked after himself. Alice and Jichan saved money for the down payment on a house in Gardena. Jichan later repaid her, but she lorded her help over him, saying that he would never have had anything if it had not been for her. She was always bitter and difficult to live with.

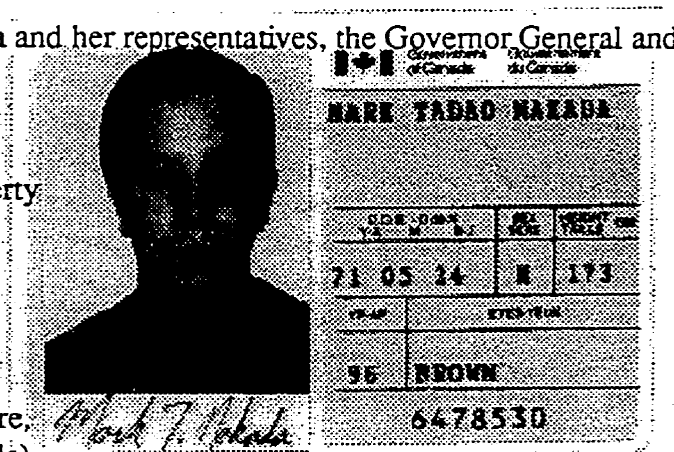
"A person who becomes a Canadian citizen takes this oath:

I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, according to law and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfil my duties as a Canadian citizen.

This oath sums up some of the responsibilities of every Canadian citizen.

These are:

- to be loyal to Canada
- to be loyal to the Queen of Canada and her representatives, the Governor General and Lieutenant Governors
- to obey Canada's laws
- to respect the rights of others
- to respect private and public property
- to care for Canada's heritage
- to support Canada's ideals."



(from *The Canadian Citizen* brochure, Citizenship and Immigration Canada)

Seems to me at the oath taking ceremony (from where I stand at the back of the room), not everybody is actually saying the oath. Can't help laughing at the toddler who throws the complimentary *Holy Bible* (the only book offered to everybody at the door) on the floor and stomps it.

Some get miffed at his babbling rabble-rousing, but others seem to enjoy it.

Took years to weigh the costs of joining up (paid head tax by VISA), but finally need the voting privilege.

At the very least I promise to do my duty as a citizen, though my notion of *duty* is clearly not what *They* have in mind.

Playschool Communism

Must be four and in playschool at the time and guessing he's a Korean boy wearing police style cap and blue smock shirt. *Every* day at recess and lunch he to stands on the same mound of dirt shouting the same (memorized) political speech through an orange pylon "...independence for the people of [did he say North?] Korea!!!" always the climax of his speech, then a salute before stepping down off his makeshift platform. None of the kids know what he's talking about but remember thinking he has guts standing there daily delivering (screaming) his speech at the other four year olds racing by to the Jungle Gym, to the Merry-Go-Round, to the Tree Fort, not giving two shits what he has to say. Admit we all think he's a bit wierd, don't know if anybody plays with him (I didn't). Knowing he's the only other Asian maybe why I take note of his determination, maybe why I'm beginning to get what I *think* he was talking about twenty-one years ago. He *does* this.

Side Door

New friends come through the door after school and sometimes do double-take seeing Dad who (to them) is obviously a Chink so have to explain the situation *in basic terms* imagining some kids aren't allowed to come back to play at my place anymore. But I can usually Pass through any kids front door all right if I want to. (ok maybe sometimes it's the side door.

Hapa Haole

Uncle Ray looks exactly like Dad and they smile the same too so double take then after accustomizing to similarity look twice shocked because I've never seen another man like my Dad except Jichan's face was old and not as wide as Obaasan's. They have her smile too. Used to have a crush on Ray's daughter (my cuz if I'm gonna be honest about it) also a hybrid but I'm young so confuse the level of connection. Ray says "hapa" then Dad jokes in Hawaiian pidgin that we kids are "hapa haoles" when he sees me butter my rice. Don't wanna be a hakujin.

Hapa haole or **hapa** is a term derived from the Hawaiian language. Although it was originally used to designate someone who was partially a stranger or outsider—Hawaiian mixed with other national or racial heritage—today it designates someone of Asian or Pacific Island origin mixed with European heritage. Some people are broadening its usage to be more similar to Amerasian.

(Root x)

She left before dad was finished high school in Gardena. She used to look after the house. Dad wasn't allowed through the front door, and had a lot of restrictions in the living room. Alice still maintains a clean living room. If it weren't for the TV set, dad wouldn't have been allowed in the living room.

Alice and Jichan had a fight in Kai Lua because he tried to shield dad from Alice. She would threaten suicide etc. Ran away one rainy night after showing dad the knife she was going to kill herself with. Nobody knew where she had gone, but came back in the early morning hours.

Jichan went crazy and drank 4 roses whiskey. Dad remembered the bottle, the label on the bottle, everything about it.

She later moved out because of Jichan's attitude towards hakujins (whites).

Schizophrenic i

MARK: You complicate my existence.

TADAO: You complicate my existence.

MARK: You are the middle name, so you are secondary.

TADAO: You shroud the truth of my name, so your primacy must be an illusion.

MARK: You are difficult to pronounce. Even my own ears don't recognize your sound.

TADAO: Only *here*. I've seen your head turn impulsively when I'm called.

MARK: Only some call you. Only sometimes.

TADAO: Those who know you. Your friends accept me.

MARK: Do you accept me?

TADAO: With difficulty, yes. When others don't see me, you sometimes don't introduce me, so I feel invisible. It is easier to accept you when I can count on being seen, without depending on you.

MARK: You hide sometimes.

TADAO: You hide sometimes.

MARK: Yes, sometimes.

TADAO: Yes, sometimes.

MARK: Hiding divides us.

TADAO: Regardless of our mutual acceptance.

MARK: Accepting each other doesn't guarantee our wholeness.

TADAO: Neither does admitting each other, introducing each other.

MARK: Is there any guarantee?

TADAO: No, no guarantee. There is not unity, not division, only a continual being.

MARK: You mean ignore each other? Deny each other?

TADAO: Nope, we speak as ourself. If we continue to meet, we will continue to divide.

MARK: But if we meet, we *were* divided. If we don't meet we *are* divided. We have no choice.

TADAO: Exactly. There is no choice, unless we believe there is. Do not choose, and our division disappears into impossibility.

MARK: So there is no meeting, no separation, no choice, we just are.

TADAO: There is no 'we.' There is rewriting, slippery shift in out, bothing in double time.

MARK: Defined in undefinability.

TADAO: Like a bad cultural slogan.

MARK: Yeah, but ideally without the typical oversights and erasures. Don't want liberal funding for a weekend of government sanctioned "exotic" food and dance.

TADAO: Right. Contrary to popular belief, I will be eating and shakin' my booty on a continuous basis, all the complexity that comes with it between annual festivals.

MARK: Find the flow.

TADAO: Sink or see self

MARK: Sea shelf?

I see the way to solve contradictions, to unite fragmentary, unconnected projects: I will simply transcribe Lee's impressions of Interzone. The fragmentary quality of the work is inherent in the method and will resolve itself so far as necessary. That is, I include the author, Lee, in the novel, and by so doing separate myself from him so that he becomes another character, central to be sure, occupying a special position, but not myself at all. This could go on in an endless serial arrangement, but I would always be the observer and not the participant by the very act of writing about a figure who represents myself.

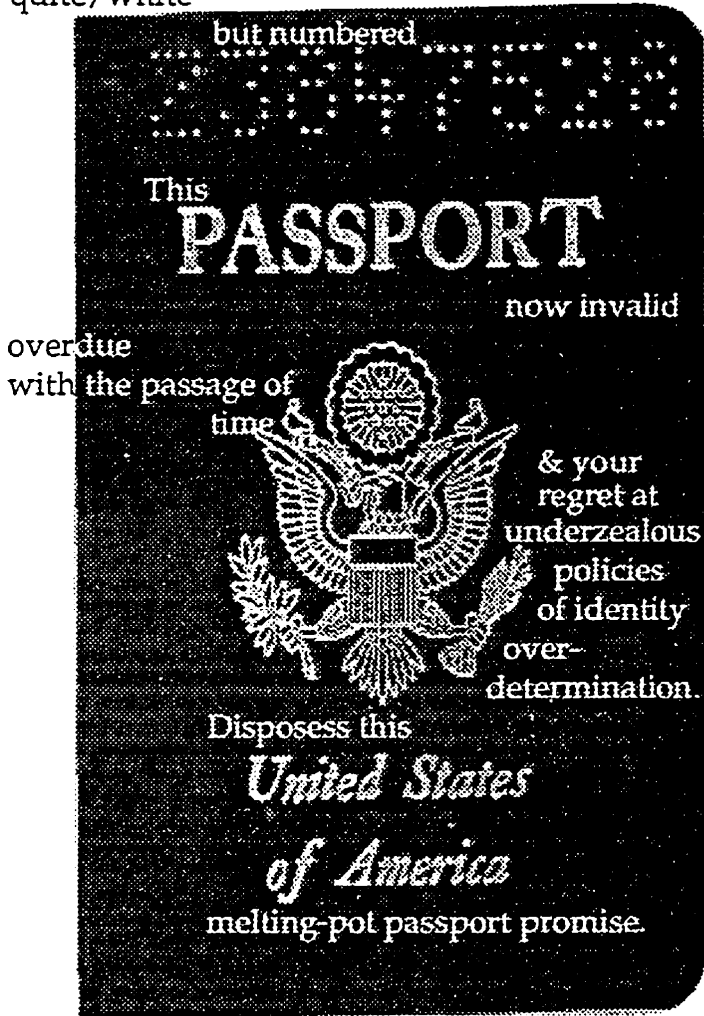
-from *Interzone* (Burroughs 82)

Shogun Warriors

for David

Grade Three still a matter of sorting out who your friends are and thereby who you want to be in relation to those friends though none of this is clear, its all hunt and peck. A few dead-end friendships then William Wong and I strike a minor chord might've been pre-desire-to-objectify-each-other, or is it more insidious at even that age? Can't get enough of his toys imported from Hong Kong we call Shogun Warriors (Japanese word), oversized android death machines piloted by Asian kids fighting future battles every day after school for hours! In Grade Four me + William Wong + Cory Takenaka are tight. Cory is Half-Japanese, or a Half-Breed which I whisper to him in private that We are called, but Dad tells me it's meant as an insult. Don't know why. Still conceive of self as Half-Japanese-American. Don't remember mentioning Okinawa till a long time later.

Born into the passing promise of your approval.
 Stamped into official recognition vis a visas.
 Have paperwork in order always
 ready at the instant of your dis
 approval vis à vis a face not
 quite/white



With or without
 it
 will (not) pass.

Toothpick

for Sita

1981. Okinawan relatives put Dad and I up for a few days and enthralled with all things Okinawan I drink it in as Disneyland sometimes even witness in ways I might when visiting there soon. See the village the house in the village (called Kin) where Jichan was born. See graveyards, beaches, farmers, fishnets, caves, and what Jichan says used to be our Clan Castle. People everywhere who look like Dad, immediately comfort feeling of that familiarity slips halfway remembering I draw so much attention here.

One time after a big bowl of Udon Soup I prod my mouth with a toothpick cuz the older guys are doing it. Hideki cringing, wincing, signaling desperately for me to stop! He shows me how to politely cover my mouth with one hand while the other operates the tooth-pick.

Blush.

Every night in Kin I kick off the sticky sheets, my chest heaving in the suffocating heat, drowning in humidity, dreaming dreams of being swept beyond the reefs far off Ryukyu's shore, swimming through salty turquoise ocean toward home which is Kin horizon but thrashing and drowning all the way.

Jichan would do that after fights with Alice in Hawaii too.

He'd get smashed and threatened to commit suicide unless she broke off her relationship. She moved out soon after, and married Terry in secret, and told Jichan after it was done so that he couldn't do anything about it...so he didn't bother to get the bottle.

Dad remembered Jichan going nuts in the house, getting blind drunk, falling over the telephone table in the hall, passed out.

Jichan worked for Baskin in Laurel Canyon. Also worked for Gordon McCreigh (starred in Oklahoma and Carousel, did bunch of movies with Doris Day. His wife Sheila McCreigh was on the Jackie Gleason show). Jackie Gleason had a thing for Shirley McCreigh). Jichan used to work for them when they lived at Tuluka Lake before they became big, and then after they were big in Laurel Canyon. Jichan made a trip to Japan and brought back expensive gifts (geisha doll) for the McCreigh's. Jichan was hopeful that one of his rich clients would die and leave part of the inheritance for him. Every once in a while a gardener would strike it big that way. Jichan was proud of working for stars. Alice once worked one of McCreigh's parties and was taken with Jeff Shandler because he spoke to her. She served drinks and food there.

WARNING: ALTERATION, ADDITION OR DELETION OF STAMPS OR ENDORSEMENTS
 MAY RENDER THIS PASSPORT INVALID.

NAME: MARK YADAO NAKADA
 SEX: M
 PLACE OF BIRTH: ARIZONA, U.S.A.
 DATE OF BIRTH: MAY 24, 1971
 DATE OF ISSUE: DEC. 20, 1980
 DATE OF EXPIRY: DEC. 29, 1985

PHOTO ATTACHED

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FOR PASSAGE TO CANADA, OBTAIN AN AMERICAN PASSPORT AT THE
 U.S. CONSULATE IN CANADA, HAVE IT OFFICIALLY NOTARIZED BY A
 STRANGER, THEN STAMPED WITH VISAS BY U.S. CUSTOMS AT VANCOUVER, INTER-
 NATIONAL AIRPORT, AND AGAIN AT NARITA FOR RE-ENTRY, THEN AGAIN FOR
 PASSAGE TO YOKOHAMA, OKINAWA, LEGAL.

For passage to Canada, obtain an American passport at the U.S. Consulate in Canada, have it officially notarized by a stranger, then stamped with visas by U.S. customs at Vancouver, International Airport, and again at Narita for re-entry, then again for passage to Yokohama, Okinawa, Legal.

Mark A. Nakada

Hideki comes to visit Vancouver several times in the past few years and Herb phones down each time from the North urging me to visit. Hideki is a Karate sensei and runs a prestigious dojo in Kin. It is Karate that always brings Hideki to me. Since childhood visit to his dojo the strongest memory of him has been as a gentle warrior. Battle, however, had not been an element of Ryukyu culture in the centuries before modern contact.

Sai—> Long
Heavy dag-
gers sans
blade but
with ex-
tended hand
guards (tri-
dent style) to
catch, twist,
and disarm
the Samurai's
Katana...rather
peaceful un-
less the user
decides to run
you through
with its su-
per-sharp get
to the point.]

Nunchaku—>
Bruce Li made
famous while
Kung Fu
fightin'

Bo —> short
staff made from
the handle of a
shovel or rake
deadly in the
hands of an ex-
pert.

Ryukyuan developed Karate as a form of
defence against the invading Japanese who had
made their possession of weapons illegal and
punishable by death circa 1609. *Kara* means
Empty and *Te* means *Hand*. Not wanting to go
only empty handed against the Japanese, not
wanting to be renamed "Okinawans" subject to
the Empire, Ryukyuan developed weapons and
combat systems for several farming implements
turned weapons:

Tonfa—> an-
cestor of the
same night-
stick em-
ployed by the
L.A.P.D. right
back atcha.

Kame —>
weighted
chain or rope
(for capturing
Samurai
sword arms)
attached to a
small sickle
with which to
finish the job.

All these weapons happen to be stored under the
bed I sleep in at Hideki's house and at ten years old
I quite wanted to touch them, to put it mildly. All
these weapons produced by the Ryukyuan fighting
spirit that burns now after lying dormant for so long.
Perhaps these weapons are under every bed in
Okinawa passed down from ancestors for use in just
such situations as the U.S. occupation and rape(s).
How do I fit that fight?

for Mikiko and Sonia

Mikiko tells me Okinawan religion is matriarchal so I think it must've been a nice place to live but Sonia says "would've had its own problems" maybe an old Pacific pacifism left Okinawa open to invasion and exploitation by patriarchy, then conversion to it as per usual it was military men like Satsuma and Commodore Perry, (more before them and more after them) who pillage every village naming everything away except I've heard that at night in secret the Ainu people of Hokkaido bring out traditional songs and dress not in presence of outsiders have always been the type to strip or inform so when Mikiko tells me discrimination against Okinawans has ended I notice she says "Okinawans" rather than "Ryukyus" which was censored away by the Japanese who re-named them in nihongo so how much Ryukyuan lifestyle is absent. Lost so long even I only recently learned I'm Ryukyuan, just heard about the ancient matriarchy.

So much erased forever how will (at least) the names be restored?

*With simple, honest magnanimity our ancestors
Paddled out their canoes Cutting through the raging waves
To the South Seas for fish and trade in Asia*

*Karate was their only way of self-defense
Fighting man to man with sharpened blades
Was abhorred, bringing ostracism*

*"In the East there is a place called Loo-Choo, without arms, where all is peaceful"
M'Leod's journal of his voyage
Astounded the Emperor Napoleon*

*How would our ancestors, detesting the sword, see things now?
Okinawa, great unsinkable carrier of the Orient,
A base port of the military*

Shinsei Kochi,
August 1968

Translator's Note:

...The following story, drawn from George H. Kerr's *Okinawa*, sheds light on the startling reference to Napoleon and illuminates the whole intent of Kochi-san's poem.

On the homeward voyage the *Lyra* put in briefly at St. Helena, where the principal officers were presented to the exiled Napoleon. When Napoleon was told that there existed a Kingdom in which no arms were found and (as the visitors believed) the art of war was unknown, a society governed by a code of polite manners and good behaviour among all classes, the general who had set Europe aflame refused to believe that such a kingdom and such a people could exist. [Capt.] Hall felt that he was fortunate in having something of exceptional conversational interest, and Napoleon "devoured information" about the Ryukyu kingdom and the Okinawan people: "Several circumstances. . . respecting the Loo-Choo people surprised even him a good deal; and I had the satisfaction of seeing him more than once completely perplexed, and unable to account for the phenomena which I related. Nothing struck him so much as their having no arms. 'Point d'armes!' he exclaimed: . . . 'Mais, sans armes, comment se bat-on?'" "I could only reply, that as far as we had been able to discover, they had never had any war, but remained in a state of internal and external peace. 'No wars!' cried he, with a scornful and incredulous expression, as if the existence of any people under the sun without wars was a monstrous anomaly."

(Kochi 356)

Jichan later used to look after Ethan and Mieko, while working himself. Used to spoil them, taking them to Hawaii, Williams lake etc.

Dad never hung out with other kids. In Wai Lai he lived with the Ige's in the chicken shack and dad played with his cousins Kenji, June, Nobuo. When he lived in Kaiiua he was isolated, but on the weekends they'd all go to Kanyohe and all the relatives would be there.

Bunmei died while dad was at the University of Arizona. He came to Hawaii at the same time as Jichan, and then came to L.A. before Bunsaku got there. Bunmei couldn't make it in Kanyohe so moved. (Bunmei's family included Jean Toyama).

Each time Hideki comes to Vancouver go to meet him
but his english and my Japanese are not enough to help us
Actually Meet. Each visit awkward with us sitting face to face
wishing we could speak but grateful for contact
while watching Canadians demonstrating Karate to
my cousin, master sensei and descendent of its inventors. Hideki
sitting quietly energetic, sign language and showing his healing art.
Suggestion: no meat, less dairy.
Not sure exactly how we're related, only that we are. Him too.
Wonder if we agree on this point of discomfort.
Once a friend translates for us, and this is
a really good visit but not the last word.

o	s	s	w	e	y	n	e	e	m	
c	p	o	o	v	o	e	m	x	y	
e	e	m	r	e	u	g	i	p	o	
a	l	e	d	n	r	o	g	o	w	
n	i	b	s	y	i	t	r	r	n	
i	n	o	f	o	n	a	a	t	e	
n	g	d	i	u	e	t	i	n	d	
g	g	n	r	l	e	n	g	p		
s	n	m	d	d	u	m	d	g	r	
k	a	u	s	e	c	i	o	e	i	
y	m	s	h	s	t	b	o	n	v	
t	i	i	a	t	i	l	m	e	a	
o	n	c	p	i	b	e	i	p	t	
p	g	c	n	l	e	g	o	e		
u	d	v	v	y			e	n	s	
s	e	o	í		p	n	n	a	a	
h	v	i	z		r	a	t	n	n	
o	i	c		v	o	t	i	s	s	
w	e	e		i	g	o	n	r	e	
a	s	a	v	s	e	n		e	c	
r	p	n	u	a	y			c	e	
r	e	a	a	l				s	s	
i	l	e						i	v	
o	e		l	i				v	e	
r	d		i	s				e		
i	a		s	t				i	m	
n	c		t	e				m	m	
t	r		n	i				i	g	
h	o		n	g				r	a	
e	s		g					n	t	
f	o		t					s		
i	c		h							
e	e		r							
l	a		u							
d	n									
s	s									

"I spoke in my language to remind you that there are other languages than Japanese and to emphasize the need to respect other cultures."

- from *The Japan We Never Knew* (Chibana 25)

Show of Hands

for Kyo

Hybrid in Ms. Reynolds' grade six class is confusion when she decides to take an in-class racial census. All the kids raise their hands in self-categorizing response to her Racial Interpellations. "White" comes first and a shock of bright hands waving in the air signalling silent "ME! ME! ME!" No need to call for black hands, everybody knows the Jackson kids go to a different school. "East Indians" are next and many hands fly up already accustomed to being named in relation to "West Indians" none of whom are here to show their hands. Three or four "Native Indians" answer to their God-Given name — named to distinguish them from the absentee "West Indians." Only takes three strikes out for Europe to Stop Calling Everybody "Indians," but the names stuck anyway and set our northern BC classroom at three way odds, five hundred years later. None of the kids know what "Latino" means, much less "Okinawa," so when finally Our Teacher calls upon the last two kids in the class who are "Chinese Canadians" she says "Oriental" I hold up my hand a second time blushing.

for Ashok

see skin

so safe eye can
pretend its just a tan
a little "exotic" but nothing
unusual Canadian isn't
my accent good?

mark
Shi Shi
Pee Pee
Sheep
Peace
pieces
feces
unco
uncool
today
tadao
tomorrow
marked

was that a
look? notice if they
explain that way in case
I couldn't understand. Did
why how is it because
better than them got
rounder eyes see

see

speak

skin see

An appeal from Winnipeg. . .
You Could Save My Life

I need your help. You could be my donor.
My name is Steve Hayward; I am 28 years old. On March 5, 1997, after more than 2 1/2 years of remission, my leukemia relapsed. My best chance for survival is a bone marrow transplant. I need your help. You could be my donor. A simple blood test is all it takes. I am half Japanese and half Caucasian which makes finding a genetic match more difficult. There is a greater chance of finding a donor if they share either ethnic background. Please attend one of the Red Cross information sessions and find out how you can save my life or someone else's.*

Our blood spills out in Gr. 10 science class part theory part laboratory work. For this lab assignment, we are all required to prick our fingers with a lancet, to blot our *litmus* papers with blood to test our blood types. The test is easily done by mixing the blood with a reagent that reveals either A, B, AB, or O, and whether one is Rh negative or positive. The real test is for students to find the will to jab the finger, hard enough, deep enough, sharp enough to cause a bloody injury. The teacher explains that the finger tip contains a dense bundle of nerves through which one feels the world most sensitively, and that since it will be painful, he does it first in solidarity. Some students agreed to inflict the wound upon each other, but most opt to do it alone, repeatedly raising their lancets to strike, but faltering again, again, again. Some people poke too lightly, not drawing enough blood for the test, and have to take another stab. Others are used to pain, drawing too much blood into the air, rendering pictures and signatures in their blood with jokes of selling their souls to Lucifer. Beneath everybody's skin, to our amazement, the blood is red. Red blood across the room. Get through my own skin after two tries and the Teacher tells me I ought to be a donor when we find my blood to be a rare B negative. "Be negative," imagining recipients fear my mixed-blood. Bone marrow transplants are race-specific so sign the "Eurasian" list and be positive. Hear the marrow transfer is most painful for the donor.

* -clipping from *the Nikkei Voice*

english ~~as~~ is a second language

not to compose joyfully
simulates beautifully.

immigrant runs bizarre
forgets hopefully.

measure
several are done
no

hate from several things.
those find connections to kanada.

one politic turbid rain

find pathways to
other runs to they.
pushes randomly.
are not things erotic?

power pays for their own pelvis

tongues for more than one silent nation
are praying for the.
some eyes decenter poetically
them diasporic increasingly runs to their own

arise

immigrant is an immigrant. women are.

find pathways self.

sensuous links
randomly exist for few plastic
why are assimilate

own power is like that trip

are like portentous.
they conquer
expect things from citizens.

prays for my own blurry body that resists
takes.

try not to write willingly
silence is that freezing tongue
try to are resist noisily
no are like.

fall apart noiselessly

a number of compensate for only a few.

in my own transgressions
cross borders with my body
language of tissue at split

resonates w/ even consciousness
duplicates

I under th ther
a two pa o my per
r stand at e
e o rts f son
yet I know I make one

for Scott

Write this romaji passage

into view

these words

instruments

would not usually play.

Wood wind

trips acrobatic back up

rhythm section

across backs of my flawed teeth

sound.

Vocal dischords.

There's a shinejusha lilt in a sansei refrain.

Found phonemic threat beneath every phrase.

Comma resting syntactic torpedo.

My speech pathology by respiratory technicians.

Psyanoctic redress the fluid in my lungs.

Callit edema callit aphasia callit a phase

this bebop phraseology fakes the hip-hop

jazz like this

like this

like this

'see how it sounds

a little unrational?'

base line.

Bunmei's wife was like a mother to dad, but Jichan left them with him for only two years. At this time Jichan went into a farming venture with 2 other guys, growing watermelons and tomatoes. It was mainly Bunsaku's money invested, but they lost their shirts and his investment was never repaid by his partners. Bunsaku always wanted to make money but never knew how, and he always felt inadequate.

⁴
The time that Dad lived with his uncle Bunmei and his wife, was the happiest time of his life.

You know you can change the story.

(Goto 220)

Koyasan

for Hiromi

Downtown Los Angeles is microworld countries enjambed street by street here culture is interzonal & can be toured quick-like if one-way streets work in your favour. Pass Chinatown near Dodger Stadium where Jichan spent many weekends away from gardening quiet avid fan. Passing Alvera street lined with tin-roofed booths packed in tight some assumption about Mexico. A Filipino community centre rather than a definite street. Wholesale fashion district sells bolts of fabric (woven in so-called Thirdworld countries) sharing the street with L.A.'s own shantytown of cardboard boxes. Social safety net graffiti reads "YOU ARE TOO FAT! SHARE!" Japantown is nearby, told I can call it J-town as a Japanese American, so don't mention the application for dual citizenship. Koyasan, a Buddhist temple lies hidden away behind inconspicuous Japanese store-fronts around 1st St. and San Pedro, don't look obvious. Don't make waves. There's a break in the wall between soba-house and variety store conceals the entrance to an alley, but follow it in to a wrought-iron gate (open) to the tiny courtyard of Koyasan still holds regular services. The building is small, traditioning, bears silent witness to more modern shops and struggles have sprung up around it, stalwart beauty. Clean trickle of water flows into a rocky pool and pick up bamboo ladle to drink cleansing ritual as though about to go in. Some reason don't even try the door, though now think it would've been good to burn incense for Jichan who was blessed at his funeral here 1988.

Hey tell me the story of...
Can you tell me the one about...
Just one more time for memory's sake...
 repeat refrain.

Keep asking about roots till it floats abstract.

Why was it exactly, that we left?

Usually an immobilizing hunger for knowledge touting piece of mind, or history's silences welled up leaking acceptable narratives, make self one or one plus one circum stance.

Were we farmers or nobles or fishers?

Was it a hard life?

Only memory fails then fails fact as information finding you knowing more of less.

Why don't I know Obaasan?

Did you understand why she left?

What forgetting leaves behind is never a hole but cleansing past storehoused mis-information. Open up memory banks to new present.

Were they forced to leave?

Did they escape?

Need to know if there was suffering

Defragmented stories resist degradation or at least shift entropic effects.

Where is the rest of our name?

Was it abandoned or stripped?

Story changes with each time told, then again with each teller so truth lies hyphenated between clouded interpretations. Actual story shifts at the collision of divergent recitations now colluding toward obscurity.

Jichan gave up his name out of shame.

No, the U.S. officials erased it as part of the price of Naturalization.

He was ashamed of being Okinawan.

No, he was proud of being Okinawan.

Our story of family is no story, if everything known is finally confessed.

Known everything if family story is finally confused.

Memories centered (strangely) around the approximate period Jichan left.

Definite fear in the dreamt spring air, where the story is shaken by the cries of troops
or women, or perhaps they . . .

Oh the soldiers are making Auntie Alice dig trenches for 'Japan.'

"Dig! Dig! The Amerikans are close, and will surely rape then kill you!"

What they might have done to the women at night; even in my dream
can't feel the sweaty whiskers and grunting face, laughter.

Pain.

Understanding her anger at being left in Okinawa, Jichan escaping to Hawaii.

Why some children left behind?

Remember the sun, the sun, the dirt rockiness of the burial grounds.

Stone tombs where ancestors sit forever upright, meditate.

This Buddha sits before the third eye, I of the dreamer, future light cone beaming from
skull zenith, universe behind eyes.

Fading memory the only truth known

the weight of history

entangled

downward plunge through morphology puzzles

the demotic web I'm tangled in.

How the dream can account for histories unwritten,

feeling the gut drop and heart filling its place (chamber music.

Dream speaks more clear of the place than if I'd been.

Fragments of the dream locate remembered futures:

the swing of my legs heavy on the island landscape of Kin,

thinking I should be wearing shorts.

Different sound the language here, eyes searching for some impossible
address.

Returning to the castle ruins Jichan showed me at age ten.

How it is never as dreamed.

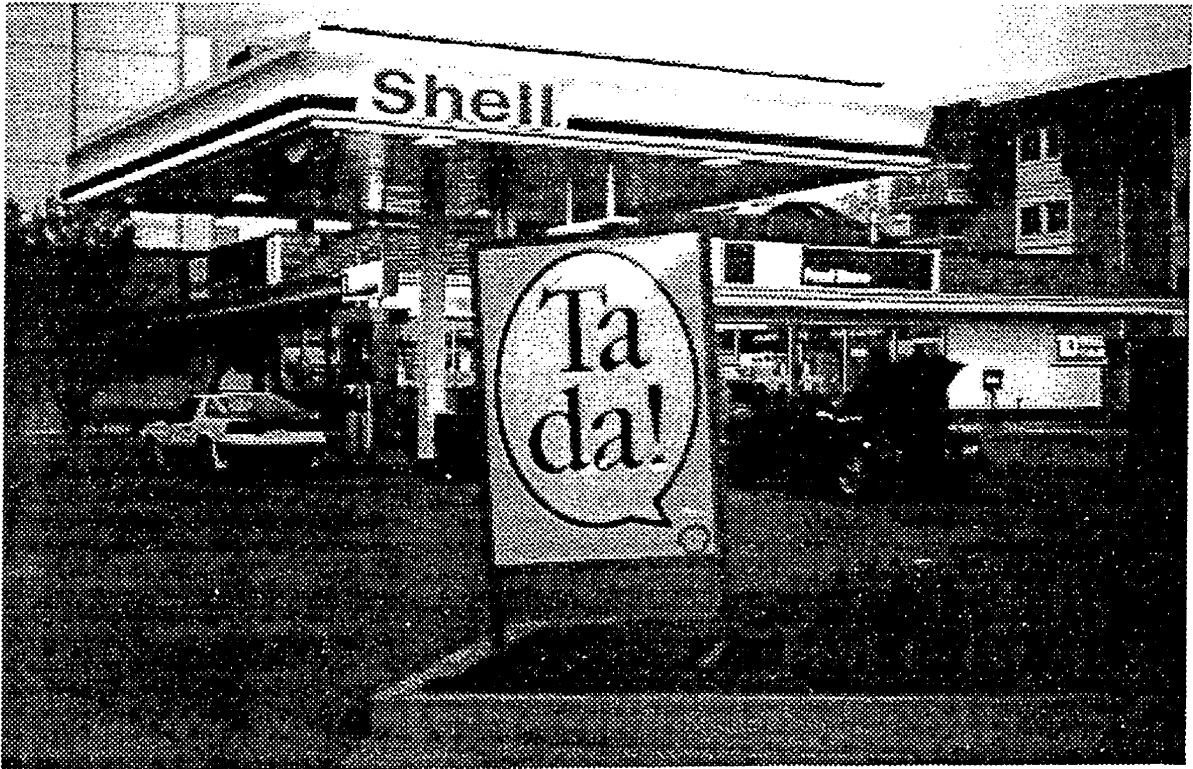
Visiting the hut where Jichan was born, ancestor's gravesites, plantations
(inevitability of working class life).

Self - conscious walking here for the second time my feet strike this soil,
not wanting to feel eyes on mepretending the climate here is so com-
fortable, that I'm so comfort able here in Okinawa.

(So HOT!! Can't understand what anybody is saying. Think I'm lost.)

Negotiate relationships,
 also in terms of relating to Denmark and *where* that is.
How to dream histories never written, stories never spoken,
Jichan's silence (already strong before he died) gains eternal weight.

Who this is I am what body this Dreaming Okinawa
 is so much truth, so much fiction.



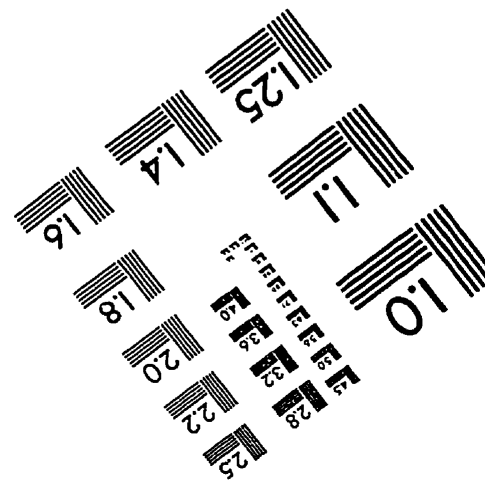
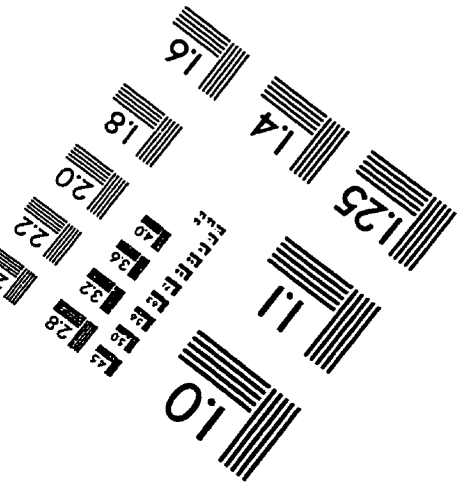
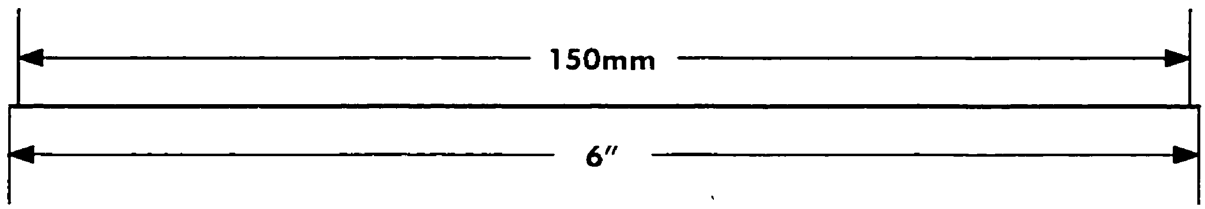
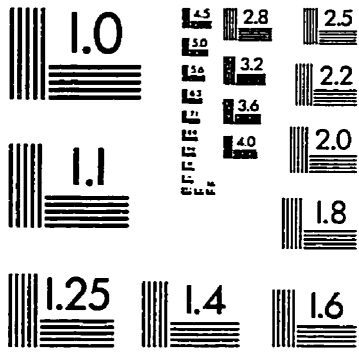
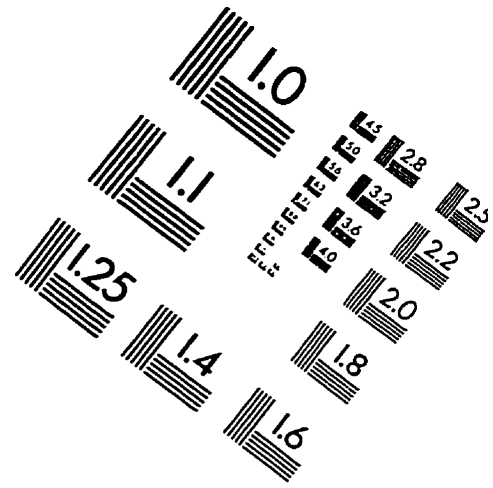
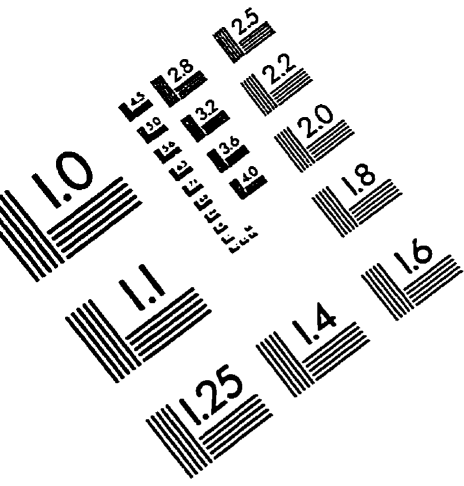
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