Beyond Adaptationism: Immigrant Filipino Ethnicity in Hawai'i

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Over fifty years ago, Roman Cariaga (1936a: 38), who conducted some of the earliest ethnographic studies of Filipinos in Hawai'i, observed that, "The story of Filipinos in Hawaii has its sadder side—problems of family life, sex disproportion, maladjustment and misunderstanding—common to all immigrant groups and well nigh inevitable in their process of *adaptation* to the life of the new country" [emphasis added]. Despite the passage of time and the advances in social science theory, research on Filipino immigrants in Hawai'i and the continental United States continues to be conducted according to an adaptationist perspective (e.g., Alcantara 1981; Caces 1985, 1986; Card 1984; Sharma 1980; Soriano 1982). What should have long been apparent is that the concept of adaptation does not advance our understanding of Filipino immigrants or of other immigrant minorities in American society. As will be shown below, adaptationist analyses are essentially functionalist, teleological and reductionist in nature and inevitably result in all manner of immigrant sociocultural activities and institutions being viewed as positively adaptive.

In this article I discuss the theoretical and methodological limitations of the concept of adaptation, review how it has been applied in studies of immigrant Filipinos in Hawai'i and indicate how it does not provide a sufficient explanation of various social processes in a particular urban Filipino community where I have done field research (Okamura 1983a). Lastly, I present an alternative analytical perspective on Filipino immigrant social relations and institutions in terms of the affirmation and maintenance of ethnic identity.

To make my position clear from the outset, I do not deny that Filipino immigrants engage in adaptive processes and use aspects of their culture and social organization in their adjustment to Hawai'i society. However, there are other more salient sociocultural processes than adaptation that are occurring in Filipino communities. Furthermore, these processes cannot be explained adequately in terms of adaptation, or they can be analyzed from a more theoretically significant perspective than adaptation. Data from a study of post-1965 Filipino immigrants in an inner city area of Honolulu called Kalihi are used to illustrate my arguments.

The Concept of Adaptation

Adaptation has been defined in terms of its social science usage (at that time) as the "process, and the resultant condition, in which changes in an organism,

system of social organization, group, or culture aid the survival, functioning, maintenance, or achievement of purpose on the part of an organism, personality, group, culture, or any part thereof" (Honigmann 1964: 8). Honigmann (1964: 8) points out that this is an especially broad definition so as to be "diffuse and almost meaningless." Significantly, there is no reference to the term adaptation in the more recent *The Social Science Encyclopedia* (Kuper and Kuper 1985). This trend is perhaps indicative of the increasing nonsalience of the concept for social science theory and analysis (see Bargatzky for a review). For example, Bargatzky (1984: 402) maintains that the notion of adaptation "makes sense" only in the restricted context of the relation between human physiological needs and sociocultural institutions but not in terms of the relation between such institutions and the natural environment.

The concept of adaptation was initially and is still used to refer to biological processes, e.g., "the good fit of organisms to their environment" (Gould and Lewontin 1979: 592 as cited in Bargatzky 1984: 400). Biological adaptation proceeds through natural selection and genetic mutation (Bargatzky 1984: 400). That is, plants and animals adapt to their natural environment as a result of greater numbers of progeny being born to those organisms that have a more positively adaptive genetic constitution. These more advantageous and beneficial genes are transmitted with greater frequency to the next generation and thus change the genetic composition of the reproducing population to a more adaptive makeup.

However, since cultural traits are learned and not biologically inherited, differential reproduction does not necessarily result in adaptive cultural change for human populations. In order to demonstrate that cultural adaptation is occurring, a cultural equivalent to natural selection must be established which has not been the case (Burnham 1974: 95). Furthermore, "not one of the existing theories of culture can explain just how cultural behaviors came to be adaptive in this biological sense" [survival and reproduction] (Durham 1976: 91). Nonetheless, some anthropologists have argued that decision making provides the operative principle for cultural adaptation (Cohen 1968: 47). Furthermore, the assumption is made that human rationality ensures that decisions will be basically adaptive for the culture or group in question. Due to cultural relativism, the rationality of decisions and therefore the adaptive salience of institutions and activities must be measured and evaluated according to the values and knowledge of the particular society concerned and not ethnocentrically against Western science or values (Burnham 1974: 95). As shown below, this line of reasoning has the ultimate effect of protecting adaptationist explanations from any possibility of refutation.

While it has been argued that culture is humankind's primary means of adaptation to our social and natural environment (Carneiro 1968: 551), one might reasonably question if all of culture is positively adaptive or if there are maladaptive cultural traits (Burnham 1974). In this regard, a major methodological problem with the adaptationist approach is the difficulty in demonstrating that a particular cultural practice or activity is maladaptive. Bargatzky (1984: 400) has pointed out the "tautology that whatever exists is adaptive" which essentially informs the adaptationist argument. Adaptationism adherents will always find some unforeseen adaptive significance of the cultural trait in question in the same way that proponents of functional analysis inevitably can determine some positive function for an institution or activity. Indeed, there is an obvious functionalist and teleological thrust in the concept of adaptation insofar as adaptive mechanisms are viewed as ultimately contributing to the maintenance or stability of a social system. Therefore, as with functionalism, it is difficult to disprove arguments or explanations in terms of adaptation since the concept can be used to establish the adaptive (functional) salience of virtually any cultural trait or practice. While adaptationist generalizations thus are protected from being refuted, as a result they also are prevented from stating anything of much significance about human social behavior.

In addition to being functionalist in orientation, the adaptationist perspective also is essentially reductionist since it limits the analysis of sociocultural processes and institutions to their presumed adaptive function while ignoring other important aspects of them. From the adaptationist framework, a necessary and sufficient explanation need only specify adaptive functions that are being performed. In sum, adaptationist analyses are theoretically and methodologically deficient because the nature and level of the explanations they provide are tautologous and superficial.

Given the frequency with which the terms "immigrant" and "adaptation" are found together, and not only with regard to Filipinos, one might have the impression that only immigrants are involved in adaptive processes or that adaptation is the only appropriate approach for their analysis. However, adaptation is a universal social process that all human populations undergo. There is no *a priori* reason for analyzing the social relations or institutions of immigrants in their new social settings in terms of adaptation. Alternative theoretical perspectives that place emphasis on other social processes or social relations of immigrants are equally as valid, if not more enlightening.

The tendency to view immigrants from an adaptationist framework is perhaps attributable to their generally depressed socioeconomic status in their host societies. Holding low paying menial jobs, concentrated in overcrowded housing in decaying inner city wards and subject to discriminatory treatment and prejudiced attitudes from the larger society, it would seem as though adaptation is their only viable course of action. However, a concern for the adaptive strategies of immigrants tends to emphasize their relatively passive accommodation to their subject position while ignoring the structural constraints in the wider society, such as those engendered through class and ethnic relations, that maintain immigrants in their servile condition.

The tendency to focus on the adaptive processes of immigrants also derives from the view that adaptation is the initial stage for them in an inevitable processual sequence that is followed by their eventual acculturation, assimilation and ultimately integration into American society. For example, note the following conception of adaptation employed in a study of Korean immigrants in the United States: "adaptation is a broad concept to include its various modes and resultant conditions such as acculturation, assimilation, segregation, pluralism, 'adhesion', etc." (Hurh and Kim 1984: 188). The validity and utility of such sequential stages approaches to immigrant minorities have long been disproved. Furthermore, the view that adaptation is the dominant sociocultural process initially experienced by immigrants in American society, and therefore of considerable importance, hinders sociological concern for other possibly more significant social processes that also are proceeding at the same time as adaptation.

Filipino Adaptation in Hawai'i

In studies of the adaptation of Filipino immigrants in Hawai'i, the term generally refers to their processes of adjustment or accommodation to the constraints and demands of the wider society. Immigrants are understood as using their cultural practices and social institutions, which have to be changed appropriately, as adaptive mechanisms or strategies in order to accommodate themselves to the generally harsh socioeconomic conditions they face in Hawai'i. For example, Soriano (1982: 165) refers to "adaptive strategies as positive adjustment and effective solutions to [migration] problems." Similarly, Alcantara (1981: ix) states that "the processes of adaptation (analyzed through changing life goals and strategies) are seen in the context of the changes over time in the nature of plantation life, of Hawaii society, and of immigration laws." Only Sharma (1980: 92, 112) in her concept of "active adaptation" views Filipino immigrants, specifically plantation laborers, as adapting by actively seeking to change their socioeconomic environment through labor organizing and agitation

rather than only through a "one-way adjustment process" in which the burden of change falls upon the immigrant.

In general, the adaptive strategies said to be employed by Filipino immigrants in Hawai'i include modifying their kinship and marital institutions, creating fictive kinship relations through *compadrazgo* (godparenthood), establishing localized voluntary associations, and using their interpersonal networks to obtain employment and housing (Alcantara 1981: 57; Caces 1985, 1986; Sharma 1980: 111; Soriano 1982: 165). For example, Soriano (1982: 169) maintains that retired Filipino plantation workers married late in life, generally for the first time, as an "adaptive strategy" in response to a previous demographic situation in which there were far greater numbers of Filipino men than women during their younger years. However, it is questionable if such delayed marriages legitimately can be considered rational "strategies" rather than the outcome by default of a grossly unbalanced sex ratio over which Filipino plantation laborers had little control. That is, given the relative scarcity of Filipino women and the generally negative attitudes toward Filipino men in Hawai'i, the plantation workers did not then decide to adapt to this situation by developing a strategy to marry late in life in the Philippines. This latter course of action presented itself much later as an option for them due to harsh economic conditions in the Philippines which made marriage to a *pensionado* from the United States desirable as a means of upward social mobility for one's family.

As was first observed by Cariaga (1936b: 22) some fifty years ago, another means that Filipino plantation workers are said to have devised in adapting to their difficult life in Hawai'i was the creation of numerous fictive kinship ties through modifying the cultural institution of compadrazgo or godparenthood (Sharma 1980: 109; Soriano 1982: 172-176). Given the general absence of kin in Hawai'i, Filipinos initiated ritual kinship relations with one another by naming multiple godparents or sponsors for their children, rather than the customary few, for baptisms and marriages. Compadrazgo generally establishes formal quasi-kinship relationships of mutual assistance, loyalty and trust between the parents of the child and his or her godparents. It is claimed that multiple sponsorship provided an effective adaptive strategy to the "abnormal profile of a large number of family-less men yearning for some family life" and that "the ritual kinsman became an active member of his adopted nuclear family" (Soriano 1982: 173, 176). However, the argument has been advanced that because of the transient orientation of plantation laborers and the large numbers of designated godparents, compadrazgo relationships generally did not develop into close kinship ties (Alcantara 1981).

Also with regard to the adaptive significance of multiple sponsorship, numerous godparents continue to be named at baptisms and marriages of Filipino immigrants in Hawai'i despite their wide networks of kin (Okamura 1983a: 176). Furthermore, multiple sponsorship also is followed in the Ilocos provinces in the Philippines whence come the great majority of Filipino immigrants in Hawai'i, again in spite of the presence of numerous relatives. In defense of their approach, adaptationism proponents would maintain that naming many godparents may no longer serve as an adaptive mechanism for Filipino immigrants because their social circumstances, particularly in terms of the presence of kin, have changed substantially since the period of plantation labor recruitment. This reasoning is indicative of the problem in refuting adaptationist explanations, not because of their inherent logic or validity, but because their superficial nature allows for facile counter arguments.

With regard to post-1965 immigrant Filipinos in Hawai'i, it has been argued that their interpersonal networks of kinship, friendship, neighborhood and other ties serve as adaptive mechanisms insofar as they can be used to obtain work and housing (Caces 1985, 1986). In terms of gaining employment, such networks assist immigrants, especially the newly arrived, by directly providing work, by furnishing specific and timely information on job opportunities, by assisting immigrants in applying for work, by providing orientation or elementary training in certain occupational tasks, and by referring immigrants to agencies that can assist in obtaining work (Caces 1986: 33). In particular, social networks are especially advantageous for Filipino immigrants with few occupational skills or minimal employment experience since without network connections such persons would have considerable difficulty in finding regular work.

However, personal networks are less beneficial for better qualified immigrants who might be able to gain higher status occupations under less restrictive employment conditions (Caces 1986: 35). This conclusion follows because most of the jobs that are obtained through network ties are in the secondary labor market and thus require little or no previous training, are concentrated at the low end of the wage scale, have minimal or no upward mobility opportunities and are characterized by rapid turnover (Caces 1986: 25). In short, social networks tend to channel Filipino immigrants into low level occupational categories, although they may have the educational and employment qualifications for higher level positions. Another disadvantage of personal networks is that they can result in immigrants becoming resigned to their low employment status, despite their initial aspirations for high occupational positions and full utilization of their

skills and training, through the reinforcement that immigrants receive from regular interaction with similarly situated persons (Caces 1986: 34-35).

Thus, the adaptive significance of the interpersonal networks of Filipino immigrants is dependent on the time frame that one employs. In the short term, such networks can be of initial assistance to immigrants, especially those newly arrived who are unfamiliar with the job market and its requirements and procedures. However, in the long term, continued reliance on social networks to obtain employment can result in both individual and collective occupational downgrading of Filipino immigrants, particularly those qualified for higher status occupations.

Furthermore, a focus on personal networks as adaptive mechanisms that assist Filipino immigrants to gain employment deflects concern for the structural constraints in the wider society, such as institutional discrimination against Filipino immigrants, that ultimately account for their socioeconomic status in Hawai'i (Okamura 1990). An adaptationist analysis of the use of interpersonal networks by immigrant Filipinos cannot provide an adequate explanation of their presence in low status occupations. While social networks indicate how immigrants adapt themselves to their class status, they do not provide a sufficient explanation for that status which is a much more important sociological issue.

The Inner City as a Setting for Immigrant Adaptation

Inner city wards are commonly viewed as "zones of transition" where successive waves of immigrant minorities first settle upon arriving in a new country before they eventually move on to the suburbs (Dahya 1974: 90). Given the socioeconomic circumstances of immigrants, the specific attraction for them of these working class areas is said to be the availability of cheap housing and their proximity to work in the city. In terms of being transition zones, it is argued that inner city neighborhoods, such as Chinatowns, "J" (Japanese) towns or "Little Manilas", provide an initial setting for the economic and cultural adaptation of immigrants to American society, and eventually either they or their children will relocate to the suburbs as they attain middle class status. This movement to suburban America is viewed as part of a larger overall process of the assimilation, acculturation and integration of immigrant minorities into the mainstream of American life. The transitional process continues as immigrants are replaced in the inner city by other more recent immigrant groups that similarly undergo adaptation processes before being able to achieve upward socioeconomic mobility.

Probably the first such inner city area in Hawai'i was Chinatown in Honolulu as described by Lind (1980: 65):

> The people who have lived in Chinatown over these hundred years—whether Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, or Koreans—usually utilized the low-rental housing facilities of the district for only as long as was needed to establish a firm economic foothold in the new community...
>
> The tendency of immigrants to seek the comfort and security of a ghetto community among their countrymen *during the initial period of adjustment* to the urban setting...has occurred among all the immigrant groups in Hawaii [emphasis added].

As a multiethnic working class community, the Kalihi district, which is located two miles west of downtown Honolulu, is another inner city ward. It has served historically as an area of settlement for various immigrant minorities including Japanese, Portuguese, Filipinos and Samoans. Indeed, Kalihi has been termed a "Place of Transition" in a four volume collection of interviews with longtime Kalihi residents (Ethnic Studies Oral History Project 1984). However, Kalihi is not necessarily a locale for the adaptation of post-1965 Filipino immigrants. The primary reason that they initially settle in Kalihi is not because of the availability of inexpensive housing or its proximity to work places but because of the presence of their close relatives and other Filipinos. This factor also accounts for the settlement and residence of Filipino immigrants in other Filipino communities in Hawai'i, such as Waialua or Waipahu, or in the continental United States such as San Francisco or Chicago. Immigrants settle in these towns and cities not primarily because they are Filipino communities but due to the presence of their relatives who provide them with immediate accommodations and assistance in obtaining a first job (Okamura 1984: 34). Since the 1965 liberalization of U.S. immigration laws that provided for family reunification, Filipino communities have developed through the accretion of groupings of extended family kin. This process is attributable, not to the inherent desirability of the inner city as a setting for immigrant adaptation, but to the kin sponsored basis of Filipino immigration to the United States, to the obligation to lend support to relatives, and to the preference for living with or near relatives.

Upon arriving in Hawai'i, substantial numbers of immigrant Filipinos settle immediately in middle class suburban communities, such as Waipahu and Mililani, with their relatives and thus bypass the inner city altogether in their initial adjustment to American life. Other immigrants settle in plantation towns and hence could be said to reverse the historical process of Filipino integration

and socioeconomic mobility in Hawai'i, at least from the perspective of inner city adaptation. Thus, there is no *a priori* reason for viewing Filipino immigrants as adapting to American society by first residing in an inner city neighborhood.

With regard to the availability of cheap housing as a primary factor in immigrant settlement in the inner city, it is the case that inexpensive rental units in houses are more available in Kalihi than in other areas of Honolulu or the island of O'ahu, and it is cheaper to rent a room in a house than an entire apartment. However, houses in Kalihi are not necessarily cheaper to purchase than in other areas of O'ahu. In fact, on average they may be more expensive because there are so many two storey homes with six to ten bedrooms. Some of the people I knew when I was doing my fieldwork in Kalihi who have since purchased homes in suburban communities told me that they wanted to continue residing in Kalihi but could not afford to buy a house there.

The view of Kalihi as a transitional zone of adaptation for immigrants is not in accord with Filipino immigrants' perception of the area. Their substantial investments in the renovation, construction and ownership of homes and in small scale businesses clearly demonstrate their commitment to the stability and further development of the Filipino community in Kalihi. In general, the settlement and aggregation of immigrant Filipinos in Kalihi is best understood in terms of their perception of their situation rather than from an adaptationist perspective. The latter approach would place emphasis on the low socioeconomic status of Filipino immigrants and assume that this condition alone accounts for their presence in Kalihi. However, sufficient analysis of the development of the Filipino community would have to include consideration of the preference of immigrants for living with or near their relatives, their kinship norm of support for extended family members, and their perception and appreciation of Kalihi as a Filipino community (Okamura 1984: 37).

Voluntary Associations as Adaptive Mechanisms

In social anthropology there was a substantial amount of literature in the 1950s and 1960s that demonstrated the role of voluntary associations as adaptive mechanisms for rural migrants in towns and cities, especially in Africa (Banton 1956; Kerri 1976; Little 1957, 1965; Parkin 1966). Functional analysis resulted in an overemphasis on the positive features of those organizations such that a great variety of association activities were understood as being of eufunctional adaptive significance for their members (Okamura 1983b: 345). In particular, voluntary associations in West Africa were viewed as facilitating the adjustment

of urban migrants by serving as a substitute for the extended family and thus meeting many of the same needs as the family (Little 1957: 593). Associations provided support and assistance to their members in the form of companionship, legal advice and protection, and sickness and funeral benefits.

In the past, Filipino plantation workers, the great majority of whom were single young men, could receive such familial aid and support by joining a *saranay* or mutual aid association. These "clubs", as they were often called, were organized by workers from the same hometown in the Philippines ("townmates") or from the wider Filipino plantation community to provide various social and security benefits for their members, for example, in times of illness or death (Alcantara 1981: 57-58). Financial assistance also was available through membership in an *amung* or rotating credit association in which each member contributed a prescribed amount of money each month and received in turn the entire amount collected.

At present, Filipino voluntary organizations, particularly hometown associations, no longer function as a surrogate for the extended family because most immigrants have real kinsmen whom they can depend on for assistance and support after their arrival in Hawai'i. Kin provide the newly arrived immigrant with his or her initial place of residence and with assistance in obtaining a first job. Even after residing in Hawai'i for a period of time, relatives continue to rely upon one another for advice and support. Also, various security benefits, such as health and unemployment insurance and welfare assistance, are provided by employers or by the State government, thus lessening the dependence of Filipino immigrants on voluntary associations.

Voluntary associations in West Africa also were viewed as fostering the adaptation of urban migrants by serving as acculturative mechanisms insofar as they inculcated new standards of dress, etiquette, hygiene and punctuality (Little 1957: 593). However, Filipino voluntary associations in Hawai'i do not furnish this adaptive role for immigrants because they do not exert that degree of influence or control over their members. Immigrants experience acculturation processes much more so at their work places and through their daily interactions with nonFilipinos than through membership in a voluntary organization.

The primary reason that Filipino voluntary associations do not contribute to the adaptation of immigrants is because the organizations are not very active. Furthermore, the activities that they do organize for their members, e.g., beauty contests and social gatherings, are not especially adaptive in nature. Thus, hometown and other voluntary associations established and maintained by

Filipino immigrants no longer serve as adaptive mechanisms for immigrants essentially because they are not needed or are not able to perform such a role.

Philippine Catholic Rituals

Since the early 1970s various Philippine Catholic rituals have been conducted in the streets and at the homes of immigrant Filipinos in Kalihi. The observance of these rites is a direct result of the influx of Filipino immigrants into the area following the 1965 changes in U.S. immigration laws. Their cultural significance is that, while they are standard Catholic rituals, they are conducted in accordance with Philippine Catholic tradition beyond the confines of the church in the surrounding neighborhood and at parishioners' homes. As will be made evident below, performing the rituals in the community besides in the church requires a considerable number of active participants which only became available with the emergence of the Filipino community in Kalihi in the late 1960s.

The rituals are organized by the Filipino Catholic Club of one of the churches in Kalihi. Participation in the religious observances is open to all members of the parish, which includes Portuguese, Samoan and Hawaiian Catholics, although the overwhelming majority of participants are Filipino immigrants. Various rites are observed by the Club throughout the year, such as the *misa de gallo* (early morning mass during the Christmas season) and *novenas* (nine consecutive evenings reciting the rosary) for different saints, but I will limit my discussion to only two of them.

The Stations of the Cross rite commemorates fourteen events that occurred as Christ carried the cross along the Via Dolorosa to His crucifixion. It is primarily observed in Catholic churches on six consecutive Fridays during Lent, the six week period preceding Easter Sunday, generally after the mass. In Kalihi, besides being conducted in the church, the Stations of the Cross ritual also is performed in the community on Friday evenings during Lent. The fourteen stations are situated at nearby houses along one or two streets in the parish that are within walking distance of the church. The families at these homes set up a temporary altar in their front yard or garage with a picture that depicts the particular station their home represents along with flowers, votive candles and other religious ornaments.

Led by a priest from the church, the worshippers recite standard prayers and a reading from the Bible and sing a short song at each station. As they walk to the next station, they recite the rosary which consists of a formal set of prayers.

The number of participants increases as the observance proceeds as members of the host families join the group such that by the last station it consists of about fifty adults, primarily women, and twenty children. In the Philippines, this ritual is oftentimes referred to as "block" Stations of the Cross because it is held at adjacent or nearby homes on the same neighborhood block. Essentially the same procedure is followed in Kalihi because of the close proximity of Filipino residences along the same street or in the same apartment complex, although Filipinos comprise only about one-third of the population in Kalihi (Okamura 1984: 28).

Another Catholic ritual that is localized in the community is the daily evening rosary during the months of May and October that is observed at the homes of parishioners. Although it is not uncommon for the rosary to be recited in Catholic homes on various occasions, its daily frequency in May and October makes performance of the rite by Filipino immigrants distinctive in Kalihi. A pastor from the church leads the rosary which consists of a standardized set of prayers, including the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary and Glory Be to the Father, that is repeated several times in a prescribed sequence. About twenty to twenty-five adults, mostly women, attend the rosary each evening. As in the Stations of the Cross observance, the overwhelming majority of worshippers and host families are immigrant Filipinos.

The culmination of the May rosaries occurs on the last Saturday of the month when a procession, called the *Santa Cruz de Mayo* or, alternatively, the *Flores de Mayo*, is held through the neighborhood around the church. This procession, which is widely celebrated in the Philippines, is a reenactment of the search and finding of the true cross of Calvary by "Reina Elena" (Queen Helen). About 200 people participate in this procession including the worshippers in the evening rosaries, Filipino Catholic Club members, Catholic school students, and other Filipino parishioners.

The observance of Philippine Catholic rituals represents a revitalization of Filipino culture as a direct consequence of the emergence and growth of the Filipino community in Kalihi since the late 1960s. In the past, these rites were conducted in their standard Catholic mode (at least in Hawai'i) within the church or were not performed at all. Another significant difference between the present and past performance of these rituals is their regularity and frequency at present. This continuous observance of religious activities throughout the year followed the settlement of immigrant Filipinos in the parish since numerous families are required to serve as hosts for the prayers, and there has to be a community of worshippers to participate regularly in them. The increased presence of Filipino

families made it possible for the rituals to be localized in the surrounding neighborhood according to Philippine custom rather than being held only in the church. Indeed, the substantial numbers of Filipino immigrants in the parish was stated as one of the primary reasons that the Filipino Catholic Club began to organize its religious activities.

With regard to the concept of adaptation, the adaptive salience of the performance of Philippine Catholic rituals is not immediately apparent. While an argument could be made that they serve as a means of cultural continuity for immigrants with their religious traditions in the Philippines and thereby mitigate the culture shock that they experience, the same could be said of any manifestation of Filipino culture in Hawai'i, no matter how trivial.

Far from being merely adaptive mechanisms, the Philippine Catholic rituals represent collective expressions of immigrant Filipino ethnicity. As such, the rituals have a greater social and cultural significance than any adaptive function that might be attributed to them. This much larger significance pertains to their demarcating the social boundaries of the Filipino community in Kalihi. That is, the localization of the rituals in the streets and homes of the area is a sociocultural manifestation of the extent to which Kalihi is a Filipino community.

Beyond Adaptationism

The above discussion was concerned with demonstrating the theoretical and methodological inadequacies of the concept of adaptation for analysis of the social relations and institutions of immigrant minorities in American society. In particular, the limitations of the adaptationist approach were made evident in the review of studies of Filipino immigrant adaptation in Hawai'i. The salience of various reported adaptive strategies and mechanisms, such as delayed marriages, the establishment of multiple ritual kinship ties, and the use of personal networks to gain access to employment and housing, was questioned in terms of their respective contributions to immigrant adjustment. The concept of adaptation also was shown to provide an essentially insufficient explanation of various social processes and groupings in an urban Filipino community in Hawai'i, including settlement in the area, immigrant voluntary associations, and the localized performance of Catholic rituals.

Given the inadequacy of the adaptationist perspective, an alternative approach for the analysis of Filipino immigrant social institutions and activities needs to be specified. It was noted above that the localization of Philippine Catholic rituals in the community represents a collective articulation of immigrant Filipino ethnicity. The other two social processes in Kalihi discussed in this article, i.e., the development of the Filipino community and the establishment of immigrant voluntary associations, also can be viewed as corporate representations of Filipino ethnic identity. These three processes and other related immigrant sociocultural activities, such as language and cultural values retention, are part of a larger overall process of the affirmation and maintenance of immigrant Filipino ethnicity in Hawai'i. Rather than being primarily concerned with their adaptation, acculturation or assimilation into the wider society, immigrants can be viewed as demarcating the structural and cultural boundaries between themselves and other ethnic groups, including in some social contexts Hawai'i born Filipinos.

Despres (1984: 14) has argued that social boundaries supportive of ethnicity will persist to the extent that they confer competitive advantage with regard to particular resource domains such as political power, employment opportunities, etc. The social resource with which the Filipino community in Hawai'i can be said to be primarily concerned is their socioeconomic and political advancement given their low social status in Hawai'i since their arrival as plantation laborers 85 years ago. Ethnic identity among Filipino immigrants has been maintained because it contributes to their collective effort to gain economic and political power by promoting group solidarity. However, Filipinos, whether immigrants, Hawai'i born or both groups acting in concert, have not been successful in mobilizing the larger community in collective action towards attainment of their shared interests for greater participation in the political and economic status orders in Hawai'i (Okamura 1984a: 304). At present, immigrant Filipino ethnicity lacks the corporate organization necessary for it to be employed as a collective strategy in pursuit of their material interests. The nature of immigrant Filipino ethnicity represents a condition of "ethnic solidarity" in terms of conscious identification moreso than "ethnic mobilization" in terms of collective action (Olzak 1983: 356-357).

If anything, the expression and maintenance of immigrant Filipino ethnic identity could be said to be maladaptive rather than adaptive for immigrants insofar as they reinforce derogatory stereotypes of Filipinos prevalent in Hawai'i that originated with the largely uneducated plantation laborers. The emergence of a residential enclave, the formation of voluntary associations, the performance of traditional religious rituals, and the observance of other cultural norms and activities could be construed by nonFilipinos as demonstrated evidence of immigrant unwillingness or inability to adapt, assimilate or integrate into the larger society and therefore "explanatory" in a superficial sense of their subordinate

socioeconomic status. However, in going beyond the theoretical and methodological limitations of adaptationism, the affirmation of immigrant Filipino ethnicity can be viewed more significantly and validly as part of the worldwide phenomenon of ethnic movements since the 1960s.

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