

Densho Digital Repository
Naoko Wake Collection of Oral Histories of US Survivors of the Atomic Bombs Collection
Title: Matsuko Hayashi Interview
Narrator: Matsuko Hayashi
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
Location: San Jose, California
Date: June 3, 2012
Densho ID: ddr-densho-1021-4-19

<Begin Segment 19>

NW: Now, um ... One thing that we hear as something that happened after the war—after the war in Japan but also in America . . .

MH: Mhm.

NW: . . . is that women's status changed a lot. So . . .

MH: Yeah.

NW: Yeah, so women in Japan got right to vote, for instance, right? Then, in America, many women, well, started to work outside . . .

MH: Uh-huh.

NW: . . . of their house as well. Did you feel like you—you sensed that sort of change for women's status? As you yourself went through that area . . .

MH: Oh yeah, I mean.

NW: Yeah.

MH: Have more freedom anyway. Do everything you want. Women could—just like my daughter . . . she went to UCLA.

NW: Mhm.

MH: And then she was teaching, she—teacher's credential.

NW: Mhm.

MH: And she was teaching. Then she decided she wants to go to Japan . . . And she went to Japan two years.

NW: Mhm.

MH: And . . . out there she met a lawyer . . . So she wanted to come back and go to law school.

NW: Mhm.

MH: So she went to, uh, Georgetown.

NW: Mhm.

MH: Law School.

NW: Mhm. Yeah, yeah.

MH: And that's where she met her husband.

NW: Right.

MH: And got married there.

NW: Uh-huh.

MH: And now she wants to be a minister.

NW: Wow.

MH: So, she's uh . . . Harada *sensei*'s minister assistant.

NW: Uh-huh. Yeah, yeah. I think I . . .

MH: You know the girl . . .

NW: . . . saw her, on the stage . . .

MH: Yeah, yeah.

NW: She's one of them.

MH: Ellen Crane.

NW: Okay.

MH: That's my daughter.

NW: Okay, okay.

MH: But she want to be a minister, and—and he let her, you know?

NW: Mhm.

MH: He's, see, in fact his, uh, mother was saying, it's sure nice that she found what she wants to do.

NW: Mm. Mhm.

MH: So.

NW: What about yourself, when you were working in 1940s, 1950s, did you feel that women were treated equally in the States?

MH: No, it didn't bother me. I was . . . you know, my father always let—my mother always let my father's . . . be the boss, and . . . it, it's . . . it sure didn't . . . I don't know what to say. I don't have that kind of a . . . woman's right anything. It doesn't bother me.

NW: Mm. Mhm. So did you read about like, feminist movements? I think it was very active in 1960s and '70s.

MH: Yeah, but those things, I'm not interested.

NW: So you didn't really read, or?

MH: I'm just happy, just—just like I am.

NW: Mhm. Mhm.

MH: Old fashioned, maybe. But, but, I'm happy.

NW: Mm. Mhm. So you didn't really get interested in that?

MH: No.

NW: Mm. Um.

MH: To me, Buddhism i—is still . . . only thing.

NW: Mhm. Yeah, I can hear that in . . .

MH: Yeah.

NW: . . . in this conversation a lot.

MH: I really feel . . . peace and I feel like I'm living in nirvana right now.

NW: Mhm.

MH: The kids are so good. Everybody have beautiful . . .

NW: Mhm.

MH: Wonderful, *dan'na*, friends.

NW: How about, um, so you, after you came back to the states, I think generally speaking, American people could have been, still, very hostile, biased against . . .

MH: Yeah. They could.

NW: . . . Japanese Americans. Did you experience that yourself? Or?

MH: No.

NW: Yeah.

MH: It was pretty . . . pretty nice.

NW: Mhm.

MH: Compared to what it was before.

NW: Mm.

MH: Fighting with the school teacher and things like that.

NW: Mhm. Yeah, yeah. I can see that. [chuckle]

MH: [chuckle]

NW: Yeah, that's—that must have been very difficult.

MH: Yeah.

NW: To have a teacher say that—It is, it is difficult.

MH: They always say Japan's bad and . . . say in front of class, and,

NW: Mhm.

MH: And used to make us mad.

NW: Mm.

MH: Of course, our parents are Japanese, so we stick up for . . .

NW: Mhm.

MH: Nihonjin.

NW: Mhm. Mhm.

MH: And we think we're Japanese. [chuckles]

NW: [chuckles]. Yeah, that's kind of interesting, how it works out.

MH: Yeah.

NW: Yeah, yeah.

MH: We really respect our mothers and fathers, so . . . I—I've been always lucky though.

NW: Mm . . .

<End Segment 19> - Copyright © 2012 Densho and Naoko Wake. All Rights Reserved.