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Kyoko Watanabe Autobiography, n. d.

Kyoko Watanabe

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My Autobiography

In between two towns called Manchester and Hawthorne, there was a little farming section called the county of Los Angeles. It was about twenty miles away from the big Los Angeles city hall. In this little place there was a very big block and on one side of the block was farming and on the other side of the block was an airport. Across the street from our house there was a big golf course. It was a nice place because it had a gasoline station, restaurants, grocery stores etc. near by. They sold fishes near there and they had large green houses there too. It was a nice quiet place, but on July 13, 1928 there was great excitement there. Everybody was excited because I was to be born, and about eight o'clock at night I was born to this world, but I was born on a wrong day, it was Friday the Thirteenth.

My father's occupation was to support four children and a wife, so he was working as a farmer at that time. My mother guided me during my first six years. My mother told me about the great worries I bought to everybody when I was only seven months old. I was so sick, everybody thought that I might not live. Even the nurses and the doctors gave up, but my mother didn't. She stayed up day and night for about a week to save me. This week was the worst of all, but after mother looked after me that week the doctors had some hope that I might live. I was sick for about three months. I first had whooping cough and, because I coughed too much it effected my ears and I got Mastoid, and before I was well I got Pneumonia. That is why up to this date I am very thankful to God that I have a good mother. There were three children in our family before I was born. Now there are six of us.

Mother said that she was going to a Christen Church when I was born. After I was born about seven years later, my mother went to a Japanese Church. She is still going to this church, but I do not go to this church anymore. After I went to Maryknoll I had always wanted to become a Catholic, and I am wishing that I may be one in the coming future.

When I was little the only playmates I had were all Japanese children. I had played with them until I had started to go to school. There I met many Caucasian children. There was a dog at home but he was so big I didn't play with him. Instead of that I played with my toys, which were play dishes, dolls, and things that we played house with. We used to make mud pies and bake them on my little cooking stove. We used to always have a bakery store, then we would sell our mud pies to the customers, (which were my playmates.)

I started school at about four years of age so I had to stay in kindergarden for two years. The first school I went to was named...
Chapman Avenue School. While I was still in kindergarten I changed to Center Avenue School. While I was going to Chapman Avenue School my brothers told me I was a great problem because I didn't like to walk to school, so they used to get a dead snake and chase me to school with it. Maybe that is why I am so scared of snakes now. In school the teacher was nice to us except when we were bad. When she was nice we would think that she was the best teacher, but when she scolded us we thought she was the meanest teacher ever was. This was all when I was in my primary grades.

When I was in the first part of the sixth grade I changed from Center Avenue School to Maryknoll in Los Angeles City. I went to Maryknoll until evacuation came, there I had to stop because school closed before I was evacuated. While I was there in seventh grade I had my favorites and dislikes. Some things I liked were Arithmetic, English and Religion. I liked Arithmetic and English because I thought it very interesting and I was sure I was learning something. In religion I thought the same. In history I don't think I learned very much because she made us memorize the dates and beside in the first time we go very slowly and when it comes to mid-year or the final examination we would try to rush the remaining in. That is why it all confuses me. We had a different teacher for history. When I went into the eighth grade I learned more in history and civics because our teacher was stricter. Sometimes I wouldn't like a subject because I couldn't catch on, but otherwise I would like it. In the ninth grade I do not yet have my dislikes and favorites but later as we go into further details I would have my dislikes and favorites. I am hoping that they may all be my favorites.

I am not so sure of my talents yet. Sometimes when I do something and it turns out as I wanted it to, I think that that was my talents, but when I try it again and it fails me I get so disappointed. The things I would like to do is to take music lessons. The instrument that I would like to learn the most is violin. The next is piano. I like the violin because it plays the music I like the most so beautifully, and I like waltzes.

About my interests in civics, I do not quite know yet. Sometimes I think I am selfish but other times I think I think of others too. When I do things I think I help others at the same time too. The church I am interested in most is the Roman Catholic Church. I have been interested in that ever since I went to Maryknoll, and I am praying that I may be a Catholic someday in the coming future. I don't think I will ever want to change to another religion. I belong to only one club now. It is called the "Sodelity of Mary" and it gives you permanent membership. This club is all over the world, and it is mostly for girls. It is more or like a religious club. Even though you are far away from everything you are still a member of this club. That is why it is so good. It keeps on growing.
Like the other clubs I had entered at Santa Anita, it only lasted about five months. When everybody went away, it no longer existed. I never went around in a gang. I only went around with one or two girls, then we would go see and play with a bunch of girls then again we would go and play with another bunch of girls. I never played with a definite bunch of girls. Some sports I like is swimming, tennis, football or any other things in that line. I like these things because they are out doors. It would give us good exercise and by playing these games you get around more. You meet with various kinds of people.

I used to have a hobby when I was small but I do not have one now. My hobby when I was small was to make and play with puppets. I learned to make puppets in the fourth grade. The part I liked best was to use the strings and make the doll move. We used to have plays and we would talk for the dolls. My, but I wish we could go back to those days again.

The type of entertainment I like is listening to music. I could sit for hours and listen to waltz music or any symphonic music. These types of music are the ones I like the most. If there wasn't any at that time I would like to see a movie. There are certain types of movies I like. For instance I do not like those spooky pictures.

I like to read when I have time for it. I would have to be in the mood to read. If it was a good book I would read at every chance I have, otherwise I read the beginning than I would read the end and then put the book away.

I would like to spend my vacations by traveling. I would like to see the world myself and not only hear about it. I would first like to travel through the United States, then after that I would like to go across the world. I would like to see how other countries dress and how their governments are formed, and I would like to learn a little bit of their language. This is all that I would like to do on my vacations.

There are many experiences I had during the evacuation that I didn't have outside. There were many things I liked and there were many things that I disliked. Some things I liked was to meet my old friends and to get acquainted with persons who come from different parts of California. Another thing I liked was to be in a club which I had never been in before. I liked it especially because I met many girls of my own age, and beside we had fun while it lasted. We had many plans for the future but everybody had to evacuate so we had to stop. When we evacuated, it was the first time I ate and slept on a train. It was the first time I went out of California, too. Sometimes I didn't like about this evacuation was to be taken away from my home and my school mates, especially from my very best girl friend. Now I know how a person who couldn't go to see a movie feels. We heard everything about Hollywood and the pictures they were producing, but couldn't see them because we were in centers, but I guess we are quite used to of it now.
I know how it feels, too, when you have cracks in your wall and when the wind would blow we would be shivering, and when there are holes in the roof the water would leak through it when it rains. When we are in these centers we do not have as many privileges as we would have if we were outside, but as a whole I find these camps quite satisfactory.

This is my autobiography up to this time and I do not know yet what it will be like in the coming future.