1. Introduction

In the study of American urban development, there are some clear distinctions between Honolulu and the mainland cities regarding the organization of ethnic social relations. These salient features, which arose from Hawai'i's unique modern history, have influenced the particular patterns of ethnic identity formation and interrelation in Honolulu.

First, no single ethnic group has occupied a numerical majority status, though political and economic power has been unequally distributed.1)
Since it was first revealed to the Western World, Hawai'i has become a destination for Occidental capitalists and missionaries to achieve their goals. Although never occupying a numerical preponderance in the population of Hawai'i, the white foreigners arose to economic elites in the process of economic transformation to capitalism, and consolidated political power over the native Hawaiians. The Haole\textsuperscript{2} class, which was solidifying its economic and political hegemony through the plantation economy, sought sufficient and reliable labor forces all over the world.\textsuperscript{3} As a result, the different foreign groups were imported as the workers on the plantation such as Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, Spanish, Germans, Filipinos, Koreans, Puerto Ricans, and other Pacific islanders. Even some African Americans were brought in from Alabama. The Haole planters, however, did not allow a single group to numerically predominate in the labor force. They feared that a predominant single group would grow to an economic or political threat to themselves through class consciousness based on ethnic identity (Lind, 1980; Kirkpatrick, 1987). This controlled distribution of ethnic populations by the Haole planters has constituted a fundamental and unique ingredient for the urban social geography of Honolulu up to the present.

Second, the large labor force for the development of the sugar industry was supplied mostly by immigrants from Asian countries. Introduction of the large number of Asian workers was due to not only geographical proximity of Asia to Hawai'i but the docility and high productivity of Asian labor forces which met the planters' needs.\textsuperscript{4} Also it is interesting to note that in contrast to the lumping conceptualization of “Asian American” in the mainland, which ignores separate cultural traditions and social characteristics, no such concept of “Asian American” has developed in Hawai'i as the various Asian ethnic groups became numerically dominant in the paternalistic plantation system which encouraged segregated labor camps along ethnic lines.\textsuperscript{5} As a consequence, there is a marked consciousness of distinctive ethnic identity in the Asian population of Hawai'i (Hechter, 1978). Each Asian group has kept its ethnic identity without being reduced into a lumped concept of “Asian American.”

A third distinction from other states in the mainland U.S. is a sense of tolerance and mutual acceptance among ethnic groups. The local sense of mutual hospitality for coexistence may have derived from the native Hawai'ian legacy of “Aloha Kanaka”-the love of one's fellow human beings (Okamura, 1982; Grant and Ogawa, 1993). The native islanders were willing to open their land to all visitors or settlers from the outside and absorb everyone into a community of mutual support (Hass, 1992). It is surely undeniable that this traditional Hawai'ian value helped the first Westerners settle peacefully in the Hawai'ian Islands. Based upon the traditional cultural value, ethnic multiculturalism gradually emerged from the plantation system which contained a variety of immigrant labor groups. Associated with this social situation, the legacy of tolerance has often became a part of the social norms of ethnic relationships and thus led to the relative absence of collective violence in order to “avoid fouling the social nest.” (Okamura, 1994)

In association with these distinctive features, Hawai'i has been long recognized as a harmonious multicultural society, where unmelting ethnicities live peacefully together. The relative absence of collective unrest and of racially or ethnically motivated violence has been considered as explicit evidence as to Hawai'i's differences from the mainland, where relations among heterogeneous ethnic groups are often confrontational and violent. Yet is there not a problem in identifying the Hawai'ian case as a paradise of ethnic relations? Is the Hawai'ian