

# I

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## Asian American Literature within and beyond the Immigrant Narrative

For a very long time, Asians in America have been viewed as newcomers to the country and destined always to be outsiders. While the antiquity and greatness of their countries of origin were often touted, Asians themselves who crossed boundaries and set themselves up as immigrants to the United States were greeted with scorn. The following is an example of this attitude, published in 1904 in the widely read and much-respected *Century Magazine*: “These Orientals have a civilization older than ours, hostile to ours, exclusive, and repellent. They do not come here to throw their lot with us. They abhor assimilation, and they have no desire to be absorbed. They mean to remain alien; they insist upon being taken back when they are dead; and we do well to keep them out while they are alive.”<sup>1</sup> Under such conditions, it was difficult – but not impossible – for Asians in America to become writers who could find a large readership. To do so required being aware of their uniqueness. It meant having to navigate a complex series of spoken and unspoken expectations about what they could write and how they could write it, with few if any models for how to accomplish this feat.

This situation changed to some degree as activists began to organize as *Asian Americans* in the late 1960s and early 1970s and started to make claims about a history of writing that had largely been obscured. Immigration laws also changed in the postwar era, first incrementally and eventually in a large-scale way that opened the door to particular kinds of immigrants from Asia. The economic fortunes of several prominent Asian countries improved in the last decades of the twentieth century as well, putting enormous pressure on ingrained habits of racial perception. While the Asian as perpetual foreigner is a perception that continues to be widespread, its circulation is increasingly impeded by challenges to its underlying logic. The post-1965 immigrants and their children, working alongside more established communities of Asian Americans, have substantially contributed to an altered understanding of how Asians in America are raced. One way they have done so is by becoming creative writers, their numbers now significant enough

that they are in the process of making a major impact on contemporary American literature as a whole.

In an interesting twist, one claim these creative writers often put forward is a challenge to the idea of Asian America itself. If the term “Asian America” refers to a single racial group whose experiences are somehow held in common despite the many differences that cleave to the populations it seeks to represent, it is a term held in low repute by many authors whose interests branch off into multiple directions. If being an Asian American writer means having to write about being an immigrant, a perpetual retelling of ethnic stories of arrival, struggle, adjustment, accommodation, and resistance that can span generations, writers more often than not insist that they are *not* Asian American. As the number of literary works by American writers of Asian ancestry, their aspirations, and their critical successes bloom all around us, their sense of purpose has also grown more diffuse and more difficult to categorize. The immigrant narrative is one story among many that they are telling. The immigrant is also a more mobile figure who travels across more boundaries, who seeks something different than assimilation, who disrupts and changes and makes demands.

### On the Road to “Asian America”

In 1870, just as political debate about the need to restrict immigration from China was heating up on the West Coast, Bret Harte inadvertently produced one of the most enduring literary invocations of the Chinese menace – who were at that time the most visible Asian ethnic group in the United States – in a poem entitled “Plain Language from Truthful James.” After it first appeared in *The Overland Monthly*, it was reprinted in countless publications across the United States under the title “The Heathen Chinees.” As it circulated, the satirical intent of Harte’s poem directed against the anti-Chinese movement in California was lost, and it became perceived instead as a straightforward characterization of the Chinese as a group: “Which I would like to remark – / And my language is plain – / That for ways that are dark / And for tricks that are vain, / The Heathen Chinees are peculiar.”<sup>2</sup> The emphasis on “plain” language in this stanza, which both begins and ends the poem, sets off the Chinese as using a language that is more twisted than the speaker’s own. The Chinese’s “tricks” confound those who are unsuspecting of his treachery. Such framing sets up the story of Ah Sin (whose name explicitly evokes a deliberate violation of socially acceptable norms) cheating at a game of cards. The fact that one of the white men he is playing with is also cheating did not seem to register for readers; only what he says when he catches Ah Sin in his duplicity is noted: “We are ruined by Chinese cheap labor.”

In viewing the Asian as untrustworthy and mysterious and menacing, Americans were borrowing from the Europeans, who had a long tradition of defining themselves by projecting what they most feared and disliked onto a racialized Other. The Other was often situated East of Europe, in an Orient full of barbarous Asians trapped in age-old ways of living, customs, and traditions whose actions and behaviors, as a result, were more or less opaque to the Western observer. The literary scholar Edward Said famously called this habit of thinking and knowing “Orientalism.”<sup>3</sup> The term refers specifically to the systemic, self-referential, and cumulative efforts of generations of scholars, politicians, bureaucrats, travelers, and specialists who observed, studied, and wrote copiously about an Orient they collectively invented. There was, to put it bluntly, nothing objective about the knowledge they produced. According to Said, knowledge was – and is – a product of its intimate and intertwined relationship to power and, in this instance, a product of colonial expansion.

Orientalism filled the administrative needs that vast European empires had for information. Such efforts also instilled the sense that the Westerner was the subject who studied and made sense of the East, which in turn was an object waiting to be studied. A divide became entrenched through which the subject and object named a stable relationship between two discrete entities, and the subject began to understand himself by what he, and much less frequently she, studied but was not a part of. Because the subject was not the object, whatever qualities the object exhibited must therefore be understood to not to be found in the subject. In short, the West became the West by defining itself against an East that exhibited all the qualities the West rejected as descriptive of itself.

The term “yellow peril” is a salient and modern manifestation of this older and larger phenomenon. Gaining traction throughout the first half of the twentieth century in both the United States and Europe, it is often said to originate in a dream that visited the leader of Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm II.<sup>4</sup> In 1895, he commissioned an artist to make his dream into a painted image that was widely distributed. The Archangel Michael stands on top of a high ridge in front of several white women in battle armor, each notably representative of a sovereign European country (one holds a shield with the Union Jack emblazoned on its front), and gestures broadly with his arm to the horizon. There, a statue of the Buddha sits on top of a massive storm cloud ravaging the expansive plains below. The caption reads in both French and English: “Nations of Europe! Join in the defence of your father and your home!” At the center bottom, in large all caps, are the words “THE YELLOW PERIL.”

As this illustration demonstrates, not only did Asia long embody qualities that Europeans and Americans rejected, but those qualities also made

Asia itself a threat. Its inhabitants and the qualities that characterized them could invade the West and make it lose the ideals of the self it worked so hard to conjure and uphold. The yellow peril as a widely invoked fear called on those in the West to defend these ideas against a threat that Asians, in their mystery, never ceased to pose. Asians were defined by what could not be known (and hence what could become the repository of all the fears the West could heap on the Other) and what certainly could not speak for itself in any plain, understandable way. In the midst of such habits of thinking, many activists who started to call themselves “Asian Americans” during the late 1960s and early 1970s, a period of political tumult in the United States and abroad, sought to emphasize the idea that Asians in America have been writers who had for a long time been writing their own stories of immigration, struggle, aspirations, love, and dignity. They championed authors who conformed to this storyline, recovering and celebrating the work of earlier published authors like Sui Sin Far (the pen name of the Eurasian author Edith Maude Eaton), Carlos Bulosan, Hisaye Yamamoto, and John Okada.

In what is easily one of the most influential pieces of writing of this period, the editors of *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian American Writers* (1974) observe in their introduction to the volume: “The truth is that Asian-Americans have been writing seriously since the nineteenth century, and writing well.”<sup>5</sup> This statement signals their intent to claim a literary tradition that they would, in the process of collecting, help to construct. Editors of earlier anthologies similarly understood what they were doing as part of a larger political project. Kai-yu Hsu and Helen Palubinskas insist in their introduction to *Asian-American Authors* (1972), “The rebellion against the stereotype is a real and serious undertaking of these Asian-American writers. They admit that they have responded to the impetus of the Black movement, but they recognize that their battle is their own, long overdue.”<sup>6</sup> Likewise, in the introduction to *Asian-American Heritage: An Anthology* (1971), David Hsin-fu Wand asserts the importance of Asian American literature to American literature as a whole before addressing the question, Why have these works been ignored? He writes,

The neglect of Asian-Americans in American literature can thus be traced to the linguistic and cultural barriers of early Oriental immigrants; to the whites’ indifference to or discrimination against ethnic minorities (as shown in the history of United States immigration); and to the myth of the melting pot, in which all “alien” people are expected to shed their racial and ethnic identities and be assimilated as Christian and “loyal” Americans.... But Asian-Americans have distinct physical characteristics which bar them from total assimilation. And some of them are too proud to renounce their cultural heritage, the heritage of their ancestral lands. The recent awakening of black

consciousness in the United States further convinced some Asian-Americans to seek their ancestral roots.<sup>7</sup>

All three of these examples emphasize the existence of a significant body of writings by Asian Americans, their importance to American literature and culture as a whole, and a sense of awakening to differences that enliven and animate creativity. Creative writing is granted enormous powers to undo oppressive representations, to shed greater light on structural inequalities, and to make possible the acceptance of a more authentic self that is at once marked by racial difference but not degraded by it. In an essay on Asian American literature appearing in *Roots: An Asian American Reader* (1971), Bruce Iwasaki makes this claim as explicitly as any publication that followed: “Literature and change no longer *describe* each other – they become the *same thing*.”<sup>8</sup>

As Viet Thanh Nguyen has pointed out in a book-length study of Asian American literature that has had a lasting and widely felt impact on the field, what such thinking has left out is the enormous ideological heterogeneity that exists among Asian Americans.<sup>9</sup> Contemporary scholars in general have been adept at accounting for the ways in which, as Colleen Lye puts it, Asian Americans are a “minority which is not one.”<sup>10</sup> They are divided along classed, ethnic, linguistic, geographical, gendered, and sexual lines, so much so that those sensitive to such differences are left contemplating what Lisa Lowe describes as “heterogeneity, hybridity, multiplicity” and can perhaps be better designated, as David Palumbo-Liu insists, with a slash that runs between its two keywords – Asian/American.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, other literary scholars have gone on to insist that Asian America does not name a stable demographic group so much as it does a particular critical stance, one defined by critique of the present social order. This is the reason Kandice Chuh insists in her often-cited book *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique* (2003) that Asian American studies is itself a “subject-less discourse”: it doesn’t name a group of people whom we can neutrally describe as Asian Americans, but rather it refuses to name any such group and demonstrates in the process how any attempt to do so is itself a kind of ideological illusion.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, Susan Koshy argues that “Asian American literature” is itself a “fiction” but one which we cannot do without.<sup>13</sup> For all of these scholars, what gives the term “Asian American,” or “Asian/American,” its cogency is its political project, which aims to illuminate the ways in which understandings of human difference are mediated by power and its will to maintain itself.

What makes Nguyen’s intervention in this discussion noteworthy is how he targets this political project, arguing that Asian American literature

mainly looks politically progressive or even radical because scholars have self-consciously sought out such works to highlight. This has meant scholars and activists have ignored a variety of other literary works that have been more accommodating. Hence, scholars have paid attention to the work of Sui Sin Far, which does indeed often depict Chinese Americans in a realist form that emphasizes the social, economic, and political hurdles they faced but also their ability to find ways to get around such hurdles, at the expense of attending to the work of her far more popular and widely read sister Winnifred Eaton, who wrote under the pen name Onoto Watanna, claimed high-born Japanese ancestry, and wrote racial romances that did little to question the social order of her day. Indeed, if we go back to Bruce Iwasaki's early essay, we find exactly this kind of judgment being made against specific works viewed as being not politically attuned in the proper way: "If racist stereotypes have always plagued the Asian American community, today there is a stereotype promoted in part by that community. That is the success story. Asians have no problems; Asians have made it. Ingratiatingly cheerful autobiographies such as Monica Sone's *Nisei Daughter* (1953) and Pardee Lowe's *Father and Glorious Descendant* (1943) are examples."<sup>14</sup> Such statements suggest that far from ignoring the existence of ideological heterogeneity, an active debate had been waged by a rising group of mostly young, self-identified Asian Americans against what they perceived as the reactionary politics of ethnicity and assimilation advocated by other members of their community.

When Nguyen's argument was first published, there were already many scholars doing the work of recovering texts that had languished in relative anonymity. Other scholars have also since substantially revised our understanding of the literary history of Asian American literature, and additional works are poised to appear in print. What has become clear is that before the advent of what we might call the Asian American Movement, a signal moment of political awakening that insisted Asians in America were a distinct racial group who had many causes in common, there had been an impressive number of writers of Asian ancestry who often enjoyed a wide readership and critical acclaim. More often than not, their careers were defined by a quick rise and then an eventual fall into obscurity. Rarely did such early writers of Asian ancestry leave a lasting impression on a reading public so that years and decades after their major work was done, they continued to be read and their names remembered. Instead, they seemed somehow to be buoyed by the current events of their contemporary moment and then forgotten as public concern faded and became fixed on something else. What this pattern suggests is that none of these writers enjoyed a public of readers in the United States whom they could engage throughout a long

career or a visible tradition or movement of writing that could help call such a public into being. They became either minor figures in preexisting traditions or movements, easily slipping into the background, or stood alone, solitary figures of readerly curiosity and even celebration whose impact on the wider culture was fleeting.

If so, we might say the emergence of an Asian American Movement and its investment in the production or invention of a tradition of Asian American literature was an explicit attempt to break this hard-woven pattern. Henceforth, they seem to proclaim, newly christened Asian American writers need not write in isolation. They are part of a tradition, which can be retroactively traced and recovered, and as such proficient at calling forth a public capable of appreciating the continuities that inform and sustain new work. Alternatively, Asian American writers might understand themselves as part of a literary movement connected to a racially based movement, one fully engaged in self-conscious attempts to break from the nightmares of the past and to call forth new forms of being together. Another remarkable example of the latter way of thinking is *Asian Women* (1971), a mostly literary journal produced by Berkeley students. Its introduction explicitly articulates the political aspirations motivating the volume's creation. The anonymous editors write, "we saw that we faced a double oppression not only as being women but also as Asians. The white middle-class women's liberation movement was not totally relevant to our lives. We had to create our own roles as Asian women. We began enthusiastically because we were not alone anymore in our struggle for womanhood."<sup>15</sup>

What should be foregrounded about all of these early attempts to define an Asian American is the fact that stories about immigration played a relatively small role. What these activists and critics were most focused on was defining Asian Americans as Americans whose contributions and struggles within their country were often overlooked. Stories about immigration became, as a result, something to be suspicious of, as they seemed repeatedly to cast Asians in America as perennially new arrivals, their struggles always those of acculturation and adjustment and of a foreignness that refused to be fully shed. The founding of a tradition and a movement, then, was a way for activist writers and critics to get past the strictures of immigration, or (as it was primarily imagined) the one-way migration of peoples from a far-away home and the forging of a new home that required an adoption of a new identity.

Tradition and movement need not be put in opposition to each other when we think about what this earlier generation of writers, critics, and activists created together, for any literary movement can be said to need a tradition it seeks to uphold, renew, reinvent, resist, or betray. Just as

important, even if a writer doesn't see him- or herself as part of either a tradition or a movement, the presence of either can add extra dimension to, more interest in, and greater influence for their writings, so that the effects of both on a writer's career can be very similar. Nevertheless, there seems to be a distinction worth maintaining. Tradition, a word frequently invoked in the *Aiiieeeee!* introduction, is a backward-looking glance that allows the past to help give context and form to the present. A movement looks to the future, to imagine what it is that remains absent but which present struggles, organized by a shared goal or goals, might help bring into existence.

### The Literary Afterlives of Immigration Reform

As I explore at length elsewhere, the efforts – often fractious and full of disagreement – to establish an Asian American literature emerged just as the demographic base it purported to speak for or speak to began to change.<sup>16</sup> The end of the Second World War made explicit race-based forms of immigration restriction difficult to defend in a world become more sensitive to claims of racial superiority and quickly divided between two opposing ideological positions vying for influence in geographical regions that were overwhelmingly nonwhite. Racially defined bars to entry were officially lifted, racially restrictive naturalization laws overturned, and local laws limiting land ownership and marital possibilities were slowly rescinded. In 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act was passed. A culmination of earlier reforms, it set up a quota system that was supposed to be applied equally to all countries. A set number of possible immigrants per year was established (170,000), and each country in the Eastern Hemisphere was given a cap of 20,000 entrants that had to be drawn from this larger number. The law also gave preference to family members kept apart by previous laws and professionals in areas for which the United States' rapidly expanding economy needed skilled workers, such as medicine and engineering.

The passage of this law and the underlying forces that surrounded its passage gave birth to a dramatic increase in the number of Asians in America. For ease of discussion, I will call this group Asian Americans, even as I want to maintain a distinction between using this term to describe a demographically neutral group and using it more self-consciously to refer to a specifically political stance. As the former, each decade following 1965 witnessed a rapid multiplication of an Asian American population. They became largely foreign born, when before 1965 they were largely native born. They were more likely to be women than men. They became younger, with many of child-rearing age. They settled across the United States and



not just concentrated on the West Coast. They became ethnically much more diverse. They became socioeconomically more complex, less definable as working class and more distributed across all the classes.<sup>17</sup>

There are significant limiting concerns that need to be kept in mind when thinking about the impact of immigration reform on the current shape of Asian Americans and the kind of lives they lead. The hypervisibility of Asian Americans as excellent students and socioeconomically well off significantly obscures the heterogeneity of this population, especially in terms of class. That is, it is easy to forget that when we are talking about Asian Americans, we are referring to some groups who are in fact the least well off financially of any demographic group, the least likely to graduate from high school much less college, and who are highly vulnerable to being incarcerated. Similarly, an emphasis on Asian Americans as educated and economically privileged places the focus on the experiences of East Asian immigrants and increasingly South Asian immigrants and leaves little room for considering the quite different experiences of the Filipino Diaspora, refugees from Southeast Asia, the working poor from East Asia and South Asia, adoptees, and so forth. Moreover, the focus on common perceptions can, paradoxically, end up reinforcing them. That is, even when we try to show how these perceptions can be explained in historical and structural terms, the perceptions can get hardened. Finally, the emphasis on legal reforms can turn attention away from the ways in which there was already an acceleration of immigration from Asia occurring before the 1965 Act went into effect. It seems plausible to suggest, then, that immigration from Asia to the United States would have continued its dramatic increase even if the 1965 reforms had not been enacted, especially in light of the large-scale immigration that has swept Western Europe despite a lack of similar changes to their laws.<sup>18</sup> What an overly narrow emphasis on the determining power of a single law can obfuscate are the global changes to capitalist production that have encouraged the mobility of capital and peoples.

Despite such caveats, focusing on 1965 as a pivotal moment in the dramatic changes to an Asian American population we have witnessed does allow us to emphasize how these changes were catalyzed in the United States by law. Legislators, whether they knew it or not, helped to create the conditions that made it possible for Asian Americans to look the way they do, with preferences to immigrants of professional background favoring the growth of an Asian American population that is in large numbers highly educated and employed in white-collar professions. Any claim otherwise, particularly those that turn to culture as an explanation of why many Asian Americans hold advanced degrees and work in professions that favor technical expertise (like engineering and medicine), is simply ignoring this

important historical factor and, most likely, giving in to a way of thinking indebted to long-espoused and odious ideas of racial hierarchy.

The focus on the 1965 Act also helps to isolate another phenomenon, which is the maturation of the children of Asian immigrants of professional background who made a significant impact on public consciousness in the 1980s for their many impressive academic achievements and who began to enter colleges and universities in numbers disproportionate to their population in the 1990s. This was the same decade we began to see these “children” move into professions that their parents would not or perhaps could not have chosen. One career path some chose was to become creative writers. Hence, in 1995, Chang-rae Lee, the thirty-year-old son of immigrant parents (his father is a psychiatrist), published his first novel, *Native Speaker*. Its publication was greeted with great critical acclaim and helped to establish Lee as a major figure in contemporary American literature. Soon after, other writers of Asian descent gained equal prominence, including Jhumpa Lahiri, Han Ong, Ruth Ozeki, Susan Choi, Julie Otsuka, and many more. These writers are the most visible figures of a much larger cohort that every year produces dozens of new novels, books of poetry, life writings, creative non-fiction, and graphic narratives. Major nonprofit literary institutions exist to support and foster their work, including the Asian American Writers’ Workshop (AAWW), Kundiman, *Hyphen* magazine, the independent press Kaya, and the *Asian American Literary Review*.

A simple survey of these works reveals that while these contemporary authors do write stories about Asians who have immigrated to the United States, they also branch out and write a much wider variety of stories. So, while *Native Speaker* might be said to be an immigrant narrative (even if the narrator was born and raised in the United States, he is nevertheless focused on the fate of immigrants around him), Lee’s later novels stray far from this focus or, when it returns, recast immigrants in startlingly different ways. June from *The Surrendered*, for instance, is an angry, determined, forceful character whose personal voyage from being a refugee of the Korean War to a mother woefully looking for a lost son at the end of her life in Italy seems to make the fact that she’s also an immigrant to the United States a minor detail of her life. Even for a writer like Lahiri, who has made her career depicting mostly middle-class and professional Bengali immigrants from India settling in the Northeast United States and can therefore be said to remain focused on immigration, immigration itself has become a flexible idea. Many of her characters are as likely to retire in India or to settle in England or to travel ceaselessly among the metropolises of different countries as to stay put in New England. Immigration is rarely a solution to a problem for her characters, as it is more often a problem that needs puzzling.

Observing from the perspective of such a variety of storytelling, we might be tempted to say that the aspirations of an earlier generation of Asian American writers and activists have found at least partial fulfillment in the present. There is a lively and vibrant culture of creative writing among Asian Americans, one that seems capable – at least for now – of sustaining itself and its participants. This culture offers important encouragement, community, and even outlets in which writers can showcase their work. Despite their many significant accomplishments and the growing institutional apparatus (much of it outside the university system) that have sprung up to encourage further development, however, there is a good deal of dissatisfaction among writers themselves about the ways in which race might limit their creativity. In a study that included interviews with contemporary writers of Asian ancestry, I asked explicit questions about whether they viewed themselves as Asian American writers and what it means for them to be called such. The writers were candid in expressing their discomfort, even active dislike, with the categorization. Part of this ambivalence seems to stem from animosity to the expectations that others, including agents, publishers, book reviewers, and readers, project onto them. They are told that to be successful, they must write a particular kind of work, one that focuses on Asian and Asian American characters in settings and roles and events that conform to fairly conventional ideas about them as primarily immigrants. When they do not conform to such expectations, their work is often greeted with skepticism and, at best, a sense of novelty.

On the one hand, then, being an “Asian American” writer for the current burgeoning generations of American writers of Asian ancestry offers them the opportunity to belong to a culture of creative writing that previous generations of similar writers did not have access to, often to their detriment. On the other, the pitfalls of being associated with such a culture (especially one so closely associated with the immigrant narrative) are many, since all cultures are themselves products of a process of inclusion and exclusion, of generating norms, and of modeling ways of doing things founded on how these same things were done in the past. There is also now, irrefutably, a tradition of Asian American literature that helps anchor what it means to write Asian American literature in the present. This tradition can at once act as a resource for writers whose works are enhanced by their association with it and simultaneously as a limitation that writers must work to overcome, another hurdle that gets in the way of attaining whatever ambitions any individual writer might harbor for his or her work.

As writers continue to strive to realize such ambitions, making Asian American literature both harder to define and more vital in its complex heterogeneity, what recedes from view is the possibility that there might also

be an Asian American literary movement. While American writers of Asian ancestry, of which there are many now, might have a shared literary past (even if it is one past among many they might have) and a shared culture (again one of many), both powerfully shaped by the ever-changing experiences of immigration, it is not clear whether they have a shared future. That is, it is not clear whether any vision exists to organize their collective literary labors or to give them a sense of belonging to a recognizable group of writers – whether defined as Asian American or in some other way – moving toward a specific goal that is larger than their individual selves. The drama of reading their works as they are produced is for me, as a reader, the potential that tradition and culture might somehow come together to incite the rise of exactly this kind of movement or, even more exciting, movements.

## NOTES

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- 6 Kai-yu Hsu and Helen Palubinskas, *Asian-American Authors* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1972), 5.
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- 9 Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Race and Resistance: Literature and Politics in Asian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- 10 Colleen Lye, *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893–1956* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 1.
- 11 Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); David Palumbo-Liu, *Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).
- 12 Kandice Chuh, *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).
- 13 Susan Koshy, "The Fiction of Asian American Literature," *Yale Journal of Criticism* 9.2 (Fall 1996), 315–346.
- 14 Iwasaki, "Response and Change for the Asian in America," 93.

- 15 *Asian Women's Journal*, *Asian Women*, third printing (Berkeley, CA: Asian American Studies Center, 1975), 4.
- 16 Min Hyung Song, *The Children of 1965: On Writing, and Not Writing, as an Asian American* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).
- 17 For greater detail about these changes, see Song, *The Children of 1965*, 31–38. For more discussion of the history of post-1965 Asian immigration, see Shelley Sang-Hee Lee, *A New History of Asian America* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 315–334.
- 18 Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, second edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 322.