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A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study

Finding a Path Forward

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS THEME STUDY

Edited by Franklin Odo

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Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans Revisited: An Introduction to the National Historic Landmarks Theme Study

Franklin Odo
Department of American Studies, Amherst College

In *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*, Noenoe Silva asserts for Native Hawaiian history what this Theme Study attempts for the experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans: "[f]or those of us living with the legacies and the continuing exercise of power characteristics of colonialism, it is crucial to understand power relations in order to escape or overcome their effects, and, further, to understand the resistance strategies and tactics of the past in order to use them and improve on them."[1] There are many venues through which we might pursue this journey: theory, poetry, fiction, film, psychology, politics, technology, science fiction, among others. But history, memory, and place are crucial, in my view, to the apprehension of colonial power relations and the "resistance strategies and tactics of the past" through which we seek redress. Or, perhaps better to insist on "memory **through** place" as

United States Immigration Station, Angel Island, California. Photo from the collections of the National Register of Historic Places.

potentially subversive of the normalized hierarchies of race, class, gender, and other classifications inscribed in our museums, monuments, historic houses, websites, and the myriad other sites through which public history is manipulated.[2] We can make serious connections among critical issues of the day and relate them to the past when we locate and interpret sites where important events, people, and ideas occurred.[3]

But place is rarely provided the significance it deserves in the contemplation or commemoration of historic events/people/ideas in the narratives of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders within the histories of the United States.[4] This volume, then, foregrounds "place" as a crucial variable in locating AAPIs in the history of the American empire. It does so by inviting 17 senior scholars in the field of Asian American Studies to reimagine or reconfigure special topics in U.S. history. There are two major lists of nationally designated historic sites in the United States. Both are maintained by the National Park Service (NPS) which celebrated its centennial in 2016. Known more widely for its stewardship of the national parks—"America's best idea"—the NPS also maintains the National Register of Historic Places and the National Historic Landmarks program.[5] The National Register lists properties that are important to cities, states, and the nation, while the National Historic Landmarks (NHL) program only designates those of outstanding national significance that retain a high degree of integrity. Fewer than 3,000 NHLs are on this elite list, with properties ranging from Mt. Vernon, birthplace of George Washington, to the Angel Island Immigration Station in the San Francisco Bay, through which many immigrants came into the U.S. but where many Asians were detained and barred from entrance because of their race and nationality. These places are critical, providing effective lessons through which visitors absorb American history and learn about the people who belong in that narrative and in this nation as well as the large numbers relegated to obscurity.

When peoples of color, including Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans, are not reasonably represented, the historical narrative of the nation itself becomes biased and skewed. But even the rubric used for this Theme Study, "Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders," is routinely misapprehended and skewered. I use the term intentionally because it may still be a useful intellectual and political construct, understanding full well that for many Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, decades of appropriation of the terminology by Asian Americanists, without reciprocal scholarly or material benefit, have rendered the juxtaposition more than problematic. As Lisa Kahaleole Hall insists, "Asian Americans have taken up the use of the APA etc. construction in an attempt to be inclusive, but the crucial difference between inclusion and appropriation is whether the included benefit equally from their inclusion.[6] Perhaps the operative word might be "at all" rather than "equally." Here, we have several outstanding essays on Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders with important implications. Because it was manifestly evident that the histories and heritages of AAPIs are dramatically underrepresented on both lists of significant historic properties, then-Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar asked the NPS in 2013 to undertake this AAPI theme study. Secretary Sally Jewell carried the project forward. NPS Director Jonathan Jarvis has taken a personal interest in the project and Stephanie Toothman, Associate Director for Cultural Resources, has been a champion for its completion.[7]

On a larger canvas, a theme study of this nature fills in the spaces, the silences, which obscure or obliterate so many critical issues that should be foregrounded in our society. There has been some progress. For example, there have been remarkable advances in our apprehension of the meanings involved with the incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II, in both academic scholarship and public history venues. As Eiichiro Azuma suggests, there has been a rapid growth in the production of scholarly work, expanding our notions of who can describe or interpret these histories as well as the expansive parameters which form its borders or its horizons.[8] At the same time, enormous changes have been taking place beyond the academy, at times in concert with scholars, at others in independent journeys. In her 2012 theme study of Japanese Americans and World War II, for example, NPS historian Barbara Wyatt explored the myriad ways in which previously unheralded people, groups, incarceration sites, as well as museums, memorials, and monuments have exploded onto the public history scene.[9] In addition, the Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) program in the NPS has provided over $20 million to support efforts to illu-

From Asia to America: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders emigrated from a huge geographic area to travel to the United States.

minate that notorious chapter in American history.[10]

This volume seeks to inspire more Americans to discover the stories of America's Asian and Pacific Island heritage. Further, it is intended to motivate and support those seeking National Historic Landmark or National Register of Historic Places designation for places linked to stories about Asian American and Pacific Islanders and their experiences in the United States. Designed to be inviting and inspirational, these essays are not intended to be encyclopedic or comprehensive.[11] Instead, we hope to reach local historians, planners, elected officials, AAPI communities, and all Americans interested in linking power of place to the ideas, people, and movements that have been meaningful to American society. There is overlap among several essays, especially with regard to duplicating information about basic immigration or demographic data about AAPIs. But I thought this was acceptable if only because readers are likely, at any given point, to focus on one or another essay and require the basic data for context. I hope this editorial strategy is not without merit.

When and how, for example, did the Pacific Islands become part of the American empire/fabric? When and where did the people from Asia appear in the United States—or earlier, in the American colonies—or even earlier, in North America? How did ethnic communities like Chinatowns develop? What are the legacies of these vast movements of people, capital, resources, and labor—where do they begin and end? Do they end? If not, how do historic events and contemporary individuals and communities impact one another? The NPS hopes to help answer these and other questions by identifying and designating historic places that can provide stories explaining the long and fascinating histories of AAPIs.

WHO ARE ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICANS?

What do we mean by Asian American and Pacific Islander Americans? As the accompanying map shows, some of these peoples travelled farther to get to North America than most European settlers and both free and enslaved Africans. Asia generically refers to the Eastern hemisphere of the globe. The region of interest in this theme study is usually defined by China to the north and Indonesia to the south, and incorporating Afghanistan and Pakistan to Japan and the Philippines. The South China Sea, the Philippine Sea, and the Indian Ocean, in addition to the mighty Pacific Ocean, are major bodies of water in this region.

The Pacific Islands are highly fragmented geographically, but some of the major islands or groups are Hawai'i, Guam, the Marshall Islands, the Solomon Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, Samoa, and Fiji. People who came to the U.S. from the Pacific Islands and

Asia, or who were incorporated against their will into the American body politic, represent a staggering variety of cultures, languages, and religions, some resulting from an ancient mingling of cultures and others representing more recent merging.

In this Theme Study we refer to the people from these diverse and geographically far-flung cultures as "Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders"—AAPI, in short. Because they share a sense of community in the United States, they often unite for political or cultural reasons under various umbrella terms, sometimes as "Asian Pacific Americans" (APA), "Asian American and Pacific Americans" (AAPA), or simply "Asian Pacific Americans" (APA). While the two groups were once unified for census purposes, they are now disaggregated. There is no common agreement that one designation is more accurate than others; we selected AAPI as a convenient acronym, but we do not consider it superior to others.

WHY THIS THEME STUDY IS NEEDED

The year 2016 marked the centennial of the establishment of the NPS in an act signed by President Woodrow Wilson. The NPS includes 417 units, with properties in every state, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. Some of these units already commemorate the historical presence of AAPIs, but people of AAPI heritage are still grossly underrepresented in terms of designated places that tell their stories. AAPI communities and the general public need more sites providing insights about AAPI groups, from indigenous peoples in Hawai'i, Guam, and Samoa to more recent refugees from Southeast Asia.[12] Adding to this list of sites will assure more exposure to large audiences; in 2015, some 307,247,252 visitors enjoyed the natural wonders and historic buildings, museums, memorials, and parks that NPS protects and interprets and that help explain America's complex and diverse history.

The explosive growth of Asian American and Pacific Islander American communities has fueled political, scholarly, economic, cultural, and transnational interest in many circles. The AAPI share of the American population in 1970 was less than 1 percent (about 1.5 million people) but, largely as an unintended consequence of the 1965 immigration reforms and the influx of refugees after the disastrous American interventions in Southeast Asia, by 2015 there were close to 20 million AAPIs in the U.S.[13] AAPIs have experienced the fastest growth rate among all "races" in the United States since 2000, and they appear to be continuing this trajectory into the foreseeable future. This "racial" demographic has enormous potential to influence future policy-making in myriad arenas. The quality and quantity of designated historic sites with significant AAPI linkages will have considerable impact on the ways in which AAPI heritage is understood and embraced or rejected by Americans.

Like other groups that have discovered or rediscovered their need to establish more intimate ties to their nation, their states, and their neighborhoods, AAPIs are looking for real places that harbor (or hide) stories about their histories in the United States. As part of a larger NPS project, this Theme Study joins other communities whose legacies were historically and effectively marginalized; they include the 2013 *American Latinos and the Making of the United States: A Theme Study* and *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History*, launched in October 2016.[14]

THE COLLECTION

What binds our 17 essays about AAPI heritage together most coherently is the sense among AAPI scholars that their history, indeed American history writ large, can logically be understood in the context of the United States as an American empire. The origin of the United States as former colonies within the expansive British Empire serves as a backdrop to the revolution of 1776, giving birth to a new nation. That dynamic entity immediately continued the acquisition of enormous territories at the expense of indigenous hosts and neighbors whom we now call Native Americans. Even earlier, the vast Spanish empire reaching from Mexico to the Philippines became a regular conduit, as early as the 16th century, for Asians coming to the Americas. But living in an imperial order inevitably places individuals and communities in conditions requiring serious, sometimes deadly, moral and political choices. AAPIs became consequential victims and participants as a result, as will be explored in the essays in this theme study. As targets, objects, and agents, they have consistently faced complex alternatives, beginning with the earliest sojourners and continuing with contemporary generations of immigrants and their children.

In the mid-19th century, as the United States

A view from the ancient village of Pågat on Guam's northeast coast. This site is important to the indigenous Chamorro people. Photo by Brian R. Turner.

extended its reach to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, international European competition for Asia and the islands en route to that vast continent unleashed a torrent of imperial adventures. At the same time, the insatiable hunger for new lands and resources committed the U.S. to absorb the indigenous inhabitants of the territories it coveted and seized, as well as others who had settled there. Manifest destiny and Social Darwinism assured us that God and science were on our side. Among other assumptions, we accepted the principle of the racial inferiority of these peoples, but there was considerable tension over democratic principles and rights accruing to people already living on newly acquired "American" soil. Did the Constitution, as some Americans argued or feared, follow the flag? Would these "inferior" peoples insist on rights properly claimed only by European Americans? If so, would that unfortunate outcome contaminate core principles of racial hierarchy in the homeland? Indeed, the insistence on equal treatment under the law/Constitution has long proven problematic to white supremacists.

The quest for empire incorporated Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders into the American body politic, as it recruited limited but important numbers of AAPIs into the U.S. as immigrant workers. A seemingly insatiable need for cheap labor, to develop not only the newly conquered territories but significant sections of the metropole in which Americans lived, created complex and difficult contradictions. For example, the expansion into the Pacific and Asia necessitated the annexation of islands like the Hawaiian archipelago, in 1898, with its indigenous population of Native Hawaiians as well as growing numbers of Asian immigrant workers. And it also effectively created an opportunity to exploit thousands of Chinese workers recruited to build the transcontinental railroad in the 1860s and Japanese laborers to plant and harvest agricultural crops to feed a burgeoning population in the 1890s. While infinitesimal, compared to burgeoning rates of immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe, the introduction of these new "others" precipitated unprecedented ruptures in American patterns of immigration and acculturation.

When periodic crises in capitalist development created recessions and depressions, including in the 1870s, nativist racism surfaced more strongly, resulting in the nation's establishment of its first exclusion laws, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. These laws eventually barred nearly all AAPIs from entering the country or becoming naturalized. When the Chinese and Japanese had been effectively excluded, by 1908, Filipinos, as part of the American empire, were recruited to work as sugar and pineapple plantation workers in Hawai'i and as migrant workers and fish cannery laborers on the west coast and Alaska. Even the Filipinos, "nationals" as colonial subjects, were eventually effectively cut off in 1934, albeit at the national cost of a promise of future independence for the Philippines. These contradictions are formidable parts of our legacy; all too often they helped define who Americans could be by excluding AAPIs as unfit to enter or be naturalized. The following are brief summaries of the essays roughly grouped into categories designed to be suggestive; readers will note consistent overlap.

EMPIRE AND IMPERIALISM

Given the salience of empire running through this volume, it is fitting that we begin with the essay "Imperialism and Migration" by Gary Okihiro on that very theme. Okihiro stakes out a wide purview, suggesting that the topic should begin with the Greeks and Romans and not, as other scholars insist, as a stage of late capitalism. And he contends that "[u]nlike most standard U.S. histories that depict imperialism as largely restricted to the 19th century and as an aberration, this chapter maintains imperialism, both as discourses and the material conditions, is a crucial aspect of the republic's constitution. The U.S. was

Farm families of Japanese ancestry boarding buses in Byron, California, for the Turlock Assembly Center, 65 miles away. An official of the WCCA is checking the families into the bus on May 2, 1942.

Inset photo: Civilian Exclusion Orders systematically directed the confinement of "all persons of Japanese ancestry, including aliens and non-aliens" from areas on the West Coast. These orders were posted on April 1,1942, in San Francisco.

WRA photos by Dorothea Lange, 1942; courtesy of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.

made in the idea and act of expansion." Okihiro further argues that advocates like Alfred Thayer Mahan in his influential *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* (1890) combined lethal doses of imperialism, manifest destiny, and white supremacy to solidify American intentions to secure strategic and material supremacy in Asia and the Pacific. These intrusions and conquests of places like Hawai'i not only disrupted indigenous cultures and societies but also displaced Native Hawaiian peoples by the thousands, forcing many to work on sailing ships in the Pacific Northwest, as well as on whaling fleets based in places like New Bedford, Massachusetts.

The forced removal and incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans, primarily on the west coast of the U.S., was the quintessential culmination of necessary consequences for the racialized war between the American and Japanese empires. While Brian Niiya does not overtly utilize empire or imperialism as analytic tools in his essay "Asian Americans and World War II" he reminds us that the clash was perhaps inevitable, given the racialized nature of both empires. Indeed, many white Americans had long sought to remove Japanese Americans from their midst: "This is our time to get things done that we have been trying to get done for a

quarter of a century" – referencing one Californian's outburst on February 6, 1942, urging mass evictions [only 13 days] before President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, officially authorizing the army to begin the forced removal. Niiya's descriptions of the WWII internment/concentration camps, where West Coast Japanese Americans were incarcerated, provide stark notice that, at least for some groups at some times, the notion of internal colonies invoked by Third World Liberation Front activists in the 1960s and 1970s could be graphically depicted.

WWII had demonized Japan and Japanese Americans and provided a brief racial respite to other Asian Americans. Japan was effectively using America's anti-Asian racism, including the exclusion acts and the mass incarceration, to tout its own aggression as part of a race war in which it would lead other Asians to racial victory. In order to counter that propaganda, the U.S. repealed the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act by agreeing to admit a paltry 105 people of Chinese descent. But even with this concession, immigrants of Chinese descent from any part of the globe (not, as with other nations, from that country alone) counted against that quota. Still, and very importantly, it did permit resident Chinese Americans to become naturalized citizens. That respite, however, was short-lived because the American empire's preeminence as the world's only super power was being contested by the Soviet empire and what was perceived to be a monolithic global communist threat.

Rick Baldoz explains in his essay "Asian Americans: The Cold War" that Asian Americans were part of "long-standing stereotypes characterizing Asians as an 'enemy race' that threatened to destabilize the global political order." This unfortunate legacy resurfaced after a brief period of several years when post-WWII policies appeared to favor Asian American communities, whose leaders urged the celebration of wartime heroism demonstrated by ethnic groups loyal to their American homeland. Indeed, all the significant Asian immigrant groups, including their children, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, and Korean, became intense patriots and military heroes fighting for the Allies. In the process of targeting the Chinese Communist Party, after its victory in China in 1949, the full force of the U.S. government was trained on any Chinese Americans alleged to have ties with the People's Republic. The clash of empires was lethal for many living and working in America.

The Central Utah Relocation Center, also known as Topaz, as it appeared recently. The site is a National Historic Landmark. Photo courtesy of the National Historic Landmarks Program.

Panorama of the Central Utah Relocation Center, also known as Topaz, from the water tower. WRA photo by Tom Parker, October 18, 1942; courtesy of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.

Lafcadio Hearn called attention to the Filipino settlement near New Orleans in an essay published in *Harper's Weekly* on March 31,1883. Hearn's house still stands in New Orleans. Photo courtesy of the National Register of Historic Places.

Imperialism and colonialism constitute central themes in Erika Lee's essay "Immigration, Exclusion, and Resistance, 1800s-1940s." She notes the early arrivals in North America via the Spanish empire and the large emigration of people from China, partly as a result of the destructive impact of British imperialist incursions, such as the Opium Wars of 1839 to 42. The modest numbers of Korean immigrants in the early 1900s may be explained by Japanese control of Korea, formalized in 1910 and ending only with the end of WWII. Japan's imperial concerns included fears that Korean workers would undermine Japanese labor mobility and aspirations in the U.S. Korean immigrants became, then, pawns in the collision of American and Japanese empires in the Pacific.

IMMIGRATION AND COMMUNITIES

Finding and/or creating community has been an ongoing theme in AAPI history. Indeed, one of the major aims of "othering" subordinated groups like indigenous peoples whose lands were appropriated or ethnic workers whose labor was expropriated was to deny them the power of community. AAPIs formed communities as best they could.

In the face of often hostile and intermittently violent lynchings and "drivings out," AAPIs used old cultural forms and newly learned American strategies to protect themselves and advance their community standing. Nayan Shah distinguishes four analytically separate categories of such advocacy and social movement in his essay "Establishing Communities." They include: 1) social, mutual aid, and spiritual institutions; 2) transformation of the physical landscape; 3) labor, advocacy, political, and nationalist organizations; and 4) commercial and entertainment cultures. Among the earliest mutual aid societies was the Sociedad de Beneficencia de los Hispano Filipinos, established in 1870 in the tiny, deliberately hidden, village of St. Malo, just outside New Orleans, Louisiana. Lafcadio Hearn visited this remote village in 1883 and wrote an essay about the early Filipino settlers. He included several images of drawings by Charles Graham after sketches by J.O. Davidson. The essay was published in *Harper's Weekly* on March 31, 1883. These men had probably jumped ship to escape terrible conditions as seamen aboard Spanish galleons while Spain maintained colonial control of Mexico and the Philippines. That Manila Galleon trade flourished in an era predating the American colonies and through the first decades of the young nation, 1565 to 1815. This historical revelation is mentioned in several essays in order to encourage readers to appreciate the long history of Asians in the Americas.

Kelly G. Marsh and Tiara R. Na`puti have provided a wide-ranging essay that could easily serve as an introduction to the experiences and value of considering the stories of Pacific Islander Americans. In "Pacific Islanders in the U.S. and their Heritages: Making Visible the Visibly Absent," the authors list the peoples and islands as well as the extraordinary blue-water voyages and discoveries over the centuries. The range of political jurisdictions alone are sufficiently complex as to invite lengthy discussion; how is it, for example, that unincorporated territories (Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) can vote in local elections but not for their commander-in-chief? Why are they allowed

to compete as distinct entities in the Olympics but have no representation in the United Nations or in regional cultural programs? How does their status square with our vaunted claims of democratic rule? The essay does its part in making "visible" the "visibly absent."

AAPI communities were not only here from early years; they were highly diverse from their very beginnings. The workers who created railroads, canneries, farms, ranches, sugar and pineapple plantations, seafood industries, and myriad urban businesses are occasionally recognized in our histories, on markers, and in memorials. However, there were also numbers of Asian immigrants who arrived with money and savvy. They were armed with financial and social capital, ambitious to do more than earn a basic wage. Lane Hirabayashi chronicles some of these entrepreneurial projects on the U.S. continent with a wide-ranging account of ventures, including the owners and operators of early gold mine claims or purveyors of luxury goods or tours. In his essay "Asian American Businesses, 1848 to 2015: Accommodation and Eclectic Innovation," Hirabayashi explains that these innovators extend into more recent times with their own businesses, like the Vietnamese businessman who built a veritable empire based on the chili-based Sriracha sauce and the Hmong from Southeast Asia who created farms in California and urban enterprises in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. A number of Asian Americans became seriously wealthy, including dot.com entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley; others formed family and kinship-related corporations—such as the Patels, not all related, from India who, beginning in the 1950s, created a formidable national network. The Patels now own and operate perhaps two-thirds of the budget hotels and about 40 percent of all hotel and motel rooms in America.

Catherine Ceniza Choy's essay, "New Asian American Communities: Building and Dismantling" notes that both the Korean and Southeast Asian communities developed rapidly in the second half of the 20th century, largely because of the ongoing wars between empires representing communist and capitalist interests. The large Filipino American community, for example, owes much of its size, complexity, and vibrancy to the colonial history of their homeland within the American empire. Her essay focuses on the development of the five largest ethnic groups within the AAPI demographic: Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Korean, and Vietnamese. Japanese Americans are the sixth; until the 1970s, Japanese Americans were the single largest AAPI group, their relative decline evidently a result of Japan's post-WWII economic and political stability. When the 1965 Immigration Act reforms were implemented, they unleashed dramatic increases from the rest of Asia. So, while there are imperial roots in all their legacies, Choy emphasizes the fact that these AAPI communities have their own trajectories within the U.S.

While primarily focusing on the post-1965 influx of AAPI immigrants and refugees, Linda Vo's essay "Asian Immigrants and Refugees: Demographic Transformations in the United States from World War II to the Present" points to the fact that the wars in Southeast Asia were direct results of the clash between imperial and colonial ambitions inherent in American/Western and the Soviet empires. These wars, like previous ones in Korea, China, and Japan, led first to thousands of Asian women entering the U.S. as brides of American military and occupation forces. Subsequently, economic and political migrants arrived sometimes as refugees. Then, increasing numbers of Amerasian infants and children born to American GIs and Asian women were accommodated, belatedly, as well. These children, despised and abandoned in their Asian homelands, were adopted mainly by white families in the U.S. Tens of thousands of Vietnamese found their first temporary homes in four military bases: Fort Chaffee in Arkansas, Camp Pendleton in California, Elgin Air Force Base in Florida, and Fort Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania. These communities constituted entirely new and complex sets of communities in the U.S. From these and a multitude of other remote and inhospitable places scattered across the country, many remigrated to more hospitable areas or warmer climates on the Gulf or west coasts.

RESISTANCE AND ACTIVISM

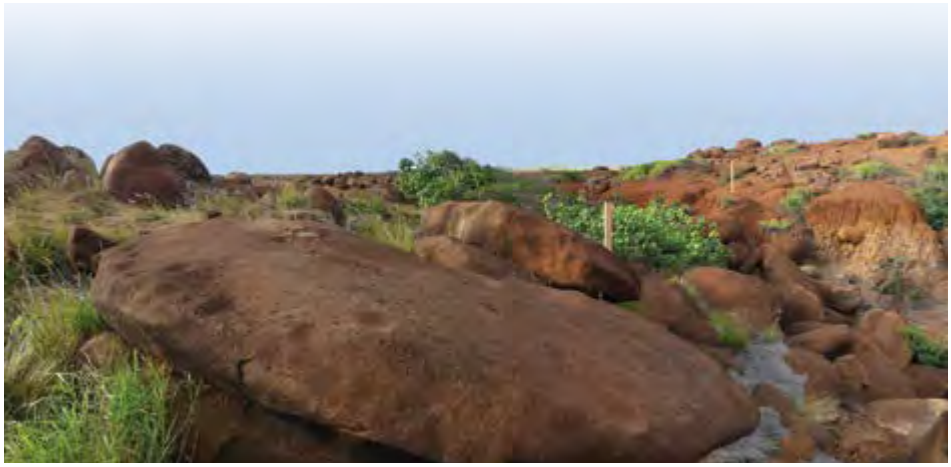
It may appear that every generation of activists sees itself as seriously breaking with historical tradition. But as the following essays demonstrate, certainly for the AAPI populations, resistance and activism were part of the DNA of these communities from their inception.

In "Sites of Resistance to Imperialism," Davianna McGregor uses two contemporary examples from the Pacific, Guam and Hawai'i, to illustrate the long and

involved histories of indigenous resistance to imperial agendas. Pågat is the sacred site of a former village on the northeast coast of Guam, one of the spoils of war acquired by the U.S. after the Spanish-American War of 1898, which also incorporated Cuba and Puerto Rico into the American empire. In 2012, Pågat was targeted as a live-fire training site for 6,000 U.S. marines who were being forced to leave Okinawa, Japan and scheduled for redeployment in Guam. According to McGregor, this military use of Pågat was deemed sacrilegious and provoked a firestorm of protest from indigenous Chamorros. The military backed down and is now considering other sites. Pågat was listed by the National Park Service in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. McGregor also uses the example of Kahoʻolawe, an island used by the U.S. Navy for live fire exercises from 1941 into the 1990s. Military bombardment of the island, sacred to Native Hawaiians, desecrated the land; a sustained movement, begun in the 1970s and led by Native Hawaiians, finally succeeded in 1994 when the U.S. Navy signed title for Kahoʻolawe over to the Hawaiʻi state government. These are but two examples of native resistance to ongoing American imperial designs on indigenous properties and cultures.

A new perspective on Asian American labor in the West can help all of us, Dorothy Fujita-Rony insists in her chapter "Reframe, Recognize, and Retell: Asian Americans and National Historic Sites." She maintains that understanding "what happened to racialized workers through the United States empire also had an impact on U.S. culture as a whole." One example is a lesson for those seeking places to designate as significant historic sites. In the first decades of Asian labor on the west coast, migrant labor, with no fixed homes or neighborhoods, formed immense and vital units deployed to tend and harvest crops and process seafood. We will need, she suggests, considerable wisdom, to imagine actual places that can function to commemorate their pain, their loneliness, their contributions, and their agency. She reminds us as well that, in the imperial competition for land, resources, and labor, the United States was not the only destination point for migrants seeking jobs. For example, fewer than 100,000 Indians left their South Asian country for the U.S., Canada, Australia, Argentina, Panama, and Mexico, while an astounding 32 million of their countrymen and women went to the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, and British and French colonies in the Pacific and Indian oceans. Truly, AAPI history helps us better apprehend the transnational nature of the AAPI experience as well as approaches to global history.

Kim Geron's essay is an overview of AAPI political history as it intersects with mainstream political institutions. Geron notes, in "Asian American and Pacific Islander Political Mobilization and Participation" that few Asian Americans were elected or appointed to local, territorial, state, or national bodies before WWII, even in areas like Hawaiʻi, where AAPI populations far exceeded whites or *haoles*. A large part of the reason was, to be sure, the existence of racist laws preventing the large population of Asian immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens. In Hawaiʻi, the indigenous Kanaka Maoli had always been significant parts of the elected and/or appointed political officials, even as ultimate political power resided in the small elite of white men. Some progress was made after WWII, especially in Hawaiʻi where returning veterans were supported by



Pokaneloa, also known as Loa's, is a collection of petroglyphs and cupules located on the top surface of this 3x4-meter boulder located in the hardpan area on the island of Kahoʻolawe. Studies indicate that the boulder may possess archeoastronomical significance in Hawaiian culture. Photo by Stanton Enomoto.

Students gathered recently in the quad at San Francisco State University to protest budget cuts proposed for the College of Ethnic Studies. Similar protests in 1968 and 1969 led to the introduction of ethnic studies at San Francisco State and other colleges and universities around the country. Photo by Tomo Hirai/*Nichi Bei Weekly*.

a large and organized labor union work force. But the astonishing growth in sheer numbers of AAPIs in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has been accompanied by noticeable increases in federal, state, and local officials in every major AAPI ethnic group.

Daryl Maeda's essay, "Asian American Activism and Civic Participation: Battling for Political Rights and Citizenship, 1917 to the Present," explores the origins and meanings of Asian American and Pacific Islander American activism in the 1960s and 1970s. While he points, appropriately, to influences from Black Power, Brown Power, Native American protests, civil rights advocacy, and the anti-war movements, he also notes the linkages to anti-imperial/anti-colonial struggles roiling much of the globe. These struggles, loosely combined and acknowledged domestically as the "Third World Liberation Front" (TWLF), gave rise to a pan-ethnic, pan-racial, united front confronting colonialism abroad and what some leaders termed "internal colonialism" within the United States. This direct comparison energized large numbers of both old and new left activists. The student strike in 1968 at San Francisco State College (now University) heralded a new era of unity for activist students of color in the U.S. and generated a host of new movements to bring about positive change for AAPI communities. Followed soon after by student strikes at the University of California, Berkeley, UCLA, Columbia, and then across the country, the TWLF movement proved to be emblematic of a generation of social justice activism.

CULTURAL RETENTION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

It is not easy to make a case for preserving a history almost universally absent from our mainstream narratives and, while this would be the case for all the larger Asian American ethnic groups, it would be even more clearly so for Pacific Islanders. In the first essay in this last section, Amy Stillman gives us a panoply of "epochs" with wondrous stories in each.

In "A Sea of Islands: Early Foundations and Mobilities of Pacific Islanders," Amy Stillman takes us on a journey lasting thousands of years and traversing thousands of miles of the Pacific Ocean, reminding us that there were vibrant peoples and cultures existing long

before European and American colonialism appeared on the horizon. We now know that long-range, non-instrument navigational skills developed more than a millennium ago and extended the capacity of blue ocean travel for Pacific Islanders well beyond visible horizons, long before the compass and sextant were invented. In mapping the extensive evidence of pre-colonial travels and cultural exchanges among Pacific Islanders, Stillman provides a convincing argument that the Pacific Ocean, covering about one-third of the entire surface of planet earth, served the Islanders as much as a bridge as it did a barrier. In doing so, she effectively challenges us to take seriously the mapping of both islands and islanders within the vast reaches of the Pacific Ocean. Implicit within this essay is a challenge for us to consider and reconsider the limits of immobile historic sites.

Indigenous people found themselves literally outgunned in the numerous wars and struggles against colonial onslaught and were involved in continuous efforts to protect dwindling resources, including land, people, cultures, and heritages. As Mary Yu Danico points out in her essay "Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Cultural Retention/Assimilation," Asian immigrants and refugees were quickly put to similar tests. Their collective acts included resistance to restrictive laws and policies, exploitative labor practices, racist wartime conditions, and degrading images in the media and popular culture. But they also responded to hostile assimilation forces with wide-ranging claims to maintaining and creating their own languages, education systems, theater, writings, political movements, and media expressions. The sheer range of these acts of resistance to forced assimilation into a mythical American mainstream is astonishing. Collectively, they constitute a notable testament to the resilience of the human spirit.

Moving beyond the initial confrontation and intersections between AAPIs and the American empire, other essays focus on the existence of these communities within the U.S. Not surprisingly, many of the narratives hark back to troubled times when neighborhoods and the nation attempted to remove or eradicate AAPIs as too foreign and too unalterably different to be assimilated into the American body politic. For the millions of Asian migrants seeking better economic conditions away from their homelands, their reception in many countries was unfortunately similar to hostilities faced by compatriots in the U.S. One result is the strikingly similar accomplishments in the field of Chinese diaspora archeology in places like Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. Doug Ross also mentions Japanese American archaeology in passing, noting that much of it deals with an entire cottage industry involving the WWII incarceration of that ethnic group. In his essay "Archeological Research on Asian Americans," Ross notes that much of Chinese American archeology centers on early Chinese mining camps and Chinese laborers on the Central Pacific Railroad. The Central Pacific led from Sacramento, California, up and through the formidable Sierra Madre mountain range and eastward to meet the Union Pacific Railroad at Promontory Summit in Utah, finally connecting both coasts in 1869. An analysis of artifacts sifted from old sites, especially in Nevada, California and other western states, seems to confirm that early Chinese laborers continued traditional cultural lifestyles even as they adopted western foodstuffs, clothing, and other cultural elements.

As if in counterpoint to the archaeological findings for the early Chinese workers, Gail Dubrow has provided a rich overview of the extraordinary legacies of Japanese American architecture and landscape gardening. In "The Architectural Legacy of Japanese America," Dubrow chronicles some of the outstanding ways in which the American built environment began to reflect Japanese cultural influences brought to bear by a wave of enthusiastic embracing of many things Japanese. This "Japonisme" or "Japanism" inspired an entire cottage industry of artistic pandering to an orientalist fantasy. The U.S. was following European elite cultural tastes in this phenomenon but Dubrow reveals a more ominous side: unlike Europe, America had to deal with significant numbers of actual Japanese bodies who were met with real hostility and racism. One consequence was the ability of white architects designing both buildings and landscapes to secure commissions while their Japanese counterparts, usually more proficient, languished without work. One more corrective from Dubrow: even within the Japanese American community, much more credit should be assigned to a multitude of carpenters, contractors, gardeners, nursery owners, Buddhist and Shinto priests and parishioners, and donors, who provided the real skills and expertise to design and build large numbers

Bok Kai Temple. This traditional Chinese temple is located in Marysville, California. Photo by Elaine Jackson-Retondo, 2016

of Japanese gardens and buildings across much of Hawai'i, the west coast, and across some very elegant properties of America's elite.

HOW THIS THEME STUDY CAN HELP HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACTION

This AAPI theme study of 17 essays is intended to inspire all Americans to consider the history of the many Asian American and Pacific Islander groups that contributed to the development of the United States and to the rich diversity of this nation's cultural heritage. Sites related to AAPI heritage have been neglected among many historic preservation initiatives, and this theme study should suggest potential designation as National Historic Landmarks or listing in the National Register of Historic Places. To that end, the Appendix of this collection addresses the potential for National Historic Landmark designation among properties associated with AAPI history.

But there are specific and large areas left relatively untouched by these essays and it may be helpful to provide an editorial view, certainly delimited and suspect, of what needs more attention. Gender and sexuality are rarely mentioned. Fortunately, the availability of the substantial LGBTQ Theme Study comes to the rescue. Moreover, multi-volume Asian American encyclopedias already exist; they complement a rapidly growing store of monographs, magazines, journals, social media resources, websites, documentaries, and blogs filling the growing demand for content and analyses of AAPI issues. In addition to recognition through the NHL and National Register programs, historic houses, museums, national parks, and other places associated with AAPI heritage are sorely needed to provide the general public with easily accessible, readily digested, readily affordable, educational, recreational, and historically responsible, information about this rapidly growing "racial" demographic in America. Providing these resources will help AAPIs better understand their places in American history. This understanding will empower the U.S. to act positively to secure their roles going forward in complex times, when issues of race, class, gender, and religion make increasing demands on the political and moral character and stamina of the entire nation.

Endnotes

1 Noenoe Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 9.

2 For a set of brief, provocative, pieces exploring this field, see Max Page and Marla Miller, eds., *Bending the Future: 50 Ideas for the Next 50 Years of Historic Preservation in the United States* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016). The 50 essays contain a wealth of information and references to the vast literature dealing with this set of burgeoning fields.

3 Studying the evolving relationships between historic sites, monuments, and memorials along with collective memories has long been a serious focus. Potential intersections between this field and the similarly growing area of Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies is long overdue. The essays in this Theme Study will suggest both places and narratives that can produce fruitful results. In the interim, some of the important works on memory and place include the following: David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Alice Yang Murray, *Historical Memories of the Japanese American Internment and the Struggle for Redress*

(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1998); Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995); Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas, 1997).

4 For a survey of critical topics in the rapidly growing field of Asian American history, see, for example, David Yoo and Eiichiro Azuma, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Asian American History* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2016).

5 Wallace Stegner coined the term. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1972 for *Angle of Repose* and the National Book Award in 1977 for *The Spectator Bird*.

6 Lisa Kahaleole Hall, "Navigating Our Own 'Sea of Islands': Remapping a Theoretical Space for Hawaiian Women and Indigenous Feminism," in *Wicazo Sa Review*, Vol. 24, No. 2, Native Feminism (FALL 2009), 23. University of Minnesota Press. URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/40587779.

7 Paul Loether, Chief of the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Program, assumed authority over this project; Alexandra Lord, Branch Chief, directly supervised it until she moved to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Theodora Chang was an Advisor to the Director of NPS, and advanced the project. Barbara Wyatt, NPS historian, was critically important, especially in its final stages. JaMarcus Underwood helped enormously by discovering many of the images we eventually used in this volume. Jon Jarvis, Director of the NPS, pushed us along. But it was Stephanie Toothman who shepherded the project from beginning to end to whom this Theme Study owes most. The Advisory Panel was instrumental in setting initial guidelines for the content, suggesting scholars and reviewers for these essays.

8 Eiichiro Azuma, "Internment and World War II History," in *The Oxford Handbook of Asian American History*, ed. David K. Yoo and Eiichiro Azuma(NY: Oxford University Press, 2016).

9 *Japanese Americans in World War II: A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study*, ed. Barbara Wyatt (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Interior, 2012). The new or revised museums, memorials, and historic sites dealing with the topic have grown at an astonishing rate since her pioneering work.

10 JACS was established by Congress in 2006. "The law authorized up to $38 million for the entire life of the grant program to identify, research, evaluate, interpret, protect, restore, repair, and acquire historic confinement sites in order that present and future generations may learn and gain inspiration from these sites and that these sites will demonstrate the nation's commitment to equal justice under the law." www.nps.gov/jacs/reports.html

11 There are, now, increasing numbers of such useful reference works. See, for example, *Asian American Society: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Mary Danico (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2015); *Asian American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Huping Ling and Allan Austin (NY: Routledge, 2010); and David Yoo and Eiichiro Azuma, op cit.

12 Immigrants and refugees from West Asia, the region usually referred to as the Middle East, is sometimes considered part of this complex group. This region might include Afghanistan and Iran to the east, stretching to Morocco in the west. At times the reference is to the "ethnic" group and Arab Americans or Iranian Americans become the subjects or agents; at other times, the reference is to a religion: Islam can then become the reference point and the fact that the largest Muslim country in the world is Indonesia, clearly within Asia, makes the point. These then, make it clear that, in the U.S., mosques should be apprehended as historical sites in addition to Indian American Hindu "gurdwaras." The fact that Asian Americanists have abandoned the terms, "Orient" and "Oriental" should not obscure the fact that, as Edward Said made clear, "Orientalism" was first systematically applied to the Middle East. The fact that a number of key nations, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, are also in Africa, complicates the issue. See, for an early exploration, Sunaina Maira and Magid Shihade, "Meeting Asian/Arab American Studies: Thinking Race, Empire, and Zionism in the U.S." In *Journal of Asian American Studies,* Volume 9, Number 2, June 2006.

13 The Pew Research Center's 2012 Asian-American survey (updated 2014) is based on telephone interviews conducted by landline and cell phone with a nationally representative sample of 3,511 Asian adults ages 18 and older living in the United States. The survey was conducted in all 50 states, including Alaska and Hawai'i, and the District of Columbia. The survey was designed to include representative subsamples of the six largest Asian groups in the U.S. population: Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese. The survey also included Asians from other Asian subgroups." This report was severely criticized by AAPI scholars who condemned its rosy message of super-achieving, model-minority, communities.

14 See NPS websites for more: www.nps.gov.

15 Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2005).

16 See Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against Chinese Americans* (NY: Random House, 2007).

17 Bronner, Simon, ed. *Lafcadio Hearn's America: Ethnographic Sketches and Editorials* (Louisville, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2002).

18 More directly relevant to the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom is the NHL, Iolani Palace. There is now a lesson plan about the coup and annexation by the U.S. in the 1890s. In the lesson, students have opportunities to investigate American expansionism, how indigenous cultures responded to colonization, and how some historic sites hold great power as sites of contemporary activism and political protest. This is the 161st lesson plan from the NPS. Find out more about *Iolani Palace* at

the Teaching with Historic Places website: *http://nps.gov/subjects/teachingwithhistoricplaces/lesson-plan_iolani-palace.htm*

19 Of course, the United States was but one of several Western powers competing in Asia and the Pacific. Samoa is a good example of societies torn asunder by imperial contestation; where the sun first rises over Guam in the American empire, it finally sets over American Samoa just over the international dateline. Initially divided between the U.S. and Germany, Samoa (formerly Western Samoa) is an independent nation, while American Samoa remains firmly under American control.

20 See, especially, Amy Sueyoshi's essay (Chapter 11): "Breathing Fire: Remembering Asian Pacific American Activism in Queer History" and Will Roscoe's piece (Chapter 9), "Sexual and Gender Diversity in Native America and the Pacific Islands," in *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History,* Megan Springate, ed. (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2016).

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FROM THE CAPE TO CAIRO.

Though the Process Be Costly, The Road of Progress Must Be Cut.