

# Spaces of Mobilization: The Asian American/Pacific Islander Struggle for Social Justice

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**A**SIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS HAVE BEEN POLITICALLY CONSTRUCTED AS AN ALIEN presence or as “forever foreigners” in U.S. culture (Lowe, 1996; Tuan, 2003; Lee, 1999). For millions of Asian and Pacific Islanders who fully identify as Americans, they are reminded repeatedly that one of their core identities is at best questioned or at worst denied (Cheryan and Monin, 2005). This image of Asians and Pacific Islanders as “forever foreigners” or as “sojourners” ideologically positions them as outsiders who do not have a stake in American society and therefore constitute the sources of moral panics and social anxieties that must be subjected to social control and regulation. Simultaneously, Asian and Pacific Islanders in the United States are ideologically constructed as “model minorities” that have been well integrated into mainstream America (Osajima, 1988; Lee, 1996; Omi and Winant, 1994). This ideological construct portrays Asian and Pacific Islander Americans as passive populations that do not experience racial discrimination, violence, and social problems (Vo, 2004). However, Asians and Pacific Islanders have been deeply engaged in the struggle for social justice in America. Historically, Asians and Pacific Islanders have challenged exploitation in the workplace, unjust immigration policies, barriers to U.S. citizenship, discrimination against gays and lesbians, exclusion from labor unions, and discrimination in education and residential segregation (Chan, 1991; McClain, 1994; Omatsu, 1994; Takaki, 1989; Wong, 1994; Zia, 2000; Espiritu, 1992; Vo, 2004). Asians and Pacific Islanders have organized against domestic violence (Lin and Tan, 1994; Abraham, 2000; Rudrappa, 2004; Supriya, 2002). They have also formed social movements and coalitions with other groups in the struggle for immigration rights, affirmative action, and social justice (Scharlin and Villanueva, 1992; Kim, 2004; Yoshikawa, 1994; Saito, 1998; Geron et al., 2001; Zia, 2000; Pulido, 2006). Despite their long history of fighting for social justice, the image of Asians as model minorities renders this history

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invisible (Aguilar-San Juan, 1994; Wei, 1993). This special issue of *Social Justice* will contribute to the emerging literature on Asian and Pacific Islander community formation and the struggle for social justice in the United States.

### **International Spaces of the Asian and Pacific Islander American Struggle for Social Justice**

The experiences of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States have been shaped by the larger global context, including the integration of Asia into the modern world-system, imperialist competition between the various global powers, colonialism, and wars (Bascara, 2006; Choy, 2005; Palumbo-Liu, 1999; Tyner, 2006). The transnational space for the circulation of capital, the formation of labor migration, and the commodification of migrant labor structure the contours of Asian-American community and identity formation. The relatively weak position of China in the modern world-system during the 19th century meant that Chinese immigrants were vulnerable to physical attacks, as well as economic and political exclusion in the United States. The 1882 Exclusion Act and the 61-year-long exclusion resulted in forced segregation, limited occupation choices, and an extreme sex-ratio imbalance (Li, 2007). Imperialism led to the incursion into and colonization of the Philippines, Hawaii, India, Southeast Asia, etc. The Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, the Cold War, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War affected the perception and treatment of Asians and Pacific Islanders by the majority population of the United States. During World War II, when China and the United States were allies, Chinese Americans became a symbol of friendship between the two countries; simultaneously, however, 120,000 Japanese Americans were incarcerated in internment camps. The Cold War led to a crackdown on labor organizers among Filipino farm workers and Chinese Americans (de Vera, 1994; Zhao, 2002). The Korean and Vietnam Wars affected how Asians were perceived in the United States (Yoshimura, 1989). The economic rivalry between Japan and the United States in the 1980s created the social conditions in which Vincent Chin, a Chinese American, was murdered in Detroit because his murderers thought he was Japanese. September 11 generated hate crimes and murders committed against South Asians and Muslims (National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, 2001; The Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force, 2001/2002; Naber, 2002; Narasaki and Han, 2004). Asian-American workers were disproportionately affected by September 11 because they constituted a significant sector of service workers and the strata of low-wage workers (Matsuda, 2002; Das Gupta, 2004). Since September 11, racial profiling has expanded to target South Asians. The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have aggressively used the powers under the Patriot Act to detain Pakistani immigrants indefinitely (Narasaki and Han, 2004).

The international context also shapes the political opportunities and the particular collective action frames for mobilization (Meyer, 2003). By altering political and

economic conditions, as well as the perceptions of those conditions, changes in the international context can change the opportunities for activists within a country (*Ibid.*). In the 1960s, the rise of nationalist, anti-imperialist, other world-systemic movements had an impact on Third World liberation movements in the United States (Umemoto, 1989; Ho, 2000). Thus, the Black Liberation struggle, the Chicano Movement, the Young Lords, CASA, the Native American movement, the anti-imperialist national liberation struggles and revolutions in the Third World, socialist China, and the movement against the Vietnam War inspired the Asian-American movement in the 1960s and 1970s (Ho et al., 2000; Louie, 2001; Omatsu, 1994). Asian-American activists studied the works of revolutionary intellectuals such as Frantz Fanon, Amílcar Cabral, Mao Zedong, Che Guevara, and Vladimir Lenin (Umemoto, 1989; Nakano, 1989; Nishida, 1989). Revolutionary organizations such as the Red Guard Party, I Wor Kuen, Wei Min She, and other collectives connected the issues of racism to imperialism by linking opposition to the war in Vietnam and Southeast Asia with the struggle for liberation and against racism/sexism in the United States (Ho, 2000). The Bay Area Asian Coalition Against the War (BAACAW) was formed in 1972 to build an Asian presence in the anti-war movement in the San Francisco Bay Area (Geron, 2003: 172).

The global women's movement created the political opportunities for Third World and white women to organize against an economic and political system that gave rise to racism and sexism (Quon, 2001). In the 1970s, the battered women's movement in the United States and United Kingdom initiated a movement that transformed the meaning of marital violence from a private, individual problem into an important social problem (Abraham, 2000). From the late 1970s into the early 1980s, Third World feminist groups began to address the "woman question" in their own countries. In the 1980s, South Asian women's organizations emerged in the United States to take on the problem of violence against women in the South Asian community (Abraham, 2000; Supriya, 2002). Asian and Pacific Islander American feminists have organized around transnational issues, such as the comfort women of World War II (Thoma, 2004).

By the early 1970s, several Filipino organizations in the United States opposed U.S. imperialism in the Philippines, the exploitative practices of transnational corporations, military violence, the concentration of landownership in the hands of a few, and government corruption (Lindio-McGovern, 1999; Choy, 2005). The immigrant activists who formed these organizations had developed a critical consciousness gained through their participation in movement organizations that were linked to the national liberation movement in the Philippines (Lindio-McGovern, 1999: 282). Their emigration to the United States enabled them to critique the dynamics of capitalism and imperialism in the United States (*Ibid.*). These Filipino immigrant activists saw the importance of organizing themselves to further develop their political consciousness and activist identities (*Ibid.*: 283). Activist organizations that were formed in the United States included the *Kalayaan*, or the Freedom Col-

lective, the Support Committee for a Democratic Philippines in New York, and the *Samahan ng Makabayang Pilipino* (SAMAPI—Association of Nationalist Filipinos in Chicago) (Choy, 2005: 294). In 1972, when Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in the Philippines, Filipino activists in the United States organized against it and as racialized minorities in the United States (*Ibid.*: 300).

The aftermath of September 11 expanded the possibilities for coalitions among activists such as South Asians, Filipinos, and Arabs and Arab Americans who were targeted by September 11-related hate crimes, biases, and government policies (Naber, 2002). Immigrant-rights activists have exposed how the Arab, South Asian, Filipino(a), and other immigrant communities have experienced the impact of the “war on terrorism” (*Ibid.*: 228).

### **Community and Neighborhoods: Spaces of Mobilization**

A socio-spatial analysis of social movements demonstrates the connections between everyday life and broader social, political, and economic processes, as well as how these relationships shape collective action (Martin and Miller, 2003). Space constitutes and structures the processes that produce race, class, and gender identities (*Ibid.*: 144; see Fujino in this issue). Space affects, and is affected by, social action (Massey, 1994; Pulido, 2006). When activists talk about creating “safe spaces” or “hidden arbors” where oppressed people could safely voice their complaints and protests, they are highlighting the importance of the socio-spatial dimensions of collective action (Scott, 1985; Johnston and Lio, 1998: 457). Thus, space constitutes the social-structural contours of domination and resistance (Pulido, 2006). Through place-specific histories of social relations, struggles, and events, landscapes develop meanings that shape a variety of place-specific discourses (Martin and Miller, 2003).

Asian Americans were clustered in particular neighborhoods because of housing discrimination and segregation. Japanese-American neighborhoods were located in the interstices of nonwhite spaces (Pulido, 2006: 54). Therefore, living near other people of color facilitated connections and identification with other oppressed groups (*Ibid.*: 80; Yip, 2000; Aoki, 2000). Thus, the various liberation movements had the strongest external influence on the Asian-American movement. Spaces on college campuses provided the institutional basis for the formation of a pan-Asian ethnic identity and facilitated connections with other student movements (Espiritu, 1992; Kibria, 2002). In 1968, activists founded the Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA) at the University of California, Berkeley, the first pan-Asian political organizations (Espiritu, 1992: 34). Here the term “Asian American” was first used to mobilize people of varying Asian descent in a struggle against racial oppression, becoming active agents in the making of history (*Ibid.*). College and university organizations such as the AAPA, the network of Asian and Pacific Islander student organizations such as the Asian/Pacific Islander Student Union (APSU) and the East Coast Asian Student Union (ECASU), as well as Asian

American Studies programs created the space for organizing, educational events, and communication between organizations and networks (Espiritu, 1992; Geron, 2002; Pulido, 2006; Umemoto, 1989). In 1969, UCLA students founded the Asian-American newspaper, *Gidra*, which served as a forum for exchanging ideas and provided news and analysis of the Asian-American movement and communities (Pulido, 2006: 208). The San Francisco State College strike (1968–1969), led by the Third World Liberation Front, allowed Asian-American students, Third World students, and progressive white students to form a coalition that demanded ethnic studies, open admissions, and a redefinition of education that would serve the needs of their communities (Umemoto, 1989; Omatsu, 1994).

Estella Habal (2000), a Filipina revolutionary who co-founded Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA) in Los Angeles, was introduced to Marxist, revolutionary politics by Chicano students in the United Mexican American Students (UMAS) at Long Beach State College. The Civil Rights and Black Power movements had a profound political effect on Asian and Pacific Islander activists. Yuri Kochiyama was active in the Congress of Racial Equality and the Organization for Afro-American Unity (Fujino, 2005). Richard Aoki was a field marshal in the Black Panther Party (Pulido, 2006). Grace Lee Boggs, who had worked closely with C.L.R. James and Raya Dunayevskaya in the 1940s and 1950s, was deeply involved with the Black Power movements in Detroit during the 1960s (Boggs, 1998; 2001/2002).

Asian-American activists in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Stockton, Seattle, New York, and Honolulu created “Serve the People and Promote Revolution” organizations modeled after the mass organizing of the Black Panthers and the Young Lords (Ho, 2000; Omatsu, 1994). “Serve the people” campaigns sought to do so by addressing their basic needs while promoting revolutionary education (Ho, 2000: 6). During the urban redevelopment movement of the 1960s, the low-cost residential International Hotel was targeted for demolition to build high-cost condominiums, parking garages, and boutique stores. From 1968 to 1977, thousands of activists protested the eviction of elderly tenants—predominantly Filipino *manongs* (this term initially conveyed respect for an elder male, but later referred to the early wave of Filipino laborers who came to the United States)—from the International Hotel in San Francisco. A coalition of Asian-American activists, affordable housing advocates, as well as gay, lesbian, and women activists was formed to fight for the I-Hotel (Geron, 2003: 173). For Asian Americans, the I-Hotel symbolized the destruction of their historic communities to pave the way for the expansion of international capital (*Ibid.*). The building was transformed into a thriving mecca for activist youths, grass-roots community organizations, and arts and cultural groups such as the Asian American Writer’s Workshop (Omatsu, 1994; Geron, 2003; Habal, 2000; Kordziel, 2001). Posters for the movement declared: “Fight for the International Hotel: decent low-income housing is everybody’s right” (in Geron, 2003: 173–174). The I-Hotel tenants were forcibly evicted in August 1977 and the building was bulldozed in 1979.

Participation in pan-Asian student organizations led to the creation of various community-based organizations (Geron, 2003; Omatsu, 1994; Wei, 1993). Many Asian youth became involved in community service to deal with the various social problems in their areas. In Los Angeles, drug abuse, gang participation, and suicide reached crisis proportions among Japanese-American youths (Pulido, 2006). Asian-American youths addressed these problems by forming organizations such as the Yellow Brotherhood, Asian American Hardcore, and Japanese American Community Services–Asian Involvement (JACS–AI) (see Fu in this issue; Pulido, 2006; Quon, 2001; Tasaki, 2001). In San Diego, Beverly Yip (once a student activist at the University of California, Berkeley), along with students in the master’s program at San Diego State University’s School of Social Work and other community leaders, formed the Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC) to provide social services to the various Asian and Pacific Islander communities in San Diego (Vo, 2004). Thus, Asians and Pacific Islanders formed pan-Asian organizations to create a supportive community within which to strategize about collective issues (Okamoto, 2006: 21).

### **Asian/Pacific Islander American Labor Movement**

Asian Americans have organized to fight for social justice for workers in their communities. They have organized worker cooperatives, mobilized community support, and led worker struggles (Wong, 1994; 2000). In 1903, Japanese–American farm workers joined Mexican workers to launch a strike and form a multiracial union of farm workers in Oxnard, California (Wong, 1994). In the 1920s, Japanese and Filipino workers struck in Hawaii and brought the plantation operations to a halt (Takaki, 1989). In the 1930s, Japanese and Chinese Americans helped to establish councils of the unemployed and actively participated in the 1934 general strike (Wong, 1994: 337). From the 1930s through the 1960s, the Filipino Labor Union played a key role in organizing farm workers in California’s central valley (Wong, 1994; Scharlin and Villanueva, 1992). Veteran Filipino organizers led the Delano grape strike in the 1960s and worked with Mexican Americans to form the United Farm Workers Union in 1965 (*Ibid.*). The International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union began organizing Chinese workers in the 1950s (Bao, 2003: 290). However, the union was indifferent to the interests of its Chinese workers, such as the need for childcare. In September 1977, the predominantly Chinese Local 23–25 of the ILGWU campaigned for daycare centers in New York City. The garment workers had petitioned the union and engaged in a public campaign by working closely with the community press (*Ibid.*: 293). In 1983, the Chinatown daycare center for the children of women garment workers opened. In 1993, a second union-involved daycare center was established in the center of Chinatown (*Ibid.*: 296). In 1991, immigrant Korean and Chinese waitresses and waiters, along with Latinos, formed a union to fight against the unfair labor practices of Shinwa Restaurant, a pricey Japanese eatery located on New York City’s Fifth Avenue (Cho, 1994).

In 1992, the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO, was formed as a national organization to work with Asian Pacific American workers, many of them immigrants, to build the labor movement and address exploitative conditions in the garment, electronics, hotel and restaurant, food processing, and healthcare industries (see Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance at [www.apala@apalanet.org](http://www.apala@apalanet.org)). Other worker centers have formed to organize Asian Pacific Islander workers to fight the exploitation of workers and abuse within Asian communities (Wong, 2000). The Asian Immigrant Women's Association (AIWA) in Oakland, California, and the Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates (KIWA) in Los Angeles were established with little support from labor unions, having relied on community-based fundraising and foundations for funding (*Ibid.*: 97).

In 1995, the public was horrified by news accounts about a sweatshop in El Monte, California, in which 72 Thai garment workers had been held in slavery for up to 17 years. The workers labored over 18 hours a day in a compound where armed guards imposed discipline. Sweatshop Watch—a coalition of organizations, attorneys, and community activists—mobilized to provide social and legal services to the Thai workers when the INS detained them. Member organizations include the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles, Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates, the Thai Community Development Center, UNITE, Asian Immigrant Women Advocates, the Asian Law Caucus, among others.

### Queer Spaces for Asian/Pacific Islanders

In October 1979, the First National Third World Gay and Lesbian Conference in Washington, D.C., and the First National March for Gay and Lesbian Rights gave birth to an Asian gay and lesbian movement (Tsang, 2000; Ordoná, 2003). In the 1960s and early 1970s, sexism, misogyny, and homophobia were unchallenged in the cultural nationalist movements (*Ibid.*). Lesbian, queer, transgender, and bisexual Asians and Pacific Islanders felt invisible and marginalized in the white gay community, as well as in their own Asian/Pacific Islander communities (Ordoná, 2003; Coloma, 2004; Park, 2004; Zia, 2000). Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer Asians and Pacific Islanders had to create “safe spaces” within which they would be able to build political and cultural identities that facilitated the integration of their queer, colored, and gendered selves (Ordoná, 2003; Coloma, 2004; Leong, 1996; Thompson, 2004; Wat, 2002). For instance, Filipina lesbians formed Kilawin Kolektibo, a sociopolitical collective based in New York City that aims to create a cultural space for Filipina lesbians (Lipat et al., 2005). Safe spaces such as these were to enable them to struggle against racism, sexism, and homophobia issuing from society, their communities, and their families (Ordoná, 2003: 330). Asian and Pacific Islander gay and lesbian organizations such as the Asian Lesbians of the East Coast (ALOE) and the Gay Asian and Pacific Islander Men of New York (GAPIMNY) organized to demonstrate against the use of *Miss*

*Saigon* by two major lesbian and gay community institutions as part of their annual fundraiser (Cho, 1994). These safe spaces also allow activists to form networks and mobilize against hate crimes, such as the vicious beating of Loc Minh Truong by gay-bashing youths in Laguna Beach, California, in 1994.

### **Asian-American Feminist Spaces**

The Asian/Pacific Islander American women's movement has been one of the most dynamic parts of the broader movement (Wei, 1993: 72). Asian and Pacific American women have fought against the sexism, racism, and homophobia in their own communities, families, and the society at large. Sexist and sexual oppression existed even in the most revolutionary and progressive Asian-American organizations. Asian-American women were often restricted to subordinate tasks such as making coffee, typing, and answering phones, and their worth was only in producing new revolutionaries (Espiritu, 1992). Asian/Pacific Islander women who achieved leadership positions were called "bossy" or "unfeminine" (*Ibid.*). When Asian/Pacific Islander feminists critiqued the sexist and homophobic aspects of Asian-American cultural nationalism, they were branded as disloyal (Thoma, 2004). Simultaneously, Asian/Pacific Islander feminists felt alienated from and exploited by mainstream, middle-class, white feminist organizations. Asian/Pacific Islander and other Third World feminists began to form their own organizations to deal with their experiences of "triple oppression"—linking their gender to their race and class (Espiritu, 1992: 48). Asian and Pacific Islander women worked within the community and within Marxist-Leninist organizations to create feminist spaces. In 1971, Asian American women in Los Angeles founded Asian Sisters to address the drug problems of young Asian-American women (see Fu's article in this issue). Other organizations of Asian women include Asian Women United in San Francisco, Asian Sisters in Boston, and the New York Asian Women's center (Shah, 1994). Asian and Pacific Islander women were also engaged in transnational feminist politics, organizing around issues such as the social conditions of Asian women in China, Vietnam, and South Asia, as well as the comfort women of World War II (Thoma, 2004; Choy, 2005; Khandelwal, 2003).

### **Asian/Pacific Islanders as Model Minorities: The Depoliticization of Asian/Pacific Islander Identity**

During the post-civil rights era, Asians and Pacific Islanders have been the harshest opponents of affirmative action and have reified the model minority myth (Omatsu, 1994; Wong et al., 1998; Kim, 2004). We have taught countless Asian and Pacific Islander American students who have embraced the model minority myth and castigated other people of color for not being able to achieve the American Dream. Asian-American conservatives such as Susan Au Allen have argued that, "mainstream society has accepted Asian Americans..." (in Kim, 2004: 24). The

racial identity of Asian Americans had become depoliticized and detached from the political beliefs that were originally intertwined with it (*Ibid.*: 22). Thus, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are proud of being Asian Americans, but denounce the Asian-American movement of the 1960s and 1970s (Omatsu, 1994: 43). Rather than having a social and political meaning, Asian-American identity has become a depoliticized cultural and individual identity (Kim, 2004: 22). Asians and Pacific Islander Americans are roughly two-thirds foreign born and occupy diverse class positions (Kim, 2004). Thus, many Asian Americans do not understand their debt to the Black Power movement. Also, many Asians and Pacific Islanders came of age during the Reagan-Bush era of conservatism, class and racial polarization, consumerism, and the emphasis on individual advancement (Omatsu, 1994: 43). Given disparate class positions, resources, and experiences, it becomes difficult to articulate a unified political pan-Asian identity to mobilize progressive collective action for social justice.

Despite the hegemony of the model minority myth, Asians and Pacific Islanders do resist and have organized to fight for social justice in the United States. They have struggled for redress and reparations for the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, against environmental racism (Sze, 2004), hate-crimes and anti-Asian violence (Kurashige, 2000), the perpetuation of stereotypes in the media/popular culture (Media Action Networks for Asian Americans), police profiling of Southeast Asian youths, as well as for workers' rights, affirmative action, immigrant and refugees rights (Shah, 1994; Kiang, 1994), and Asian American Studies.

### **About This Volume**

In this introductory essay, we have sought to provide an overview of the struggle for social justice in the United States by Asian and Pacific Islanders. The articles in this volume explore the factors shaping oppositional consciousness and the possibility for collective action in efforts to achieve social justice.

The first section of this issue, "People, Places, and Space," examines the socio-spatial dimensions of collective action. Michael Liu and Kim Geron focus on Asian-American activism in urban communities—particularly traditional Asian ethnic enclaves—around land use, affordable housing, as well as labor and community preservation. They explore "the historic intersection and evolution of enclaves and social justice organizing, the roles that community activists exhibited in ethnic enclave-based struggles, the contemporary state of enclave activism, and the prospects for continuing activism."

Diane Fujino's article looks at the development of oppositional consciousness and activism in pre-Movement Japanese-American activists. It also examines the pivotal role of place, space, race, and historic moment in the reemergence of Japanese-American radicalism in the early to mid-1960s. Geographic proximity to Black communities and social and organizational connections with the Black

Liberation Movement inspired the politicization and radicalization of Japanese Americans in the pre-Movement period. This was more important than any genealogical linkage to the Japanese immigrant Left, primarily because the latter linkage was severed through state repression and internal contradictions within the Left. The significance of racial and geographic segregation is discussed in terms of how it spawned a culture of opposition inside the wartime concentration camps and awakened a racial and social consciousness.

May Fu's article examines the crucial role organizing around the effects of drug abuse played in the development of the Asian-American movement in Los Angeles. Her article details the grass-roots political work of third-generation youth (*Sanseis*), who confronted the drug epidemic by launching an anti-drug offensive that addressed the immediate and practical needs of their community. It traces how they established treatment and counseling opportunities for young drug users and their parents, created supportive networks that linked communities to healthcare professionals, and identified the broader social conditions that made drug abuse such an attractive option for so many youth. With networks that bridged ethnic, racial, generational, and neighborhood divisions, organizers developed "serve the people" campaigns and fostered a transformative praxis that linked self-help to community self-determination.

In the next section, Bindi Shah's article demonstrates how the participation of second-generation teenage Laotian girls in a leadership development and community organizing program established by the Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) in Northern California helped them challenge their portrayal as a model minority, as refugees and perpetual foreigners, as "problems," and as being at-risk of becoming single mothers. The author discusses the involvement of young women in a campaign to improve academic counseling services in their high school. She analyzes the strategies and practices that arise from such struggles for social justice, and documents the generation of new social capital, networks, trust, information channels, and norms, which encourage and facilitate greater community involvement in collectively solving the social problems young Laotians face. In so doing, she makes visible the community activism of young Asian Pacific American women, but also argues that by participating in an environmental justice organization, which links grass-roots activism concerning environmental protection to issues of economic development, racial and social equality, and community empowerment, they demonstrate a desire to gain a sense of citizenship from below, rather than that which is conferred by the state.

Etsuko Maruoka's article explores the forms of political activism among Muslim women of South Asian descent in the post-September 11 era. An ethnographic study of two religious student associations in New York illustrates a rising trend of "identity movements" centering on their religious dress code of veiling. Women's narratives presented here show the ways in which socially persecuted young women after September 11 use their practice of wearing a headscarf (or *hijab*) as a major

political tool in fighting anti-Islamic sentiment in the local and global contexts. The findings signify two theoretical views related South Asian women's activism: (1) the cultural "difference" and "disadvantage" that Asian women bear could be also seen as a source of group mobility, strength, and resiliency for their political activism; and (2) women's religious identity might play an increasingly significant role in boundary formation associated with South Asian women as social and political attention toward Muslims and the Islamic faith increases in the years to come.

Meera Deo et al.'s article analyzes the racial ideologies surrounding Asian/Pacific Islander Americans (APIAs) in prime-time television, the most widely consumed media in popular culture. The authors show empirically how APIAs are marginalized and stereotyped in prime-time television through particular frames. They also examine how the Asian-American movement has fought against negative portrayals of Asians and Pacific Islanders in popular culture.

Jinah Kim's contribution explores the contradictory and paradoxical claims of the multiculturalist discourse on Los Angeles in racially differentiating the Asian and Latino immigrant populations from one another and from fully enfranchised citizens. Demographic and economic changes in Los Angeles were accompanied by representations of Los Angeles as a uniquely American space during the 1980s and 1990s. Kim argues that this was emblematic of the wealth, progress, and inclusion that were possible in the U.S., but also of the space of racialized conflict and a dystopia of Third World encroachment.

Drawing from the immigration narratives retold by children of immigrants, Lisa Sun-Hee Park argues that the model minority myth plays an ongoing role in perpetuating the foreigner status of Asian Americans, while limiting the avenues for progressive social change among the second generation. The familiar refrain, "We are a nation of immigrants," obscures the underlying reality of life in the United States and instead institutes a disciplinary mythology of the model minority, which promotes a national ideology of meritocracy and equality. As an ideological construction, however, the notion of a model minority affords differential inclusion to minorities that "behave" and stay in their designated social space. Thus, the model minority myth reinforces established inequities and places second-generation Asian Americans within a precarious, defensive dilemma in which they must constantly prove their worth as "real" Americans regardless of their legal citizenship status.

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