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NEWSLETTER ON ASIAN AND ASIAN-AMERICAN PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHY

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AND OTHER BODIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RACE

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Craig K. Ihara & David Haekwon Kim, Co-Editors Spring 2003

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ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY: OTHER BORDERS AND OTHER BODIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RACE

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

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This edition of the APA Newsletter contains five essays on *Asian American* philosophy. It is the first such compilation in the APA's history. This may seem odd given how much Asian philosophy has been done under the auspices of the APA and how many Asian American students attend American universities. But Asian philosophy and Asian American philosophy are not the same, as will become clear in the essays that follow. And, yes, it is odd and a good deal worrisome that almost no Asian Americans seek to make philosophy a vocation, especially when they have begun to steadily join the ranks of other theoretical disciplines. But as the essays that follow will indicate, this subfield of philosophy examines all kinds of puzzles and problems, many of them of great political importance and many precisely the sort that will pique the interest of socially engaged students. Perhaps the emergence of this subfield will finally let the horse go before the cart, and future students, Asian American or not, will take our reflections here in unforeseen directions.

Two short compelling pieces introduce this edition of the newsletter. The first, we are honored and pleased to note, was written by one of the leading historians of Asian America, Gary Okihiro. He advances a riveting comparison of the situation of Asian Americans after Pearl Harbor and now after 9/11. A distinctive feature of his analysis is concern with Asian American agency, particularly in the way that Asian American democratic struggles at the margins of society have facilitated the realization of democratic values professed at the privileged center of the body politic. The second essay is a haunting and existentially probing philosophical memoir of the havoc wrought by American empire. Ronald Sundstrom offers an autobiographical meditation on his childhood in the Olongapo district of the Philippines. Together, these two essays powerfully highlight the on-going relevance of Asian American philosophical concerns.

The third essay offers a pivot point at which the reader can consider with the author, Gary Mar, "what is the relevance of Asian American studies to philosophy in the first place?"

Mar concludes with three suggestions. Asian American philosophy can help us understand: 1) the orientalism underlying much of the history of Western philosophy, 2) the nature of race relations beyond the classic black-white dialogue, and 3) the contributions of Asian Americans to American democracy. In various respects, we can read the other essays of this special edition as advancing philosophical knowledge in precisely these ways.

It is perhaps fitting that Mar should be the first to formally broach this issue because it was through his advocacy that the APA decided to open its doors to issues of concern to Asian American philosophers and philosophies – hence the unusually long title of the committee that sponsors this portion of the newsletter. And through this expansion of the committee's mission, a further consequence of Mar's advocacy has been the space opened for this special edition on Asian American philosophy.

The fourth essay, by David H. Kim, reconceives the study of America and Asian America in terms of an America enlarged through an imperialist array of orientalist practices. A great deal of work in ethical and political philosophy relies on general sociohistorical portraits. But such work has yet to undergo the reconstruction involved in a serious engagement with American orientalism, a phenomenon constitutive of American modernity. As well, other critiques of standard sociohistorical portraits require integration with each other and with the sort of anti-orientalist concerns raised by Kim. The essay concludes with various suggestions for a more complete reconstruction of philosophical narratives.

The final two essays both concern the role of the body in Asian American identity. Emily Lee advances a framework developed by Merleau-Ponty by which to understand the creative arena of perception out of which bodies are endowed with a racial and gendered meaning and in particular embodied meanings of being an Asian American woman. After a careful mining of theoretical resources in phenomenology and feminism, Lee offers an intriguing account of the political depth of ordinary and seemingly innocuous practices of racial-gendered perception. It draws attention to how Asian American bodily meanings permeate our culture and, therefore, how a full understanding of our culture requires the sort of analysis offered by Asian American philosophy.

The last essay, by Tommy Lott, develops a position on an ornery problem in Asian American politics, namely the peculiar interplay of phenotypical and political criteria in forming a racial basis for panethnic Asian identity. How, after all, can Asian American identity accommodate inclusion of Tiger Woods, an Asian Indian American, and the more "classical"

Chinese or Japanese American? Lott reveals the nature of the problem for what it is and brings a great deal of clarity to the concepts involved. He concludes with some compelling considerations on how politically reconstructive projects have diverged from racialized identification processes in the wider culture. In this sense, Lott's essay is as much prospective as it is diagnostic.

ARTICLES

Safeguarding Democracy: Asian Americans and War

Gary Y. Okihiro
Columbia University

It is a commonplace that during times of war, national crises, all Americans are drawn together. "United we stand" is the ubiquitous motto, if not mandate. In the instance of 9/11, solidarity extended to New Yorkers – "we are all New Yorkers" was the cry across the country, and to U.S. allies – "we are all Americans" were the words of the British prime minister. In this fight against those who fear freedom and hate democracy, the war rhetoric goes, there are no Republican or Democrat, white, black, Latino, or Asian, man or woman, young or old, Christian, Jew, or Muslim. We are all Americans.

While community might be achieved for many Americans, the truth is that during war, during national crises, intolerance increases because unanimity is required. As put by Mr. Bush, either you're with us or against us. And some six months after 9/11, when Senate majority leader Tom Daschle questioned Mr. Bush's plan to wage war around the world indefinitely, Republican leader Trent Lott rebuked him, saying "How dare Senator Daschle criticize President Bush while we are fighting our war on terrorism?"

The definition of loyalty, of patriotism narrows. Its prescription, derived from the state, finds enforcement through ordinary citizens who police dress, behavior, speech, and even thoughts. The designation of community members become sharper, between "us" and "them" or again in Mr. Bush's words, "evildoers" and, I suppose, the "righteous ones." We identify "ourselves" against those whom we select as "not us" or our "other," and accordingly social cleavages that predated the crisis or war, notably around identity formations, can easily widen.

Thus, in the days following 9/11, the nation rallied around the victims and the flag as if one, but also members of the community erected and patrolled the borders that excluded those deemed not "us." Thousands of Arab and West, Central, and South Asian Americans reported instances of racial harassment and intimidation, including threatening gestures and speech, shootings, and the vandalizing of homes, businesses, and mosques. A Hindu temple was burned to the ground in Canada, and a white man drove his car into a mosque in Ohio. Whites attacked an Asian Indian and his white friend in San Francisco; Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh, was killed in Mesa, Arizona in a hate crime, and Waqar Hasan, a Pakistani, was killed in Dallas. As two men beat Sikh American Surinder Singh Sidhu with metal poles in his Los Angeles store, they reportedly exulted, "We'll kill bin Laden today." Nervous crews and passengers removed dozens of Muslims and Sikhs

and Arabs and West, Central, and South Asians from flights, and dozens of students left colleges and universities. Hundreds of "suspects," including immigrants generally, were summarily arrested, questioned, and detained.

Nationally, between September 11 and December 11, 2001, there were 243 reports of bias crimes committed against Asian Americans, according to a study released by the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium. New York and California led the way, each with forty-two incidents. Normally, hate crimes against Asian Americans run between 400 to 500 a year. And bias against Muslims and Sikhs and Arab and Asian Americans continue, albeit in different guises like discrimination in the workplace or in housing and educational settings. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has received so many allegations of discrimination against Muslim and Sikh and Arab, West, Central, and South Asian Americans that it has created a special category called "Code Z" to track these complaints, and the Council on American-Islamic Relations has received more than 1,700 reports of bias in the workplace and schools, airport profiling, and physical assaults.

Although very different in historical circumstances, 9/11 has been likened, by some commentators, to Pearl Harbor in that both attacks were from the air, sudden and swift, seemingly unprovoked, and waged by militant "fanatics" against unsuspecting civilians and an unprepared nation. America, like a chaste woman, lost her "innocence" on those days of infamy, the story goes. While the nation slumbered, its enemies worked their enmity and hatred.

And like the days following December 7, 1941, there were prominent calls for tolerance and for distinguishing the loyal from disloyal, friend from enemy, while at the same time, there were strident calls for retaliation and for the extrication of the enemy from within our midst. It was within that immediate and historical context that acts of intolerance — the harassment, vandalizing, beatings, murders, and detentions took place, of Japanese Americans in 1941 and 1942 and of Arab and West, Central, and South Asian Americans sixty years later.

Long-standing in American history, a suspicion and fear of immigrants, especially those of a darker hue, was pervasive and indiscriminate, and in the days following 9/11 both documented and undocumented immigrants were caught up in sweeps, interrogated, and confined. National defense secrets, their identities remain confidential. These, the nation's leaders claimed, posed potential dangers. The enemy lurks among us, a shadowy presence, an invisible yet palpable specter. The enemy is everywhere and nowhere. He could be your friend, your neighbor. Be prepared (a lesson of Pearl Harbor). They could strike at any moment, perhaps next week, we are told repeatedly by a man who has been put in charge of the nation's security and is accountable to no one but the president.

The fifth column operates within "our" borders, taking advantage of "our" democracy, "our" open society. "They" abuse and mock "our" way of life, and are hence even more insidious. Because of that uncommon enemy and war, we must deploy uncommon means for our "homeland defense." Thus secrecy pervades the conduct of government and the war, and concentration of powers in the executive branch is justified, indeed elevated, to a high and noble cause immune from reproach or even scrutiny. And we indulge a greater tolerance for intolerance, and willingly trade our civil liberties, especially of those who are not "us," for our perceived personal safety.

A CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll taken a few days after 9/11 showed that 58 percent of Americans backed intensive security checks for Arabs, including those who were U.S. citizens, 49 percent favored special identification cards for “such people,” and 32 percent supported “special surveillance” for them. And as a great civil libertarian friend of mine admitted quietly to me a few days after 9/11, the public safety eclipsed civil liberties in that moment of crises. In response, I thought to myself sadly, he, a white man, so easily surrendered what he thought to be someone else’s civil rights for his peace of mind. I could understand, but can never accept my dear friend’s bargain.

Today, encouragingly, the press has taken an increasingly critical stance on the Bush administration’s “war on terrorism” and a USA Today/CNN/Gallup Poll conducted in September 2002 showed that 62 percent of those surveyed said government efforts to thwart terrorism should not violate basic civil liberties, even as the Attorney General has pursued and was granted by the courts in November 2002 expanded use of wiretaps and email monitoring, and the administration has begun to investigate Iraqis and Iraqi Americans in preparation for its war on Iraq.

“We, the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union,” establish military tribunals, enabled by executive fiat, that escape the protection of the Constitution, and through a U.S.A. Patriot Act (2001), ordain increased surveillance and expand the ability of government to conduct secret searches, give the attorney general and secretary of state the power to designate domestic groups as terrorist organizations and deport any noncitizen who belongs to them, enable investigations of American citizens for “intelligence” purposes, and allow for the indefinite detention of noncitizens whom the attorney general deems dangerous to the national security. The press agreed to restrict our freedom of speech to avoid giving comfort to the enemy, and citizens scolded professors who were critical of the war and disciplined Muslims (and Sikhs) and Arabs and West, Central, and South Asians for their religious practice, dress, speech, and appearance. As Attorney General John Ashcroft told Congress in December 2001, “those who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty...only aid terrorists.”

“We, the People,” established, in the days following Pearl Harbor, martial law in Hawaii and military zones in the Western Defense Command, and through an executive order enabled the removal and detention of citizen and noncitizen alike, depriving them of the Constitution’s protection because of “military necessity.” We learned later that surveillance of, and plans for Japanese Americans anticipated December 7, 1941, by about twenty-five years. And besides the selective detention in Hawaii and mass removal and detention along the West Coast, the U.S. deported undesirable aliens and administered a program of citizenship renunciation and “repatriation” after Japan’s surrender.

The affected people responded to their exclusion from the American community in related ways. Japanese Americans were advised to “speak American, think American, even dream American.” They avoided gathering in groups, burned their flags, letters, and pictures, and destroyed their Japanese record albums. They were urged to volunteer for public work projects, donate blood, and contribute to the war effort. A few put up signs in their windows declaring, “I Am an American,” and some Chinese Americans wore badges that pleaded, “Chinese please, not Japanese.”

Muslims and Sikhs, Arab and West, Central, and South Asian Americans faced the hard choice of attending or avoiding their mosque or gurdwara, of wearing a *hajib* or *sari*, of gathering in groups that might call attention to themselves.

Many flew U.S. flags on their cars, lawns, and porches, and taxi cab drivers in New York City offered free rides in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, and displayed the Christian cross and their nation’s flag and name as if imploring, “Pakistani please, not Afghan.” The Sikh Media Watch advised Sikhs in the U.S. to attend local memorials to the victims of 9/11 and to donate blood, clothing, and money toward the relief effort.

But the similarities must not slight the profound differences between December 7 and 9/11. Both wars and social relations were very different, and the constraints and opportunities likewise form contrasts. While the Japanese American Citizens League urged Japanese Americans to report any pro-Japan sentiment even among their parents in 1942, the Sikh Media Watch advised Sikhs to report any instance of racial profiling or hate crime, write to Congress, and file suits if necessary in 2001. The civil rights movement, led by African Americans and enjoined by Asian Americans, Latina/os, women, and gays and lesbians, helped to secure those rights and claims for equal treatment under the law.

And a coalition of Arab and West, Central, and South Asian Americans, Japanese and other Asian Americans, African Americans, Latina/os, Whites, and women joined in a press conference at the recently erected memorial to Japanese Americans during World War II in Washington, D.C., to declare their opposition to racial harassment and intimidation, racial profiling, and curtailments of civil liberty. Never again, they urged, should racism betray the Constitution’s promise. The Japanese American redress and reparations movement and Civil Liberties Act of 1988 provided the platform for that monument and renewal of a pledge made by countless women and men throughout the republic’s history, sealed with their dreams, sweat, and blood.

The lessons of December 7 and 9/11 are profound and fundamental for American history and democracy. I’d like to stress, among the many, just two. First, the struggles for freedom and equality of others in the past have consequences for us in the present. We stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before. And second, the victims of intolerance, those who have been denied their rights, through their resistance and refusal, have ensured the rights and liberties of all Americans. Those at the margins of American society are the most vulnerable. Consequently, they are the ones who most frequently suffer exclusions during times of war or crisis. It is also their claims to the Constitution’s promise from the margins that safeguard its guarantees for the mainstream, and indeed, for us all.

Falling into the Olongapo River

Ronald R. Sundstrom

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Vulgarity permeated my childhood because for much of my childhood I lived on U.S. military bases surrounded by servicemen, and they were vulgar in surprisingly creative ways. The vulgarity was present not only in accented adjectives, but also as nouns that marked people, down into their bones, and places, down into bedrock. Yokohama, Yokuska, and Subic Bay are the polite names for where I spent my childhood. It was in Subic Bay, in the Republic of the Philippines, where I was born. I was not born, to be truthful, on the American side of the fence; rather, I was born on the Filipino side, in the city of Olongapo. Due to the singular love of my mother, and her amazing efforts and sacrifices, I eventually made it to the other

side of that American fence, and was spirited away to other parts of Asia and then on to the U.S. My mother and my adoptive father moved the family, which included my younger sister, back to the Philippines where my adoptive father had a four-year tour of duty (1980-1984). It was in that atmosphere that I reached my adolescence. American military power, neocolonialism, sexism, sexual excess and exploitation, poverty, racism, classism, and the lottery of opportunity—all coated with a pervasive vulgarity—formed my moral and political universe, my sense of justice. The following story is from that time, and it is a story of my experience of Olongapo and my moral and political formation.

Shit River was the vulgar name for the Olongapo River in the Philippines.¹ At its mouth, the river divides the main gate of the biggest military installation in Asia, Subic Bay Naval Base, from the neighboring city of Olongapo. Olongapo was the epitome of third-world slums; it is exceedingly poor, dirty and rough. The city was featured in the movie *An Officer and a Gentleman*, where the main character, as a young boy, was assaulted and robbed by a group of karate-fighting, poor Filipino boys. That movie also featured a pair of submissive, and tellingly *silent*, Filipina whores, one of whom was intended as the main character's coming-of-age gift.² A brown gift that he rejects, along with his father's sordid blue-collar enlisted life: a vulgar, tough, working white man, another resident of the dirty Asian slums, and the lover of its residents. The main character's rejection of his father, the whores, and Olongapo was in character with the chaste, white and pure shining knight—who saves the just-as-white and pure princess from her factory job—that he was fated to be at the end of the movie.

Leading up to the entrance of Subic Bay Naval Base was an avenue that ran the length of the base, but at the main gate the avenue lead to a bridge, lined at both sides with sidewalks, that spanned Shit River, and then emptied onto long and wide Magsay-say Drive, which terminated at Olongapo's city square. Crammed on both sides of Magsay-say were dance clubs, tattoo parlors, whorehouses, street-side vendors and cantinas.

The streets were filled with young boys and girls selling cigarettes, individually or by the pack, vendors hawking foods such as meat-filled sweet rice cakes, chicken and pork shish kabobs, and grilled chicken intestines on a stick. All around are the vendors, beggars—asking for a centavo or a peso—and young women, some of them adolescent girls, selling themselves to passing American men. The chattering voices, the calls of the vendors, the clamor of the cars, buses, trucks and jeepnies, the appeals of the beggars, and a cacophony of other propositions filled your ears. The smell of oil, diesel, gasoline, smog, cooking food, the not too distant fish market, and the ever-present stench of Shit River filled your nostrils.

If you were to stop on the bridge sidewalk and look over the white concrete railings down onto Shit River, you would see thick, brown, and murky ooze slithering its way to the bay. Trash and refuse, dead fish and an occasional dead animal, and pools of human waste—from the Navy base and the shanty town that sprang up over the years on the bank opposite the base—have soiled the Olongapo and, thus, baptized it Shit River.

Occasionally young Filipino children in homemade canoes paddled out to the bridge and called out to the pedestrians above, servicemen and the Filipinos who labor on the base going to and from work, to throw down coins.³ The pedestrians invariably did throw coins, and just as invariably they threw the coins out of the reach of the children—into Shit River. The children, for the entertainment of the smiling, kind, expectant American faces above, dove into the river to fetch the coins.

Into the slime, murk, disease, and death they went, to collect a few centavos so that they could buy themselves scraps of food and candy.

As a young boy I remember clearly the day my American stepfather pressed a peso into my hand, and I, looking over the bridge, turned my hand over and watched the coin descend into the river's depth with the children, who were my age and my color, following after. I will never forget that river. I will never forget my complicity, and my reflection in Shit River.

On August 21, 1983, Ninoy Aquino was shot as he arrived in Manila. A henchman of Marcos assassinated him. My family was in Pasay City, outside of Manila. We were visiting my uncle, but due to the potential for unrest we had to rush back to Subic Bay. Not long after that day, I awoke on a bright morning and walked to a field that overlooks the opposite bank of the Olongapo River. The shantytown was gone, it had disappeared in the night, and in its place were fresh brown dirt and the violent tracks of the tractors that had done their deeds at night. "Where are the people?" I thought to myself, "Were they underneath that light brown mud?" I felt as a young boy that Marcos himself was connected to the destruction of the shantytown. Perhaps the shacks were destroyed to please the Americans, to help keep the base safe, or to fatally quell the anger of the poor that lived there. In the summer of 1984 my family left for the US.

I am overwhelmed by what that river means to me, and the Olongapo that remains in me. It was my experience of what Gloria Anzaldua captured in her discussion of *la frontera*:

Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them*. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants. *Los astravedos* live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulatto, the half-breed, the half-dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the "normal." Gringos in the U.S. Southwest consider the inhabitants of the borderlands transgressors, aliens—whether they possess documents or not, whether they're Chicanos, Indians or Blacks. Do not enter, trespassers will be raped, maimed, strangled, gassed, shot. The only "legitimate" inhabitants are those in power, the whites and those who align themselves with whites.⁴

That river and its inhabitants have always been a source of pain and allegory for me. When I read or write about the other, borders, purity, impurity, and separation, I return to that river and its people. When I write, I am writing about that river, about Olongapo, and its people.

When I think of that river, I think of walking to the middle of the bridge, climbing up onto the concrete railings, looking down at those kids, and diving in. There in Shit River, with the kids diving after, encased in its stinking brown waters, I cannot tell up from down, nor can I make out the passing forms. I cannot reach bottom. I cannot breathe.

Endnotes

1. This essay was originally entitled "Shit River Reflections," and I have been working on it in various contexts since the fall of 1996.
2. I use the bitter and dehumanizing term 'whore' in a sarcastic manner. I do not want to hide from the readers, or myself, the awful truth about how these women were regarded and treated by the sailors, marines, and the U.S. Navy.

3. I was in Olongapo in the years immediately following the Vietnam conflict. The kids are not just Filipino; many of them are Amerasian. Amerasians have populated that city since the end of WWII, but these kids—a little white, a little black, a little Filipino and a little American—were the children of Vietnam. Further, it is important to realize that in the Philippines ‘American’ was mainly used to refer to a white American. Mexican Americans were Mexicans, Native Americans were Indians, and African Americans (as with Native Americans, they were defined by imported American cinema) were ‘blacks’ or ‘nog-nogs’ (pronounced as “noug-noug”), which was the derogatory name for the Micronesian indigenous peoples that inhabited various parts of the islands. The caricatured images of “nog-nogs” that I have seen resembled, and were influenced by, the “Sambo” caricatures in the U.S.

4. Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987: 3-4.

What Does Asian American Studies Have to Do with Philosophy?

Gary Mar

Stony Brook University

What’s in a Name? ‘The Committee for the Status of Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies’ is one of the longest of the titles among the APA committees. Why? The tortuous title bears witness to struggles for inclusion. Some of these struggles were discussed in this publication when David Kim raised the question, “Why are Asian Americans virtually absent from the APA, despite the widespread perception that Asian Americans are ‘over-represented’ in American universities?”¹ Another struggle has been for the inclusion of Asian American perspectives and philosophy within the scope of this committee and the APA. This essay discusses the question, “What does Asian American studies have to do with philosophy?”

What is the difference between Asian and Asian American studies? Gary Okihiro, Director of Columbia’s Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, once suggested the following thought experiment: Can you understand the Civil Rights movement in America or do justice to the experience of Blacks in America by studying the cultures of Africa? Clearly not. Similarly, studying the cultures and philosophies of Asia does not do justice to the Asian American experience or to the importance of Asian American philosophy. One reason why philosophers fail to include a space for Asian American philosophy is that Asian Americans, unlike African Americans, are stereotyped as “perpetual foreigners,” the current political implications of which we will discuss after distinguishing Asian and Asian American studies.

The founding purposes of Asian studies and Asian American studies are quite distinct. Since 1838 the French term *orientalisme* has been used to refer to the European literary and scholarly interest in the Orient, although the meaning of ‘the Orient’ has changed over time to encompass Turkey, the Middle East, East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and West Asia. Ever since Rudyard Kipling declared that “East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet” (1891) and articulated the “White Man’s Burden” (1899), British literature and philosophy has mediated the colonialist meeting of East and West. Edward Said in his seminal *Orientalism* (1979) identified the colonizing agenda of Oriental studies.²

“Orientalism,” Said wrote, “is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident.’ ... In short, Orientalism is a Western style for dominating,

restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.”³ The “Orient” or “East” came to represent the farthest, most exotic, and most remote opposite from Western civilization. During the Cold War era, the status of Oriental studies increased by assisting the U.S. government to deal with “the Orient” (even though the Far East, from America, was, in fact, the Far West). Many of the Orientalist scholars of this era came from the ranks of diplomatic corps. Today, added to these ranks, is a second generation of upper-class immigrant scholars. Many of these immigrant scholars fled to America from communist-controlled countries and have tended to hold conservative cultural and political views.⁴ Yearning for a respected presence within their disciplines, many of these scholars fashioned themselves as “authentic cultural brokers,” perpetuated stereotypes of Oriental culture as unfathomable to the Western mind, and cautiously avoided the issues of colonialism, racism, and patriarchy.

Asian American studies, in contrast, emerged in the 1960s during the Civil Rights movement. The birth of Asian American Studies is dated to the 1968 Third World Liberation strike at San Francisco State University, which resulted in founding the first Ethnic Studies program in the nation. Influenced by the Black Power Movement and other struggles for liberation, Asian American studies sought to articulate authentic Asian American voices and to free itself from assimilationism, overseas nationalism, and Orientalism.⁵ Today, Asian American studies continues to help Asian Americans to understand themselves and to represent themselves, and their diverse communities, more accurately to the wider American public. UCLA Professor Shirley Hune articulates the values of the discipline:

What is Asian American Studies? It is the documentation and interpretation of the history, identity, social formation, contributions, and contemporary concerns of Asian and Pacific Americans and their communities. Its activities of research, teaching, and curriculum development relate to the experience of Asians and Pacific peoples in America. While thoroughly academic in its approaches, Asian American studies is also strongly committed to a focus on community issues and problems ... In short, Asian American studies seeks to *democratize* higher education.⁶

The historical conditions under which Asian and Asian American studies arose should not be regarded as historical accidents, but as the historical basis for understanding and critiquing the scholarship that is produced, the differential reception of that scholarship by the mainstream, and the continuing marginalization of Asian American studies.

The naming of the Committee for the Status of Asian and Asian American Philosophers and Philosophies, therefore, carries a commitment to democratizing philosophy. The name signifies that among the goals of the committee will be addressing the issue of the under-representation of Asian Americans within the APA as well as articulating Asian American philosophical research and scholarship. In these tasks interdisciplinary conversations between Asian American philosophers and scholars in Asian American studies has been, and will continue to be, of mutual benefit.

Dis-Orientalizing Philosophy. In what ways could dialogue with scholars in Asian American studies help to raise issues of importance to philosophers? Charles Mills in *The Racial Contract* argued that the assumption of white supremacy was formative and foundational to the history of Western philosophy.⁷ John Locke’s justification of the Royal African

Company's slave expeditions as a "just war," his investments in the East India Company, and Kant's belief in the fundamental differences in the rational capacities of different races were not just accidental departures from Enlightenment ideals, but views that flowed naturally from the Enlightenment's philosophical presumptions and commitments to categorizing, controlling, and classifying.

Similarly, one could argue that Orientalism—which contrasted the Occidental ideal of a democratic, scientifically rational, and morally regulated society based on possessive individualism with an Oriental despotism of a faceless collectivism, superstitious spirituality, and moral stagnation—was essential to Western philosophy's conception of itself. Consider, for example, Hegel's supremacist remarks in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*:

In the East ... conscience does not exist, nor does individual morality. Everything is simply in a state of nature, which allows the noblest to exist as it does the worst. The conclusion to be derived from this is that no philosophic knowledge can be found here ... The Eastern form must therefore be excluded from the history of philosophy ... Philosophy proper commences in the West.⁸

Bertrand Russell lamented Great Britain's colonialist policies (e.g., in *The Problem of China* (1922)). He wrote, "The British view is still that China needs a central government strong enough to suppress internal anarchy, but weak enough to be always obligated to foreign pressure". Nevertheless, Russell lapsed into cultural essentialism as an explanation for Western domination:

Possession, which is one of the three things that Lao-Tze wishes us to forgo, is certainly dear to the heart of the average Chinaman. As a race, they are tenacious of money—not perhaps more so than the French, but certainly more than the English or the Americans. Their politics are corrupt, and their powerful men make money in disgraceful ways... Nevertheless, as regards the other two evils, self-assertion and domination, I notice a definite superiority to ourselves in Chinese practice. There is much less desire than among the white races to tyrannize over other people. The weakness of China internationally is quite as much due to this virtue as to the vices of corruption ...⁹

A critical examination of Orientalism in philosophy promises a more accurate origin myth for Western Philosophy. Greek philosophy did not, like Athena, emerge fully formed from the head of the gods, and it is well known that the survival and transmission of ancient Greek philosophy to our time owes much to Arab scholars during the Middle Ages. A de-orientalized history of philosophy East and West promises to be a more complex and more self-critical account of how Orientalism has shaped Western Philosophy through its self-perception and the self-promotion of its allegedly unique and privileged intellectual and moral virtues.

Secondly, the *answers* one gets in philosophy depend partly upon the *questions* one asks, and the questions one raises depend partly on one's positioning in a racial hierarchy. Historically, if White is at the top of the American racial hierarchy and Black at the bottom, then adding Yellow, which was inserted as a racial middle, can advance the dialogue on race beyond the usual "Black/White" paradigm.¹⁰ Consider, for example, the stereotype of Asian Americans as the "Model Minority," the subject of much theoretical and sociological

discussion within Asian American studies.¹¹ The term 'Model Minority' implies that some minority is a model for others. Which minorities?

The expression 'Model Minority' was first used in print in the *New York Times Magazine* (Jan. 6, 1960) in "Success Story: Japanese American Style" by sociologist William Peterson, in which he argued that Japanese culture with its family values and strong work ethic saved Japanese Americans from becoming a "problem minority." In the 1960s, the 'Model Minority' stereotype, therefore, functioned to discredit the Civil Right movement by shifting discourse from *institutionalized racism* to blaming communities of color for lack of *family values* leading to personal advancement. While appearing to be a "positive" stereotype, the Model Minority stereotype has harmful consequences. By unfairly representing all Asian Americans as successful, it deprives Asian American groups who are not successful from receiving badly needed social services. More subtly, the stereotype serves as a mechanism of exclusion for Asian Americans by classifying them as minorities while setting them up as targets of resentment through invidious comparisons and pitting them against other minorities in competition for limited social resources.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Model Minority stereotype rationalized a backlash against Asian Americans from both above and below in the racial hierarchy. Originally valorized as hard-working immigrants, Model Minorities, during times of economic hardship, were resented as unfair competitors. The U.S. retreat from Vietnam in 1975 and the Iran Hostage Crisis in 1979 overshadowed the political climate in America. Combined with the economic slump created by the 1973 OPEC oil embargo and the impact of Japanese imports on the Detroit auto industry, these conditions provoked public expressions of "Asia bashing." In 1980, Chrysler's Executive VP Bennett Bidwell suggested solving the "Economic Pearl Harbor" caused by fuel-efficient Japanese imports by "chartering the Enola Gay." In 1982 Vincent Chin, a Chinese American, was brutally beaten to death with a baseball bat by unemployed Detroit autoworkers, and the perpetrators went unpunished.¹²

White student resentment against Asian Americans resonated with corporate "Asia bashing": "MIT" stood for "Made in Taiwan" and "UCLA" for "University of Caucasians Living among Asians." The 'Model Minority' was recast in popular films as over-achieving "geeks" and "super nerds" and in college admissions memos as "good but not exceptional students" who were "over-represented" in colleges and universities, taking away educational opportunities from both minorities and whites.¹³ In 1986, U.C. Berkeley professor, Ling-chi Wang wrote an article in the *New York Times* "Is There a 'Ceiling' Under the Table?," in which she revealed evidence that discrimination and informal quotas against Asian Americans were similar to medical school discrimination against Jews in the 1920s.

In the 1990s, the 'Model Minority' stereotype of Asian Americans transmuted into the callous, money-grubbing unfair foreign competitor. How could the beating of a Black motorist, Rodney King, by white police officers in the LAPD, result in multiracial uprisings, the looting of businesses owned by Korean Americans, and the arrest of Latinos in greater numbers than any other racial group? Korean Americans occupied the buffer zone between the Anglo and the mostly African American and Latino American communities and sustained about half of the estimated \$850 million in property damages, not to mention the mental anguish. U.C. Berkeley Professor Elaine Kim in the "My Turn" section of *Newsweek* challenged the media's simplistic portrayal of the racial uprising as a Black/Asian cultural conflict that ignored the devastating effect of

President Reagan's economic policies. She received a flood of racist hate mail:¹⁴

"How many Americans migrate to Korea? If you are disenchanted, Korea is still there. Why did you ever leave it? *Sayonara.*"

"[Her] whining about the supposedly racist U.S. society is just a mask for her own acute inferiority complex. If she is so dissatisfied with the United States why doesn't she vote with her feet and leave? She can get the hell out and return to her beloved Korea—her tribal affinity [*sic*] where her true loyalty and consciousness lies [*sic*]."

"Koreans' favorite means of execution is decapitation ... Ms. Kim, and others like her, came here to escape such injustice. Then they whine at riots to which they have contributed by their own fanning of flames of discontent ... Yes! Let us all study more about Oriental culture!"

Asian Americans have suffered nearly a century of discriminatory immigration laws that targeted them by race and class, forced relocation and internment during World War II, and continuing racial profiling as "perpetual foreigners." Moreover, the American wars of the 20th and 21st centuries have been against countries in Asia: the colonization of the Philippines (1898-1910), the war against Japan and the Axis Powers (1941-1945) culminating in the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the war against Korea (1950-1953) and China, the war against Vietnam (1959-1975) and China, the war against Afghanistan (2001-2002) and currently the war against the "Axes of Evil" in Iraq and North Korea. These wars in Asia have had a direct negative impact on the civil liberties of Asian Americans on the home front. This history suggests that a culturally competent philosophy that countenances Asian American experiences could be a key component in fighting for democracy on the home front.

Philosophy and Homeland Defense. Part of homeland defense is to balance two important values — national security and civil liberties — and to remember that a zealous pursuit of national security can compromise the very values we say we are trying to preserve. The treatment of Asian Americans as "perpetual foreigners" was evident in the case of Wen Ho Lee, the Los Alamos scientist who was falsely accused of leaking defense secrets to China, tried in the press, and imprisoned without a trial. Transcripts of the FBI interrogations reveal the domestic terror tactics of the FBI :¹⁵

Lee: Okay, well, I tell you the truth already. You want me repeat again? I, there's, nothing I can tell you because I already told you everything, okay? And if they don't believe. It's too bad. If they want to put me in jail, fine, I, I ...

(xxx): Fine! That's fine!

Lee: That's fine! Because I, I told you, I tell you the truth.

(xxx): Do you know how many people have been arrested for espionage in the United States?

Lee: I don't. I don't know. I don't pay much attention to that.

(xxx): Do you know who the ROSENBERGs are?

Lee: I heard them, yeah, I heard them mention.

(xxx): The ROSENBERGs are the only people that never cooperated with the Federal Government in an espionage case. You know what happened to them? They electrocuted them, WEN HO.

After nine months of solitary confinement and two days before the prosecution was forced to turn over evidence of the government's racial profiling, all but one charge against Dr. Lee were dropped. The presiding federal judge, Judge Parker, in a highly unusual move, felt compelled to make a public apology:

Dr. Lee, I tell you with great sadness that I feel I was led astray last December by the Executive Branch of government through its Department of Justice, by its Federal Bureau of Investigation and by its United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico, who held the office at that time. I am sad for you and your family because of the way in which you were kept in custody while you were presumed under the law to be innocent of the charges the Executive Branch brought against you ... It is not only the top decision-makers in the Executive Branch, especially the Department of Justice and the Department of Energy and locally, during December, who have caused embarrassment by the way this case began and was handled. They did not embarrass me alone. They have embarrassed our entire nation and each of us who is a citizen of it ... Although, as I indicated, I have no authority to speak on behalf of the Executive Branch, the President, the Vice-President, the Attorney General, or the Secretary of the Department of Energy, as a member of the Third Branch of the United States Government, the Judiciary, the United States Courts, I sincerely apologize to you, Dr. Lee, for the unfair manner you were held in custody by the Executive Branch.¹⁶

After 9-11 there was a sharp increase in harassment, hate crimes, and job discrimination against Muslims, Sikhs, and Arab, South, and West Asian Americans.¹⁷ Moreover, the supporters of the Bush-Ashcroft anti-terrorist initiatives even appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court's World War II decision in favor of the Japanese American Internment. Ironically, George Bush (senior) signed Public Law 101-162 in 1989 which authorized the reparations payments to surviving interned Japanese Americans to begin in October 1990, at which time he issued a Presidential Proclamation stating, "We can never fully right the wrongs of the past. But we can take a clear stand for justice and recognize that serious injustices were done to Japanese Americans during World War II." According to the government's own study, the June 23, 1983 Report of the Commission of Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC), entitled *Personal Justice Denied*:

[the relocation and incarceration of the Japanese Americans] was not justified by military necessity, and the decisions which followed from it ... were not driven by analysis of military conditions. The broad historical causes which shaped these decisions were race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership.... A grave injustice was done to Americans and resident aliens of Japanese ancestry who, without any individual review or probative evidence against them, were excluded, removed and detained by the United States during World War II.¹⁸

These lessons are pertinent today. The comments of Judge Marilyn Hall Patel upon invalidating the infamous Fred Korematsu conviction, which became the legal basis for the 1988 Civil Liberties Act, are equally trenchant:

[*Korematsu*] stands as a constant caution that in times of war or declared military necessity our institutions must be vigilant in protecting constitutional

guarantees. It stands as a caution that in times of distress the shield of military necessity and national security must not be used to protect governmental actions from close scrutiny and accountability. It stands as a caution that in times of international hostility and antagonisms our institutions, legislative, executive and judicial, must be prepared to exercise their authority to protect all citizens from the petty fears and prejudices that are so easily aroused.¹⁹

What does Asian American studies have to do with philosophy? I have suggested three answers. First, in facing the disciplinary differences between Asian and Asian American studies, philosophers can come to grips with the Orientalist underpinnings of our conception of Western philosophy. Facing the fact that Orientalism in philosophy has historically supported colonialism and domination, Western philosophers would be better positioned to undertake the critical and timely self-reflection that could be a countervailing voice of reason in the current rhetoric about “crusades” and defeating Asian “axes of evil.”

Secondly, Asian American studies is a resource for expanding critical race theory beyond the usual Black/White paradigm. A critical examination of the Model Minority stereotype, for example, illustrates how all racisms are relational and inter-related. The long name of the committee under which this essay is sponsored testifies to the fact that the struggle against Orientalism, racism, and marginalization is both against and within the categories of Asian and Asian American philosophy. The naming and inclusion of Asian American philosophers and philosophies within an APA committee is itself a significant first step towards de-orientalizing philosophy.

Finally, the struggle of Asian American communities for their civil rights has resulted in an America that is more democratic for all Americans. A culturally competent philosophy that countenances the unduly neglected history of Asian American struggles — against discriminatory immigration laws, for equal protection under the law, and for reparations for violations of civil liberties — could be a timely and critical part of the “homeland defense” of democracy.

Endnotes

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10. See Gary Okihiro’s insightful “Is Yellow Black or White?,” Chapter 2 of *Margins and Mainstream: Asians in American History* (Washington: Washington State University Press, 1994).

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15. FBI Transcript FBI/004868-004950 dated March 7, 1999, which is available at www.wenholee.org.

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Orientalism and America Enlarged

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Introduction: America as Accident

The distance between Europe and Cathay (China), going in a *westward* direction, was once believed to be the span of the Atlantic Ocean. Although it is well-known that Columbus set sail to lay hold of the Eastern side of Asia, it is worth dwelling on this commonplace for just a moment. Far from his point of departure and certainly from his imagined destination, Columbus came ashore in the Americas. But he believed the land to be South Asia – hence the early name “West Indies.” The so-called discovery of America, then, was an accident, an accident borne of Cathay fever and a colossal cartographical error. As we also know, though it fails to affect philosophy with due force, moral horrors followed upon this alleged discovery of a westerly route to Asia – genocide, displacement, slavery, coolie servitude, Jim Crow and lynchings.

In what follows, I discuss the completion of Columbus’ mission in the form of America’s imperial traversal of the Pacific and thereby America’s colonizing encounter with Asia. I will focus less on, say, gunboats setting course across the Pacific as Columbus did the Atlantic, than on the expansion of America itself, as a network of material and power relations, stretching out across this final ocean to occupy a formidable presence in Asia. This narrative is offered to complement and

fill out recent attempts by philosophers of race to reform or transform political philosophy. I begin with some general points about political narratives, then consider two contemporary Pacific gestalts, and conclude with some thoughts on American orientalism.

Reformulating Our Narratives – Once and Then Again

The history of Western moral and political philosophy is replete with broad sociohistorical portraits or images, not just arguments, in attempts to advance or criticize philosophical positions. Philosophical arguments envision, presuppose, gain salience from, and more generally, are permeated and oriented by sociohistorical portraits. Think, for example, of the work done by rough societal characterizations in Plato's *Republic*, Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Rousseau's *Discourses*, Kant's *Anthropology*, and of course the work of Hegel and the immense Continental tradition that followed in his wake, from Marx to Heidegger to Foucault. American Pragmatists, like James and Dewey, were of course well-known not simply for their integration of argument and portraiture but their philosophical rationales for such integration. And various philosophers contend that some such portrait lies deeply embedded in the moral and political philosophy of the analytic tradition in general and, consequently, that its universalist or even merely culturally generalizable claims amount to disguised particularisms with attendant sociohistorical portraits.

This cursory review is offered simply to remind us that sociohistorical portraiture or imagery has played both substantive and contextual roles in philosophy. Political philosophy in particular aims to explain the basic structure of society and to clarify the normative features of social arrangements, both at an appropriately abstract level. Sociohistorical portraits then offer information and, more importantly, perspectival considerations that aid in the formulation of these abstract structural explanations and normative accounts. In addition, political philosophy, like ethics, admits of applied analysis, even if no one uses the expression "applied political philosophy." Sociohistorical portraits will clearly play a substantial role in such analyses. For example, Michael Walzer's *Just and Unjust Wars* is aptly subtitled, *A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*.

One crucial element of these rough and ready portraits is the interrelated set of narratives of race-, culture-, and nation-building. In much of philosophy from the modern period onward, notions of race have been put to racist theoretical ends, or they have simply been ignored and take up a shadowy presence in characterizations of culture- and nation-building. Recently, however, some philosophers of race have followed the feminist model of centering gender in sociohistorical narratives and thereby the conceptual backdrop of arguments proper. Charles Mills, for example, has argued that when we foreground racial subordination and Western imperialism in standard narratives of culture- and nation-building, the overall portraits and the arguments with which they are thickly meshed must be significantly revised or altogether rejected. In the process of such revision or rejection, he argues that we will find the concept of white supremacy to be a powerful analytical lens through which we can identify configuring principles of the body politic. One of the chilling conclusions derived by Mills, and others working in Africana, indigenous, and generally third world theoretical traditions, is that racial subordination seems not to be a matter of akrasia on the part of historical and extant political structures so much as haunting conformity to their organizing principles.¹

I endorse much of this revisionist work, and won't defend it here. More interesting for my purposes is how the classic sociohistorical portraits or images get transformed by such anti-racist critiques and how various components of such critiques are integrated with each other. Much attention has been paid to how American and European culture- and nation-building have been inextricably tied to anti-black racism. One popular trope used to consolidate these ideas is Paul Gilroy's notion of a Black Atlantic. This trope weaves together Atlantic cultures in a way that foregrounds the underside of American and European industrialization and nation-building: the forced transport and enslavement of Africans formed the basis of early American and European development.² When we include considerations from indigenous and Latin American philosophies, the portrait is fuller still because European and American nation-building also involved the genocidal displacement of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. These Black Atlantic, American Indian, and Latin American critiques of the classic political narratives are largely about events in early American modernity and their legacy. What has not yet been fully articulated in this critique "from below" is the rise to racial prominence of Asians and Pacific Islanders in late American modernity, beginning roughly in the late 19th century when America began its slow ascent to global hegemony. Philosophy may one day transform its classic, and we might say "colorblind," sociohistorical portraits in light of the current consensus that has already been built at its theoretical (and political) margins. But even theoretical margins can have their own margins. Therefore, an account of Pacific racialization in late American modernity would contribute to a still fuller reformulation of our theoretical resources.

My discussion below of two gestalts is an attempt to aid in the task of sociohistorical reconstruction by focusing on the other great ocean. I will elaborate on Pacific racialization in American culture- and nation-building, in particular the racially configured enlargement of America in various respects beyond its California border.

Two Gestalts

It's early January in Chicago, and, ahhh, wouldn't it be nice to sip a Banana Daiquiri on a sparkling beach with pure blue waters swirling about your feet? It would be lovelier still if you could enjoy this sort of R&R some place *different*, some place with *culture*. Whatever locations come to mind, it would take considerable effort, if this is even the right way to put it, *not* to think of Hawaii. There, you get not only sun and fun, but the opportunity to dine with a view to a volcano, tap to the beat of fire dancers, merge into a sea of diverse Asian and Pacific Islander faces, have an island beauty hoop your neck with a ring of flowers, and partake of a luau in a floral-printed shirt. Of course, this is a completely ordinary fantasy of Hawaii, and this Pacific state would be economically devastated without the tourism founded upon it.

But consider as well our ritual remembrance of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, both a spectacle of vulnerability and the moral door through which the U.S. entered WWII. Annually, December 7, the "Day of Infamy," is an occasion for patriotic meditation. The attack was so brazen and unexpected, over 2000 soldiers lost their lives, and the Pacific fleet was left very nearly crippled. And this was but the first episode in a remarkably vicious conflict whose savagery was unparalleled in concurrent U.S. combat in Germany and Italy. Historian John Dower has characterized the Pacific theater of WWII as a "War without Mercy" due in large part to the distinctly racialized animus permeating battlefield, command center, and civilian populace.³ Arguably, the ritual of December

7 has a latent teleology that makes it more meaningful nationalistically than the heavily commercialized 4th of July. Specifically, remembrance is prelude to glorious judgment: America emancipated Europe and Asia from fascism, and so the nations of Atlantic and Pacific alike are yoked with a moral debt to their liberator.

We have here Hawaii as gestalt. On the one hand, it is a uniquely exotic state. On the other, it is a site of patriotic solemnity. It can take up a position as an alluring satellite to American culture, and it can supply bedrock upon which nationalist culture and sentiment are squarely built. Both other and familiar, Hawaii is caught in the grips of vacillating perspective. Importantly, neither exoticism nor patriotism would be intelligible without reference to Asians and Pacific Islanders, as culturally foreign denizens or enemies.

There is another and a very different kind of gestalt to consider. A typical occurrence on December 7 is a marathon of black and white war movies shown on television. They often show footage (narrated by that oddly familiar mid-century documentarian voice) of the battles of Midway, Guadalcanal, Okinawa, and Guam, and of the tragedy of the Bataan death march in the Philippines. These documentaries never clarify the importance of something that Americans now, as many decades ago, would find mostly insignificant, namely the fact that some of these islands and many neighboring ones have been for decades under U.S. formal jurisdiction or *de facto* control. Although Hawaii is culturally remote from the U.S. in the way described, it is formally or legally a state of the U.S., and in this sense perfectly constitutive of the country. Consequently, the patriotic ritual, described above, adds to and indeed presupposes, rather than facilitates, this type of inclusion within America's formal political borders. The annexation process began just prior to the 20th century, around the time of the Spanish-American War in 1898, the dawn of America as empire. And as a result of the Spanish-American War, the first U.S. war in Asia, America added to its legal holdings through its acquisition of the former colonies of Spain: the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico.

Well past WWII, however, Guam, other Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa (interesting name, no?), the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico hold the status of unincorporated territories. This status is problematic because it entails little of the self-rule of an autonomous nation, like Japan, and little of the benefits of an annexed state, like Hawaii. Guam, for example, was governed by the Department of the Navy until WWII, and now continues to have limited self-rule. For nearly a century, it has been retained as a crucial military bulwark in the outer perimeter of the U.S. security system. Although varying in legal and power relations with the U.S., a range of nations – including South Korea, Okinawa, the Philippines for nearly a century, Guam, and a range of islands formerly called Oceania (like many of the islands that appear in the WWII documentaries) – form a military rim around the Asian mainland, in particular China, and serve as the first line of defense on America's Pacific frontier. With just the sheer megatonnage of combative American stuff – soldiers, airplanes, tanks, battleships, missiles, and nuclear weaponry – surrounding the Eastern border of the Asian continent, America occupies, in a significant sense, both sides of the Pacific. It is hardly surprising then to find some people calling the Pacific Ocean an American lake. Parenthetically, it is interesting to consider what the world and America would have been like if China rimmed the California-Oregon-Washington coast with a similarly monolithic military presence. World history would have to have been radically different for Chinese spy planes to be regularly buzzing about the coast of Los Angeles and San Diego.

Guam too, then, is a gestalt. On the one hand, its being unincorporated – its being controlled by the American government without having full powers of self-representation and mutual influence – entails its being politically alien or alienated. On the other, its being a legal U.S. territory gives the teasing semblance of its being a Pacific state and, hence, a fully empowered constituent of the U.S. Because Guam is barred from full participation in the American political process, it is not politically proximal to or incorporated in America, like the 50 states. But Guam also takes up a position as a defensive satellite to the American security system such that an attack on Guam would be a violation of American, not an ally's, sovereignty. Unsurprisingly, for some time, the denizens of Guam, primarily Chamorros, were counted as nationals but not citizens of the U.S. Therefore, both political spectator to and legal extension of America, Guam too is caught in the grips of bifurcated perspective. As some have aptly put it, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the other unincorporated territories, are “foreign in a domestic sense.”⁴ But given what I have briefly described, they also could have said, “domestic in a foreign sense.”

As noted earlier, Hawaii is culturally remote and nationalistically intimate. Guam is politically remote and legally proximal. Importantly, as with the Hawaii gestalt, the bivalent structure of the American politico-legal conception of Guam makes crucial reference to the Asian alien. These gestalts have a contemporary salience. They clarify on-going Pacific normative processes in which Asian Pacific Americans have been placed under a racial framework or matrix that distances or alienates this people culturally and politically. This framework, as a racializing perceptual and conceptual hub, attaches bodily phenotype to a range of first-order properties (like biological inferiority, aesthetic ugliness or pleasing peculiarity, passivity, femininity or emasculation, intransigent Asian nationalist loyalty), second-order properties (like a vaguely Oriental foreignness, which may be a conception that somehow compiles or finds a common denominator underlying various of the first-order properties), and even third-order properties (like unassimilability, which takes the second-order property, foreignness, to be, if not permanent, longstanding or difficult to uproot; and inscrutability, which takes foreignness to be mostly or permanently undecipherable). Of course, this racial template or graphic has a sociohistorical story behind it. And both the graphic and the story must be incorporated in a critical fashion into the standard philosophical narratives of culture- and nation-building, and integrated with the African, American Indian, and Latin American critiques of the same. Consideration of the two gestalts opens up some aspects of the Pacific story because the gestalts highlight various features of the hierarchical cultural and political internationalism that joins subordinated Asia to an enlarged and domineering America. One of the standard ways of “summing up” the Asian personality or social nature is to refer to a distinctive sort of foreignness (i.e., the second-order property noted earlier). Should it be any surprise then that the international story behind the Hawaii gestalt adverts to the exotic denizens of Hawaii and the alien enemies of Pearl Harbor, and the Guam gestalt points to the potential alien enemies that lie within striking distance of Guam and other garrison islands?

America's Orientalist Modernity

The strategic location of Guam as a piece of military real estate and its correlative political impotence is likely to inspire little concern in the average U.S. citizen. I insist, however, that it is important in itself and as an example of America's attempt to contain or combat its 20th century nemesis, the Oriental.

Filipino insurgents, Japanese kamikazes, Korean and Chinese communist hordes, Vietnamese guerilla peasants – much of the monolithically violent aspects of American foreign policy have been Pacific-oriented. In addition, unlike incorporated and unincorporated territories, some nations, like South Korea, Okinawa, and the Philippines, fall within America's "spheres of influence." And throughout the 20th century, Guam, like many of these other nodes in the security perimeter, has served America well. More explicitly, the combination of these gestalts reveals the operations of a larger phenomenon: America as empire.⁵ The archipelago, of which Hawaii and Guam are but two elements, forms, in effect, an imperial penumbra. And its Pacific-Caribbean geography indicates unique features of American imperialism in contrast to European variants. Although America's slaves were African, its colonies and semi-colonies were and continue to be located predominantly in Asia and Latin America. And we get a sense of America's unique imperialist history in an early passage of the *locus classicus* of studies of orientalism, namely Edward Said's *Orientalism*:

Americans will not feel quite the same about the Orient, which for them is much more likely to be associated very differently with the Far East (China and Japan mainly). Unlike the Americans, the French and the British – less so the Germans, Russians, Spanish, Portuguese, Italians, and Swiss – have had a long tradition of what I shall be calling *Orientalism*, a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience ... In contrast, the American understanding of the Orient will seem considerably less dense, although our recent Japanese, Korean, and Indochinese adventures ought now to be creating a more sober, more realistic "Oriental" awareness. Moreover, the vastly expanded American political and economic role in the Near East (the Middle East) makes great claims on our understanding of that Orient.⁶

So far I have focused on tourism and warfare, exotic people and alien enemies. But I have been especially concerned with the *felt necessity for, and instability of, the outer perimeter* of the U.S. defense system. The manipulative arrangement of Asian and Oceanic nations and territories into a defensive array was formed and weathered by four massively-scaled wars in Asia. These considerations seem to underlie Said's remarks about a "more sober, more realistic 'Oriental' awareness" generated by America's various Asian "adventures." But some of the best work in Asian-American Studies has focused on the inner side of the perimeter problem, that is, domestic racism. In the context of America enlarged, how has America proper engaged in racialization processes at, and internal to, its formal borders? Very many studies have shed light on the anti-Asian racial basis of 1) immigration exclusion laws (e.g., 1882 Chinese Exclusion Laws), 2) denials of naturalization rights (e.g., *Ozawa v. U.S.* in 1902), 3) denials of equal rights protection (e.g., *Yick Wo v. Hopkins* in 1886), 4) labor exploitation (from coolie indenture to railroad workers and farmers), and 5) cultural oppression and violence. One of the overall features of these domestic

measures taken together is the *efficacy of exclusion*. Until 1965, the U.S. government was extremely successful, not simply in excluding Asian immigrants from domestic empowerment and enfranchisement, but more basically in limiting the very number of Asian immigrants to an extremely miniscule percentage of the population. As a result, the "Negro problem" was far more provocative on the domestic front – though of course the "Oriental problem" has been far more riveting on the foreign policy front.

Although this is not the place to offer an adequately full discussion, the felt necessity for and instability of the outer defense perimeter, and the domestic efficacy of exclusion, have a common root in the materially exploitative relation that America has had with Asia. This is why America began its imperial ascent in taking over colonies from a fading Spanish empire, why the politico-economic rivalry of the major powers of the Cold War was played out so violently in Asia, and why for some time Japan has been a dangerous "success story" in Asian capitalism. What I have offered in the foregoing are some very general ways of understanding America enlarged. Asian-American Studies has typically conceptualized Asian America in terms of a diasporic movement from Asia to America. This is a sound way of understanding its subject matter. But if the foregoing is coherent, then we can also understand Asian America in terms of America expanding across its "lake." To view these matters in terms of diaspora, Asians coming to America, or in terms of imperialism, America going to and residing in Asia, suggests that America too admits of gestalt interpretation. This interstitial character reveals that any full assessment of America in late modernity will necessarily involve an account of Asian America.

If this is the case, then a number of integrative and reconstructive questions emerge. I conclude with some of them. Can we view Pan-Africanism and Pan-Asianism of the late 19th and early 20th century as concurrent responses to white modernity? Is the dispossession of land and livelihood in Hawaii, Guam, the Philippines, and so on, continuous with the American Indian experience? Is the consolidation of black, Asian, and Latin American marxisms from the 1930s onward a convergence of frameworks responding to American hegemony and late white modernity? How can we understand the civil rights and black power movements in terms of their Cold War context, one in which the Asian villain emerges dramatically? How should we characterize the longstanding unjust "peace" in the Pacific that forms the larger context of Michael Walzer's piecemeal focus on just and unjust wars? What bearing does or should the consolidation of American empire in the Pacific have on Rawls' writing of *A Theory of Justice* and his communitarian critics? In short, how might we transform standard and critical sociohistorical accounts in light of the orientalism of an America enlarged?

Endnotes

1. Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998)
2. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).
3. John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (NY: Random House Inc., 1983).
4. Christina D. Burnett and Burke Marshall, eds., *Foreign in a Domestic Sense: Puerto Rico, American Expansion, and the Constitution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).
5. On this and related topics, I have learned from the following: Arif Dirlik, *The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997); Arif Dirlik, ed., *What is in a Rim? Critical Perspectives on the Pacific Region Idea* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993); Bruce Cumings, *Parallax*

Visions: Making Sense of American-East Asian Relations at the End of the Century (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); David Palumbo-Liu, *Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); and Gary Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History* (WA: University of Washington Press, 1994).

6. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (NY: Random House Inc., 1979), p.1-2.

The Meaning of the Visible Differences of the Body

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Introduction

In the discussion of race and sex, what remains persistently elusive is the function of the physical features of the body. Yet I must stubbornly speak on race and sex by emphasizing the physical specificities of the body. Racism and sexism hinge on the visible features of the body. As theorists including Carol Bigwood, Linda Martin Alcoff, Taunya Lovell Banks, Patricia Williams and Jayne Chong-Soon Lee write, the visible features of the body serve as the pivot for sexism and racism.¹

In focusing on the visible features of the body I am led to examine the role of perception in the dynamics of racism and sexism. During the moment of perception, one recognizes that the visible features of the body possess meaning about the invisible features of the person. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's work explores precisely this interstice between seeing and meaning, functioning within the moment of perception. His philosophical system serves as the springboard for an exploration of the meaning of the body's visible features. I utilize Merleau-Ponty's work even though feminist theorists have criticized him for failing to perform an analysis of different body features. Feminist theorists have voiced that Merleau-Ponty's generalized body is a male body. Nevertheless, I believe that Merleau-Ponty's work can be fruitfully mined.²

À L'état Naissant

Maurice Merleau-Ponty's aim, particularly in his later works is to locate the birth of meaning, the moment of creation. Merleau-Ponty rightly argues that philosophy until his time cannot explain the creation of meaning. Within traditional philosophy, all meaning is either inherent within the invisible features of the world, or all that exists is simply the visible. Within such a framework, all meaning has existed already throughout time. Human beings are confined to simply discovering the meaning hidden beneath the surface. Against such a system, Merleau-Ponty searches for the original conceiving moments of meaning. Merleau-Ponty searches for the possibility of human beings creatively becoming.

Merleau-Ponty's work makes several controversial maneuvers. First, Merleau-Ponty conceptualizes the ontological as embodied. Such conceptualization requires that Merleau-Ponty relinquish the idea of universal knowledge, aligning him with many feminist conclusions. Merleau-Ponty argues that all knowledge is situated knowledge.³ Second, Merleau-Ponty emphasizes the importance of the experiences that bodies undergo. He writes, "[i]t is to experience ... that the ultimate ontological power belongs."⁴ Merleau-Ponty takes experience seriously.⁵ Third, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological framework is a philosophy of becoming. Merleau-Ponty's system separates away from a philosophy of

being, towards a philosophy of becoming.⁶ Merleau-Ponty's search for creativity is a search for the possibility of movement, of change, of human development. Fourth, Merleau-Ponty's search for meaning is a search for the very forms that Plato inaugurated.⁷ Of course, Merleau-Ponty does not exactly search for the Platonic forms. For Merleau-Ponty rejects the idea that these forms are pre-existing, universal, and infinite. But to the extent that these forms reflect an attempt to conceptualize beyond the space of the actual to the space of the possible, Merleau-Ponty argues that human beings are involved in conceiving and creating these forms. Fifth and finally, Merleau-Ponty locates the moment of creation within the moment of perception. Merleau-Ponty argues against the traditional understanding of consciousness as a completely constituting, pure power of signification and representation. It is not through reason alone that man discovers meaning. For Merleau-Ponty creation occurs in the moment of the awakening of attention.⁸

The Flesh...Visibility

To understand how these five steps lead to the possibility of human beings creating meaning, let us more closely examine the process of perception, particularly the perception of something new. Only in his last unfinished work, *The Visible and the Invisible*, does Merleau-Ponty offer an analysis of perception radically different from the traditional understanding of perception. Understanding perception within a gestaltian system is itself only reluctantly gaining acceptance. Yet Merleau-Ponty moves away from this gestaltian understanding of perception upon which he had so strongly relied in his earlier works.⁹ First note that a vertical structure of the invisible and the visible replaces the horizontal structure of the gestalt, organized as the figure and the ground. The invisible plays a pivotal role in the presentation of the visible. In the words of Merleau-Ponty, the "thin pellicle of the quale, the surface of the visible, is doubled up over its whole extension with an invisible reserve." "[T]he visible is pregnant with the invisible."¹⁰ This is not to argue that the value of the visible is in the invisible. The most commonly understood and perhaps the simplest way of understanding the structure of the visible and the invisible is as the body and the mind, the object and the subject. As the subject, the invisible is oneself, "that which we forget because we are part of the ground."¹¹ As the subject, James Phillips associates the invisible with the unconscious.¹² The mind and all that are ineffable and ungraspable are usually associated with the invisible, whereas the body and all that are sensuous and concrete are traditionally relegated to the world of matter, the visible. But the invisible is much more than simply mind or subject. The invisible is, as Phillips indicates, the "nucleus of meaning-structures," the "nuclei of signification."¹³ Or, the invisible is, as Henri Maldiney writes, "the depth of the world ... the unexpected of the world."¹⁴

The medium of the relation between the visible and the invisible Merleau-Ponty names as the *flesh*. "The flesh is not matter, is not mind, is not substance, to designate it, we should need the old term 'element,' ... in the sense of a general thing, a midway between the spatio-temporal individual and the idea."¹⁵ Visibility is the incredible moment when body and mind; subject and object, internal and external, signification and signified, overlap. The flesh accomplishes this feat Merleau-Ponty writes, by folding back on itself. As Shannon Sullivan elaborates, "the 'folding' of which gives birth to both subject and object and their interpenetration. Thus the notion of flesh speaks to us of the intertwining of an exchange ('chiasm') between the subject and the object which results in a fundamental ambiguity and possible reciprocity between

them.”¹⁶ Chiasm refers to reversibility. Chiasm refers to the reversibility between me and the other, intersubjectivity. Chiasm refers to the reversibility between the subject and the world. Merleau-Ponty posits reversibility between all the prevalent and famous dichotomies.¹⁷ With the notion of the flesh and chiasm, Merleau-Ponty collapses traditional, sacred dualities. Alphonso Lingis beautifully states, “this intertwining, this chiasm effected across the substance of the flesh is the inaugural event of visibility.”¹⁸

Within the shimmering between the visible and the invisible, through the chiasmic medium of the flesh, perception occurs. Fred Evans and Leonard Lawlor eloquently describe this shimmering in terms of a dialogue:

According to ‘objective thought’ ... perception either mirrors a fully determinate object (empiricism) or constitutes an object in light of a fully determinate idea (intellectualism). In contrast ... like a dialogue, perception leads the subject to draw together the sense diffused throughout the object while, simultaneously, the object solicits and unifies the intentions of the subject.¹⁹

Consonant with the numerous manifestations of the visible and the invisible, the dialogue occurs through a variety of mediums or relationships. The dialogue occurs between the intentionality of the subject and the transcendence of the object.²⁰ The dialogue occurs also within the function of time. Hence, Gaile Weiss depicts the dialogue as, “[t]ranscendence as a sense of openness to future projects as an existence-for-itself and immanence as a sense of rootedness to the past stemming from one’s objectification as a being-for-others.”²¹ The dialogue occurs not simply within the vacillation of movement between the subject and the object, but within a vacillation inherent in the subject herself living within time and facing oneself and the world. Perception occurs, amazingly enough, through this heavy thickness of time and space, a thickness in which time and the objects of the world do not sit unobtrusively aside, but impinge, melt, and spill over into the intricacies of flesh. Perception occurs through a haze of ambiguity.

The Creation of Meaning

Because perception occurs through this ambiguity, the possibility of creativity exists within perception. Merleau-Ponty’s ultimate goal of searching for meaning is a search for creativity. Evans and Lawlor show the possibility of creativity within the vacillation of perception. They write, the dialogue “provides a direction for the becoming of both subjects and objects and yet retains the degree of indeterminacy or ambiguity required for the creative contributions of subjects and for the surprises that the world harbors.”²² It is because the flesh is so dense, so rich, so indeterminate that Merleau-Ponty ultimately locates creation here. Merleau-Ponty is not simply speaking of the creation of a few anomalies, Merleau-Ponty addresses the birth of the very forms that Plato made famous, the norms of society, and the significations for understanding. Merleau-Ponty searches for “the very appearance of the world and not the condition of its possibility; it is the birth of a norm and is not realized according to a norm.”²³

Merleau-Ponty provides a very possible account of how creation might occur, and a generous reading of Merleau-Ponty would argue that he succeeds. Merleau-Ponty provides a likely account of the circumstances of how creativity might occur, but yet is there explicit guidance for creating in his account aside from the establishment of this novel framework of perception and embellishments in nomenclature?

Merleau-Ponty’s work does not answer the questions: how does meaning arise, when one is solely a sum of one’s experiences? How does one create when one is a product of the given world? Merleau-Ponty’s analysis plants the seeds for the search for meaning, yet ultimately he does not succeed in showing exactly how the moment of creation happens. Merleau-Ponty simply writes that “if, through all these experiences, some unique function finds its expression, it is the momentum of existence.”²⁴

The Symbols on the Body; the Meanings about the Person

It is precisely these questions that haunt the analysis of race and sex. Racism and sexism hinge on the visible features of the body, even though the visible features of the body are completely arbitrary.²⁵ The features of the body are the symbols for racism and sexism without which racist or sexist occurrences cannot be understood as racist or sexist.²⁶ Through the visible differences of the body, one conjectures about the invisible differences of the person.²⁷

Yet human bodies have visibly similar features as well as visibly different features. Racism and sexism utilize certain visibly different features. Is it that visibly same features are not so meaningful, while visibly different features indicating skin color and sex are so meaningful? Of course, one answer, much familiar after the works of Nietzsche and Foucault, is the institutionalization of the discrimination.²⁸

Institutionalization does not explain all of racism and sexism, particularly the lived, every day experience of racism and sexism. For as Merleau-Ponty recognizes even with the institutionalization of discrimination, every individual is responsible for every act of discrimination. As Merleau-Ponty writes, an institutionalized knowledge “is not an inert mass in the depths of our consciousness ... what is acquired is truly acquired only if it is taken up again in a fresh momentum of thought.”²⁹ To understand the lived level of the discrimination one must understand the meaning that the visibly different body features have attained. Consequently one prominently recalls, beckons, and focuses on such body features. It is to such a phenomenon that Omi and Winant, Alcoff, Williams and others refer when speaking of the *naturalized* status of the visibly different body features.³⁰ The prominent visibility of body features indicating race and sex is a function of the signification these features have taken on.

The Asian American Woman’s Body

Although I am frustrated with Merleau-Ponty for failing to provide a definitive answer, I believe his phenomenological framework is especially useful for addressing two particular endemic qualities of racism and sexism. The first, as indicated above his analysis helps reach the lived sense of living in a society with racist and sexist significations embedded in the invisible. And second, his work facilitates understanding the particular situation of women of color. For women of color continually disappear in the current predominant analyses of race and sex. As Elizabeth Spelman elucidated almost twenty years ago, it is the ampersand problem; the current analyses of sexism and racism leave the impression that there cannot be an experience of both sexism and racism simultaneously—for all people of color are men and all women are white. To illustrate the usefulness of Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological system, I apply the framework of the visible and the invisible to a reading of Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s article, “Defining Genealogies: Feminist Reflections of Being South Asian in North America.”

On a TWA flight on my way back to the U.S. ... the professional white man sitting next to me asks: (a) which school do I go to? and (b) when do I plan to go home? ... I put on my most professional demeanor (somewhat hard in crumpled blue jeans and cotton t-shirt—this uniform only works for white male professors, who of course could command authority even in swimwear!) and inform him that I teach at a small liberal arts college in upstate New York and that I have lived in the U.S. for fifteen years... Being mistaken for a graduate student seems endemic to my existence in this country. Few Third World women are granted professional (i.e., adult) and/or permanent (one is always a student!) status in the U.S. ... He ventures a further question: what do you teach? On hearing “Women’s Studies” he becomes quiet and we spend the next eight hours in polite silence. He has decided that I do not fit into any of his categories.³¹

To understand why Mohanty takes such offense in this seemingly innocuous interaction, is to understand the lived sense of racism and/or sexism precisely in these innocent, banal, and what the ‘professional white male’ probably considers a friendly interrogation. To understand this interaction, we must recognize that Mohanty’s body spurs the particular questions from the “professional white male.” It is unclear if either the female or the racial features motivate the questions. One can make arguments for either characteristic; for women of color it may be that the conglomeration of both features hurries the association. The extent of the difficulty in delineating precisely which “ism” beckons the connection is endemic to women of color.

Mohanty’s body as a female and as a person with Asian features motivates the first question and the meaning, student; her body reads as still growing. Perhaps the assumed national origin of the body, the third world, an undeveloped or a developing nation, associates the individual with the not yet developed, the not yet professional status.

Perhaps her body features going to the United States only occurs if she is a student; her body features read as a temporary resident of the United States. This connection explains the “professional white male’s” second question. The curiosity in regards to her return home illustrates a lack of connection with Asian female bodies and the United States. Moreover, that he the “professional white male” independently seizes the privileged position in posing such a question implies that his white male body has some closer association with the United States. Although generations of Asian Americans have inhabited the United States for over a century, including South Asians, the “professional white male” regards his own body as having a closer affinity to the United States.

Perhaps her body’s class association inspires the “professional white male’s” questions. Dark Asian female bodies—read “poor,” and unable to afford the flight from the Netherlands unless it is a momentous life event en route from another country. Pointedly, Mohanty provides us with a depiction of the clothes she was wearing, assuring us that such a uniform does not command authority on her body. Mohanty insinuates that white male bodies mean middle class, hence white male bodies in jeans and t-shirt can still be recognized as simply in casual, comfortable clothes and not that such clothes are the only clothes “professional white male” bodies possess. Whereas dark Asian female bodies mean poverty; to defy the meaning of her body as poor and as not professional, the jeans and t-shirt do not suffice.

I do not present this reading to argue that the “professional white male” is racist or sexist, but rather to investigate the incredible informative content of the two bodies. To the “professional white male,” Mohanty’s body conveys information about her stage of educational and professional development, her country of residence, her class level, and finally her area of specialization—witness the silence upon being informed that she is a professor of Women’s Studies. Her body apparently does not read as a feminist. The immediacy of so much meaning the “professional white male” instantly reads on the body of this Asian female elucidates the invisible significations with which he perceives. Mohanty’s exasperation, with which I can readily empathize, is precisely with the presumption of the “professional white male” to know so much about her, to categorize her, to *essentialize* her. But that Mohanty sees so much meaning about this “professional white male” also clearly illustrates the embedded, endemic quality of seeing through the denseness of flesh.

Conclusion

Merleau-Ponty’s work implies that every racist and sexist perception is a missed opportunity for creativity. If racism and sexism are a result of the signification of the visible features of the body, to break out of the framework of racism and sexism requires an act of creation, an act in which the subject perceiving must see new meaning in the body features. Yet, creativity occurs within and because of the shimmering of the visible and the invisible; and Merleau-Ponty does not show us how to actually create the invisible itself. But perhaps a systematic attempt to reach creativity belies the nature of creativity.

Endnotes

1. See the works of Linda Alcoff, “Merleau-Ponty and Feminist Theory on Experience,” *Chiasm, Merleau-Ponty’s Notion of Flesh*, eds. Fred Evans and Leonard Lawlor, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000). Taunya Lovell Banks, “Two Life Stories: Reflections of One Black Woman Law Professor,” *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed the Movement*, eds. Kimberle Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas (New York: The New Press, 1995). Jayne Chong-Soon Lee, “Navigating the Topology of Race,” *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed the Movement*, eds. Kimberle Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas (New York: The New Press, 1995). Carol Bigwood, “Renaturalizing the Body (with the Help of Merleau-Ponty),” *Hypatia*, v. 6, no. 3 (Fall 1991). Feminists have argued that binding female experience to the body is essentializing. Nevertheless, Bigwood aims “to affirm to some extent a loose and non-causal linkage between the female body and women’s ways of being, between the body and gender [because] ... unless we recognize and investigate a link between gender and the body, the theoretical position of gender specificity is left, as it were, without a leg to stand on.” (56).
2. On this ongoing debate, see the works of Judith Butler, “Sexual Ideology and Phenomenological Description: A Feminist Critique of Merleau-Ponty’s Phenomenology of Perception,” *The Thinking Muse: Feminism and Modern French Philosophy*, eds. Jeffner Allen and Iris Marion Young (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989: 85-100). Elizabeth Grosz, “Merleau-Ponty and Irigaray in the Flesh,” *Merleau-Ponty, Interiority and Exteriority, Psychic Life and the World*, eds. Dorothea Olkowski and James Morley (Albany, SUNY Press: 1999: 145-166). Luce Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* trans. Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984). Susan Kozel, “The Diabolical Strategy of Mimesis: Luce Irigaray’s Reading of Maurice Merleau-Ponty,” *Hypatia* v. 11, no. 3 (Summer 1996: 114-129). Silvia Stoller, “Reflections on Feminist Merleau-Ponty Skepticism,” *Hypatia*, v. 15, no. 1 (Winter 2000: 175-182). Shannon Sullivan, “Domination and Dialogue in Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception*,” *Hypatia*, v. 12, no.1 (Winter 1997: 1-19).

3. See Richard Wolin, "Merleau-Ponty and the Birth of Weberian Marxism," *Praxis International*, v. 5, no. 2 (July 1985: 117).
4. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968, 110).
5. See Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, 94-95).
6. Renaud Barbarus, "Perception and Movement: The End of the Metaphysical Approach," *Chiasm, Merleau-Ponty's Notion of Flesh*, eds. Fred Evans and Leonard Lawlor (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000: 80).
7. Gaile Weiss, "Body Image Intercourse: A Corporeal Dialogue between Merleau-Ponty and Schilder," *Merleau-Ponty, Interiority and Exteriority, Psychic Life and the World*, eds. Dorothea Olkowski and James Morley (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999: 123).
8. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. 1962, 28-29).
9. See James Phillips, "From the Unseen to the Invisible: Merleau-Ponty's Sorbonne Lectures as Preparation for His Later Thought," *Merleau-Ponty, Interiority and Exteriority, Psychic Life and the World*, eds. Dorothea Olkowski and James Morley (Albany, SUNY Press: 1999: 83).
10. Merleau-Ponty, *Visible*, 152, 216.
11. Dorothea Olkowski, "The Continuum of Interiority and Exteriority in the Thought of Merleau-Ponty," *Merleau-Ponty, Interiority and Exteriority, Psychic Life and the World*, eds. Dorothea Olkowski and James Morley (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999: 11).
12. Phillips, 80.
13. Phillips, 80.
14. Henri Maldiney, "Flesh and Verb in the Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty," *Chiasms: Merleau-Ponty's Notion of Flesh*, eds. Fred Evans and Leonard Lawlor (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000: 56). See also Merleau-Ponty, *Visible*, 152.
15. Merleau-Ponty, *Visible*, 144.
16. Shannon Sullivan, "Domination and Dialogue in Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*," *Hypatia*, v. 12, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 9. See also Merleau-Ponty, *Visible*, 139, 140, 146.
17. Merleau-Ponty, *Visible*, 215.
18. Alphonso Lingis, "Translator's Preface," *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968: lvi).
19. Fred Evans and Leonard Lawlor, "Introduction: The Value of Flesh: Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy and the Modernism/Postmodernism Debate," *Chiasms: Merleau-Ponty's Notion of Flesh* eds. Fred Evans and Leonard Lawlor (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000: 3-4).
20. Barbarus 82.
21. Gail Weiss, *body images: embodiment as intercorporeality* (New York: Routledge, 1990, 10).
22. Evans and Lawlor 4.
23. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology*, 61.
24. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology* 138. See also Hubert Dreyfus, "The Current Relevance of Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Embodiment," *Filozofska Istrazivanga*, v. 15, no. 3 (1995).
25. See Geraldine Finn, "The Politics of Contingency: The Contingency of Politics—On the Political Implications of Merleau-Ponty's Ontology of the Flesh," *Merleau-Ponty: Hermeneutics and Postmodernism*, eds. Thomas W. Busch and Shaun Gallagher (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992: 176).
26. I can cite extensively in this regard. Consider Patricia Williams, who recounts her experiences publishing an article explicating her now quite famous case of being denied entrance to a Benetton store. Williams writes that the editors erased all references to the fact that she is a black woman, effectively erasing all means for understanding that she was denied entrance because of racism. Williams writes that "[w]hat was most interesting to me in this experience was how the blind application of principles of neutrality, through the device of omission, acted either to make me look crazy or to make the reader participate in old habits of cultural bias." (*The Alchemy of Race and Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991, 48.)
27. See Linda Alcoff, "Toward a Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment," *Journal of Radical Philosophy* 95 (May/June 1999): 23-24.

28. See Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994, 67-71).

29. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology* 130.

30. Omi and Winant, 60.

31. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Defining Genealogies: Feminist Reflections on Being South Asian in North America," *Making More Waves: New Writing by Asian American Women*, eds. Elaine H. Kim, Lilia V. Villanueva, and Asian Women United of California (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997, 119).

The Role of the Body in Asian-Pacific-American Panethnic Identity

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Anyone who teaches college in California knows the importance of including groups other than blacks and whites in discussions of the social and political implications of race. In a larger project, I attempt to do this by considering certain parallels, as well as some important discontinuities, between Asian-Pacific-American panethnic identity and the panethnic identities of other minority groups in America, in particular, Latinos, Native Americans and African Americans.¹ I aim to draw attention to a social dynamic underlying the social identities of racial groups, more noticeable from a panethnic standpoint, that operates under the guise of a biological concept of race, and thereby reiterates the legitimacy of that notion. Here I can only present a brief sketch of how I propose to apply a panethnic model, as a general account of racial identity in America, to Asian-Pacific-Americans. Certain sociopolitical aspects of Asian-Pacific-American panethnicity seem to destabilize the biological concept. What is of special interest is the manner in which panethnic identity incorporates a biological notion of race despite these destabilizing factors. In what follows I focus on the situation of Asian-Pacific-Americans (APAs) to provide a brief sketch of my general account of how a destabilized biological concept of race can be reconstructed to provide a politicized *racial* (rather than cultural) ground for panethnic identity.

Panethnicity seems to be an internally and externally driven social formation, nurtured by a largely mass-media-based discourse on race, that posits a *racial* identity across diverse cultural groups in accordance with a time-honored three-race ideology—specifically, yellow, black and white. The unspoken assumption underlying the idea of panethnic identity is that within each biological racial group there are ethnic subdivisions. When necessary, as in the case of Latinos, this assumption is sometimes amended to accommodate "mixtures" of the three major racial groups. On this view of race, Asian-Pacific-Americans, like blacks and whites, can be identified by reference to certain group-specific physical characteristics that serve as biological criteria. What is rarely acknowledged by subscribers to this view is the extent to which racial identification based on physical characteristics, and hence, its use as a ground for social practices that grant privileges and deny rights, is *phenomenological*. Instead, we are led to believe that the science of anthropology has, in some *objective* manner, established that there are these three races.² In many parts of the world, especially Latin America, racial identification by a third party is based primarily on how a person "looks," but, in the United States, it matters also whether a person is *known* to be related to someone who "looks" black. Naomi Zack and other mixed-race black people

have contested the one-drop rule employed in the United States to determine black identity for legal purposes.³ An important stipulation of their complaint is that this descent rule imposes *political* criteria that masquerade as biological—especially when the biological criteria amounts only to black ancestry that is “traceable” (i.e., known). Is there, for APAs, a counterpart to the politicizing of biological criteria?

What a person “looks” like is a matter of *subjective* perceptual judgment heavily influenced by the social background of the perceiver, as well as the social context in which the judgment is made. In the case of Latinos, despite the existence of stereotypes, we acknowledge that members of this “ethnic” group can sometimes “look” like (i.e., share similar physical characteristics) any of the major three races, as well as “look” like some of the other mixed-race ethnic groups, such as Middle Eastern-descended people, or Italian-descended people.⁴ With regard to Asian-Pacific-Americans, however, the three-race assumption seems to dictate that, more like blacks and whites than like Latinos, Asian-descended people are a biologically constituted group with fixed boundaries that can be specified in terms of a unique set of physical characteristics. Without discounting entirely the social practice of using a person’s physical characteristics as racial criteria, there are reasons for thinking that all racial categories, including the Asian-Pacific-American, are more sociological than biological, and that, as in the case of black and white Americans, Asian-Pacific-American panethnicity is a social formation generated and perpetuated by its *political* function. With reference to some of the internal and external factors shaping the general contours of Asian-Pacific-American panethnicity, I want to emphasize the manner in which political criteria seem to operate in tandem with, and sometimes replace, biological criteria. This inconsistency can be explained only by reference to the role of the body in Asian-Pacific-American panethnic identity. Indeed, to overcome cultural diversity, the “transcendence” demanded by a sociohistorically-grounded identity involves a reconstruction in political terms that, at once, accommodates *and* destabilizes the biological criteria of social identity.

For many reasons, there is some variation in the criteria used as a basis for inclusion in the Asian-Pacific-American category.⁵ The formation of APA panethnic identity requires a negotiation of the tension between advocates of a narrower category that they believe more accurately describes the racial specificity of pan-Asian ethnicity and advocates of broader categories that accommodate the racial diversity among Asian ethnic groups. Hence, the commonly accepted defining elements, among such criteria include geographical (i.e., nationality) as well as biological heritage (i.e., physical appearance). What is at issue in the contestation over which cross-cultural appellation best applies (e.g., Asian American, Asian Pacific Islander, Asian Pacific American), however, is a question of whether geography alone is a sufficient criterion for inclusion in the group, given that geographical criteria often do not correlate with cultural, or biological, criteria. It is worth noting here that there are important discontinuities between all the panethnic groups with respect to whether there has developed a synthesis of cross-cultural forms unique to a specific panethnic social formation. In the case of Asian Americans, the relative absence of a monolithic cultural heritage, combined with substantial intra-group resistance to a social realignment that requires each ethnic group within the APA category to shun its mother culture in favor of a new Asian-Pacific-American identity, is an important destabilizing factor. (And this is also true for other emerging panethnic identities as well).

Cultural diversity among APAs has not totally hindered the development of a cross-cultural panethnic identity. It is because ethnic diversity among APAs refers primarily to a diverse *cultural* heritage that the concept of Asian-Pacific-American panethnic identity relies on (biological) *racial* criteria. Hence, racial criteria, based on physical appearance, have a role to play in the social formation of APAs as a panethnic group.

As I have already noted, some such biological criteria seem to be presupposed when employed in the subtle fashion of mass media’s representation of the physical characteristics of APAs. Does the representation of the Asian body reiterated in mass media have a manifestation in anti-Asian racism, especially those social acts that constitute racially-motivated hate crime directed toward Asian-descended people? Asian-American scholars have pointed out that one important aspect of anti-Asian racism is the phenomenon of “lumping” all APAs into a single biological category based on physical characteristics. The murder of Vincent Chin, by a disgruntled white autoworker who blamed the Japanese auto industry for his woes, illustrates how anti-Asian racism operates with a panethnic orientation based on media-derived images of the physical characteristics of APAs. In this regard, racism is one of the external factors influencing APA panethnic identity. And, it is primarily for reasons having to do with anti-racism that the *politically* motivated APA panethnic response across cultural difference has a biological constituent.⁶

In what follows I want to draw into question this reconstitution of the biological ground of racial identity by reflecting on a selection of problems articulated by Asian Pacific Americans that reveal some of the destabilizing factors influencing APA panethnic identity. To illustrate some of these problems I consider several statements by various Asian Pacific Americans reported in *Asian Week*, a Bay area weekly newspaper.

Perhaps the most widely held view of APA identity is that it entails cultural and biological criteria. This view of culture and physique as defining characteristics of race is expressed in the following quote.

Dear Editor—I don’t think that “Asian” Indian Americans should be considered “Asian or Oriental.” American Russians are on the Asian continent, but we don’t consider them Asian. The truth is that Asian Indians do not have the same culture and physical features as “Orientals” or “Asians.” ... In addition, their skin is darker and their eyes are bigger than those of us “Orientals.”⁷

If we put aside, for the moment, the intragroup antagonism this statement reflects, the Vietnamese speaker in this case is making the point that all APAs share a similar culture and physique that Asian Indians do not have. But if culture includes religion, along with language, music and other practices, the statement represents gross ignorance of the origin and spread of Buddhism and the level of cultural contact and exchange that has transpired between India and other Asian cultures. The speaker’s failure to associate Buddhism with Indian culture is already an indication of the extent to which ethnic diversity is a politically destabilizing factor—in this case, it fosters a tendency to misrepresent the cultural difference that exists among APAs. With regard to physical characteristics, Asian Indians are only one among many of the biologically diverse APA ethnic groups. Fijians, Samoans, and Filipinos, for example, often share common physical characteristics with African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans. Until recently, Asian Indians in England were classified as black

people. Their movement from one biological category to another reflects the politics of racial identification. We can notice a political motivation for the recent shift of native Hawaiians from the APA category to the Native American category. This phenomenon shows how politics influences a social process of inclusion and exclusion, the sociological outcome of which is a panethnic identity that accommodates biological diversity.

The appeal to physique as a defining characteristic shaping the racial contours of APA identity has to accommodate its intragroup application to distinguish biological difference between APA ethnic groups other than Asian Indians. Physical characteristics are sometimes employed as a distinguishing characteristic of Hmong ethnicity. In an editorial protesting racial profiling of APAs by police searching for suspects in a gang rape in Boulder, Colorado, the following statement appeared in *Asian Week*.

Newspapers and newscasts that described them [six assailants in a gang rape of a white student from the University of Colorado, Boulder] said little more than that they were young men of Asian descent. ... And while we might have issues with something like 'dark-skinned Asian,' such detail would have at least made the description meaningful enough to be useful ... Given that there are physical differences among Asian ethnicities, it would have been a service to the overriding consideration of specificity to note that the suspects were all believed to be of Hmong descent—a fact curiously absent from most of the descriptions in newspapers and newscasts so far. Perhaps those doing the reporting weren't aware of the difference, or perhaps they thought that saying 'Hmong' was race-baiting whereas 'Asian' was not.⁸

Two key features of these remarks are the reference to "Hmong descent" and the claim that the news media reporting on the case "weren't aware of" the *physical difference* (i.e., darker skin color) between Hmong people and other APAs. The use of skin color to distinguish Hmong people as an ethnic group within APAs shows that the distinction between race, as a biological category, and ethnicity, as a reference to a cultural group within a biological category, is also employed as a primary way to distinguish between ethnic groups within a racial category. What is being protested here is the police practice of racially profiling all APAs, when the APA suspects could have been targeted more specifically.

I do not mean to imply here that this protest was meant to endorse the targeting of Chinese American espionage suspects, or Asian Indians as potential terrorists. Rather, the editor's protest of the social practice of "lumping" APAs cautiously invokes biological racial criteria to further distinguish an ethnic group within a (biological) racial category of APAs. This suggests that sometimes more than cultural criteria are used to define Asian ethnicity. Moreover, given the legacy of Japanese imperialism in Asia and current ethnic antagonism between Chinese settlers and darker natives throughout Southeast Asia, the editor's reference to skin color reiterates a racial hierarchy within APA panethnic communities that positions dark-skinned APAs at the bottom. The appeal to biological difference in this instance indicates how the "lumping" phenomenon can function politically to destabilize, as well as to solidify, APA panethnic identity.

The "lumping" phenomenon operates on the basis of stereotypes of Asian people that emanate from a racist discourse in Western culture. These stereotypes have political significance to the extent that Orientalist representations of

the Asian body, constantly reiterated in a racist culture, provide the imagery for hate crime. The controversy surrounding the animated character Mr. Wong illustrates how generational differences among APAs with regard to the reception of Asian stereotypes operate as a destabilizing factor influencing APA panethnic identity. What is at the center of the controversy is the question of whether stereotypes of Asians, specifically those that incorporate negative representations of Asian bodies, contribute to anti-Asian hate crime. Consider, for instance, what one writer for *Asian Week* points out as some of the offensive aspects of Mr. Wong's image of the Chinese servant.

Mr. Wong ... follows the adventures of a slant-eyed, bucktoothed houseboy, Mr. Wong, and his domineering WASP socialite employer, Miss Pam... Mr. Wong speaks in a highly exaggerated Chinese accent, mispronouncing his l's as r's, and is the subject of ridicule because of his speech. The site even informs the watchers that the show is 'roading' when it loads the cartoon for viewing.⁹

The company that produces the cartoon has a Chinese American board member, Lily Chang and was co-founded by an African American, Steve Stanford. Several APAs directly involved in production include Joel Kuwahara, vice president, and Colleen Murakami, production coordinator. In a survey conducted by Asianavenue.com, an online Asian Pacific American community website, over 9,000 viewers within the 18-24 year old age group were surveyed. Only 20% considered the cartoon "totally offensive" compared with 28% who found it "funny as hell." The 52% majority included 33% who considered the cartoon "offensive but laughed" and 19% who viewed it as an expression of free speech. The mixed reaction indicated by the survey reflects the impact of the civil rights movement on the social mobility of younger generation APAs who have not experienced the full brunt of racial discrimination grounded on derogatory caricatures of the "Yellow Peril."

The results of the survey also indicate a generational divide that overlaps different sociohistorical experiences of native-born and immigrant APAs (two thirds of the APA population is foreign born). With little awareness of the legacy of the Chinese Exclusion Act, Japanese Internment, and more than a century of Jim Crow exclusion, my APA students have informed me that FOB (Fresh Off the Boat) jokes are currently exchanged by younger generation APAs as part of their assimilation process. Whether or not Mr. Wong's image is viewed as demeaning by present generation APAs, the demeaning image of Asians using slant-eyed, buck-toothed physical characteristics has figured into anti-Asian hate crime—sometimes accompanied by drawings, as in the case of a lawsuit filed by Los Angeles Sheriff Brian Moriguchi against his department.¹⁰

Political activists worry that Mr. Wong's FOB image facilitates a rising tide of Asian immigrant bashing. Their racial harassment, in the form of linguistic ridicule, goes largely unchecked by social norms. What makes Shaquille O'Neal's racist humor (in the quickly squashed Yao Ming incident) so egregious, from an African-American standpoint, is that he remains unable to see that his insulting behavior is at one with the racist practice of ridiculing black dialect. But if *Charlie Chan* and *Amos n' Andy*, are no longer condemned by a younger generation of African Americans and APAs, it is difficult for activists to insist upon making this connection. O'Neil's response to his critics is the same as that of Mr. Wong's creator, Joel Kuwahara: "You just can't take it that seriously."

Sometimes the role that the body plays in racially motivated hate crime involves confusion regarding the biological categories. On August 10, 1999 Buford Furrow, an Aryan nation white supremacist, murdered Joseph Santos Iletto, a Filipino American, in a shooting rampage at the North Valley Jewish Community Center in Los Angeles. According to civil rights lawyer, Dennis Wu, "He targeted Iletto because he couldn't decide if he were a 'chink' or a 'spic.'" This provides some indication of the extent to which judgments regarding race are subjective. It also indicates a tension between cultural and biological criteria of racial identity. Are Filipinos Asian, or Latino/Hispanic, or some combination? Emil Guillermo, a columnist for *Asian Week*, doesn't like Filipino American or the panethnic label of APA. He proposes instead to use the appellation, "As-panic" to honor his Spanish name. But do we associate having a Spanish name with having Spanish blood, when often this is not so, or do we associate it with having a Spanish cultural heritage? As I have argued elsewhere, the biological diversity of Latino populations has influenced the policy of relying on primarily cultural criteria to establish Latino identity in the United States.

For my purpose here we can suppose that Filipino people are mixed-race, i.e., they are in some sense a combination of European-Spanish and Asian-native mixture, and that they have an even more diverse European-Asian mixed-cultural heritage. What about Amerasians, a panethnic ethnic group, sometimes referred to as "hapas?" Unlike Filipino Americans who can claim a cultural heritage (albeit mixed-origin) associated with the homeland of their parents, or grandparents, Amerasians are biologically mixed-race (black or white) with one Asian parent. Amerasian identity is based primarily on sociohistorical criteria and, other than an emerging cuisine that represents a blending of cultures, it does not rely on any specific cultural criteria, such as language. Tiger Wood's mother is Asian (Thai American) and his father is African-American. In the APA community he is what is known as a double-minority hapa. Although *Asian Week* has elected to recognize this status, the major media outlets have not. When Tiger Woods received his Masters jacket from Vijay Singh (of Fiji) the frontpage color photo in the San Francisco Examiner (9 April 2001) offers clear visual evidence of their similar physique, including skin color and facial features. Yet we continue to register a difference in physical characteristics (no matter how few) in order to maintain a biological distinction between South Asians and African Americans. But there is simply not much of a phenotypical, or genotypical, difference between Vijay Singh and Tiger Woods, nonetheless, for socio-political reasons they are located (by mass media) in two different biological racial categories.

The obvious solution to this conceptual confusion is to succumb to the influence of mass media and insist upon narrower biological criteria that exclude double-minority hapas (Tiger Woods) and South Asians (Vijay Singh) from the APA panethnic category. Biological and cultural diversity among APAs bodes against this option, for it is difficult to draw the boundaries of APA panethnic identity on the basis of more specific physical characteristics that would exclude people of Asian descent who do not satisfy these criteria—i.e., mixed-race APAs such as Tiger Woods and South Asians such as Vijay Singh. The political function of this exclusion has to be understood in terms of the role of the body in the social construction of APA identity. The media's orientalist influence on our perception of biological difference cannot be ignored when we think we simply see a racial difference that is obvious to everyone, that is, when someone "looks," or doesn't "look" Asian. I would like to insist that the multi-racial panethnic Asian

body (reconstructed by APAs for political purposes) that provides a biological reference for APA identity is really not the one that appears in mass media, or in anti-Asian hate crime.

Endnotes

1. Tommy L. Lott, "Racial Pride and Panethnic Identity," forthcoming in David Kim's anthology, *Passions of the Color Line*.
2. For reiterations of the three-race theory by contemporary anthropologists see, for instance, the images provided in the entry by Alan Swedlund, "Human Races," *World Book Encyclopedia* (Chicago: World Book, Inc., 1999), pp. 53-54 and the diagram included in the entry by R.C. Lewontin, "Race" *Encyclopedia Americana* (Danbury, CT: Grolier, Inc., 1996). For a critical discussion of the relation between popular conceptions of race and scientific conceptions see Naomi Zack, *Philosophy of Science and Race* (New York: Routledge, 2002).
3. See Naomi Zack, "Philosophy and Racial Paradigms," in Tommy L. Lott and John P. Pittman, eds., *A Companion to African-American Philosophy* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), pp. 239-254 and F. James Davis, "The Hawaiian Alternative to the One-Drop Rule" in Naomi Zack, ed., *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdiversity* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1995), pp. 115-132.
4. For a discussion of the phenomenon of racial metamorphosis and racial categories see Ian F. Haney-Lopez, *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996) and Linda Martin Alcoff, "Towards a Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment," *Radical Philosophy* 95 (May/June 1999): 15-26.
5. For a discussion of the various criteria see Yen Le Espiritu, *Asian American Panethnicity: Bridging Institutions and Identities* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1992) and Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996).
6. Cf. Espiritu, pp. 140ff.
7. Van Trang (San Jose, CA) in a letter to the editor of *Asian Week* (14 October 1999): 4.
8. Editorial, *Asian Week* (16 Sept 99): 4.
9. Tom Lee, "Cartoon Seeped in Ethnic Stereotypes Say Critics," *Asian Week* (27 July 00): 11.
10. Jason Ma, "API Sheriff Settles Suit with L.A. County," *Asian Week* (9 March 2000): 10.