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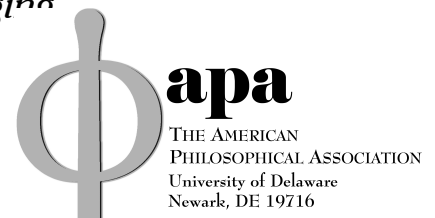
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Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies

Gary Mar, Editor

Spring 2011

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“APPROACHING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11 THROUGH ASIAN/AMERICAN EYES”

A Panel at the American Philosophical Association
Pacific Division Annual Meeting, April 20, 2011

Editor's Introduction

Gary Mar
Stony Brook University

How can Asian American perspectives and philosophy provide knowledge and insight into ending the decade of destructive consequences resulting from the nation's reactions to 9/11? A panel at the Pacific Division meeting in San Diego sponsored by the APA Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies addressed this question as well as these:

- Was the proliferation of flag waving immediately after 9/11 a symptom of the nation's inability to grieve and to mask this deficiency with militaristic machismo and eschatological allusions to “shock and awe”?
- Was President Bush's call after 9/11 for patriotic Americans to continue shopping a symptom of a national addiction that contributed to the real estate bubble and economic collapse of 2008? What, in the words of Alexis de Tocqueville, is the source of “a strong melancholy that haunts the inhabitants...in the midst of abundance”?
- How has 9/11 shaped our increasingly militarized immigration policy towards Latinos in America and the peoples of South America?
- Why was patriotism confused with intolerance of dissenting views as the nation marched towards a “war on terror,” which, by definition, unlike a police action, had no definitive ending?
- Why did the nation fail to consider the consequences of a “war on terror” abroad on the safeguarding of democracy at home? Why didn't George W. Bush learn from the apology letter signed by his father George H. W. Bush to Japanese Americans interned during World War II as his administration invoked the infamous 1944 *Korematsu* case even though it had been vacated by the Supreme Court on a *coram nobis* appeal in 1984?

- How did the failure to address the question, “Why do they hate us?” spill over to anti-Muslim hysteria and anti-Asian hate crimes?

The panelists were **George Lipsitz** (Black Studies at U. C. Santa Barbara, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the African American Policy Forum, and member of the Board of Directors of the National Fair Housing Alliance), **Mary Watkins** (Core Faculty and Coordinator of Community and Ecological Fieldwork and Research in the M.A./Ph.D. Depth Psychology Program, Pacifica Graduate Institute), and **Gary Okihiro** (International and Public Affairs and Founding Director of the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, Columbia University). The panel was chaired and organized by **Gary Mar**.

ARTICLES

Affinities, Affiliations, and Alliances: Why Asian American Perspectives Matter Now

George Lipsitz
University of California, Santa Barbara

In the wake of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, Eric Yamamoto and Susan Kiyomi Serrano drew on the historical memory of the Asian American movement to foreground the importance of “the loaded weapon” analogy. Initially uttered by Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson in his dissent against the majority opinion in the *Korematsu* Case that justified the Japanese internment, Jackson warned against allowing governments to use emergencies and states of exception to undertake illegal actions. He warned that once governments were given those powers, they would not give them up, that they would be like a loaded weapon “ready for the hand of any authority that can bring forward a plausible claim of an urgent need.”¹ Yamamoto and Kiyomi Serrano anticipated exactly what we have witnessed over the past decade, not only legalized first strike wars and racial profiling, but also abandonment of the right to due process, to know the charges one faces, to confront one's accuser, and to be free from torture. The loaded gun on the legal front has its equivalents on the policy front. Once social welfare benefits are denied to undocumented immigrants, it paves the way for denying them to legal immigrants. Once they have been denied to legal immigrants, it is easier to deny them to citizens. Once tax breaks for the wealthy are financed through cuts in benefits to the poor, the sick, the disabled, and the elderly, the precedent has been set for financing them through cuts to civil servants and increases in user fees and payroll taxes for the middle class.

In recalling Justice Jackson's warning about the "loaded weapon," Yamamoto and Kiyomi Serrano drew on the situated knowledge of Asian Americans. In a moment of danger, the memory of the Japanese internment "flashed up" to them with particular relevance and force. They remembered what members of the dominant racial group felt they could afford to forget. Yamamoto and Kiyomi Serrano's prophecy was not mysticism or chance, but rather a prediction made possible by their situated exclusion from what Mills describes as "the epistemology of white ignorance, which he describes as *'the failure to ask certain questions'*, taking for granted as a status quo and baseline the existing color-coded configurations of wealth, poverty, property, and opportunities, the pretence that formal, juridical equality is sufficient to remedy inequities created on a foundation of several hundred years of racial privilege, and that challenging that foundation is a transgression of the terms of the social contract."² Mills notes that "White moral theory's debates on justice in the state must therefore inevitably have a somewhat farcical air, since they ignore the central injustice on which the state rests."³ For people connected to the situated knowledges of aggrieved communities of color, however, Mills notes that "the 'ideal speech situation' requires our absence, since we are, literally, the men and women *who know too much*, who—in that wonderful American expression—*know where the bodies are buried* (after all, so many of them are our own)."⁴

The prescient warning about 9/11 from Japanese American legal scholars resembles the profound critique of the elevation of property rights over human rights emanating from the Black freedom movement of the 1960s. As trade union and civil rights leader Philip Randolph explained to the March on Washington on August 28, 1963, "The sanctity of private property takes second place to the sanctity of the human personality. It falls to the Negro to reassert this priority of values, because our ancestors were transformed from human personalities into private property. It falls to us to demand full employment, and to put automation at the service of human needs, not at the service of profits." The events of 9/11 had a slightly different feel for politically conscious Asian Americans than they did for members of other groups. As Helen Zia recalls explaining her decision to attend a community event shortly after the tragedy, "All I wanted to do was to stay home with Lia, my life partner, to create the illusion of a safe haven from the madness. But as a 'perpetual foreigner,' I also knew that Asian Americans could ill afford to retreat and be silent, so I willed myself to go."⁵

The tradition that Yamamoto, Kiyomi Serrano, and Zia drew upon is a powerful one. The interpretations, analyses, and actions that created Asian America as an intellectual and political project contain unique insights about citizenship and social membership, about exclusion and assimilation, about patriotism and patriarchy, about solidarities of sameness and dynamics of difference. Asian American Studies remembers the history that people in power want us to forget. Asian American Studies is an archive of politicized identities, a repository of collective memory about citizenship and the state and about exclusion and empire, as well as a mechanism for envisioning and enacting creative coalitions. Like similar race-based institutions created by African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos, Asian American Studies teaches people to turn negative ascription into positive affirmation, to respond to the radical divisiveness in the life of aggrieved communities with exuberant solidarity, and to transform brutal dehumanization into creative re-

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humanization. Asian American Studies has been an important alternative academy within the academy, a site where collective responsibility and mutual recognition are learned and legitimated. More an ungainly force field than a unified political or ideological project, Asian American Studies has produced a unique optic on identity, empire, and power. It has been a generative site for envisioning and enacting seemingly unlikely coalitions emanating from the needs and desires of new social groups produced by current conditions.

Of all the ethnic studies projects in the U.S., Asian American Studies has been the most resistant to essentialism and narrow nationalism. Asian American Studies scholars and activists have championed the importance of deriving identities from politics rather than believing that politics will flow from identities. As the late Chris Iijima argued,

Asian American identity was originally meant to be a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It was created as an organizing tool to mobilize Asians to participate in the progressive movements of the times. It was as much a mechanism to identify with one another as to identify with the struggles of others whether it was African Americans or Asians overseas, and that it was less a marker of what one was and more a marker of what one believed.⁶

While of course plagued by the same kinds of jealousies, rivalries, and conflicts that all groups experience, the project of Asian America created a complex composite collective identity out of a polity composed of people speaking different languages, practicing different religions, doing different kinds of work, and characterized by no single pigment or phenotype. Out of political necessity, the Asian American movement created an identity that did not require people to be identical, a unity without uniformity forged tactically by appreciating differences yet recognizing similarities. In a society suffused with possessive individualism, hostile privatism, and defensive localism, the project of Asian America has crafted flexible, dynamic, and strategically productive ways of thinking about *we* instead of *me*. The same creative identity work that enables the Asian American pan-ethnic coalition to exist has also enabled Asian Americans to play prominent roles in race-based movements by other groups evidenced by Ed Nakawatase's work with the Black Freedom movement in Mississippi, Grace Lee Boggs' organizing in the Black community in Detroit, Yuri Kochiyama's service to Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity and to the Puerto Rican Independence movement in New York, and Richard Aoki's participation in the Black Panther Party in Oakland. Drawing identities from politics has even enabled Asian American activists to play prominent roles in mobilizing Latino/a immigrant workers against Asian capitalists through activism at the New Otani hotel in Los Angeles owned by the Japanese Kajima Company and against immigrant Korean capitalists in the restaurant industry.

Sometimes it is capital that makes seemingly unlikely coalitions possible and necessary. Activists from Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates in Los Angeles could not help the 78 Thai workers held in virtual slavery in a garment sweatshop in El Monte without assisting the 55 Latino/a workers imprisoned there at the same time. Asian Immigrant Women Advocates in Oakland found that the language domination workshops the group organized for Korean-speaking and Mandarin-speaking low-wage immigrant women workers proceeded even more

effectively when they held joint sessions with Spanish speakers being organized by the group *Mujeres unidas y activas*.

In a neo-liberal society where market times and spaces occlude social and historical times and spaces, the Asian American movement is important because of the history it remembers and its recognition of the ways in which the patterns of the past still shape possibilities and perils in the present. Scholars and activists in Asian American Studies draw on the situated knowledges of people whose ancestors and contemporaries have been eyewitnesses to low-wage labor and war, to empire and exploitation, to vigilante violence and sexual racism. White America's conventional historical narrative of linear progress means something quite different to communities who have faced histories of racist barriers to naturalized citizenship, alien land laws that prohibited the acquisition of property and mass internment with its forced sale of assets. The celebratory masculinist militarism of U.S. political culture has a distinct and particular resonance for people whose personal and collective histories have been shaped by direct U.S. military conflicts in China, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The tension between the nation's promises of universal inclusion and its practices of differentiated exclusion pervades the lives of people who face the collective, continuing, and cumulative consequences of raced and gendered labor exploitation, sexual racism and racist sexism, unacknowledged and unprosecuted vigilante violence, cultural ridicule and exclusion, language discrimination, and immigration and welfare laws that mete out different treatment and produce different levels of social membership for citizens, legal residents, aliens, and undocumented workers.

The analyses, attitudes, and opinions honed and refined inside Asian American Studies have enormous relevance for activism outside the academy. Asian American Studies students and teachers have done important work inside community coalitions like the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence in New York, Khmer Girls in Action in Long Beach, the Asian Pacific Environmental Network's Laotian Organizing Project in Richmond, and Asian Immigrant Women Advocates in Oakland and San Jose. AIWA's work among low wage and limited-English speaking women workers is particularly important because it implements in action the principles of intersectionality, differential consciousness, and hybridity, heterogeneity, and multiplicity that have been at the heart of women of color feminism in Asian American Studies specifically and ethnic studies more generally. AIWA relies on intersectional organizing, an approach which rejects the subordination of one oppression to another and recognizes the ways in which the dynamics of power and inequality are inscribed and reproduced on multiple scales from the body and the household to the workplace and the broader life of the community. Its strategy is designed to enable participants to recognize, analyze, and address the overlapping layers of marginality and discrimination in their lives.

AIWA recognizes that people belittled for their accents and their not yet fully developed skills in the English language are also multilingual critics capable of identifying and opposing language oppression in workplaces, schools, and public spaces and documents. Women workers who suffer from headaches, muscle aches, nausea, and skin rashes are not merely victims, but also *de facto* experts on workplace health and safety capable of making substantive social change. AIWA has also been attentive to the intersections that complicate women's status as workers with their socially defined roles as mothers, daughters, and sisters. Leadership training, workplace literacy classes, and instruction in computer use all compel women to insist on taking time for themselves and meeting their own needs.

That insistence frequently leads to renegotiation of family roles and responsibilities, changing not only the lives of these working women, but of their spouses, children, parents, and siblings as well. The social world created within AIWA also offers women opportunities for purposeful and caring relations with other women who are not blood relations, building a new sense of personhood and possibility among women accustomed to pressures to define themselves exclusively in relation to family roles and identities. As participants proceed through successive steps, they discover that differences in skills, abilities, experiences, and capacities can be sources of mutual learning and organizational innovation rather than impediments to efficiency and success.

Important new work by Asian American scholars across the disciplines is emerging in this moment of danger. It is research that mounts epistemological critiques of citizenship and racial formation, reveals the hidden history of collective, cumulative, and continuing racial projects rather than just personal experiences with exclusion, explores how seemingly quotidian practices in everyday life encode larger meaning, interrogates how national cultures include and exclude, how they link patriotism to patriarchy, how aggrieved groups perform normativity in hopes of pleasing their oppressors and in the process dis-identify with non-normative members of their own groups. This research focuses on Asian Americans but deftly deploys intersectional, comparative, and relational approaches to reveal the polylocal contours of power.

In *A Freedom With Violence*, Chandan Reddy addresses the nexus of security and state power through a discussion of the insertion of the Shepard-Byrd hate crime bill inside a bill authorizing defense appropriations. A bill extending enforcement of laws against hate crimes to people targeted for violence because of their sexuality might seem like a freedom from violence, but Reddy's discussions of the ways in which gay and lesbian inclusion into citizen rights is premised on the exclusionary violence of empire, on the ways in which "Don't Ask Don't Tell" supports a homophobia that is productively seen as racial in its recourse to excessive violence approved by the state makes a different argument. Reddy examines how asylum law and other instruments regulating global human rights perpetuate the preconditions for violence embodied in rights-based freedoms (the right to have rights). By establishing the figure of the individual citizen "as the subject of knowledge and the trope of unity," and by promising to protect the citizen against irrational violence by the pervasive deployment of violence, the legal order regulating the behavior of nation states produces the non-normativity it purports to prevent.

Asylum policy and immigration law work to make immigrants increasingly dependent on hetero-patriarchal relations. This makes the "queer of color" immigrant a "non-individuated, non-rights bearing" subject in order to obscure the causes and consequences of migration, exploitation, and war, while protecting the illusion of the liberal isomorphism of family, society, and state. Reddy shows that the evisceration of the welfare state does not make the state less central to the lives of immigrants, but instead puts state power behind seemingly private institutions designated as administrators of social welfare like religion and the family. As Avery Gordon notes, when the state abandons you, it never leaves you alone. Yet Reddy notes the possibilities that emerge from this era, how capital's tendency to produce heterogeneities conflicts with the state's imperatives to demand heteronormative homogeneity.

By focusing on the disciplinary work done by "family reunification," Reddy explains how the gendered and racialized low-wage work force of the U.S. relies on what Joel Kovel called the administrative mode of family formation. Reddy reveals how

the state externalizes the costs of social welfare onto families but also creates new forms of vulnerability to exploitation by charging churches and families with policing non-normativity in immigrant communities. Analyzing the seeming coincidence of the insertion of the Matthew Shepard-James Byrd federal anti-hate crimes act within the appropriation of funds for war in Iraq and Afghanistan, Reddy reveals how human rights for gays and lesbians become figured as state benevolence in return for a kind of homonormativity in which queer subjects take up the project of the state as their own. Yet this process cannot proceed smoothly because anti-gay violence plays a constitutive role in fomenting the forms of transgression and calculated cruelty upon which the state relies. In order to fight “irrational” violence and promote fantasies of sovereign state power, the state must emulate its enemies and promote among its citizens the very irrationality it claims to prevent.

Reddy cites the uses of the *Loving* decision to illuminate how an impoverished understanding of history is generated by the ways in which struggles for social inclusion are channeled away from their own histories of counter-memory and counter-modernity. Modern inclusion requires deracination and interchangeability, viewing difference as a problem to be obscured or overcome rather than as a generative source of what Nayan Shah calls “stranger intimacies.” Reddy shows how the elevation of the right to marry as a key civil right creates a false universality that hides differences of race and gender.

In his discussion of the battles over California’s Proposition 8, Reddy explains that before we decide which side we support we need to see how the opposing positions are both structured in dominance. Reddy reveals how a seemingly simple demand for democratic inclusion has implications far beyond resolution of the immediate controversy. In an argument that evokes Daniel HoSang’s important discovery of liberal presumptions undergirding seemingly racist and illiberal ballot initiatives in California from the 1940s to the present, Reddy finds in the arguments raised by proponents of the ban on gay marriage assumptions rooted in the New Deal welfare state. Opponents’ arguments have their own unusual genealogy in Reddy’s framework. He shows that these positions pose as the extension and culmination of the work of the civil rights movement of the 1960s yet really owe more to an under-theorized embrace of neo-liberal categories and concerns. Valuable for Reddy’s own arguments, this section opens the door to a thorough revision of U.S. political history and contemporary political divisions.

In his new research on race, radicalism, and repression, Moon-ho Jung asks and answers difficult questions about the importance of experiences with colonialism in Asia in shaping the political consciousness of immigrants to the U.S. from that continent, as well as about the ways in which wars and economic expansion in Asia served as a testing ground for policies of surveillance and social control at home. Jung identifies the origins of many of today’s security apparatuses in the history of late nineteenth and early twentieth century U.S. campaigns against Asian radicalism on both sides of the Pacific. This is an original and generative thesis, one that addresses historians’ tendency to neglect the Pacific and overemphasize the Atlantic in assessing the geopolitical concerns of the state. Jung’s project provides empirical evidence about the causes and consequences of the frequently asserted claim about Asians as quintessential signifiers of foreignness in U.S. politics and culture. His research helps explain the links that connect the state, counter-subversion, and imperial expansion. His research addresses the recurring tensions in contemporary racial studies about the relative importance of international anti-colonialism and internal national civil rights histories. Within Asian American Studies, this book will help demonstrate that the diasporic and

civil rights approaches can be complementary rather than competitive, a lesson of enormous importance of the study of other racialized groups as well. Building on Uday Singh Mehta’s formulation that the history of liberalism is inseparable from the history of empire, Jung promises to explore the different identities diasporic Asian radicals inhabited at home and abroad, not just as immigrants to the U.S., but also as imperial subjects, witnesses to war, and insurgents against colonial rule. Jung continues the re-evaluation of U.S. military action in the Philippines that has animated recent scholarship by Oscar Campomanes, Allan Isaac, Jody Blanco, Viet Nguyen, and others, while at the same time picking up a relatively neglected thread of argument about the importance of homeland experiences and politics in the lives of Asian immigrants in the U.S.

Sunaina Maira’s *Missing* is a carefully researched and beautifully written account of the experiences, ideas, and opinions of South Asian Muslim immigrant children in the United States who find themselves deemed enemies of the state through no fault of their own in the aftermath of 9/11. Through a deft blend of ethnography and cultural critique, Maira demonstrates how the expanding reach and power of the nation state overseas leads to new forms of disciplinary control at home inside schools, workplaces, media imagery, and immigration law.

Originating out of an ethnographic research project funded by the Russell Sage Foundation on working-class immigrant high school students, the book is a perfect combination of micro-social detail and macro-social context. It is a carefully researched and brilliantly designed study of the experiences, ideas, and opinions of South Asian Muslim immigrant children in the United States who suddenly found themselves after 9/11 portrayed as enemies of their new nation by significant figures in the culture industry and the national security state. Maira closely chronicles how accounts of their experiences by these young people illuminate the ways in which the expanding reach and power of the U.S. economy and nation state overseas has led to new forms of disciplinary control at home, especially inside schools, workplaces, media imagery, and implementation of immigration laws. Yet like most successful ethnographers, Maira goes beyond the subjective perceptions of her research subjects to locate their testimony in its full social and historical context. She draws on advanced new scholarly research on the changing contours of citizenship to locate the stories told by the students she studies within emerging practices that she describes as flexible citizenship, multicultural and polycultural citizenship, and dissenting citizenship.

In her work *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and Cold War Compositions*, Jodi Kim examines a wide range of works of expressive culture to delineate the ways in which Cold War discourses have shaped the contours of identity for different Asian American groups. She argues that wars in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam produced key parts of the national imagination of the U.S., complicating Asian American claims for inclusion in the national polity and culture. *Ends of Empire* also makes a significant contribution by identifying how a nexus of gender-sex-race has defined the categories of inclusion and exclusion for Asians in North America, but also produced critical ruminations by Asian Americans on the links connecting normative citizenship and subjectivity to particular sexed, gendered, and raced identities.

By taking this approach, Kim does more than “add on” experiences by Asian Americans that are usually left out of works of cultural criticism and political history. Instead, she uses the situated historical and social positions of Asian immigrants and their descendents as colonial subjects, witnesses to war and empire, participants in low wage labor, and targets of

negative ascription to reveal how these identities lead to the production of unique archives, imaginaries, epistemologies, and ontologies. What is important in this formulation is not what has been *done to* Asian Americans or even what they have *done for* themselves, but rather the unique optics on power, culture, and social identities to be found in works of expressive culture by Asian Americans. Kim reveals how works of art by Asian Americans register and resist the inscriptions of Cold War ways of thinking. They document neither simple exclusion from the nation nor uncritical embrace of it, but rather continuing critical and contradictory engagements with its core categories and beliefs. At the same time, this work makes us rethink the Cold War, to see it as a civil war *inside* the west that had some of its most deadly consequences in Asia, to rethink its periodization between 1946 and 1989 by understanding how it interacted with prior histories of colonialism and modernization as well as with its afterlife in subsequent Manichean and binary oppositions deployed in the war on terror after 1989.

Ends of Empire makes important contributions to American Studies by showing how the Cold War in general, and how hot wars in Asia in particular, played central roles in shaping national and personal identities from the mid-twentieth century onward. It reveals the Cold War to be a way of knowing and a cultural product whose influence persists despite the demise of Soviet communism in 1989. It places the project of empire at the center rather than at the margins of U.S. society and its social imagination.

The book reveals how political and cultural projects of identity and national identification have been influenced by the aims and ends of empire. Unlike many studies of U.S. national identity, this book focuses on the nation's presence in the world and the world's presence in the nation. It delineates the ways in which U.S. nationalism has been a transnational project, how what W.E.B. Du Bois (and more recently Amy Kaplan) calls the anarchy of empire creates new categories of differentiation at home as well as abroad, and how the cultural project of empire contains inescapable sexed, gendered, and raced dimensions. Elaine Tyler May, Stephen Whitfield, Alan Nadel, and David Savan (among others) have argued previously for the centrality of the Cold War in shaping U.S. culture in the postwar period, but *Ends of Empire* hones and refines these arguments by revealing the importance of actual war in Asia to Cold War culture. Kim's book demonstrates how Asian American cultural production contains critiques that unsettle the stabilities that Cold War culture creates and requires. Several American Studies scholars have focused on how engagement with particular Asian countries has shaped U.S. culture (Thomas J. McCormick, John Dower, Bruce Cummings, Susan Jeffords, Katherine Kinney, Marilyn Young, Nick Browne), but Kim is the first to present a comparative and relational study of the cumulative effects of continuous war in Asia in different national contexts starting in the 1940s.

At the same time, *Ends of Empire* makes major contributions to Asian American Studies. In a field too often split between those who advocate an approach stressing global anti-colonialism and those championing a nation-based civil

rights approach, Kim shows that the two approaches cannot be separated. By foregrounding the Asian American cultural response to wars in Asia as an unsettling hermeneutic, *Ends of Empire* shows how Asian American cultural producers do not seek simple entry into—nor do they accept simple exclusion from—the politics of the U.S. Instead, they produce a sustained critical engagement with it fueled by what Fredric Jameson calls “the hurts of history,” the things that cannot be forgotten. Vexed by what Lisa Lowe calls “the impossibility of the Asian American liberal subject,” these cultural producers call into question practices that link normative raced, gendered, and sexed identities, and instead imagine new forms of affiliation, identity, and identification that exist both within and beyond the nation state. Kim's close, careful, and creative readings of literature and film reveal critical genealogies of imperialism waiting to be unearthed in Asian American cultural production by discerning and knowing readers and viewers.

Kim asks and answers hard questions in *Ends of Empire*. She sees her analysis through to the end, explaining in her epilogue how the “critical longings, enactments, and embodiments” in the texts she critiques point toward a not-yet-realized hope for an end to empire itself. Yet her book explains that this is not a simple project, that it is not merely a matter of will, but rather a challenge that requires understanding how culture serves as a site where knowledge and meaning are both instantiated and resisted, how “the officially unknowable” lies submerged inside unauthorized and unofficial knowledges. Anthropologist Katherine Verdery was one of the first scholars to call for understanding the Cold War not just as an historical event but also as a powerful epistemology. Drawing on the brilliant work of Donald Pease, Kim offers us the first fully realized cultural analysis of how that epistemology has worked—and continues to work—to occlude and suppress other ways of knowing and being.

This work grounded in the situated knowledges of Asian Americans promotes new professional priorities. In addition to the mastery of empirical knowledge and difficult methods prized in the academy, this work also calls for social intervention. It tries to change the world it studies. Yet this emphasis on intervention does not lessen the demands on scholars. On the contrary, asking and answering questions important to people with whose struggles we identify compels us to do our work even better. Drawing on the experiences of large groups of people with firsthand knowledge of the conditions we study brings scholars in contact quickly with multiple standpoints and perspectives. This kind of research promotes an honest reckoning with the narrow range of experiences generally represented in academic conversations and subjects preliminary findings to knowing critiques from interlocutors with otherwise inaccessible knowledge. It is in its own way a “loaded gun” for the other side, an archive and inventory of perspectival knowledge and critique available for all people struggling for social justice in the face of the increasingly indecent and unjust social relations of our time.

Endnotes

1. Eric Yamamoto and Susan Kiyomi Serrano, “The Loaded Weapon,” in *Asian Americans on War & Peace*, ed. Russell

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- C. Leong and Don T. Nakanishi (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 2002), 63.
2. Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 73.
 3. *Ibid.*, 39.
 4. *Ibid.*, 132.
 5. Helen Zia, "Oh, Say, Can You See? Post September 11," in *Asian Americans on War & Peace*, ed. Russell C. Leong and Don T. Nakanishi (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 2002), 2.
 6. Chris Iijima, "Pontifications on the Distinction between Grains of Sand and Yellow Pearls," in *Asian Americans: The Movement and the Moment*, ed. Steve Louis and Glenn Omatsu (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian American Studies Center Press, 2001), 7.

The Shame of Forcibly Displacing Others: 9/11 and the Criminalization of Immigration

Mary Watkins*

Pacifica Graduate Institute

What are psychologies of liberation?

Jesuit and social psychologist Ignacio Martín-Baró (1994), who worked for justice and freedom from violence in El Salvador, first named "liberation psychology." He was assassinated in 1989 by paramilitary forces trained by the United States. Through the exercise of prophetic imagination, liberation psychologies hold open the possibility of a world, of regions, of nations, communities, families, and psyches that are graced by increasing justice, peace, and sustainability. Their orientation begins with deep listening into people's experiences in the face of injustice, violence, and environmental degradation, and proceeds to collaborative critical inquiry to discern the dynamics that reproduce these conditions. This requires deconstructing dominant histories that distort the past and perpetuate injustice, profiting those who hold more power. People's histories are supported. This opens the way to create and undertake actions that can transform pernicious dynamics into ones that can be generative of—in Freire's (1989) words—a "world in which it will be easier to love" (24).

The arts are used to express the current dilemma, to empower artists and their audiences to see through lies and distortions, to announce forgotten history, to name and image their experiences, present its dynamics, and to imagine a world otherwise. Psychologies of liberation (Watkins and Shulman 2008) pay attention to the intrapsychic structures and affects that are residues of oppression for victims and perpetrators (and all those lying between these poles), outlining how they can be metabolized to create new forms of relations unmarked by the misuse and abuse of others. In this paper I will work from the fear occasioned by 9/11 to its misguided fueling of the criminalization of migrants who have been scapegoated. I will end with a consideration of the restorative potentialities of shame at displacing others.

Listening

First, for me—and I suspect for many of you—the actions of the perpetrators of 9/11 exposed how deeply I had not been listening to the experiences of those in the area of the world

they came from. I was confronted with how little I knew of the history of their regions, and the dynamics out of which their suffering exploded into a horrific violence that pierced the peace of a great and vibrant city, throwing a nation into fear. I listened closely to the words of bin Laden, and as the days passed and delivered us into a war waged under false pretences, I felt the room for dissent close around me. It became more difficult to announce how much sense bin Laden's words made to me, and what I was learning from them. Some of us were trying to address the important question: "Why do they hate us?" In the absence of any dialogue with those involved in or in favor of the 9/11 attacks, in the presence of state narratives that were largely based on lies and conscious efforts at social deception and manipulation of public opinion, it remains important—even ten years later—to carefully study the words of bin Laden who did offer his own perspective. We can listen to his words not to support his perspective; it is not to be a subversive to the U.S., or anti-Israel, or to endorse the use of violence or the attacking of civilians. It is to try to understand a perspective rather than to disappear it, so that we might be able to mitigate against the conditions that were part of what fed the anger and the eventual violence.

In his "Statement to the 'Infidel' Nations" on October 7, 2001, bin Laden inquires whether the American people can ask themselves "why all this hate against America and Israel." At the top of his list of American offenses is its role in the creation of Israel, what bin Laden calls "a continuous crime for 50 years." Next, bin Laden claims that 9/11 resulted from Americans supporting the government policies toward Israel and the empowerment of dictators. He applauds the fear created by 9/11, claiming that this is a little of what Islam has been tasting for the last 80 years. He says that we in America "will never dream," "never taste security and safety" unless Palestinians and Muslims feel security and safety in their lands. In other speeches, bin Laden makes it clear that 9/11 was also a violent blow back for U.S. military being too near to Islamic holy sites, our intrusiveness into Arab affairs, and our colonizing of Islamic cultural space.

bin Laden asks why the American government is "supporting the rotten governments of our countries." Ten years later this sentence strikes a much more familiar note, as we watch the present administration hesitate to support Arab pro-democracy protesters, fearful of losing the dictators who have accommodated American military and economic interests.

Critical inquiry to discern repeating dynamics of problematic situation: Forced displacement

In his list of concerns bin Laden not only sees us being where we should not be (militarily present in other people's lands), but supportive of the forced displacement of Palestinians. To listen to this with the ear of history, we cannot help but hear the repeating chords in our nation's history that effect tragic forced displacements, chords that continue to sound in present policies of detention and deportation of largely Mexicans.

America as a nation was built on forced displacements and the derogation and often death of those who resist. Perhaps one reason we have been so supportive of Israeli policies of occupation and displacement is that we have so normalized and neutralized them in our own whitewashed history. Our national history is full of genocide and displacement of native peoples, the displacement of Africans for the slave trade, and then, after slavery, their forced displacement from communities through methods of terror (lynchings, burnings of businesses and homes) and systematic withholding of justice and equality.

To this list we must add the displacement of Mexicans from their national land in 1848. The land grab allowed believers in manifest destiny to have America own all the land "from sea to shining sea." They felt justified in using terror to forcibly displace

those of Mexican descent, including U.S. citizens, from the broad swath of what had suddenly become the United States. The lynching of Mexicans¹ and the burning of their homes and businesses were the methods of terror used to forcibly displace entire communities. Their history and pueblos were steadily removed, erasing Mexicans' former rightful claims.

In a remarkable sleight-of-mind, Mexicans are now seen as illegal intruders and aliens. Many Americans feel entitled to use migrants' labor when it suits them, denying them the rights given to citizens, and then self-righteously arguing for their forcible extrusion when it is convenient due to economic downturns.

Out of the fear that was engendered by the attacks of 9/11, the United States heightened attempts to secure its borders. The earlier effort to do this was begun in earnest in 1994 in concert with the passage of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement. This agreement flooded the Mexican market with U.S. corn, made cheap by U.S. government farm subsidies. It undercut the price of Mexican corn, the country's staple crop, and led to the bankruptcy of millions of small farmers. While Mexican government corruption has also contributed to the hunger of millions of Mexicans, it is important for Americans to know that our own governmental policies contributed very substantially to the magnitude of the migration from Mexico that is now being complained of. This includes our failures to legalize drugs and to create adequate gun control policies. These failures create much of the violence in Mexico from which citizens are having to flee. Mexicans were also drawn to the border region to work in massive manufacturing plants that were set up in the newly created free trade zone. As capital shifted to areas of the world with cheaper labor, Mexican workers were stranded in a place far from home but close to the United States and it is hardly surprising that they came north to feed and sustain themselves and their families.

Re-definition of the migrant "Other" from one who belongs to a criminal thief

Liberation psychology tracks the ways we define the other and ourselves, knowing these definitions are prone to manipulation for self-serving ends. Before the Great Depression Mexicans were valued for their labor and their purported attributes. They were compared favorably to Asians and Eastern Europeans on the grounds that they were not aspiring to become citizens, and so would not drain the resources of the U.S. Their allegiance lay with Mexico. They were not seen as communists, and thereby not feared to create political unrest. Once the Depression hit, the United States sponsored the mass expulsion of immigrants. While Mexicans in the 1930s were only 1% of the immigrant population, they were 50% of those formally deported, and 80% of "voluntary" departures (Flores 2003, 363). Lisa Flores (2003) states that while the overt rhetoric for the deportation drive at that time was job scarcity, its underlying agenda was to create an atmosphere of fear that would produce massive voluntary repatriation. There are estimates that a half million Mexicans and Mexican Americans repatriated out of fear of the hostile anti-Mexican climate that was cultivated during the 1930s by media and government. This number included U.S. citizens of Mexican descent.



Triple wall construction on the U.S. side of the San Diego/Tijuana, Mexico border.

As Flores (2003) describes in her review of how Mexicans were portrayed in the media of the early 1930s, there were two prevailing narratives about Mexican workers in the U.S., one characterizing them as fulfilling a national need, and the other as constituting a national threat. When Mexicans were viewed through the lens of national need, they were hardly seen as valuable and precious individuals. Mexicans were seen as "peons," with qualities of docility, lack of ambition, ignorance, agreeableness, easily controlled as workers, comfortable with submission to authority, timid, painfully eager to conform, and well-behaved. They were purported to be only interested in earning a scant amount of money to provide for their own meager support and entertainment, and that they were eager to return home. Taking over the society was not on their minds, in contrast to the purported "yellow perils" from Asia and the Eastern Europeans who were presumed to be communists. The narrative of threat, on the other hand, emphasized Mexicans appearing in unexpected parts of the United States and beginning to settle there, challenging the sense that they were only interested in being temporary workers.

Mexicans, says Flores (2003), had been able to live in a space "outside the national body" (373) while in the U.S.

Increasingly the media seized on the narrative of threat, providing rhetorical arguments that served as a back-up to the use of police and immigration officials (Flores 2003). While Mexican laborers may have temporarily benefited from being positively compared to the Chinese, who were banned through the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the same kind of racism that gave rise to that act soon bore its strange fruit in efforts to exclude Mexicans from the racial composition of American life. The same characterizations that had demeaned Chinese immigrants now came to rest on Mexican immigrants: disease-ridden, criminally disposed,

drug-dependent. The same population of Mexican laborers that had been lauded for their hard work and docility were transposed through the narrative of threat to "imported vermin," "alien dope dealers," communists, and dangerous and menacing criminals. Those promulgating such rhetoric seized the power to shape discourse about the permissible and impermissible roles for Mexicans in U.S. society, and to figuratively re-inscribe the border between "Americans" and "Mexicans," neglecting those many citizens of Mexican descent.

What is of particular note about this period for our own is the way in which entry into the United States became conceived of as criminal. The emphasis on criminality and the criminalization of entry combined to provide a rhetorical space in which the Mexican body became a criminal body (Flores 2003, 376).

Once entry became criminalized by categorizing it as a felony, the term illegal alien became more commonplace. People without documents who had criminal histories were confused in the public imagination with Mexicans who had entered without documents but who had worked hard and made many contributions to their local American communities. Flores (2003) reports how the Mexican immigrant is imagined as stealing into the nation, as a burglar would steal into a home: "Their theft included the taking of jobs and other limited resources from deserving Americans" (377). "The conflation of criminality and immigration status positioned Mexicans as

part of the problem and the solution” (377). Citizens who were Mexican American were swept up in the deportation drive and deported illegally. Social service agents warned Mexican families to depart voluntarily before they were deported and barred from re-entry later. Cities passed legislation barring Mexicans from employment on state and federally funded projects. In the 1920s poor Mexicans were seen as particularly prone to tuberculosis and infestations, and were subjected at the border to degrading rituals of cleansings, line inspections while naked, and spraying with DDT. Other nationals and Mexicans who arrived in first class train compartments were spared these humiliations.

The complex questions of what had caused the Depression, of who and what were responsible for the unemployment and misery that resulted, were answered summarily: Mexicans. Similar things are happening now. Once again Mexicans are being defined out of the national body by right-winged media, local legislation, and a corporate-state run detention and deportation system that is greedy for Mexican bodies and the profits from their imprisonment and forced removal from the U.S.

Frantz Fanon (1967) described colonialism as a “systematized negation of the other, a frenzied determination to deny the other any attribute of humanity” (182). Sadly, Mexican migrants in the United States still find themselves derided and reduced: “lazy,” “stupid,” “docile,” “dirty,” as “aliens,” “invaders,” “squat little Indians,” “animals,” “vermin,” “cockroaches,” “criminals,” “lawbreakers,” “diseased,” “parasitic,” “mongrels,” “half-breeds,” “ignorant,” “peons,” “bastards,” “greasers.”³

Following 9/11 the Immigration and Naturalization Service—do note the word “service”—was placed under the umbrella of “homeland security.” This created a category confusion that has caused much suffering for some, and much profit for others. The category confusion is that migrants and supposed terrorists were fused into a single category, criminalizing the approach to migrants. The propaganda that resulted from this fusion insisted that our borders needed to be tightened and further defended to protect us from terrorists. Please note that all those involved in the 9/11 attacks entered the country legally and on airplanes. To date not a single terrorist has been captured trying to cross the border between the U.S. and Mexico. The fusion of categories of migrants and terrorists, however, has led to increased xenophobia, calls for removal of people without documents, more border wall building, and increased surveillance of the border. How handy that as migrants are conceived as criminals and Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) is given authority to create raids, that there are companies ready to build the facilities needed to house and imprison the laborers before their deportation.

The federal government pays approximately \$85-\$135 a day to the municipality housing each migrant. Some counties have found the detaining of migrants to be an acceptable approach to balancing their failing budgets. In a report by Amnesty International (2009), Santa Clara County in California was found to have built detention facilities for this express purpose. Some counties whose city jails have unfilled beds can get federal monies if those beds—jail beds—are filled with migrants on their way to deportation.

ICE created three categories to sort through migrants rounded up in raids, the first described as being for “your rapists and murderers,” the second for more minor offenses, and the third those without any criminal record at all. Municipalities without free beds in their prison and detention system house many of those in categories one and two. Unfortunately, the more beds for rent a municipality has, the more people in category three are detained and deported—innocent people.

Last year, 2010, nearly 400,000 people were detained and deported, half of them having committed no criminal offense. Indeed, most of these people have worked hard under inhospitable circumstances—low wages, few rights, denial of paths to citizenship, and surveillance.

The same corporations responsible for building the inhumane prisons in the U.S. that punish and control through isolation have found a new market niche: the detention of poor Mexicans. Corporations like the Corrections Corporation of America are building detention facilities all over America to enjoy considerable corporate profits and to construct the deportation pipeline that rids our communities of those we have now defined as criminals. Each migrant deported costs taxpayers \$12,500. What it costs migrants is incalculable, in terms of separation of family members, loss of livelihood, and living daily with fear, anxiety, and uncertainty. Young adult immigrants who grew up in the United States since they were babies are returned to a country they never knew, and to a language which is not theirs.

If you protest your deportation and request additional hearings, you must stay in detention facilities longer. It is only when you agree to deportation that your imprisonment as if you were a common criminal can end, once you get past the border. In Chicago the detainees are clothed in orange jumpsuits and placed in the Cook County jail along with criminals. When they are transported to the detention and deportation processing facilities and to the airport from the six states that house them in jail and detention facilities, they are leg and hand shackled, and placed in small cells within a bus that is painted so

that you cannot see in. They are taken onto and off of the bus at the processing facility in the dark of early morning behind a fence you can no longer see behind.

Corrections Corporation of America was at the table when Russell Pearce in Arizona drafted SB1070, the contested law that invites racial profiling.

Those whose human value has been reduced to being cheap labor now suffer the additional burden of being criminalized in order for the nation to support their forcible displacement once again; in effect, the second displacement that our nation has imposed. The category confusion between migrants and criminals is complete in many parts of the United States. It is a category confusion that is familiar to us not only from Mexicans’ history in the U.S. but also from that of Chinese and Japanese.

As the migrant has been linked in the public imagination to the criminal and the terrorist, the Immigration and Naturalization Service has morphed into a part of Homeland Security and Immigration Custom Enforcement. Civil rights have yielded to surveillance and enforcement. If security equals retaining excess privileges that includes being where others do not want you and removing at will others no longer wanted in your space, then there is no category confusion. A person who is a forced

The connections are clear between 9/11 and the building of detention facilities throughout the U.S. for Mexicans who have been placed in a deportation pipeline. When out of fear the U.S. post-9/11 moved to strengthen its borders, poor Mexican migrants and potential terrorists became part of the same imagined category of illegal criminals and terrorists who needed to be thwarted and removed. Those ready to profit from the burgeoning of a detention and deportation industry were quick to effect laws and budgets.

migrant has been turned into an illegal alien. A migrant is a terrorist. Migration itself is criminalized. This is the stuff of what is now called the Secure Communities Program. We need to ask ourselves if we feel more secure, and then turn to the question of what real security needs to be composed of.

We can turn to Asian American history for parallels⁴ to how NAFTA destroyed aspects of the Mexican economy leading to mass displacement and cheap labor. The beginning of large scale Asian migration was caused by colonialism. Because of a growing trade deficit from importing Chinese teas used to feed the workers on the production lines to fuel the industrial revolution, Great Britain came up with the idea of smuggling illegal opium into China which was grown by the British in India. When the opium was confiscated and burned by the Chinese, the Opium Wars were the pretext to gain control over the treaty ports. The Treaty of Nanjing (1842) with Great Britain and the Treaty of Wangxia (1844) with the United States led to foreign control of treaty ports such as Hong Kong to Great Britain and Macau to Portugal whose “spheres of influence” led to the “coolie trade” in Chinese and Asian Indians to replace the loss of enslaved African labor after the ending of slavery in the British empire. There are also parallels to be drawn regarding the race and ethnicity based criminalization and extrusion of immigrants, after their labor for the profit of others is no longer deemed desirable. After Chinese labor built the Transcontinental Railroad—the almost impossible engineering feat of laying track across the Sierra Nevada mountains—they were protected by the Burlingame Treaty (1868), which granted China the “most favored nation status”; however, when economic competition after the end of the Civil War was an issue, the U.S. passed the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the first immigration law in U.S. history to target a group for exclusion by race and class. After the Chinese built the Transcontinental Railroad, the transportation which tied American together from “sea to shining sea,” this same railroad carried immigrants from the East Coast to displace the Chinese as well as Mexicans.

We can also turn to Asian American history to be inspired by the efforts to hold a government accountable for the withholding of civil rights from those who live within its borders. The apologies and reparation for the detention of Japanese Americans were hard won, and though inadequate, are impressive in the face of failures of national reparations for slavery and the injustices that continued beyond its formal ending.

Restorative shame

There is another contribution that some Asian cultures could potentially make to the present era of forced migrations to and from the United States. This concerns the constructive use of the experience of shame. Not all cultures cut themselves off from the learning that can happen when a psychic and social space is allowed for feeling shame. For the Maori people, shame is said to be one step removed from heaven. We are unfamiliar with what it looks like and feels like to allow ourselves to be suffused with shame in order to move toward greater compassion. As long as we avoid feeling and owning up to the shame that our actions have incurred, our compassion is like a shriveled or amputated limb. To learn to work with our shame would indeed allow us to feel the way it could be not an emotion that we loathe and avoid, but as a differentiated feeling that can be used to inform our basic stance toward others. Indeed, for shame not to predispose us to rage and violence we need to bring consciousness to it, and use it as a path to appropriate guilt, meaningful remorse, empathic connection, and more

caring, compassionate, and just treatment of others.

Hannah Arendt (2005) addressed shame in 1945, before the end of the war:

For many years now we have met Germans who declare that they are ashamed of being Germans. I have often felt tempted to answer that I am ashamed of being human. This elemental shame, which many people of the most various nationalities share with one another today, is what is finally left of our sense of international solidarity; and it has not yet found an adequate political expression. ...[T]he idea of humanity, when purged of all sentimentality, has the very serious consequence that in one form or another men must assume responsibility for all crimes committed by men and that all nations share the onus of evil committed by all others.” (121)

“Elemental shame” at the uprooting of others, those strangers far away and those neighbors close to home, needs to fuel our actions, and unlock our doors.

Nicholas Trist was sent to Mexico in 1847 as a peace commissioner. Before he began peace negotiations President James Buchanan ordered him back home, having decided he wanted even more land from Mexico. He wanted to send a tougher negotiator than Trist. Trist, with the support of General Winfred Scott, decided to continue. “The negotiations were difficult for Trist. He was aware of Mexicans’ humiliation and felt a strong sense of embarrassment. Trist himself knew that the war had been a pretext to seize Mexican land” (Acuna 2010, 51).

Trist wrote to a friend of the family upon his return:

If those Mexicans...had been able to look into my heart at that moment, they would have found that the sincere shame that I felt as a North American was stronger than theirs as Mexicans. Although I was unable to say it at the time, it was something that any North American should be ashamed of. (52)

We must write shame into our vocabulary for communal and psychological health, seeing it as a step toward living with others with more compassion and integrity. The shame caused to others inextricably seeps back toward the self.

There are sociocultural dynamics that mitigate against people being able to acknowledge shame. In considering Arendt’s work, Young-Bruehl (2009) underscores how feeling shame can be blocked by ideology. This is clearly the case in the United States today. We need to release ourselves from self-justifying approaches to history and find the means for nonviolently addressing shame, to appropriately give acknowledgment and apology for wrong doings, and make restitution for harms

committed. Acknowledgement, bearing of shameful feelings, apology, and restitution are the stuff of building authentic self-respect, of retrieving a sense of worth. These are the steps of reconciliation that can begin to reweave torn social fabrics.

To lock one’s door against a neighbor and his need causes shame for those on both sides of the door. Throughout the world today, in the face of forced migrations of unprecedented proportions, we can see these same efforts multiplied: to claim a place as belonging to us as we begin to define the other as not simply in our way, but as out of place, of not belonging in the very place to which they may have been before us. We

According to Jungian analyst Joan Chodorow (2009), in the Korean system of understanding emotions, shame is seen as a differentiated feeling as opposed to a basic emotion. “The *capacity to experience shame* ‘in recognition of one’s error,’ is the first of four noble qualities leading toward the development of compassion.”

see ourselves as better off without them, and through how we structure space as our own and begin to define the other as not simply in our way, but as out of place, of not belonging in the very place to which they may have been before us, seeing them as better off elsewhere and making this true through ill treatment and violence, overpowering their own efforts to find a place to be at home in the world.

It is by dint of brute power that America manages to not only claim the right to be a powerful force in other people's homelands but to define others as needing to get out of what we have conveniently and by force claimed as our own place, forgetting that it belonged to ancestors of these same others. Across the globe, uprooted by the effects of transnational globalization and its attendant violence and ecological devastation, people are having to leave their homes, communities, and families, and have become migrants.



"The Parade of Humanity" by artists Guadalupe Serrano and Alberto Morackis on the Mexico side of the U.S./Nogales, Mexico border.

My hope is that engendering restorative shame at a history remembered and taken to heart can be a positive force in how we greet and treat our neighbors.

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Endnotes

1. For some sense of the scope of racist violence, between 1848 and 1928, it is estimated that at least 597 Mexicans were lynched. William Carrigan, "The Lynching of Persons of Mexican Origin or Descent in the United States, 1848 to 1928," *Journal of Social History* (Winter, 2003).
2. G. Gordon Liddy describing Mexicans during his G. Gordon Liddy Show radio broadcast, July 6, 2010.
3. Poor Mexicans are subject to what anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes (2007) calls "pseudo-speciation," being considered a different species from those invoking the judgment. The negative judgments arising from this are used to refuse "social support and humane care" (178). Scheper-Hughes describes a continuum from everyday violence to outright genocide, all of which depend on "the capacity to reduce other humans to nonpersons, monsters, or things which give license to institutional forms of mass violence" (169). The current degradation of poor Mexicans in America is what she would call a "peacetime crime," an "invisible genocide."
4. I am grateful to Gary Mar for articulating these parallels to Chinese immigration.

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The Alien: Reflections Along the Border, Ten Years After September 11, 2001

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No doubt because of the loveliness of this place, San Diego, with its incomparable endless summers and its astonishingly restless Pacific coast, it creeps me out being here. Sufficient is the military presence but the overload is the imposed border that tries to cut off families, peoples, and nations like the Yaquis and even Mexicans who settled this area long before the fence went up. The creepiest are the bright yellow signs along the coastal freeway with the shadow image of a family in flight. Like deer crossings, this warning is of "illegal" immigrants; don't hit them, these signs caution, the impact of their bodies might damage your car!

It is good to be here in this session to reflect with my colleagues on 9/11. For this I'd like to thank Gary Mar, the organizer, and also to recognize Gary's tireless labors for the APA's Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies. Besides, he has an excellent first name.

Immigrants in Detention

The border not too far south from here and the events since 9/11 bring to my mind some of the consequences of that fateful day, a virulent nationalism and in its name, a shoring up of fences along fracture lines. The U.S. "war on terror" is simultaneously a campaign directed against immigrants broadly and migrants

of color specifically. More than 83,000 African and Asian men registered under the “special registration” program begun by the Justice Department, which required the fingerprinting and photographing of all men over sixteen years of age on non-immigrant visas from selected Muslim countries in Asia and Africa and from North Korea.

The dehumanization of America’s internees included their profiling as Muslims (in a study, 95 percent of those registered by the Justice Department were Muslims) and North Koreans, and their cruel conditions of imprisonment such as crowded and frigid cells, being hosed down with cold water, and being shackled and arbitrarily hustled to locations in the middle of the night. As the government’s own agency (DOJ Office of the Inspector General) reported in 2003, the roundup of more than 700 Muslim and Arab non-citizens after 9/11 on the pretext of immigration violations was a religious and racial profiling without any evidence that they posed a danger, and a second report detailed the physical, verbal, and psychological abuse inflicted upon them and the inhuman conditions of their confinement.

Moreover, since 9/11, immigrants generally, especially the undocumented and even the *suspected* “illegals,” have been rendered by the state as enemies seeking to destabilize, impoverish, and inflict harm upon the nation. It is downright patriotic, this business of holding immigrants in pens and, coincidentally, there are windfall profits to be had. The Corrections Corporation of America is one of the contractors for those detention centers for immigrants. In 2005, the corporation, from its detention centers and correctional facilities, earned revenues in excess of \$300 million, each prisoner generating profits of about \$50 daily for the firm. And Halliburton announced in January 2006 that it had received a \$385 million contract from Homeland Security to build detention centers for “an emergency influx of immigrants into the U.S., or to support the rapid development of new programs” in the event of a crisis.

Central is the case of Ibrahim Turkmen, *Turkmen v. Ashcroft*, who was arrested after 9/11 because of an expired tourist visa and held for four months in prison. His case, filed in 2002, is a class-action civil rights lawsuit on behalf of a class of Muslim, South Asian, and Arab non-citizens who were arrested and imprisoned by the INS and FBI in a racial profiling operation. They, along with hundreds of other post-9/11 detainees, were presumed guilty and held in detention until proven innocent, contrary to the law. They were never charged with terrorism, but the INS kept some of them in detention for up to nine months.

In 2006, federal judge John Gleeson dismissed key elements of the petitioners’ claims, ruling that under immigration law “the executive is free to single out nationals of a particular country,” and although mass arrests of Arab Muslims and South Asians might be a “crude” method for uncovering terrorists, said the judge, it was not “so irrational or outrageous as to warrant judicial intrusion into an area in which courts have little experience and less expertise.” Immigration law, Gleeson affirmed, bestows upon the state the right to profile. History proves Judge Gleeson correct.

U.S. History

Antonio, an African captured by Portuguese slavers, arrived in Virginia colony in 1621, two years after the first enslaved Africans landed. The Richard Bennett tobacco plantation, which bought Antonio, encroached upon Powhatan lands, and in 1622 the Confederacy waged war against the European invaders hoping to drive them back toward the sea. Of the fifty-seven people on the Bennett plantation, only Antonio and four others survived. After some twenty years in bondage, Anthony Johnson, as he

was called, and his wife Mary gained their freedom, and by 1650 they owned and farmed 250 acres along Virginia’s eastern coastline. Before he died in 1669, Johnson deeded to his son 50 acres of that land, but an all-white jury awarded the plot instead to a white planter because, the jurors reasoned, Johnson “was a Negroe and by consequence an alien.”¹

That racialization of the term “alien,” which stood in opposition to members of the community along with its privileges and protections, might appear odd today but not in the light of U.S. history. In fact, although rendered during the British colonial period, that white jury decision would become fundamental to the constitution of the new nation. Having gained their independence, the founding fathers faced the task of distinguishing citizens or members of the nation with their rights and responsibilities as opposed to non-citizens or those who were not “American” and thus non-participants in government. The procedure by which foreigners became citizens was called “naturalization,” from the biological process of the assimilation of a foreign species into its new environment. The 1790 Naturalization Act limited that ability to, in the Act’s precise wording, “free white persons,” a classed and racialized prerequisite.

The Act, in limiting naturalization to free, white persons, specified that citizenship was a condition of freedom as opposed to servitude and of race or “whiteness” as set against “non-whiteness.” Those qualifications of race and class resonate with the white jury’s award in the case of Anthony Johnson’s lands during the colonial period in linking “Negroe” with “alien” or non-citizen and conversely “white” with citizen. Additionally, although free, Johnson, as “Negroe” or a race, was assigned by whites to the class of enslaved labor.

Further, tied up with those ideas of citizen and alien was the question of loyalty. Having just fought a war, the Republic’s founders were acutely aware of those who aided the revolution and those who conspired with the enemy. A citizen, accordingly, was one who swore to preserve and uphold the Constitution, while an alien was one whose loyalty was in doubt. That association of the alien with threats to the national unity and security, together with its racializations, became manifest in attitudes, laws, and actions directed against aliens, such as property restrictions and loss of U.S. citizenship for marriage to “aliens” and then, “aliens ineligible to citizenship” and the perils of “alien cultures and religions” to the nation.

With talk of war with France in the air, President John Adams (1797-1801) and his Federalist Congress, aligned against Thomas Jefferson and his Republicans, cast as Francophiles, whipped up emotions against enemies at home and abroad to strengthen their political hold. “In the last extremity,” the President predicted darkly of an anticipated war with France, “we shall find traitors who will unite with the invading enemy and fly within their lines.”

Adding fuel to the fire, in 1798, Congress created the Navy Department and called for a standing army to defend the nation against a French invasion, and it made it more difficult for immigrants to become citizens by raising the years of residence required by the Naturalization Act from two to fourteen. It also passed the Alien Enemies Act, which enabled the President to arrest, imprison, and expel arbitrarily any alien he deemed dangerous to the national security. The U.S., a congressman explained, had no desire “to invite hordes of Wild Irishmen, nor the turbulent and disorderly of all parts of the world, to come here with a view to distract our tranquility.”²

Especially targeted was internal, political opposition, despite the Act’s naming of aliens and the secretary of state’s attempt to require the registration of all foreigners. The Sedition Act, passed later that year, made that clear in its use to intimidate

and prosecute mainly Jeffersonians and Republicans for criticizing the Federalist government. Popular opposition to Adams and the Federalists resulted in their decisive defeat in the election of 1800 by Jefferson and the Republicans.

Despite their origins in domestic politics, those instances of nativism and its distinction between native and alien, American and immigrant, tranquility and disorder, together with their correspondences of race and class, as in the 1790 Act, arose from attempts to forge an American subject and subjectivity and from the anxieties created over the prospect of an alleged external threat to the nation's survival and independence. Those correspondences with our post-9/11 nation must not be missed.

Of course, the original opposition of "native" and "alien" was Europeans as set against American Indians. The constitution of the nation, in fact, is the narrative of how natives or America's indigenous peoples became "aliens" and the related, how aliens or European settlers became "natives." The distinction began with the first settlement at Jamestown in 1607, ostensibly established for trade with American Indians. Powhatan, leader of the Chesapeake confederation, quickly saw the truth of the foreign occupation. In January 1609, Powhatan told his counterpart, John Smith, that the English were not here to trade "but to invade my people and possess my country." That dispossession of Indian country, its loss, involved the violence of English possession, their gain, and the drawing of a line, a border in the Proclamation Act of 1763, which essentially followed the Appalachian mountain range, north to south, to demarcate the English possessions to the east from their American Indian dispossessed others, to the west.

The postcolonial nation continued that process of expansion and the alienation of native peoples who, the state held, belonged to "foreign" nations. The Supreme Court, in *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832), held that the Cherokee nation constituted a "foreign state," a status affirmed by Chief Justice Roger Taney, writing for the majority in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857). The "Indian race," he noted, since the 1790s, was considered to be a free and independent people with the rights of sovereignty albeit, he qualified, "under subjection to the white race." That status the Court affirmed in *Elk v. Wilkins* (1884), but after conquest and the complete occupation of the U.S. by whites, as was declared by the 1890 Census, the Court ruled, in *Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock* (1903), those "foreign" states to be "domestic dependent nations," a choice phrasing.

For African Americans, that coupling of citizenship with race, as for American Indians, began in colonial Virginia (witness Anthony Johnson) and continued into the post-colonial nation. Article 1 of its Constitution delineated, in mandating a census to enumerate citizens also called "persons" or whites, "all other Persons" or the enslaved, Africans, who comprised three-fifths of a "person." Invariably, whites were "persons" while non-whites, "other" persons or in *Dred Scott* (1857), a "different class of persons."

The court's opinion in *Dred Scott* held that "negroes of the African race" and their descendants

are not included, and were not intended to be included, under the word 'citizens' in the Constitution, and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges which

that instrument provides for and secures to citizens of the United States. On the contrary, they were at that time considered as a subordinate and inferior class of beings, who had been subjugated by the dominant race, and, whether emancipated or not, yet remained subject to their authority, and had no rights or privileges but such as those who held the power and the Government might choose to grant them.

Further, "Negroes of the African race" were not immigrants but were "bought and sold, and treated as an ordinary article of merchandise and traffic, whenever a profit could be made by it." Besides referencing the Declaration of Independence and Constitution to support his finding, the chief justice cited acts of Congress, including the Naturalization Act of 1790, which showed clearly the distinction between whites or the "citizen race," in his words, and "persons of color," who comprised, as noted, a "different class of persons" excluded from the Constitution's meaning of "people of the United States" or "citizens."

Indeed, three years before *Dred Scott*, out West a court reached a similar verdict on the petition of a white man who was convicted of murder based upon testimony supplied by Chinese. George Hall, "a free white citizen of this State," Chief

Judge Hugh Murray of the California Supreme Court noted, had his rights abridged by having been subjected to a trial contaminated by evidence supplied by witnesses "not of white blood." The "European white man," Murray reasoned, must be shielded from the testimony of "the degraded and demoralized caste," like "the Negro, fresh from the coast of Africa, or the Indian of Patagonia, the Kanaka, South Sea Islander, or New Hollander." Hall, a free white citizen, was set against the Chinese coolie, unfree, bonded labor, belonging to "a race of people whom nature has marked as inferior" and a class of aliens or non-citizens who are "an actual and present danger," in the judge's opinion.

Even after having gained citizenship in 1865 and 1868 with the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments and an 1870 Act extending naturalization to "aliens of African nativity, and to persons of

African descent," African Americans were routinely denied the full rights of membership in the nation and failed to realize "equal protection of the laws" as was assured by the Fourteenth Amendment. Accordingly in 1896, the Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that segregation in which facilities were "separate but equal" did not violate the equal protection clause.

In his much cited dissent to that majority opinion, Justice John Marshall Harlan rejected that affirmation of two classes of citizens, one superior, the other, inferior.

To be sure, as neither white nor African, the "race so different from our own" could not possibly attain "naturalization," Harlan knew and U.S. statutes held, and remained therefore perpetual foreigners as "aliens ineligible to citizenship." Moreover, as was noted by the justice, the Chinese were excluded not only from naturalization but also from immigration. In an 1882 Act commonly known as the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Congress justified the exclusion of Chinese workers on the grounds that "in the opinion of the Government of the United States, the coming of Chinese laborers to this country endangers the good

In the view of the Constitution, Harlan declared, "there is no caste here. Our constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens." But although "the destinies of the two races" were "indissolubly linked together," Harlan admitted, whites were of "the dominant race in this country," and blacks deserved the privileges of citizenship if only because "by the statute in question, a Chinaman can ride in the same passenger coach with white citizens of the United States, while citizens of the black race cannot." After all, he reasoned, "the Chinese race" was "a race so different from our own that we do not permit those belonging to it to become citizens" or, after 1882, to migrate into "our country."

order of certain localities within the territory thereof.” Further, the Act directed that “no State Court or Court of the United States shall admit Chinese to citizenship.”

For the U.S., the “illegal” immigrant was a racialized, gendered, sexualized, and classed act. Before the advent of colored migrants, when European immigration prevailed, there were no national exclusion laws. As such, from the state’s perspective, there were no “illegal” (European) immigrants. Only after the 1875 Page Act, which prohibited entry to Asian women/prostitutes, among others, and the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act did the need for a bureaucracy to police those excluded categories arise. The Bureau of Immigration was created in 1891 to enforce the acts’ provisions, and the Border Patrol was mustered a year after the 1924 Immigration Act, which regulated immigration by national quotas and barred “aliens ineligible to citizenship” or Asians. The construct “illegal” immigrant, thus, fails to apprehend whites or the citizen race; “illegal” was the domain of “other” and “a different” class of persons.

Homeland Security

In the wake of 9/11, immigration migrated from Justice to the newly created Department of Homeland Security. ICE, or Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with Citizenship and Immigration Services and Customs and Border Protection, replaced the INS in 2003. ICE is the enforcement and investigative arm of Homeland Security, and maintains sixty-three immigration detention facilities in twenty-five states, Texas with the most at eleven; California, six; and New Jersey and Florida, five each. ICE has more than 20,000 employees in all fifty states and in forty-seven foreign countries. Its ally, Customs and Border Protection, defines its mission as, from its website: “We are the guardians of our Nation’s borders. We are America’s frontline. We safeguard the American homeland at and beyond our borders. We protect the American public against terrorists and the instruments of terror.”

As was true from the nation’s founding in 1607, American Indian and African American “aliens” threatened the security of the homeland, and in the nineteenth century Asian “aliens” endangered the good order of the places in which they labored. Mexicans were rendered white and hence U.S. citizens by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848, but they experienced segregation as Indians and a mongrel race. In the 1930 Census, Mexicans emerged from the white race to be counted as “Mexican” in time for forcible, mass evictions from the U.S. as excess, undesirable labor during the Great Depression. They, along with other Latina/os, many from the “unincorporated” territory of Puerto Rico, Africans, and Asians, bear the brunt of the state’s current anti-immigrant campaign under the banner of fidelity to the nation in our season of terror and, not inconsequential, the “browning of America.”

“We, the people,” history and reflecting upon post-9/11 America inform us, consists of the “citizen race” to the exclusion of “persons of color” who comprise a “different class of persons” and “aliens” and “illegal immigrants” who endanger the domestic tranquility and the national security. We, the dangerous.

Endnotes

1. As cited in Gary B. Nash et al., *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society*, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 1998), 70-71.
2. As quoted in Nash, *American People*, 262, 263.

Report on “The Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi”

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Introduction

What is Gandhi’s philosophical approach to violence and nonviolence? How relevant is it today? What is the guiding spirit or message of Gandhi’s seminal text *Hind Swaraj*? Does it capture the basic meaning of democracy? What religious narratives of Ancient India does Gandhi draw upon to create his own philosophy of nonviolent resistance? How does he transform yogic disciplines into instruments for achieving political freedom? Three papers devoted to these topics were scheduled to be presented at the 107th Annual Meeting of the American Philosophical Association’s Eastern Division in Boston on Wednesday, December 29, 2010, at 9:00 AM. The three-hour symposium, entitled “The Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi,” was scheduled to take place in the main program under the auspices of the APA Committee on the Status of Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies. A. Minh Nguyen (Eastern Kentucky University) organized the symposium. The scheduled speakers included Douglas Allen (University of Maine), Fred Dallmayr (University of Notre Dame), and Veena Howard (University of Oregon). Gail Presbey (University of Detroit–Mercy) was scheduled to chair the symposium. Below are extended abstracts of the papers.

The Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Violence in the Contemporary World (Douglas Allen)

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is the best-known and most influential modern proponent of nonviolence. Gandhi is not a “philosopher” in any professional or disciplinary way, but his work is philosophically insightful and significant. When appropriated selectively, reinterpreted, reformulated, and reapplied in new creative ways, Gandhi’s ethical and philosophical approach to violence and nonviolence is very relevant and desperately needed in the contemporary world.

Gandhi’s two major philosophical concepts are *Satya* (Truth, used interchangeably with God, Self, Soul) and *Ahimsa* (Nonviolence, used interchangeably with Love). In Gandhi’s philosophical approach, with moral philosophy as first philosophy and with the major focus on transformative practice, truth and nonviolence must be brought into integral, mutually reinforcing relations.

From Gandhi’s perspective, most ordinary citizens, economic and political leaders, and philosophers claim a commitment to nonviolence and peace, but in reality cause, perpetuate, and are complicit with structures and relations of violence and war. To a large extent, this is because we ordinarily restrict our use of “violence” to overt physical violent forces and relations, as expressed in killings, assaults, torture, bullying, and rape. Gandhi is concerned with such overt physical violence, but this is a relatively small part of overall violence.

Gandhi’s philosophy broadens and deepens our analysis of violence by introducing two key concepts: the multidimensionality of violence and the structural violence of the *status quo*. This radically changes how we analyze violence and nonviolence in the contemporary world.

One must address inner, psychological, linguistic, economic, political, cultural, religious, educational, and other dimensions of violence. For example, unlike most ethical, philosophical, and spiritual approaches, Gandhi devotes major emphasis to economic violence, usually equated with exploitation. He focuses on asymmetrical relations in which some who own and control the wealth and economic resources are able to establish unequal relations of exploitation and domination. We are socialized through language acquisition, family upbringing, education and religion, economic and other rewards and punishments, and in other ways that perpetuate a humanly caused, multidimensionally violent way of being in the world, of constituting a violent false view of self and relations to other sentient beings and to nature.

Multidimensional violence interacts with the structural violence of the *status quo*. This is business as usual, which we usually don't even recognize as violent. For Gandhi, the "normal" dominant economic, political, cultural, religious, and educational systemic relations are structurally violent. The fact that a violent relational system of alienation, dehumanization, exploitation, oppression, injustice, and domination functions efficiently, without overt disruption, does not render it nonviolent or peaceful.

Three major topics of great philosophical significance allow us to interpret and develop Gandhi's philosophy and apply it to violence in the contemporary world: his analysis of means-ends relations, of absolute-relative relations, and of a preventative approach.

First, Gandhi's philosophical approach to violence emphasizes means-ends relations. He explicitly rejects Utilitarianism and other approaches as part of "Modern Civilization" for adopting a violent view that the ends justify the means. Gandhi's approach shares significant characteristics with deontological ethics, virtue ethics, and pragmatism, but he also rejects aspects of their dominant Western formulations. For Gandhi, means and ends must be brought into integral relations. Nonviolence is usually the means and truth is the end, but means and ends, nonviolence and truth, are also convertible. Gandhi's means-ends analysis is usually presented in causal ethical terms: you cannot use impure, violent, immoral, untruthful means to achieve worthy, nonviolent, moral, truthful ends.

However, Gandhi also offers a related ontological argument. Violent means not only lead to morally unacceptable ends, but they also separate us from truth and reality. Nonviolence and love not only lead to moral ends, but they are also the bonding and unifying forces that allow us to realize the truth of the basic interconnectedness of all reality.

Second, Gandhi adopts a usually overlooked key distinction between relative and absolute. He claims to experience Truth, Nonviolence, and other Absolutes, but as a limited, embodied, situated, contextualized human being, he has only temporary, imperfect, perspectival "glimpses" of Reality. No one fully knows Nonviolence, Truth, and Absolute Reality. Our ethical and philosophical approach is always at best moving from one relative truth to a greater relative truth closer to the absolute regulative ideal.

Such an approach to violence attempts to avoid the sharp rigid dichotomy of essentialist, foundationalist, objective, absolutist versus anti-essentialist, anti-foundationalist, subjective, relativist formulations. In its emphasis on multiple perspectives, contextualism, empathy, tolerance, mutual respect, intercultural dialogue, critical reflection, and how the encounter with the other can serve as a catalyst for allowing us to rethink and develop our own philosophical position,

Gandhi's approach is invaluable in relating to violence in the contemporary world.

Third, the major strength of Gandhi's philosophy relating to violence can be seen in his short-term and especially long-term preventative approach. Well over 90 percent of violence in the world is humanly caused and conditioned and hence is contingent and can be transformed. In our world nothing is experienced as absolute or independent. All phenomena are relative and causally interdependent. What this means is that hate, greed, egoistic desires and attachments, economic violence, religious violence, environmental violence, and violent structures and relations are caused and conditioned, and they become new violent causes and conditions in a vicious causal cycle of violence, immorality, and untruth. Gandhi's preventative approach analyzes and then intervenes through transformative practices in order to decondition the relative, violent, interconnected, causal factors and replace them with relative, more nonviolent, and more truthful causes, moving us closer to the regulative ideals of Truth and Nonviolence.

The most common dismissal of Gandhi's philosophy, especially regarding violence and nonviolence, is the claim that it is irrelevant or even immoral when dealing with a Hitler or with religious and other terrorists. It rejects violence, which is the only effective means. Counter to many stereotypes, Gandhi's preventative philosophy, when integrated with complementary non-Gandhian philosophical approaches, may be formulated in a very complex, nuanced, contextually sensitive way that is very insightful and relevant when dealing with the most difficult examples of violence in the world. Gandhi even grants the necessity, not the morality, of some preventative violence, but in ways very different from and more hopeful than the usual just war and other philosophical justifications of violence.

Gandhi's Political Thought Today (Fred Dallmayr)

The year 2009 marked the 100th anniversary of the publication of Gandhi's famous book *Hind Swaraj*, or *Indian Home Rule*. Numerous conferences were held in India and elsewhere to commemorate and celebrate this anniversary. Yet, celebration cannot just mean a nostalgic retrieval of the past. What is urgently needed today is an effort to recover the guiding spirit or message of the text for our time. In my view, its significance can be found on two levels: one more overt, the other more recessed. The first level has to do with India's struggle for independence from colonial rule. In this sense, *Hind Swaraj* is a "classic" of anti-imperialist literature, a handbook for the struggle of oppressed people around the world. The second level is more recessed because of its ethical and even ontological connotations. As my paper argues, *Hind Swaraj* captures the basic meaning of "democracy" by formulating a conception of "self" and "self-rule" (*swaraj*) which is constitutive of democratic politics.

On the anti-imperialist level, Gandhi focuses on the character of British imperial rule. For him the goal of self-rule or *swaraj* cannot be obtained by simply replacing British rule with Indian rule, or British power with Indian power. The problem is much deeper, involving the very character of rulership. People wedded to the simple expulsion of the British, he argues, seem to want "English rule without the Englishman" or "the tiger's nature but not the tiger." The problem with British rule is that it reflects the defective features of Western civilization in general. What unifies these features is one central aspect: the dominance of selfishness and self-centeredness at the cost of ethical and spiritual commitments. In his words, the gist of modern Western civilization is that "people living in it make material welfare the sole object of life" while utterly neglecting ethical responsibilities and civic virtues. For Gandhi, the needed remedy is "self-rule" in the sense of the ability of people to rule over themselves, thereby taming or limiting their selfishness.

On the more recessed, ontological level, *Hind Swaraj* brings into view a novel conception of democratic “freedom,” a conception which is opposed to the liberal and neo-liberal *laissez-faire* agenda, and also to Isaiah Berlin’s distinction between “negative” and “positive” liberty. The *laissez-faire* agenda is predicated on the pursuit of unlimited individual self-interest, which negates the possibility of “self-rule” in Gandhi’s sense. Berlin’s negative liberty means the freedom to be left alone, which bypasses the need for social and political responsibility. Positive liberty, on the other hand, denotes the unhampered pursuit of collective goals, sometimes shading over into social engineering, which denies the need for *swaraj* in the sense of limitations placed on rule. What Gandhi’s thought brings to the fore is the alternative of an ethical and self-transformative freedom as the required backbone of democracy. In philosophical terms, the Gandhian view moves beyond the alternatives of individualism and collectivism, and inaugurates an ontological conception of human and political “freedom” involving the status of “being free with others.”

Toward an Engaged Philosophy: Gandhi’s Reinterpretation of Religious Narratives and Renunciatory Practices (Veena Howard)

Gandhi did not define philosophy in terms of the analysis of abstract metaphysical, epistemological, and moral questions about reality, knowledge, and humanity. Rather, he approached philosophy in terms of its pragmatic employment towards the betterment of the human condition. “Philosophy to be worth anything,” wrote Gandhi, “has got to be applied in one’s own life.” Although Gandhi rejected the formal abstractions of philosophical discourse, he embraced select suppositions found in such Indian philosophical traditions as *Advaita Vedanta* and *Classical Yoga Philosophy*, defined by the now widely known *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali. While he did not systematically refer to *Advaita Vedanta*, he employed its nondualistic philosophy of the essential unity of beings to support his nonviolent methods and his philosophy of ontological equality, which includes and goes beyond “equal justice under the law.” Gandhi also creatively utilized the Yoga philosophy’s ethical principles, including *aparigraha* (nonpossession), *ahimsa* (nonviolence), and *brahmacharya* (celibacy) to create his strategy of nonviolent activism.

This paper utilizes Gandhi’s own words (now collected in more than 50,000 pages) to examine his unique reinterpretation of select Indian philosophical ideas found in texts such as the *Yoga Sutras*, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and other religious narratives. Specifically, it looks at how Gandhi transformed the metaphysical and moral concept of Truth into a method for his social and political activism. It also analyzes his unconventional adaptation of certain yogic disciplines (traditionally employed as means for attaining spiritual freedom) as instruments for achieving political freedom. This paper examines the textual models he drew upon for the purpose of creating a coherent and strategic political philosophy, and investigates how Gandhi was able to transform yogic disciplines into instruments of struggle against the British regime.

Theoretically, Gandhi adopted for his nonviolent activism philosophical concepts and principles that are considered to carry inherent spiritual power. They are illustrated in the ancient Indian philosophical texts and religious narratives. This is especially evident in Gandhi’s concept of *Satyagraha* (literally, “Truth-force,” and generally translated as Passive Resistance), which for him was “*tapasya* [austerity] in its purest form.” In his creative synthesis of the words *satya* (truth) and *agraha* (grasp), he combined the metaphysical concept of reality, *Sat* (Truth; Reality), with the moral virtue of *satya* (truth), for his strategy for achieving social and political goals. Gandhi affirmed

the ancient belief that the transformative power of truth can become manifest in those humans who cling (*agraha*) to their truth, namely, to their moral duty. This notion is expressed by the words *saccakriya* or *satyakriya* (Act of Truth) found in the parables, fables, and narratives of ancient Sanskrit and Pali literature. Although traditionally used by certain qualified individuals for personal spiritual objectives, Gandhi expanded its application and employed it in a way that could allow the masses to achieve social and political aims. He referred to select texts and mythical narratives to substantiate his interpretation. In this vein, Gandhi’s philosophy is an expression of how abstract principles can be applied to confront actual problems. It is a philosophy that addresses such social predicaments as inequity, injustice, and slavery by making relevant the ancient philosophical paradigms for modern contexts.

Gandhi looked to traditional Indian texts, specifically the *Bhagavad-Gita*, to construct his political philosophy for the purpose of securing justice through nonviolent methods. Given its war narrative, however, the *Bhagavad-Gita* is not overtly pacifistic and often became a source of inspiration for many revolutionaries during the struggle for India’s independence. In order to create a solid theoretical framework for his philosophy of nonviolence, Gandhi used his own unique methodology to render a symbolic interpretation of the war narrative in a manner consistent with his philosophy. He substantiated his objectives of securing political freedom, justice, and equality by drawing upon the *Bhagavad-Gita*’s ontological premise of the unity of the one Self, or Universal Soul, as well as its focus on the performance of actions. At the same time, he emphasized its principle of nonattachment to the fruits of actions to unite the normally polarized categories of renunciation and worldly engagement. He sought to attach new meanings to religious and philosophical concepts such as *sannyasa* (renunciation), *yajna* (sacrifice), *dharma* (sacred duty), and *moksha* (spiritual freedom) in order to inspire the masses to engage in a nonviolent movement.

In *praxis*, Gandhi sought to transform into tools for nonviolent political activism such principles of *nivrtti* (literally, withdrawal, renunciation for spiritual freedom) as austerity, nonviolence, fasting, truth, celibacy, and nonpossession. In the modern secular world and in India’s philosophical traditions, the concepts of *pravrtti* (worldly engagement) and *nivrtti* (renunciation) are considered distinct categories. Within the philosophical traditions of India, the components of *nivrtti*—including *yama-niyamas* (ethical principles) and *tapas* (austerity)—are the means for transcending this-worldly aspiration, thus attaining *moksha* or *nirvana*. Gandhi carefully selected and reinterpreted renunciatory disciplines as activist tools of passive resistance, and utilized them during strikes, boycotts, and calls for economic self-reliance. He consistently rendered the goal of political freedom into the philosophical term of *swaraj* (self-rule). This paradox—that is, his unparalleled synthesis of renunciatory precepts and ascetic practices with social and political activism—is reflected in Gandhi’s careful choice of words. For example, in Gandhi’s rendering, *ahimsa* is “the mightiest weapon,” while *Satyagraha* is “an all-sided sword.” This integration became an effective strategy to communicate the force of nonviolent methods and, arguably, resulted in the mobilization of the masses.

By means of textual analysis, this paper explores the philosophical foundations of Gandhi’s strategy of nonviolence and truth-force in order to expand our understanding of the pragmatic value of philosophical principles and disciplines of renunciation in contemporary nonviolent activism. Gandhi’s alternative interpretation of traditional philosophical and religious texts and principles afforded a coherent narrative for his nonviolent struggle. This reinterpretation is an invitation

to rethink his hermeneutical strategy for transforming philosophical principles into an active philosophy that can meaningfully engage the modern issues of violence, injustice, and environmental crisis.

The Symposium

The symposium was affected by the inclement weather, which caused numerous sessions to be delayed or canceled. Two of the three scheduled speakers (**Fred Dallmayr** and **Veena Howard**) were unable to make it to Boston, as was the chair (**Gail Presbey**). The symposium went forward with only one speaker (**Douglas Allen**) and an emergency substitute chair (**Josef Velazquez**, Stonehill College). The presentation and discussion of Allen's paper, together with his reading of Howard's extended abstract upon the audience's request, turned out to occupy almost two out of the three hours which had originally been scheduled. The audience size varied over the duration of the symposium as some people came and went. The maximum size at any one time was twelve, but the number of people who were there for at least part of the symposium was twenty. In attendance was **Gary Mar** (Stony Brook University), chair of the APA Committee on the Status of Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies.

Q&A

Question 1: You seem to be saying that violence specifically and harm more generally are morally equivalent. This, however, seems questionable because (a) harm can be caused without intention while violence always seems to be intentional, (b) we respond differently to the causing of harm and the causing of violence, and (c) it is more difficult to recognize harm than violence.

Answer 1: (i) The equation between violence and harm can be found in the Eastern religious traditions within which Gandhi worked. (ii) To separate violence and harm too sharply will make it harder to recognize the roots of violence in the systemic social harms that are often its basis. (iii) In their original language, the terms that Gandhi used were actually wider than either "violence" or "harm."

Question 2: Isn't Gandhi being overly idealistic when he says that everyone can live nonviolently? Just because Frank Shorter was capable of running a marathon in under three hours doesn't mean that everyone is. In the same way, just because Gandhi was capable of living a nonviolent life doesn't mean that everyone is.

Answer 2: Gandhi was a realist who did not believe in a simple optimism that claims that everyone can be totally nonviolent. He believed, in fact, that no one (not even himself) had an absolute grasp of nonviolence. He also believed that many of his own followers were not yet spiritually mature enough for the level of nonviolence required of *Satyagrahis*. For this reason, he actually directed most of his followers to other sorts of effort within his movement, and the *Satyagrahis* always remained an elite force.

Question 3: Could you talk about the relationship between Gandhi and Ambedkar?

Answer 3: The differences between Gandhi and Ambedkar are often exaggerated. The most important thing to say about their relationship is that they actually agreed 90 percent of the time. Their biggest disagreement occurred when Ambedkar pushed Gandhi to openly denounce the caste system and Gandhi refused to do this. But even here it is clear that Gandhi was, in practice, against the caste system and was just hesitant, for some reason, to make the sort of public denunciation Ambedkar desired.

Question 4: Was Gandhi a virtue ethicist?

Answer 4: Gandhi was certainly close to virtue ethics and there are several scholars who are currently exploring the parallels. Perhaps a particularly close parallel for Gandhi's views would be the views of the ancient stoics. One thing to keep in mind though when discussing Gandhi and virtue ethics is that Gandhi never thought that the goal was simply the cultivation of one's own virtues, but rather he always thought that the goal was transforming the world and that the cultivation of personal virtues was always just a piece in this larger process.

Question 5: What do you think about Gene Sharp and his adaptation of Gandhian nonviolence as a strategic tool to help with conflict resolution in business and other contexts?

Answer 5: On the one hand, this is a good thing. Gene Sharp's practical approach is able to reach people who would otherwise be deaf to Gandhi's ideas. On the other hand, this very practical approach leaves out the deeper philosophical, political, and religious issues which are the most important part of Gandhi's own overall approach.

Summary Reflections from the Chair (Josef Velazquez)

The author of these remarks is not the originally scheduled chair, but only a last-minute substitute. As such, he is unfortunately not a Gandhi scholar and so lacks the expertise to comment in any specific sort of way on the proceedings which he witnessed. He wishes to apologize to the reader for this inability to comment specifically. He hopes that it will nonetheless not be out of place if he includes a couple of general and nonexpert remarks.

First of all, it was clear, even to a nonexpert, that **Douglas Allen** was achieving a very delicate balance: he was, on the one hand, updating Gandhi's thought to make it relevant for today, while, on the other hand, managing to remain true to the deeper spiritual sources from which that thought derived. As such, Allen managed to steer between the twin pitfalls of a shallow relevance on the one hand, and an irrelevant authenticity on the other. No mean feat. Those readers who are familiar with Allen's work are no doubt unsurprised by this accomplishment, but it nonetheless seems important to give it public approbation in this place.

Secondly, if a remark about the format rather than the content would be permissible, it seems that the cancellations, though obviously unfortunate, did also confer an advantage. For instead of trying to squeeze all three papers into a single session, it was possible to talk about just this one paper at length. Perhaps we do our own scholarship a disservice when we try to compress its results into presentations and discussions occurring on a tight and limited time frame. The longer format forced on us by the blizzard and the resulting cancellations had perhaps the advantage of reminding us of who we are supposed to be: not hurried professionals but leisured conversationalists.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A future issue of this *Newsletter* will report on another panel sponsored by the Committee at the Pacific Division Meetings entitled **Constructive Engagement of Analytic & Continental Approaches to Philosophy from the Point of View of Asian Philosophy**.

9/11 Ten 3/11: Remembering 9/11 Ten Years Later, Responding to Japan's 3/11 Crisis Today, Charles B. Wang Asian American Center, Stony Brook University, May 5th, 2011.

Nobuko Miyamoto, the founding artistic director of the Los Angeles based multicultural performance arts organization Great Leap (www.greatleap.org) gave a four-day workshop to philosophy students at Stony Brook University so that they could create a performance piece for a conference “9/11 Ten 3/11” held at Stony Brook University on May 5th, 2011.

The conference was in three acts: the first act dealt with the oral testimonies of the 9/11 First Responders collected by Dr. Benjamin Luft, the director of Stony Brook University’s World Trade Center Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program (WTCMMTP), the only program on Long Island dedicated to caring for surviving 9/11 first responders.

Act II consisted of artistic responses to 9/11 and Japan’s 3/11—the photographs of Asian American communities after 9/11 by Corky Lee, “the unofficial, undisputed photographer laureate” of the Asian American movement, the music of Chris Iijima and Nobuko Miyamoto (song writers and singers from the musical group *Yellow Pearl* introduced—at this conference via videotape of John Lennon on the Mike Douglas Show from the 1970s). *Yellow Pearl* created the sound track for the burgeoning Asian American movement inspired by the Black Power movement of the 1970s (see <http://www.folkways.si.edu/magazine/>). Nobuko, who is now the artistic director of Great Leap (www.greatleap.org), flew out from California to offer a three-day workshop for Stony Brook philosophy students who created a performance piece, “Water Offering,” choreographed by Nobuko and performed at the May 5th event.

The third act of the program consisted of commentators Dr. Stephanie Brown and Dr. Andrew Flescher from Stony Brook’s Center for Medical Humanities, Bioethics, and Compassionate Care and Gary Mar, professor of philosophy and founding director of Stony Brook University’s Asian American Center, and current chair of the APA Committee on Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies.



Corky Lee’s iconic photo of a Sikh After 9/11, a photograph from the exhibition “9/11 Through Asian American Eyes,” used by permission.

concise words to capture points of covered issues/topics/ideas; so entries have to be brief and coverage-selective (especially for those on issues/topics/doctrines in view of their complications), and some of them might thus appear “oversimplified.” To partially overcome this (when in need), an effective way to read them is to go with entries’ cross-reference links and through their further-reading lists that link to a thorough bibliography of primary and secondary materials which give elaborations and/or broad arrays of viewpoints (though only the English literature given due to the targeted readership). Second, some of those entries on controversial issues/topics present the author’s own views/accounts instead of surveys of various parties’ views in debates; they might thus be viewed as “one-sided”; this is somehow related to the book format; the book is not exactly in the format of a dictionary resulting in surveys but in its “A-Z”

format that expects the author to give his/her interpretations and critical understandings of the particular controversial issues/topics/doctrines (when applicable) to keep a certain degree of the integrity and systematic character of the book within limited space. In this way, for example, in the case of the entry “you versus *wu* (being versus non-being)” which the reviewer addresses, I provide a three-dimensional characterization of the issue without giving a survey of controversies within limited space; on the other hand, cross-reference links to other thirteen entries are provided to expand the reader’s understanding of the issue, and its

“Further reading” list also guides the reader to the viewpoints of some other major figures (like A. C. Graham and Chad Hansen).

Though the book is designed primarily for beginners, it is hoped that the book would be also useful for scholars to some extent. Whether agreeing or disagreeing to those sayings on some controversial or complicated issues/topics/doctrines that more or less reflect the results of this author’s relevant researches, one can treat them as raising worthy questions and/or as targets of criticism, some of which are linked to the author’s relevant elaborations in the published pieces. Moreover, with the strategic emphasis on philosophical interpretation and philosophical relevance, the book also includes and characterizes some important items that are either not normally found in such reference works in the English-speaking countries or capture some conceptions/enterprises with sufficient philosophical magnitude in recent scholarship of Chinese philosophy. (It is understandable that some of them might be thus labeled “strangely worded entries.”) Indeed, one can focus on those parts that seem “neutrally” useful: those (parts of) entries that provide historical data; an extensive (though not pretending to be exhaustive) “subject bibliography” to trace broad arrays of viewpoints; extensive Chinese originals for the names (including the style names and honorific names) of the figures and of important terms whose entries appear in the book; comparative chronology of philosophers, etc.

By the way, as copies of this book *Chinese Philosophy A-Z* first published in 2009 were out of stock last year and the publisher then provided an opportunity for minor revisions when they planned to reprint it, I have made minor modifications/revisions of the book. The modified version (marked with “Reprinted with revisions 2010”) of the book has come out recently.

BOOK REVIEWS

Reply to a Review by Alan Fox, University of Delaware, of *Chinese Philosophy A-Z* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009)

Bo Mou

San Jose State University

Professor Alan Fox’s review (this *Newsletter*, vol. 10, no. 1, Fall 2010) has constructively prompted me to give some explanatory notes for interested readers about the features of this small reference book and how to effectively use it. These remarks will also directly or indirectly address the reviewer’s concerns/questions. First, it is indeed reflectively challenging to me to work out this small reference book when it is expected by the publisher to cover the whole period of the history of Chinese philosophy over the last three thousand years with limited space, with maximal word-number cap to each entry and in

Envisioning America: New Chinese Americans and the Politics of Belonging

Tritia Toyota (Stanford University Press, 2010), 256 pp.

Reviewed by Gary Mar
Stony Brook University

Many Northern Californians know Tritia Toyota as the competition's alternative to Connie Chung, and Southern Californians know Tritia Toyota as an Emmy Award-winning news anchor. Now as an adjunct professor of anthropology and Asian American studies at UCLA, Dr. Toyota in *Envisioning America: New Chinese Americans and the Politics of Belonging* tells the compelling story of the changing political landscape of Chinese Americans in Southern California. The book addresses such questions as:

- Who are the politically active post-1965 immigrant Chinese Americans?
- How do these new activists relate to Asian American activists inspired by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s?
- What does it mean to be Asian American in the twenty-first century?

As a journalist of more than twenty-five years, Tritia Toyota reported first-hand such newsworthy events as Lily Chen's 1985 loss of her city council seat in Monterey Park as a result of the "English only" backlash, and Michael Woo's 1993 bid for mayor of L.A. in which, after forcing the incumbent into a run-off, he lost the election, unable to counter a smear campaign based on the entrenched stereotype of Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners. Toyota's journalistic background informs her analysis is theoretically framed by a racially informed political history developed in response to the probing questions of Don Nakanishi, director of UCLA's Asian American Studies Center, and the analysis is advanced with the compelling narrative, backed by statistical data, due to the advice of UCLA anthropology professor Karen Brodwin.

Toyota's book challenges shibboleths and stereotypes of Asian American political involvement. Asian Americans have been stereotyped as apathetic or apolitical, but, in fact, Asian Americans have historically given "more money to political parties per capita than any other constituency group except Jewish Americans" (Frank Wu and May Nicholson, "Have You No Decency? An Analysis of the Racial Aspects of Media Coverage on the John Huang Matter," *Asian American Policy Review* 7 (1997): 1-37). In addition, "Asian immigrants appear to attain levels of political involvement that are the same, if not better, than those of native born Asian citizens" (Paul Ong and Don Nakanishi, "Becoming Citizens, Becoming Voters: The Naturalization and Political Participation of Asian Pacific Immigrants," *Asian American Politics: Law, Participation and Policy*, eds. D. Nakanishi and J. Lai [Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003], 113-133). Moreover, the "sudden" appearance of highly professional Chinese immigrants in upper class suburbia challenges the usual immigrant narrative of Asians pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, over-achieving educationally, and then assimilating into middle-class America.

Toyota tells the story of how recent Chinese American activists—relocated by such global events as the 1997 turnover of Hong Kong to China and globalization with the benefits of elite Western education, entrepreneurial networks in Asia, and upscale ethnic enclaves—found they needed to work with multi-generational Americanized Chinese. After unprecedented

levels of Asian American political donations did not result in political influence, the new immigrant Asian activists became disillusioned with what they had been told about the American Dream. The 1996 Democratic National Committee, for example, treated Asian contributors as "cash cows," and after the scandal broke, the DNC refused donations of anyone with Asian surnames, racially lumping recent immigrant Asians, multi-generational Asian Americans, and Asians collectively as suspect foreigners. The racial profiling of Asian Americans was blatantly evident in the infamous treatment of Los Alamos scientist Wen Ho Lee, falsely accused of spying for China, in which the federal judge took the occasion of Lee's acquittal on all but one charge, to make an unprecedented apology to Lee for what the executive branch of the government had inflicted upon him.

Although Toyota's book is a detailed account of the political realities of continuing U.S. immigration policy, of political coalition building among Chinese Americans in Southern California, this *local* political science laboratory sheds light on *global* issues. For example, the book can be seen as providing an empirical reconciliation of two currently competing paradigms for *ethnic studies*. The originating paradigm of ethnic studies traces its roots to the 1968 Third World strikes at San Francisco State University and the University of California, Berkeley that gave birth to the discipline. The contemporary paradigm, grounded in the experiences of the children of the first generation of post-1965 immigrants coming of age in the 1980s and 1990s, is the *diasporic and transnational paradigm*. The shift from one paradigm to the next is reflected in the academic code words of the times—from talking about Third World liberation to academic legitimacy, from consciousness-raising that dismantled colonialism and racism to cultural theorizing, from democratizing higher education to claiming a cosmopolitanism and hybridity that does not require exclusive citizenship in either America or Asia.

Toyota's account of the pragmatic compromises and coalition building among Asian Americans that happened in Southern California suggests that the competition between these two academic paradigms is not simply an "either/or" dichotomy. When President Obama tapped Latina Congresswoman Hilda Solas to serve in his administration as Secretary of the Department of Labor, Judy Chu took the opportunity to run for that vacated seat of the 32nd district of California and won the special election by forming a coalition tapping into the political capital of Asian American activists with communities of color and also tapping into the wealth of the new Asian immigrants disillusioned when faced with the realities of continuing racism. The challenges of such coalition building were, for example, reflected in the passionately contested renaming of Chinese Americans United for Self-Empowerment (CAUSE) to the Center for Asian Americans United for Empowerment.

In May 2009 Judy Chu became the first Chinese American woman elected to the U.S. Congress defeating Republican candidate Betty Tom Chu and Libertarian candidate Christopher Agrella, winning 62 percent of the vote in a runoff by forging a coalition consisting of Asian Americans and new Asian immigrants (18 percent of the voters in the district), Latinos (almost 50 percent of the registered voters), and organized labor. Winning this election required forming a coalition of Chinese Americans with activist roots from the 1960s with the coming-of-age children of post-1965 Chinese immigrants. One hopes that lessons garnered from such local political contestations can inform and inspire ethnic studies to re-envision itself without being mired in internecine academic rivalries.

Toyota's book is a fascinating case study of the intersections of race, ethnic identity, and progressive movements for social

change as they unfolded in the laboratory of Southern California politics. It is recommended reading for anyone interested in what it means to be Asian American in the twenty-first century. Moreover, in the face of America's present crises—of U.S. imperial wars in West Asia, of racial profiling eroding civil liberties at home, of domestic terrorism waged against migrant labor—a pragmatic alliance among different waves of Asian American immigrants may well be what is needed for not only re-visioning ethnic studies, but defending American democracy as well.