Performing Racial Cosmopolitanism: Contemporary Asian American Theatre

by

Minhao Zeng

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

Department of English and Film Studies
University of Alberta

ABSTRACT

This dissertation identifies a strand of contemporary Asian American theatrical works which dramatize what I call "racial cosmopolitanism," a mode of cosmopolitanism emerging out of the lived experiences of racialized "difference." Conjoining the historically divergent fields of cosmopolitan studies and critical race studies, the project calls for bringing these two fields together to approach Asian American plays produced in an increasingly multiracial and transnational era. Through the dual lenses of cosmopolitan studies and critical race studies, this research examines eleven contemporary plays written or co-written by twelve Asian American playwrights between 1989 and 2007, which are grouped into four clusters according to the specific mode of racial cosmopolitanism they each interrogate: interracial propinquity in the racialized inner city (Chapter I "Urban Cosmopolitanism"); cross-racial solidarity forged out of the ravages of war (Chapter II "Negative Cosmopolitanism"); the mixing of different racial heritages in a single body (Chapter III "Mixed-Race Cosmopolitanism"); and voluntary racial dis/affiliation (Chapter IV "Post-Racial Cosmopolitanism"). This project integrates text-based analysis with attention to a broad range of non-textual factors involved in the theatrical production of racial cosmopolitanism, including script writing, casting, rehearsal, performance, promotion, and community outreach.

This study argues that Asian American theatrical works staging racial cosmopolitanism simultaneously advance two oppositional cosmopolitan projects. On the one hand, they unsettle Eurocentric frames of cosmopolitanism, sustaining and sustained by hegemonic structures of power, which dominate, exploit, distort, marginalize, or exclude racial minorities. On the other, they construct non-Eurocentric cosmopolitan visions grounded in Asian American

particularity in interracial and transnational contexts, and, in so doing, press Asian Americans themselves to reconfigure their own notions of racial differences which underpin and shape their cosmopolitan stances towards others. This thesis contributes to the reconceptualization of Asian American racial identity and Asian American identity politics in Asian American studies. It enriches cosmopolitan studies by offering Asian Americans' alternative and politically transgressive visions of cross-racial exchanges and transnational affiliations. It also challenges critical race studies to broaden traditional monoracial and nationalist understandings of race by placing race within contexts of transnational movement and interracial contact.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gratefully take this opportunity to acknowledge here a great number of debts.

My deepest thanks go to my supervisor Teresa Zackodnik, whose extraordinary mentorship has fostered my growth throughout this undertaking. Through her scholarly expertise, strategic guidance, and unique patience, she has pushed me to think and write better – an invaluable asset that will benefit all my future ventures. I thank her wholeheartedly for her support when I navigate life and career changes. To my thesis readers, Stephen Slemon, Rob Appleford, and Heather Zwicker, whose insightful comments and suggestions have significantly shaped my work over the years. To my two other candidacy and defense committee members, Susan Smith and Eleanor Ty, for their expert readership and feedback that have made the two exams challenging, rewarding, and memorable.

To Jerry Varsava, who enthusiastically urged me to expand my intellectual horizon in North America while I was in China, and whose encouragement ultimately led to my decision to pursue a PhD at the U of A. To Julie Rak, who called me a young scholar when I was unsure about myself and emboldened me to turn my paper in her class into my first refereed publication in an esteemed journal. To Ted Bishop, who discussed literature, art, music, photography, and travel with me, and who affirmed me that I am both a serious and interesting academic. To my peers, Leilei Chen, Olumide Ogundipe, Rachel Prusko, and Katayoun Toossi, who finished their dissertation through various hardships and assured me that I could too do so. To Kim Brown and Mary Marshall for their excellent administrative support at different stages of my PhD studies.

I thank the U of A for generous funding throughout my PhD. The scholarship from China Scholarship Council has also helped me complete this project. Travel grants from the Department of English and Film Studies, the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, and Graduate Students' Association at the U of A, and from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences have allowed me to meet with scholars all over the world through conferences and academic visits and to be part of the international research community.

To my friends in Edmonton, particularly Pushpa R. Acharya, Judith Henry, Li He, Yi Li, Goldwin McEwen, Hanyong Peng, Pengfei Wang, Wenjuan Xie, Fenghua Yang, and Rengong Zhang, who brought precious warmth to my cold Canadian winters. Special thanks to Zhaoyi Qin, who practiced photography and badminton with me and turned my dark days bright during thesis writing. To my former schoolmates in China, particularly Lan Chen and Linxin Li, for their staunch friendship through all the challenges of the journey. To my extended family in my hometown Chengdu, whose much-needed support saved my mother and me from burning out when we were taking care of my father in hospital: particularly Yalin Ren, Fayuan Chen, Junwei Zeng, Lingbo Zeng, Yushu Zeng, and Lili Wang.

To my feminist husband Renyu Chen, who supports my wildest dreams and loves me still when my endeavours fail. To my mother Gaoen Zeng, who was excruciatingly strict with my study when I was little and who sternly instilled in me the ethics of hard work. Finally, in fond memory of my late father Xiaobo Zeng, who, by contrast, always tried to drag me away from schoolwork and never stopped asking me to take life easy. Through a quintessential humour that was his, he taught me one of the most valuable lessons during his battle against cancer: to love and enjoy life no matter what. This dissertation is dedicated to him.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Cosmopolitanism, Race, and Asian American Theatre

For complex reasons, Asian American theatre[1] emerged much later than many other Asian American literary and art forms. The lack of material support to stage the play in the early hard-up times of Asian American immigration history, the relative unfamiliarity with the Western theatre tradition among Asian Americans, and the widespread disparagement of theatre as frivolous show business among Asian immigrant parents and their discouragement of their children to set foot in it were all factors for Asian American theatre's late emergence. The genre, nonetheless, began to flourish in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a product of the rise of Asian American pan-ethnic consciousness and solidarity which fuelled the Asian American Movement. Over the past four decades, Asian American theatre has nourished generations of Asian American theatre artists and built a large repertoire of Asian American plays. Examining the state of the genre at the millennium, Roberta Uno, a veteran Asian American theatre practitioner with about thirty years' directing and dramaturgy experience, exulted to note in 2001 that Asian American theatre had "come of age" ("Introduction" 330). Similarly, Esther Kim Lee, a leading Asian American theatre scholar, excitingly remarked in 2006 that Asian American theatre had come a long way since its first emergence, and that the last decade of the

[1] A distinction has frequently been drawn between theatre and drama. Often, drama refers to the written text for the performance, while theatre concerns the realization of the script on stage. However, such a distinction can never be clear-cut: no study of theatre can overlook discussing dramatic texts and there are rarely any dramatic analyses which merely focus on play scripts without any reference to their production and reception histories. Due to their inseparable relationship, discussions of drama and theatre often collapse into each other in the studies of Asian American plays. For example, Lei's "Staging the Binary: Asian American Theatre in the Late Twentieth Century" tends to center on the literary and theoretical analysis of dramatic texts; and Esther Lee's *A History of Asian American Theatre* offers many close readings of play scripts. In this thesis, I largely stick to the word "theatre" to suggest that I not only study the written text, but also take into account the play's production contexts and theatrical strategies used in the stage performance. I will explain my methodology in detail later in "Approaching Asian American Theatrical Texts" in this introduction.

twentieth century "marked the beginning of a new era for Asian American theatre" (221). As enthusiastic as Lee was, she also reminded us that it may be too soon to write about the contemporary present of Asian American theatre with perspective, and that the appraisal of this new body of works should "involve more questions than answers, more cautious observations than conclusions" (224). Partaking of the widespread exultation over the development of Asian American theatre and bearing in mind Lee's word of caution, I set in motion this project.

This dissertation aims to comprehend the cosmopolitan character of contemporary Asian American theater in this increasingly multiracial and multinational era. It identifies a strand of contemporary Asian American theatrical works which dramatize what I call "racial cosmopolitanism," a mode of cosmopolitanism emerging out of the lived experiences of racialized "difference." It connects the historically divergent fields of cosmopolitan studies and critical race studies and demonstrates the feasibility of a joint cosmopolitan and critical race perspective to approach these works. Focusing on eleven contemporary plays written or co-written by Asian American playwrights, which are grouped into four clusters according to the specific mode of racial cosmopolitanism they each stage and interrogate, this research argues that Asian American theatrical works staging racial cosmopolitanism simultaneously advance two oppositional cosmopolitan projects. On the one hand, they unsettle Eurocentric frames of cosmopolitanism, sustaining and sustained by hegemonic structures of power, which dominate, exploit, distort, marginalize, or exclude racial minorities. On the other, they construct non-Eurocentric cosmopolitan visions grounded in Asian American particularity in interracial and transnational contexts, and, in so doing, press Asian Americans themselves to reconfigure their

own notions of racial differences which underpin and shape their cosmopolitan stances towards others. This thesis contributes to the reconceptualization of Asian American racial identity and Asian American identity politics in Asian American studies. It enriches cosmopolitan studies by offering Asian Americans' alternative and politically transgressive visions of cross-racial exchanges and transnational affiliations. It also challenges critical race studies to broaden traditional monoracial and nationalist understandings of race by placing race within contexts of transnational movement and interracial contact. In what follows, I first discuss the state of Asian American studies and then offer a review of cosmopolitan studies and critical race studies. I proceed to explain my rationale for a joint cosmopolitan and critical race perspective and continue with a discussion of play selection and my methodology in studying these plays. I end with a synopsis of my four dissertation chapters.

The Second Moment in Asian American Studies

I see this dissertation as part of Asian American studies scholarship in what Kent A. Ono calls its "second phase," which is distinctively different yet closely related to its first phase. Ono describes Asian American studies' first moment as concerned with "national identity and issues of emergence as a political/cultural/intellectual community" (1). Between the 1970s and the 1980s, the field was governed by the "cultural nationalist" paradigm, which was modeled on Black Nationalism and other race-consciousness mobilizations in the 1960s civil rights movement. It aimed at the capturing of an "essential" or "authentic" Asian American identity separate from either Asian or white American identities. Its primary focus was on, as Ono summarizes, "the post-immigration family's experience of political non-recognition, non-inclusion, and outright hostility toward all things deviating from an ostensible normative

embodied way of being within the nation-state" (2). Ono characterizes the second moment in Asian American studies, which began to emerge in the 1990s, as challenging, questioning, and reconceptualizing many of the long-held precepts of the first phase. Scholars in this period seek lines of power beyond the limits of the victimhood discourse and critique Asian American cultural nationalism through different historical, social, and organizational frameworks in an increasingly transnational era. In *Asian American Studies after Critical Mass* where Ono identifies these two phases in Asian American studies, he collects a wide range of works in which scholars reconfigure the field's nationalist tradition, including Martin F. Manalansan IV's "A Gay World Make-Over: An Asian American Queer Critique," J. Kehaulani Kauanui's "Asian American Studies and the 'Pacific' Question," and Sunaina Marr Maira's "Planet Youth: Asian American Youth Cultures, Citizenship, and Globalization."

This paradigm shift in Asian American studies has been noted by other veteran Asian Americanists. At the outset of the 1990s, Lisa Lowe, in her ground-breaking essay, "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Asian American Differences" in *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*, calls for a reconsideration of notions of Asian American identity not only in terms of similarity and unity but also in relation to particularity and diversity. She acknowledges the importance of a politics based on racial identity but warns the danger of essentializing racial identity and suppressing the vast range of differences contained within the very designation of "Asian American" as a cultural and discursive category, including country of origin, generation, class, gender, and sexuality. In the mid-1990s, Sau-Ling Wong, similarly with a keen sense of perception and foresight, pointed out Asian American cultural criticism was entering a theoretical crossroads at which the field was pressured to reflect on

and modify its own operating assumptions. She uses the term "denationalization" to capture this moment and singles out some trends. One of them is the easing of cultural nationalist concerns as a result of rapidly changing Asian American demographics, which complicates traditional identity politics and opens up other axes of mobilization including class, gender, and sexuality (S. Wong 1). Another trend is the rise of a "diasporic perspective" which sees Asian Americans as part of the global scattering of peoples of Asian origin, as opposed to a "domestic perspective" that emphasizes Asian Americans' racial minority status within U.S. national boundaries. In the mid-2000s, Shirley Geok-Lin Lim and three other Asian Americanists compiled a collection of essays in *Transnational Asian American Literature: Sites and Transits*, which collectively demonstrate the "diasporic, mobile, transmigratory" nature of Asian American experience within cross-national, cross-cultural, and cross-linguistic frameworks without denying its national formations (1). The editors find possibilities in transnational Asian American writings for resisting hegemonic ideologies of assimilation as an alternative strategy to the cultural nationalist model.[2] Over a decade into the twenty-first century, the second phase of Asian American studies is now full steam ahead. This dissertation participates in the concerted effort to rethink the fields' earlier premises and assumptions, reconceptualize Asian American identity, and reconfigure Asian American identity politics. It proceeds from a cosmopolitan perspective and a critical race perspective, which I will subsequently discuss.

[2] For more works which summarize the important shifts in the second moment of Asian American studies, see, for Elaine Kim's "Beyond Railroads and Internment: Comments on the Past, Present, and Future of Asian American Studies" (1993), Xiaojing Zhou's "Introduction: Critical Theories and Methodologies in Asian American Literary Studies" (2005), and Stephen H. Sumida's "Immigration, Diaspora, Transnationalism, and the Native – The Many-Mouthed Bird of Asian/Pacific American Literature in the Early Twenty-First Century" (2010).

Changing Contours of Cosmopolitan Studies

"Cosmopolitanism is back," proclaimed David Harvey presciently in 2000 ("Cosmopolitanism and the Banality of Geographical Evils" 529). In the face of injustice, inequality, and violence emerging from globalization processes, the new century has witnessed a blooming interest in the vision of a world community in which sameness and difference are harmoniously dealt with. Across the humanities and social sciences, there have emerged multiple ways of understanding what exactly cosmopolitanism means. To push this concept to greater rigour, scholars have tried to demarcate its conceptual boundaries by underlining its "conjunctural" nature (P. Werbner, "Introduction"). Thus we have such notions as rooted cosmopolitanism, working-class cosmopolitanism, discrepant cosmopolitanism, and vernacular cosmopolitanism.[3] This project deploys the idea of "racial cosmopolitanism," which will be explained in detail later, to examine a range of theatrical articulations of cosmopolitanism emerging out of Asian Americans' specific marginalized racial position and contributing to the following three prominent intellectual turns in cosmopolitan studies since the 1990s: from cosmopolitanism of elites to cosmopolitanism of common people, from the single Kantian ideal of world community to cosmopolitanism in its multiplicity, and from discussing cosmopolitanism on a normative level to bringing it down to earth.

Cosmopolitanism used to be associated with socially privileged and geographically mobile subjects from the West, but this understanding has begun to wane as the field shifts its attention to "non-elite modes and sites of cosmopolitanism" (Hannerz 75). In "Travelling

[3] For "rooted cosmopolitanism," see Kwame Anthony Appiah's "Cosmopolitan Patriots"; for "working-class cosmopolitanism," see Pnina Werbner's "Global Pathways: Working Class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds"; for "discrepant cosmopolitanism," see James Clifford's "Travelling Cultures"; and for "vernacular cosmopolitanism," see Homi Bhabha's "Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism."

Cultures," an influential piece published in 1992 at the onset of this intellectual turn, James Clifford reflects upon the status of a wide range of mobile subjects, such as servants and migrant workers, who have been discursively excluded from the notion of a "proper" traveler and proposes "discrepant cosmopolitanisms," which emerge out of specific "histories of economic, political, and cultural interaction" (108). The trend of attending to non-elite forms of cosmopolitanism has been pushed further as the lives of the underprivileged are brought to the fore. For instance, Jamil Khader finds a mode of subaltern cosmopolitanism in Caribbean postcolonial women's writings. Due to their peripheral subject positions as women, colonials, and second-class citizens, Puerto Rican women writers feel at ease neither in their American metropolitan homes nor their Caribbean homes. But they strategically situate their marginalization within broader transnational contexts, extend their concerns beyond their own country to reach oppressed groups who may share in them, and eventually achieve a sense of oppositionality, affiliation, and empowerment. As another example, Sonjia Buckel and Jens Wissel boldly suggest replacing Giorgio Agamben's paradigmatic figure of "the refugee" with the "illegalized female migrant." As a nodal point of important threads of global power relations such as class, sex, and race and "a significant driving force of transnationalization," illegalized female immigrants, Buckel and Wissel suggest, illustrate the radical potential of a cosmopolitanism "fueled by the pragmatism of everyday life, the practices of frontier crossing and migrant networks" (44).

Another trend in cosmopolitan studies is to challenge the Eurocentric cosmopolitan imagining and address cosmopolitanism in its multiplicity. Recently, the predominant Kantian ideal of world community has come under siege from all sides due to its exclusionary vision of

universalism and its imbrications with colonial and imperial enterprises. Reviewing recent work by key thinkers in the field, such as Ulrich Beck, Paul Gilroy, Gayatri Spivak, Kwame Anthony Appiah, and Walter D. Mignolo, Günther H. Lenz finds that the attack of the Western notion of cosmopolitanism has been carried out "by engaging in a reconstructive, dialogic rearticulation of a wide range of non-Western cosmopolitan discourses" (8). He suggests that "there cannot be one single true version of cosmopolitanism today, but the questions of justice, governance, citizenship, human rights, and cultural difference have to be debated and negotiated in different transnational and transcultural contexts in an open and agonistic public discourse in a multicentered world" (Lenz 8). Similarly, in "Whose Cosmopolitanism," Nina Glick Schiller argues against the notion of the world citizen due to its tendency to either homogenize or essentialize national and foreign cultures and to take for granted the inequality of power positions. She suggests approaching cosmopolitanism as "a coming together without disregarding disparate, multiple pasts and presents," which is "different from the contemporary invocation of European humanism, either secular or Christian" (1).

Finally, scholars on cosmopolitanism also try to move beyond the abstractions of philosophical discourse and to commit cosmopolitanism to concrete realities. Instead of taking cosmopolitanism as an "ahistorical, and free-floating moral philosophy" which prescribes an "abstract appreciation for difference and for cultural Others" (Sobré-Denton and Bardhan 24), scholars point out that cosmopolitanism should be grounded in the specific historical and social circumstances in which it is practiced. Sidney Tarrow, for example, argues for thinking cosmopolitanism not as a purely cognitive concept but in actually existing human terms. In his opinion, cosmopolitan identities are both the products of social relations and results of

interaction in political activities. Zlatko Skrbis and Ian Woodward suggest viewing cosmopolitanism as "a set of practices and useful dispositions, grounded in social structures, and observable in common place folk settings and practices" ("Ambivalence" 734). Similarly, Fuyuki Kurasawa champions a practice-oriented notion of "cosmopolitanism from below." For Kurasawa, cosmopolitanism is more than just a style of thinking, but a mode of practice and a form of mutual commitment that is created through struggles for equity and fairness for marginalized groups and individuals.

Critical Race Studies Now

This dissertation analyzes the theatrical staging of the changing Asian American racial landscape, and the analysis features two prominent characteristics of recent critical race scholarship: "global" and "comparative." First, critical race studies has become global. Increasingly, the field is informed by "an understanding of the world as a single integrated social, economic, political, and cultural space" (Brubaker 23). Realizing that the dynamics of race are "inextricably linked with macrohistorical forces that are global in their reach" (Cornell and Hartmann xix), race scholars have begun to examine the impacts of global social, economic, political, and cultural transformations on local articulations and configurations of race. In the particular case of U.S. minority literature studies, Susan Koshy notes that there has been a strong impetus to examine "transnational literary influences, multilingual traditions that traversed national boundaries, and multinational public spheres produced by the translation and circulation of texts, ideas and people" ("Humanities" 1544). In line with this trend, my project places selected Asian American theatrical works within global contexts and gives them a broader historical, cultural, and political consideration.

Focusing on Asian Americans' interracial relationships with other racial communities onstage and backstage, my dissertation also participates in the conversations in critical race studies which make the field "comparative." In the editor's notes to an *PMLA* special issue entitled "Comparative Racialization," Shu-Mei Shih gives a theoretical treatment to the comparative landscape of critical racial studies. Drawing upon Frantz Fanon's famous assertion that "the black man is comparison" (qtd. in Shih 1349), by which he suggests that the making of the black man takes shape from his comparison of himself to other blacks and to the colonizer under the ideology of whiteness, Shih contends that racialization is "inherently comparative" and encourages scholars to discover "submerged or displaced relationalities between instances of racialization" (1350). Koshy responds to Shih's call in the same issue. Inspired by Spivak's "strategic essentialism," Koshy advances the idea of "strategic interracialism": "provisional interracial alliances that are continuously reworked according to the openings, fissures, and connections of the moment" ("Humanities" 1547). Carrying forward the heritage of pan-ethnic coalitions, strategic interracialism enables marginalized racial groups to extend panethnicity from coalitions within specific racial communities to alliances between them, and to even go beyond their traditional oppositional relationship with whites by associating with them to advance political and cultural interests at opportune moments.

Racial Cosmopolitanism: Connecting Cosmopolitan Studies and Critical Race Studies

This project conjoins the historically divergent fields of cosmopolitan studies and critical race studies. The divergence between these two research areas is largely due to the frequent simplistic equating of the cosmopolitan with the global and the racial with subnational as well as the binary understanding of the dialectical, certainly more complex relationship between

cosmopolitan universality and racial particularity. My confidence in this integrated approach to cosmopolitanism and race has been influenced by the work of four scholars: Richard Werbner, Pnina Werbner, Ulrich Beck, and Susan Koshy. Though the first three scholars focus on ethnicity rather than race, and Koshy, in opting for the word "minority," tries to obviate the difficult task of disentangling these two concepts, collectively they explore the seemingly opposite notions of cosmopolitanism and ethnicity/minority in ways that inform my work to think cosmopolitanism and race jointly as a viable and promising conceptual framework.

Richard Werbner uses "cosmopolitan ethnicity" to discuss the non-contradictory relationship between the cosmopolitan and the ethnic in a number of his works where he examines the building of interethnic partnerships on the borderlands of Botswana and Zimbabwe and brings into focus "a dynamic of transcendence interacting with difference [that] allows, too, for interethnic partnerships" ("Entrepreneurship" 732).[4] He contends, "understanding the postcolonial force of cosmopolitan ethnicity calls for theoretical interest not merely in ethnic differentiation or opposition, conflict and competition, but also in interethnic cooperation and mutuality" ("Entrepreneurship" 732). Supporting this stand, Pnina Werbner argues that cosmopolitan ethnicity "does not negate openness to cultural difference or the fostering of a universalist civic consciousness and a sense of moral responsibility beyond the local" ("Introduction" 15). She positions cosmopolitan ethnicity with the newly emergent conjunctural concepts in cosmopolitan studies which I have earlier mentioned, such as rooted cosmopolitanism, working-class cosmopolitanism, discrepant cosmopolitanism, and vernacular

[4] See Richard Werbner's "Cosmopolitan Ethnicity, Entrepreneurship and the Nation: Minority Elites in Botswana," *Reasonable Radicals and Citizenship in Botswana: The Public Anthropology of Kalanga Elites*, and "Responding to Rooted Cosmopolitanism: Patriots, Ethnics and the Public Good in Botswana."

cosmopolitanism. In the section "Is Ethnic Cosmopolitanism Possible?" of *Cosmopolitan Vision*, Beck analyzes the complementary relationship between ethnicity and cosmopolitanism. He considers ethnic cosmopolitanism a mode of what he calls "realistic cosmopolitanism," which develops in synthesis with "universalism *and* relativism *and* nationalism *and* ethnicity" based on "the both/and principle" (*Vision* 58). He holds that cosmopolitanism and ethnicity "do not exclude, but actually mutually presuppose, correct, limit and support each other": with ethnicity, cosmopolitanism can divest itself of its universal bias; and with cosmopolitanism, ethnicity will be less likely to suffer from its essentialist insistence on ethnic differences as immutable (*Vision* 57). As he puts it, ethnic cosmopolitanism "is opposed to the universalist dissolution of difference; but it is also opposed to the ontological emphasis on ethnicity and it facilitates the historical and contextual recognition of difference" (*Vision* 61).

If the above three European scholars provide valuable insights into the possibilities of combining the seemingly mutually exclusive notions of cosmopolitanism and ethnicity, it is Asian American scholar Koshy who first offers a concentrated examination of the potential of such a synthesizing approach. She coins the term "minority cosmopolitanism" to refer to:

> Translocal affiliations that are grounded in the experience of minority subjects and are marked by a critical awareness of the constraints of primary attachments such as family, religion, race, and nation and by an ethical or imaginative receptivity, orientation, or aspiration to an interconnected or shared world. ("Minority" 594)

For her, the benefits of thinking ethnicity and cosmopolitanism together are:

> Minority cosmopolitanism can break down the opposition between the ethnic and the cosmopolitan by highlighting (1) that minority narratives often carry non-Western modes of cosmopolitanism that offer alternative visions of cross-cultural exchange and transnational affiliation, (2) that the relational definition of the minority against the majority contains an implicit comparative cultural perspective that lends itself to cosmopolitan articulations, and (3) that a vertical

> hierarchy of scales that relegates the minority to the subnational misses the dynamic, "scale-jumping"[5] properties of the minority in globality. ("Minority" 594)

Underpinning the new concept of minority cosmopolitanism is the aim to "[conjoin] the historically divergent projects of ethnic studies and studies of cosmopolitanism" ("Minority" 592). As Koshy observes, despite the common interests shared by both fields such as cross-cultural interactions and transnational movements, scholars of ethnicity and those of cosmopolitanism traditionally pursue different paths and sometimes define their work in ways that are antithetical. This antagonistic stance has been reinforced on the one hand by the not-fully-resolved debates in cosmopolitan studies about the relationship between the universal and the particular, and on the other by the still influential political claim that first established ethnic studies, which places the rationale of the existence of this field in its support for the recognition of minority cultures within the nation. Arguing that "the frequent conflation of the minority with the subnational and the cosmopolitan with the global […] denies worldliness to the former and particularity to the latter" ("Minority" 592), Koshy proposes the notion of minority cosmopolitanism and advocates for the creative trespassing of cosmopolitan studies and ethnic studies.

For Koshy, minority cosmopolitanism promises "new ways of thinking" ("Minority" 592). Inspired by Koshy, I argue in this dissertation that it is an opportune moment to launch such an endeavor and adopt an integrated approach, which I termed "racial cosmopolitanism," to study race and cosmopolitanism in Asian American cultural productions, for at least three reasons.

[5] Here Koshy mobilizes the geographer Neil Smith's concept of jumping scales. Smith theorizes that as geographical scales such as local, national, and global are socially, economically, and politically produced rather than naturally given, scale-traversing becomes possible. He sees scale jumping as characteristic of and also produced by late capitalism.

For cosmopolitan studies, as it shows a growing interest in non-elite practices, bringing into focus people in marginalized subject positions resulting from racialization can further the exploration of non-elite modes and sites of cosmopolitanism. Second, as the field is increasingly aware of the necessity of thinking beyond the European Kantian cosmopolitan vision, perspectives from racial minorities will offer alternative understandings of cosmopolitanism that contest and perhaps overcome Eurocentrism. And third, as scholars of cosmopolitanism have begun to realize the importance of investigating concrete material realities underlying cosmopolitanism, racial cosmopolitanism, with its foregrounding of racial histories and politics, will shed light on how socially constructed identities and identification give rise to the formation of multiple cosmopolitanisms. By the same token, critical race studies can also benefit significantly from cosmopolitan perspectives. As race has come to be understood as a joint product of local, national, and global forces which in turn shapes them, a cosmopolitan framework will provide a context for examining the dynamics of the interplay of the local, national, and global in the formation and mobilization of race. Second, as comparative perspectives become more and more crucial in understanding racial issues against the backdrop of international interdependence and interracial interaction, a cosmopolitan perspective on racial differences and commonalities will help draw parallels between the mechanisms of power and domination operating in various instances of racialization, expose the constructed nature of racial categories, and reveal possibilities for cross-racial coalitions.

Throughout this dissertation, racial cosmopolitanism, explored from different aspects, consistently demonstrates a number of key features. Like the family of conjunctural concepts of cosmopolitanism I have earlier listed, racial cosmopolitanism combines apparently

contradictory opposites to understand the dialectic between the particular and the universal. Concerning its particular focus on race, racial cosmopolitanism, in line with the efforts of Richard Werbner, Pnina Werbner, Ulrick Beck, and Susan Koshy, aims to break down the dichotomous notions of racial specificity and cosmopolitan universality and recast them as mutually entailed and constituted. In bringing forward the dialectical relationship between race and cosmopolitanism, racial cosmopolitanism examines the (im)possibilities of build alliances and coalitions that defy racial divisions. Yet in exploring some kind of transcendence over color lines, it does not deny the fact of race in which specific, concrete material and structural realities are contained. Rather, it acknowledges race as an organizing system of knowledge and power that combines both discursive and institutional elements without reifying and essentializing it. It seeks to reconceptualize racial difference and articulate new modes of cosmopolitanism on the basis of new conceptualizations. In other words, racial cosmopolitanism aims not at the disappearance but an ideological reconfiguration of racial difference which promises strategic, contingent alliances. In remapping the difference that separates “us” and “others,” racial cosmopolitanism also seeks to bring about a double transformation process which simultaneously reconstructs the Other and the Self. It sees individuals as both possible victims and perpetuators of racism and calls for self-reflexivity and self-critique of one’s own investment in and complicity with racial hegemony. While racial cosmopolitanism heavily focuses on race and explores cosmopolitanism from a critical race perspective, it is well aware of the inescapable intertwining of race and other identity categories. So it frames race within its complex network with class, gender, sexuality, and other vectors of difference and seeks to strengthen racial cosmopolitanism from multiple axes of

connection. Finally, racial cosmopolitanism in this dissertation demonstrates a "utopian" aura. But it emerges more out of cautious optimism than of unrealistic wishful thinking. It is a form of aspiration on the basis of the recognition of the complexities, ambivalences, and contradictions of boundary crossing and connection making and in light of the presence of race and the reality of racism.

Approaching Asian American Theatrical Texts

Stuart Hall famously argues that cultural representations "play a *constitutive*, and not merely a reflexive, after-the-event, role" ("New Ethnicities" 165). He explains: "Events, relations, structures do have conditions of existence and real effects outside the sphere of the discursive; but only within the discursive, and subject to its specific conditions, limits, and modalities, do they have or can they be constructed within meaning" ("New Ethnicities" 165). Dorinne Kondo similarly contends that "the world of representation and of aesthetics is a site of struggle, where identities are created, where subjects are interpellated, where hegemonies can be challenged," and that taking seriously this world of representation "is, within our regime of power and truth, an indisputably political act" (4). As a powerful genre of representation, theatre, never having been a transcendent aesthetic practice, engages with the material world with its ability not only to reflect larger social, historical, and political contexts but to participate in the construction of these contexts in its peculiar generic form. In the case of racially minoritized theatre, it can provide a challenge to the paradigms of white ideology, create alternative visions to racist representations, and offer a self-reflexive site for minorities themselves to interrogate their own racial investments.

Going through the Asian American theatrical repertoire,[6] I have selected eleven plays to explore Asian American theatrical performance of racial cosmopolitanism for their focus on either or both of the following: Asian Americans' relationships with other racially minoritized groups within the U.S. and Asian Americans' diasporic and transnational affiliations beyond U.S. national borders. These plays were written or co-written between 1989 and 2007 by twelve established and emerging Asian American writers, who bring to the project an eclectic mix of backgrounds and perspectives. Sharing David Henry Hwang's view that "no single artist can speak for the community" and "only the community of artists can serve such a function" ("Response" 224), I intend the twelve writers to collectively provide a glimpse of the cosmopolitan landscape of contemporary Asian American theatre intersected by multiple forces such as ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and religion. The plays in this dissertation, for the most part, have yet to receive adequate scholarly investigation despite the warm reception they have received from audiences. Their productions were discussed primarily in the theatre reviews of local newspapers and have not been subjected to sustained academic scrutiny. Some of the plays are even unpublished, but fortunately they have been archived in academic digital collections enabling scholarly work. In this regard, the project enters a perilous, unmarked area of Asian American theatre which has not been sufficiently evaluated. My intention is not to make claims about the radical aesthetics and politics of the selected plays; rather I take the

[6] In my play selection process, two resources rendered me immense help: Miles Xian Liu's *Asian American Playwrights: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook* (2002) and Alexander Street Press's digital play collections. An excellent introduction to the overall vitality of Asian American theatre, Liu's book includes alphabetically arranged entries for 52 Asian American theatre artists, with each entry consisting of four sections: biography, major themes, critical reception, and bibliography. Alexander Street Press's two database collections, "Asian American Drama" and "North American Women's Drama," archive almost 300 plays by Asian American playwrights in full text and painstakingly index a variety of production information for each play.

plays as contested sites to explore the questions they have raised about cosmopolitanism and race as two projects interwoven in contemporary Asian American experience.

This study is anchored in the playscripts of the eleven plays I have selected. Like Josephine Lee, author of *Performing Asian America*, one of the very first major studies of Asian American theatre, I use primarily the performance script, not only for the practical reason of availability, but also because the playtext is "the most fixed part of the playwright's work" and "the only part I can share on an equal footing with the reader" (Josephine Lee 23). With the playscript, I analyze the standard elements such as plot, setting, characterization, and action, and bearing in mind that plays are written to be performed on stage, I pay particular attention to the dramatic strategies creatively employed for theatrical performance. I try to produce a mental performance out of the printed page of the script and construct what Josephine Lee calls the "liveness" and "presence" of racially specific theatre, which is bound up with the "immediate, visceral response to the physicality of race" (7). In addition to formal playscript analysis, and according to the production information I am able to collect online and offline, such as rehearsal notes, interviews with the cast and crew, and promotion material, I also consider a range of other factors which, all at once, have gone into the making of a play. They include: the conditions of a play's production; the choice of directors and actors; the location and process of rehearsal and public performance; the accessibility of the play in terms of form and content; the publicity material used to promote the show; and community outreach and audience development events. Situating the playscript and these factors within the historical, sociological, ideological and political contexts in which the play was produced, I examine how

each play, within the broad field of cultural production, engages with issues of shared interest to cosmopolitan studies and critical race studies.

Chapter Overview

The four dissertation chapters each study one specific mode of cosmopolitanism emerging from contemporary Asian American theatre: everyday interracial propinquity, post-war solidarity, mixed race, and post-raciality. The project does not seek to prescribe or proscribe what racial cosmopolitan is or is not, nor does it intend to proclaim that these are the only forms of racial cosmopolitanism. On the contrary, through these selected modes of racial cosmopolitanism, it explores how Asian American theatre artists reconceive rather than trying to abandon racial differences and how their new conceptualizations of Asian American racial differences shape their cosmopolitan stances towards others. Their artistic endeavors which I characterize as "racial cosmopolitanism" are timely responses to the social and political dynamics of contemporary Asian America, and an examination of them helps scholars redefine Asian American racial identity and Asian American identity politics as second-phase Asian American studies is fully engaged in interrogating the earlier premises and assumptions underlying its constructions of commonality and difference. I begin in Chapter I with one of the most common forms of actually lived cosmopolitanism, interracial propinquity, and I suspend my disbelief in the common perception that cosmopolitanism and violence are antithetical. In Chapter II, I complicate this widely accepted binary conceptualization of cosmopolitanism and violence. I explore the possibilities of negative cosmopolitanism, or how violence, rather than merely disrupting cosmopolitan harmony, also plants the seeds for the formation of cross-racial and cross-national solidarity in the specific contexts of two wars the U.S. has fought in Asia. If

the first half of the dissertation concerns intergroup relations, the second half looks into the individualistic dimension of cosmopolitanism from two perspectives: mixed race and post-raciality. Chapter III and IV examine how individual political actors trouble problematic registers of racial difference and (re)cast Asian Americans' sense of cosmopolitan openness.

Chapter I, "Inner-City Cosmopolitanism," examines the dramatization of interracial coexistence between Asian Americans and other racial groups in the inner-city underclass neighborhood through *Kimchee and Chitlins: A Serious Comedy about Getting Along* (1996), written by the Chinese American writer Elizabeth Wong, and *The Square* (2000), a collaborative work of sixteen American playwrights, eight of whom are Asian Americans of various ethnicities. The two works challenge the mainstream media's racialization, marginalization, and stigmatization of the inner-city neighborhood and reconstruct this "othered" urban space as a productive political arena empowered by cross-racial resistance against hegemony. Cautious of the danger of valorizing life in disadvantaged urban conditions, the plays theatricalize interracial propinquity in the multiracial urban that includes both harmony and tension and stage a subaltern form of cosmopolitanism based on a precarious sense of survival. This chapter studies the formation of interracial coalition between Asian American and other racialized groups not only at the level of the play text, but also in various other aspects of play-making. From traditional Asian American politics of pan-ethnicity to new Asian American politics of interracial cosmopolitanism, the two theatre pieces in this chapter call for Asian American communities, artistic and general, to reconceive Asian American theatre and Asian American identity politics and to move towards greater inclusiveness.

Chapter II, "Negative Cosmopolitanism," deploys the notion of negative cosmopolitanism to study the formation of cross-racial and transnational solidarity out of the ravages of violence as dramatized in two plays about the after-effects of America's military engagements in Asia: *Walls* (1989), written by the Filipina American playwright Jeannie Barroga, and *The Radiance of a Thousand Suns: The Hiroshima Project* (1995), co-authored by the Japanese American playwright Dwight Okita and three other American playwrights of other racial backgrounds**.** The two works contest the racism in mainstream memorialization discourses in the U.S. surrounding the Vietnam War and the WWII Pacific War respectively, and stage humanized representations of Asians and Asian Americans in the dramatization of the wars that have profoundly impacted their lives. By giving prominence to and forging bonds between the victims who, because of race, gender, and nationality, have rarely been included in the hegemonic narratives of these two wars, the plays reformulate the nationalist, Eurocentric, and male-centered mainstream constructions of post-war solidarity and offer alternative cosmopolitan visions of collectivity in war remembrance projects. As the plays move beyond the racial boundaries of Asian America and the national borders of the U.S., they contribute to the process of broadening the vision of Asian American identity and building broad-based forms of cosmopolitan solidarity.

Chapter III, "Mixed-Race Cosmopolitanism," explores racial cosmopolitanism through the works of two American theatre artists of mixed Asian heritage: Amy Hill's four solo plays, *Tokyo Bound* (1991), *Beside Myself* (1992), *Into the Fire* (1997), and *Deadwood to Hollywood* (1999), and Valina Hasu Houston's *Japanese and Multicultural at the Turn-of-the-Century* (1994) and *The Peculiar and Sudden Nearness of the Moon* (2006). Attentive to the intersections of

race, gender, and class, Hill and Houston problematize the mass media's consumerist construction of the mixed-race individual and highlight power relations which are often played down by such celebratory cosmopolitan discourse surrounding racial mixing. Using the mixed-race body as a productive site, the artists expose the inadequacy of current racial categories in fully accounting the lived reality of racial diversity and demonstrate the urgency for a rethinking of the monoracial construction of racial differences. As the playwrights explore mixed-race identity through dramatic art, they sustain multiple affiliations with the communities with which they simultaneously share heritage and create possibilities for building aesthetic and political coalitions between Asian Americans and other groups.

Chapter IV, "Post-Racial Cosmopolitanism," presents a concentrated discussion of the individualistic dimension underlying various forms of racial cosmopolitanism – autonomous selfhood and voluntary attachment – through David Henry Hwang's *Bondage* (1992) and *Yellow Face* (2006). It brings an Asian American voice to post-racial debates hitherto governed by the hegemonic dualistic Black-White paradigm and contributes to the understanding of cosmopolitanism's ability to unsettle readily apparent terminologies of difference in Asian American contexts. The two plays address a key issue: does an individual in today's America have the cosmopolitan freedom to cross over racial lines? In exploring this question, Hwang maps out a middle state between a bygone age when racial boundaries were so rigidly maintained that few individuals dare to cross them and an idealized era when individuals are free to associate with or disassociate from particular racial attachments. Embracing both the possibilities and impossibilities of voluntary racial identification, Hwang's vision of post-racial cosmopolitanism dramatizes a dialectical interplay between the social and material realities

that limit the individual's freedom in racial dis/affiliation, and the demographic, structural, and ideological changes to the U.S. racial landscape that have given rise to the aspiration for such freedom in the first place. His theatrical experiments lead us through the complex workings of race that shape racial crossover in contemporary times and call for a reconsideration of the Asian American boundary as it is being continually contested by people on both sides of this "color line."

My conclusion, "The End as a New Beginning," offers a holistic look at the eleven plays in this project and summarizes the common features of different modes of racial cosmopolitanism they have collectively demonstrated. This section also provides examples of other forms of cosmopolitanism in contemporary Asian American theatre and points to possible ways to further explore the cosmopolitan character of Asian American theatre and Asian American identity.

CHAPTER I

Inner-City Cosmopolitanism:

Kimchee and Chitlins: A Serious Comedy about Getting Along (1992) and *The Square* (2000)

Kimchee and Chitlins: A Serious Comedy about Getting Along, written by the Chinese American writer Elizabeth Wong, and *The Square*, a collaborative play by sixteen American playwrights, eight of whom are Asian Americans, are theatrical explorations of interracial connection and empowerment in urban neighborhoods populated by racialized minorities. With these two works, Chapter I asks: how do Asian American theatre artists dramatize cosmopolitanisms rooted in minority inner-city neighborhoods, and how do their cosmopolitan imaginings challenge the demonizing images of these racialized spaces in American mainstream discourse? Dissatisfied with the American mainstream media's stereotyping treatment of often racially marked inner-city neighborhoods that consistently exoticizes, pathologizes, or criminalizes the urban racial other, Asian American theatre artists articulate alternative visions. In their construction of a subaltern form of cosmopolitanism based on a precarious sense of survival, the inner city, rather than an area of homogeneous population isolated along racial and class lines, is a lively contact zone where diverse trajectories intersect and affect one another; rather than merely a terrain of conflict, suffering, and oppression, it is a resistant space where the marginalized continually limit, alter, and challenge hegemony and actively forge connections across normative lines of race, class, gender, and sexuality. With no intention to romanticize underclass life, the plays dramatize the coexistence of different racial groups that includes both harmony and violence and, compared with the one-sided hegemonic portrayal of the inner city, present a more balanced and complex picture of urban underclass

interracial propinquity shaped by spatial and temporal specifities. Examining *Kimchee and Chitlins* and *The Square*, this chapter asks another question that bears on the entire project: how do interracial collaboration and coalition between Asian Americans and other groups in the various aspects of the play production, including scriptwriting, stage performance, and audience outreach, challenge us to think in a more inclusive manner about the boundaries of Asian American theatre and the borders of Asian America? Framing the discussion within the broad field of theatrical enterprise, this chapter demonstrates how the productions of the two works exemplify a move towards a more expansive understanding of Asian American identity in Asian American theatre, an espousal of cosmopolitanism which, I will later show, is present in the rest of the plays selected for this project.

Cosmopolitanism in the Inner City

This chapter lies at the intersection of the debate on cosmopolitanism and the city. Behind such a focus on urban cosmopolitanism is a belief that the city, with the concentration of people from increasingly diverse backgrounds, establishes a productive site to examine the experiential realities of cosmopolitanism. Here, it is necessary to make two clarifications. First, cosmopolitanism is not a uniquely urban phenomenon, and there has been a growing eagerness in the field to investigate how "peripheral locations may likewise hold the secrets to fostering cosmopolitanism" (Yeoh and Lin 214). For instance, both Niko Besnier and Beth E. Notar have found compelling and intimate forms of cosmopolitanism in non-metropolitan areas.[7] Scholarship as such suggests understanding cosmopolitanism as "a more general and

[7] See Besnier's "Consumption and Cosmopolitanism: Practicing Modernity at the Second-Hand Market Place in Nuku'alofa, Tonga" and Notar's "Producing Cosmopolitanism at the Borderlands: Lonely Planeteers and 'Local' Cosmopolitans in Southwest China."

historically deep experience of living in a state of flux, uncertainty and encounter with difference that is possible in rural, urban, *or* metropolitan settings" (Gidwani and Sivaramakrishman 345). Second, the urban environment per se is far from an automatic guarantee of cosmopolitan harmony. There are, of course, examples of the outwardly smooth fabric of urban coexistence being scratched and even torn apart by uncompromised differences, from non-violent ethnically exclusive fellowships among Akan-speaking Ghanaian Methodists in London (Fumani) to the late-Soviet era violence towards Armenians in the much-heralded cosmopolitan city of Baku (Grant). So the story of the city has always been about the city of two tales: one of mixing and mingling and the other of exclusion, antagonism, and conflict.

If the city, as a place for face-to-face contact of great diversity and intensity that can produce both friction as well as accommodation, provides "a privileged vantage point from which to investigate people's coexistence with difference" (Humphrey and Skvirskaja 2), there is a critical need to ground cosmopolitanism in concrete urban settings, and in the social, political, and economic conditions of its very expression. Of the many different "windows" through which relations between "us" and the "other" are articulated in the city (Vertovec and Cohen)[8], this chapter pays close attention to one particular form of urban cosmopolitanism, interracial propinquity, or interracial mingling in close physical proximity, in the context of America's quintessential multiracial city, New York. As a bastion for successive waves of immigrants, from the earliest northern and western European immigrants around the mid-19th century, to the second-wave eastern and southern European immigrants since the 1880s, and

[8] In their introduction to *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism*, Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen propose six "windows" on cosmopolitanism: (1) as a socio-cultural condition; (2) as a kind of philosophy and world-view; (3) as a political project towards building transnational institutions; (4) as a political project for recognizing multiple identities; (5) as an attitude or dispositional orientation; and (6) as a mode of competence.

to the third massive influx of immigrants, especially Asian and Hispanic peoples, who came after the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Maffi; Mendelsohn; Minetor; Powell, "New York"), New York provides a fertile ground for conducting real and imaginative experiments of living with racial difference.[9] More specifically, this chapter studies two theatrical constructions of interracial relations in two race-based New York inner-city neighborhoods: first, the staging of the strained relationship between Korean Americans and African Americans in the early 1990s in Brooklyn's Flatbush neighborhood in Wong's *Kimchee and Chitlins*; second, the dramatization of the intersections between Asian Americans and other racial communities in Manhattan's Chinatown throughout its one hundred and twenty years of history in the collaborative work *The Square*.

My decision to focus on the theatrical imaginings of the (im)possibilities of alternative cosmopolitanism in the unlikely urban space of racially segregated and economically impoverished inner city coincides with the important shift of attention in cosmopolitan studies from cosmopolitanism of the elite to cosmopolitanism of common people. As is mapped out in my introduction, there has emerged a growing interest in cosmopolitan studies in exploring manifestations of alternative cosmopolitanisms in the heart of marginalized and excluded communities. Homi Bhabha puts forward the idea of "vernacular cosmopolitanism," a kind of "cosmopolitan community envisaged in a *marginality*" (42). He calls our attention to the forms of communal life practiced by minority groups, which are based on "a precarious sense of survival," and which are "part of the potentially subversive, subterranean concept of

[9] See Mario Maffi's *Gateway to the Promised Land: Ethnic Cultures on New York's Lower East Side*, Joyce Mendelsohn's *The Lower East Side Remembered and Revisited: A History and Guide to a Legendary New York Neighborhood*, Randi Minetor's *New York Immigrant Experience: A Guided Tour through History*, and John Powell's "New York, New York."

community" (42). Shail Mayaram suggests that cosmopolitanism can be found in the city's "fortressed neighborhoods and ghettos that house the working-class poor, refugees, and migrants" (xiv). Refusing to view the inner city as a Darwinist jungle, which, according to her, is a contemporary refection of the long-standing European panic for the mob, Mayaram argues that rather than a mere site of "prejudice, conflict, and exclusion," it is also a place of "cohabitation and conflictual coexistence, where difference is encountered and confronted, hate speech articulated but also negotiated" (23). Citing flashes of subaltern cosmopolitanism in Delhi's inner city cohabited by Hindus and Muslims as examples, she contends that "new subjectivities, coalitions, and alliances relating to interethnic relations" can arise in multiethnic city-slums, and celebrates this form of cosmopolitanism as "subaltern visions for democracy, citizenship, and justice" (24). Based on his ethnographic research in Islam's intersection with a legendary black street gang and hip-hop in Chicago's postindustrial ghettos, Rami Nashashibi coins the term "ghetto cosmopolitanism" to refer to "moments of extraordinary and transnational connections made among the most isolated and marginal sectors of our urban periphery" ("The Blackstone Legacy" 272). Viewing ghetto cosmopolitanism as a form of "cosmopolitanism from below," as opposed to the traditional elitist version of cosmopolitanism from above, Nashashibi expands on work that captures the global within seemingly very provincial spaces and contributes to what Ananya Roy calls "making theory at the margins" (7).

In tandem with the larger effort to restore to memory suppressed and silenced urban cosmopolitan imaginaries, this chapter attends to two performances of the interracial dynamics between Asian Americans and other racial groups on the everyday terrain of underclass urban neighborhoods. As "othered" urban spaces, such neighborhoods have been generally

understood as the result of structural barriers, spatial segregation, economic marginality, and social exclusion. Due to different geographical locations, they exhibit "different socio-spatial formations, produced by different institutional logics of segregation and aggregation" (Wacquant 237). In the American context, the residential segregation of an urban underclass usually occurs along the color line and "involves multiple forms of racial oppression and discrimination" (Hao 273). Yoonmee Chang rightly understands American inner-city neighborhoods as spaces "of structurally imposed, racialized class inequity, of involuntary containment to racialized poverty and blight" (2). The Flatbush neighborhood and Manhattan's Chinatown are two such spaces formed by and developed under social and economic structures that create a spatially contained racially minoritized urban underclass.

In spite of particular formations of different minority neighborhoods in the US, there has been a unanimous tendency in American media and popular culture to pathologize, demonize, or otherwise erase them and their racial minority inhabitants from the white urban imagination. The widespread negative perception of underclass neighborhoods has been significantly shaped by their association with degeneracy and decay in the dominant social imaginary: dilapidated housing, gang crime, drug abuse, pervasive violence, prostitution, broken families, and unemployment. As racially marked spaces of the other and as spaces that produces the other, they evoke in the public imagination of whites hatred and fear. But it is just in such marginalized urban spaces that *Kimchee and Chitlins* and *The Square* explore possibilities of alternative cosmopolitanisms through theatrical expressions. As oppositional cultural projects against disfiguring representations of race-based inner-city neighborhoods, *Kimchee and Chitlins* and *The Square* seek to recuperate the minority underclass from racial stigmatization,

ideological exclusion, and discursive effacement. They theatricalize the agency of individuals and the productiveness of underclass community relations across various axes of difference such as race, gender, class, and sexuality. Cautious of the risk of valorizing multiracial togetherness and glossing over racist realities, the artists complicate inner-city cosmopolitanism by dramatizing the confrontation and communication that simultaneously exists in interracial encounters and contacts in this space.

Urban Cosmopolitanism and Relational Space-Time

My approach to these plays has been significantly informed by a group of human geographers who look closely at living with difference in mundane urban locales and theorize real-world cosmopolitanism with an attention to space. In 2000, David Harvey first proposed integrating geographical knowledge into cosmopolitan projects both in theory and practice, advocating a reciprocal relationship between geography and cosmopolitanism: "Cosmopolitanism bereft of geographical specificity remains abstracted and alienated reason, liable, when it comes to earth, to produce all manner of unintended and sometimes explosively evil consequences. Geography uninspired by any cosmopolitan vision is either mere heterotopic description or a passive tool for power for dominating the weak" ("Geographical Evils" 557-558). He later expanded upon his thinking in *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*, where he contends that many contemporary cosmopolitan inquiries rely on an abstracted notion of space and hence suffer from a lack of material grounding. As a result, idealist cosmopolitan agendas often fail as neoliberal capitalism and imperialist politics go out to flatten geographical particularities for hegemonic economic and political control. Though Harvey doesn't specify exactly what kind of geographical understanding would be appropriate

for cosmopolitan projects in his work, he proposes specificity as an intervention in his critique of "aspatial" cosmopolitanism.

In terms of a more well-developed space-sensitive approach to cosmopolitanism, the idea of "a relational politics of place" advocated by Doreen Massey, Ash Amin, and other human geographers offers us a productive spatial framework for examining urban cosmopolitanism.[10] In her study of the politics of the event of place through examples of cities like London, Hamburg, and Los Angeles, Massey coins the word "throwntogetherness" to describe the situation of a heterogeneous population living together in physical proximity (*For Space* 149-203). This is an appropriation of Heidegger's idea that we are all thrown into the world with neither prior knowledge nor individual option, and that our being in the world is a "thrownness." In the same fashion in which we come to the world, Massey suggests, we come to live with each other in a particular place. People's comings and goings make a place "an ever-shifting constellation of trajectories" (*For Space* 151). The uncertainty and contingency associated with multiple social identities and unequal social relations give that place a highly political character. As a place is inevitably a site of tension, confrontation, and negotiation, the challenge we are faced with today is less the one so often posed, "how do *I* live in a place?", but "how do *we* live together?" (Massey, *For Space* 155; italics mine). In approaching living with diversity and sharing a common territorial space in cities, Amin proposes "a politics of

[10] In 2003, the Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography awarded Doreen Massey the 2003 Anders Retzius Gold Medal for the outstanding contribution to geography. In accordance with past practice, Massey chose a theme for the 2003 Vega Symposium, "The Political Challenge of Relational Space," which captured the essence of her work. Noted human geographers, such as John Allen, Linda McDowell, and Nigel Thrift, who presented lectures at the symposium took different transacts through this general problematic and explored in different contexts "the entanglement of the conceptualization of space and place with the framing of political positions" (Massey, "Geographies of Responsibility" 1). The proceedings of this symposium have been published in the special issue of *Geografiska Annaler B*, *The Political Challenge of Relational Space: The Vega Symposium*.

propinquity." As he sees it, the local turf is an "experienced and contested lived space," where "heterogeneity is negotiated habitually through struggles over roads and noise, public spaces, sitting decisions, neighborhoods and neighbors, housing developments, street life" (39). A politics of propinquity deals with "the challenges thrown up by negotiations of everyday difference in habituated spaces": "how diversity is represented, how interests are contested, how different needs are met and reconciled" (Amin 38-39). "If there is something distinctive about the politics of place as *spatial* phenomenon," Amin writes, "it is that different microworlds find themselves on the same proximate turf, and that the pull on turf in different directions and different interests needs to be actively managed and negotiated" (39).

While the idea of cosmopolitanism as a profoundly spatial relationship has gained increasing acceptance and influence, cosmopolitanism's connection with temporality has not received the same emphasis. Ulrich Beck asks, "Focusing initially on the spatial dimension, how can the cosmopolitanization of society be grasped more precisely?" (Vision 76). He reasons, "Considering the spatial dimension without reference to the temporal dimension leads us into a false one-dimensional real-cosmopolitanism and the reification of an ahistorical global present" (*Vision* 77). Criticizing the primacy accorded space in cosmopolitan studies on the grounds that "the cosmopolitanization of time, history, and memory [has] thus far been largely bracketed out," he contends that "the analysis of cosmopolitanization can and must be developed in both the spatial and temporal dimensions" (*Vision* 76). Massey also strongly advises incorporating a temporal perspective to our understanding of urban spaces. She draws a parallel between the temporal and spatial dimensions of "the potential geographies of our social responsibilities": just as the distant is implicated in the near, so too does the past persist in our present; and just

as we shoulder collective responsibility to the distant, so do we to the past (*For Space* 10). "Distance," according to Massey, should be conceived as temporal as well as spatial. A relational spatial politics means that we should understand the identities of place as "forged through embodied relations which are extended geographically as well as historically" (Massey, "Responsibility" 10). Inspired by Albert Einstein's theory of relativity, which states that space and time do not have an independent existence but, instead, are united in a multidimensional space-time, Massey argues for understanding social phenomena from "all the dimensions of space-time" ("Politics" 80). Holding that "space and time are inextricably interwoven" and must therefore be "constructed as a result of interrelations," she insists "on the inseparability of time and space, on their joint constitution through the interrelations between phenomena; on the necessity of thinking in terms of space-time" ("Politics" 77, 84).

These insights from human geographers inform my attention to a set of questions in the two plays' dramatization of interracial cosmopolitanism in urban practices: What specific social, historical, and political circumstances underlie the messy throwntogetherness of Asian Americans and other racialized communities? How do unequal power relations and disparate interests impact the ways in which Asian and other communities address the rights of presence and confront the fact of difference in the urban? How is the group's and the individual's sense of identity being refashioned in day-to-day interracial interactions? How do temporal and spatial dimensions interact to shape the character of an urban place and its specific politics of interracial propinquity?

***Kimchee and Chitlins: A Serious Comedy About Getting Along* (1991)**

> On May 8, WNYW's segment [the flagship television station of the Fox Broadcasting Company in New York] about the boycott was dominated by furious face-to-face simultaneous harangues through bullhorns as each side tried to drown out the opposition, leading the reporter to observe that "Brooklyn could blow up." But that assessment, repeated in various forms on other stations, seemed based on the behavior of several dozen loud and furious demonstrators who generally refused to explain themselves.
>
> Alex S. Jones, "2 Weeks' News: Sizzle over Substance," *New York Times*, 19 May 1990.

Kimchee and Chitlins was a timely response to the volatile relationship between Korean and African Americans in the late 1980s and early 1990s in poor, predominantly Black, urban American neighborhoods. A theatrical version of the real-life Black-led boycott targeting the Korean-owned Family Red Apple grocery store in Flatbush, the longest of a series of Black boycotts of Korean stores erupting during this period, the play probes the spatial and temporal specificities of the throwntogetherness of Korean and African Americans and presents their coming together in impoverished urban sites as historically contingent and politically contested. In articulating its vision of alternative cosmopolitanism, the play suggests that the inner-city space shared by Korean Americans and African Americans is a field of antagonistic engagement, but geographical proximity also provides opportunities for individuals to enter into each other's history and culture through intimate personal encounters and establish provisional interracial partnerships that defy hegemonic racial domination. Drawing on her over-ten-year journalist background before she turned to dramatic writing, Wong frames the play within the context of a news-media probe of the early 1990s race relations in America to expose the intricate workings of the politics of representation. She contests that the dominant media's biracial construction of the conflict which deliberately heightens the Korean-Black confrontation,

downplays the cooperative dimension of interminority relationships, and obscures underlying hegemonic racist structures. Wong's play shows that if the white-controlled cultural institution of televised media can shape public opinions towards the urban ethnic neighborhood and its underprivileged residents through selective representation, racialized minorities too can stage counterhegemonic cultural projects that offer alternative representations of their marginalized urban existence.

From a situated spatial and temporal perspective, *Kimchee and Chitlins* dramatizes the urban Black neighborhood as an intense and heterogeneous constellation of disparate racial trajectories rather than as a racially homogeneous neighborhood impermeable to external contact. Earlier in the twentieth century, lower-income urban Black neighborhoods in New York and other cities were characterized by a concentration of produce and grocery retail stores owned by Jewish, Irish, and Italian immigrants. As these older white immigrants reached retirement age in the 1960s and 1970s, and as their fully assimilated children showed little interest in stepping into their parents' shoes, the small business niche in these neighnorhoods was up for grabs (Min, "Koreans" 182)[11]. Koreans immigrants arriving in large numbers in the wake of the 1965 Immigration Act, driven by a desire for upward mobility, took over the niche.[12] Wong employs a variety of strategies to theatricalize the historically contingent interracial intersection between Korean- and African-Americans in Flatbush. She writes in the

[11] See Pyong Min's "Koreans: An 'Institutionally Complete Community' in New York" (178-184) for a discussion of Korean American businesses in New York since the 1970s, most of which are concentrated in labor-intensive retail and service business specialties.

[12] Halford H. Fairchild and Denise G. Fairchild suggest that lack of education and training coupled with employment discrimination made it difficult for African Americans to take control of their communities' economies, and that "their economic peril [was] historically ingrained and appears intractable" (138-39). On the Korean side, Kwang Chung Kim and Shin Kim argue that Korean immigrants' business entry into urban Black neighborhoods demonstrated both a general exclusion of Korean immigrants from the mainstream of the American occupational structure and the availability of inner-city business opportunities avoided by the white dominant group.

production notes that the play must be performed by a multiracial cast, including eight Asian Americans, seven African Americans, and five Caucasians. She further stipulates that "there must be distinctions in accent – Haitian from Jamaican, Korean from Japanese from Chinese," and "the Chorus must develop various shades of inflection" (*K & C* 2). As a material indicator of identity, the accented English sensitizes the audience to the many differences juxtaposed in Flatbush and the internal differences within Asian and African American communities, which, according to the mainstream media's facile generalization of the two groups in the reportage of the Korean-Black conflict during the 1990s, are homogeneous racial entities (Lie and Abelmann)[13]. In the play, the twenty five roles are played by eight characters. As actors play multiple roles – sometimes across racial lines – and enter into multiple relations, the play theatricalizes the inescapable interdependencies and interconnections of different life-worlds in urban proximity. Wong further stipulates that all characters "must be on stage to witness the action at all times" (*K & C* 2). So during the performance, while some actors stand forward and play their parts, others stand aside and watch them perform rather than exit the stage. There are also moments when all actors step into the spotlight and move erratically to create the disorderly scene of the boycott. The onstage presence of the entire cast throughout the play further emphasizes the interlocking of the lives of ordinary urban people from different backgrounds in the habituated inner-city space.

In the play's representation of the everyday inner-city politics of racial interactivity, Flatbush is "a field of agonistic engagement" (Amin 39), in which inhabitants deal with the agglomeration of differences and wrestle with "the challenge of the possibility of living

[13] See John Lie and Nancy Abelmann's "American Ideologies on Trial" for their fieldwork findings that debunk American ideological assumptions about the Korean-Black conflict in the 1990s.

together" (Massey, *For Space* 149). During the 1990s, the neighborhood was troubled by the conflict of interests between Korean and African Americans. While the business vacuum left by whites provided Korean immigrants with affordable small business opportunities, it also strained the relationship between them and African Americans, as the two groups competed with each other for limited social and economic resources, and as the former were viewed by the latter as draining resources out of the Black community without contributing to the local economy (Yoon 174, 235). In the play, the two communities, without a workable vocabulary to "[address] rights of presence and [confront] the fact of difference" (Massey, *For Space* 153), furiously clash over the authority of the neighborhood. Amidst their claims and counter-claims to this mundane territory, the two sides even wrangle over the garbage of the grocery store. On a divided stage which symbolizes the division between the two racial communities, the Black activist Reverend Carter shouts from one side "Get your filthy Korean trash off our streets!"; the Korean grocery store owner, Grocer Mak, shouts back from the other side, "Get off my garbage! Leave my garbage alone! This is my trash! This is my garbage!" (*K & C* 14-6).

Not only do group interests collide, but within each group individual' interests are not always in line with each other, which challenges the mainstream media's homogenization of Korean and African Americans and its generalization and simplification of concrete and individual instances of Korean-Black tension taking place at the time (Lie and Abelmann). Within the Black community, Nurse Ruth Betty and Reverend Carter are two fervent boycott campaigners, but for different reasons. Ruth Betty's support of the boycott is motivated by her financial ambition. Having applied a loan from the bank to start her own clinic three years in vain, she believes that Koreans have received preferential treatment and hopes the boycott can

right what she sees as racist banking practices. Reverend Carter is an experienced actor in the world of New York City race relations. His objective is twofold: to "[mobilize] individual Blacks' grievances toward individual Korean merchants into collective actions" against a racially oppressive system (C. Kim 176), and to "advance [his] career as an activist" (*K & C* 80). In contrast to zealous protestors, Barber Brown, also an African American, is reluctant to see the boycott escalate because it is against his business interest. On the stage, he holds before the audience a protest sign he has made under the pressure from his community, but the words are so small that one "[needs] a microscope to read them" (*K & C* 28).

In staging these fraught interracial relations in, *Kimchee and Chitlins* calls into question the mainstream media's distorted construction of the Korean-Black conflict as a biracial incident confined to these minority groups and its dismissal of whites as major players in the development of this interracial tension. Yoonmee Chang criticizes the media for "[pushing] the question of white racial power out of sight" (162).[14] Kyeyoung Park, too, perceives the problem in the media's framing of this interminority conflict, and she asks: What and who are missing here? Where are white people in this interpretation of the conflict? What kind of racial discourse or structure is the media creating, and what role does race play in this conflict? (494, 492). *Kimchee and Chitlins* shows that the boycott, rather than just an interminority group conflict between African Americans and Korean Americans, is a more complex multiracial event in which whites ventriloquize through their domination of the media and other influential social institutions in order to maintain the hegemonic interests of the white establishment. In contrast with the notorious absence of whites in the dominant representation of the Korean-

[14] Chang raises this question when she examines the representation of Korean American entrepreneurship and Korean-Black tensions during the 1990s in Chang-rae Lee's spy novel, *Native Speaker*.

Black conflict, the noticeable presence of white actors in the play, who remain onstage from start to finish, not as bystanders but as participants capable of influencing the event's course, makes visible the white racial power palpably at work in Flatbush's everyday politics of interracial propinquity.

The key white character is the news director Mark. He is the person who decides how prominently the minority issue in the marginalized inner-city space is covered or whether to cover it at all. His control of news coverage theatricalizes white cultural hegemony which operates through discursive mechanisms to maintain white racial supremacy in and through the media. Mark deliberately ignores the boycott until he feels that a palatable dish can be made out of it. Besides a cheap desire to entertain the white audience, his interest in the boycott is also due to the fact that the event, which appears to involve only minority groups, expiates white guilt. As he rejoices, "This time, the white man isn't part of the lynch party. […] Not being the bad guy for once." (*K & C* 19). While whites have a vested interest in diverting the public's attention from the well-entrenched racial hierarchy by seizing upon Korean-Black tensions, they are equally afraid to see the conflict develop beyond control and eventually disrupt the established white racist structure. So as the play proceeds, three other white characters in positions of authority are called in as symbols and guardians of the racialized social order. The Caucasian actor who plays Mark also plays the Mediator, who is supposed to intervene in the conflict; the Judge, who passes a ruling on the boycott; and the Policeman, who is dispatched to control the violent situation. That these state agents are played by one Caucasian actor underscores the structural link between the media, the judicial system, and law enforcement under white domination, all of which conspire together to enforce white supremacy.

The play further unmasks the dominant white racist frame underlying Korean-Black relations through minority characters' self-conscious acting. The frequent use of the theatrical device of the chorus not only establishes a theatricality that is aligned to the play's situation but also creates opportunities for minority characters to interrogate their unquestioned subscription to the racist hegemonic ideology that holds them "collectively divided and conquered" (Sexton 96). In some scenes, the Korean Chorus and the Black Chorus, representing group consciousness and communal speaking, each perform on one side of the stage. They form a triangulation with the audience who sit off the stage and watch them competing with each other. The two choruses break the theatrical fourth wall with self-reflexive references to create a discontinuity that defamiliarizes and problematizes their activities and engage the audience in the enlightening moment of self-critique and transformation. At one point of the play, the Black Chorus and the Korean Chorus curse out at each other from different sides. The former shouts, "Korean monkey!," and the latter swears back, "Black monkey!" (*K & C* 59). Unknowingly aligning themselves ideologically with the white majority in the clash, the Korean Chorus associates African American neighbors with aggression, delinquency, and violence, and the Black Chorus vilifies Korean American neighbors as perpetual "foreigners." Their interaction dramatizes that if minorities are usually the victims of racial oppression by majorities, they are also "not immune from deploying similar mechanisms to replicate the divisive interpellation of the white mainstream" (Cheung 21)[15]. Comically, in the rough-and-tumble of the name-calling, the two parties end up hurling invectives at themselves: the Black Chorus, in a slip of the

[15] See King-Kok Cheung's "(Mis)interpretations and (In)justice: The 1992 Los Angeles 'Riots' and 'Black-Korean Conflict'" for an interdisciplinary legal and literary reading of "The Court Interpreter," a short story by Ty Pak, a Korean immigrant writer, which sheds light on Korean-Black interracial tensions during the 1990s.

tongue, cries out “Black nigger” and the Korean Chorus, too, mistakenly yells “Yellow nigger.” The verbal abuse suddenly comes to a halt and the characters step back from the action. A moment later, the Black Chorus says to the Korean Chorus, “Well, you know what I mean,” and the Korean Chorus asks, “Did we say that right?” (*K & C* 59). The sudden pause, indicated by a blank line space in the playscript and followed by the two sides’ self-reflexive comments, presses both the characters and the audience to look into the unconscious moments in which minorities perpetuate dominant racial ideologies and reapply the racist treatment they have received to other minorities.

There are also moments in which another mode of triangulation emerges with one single character playing at stage center, the chorus formed by other characters commenting on the character’s performance from aside, and the audience sitting off the stage. The play begins with the news reporter Suzie’s recollection of her earliest exposure to the racial other, during which an African American man gave her a toy. While Suzie claims that she took it naturally, the Korean Chorus counters and lays her bare for the audience, “Not! She screamed. She quaked. She squished down, down deep in that late-model Dodge. ‘Make the boogeyman go away,’ you said” (*K & C* 4). Then the Black Chorus joins the Korean Chorus, and they together whisper, “Make the boogeyman go away” (*K & C* 4). Towards the end of the play, when Suzie sees a Vietnamese boy mistaken for a Korean and beaten by a group of African American youths, she recalls once being mistaken for a girl from Taiwan when she was in school, a girl whom she disliked for her awkwardness at tetherball, thick accent, and body odor. Then, the two choruses speak together in one voice *sotto voce*, “The boogeyman is here. Inside you. Inside me. The boogeyman takes little girls and little boys. Make the boogeyman go away” (*K & C* 83). Here,

the Korean Chorus and the Black Chorus, hitherto divided racially, merge into one united chorus to point to the problem of minority racism against other minorities shared by both groups across color lines. The very notion of the boogeyman, whispered rather than spoken out loud in a regular voice by the chorus, suggests that it is hidden beneath Suzie's non-racist proclamations. It symbolizes, as Randy Barbara Kaplan points out in her reading of this play, the "universal fear of the other" in oneself that one needs to confront (353). The chorus interruptions, which contradict the character's outwardly professed racial enlightenment, alert the character to his/her deep-seated prejudice against the racial other and raise the question of personal accountability for racism in the audience. Under the double gaze of both onstage and offstage spectators, the character is forced to conduct a more critical self-scrutiny of the racist tendencies in private thoughts. Alternating addressing Suzie at the center using the second person and addressing the audience using the third person to refer to her, the Chorus invites the audience to be part of the interrogation process.

The play also counters the hegemonic ideological construction of the Korean-African conflict also in the way it brings onto stage moments of cross-racial understanding, connection, and solidarity between Korean and African Americans, which have been deliberately played down in the media-led discourse surrounding the boycott. In the dominant representations of Korean-African Americans relations, there was a disproportionate focus on the hostility between the two communities and a deliberate disregard for their cooperative encounters, as the epigraph of this section exemplifies. In this excerpt of the play's news reportage, Journalist Jones describes how New York's major television stations, such as WNYW, inflamed racial conflicts by repeatedly broadcasting live confrontational scenes between Korean and African

Americans, which were based on the behavior of just "several dozen loud and furious demonstrators." The mainstream media demonized racial minorities as unreasonable and unintelligible urban mobs "who refused to explain themselves" with such depictions. John Lie and Nancy Abelmann criticize the excessive media attention to Korean-Black antagonism for not only reifying the two groups but the conflict itself. They contend that the ready-made media frame of the Korean-Black conflict heightens intragroup suspicion and hatred and averts the general gaze from deeply embedded racist political, economic, and ideological apparatuses that set the stage for the interminority tension. Elaine Kim observes, "The mainstream media have a stake in discouraging links among marginalized individuals and groups" (71). By emphasizing the tension between Korean and African Americans and effacing the various goodwill efforts between these communities, the news media undermines the building of interminority political coalition and "[preserves] the centrality of whiteness" (E. Kim 71). Both Hye-Kyung Ryoo and Miliann Kang have done fieldwork on service encounters between Korean shopkeepers and Black customers. With many real-life examples that depart from the Korean-Black conflict frame, they call for a reconsideration of the taken-for-granted conception that interactions between Korean and African Americans are inherently problematic and violent. While the hegemonic "divide and conquer" strategy purposefully erases stories about how different people get along and pits people of color against each other, in *Kimchee and Chitlins*, the confrontation between African- and Korean-Americans is dramatized as being interspersed with flashes of interracial cosmopolitanism. The play does not deny the reality of intraracial tension, distrust, and rivalry between Korean and African Americans, but by putting back into the scene positive interracial encounters between individuals at the level of direct personal

contact, it brings to surface an alternative facet of Korean-Black relations in everyday urban life and presents a fuller and more nuanced picture of the so-called Korean-Black conflict.

The friendship between Korean Grocer Mak and African American Barber Brown in the play is a telling dramatization of building interracial connection and solidarity at the personal level amidst the overwhelming mass media reports about the animosity between the two marginalized racial groups. Rather than irrational angry rioters, the two characters are in full possession of their minds and clear about their political stance during the boycott. Barber Brown tries to stay away from the intergroup conflict not only because the boycott is bad for his business, but also because he opposes his community's negative stereotypes of Korean Americans. Keenly aware of the injustice of lumping disparate individuals into racial categories and of interacting with others through the filter of racial stereotypes, he insists on treating people on an individual basis: "People are people. There's good and there's bad. […] That grocer [Mak] gets his haircut in here. That's all I have to know, that's all I need to know" (*K & C* 29). Grocer Mak similarly tries to resist the demands of identity politics, which demands members of the group rally and identify with one another as a demonstration of group allegiance when an entire race is under attack (Cheung 15). Disapproving of the confrontational attitude held by his fellow Korean Americans toward African Americans, he says, "I don't want to make enemies. I came to America to be a businessman. To make for a better life. That is my dream. To be a free businessman in America, and make money!" (*K & C* 88).

The relationship between Barber Brown and Grocer Mak goes beyond friendly exchanges between two businessmen to reach a deeper level of cross-cultural and cross-racial engagement. Grocer Mak knows about African American history and culture and tries to

uncover the neglected links between Korean and African Americans. He tells Barber Brown that "Korean people know plenty about Harlem," and that the ties between the two communities can be traced back to at least WWII when many Korean women married African American G.I.s (*K & C* 88). Grocer Mak introduces Barber Brown to the traditional Korean dish kimchee, and Barber Brown creates a delicious dish called "kimchee and chitlins" by placing a mess of chitlins on a bed of kimchee. Chitlins came to be because "the slave master took the best part of the pig, and left the slaves with the shit" (*K & C* 97). Ruth Betty's grandfather says: "Life is like chitlins. […] Someone gives you shit, but you make a banquet out of it" (*K & C* 97). In Korea, kimchee was originally the invention of the poor, who salted, seasoned, and stored vegetables in sealed containers in preparation for the winter. Like chitlins, kimchee stinks but delights the palate. The mixture of traditional Korean and African American food demonstrates a willingness of individual political actors on both sides to learn and respect how they each flourish despite the respective hardships they have endured and to forge interracial connections which alleviate intergroup tension.

Interracial coalition is further dramatized with the play's non-mimetic re-enactment of the incident that triggered the Red Apple Boycott and its alternative imagining of the conflict's ending. The boycott began after a scuffle between an African American woman and an employee on January 18, 1990 in the Family Red Apple grocery store on Church Avenue in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn. The facts of the original incident were disputed and never settled: the African American woman, named Matilda, claimed that she had been physically attacked by an employee without provocation, while the store owner accused the woman of shoplifting and becoming agitated. In the play, the Korean American community and African American

community each stage a version of the Matilda incident, in which actors frequently comment on their roles, discuss their performance, and directly address the audience. The overt artificiality of action marks the minority characters' acute awareness of their engagement with the politics of representation to manufacture a "reality" in their own interests. Although in staging the controversial incident, both sides, as I have analyzed in previous paragraphs, at times turn to racial stereotypes scripted by dominant culture to debase their adversary and inadvertently perpetuate hegemonic racial ideology, different from the mainstream media which tries to magnify Korean and African Americans' mutual denigration and pit them against each other, the minority characters re-enact the historical incident in ways that gesture towards understanding, connection, and reconciliation. On the stage, as one group is role-playing, the other group who watches from the side learns about the adversary's grievances and difficulties and gets a chance to view the incident from a different perspective. The spectator group is not only standing on the side watching; it also participates in the acting group's performance by offering additional information about the characters from their own side in the form of a chorus and tries to raise compassion for their own group. Moreover, while the disputing parties sometimes tend to defame each other, at other times they simultaneously portray their counterparts in a sympathetic manner.

For example, during the African American community's re-enactment of the incident, Koreans Americans learn from Black performers that Matilda has worked long hours that day "sweeping and cleaning for some uptown people" (*K & C* 29) and is shopping for groceries to cook a consoling meal for her heartbroken sister. Her sister has come to the U.S. to escape the political turbulence in her home country Haiti, and her husband has recently left her. African

Americans also learn more about their competing group from the Korean American Chorus's side comments. Just as Ruth Betty is about to play Grocer Mak's niece Wille, the Korean American Chorus jumps in and adds that Wille has been used by his uncle as "cheap labor" working "for less than minimum wage" (*K & C* 30). Then Ruth Betty turns to play Grocer Mak's niece Soomi, and tells the audience about the young Korean girl's similar exploited situation in the grocery store. In moments like these, members of both groups enter into the stories of their adversaries, who are also victims of the conflict, and their lives become interwoven. At the level of direct contact, they reach for each other for understanding, recognize shared experiences, blur racial boundaries, and alleviate group antagonism.

In line with her effort to weave moments of interracial harmony into the inter-minority conflict and challenge the dominant overemphasis on the interracial conflict in the inner city, Wong couples the dispiriting true-to-life ending with an alternative imagining. In the first ending, which conforms to the historical fact, the informal mediator session does not materialize and Grocer Mak closes the shop due to the heavy financial loss he sustains as a result of the boycott. Instead of lowering the curtains here, the play offers another "more cheerful solution" in place of this "depressing" reality (*K & C* 107). In the alternative conclusion, Barber Brown invites Grocer Mak for dinner at his house and treats him with kimchee and chitlins. As the stink of the dish "[wakes] up the whole neighborhood," all minority characters gather and stand intermixed on the stage, representing the emergence of temporary interracial solidarity (*K & C* 84). At this moment, Suzie comes and ends the play with a Brechtian remark, which reminds the audience of the play's non-mimetic nature: "Just goes to show, […] the best stories are *invented*" (*K & C* 108). Kaplan offers an insightful analysis of the two endings: "If, as

[Mark] believes, the media are obligated to render information that could be constructed as dangerous as palatable instead, it follows that the media are further empowered to manufacture a 'truth' empowered to heal" (Kaplan 353-54). The invented conclusion does not alter how the Red Apple Boycott actually ended, but it does gesture toward a new conceptual orientation and a renewed sense of the possibilities of cosmopolitanism between underclass racial minorities.

If during the Black-Korean conflict, the mainstream news media, as Cheung notes, is invested in "[stratifying] the two minorities and [subordinating] them to an invisible white majority and its position of white racial privilege" (21), minority theatre, as an equally powerful genre of representation, can also reformulate the hegemonic discourse of the entrenched Korean-Black conflict and create a conceptual condition that is more favorable towards the formation of ties – albeit tentative and provisional – across racial differences. By dramatizing flashes of racial harmony throughout the confrontational event, the play searches for seeds of cosmopolitanism in the urban periphery in which provisional interracial alliances emerge through "the openings, fissures, and connections of the moment" (Koshy 1547) and tries to forge links between marginalized racial groups in the inner city through theatrical imagining. In the public form of dramatic art, *Kimchee and Chitlins* challenges the conceptual apparatus of hegemony at work in the mass media's reportage of the Korean-Black conflict and theatricalizes the eclipsed positive dimension of Korean-Black relations. Staging Korean-Black relations as being simultaneously troubled by conflicts and empowered by interracial alliances, the play offers a more complex picture of interracial coexistence in the underprivileged inner city

populated by racial minorities and articulates a non-elitist mode of racial cosmopolitanism envisaged in the marginalized urban space.

The Square (2000)

> There it lies, unfathomed and unknown, in the very ear of the city where all things come to be known – where a pin dropped on the other side of the world is heard an instant afterward – contemptuous, blandly mysterious, serene, foul-smelling, Oriental, and implacable behind that indefinable barrier which has kept the West and the East apart since the centuries began. Within the boundaries of the three acres which it occupies, five thousand slant-eyed children of Cathay and three or four hundred whites, who have cast- their lot with them, order their existence like rabbits in a warren.
>
> William Brown Meloney, "Slumming in New York's Chinatown: Glimpse into Underworld of Mott-Street Quarter," 6 November 1909.

Written shortly after the notorious murder of a young white woman named Elsie Sigel, whose strangled corpse was discovered inside a trunk in the midtown Manhattan apartment of her reputed Chinese lover in the summer of 1909, and whose unresolved death raised widespread concerns about interracial social and sexual mixing during the period, this account of Chinatown by New York journalist William Brown Meloney speaks volumes about the entrenched Eurocentric orientalist sensibilities towards Chinatown and its inhabitants that have persisted till the present day. Despite the heterogeneity of urban and suburban Chinatowns, the construction and representation of "Chinatown," as Yuka Nakamura finds, "remain surprisingly uniform across time and space" (221). Surveying historical and contemporary mainstream images of Chinatown in various Western countries such as America, Canada, and Australia, Nakamura argues that Chinatown has been consistently portrayed as the cultural other for the dominant white society. John Kuo Wei Tchen similarly notes that widely circulated images of Chinatown have been shaped not so much by the actual presence of its inhabitants as

by their "systematic erasure and omnipresent 'otherness,'" and that they insistently associate the place with foreignness, seclusion, stagnation, dilapidation, and degeneration (Tchen, *New York* 295). As Meloney describes, Chinatown, in the minds of whites, is "unfathomed and unknown […] contemptuous, blandly mysterious, serene, foul-smelling, Oriental, and implacable." The repetition of these stereotypes has obliterated the heterogeneity of Chinatowns and ossified them into one generic image of the racially and culturally pathological Chinatown. *The Square* challenges these constructions. It is a play, collectively written by eight Asian American playwrights and eight American playwrights from other racial backgrounds, about Manhattan Chinatown's one hundred and twenty years of interracial history.[16] The sixteen playwrights participated in a collaborative writing process carried out along a creatively designed spatio-temporal dramatic structure and produced a work that puts on stage Chinatown's cosmopolitan throwntogetherness shaped by both spatial and temporal forces. Challenging the temporally static and spatially closed quality of mainstream images of Chinatown, the play reconstructs it as a vibrant cosmopolitan space that gathers different racial trajectories and pulsates with the social, economic, and political changes of the larger society. As the play dramatizes, though troubled by economic and social problems, the racially othered underclass Chinese community in lower Manhattan is also a familiar terrain where marginalized subjects seek opportunities to build strategic alliances across normative lines and subvert a Eurocentric hegemony that regulates gender, sexual, and racial identities.

[16] The eight Asian American playwrights are Chay Yew, Ping Chong, Philip Kan Gotanda, Jessica Hagedorn, David Henry Hwang, Han Ong, Diana Son, and Alice Tuan; the other eight contributors are Bridget Carpenter, Constance Congdon, Kia Corthron, Maria Irene Fornes, Craig Lucas, Robert O'Hara, Jose Rivera, and Mac Wellman.

The Square features a unique dramatic structure that accords prominent treatment to the spatial and temporal dimensions of Manhattan's Chinatown's cosmopolitan landscape. This structure designates Chinatown as the geographic focus of the play, but seen from the perspective of four decades, 1880s, 1920s, 1960s, and 2000s. It also lays out other requirements, including themes (destiny, history, chaos, tradition), number of actors (1-4), and the racial make-up of characters (at least one Asian character). Within this frame, the 16 playwrights effectively historicize Chinatown, counteract its image of spatial and temporal "otherness," and dramatize the racialized space as an integral part of the cosmopolitan city that is New York. The project's deconstruction of Chinatown as an "embodiment of static continuity and bounded insularity" (L. Liu 187)[17] began with an explicit spatial concern. First staged as a workshop in Los Angeles's Mark Taper Forum's 1997 New Works Festival, the play was inspired by a review Singapore-born American playwright, producer Chay Yew (then director of the Taper's Asian Theatre Workshop [ATW]), and Lisa Peterson, then resident director at the Taper, had read of an environmental performance staged in a German public square by the Australian anti-conventional playwright Peter Handke. From there, Yew and Peterson began to conceive a play set in and around a fictitious park based on Columbus Park in Manhattan's Chinatown. They then invited sixteen American playwrights to each produce a ten-minute piece that takes place in the park and its environs. Located in Manhattan's highly racially diverse Lower East Side, Chinatown, rather than an isolated entity, is in fact characterized by the porousness of its

[17] See Laura Liu's "Black Slates and Disaster Zone" for a discussion of the historical displacement of Manhattan's Chinatown in the government's management of immigrant labor and communities.

boundaries and packed with interracial histories.[18] Columbus Park, lying at the heart of Chinatown, is chosen as the setting because of the possibilities of racial mixing and communication this communal ground affords. In the second step, Yew and Peterson added a time parameter to the play's dramatic structure. They requested the contributing playwrights situate their pieces in one of four periods: 1880s, 1920s, 1960s, or 2000s. The 1880s saw the birth of Chinatown, when virulent anti-Chinese sentiment along the West Coast drove Chinese immigrants to embark on a transcontinental trip, arriving in New York in ever-increasing numbers between 1870 and 1882 (M. Nevius and J. Nevius 147). The world depression began at the end of the 1920s, exacerbating longstanding racial antipathies towards Asian Americans and reinforced their economic marginalization (K. Chang). The 1960s marked a watershed in American and Asian American history, when, emboldened by the Black Power movement, a wide range of Asian communities banded together for the first time under the rubric of "Asian American" to form a "pan-ethnic, self-identified political and social coalition" (Shimakawa 2). The last assigned time was 2000, which, as Yew and Peterson envisioned, "contained all the dread and hope of the approaching millennium" (Peterson 558).

Besides the time and space requirements, Yew and Peterson laid down more parameters for the collaboration to help the playwrights theatricalize Chinatown's cosmopolitanism. They played with the multiple meanings of the word *square* and invented a four-sided dramatic structure that follows Columbus Park's quadrilateral shape. As they stipulated, the sixteen plays that made up *The Square* would each include four components:

[18] See, for example, Mary Ting Yi Lui's historical study of the notorious Elsie Sigel murder in Chinatown at the turn of the 20th century, which reveals the perviousness of Chinatown's open geographical and racial boundaries. Present-day Chinatown is home to many Americans of various races as well as diverse Asian ethnic groups other than Chinese. According to the Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center, sixteen percent of the total Chinatown population are Hispanics and thirteen percent are non-Hispanic white (1-2).

time, theme, number of characters, and characters' races; each piece would center on one of the four themes: History, Change, Chaos, or Tradition; and each play would have up to four actors. Rather than assigning a period, a theme, and a cast size, Yew and Peterson asked the playwrights to draw lots out of a hat to determine the structural requirements of each piece. As a result, the playwrights generated sixteen dramatic snapshots of Chinatown over 120 years of history and collectively presented the multiple layers of intertwining connections between Asian Americans and other communities.

This unique collaboration format brings out Chinatown's cosmopolitan character, which is shaped by the interplay of time and space. With the carefully selected spatial and temporal coordinates, *The Square* grounds its dramatization of urban interracial coexistence in specific spatial and temporal settings and explores cosmopolitanism in concrete terms. As scholars of cosmopolitanism suggest, the intricacy of actually existing cosmopolitanism can be best captured when identified in particular time-space settings. The fact that Yew and Peterson took pains to design the four-sided structure of the experiment on cosmopolitanism by which the sixteen mini-plays must all abide, and that the specifics of the variables in the each piece were determined by lot rather than by selection together suggest that each spatial-temporal moment in Chinatown's history has both an element of order and an element of chaos. That the playwrights produced distinct pieces about the relationships between Asian Americans and individuals from other communities within the prescribed spatial and temporal parameters demonstrates that each interracial relationship is a unique hybrid product of the following factors at particular moments and spaces: first, macro-structural global and national changes; second, local socioeconomic conditions; and, third, highly personal choices and actions. The

recurrence of the interrelated four themes in the sixteen plays set in different time periods suggest that the past is imbricated in the present, and that it is important to retrieve connections with the past which informs and shapes the cosmopolitan present. Furthermore, the process of writing, in which the playwrights worked together as a group rather than as separate individuals, recreated the communal atmosphere of human interaction in Chinatown. In the under-class neighborhood, the crowded living of immigrants has made it a norm for the individual's life to be inescapably bonded with those of others, and the neighborhood's character takes shape through direct personal exchanges. In the final step, Yew and Peterson wove the sixteen short plays into what they saw as "a choral piece animated by intersection, interruption and provocative juxtaposition" that created "metaphors for a larger existential and historical horizon of immigration and racism, of loneliness and love, and of the (im)possibility of connection" (Peterson 558).

While the limitation of the space here does not allow me to cover each of the sixteen pieces in detail, by focusing on two episodes in *The Square* – "Silent Movie" by Filipina American playwright, novelist, and poet Jessica Hagedorn and "Examination" by Caucasian playwright, theatre director, and musical actor Craig Lucas, I can provide a glimpse of a cosmopolitan Chinatown the playwrights collectively theatricalize as a productive space where the marginalized re/construct identities and contest hegemonies. As these two pieces dramatize, Chinatown, rather than a stagnant swamp of human inability, is suffused with disruptive energy. It provides a refuge, no matter how temporary, for restless souls to release their repressed transgressive urges and establish interrelations across normative lines of race, class, gender, and sexuality. I single out "Silent Movie" and "Examination" for two main reasons.

First, both of them address homosexuality, an issue not explored in the other works I study in the dissertation. With the two plays, I want to continue the ongoing work in Asian American literary and cultural studies that began in the 1990s of problematizing "the silences surrounding homosexuality in Asia America" (Takagi 27) [19] and place homoerotic longings for connection and reciprocity onto the Asian American cosmopolitan landscape. Second, by juxtaposing "Silent Movie," a piece written by an Asian American playwright and prominent novelist about two whites, and "Examination," a piece by a Caucasian writer about an Asian American, I want to raise the question about how we re/define Asian American theatre.

Jessica Hagedorn's "Silent Movie" dramatizes a secret rendezvous in the 1920s between two white women, an Irish mistress who grew up in Chinatown, Emma, and her Irish maid and lover, Lucy, in a Chinatown opium den. Though the play does not feature Asian American characters, it brings onto the stage the historical intersection between Chinese and Irish immigration histories. The momentary passing of the life paths of two Irish women in a space racially marked as Chinese is not a happenstance. During the mid-nineteenth century, the Great Potato Famine forced millions of Irish to emigrate, 85 percent of whom headed for the United States (Suranyi 90). Many Irish immigrants set their first foot in the Lower East Side through the port of New York and shared the same spatial locus with the Chinese. What led to the mixture of Chinese and Irish immigrants, as John Kuo Wei Tchen remarks, was not only their physical proximity, but also their comparably modest socioeconomic standing and marginalized racial

[19] In "Maiden Voyage: Excursion into Sexuality and Identity Politics in Asian America," Dana Takagi criticizes how homogenous constructions of homosexuality and Asian Americanness marginalize queer individuals within Asian American studies. For influential works in Asian American queer studies, see David Eng and Alice Hom's *Q and A: Queer in Asian America* and Russell Leong's *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of Gay and Lesbian Experience*, in which the editors have compiled a wide array of essays exploring from interdisciplinary perspectives how Asian American racial identity intersects with queer sexuality.

status.[20] Most Chinese and Irish immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were impoverished, uneducated, and unskilled; both Chinese and Irish were classified as racial "otherness" before the latter successfully allied themselves with mainstream America and eventually "clawed their way into whiteness" (Lee and Bean 30). Hagedorn was intrigued by the presence of Irish immigrants in Chinatown during the early 1920s when she was researching for *The Square*, and created a play about two Irish women "in this illicit den, breaking taboos and taking charge" at a time when many women would not have had the freedom to do so (Hagedorn qtd. in Memran). It needs to be noted that in staging the historical convergence of Irish and Chinese American history, Hagedorn reproduces the popular early twenty century Chinatown narratives by white Americans which insistently constructed Chinatown as a corrupt place inhabited by opium addicts and criminals and associated the racialized urban space with moral depravity detrimental to the American national body (Ahmad 38)[21]. Despite her complicity with "the trope of addiction" (Haenni)[22], she simultaneously resists the representation of opium-laced Chinatown by exploiting the liminality built into such hegemonic constructions of Chinatown and theatricalizes it as a productive political terrain where the marginalized build socially unsanctioned relationships and stage countercultural alternatives.

The "audio *mise-en-scene*" and "visual *mise-en-scene*" in "Silent Movie" effectively helps Hagedorn reconfigure the trope of addiction and stage the sexually marginalized other as a

[20] See Tchen's "Quimbo Appo's Fear of Fenians" for a fuller examination of Chinese-Irish relations in lower Manhattan.
[21] In "Threats to Body and Behavior," Diana Ahmad reviews a large amount of historical evidence provided by journalists, doctors, and politicians to describe and confirm the behavioral and moral side effects of opium smoking which contributed to the anti-Chinese feeling and the Chinese exclusion legislation in the U.S.
[22] In "Filming 'Chinatown': Fake Visions, Bodily Transformation," Sabine Haenni analyzes Asian American cinematic representations in the early 1900s and their obsessive focus on Chinatown's "opium dens" in relation to the white consumption of difference.

position of empowerment from which to claim space and agency. The rendezvous between the two Irish women takes place on a stormy night, and the actresses are performing lesbian sex amidst sounds of thunder, lightning, and rain. These sounds symbolize the disruption of order and create an atmosphere for the unfolding of the subversion of hetero-patriarchal hegemony in the liminal space of Chinatown. During the ten-minute play, Emma asks Lucy to accompany her to the cinema, where she gazes out at the audience as if she is watching a movie. While the actresses are performing, flickering, unfocused images from the 1919 D. W. Griffith silent film *Broken Blossoms or The Yellow Man and the Girl* are projected on the wall behind them. Set in the Limehouse district of London, an early twentieth-century waterfront slum populated by Chinese immigrants, *Broken Blossoms* presents a melodrama about a young Chinese immigrant Cheng Huan's chaste love for Lucy Burrows, an Irish girl who is abused by her alcoholic father. Lucy's father discovers his daughter's whereabouts and beats her to death in a drunken rage. In the end, Huan kills the father and commits suicide. In Hagedorn's play, the acting space is bathed in the carefully chosen black and white images of the silent movie, which emphasizes Lucy Burrows's abject submissiveness to her brutal father. For example, in one of the movie clips, the audience sees Lucy kneeling, tearfully wiping her angry father's shoes as he stands there glowering at her. Using the movie version of meek and docile Lucy as a foil, Hagedorn creates a theatrical version of fighting Lucy in her closeted lesbian relationship with Emma.

Though Lucy, as Emma's maid, is supposed to be in an inferior power position, she demonstrates more command over Emma and their secret love. When Emma does not dare to admit the pleasure she gets from their clandestine meetings in which she does not have to conceal her homosexuality, Lucy tells her clearly, "Face it Emma. You are too high, and it's okay"

(*Square* 619). When Emma hesitates about their elopement, Lucy tells her firmly, "You're never goin' back" (*Square* 619). When Emma suggests waiting for some time, Lucy resolutely refuses, "No way. Tonight's our only chance" (*Square* 619). When Emma panics at the thought of being found out by her rich white husband, Lucy calms her down: "We'll get away soon enough. We're halfway there, ain't we?" We'll be outta this shithole" (*Square* 620). While Emma feels at loss with their clandestine relationship, Lucy shows a high level of toughness and determination and takes on more responsibility for their future. She criticizes Emma's weak character: "I hate you sometimes. Hate havin' to make it all better for you, the way I always do" (*Square* 620). Towards the end of the play, Emma's powerful husband finds her out and kills her with three shots. But in sharp contrast with the movie's ending in which Lucy dies in self-pity, Lucy in the play, rather than being frightened, pulls her own revolver from under the pallet on which she has made love with Emma and shoots the man. Before she exits, Lucy gently closes Emma's eyes and leaves the room taking what valuables are left. With the theatrical version of defiant and decisive Lucy, Hagedorn overturns the tragic ending of the movie and presents an image of a woman, though in marginal sexual and class positions, willing to assert herself, take charge of situations, and defy patriarchal and heterosexual normativity. In Hagedorn's "Silent Movie," Chinatown, despite being riven by drug and violence, offers possibilities for suppressed individuals, Asian Americans or not, to enjoy freedom and stage transgression that might not be available in spaces more strictly policed by normative rules or constraints.

As another piece that explores queer identity in an Asian American context, Lucas's "Examination" dramatizes a present-day gay relationship between a Chinese doctor, Dr. Tsang, who runs a clinic in Chinatown and his new patient Eric, who is racially unidentified. As Dr.

Tsang and Eric express their shared erotic desire and make emotional and intellectual connections, the audience sees the white playwright, on behalf of the Asian American community, challenging "notions of homosexuality as culturally unintelligible in Asian American communities" (Wong and Ana 205) and the hegemonic characterization of Asian men "both as asexual *and* as oversexed" (Espiritu, *Asian American Women and Men* 102)[23]. The play begins with Eric making advances to Dr. Tsang and Dr. Tsang trying to contain his feelings. On the stage, Eric makes a great fuss of adjusting his underwear, his belt, his privates, going as slowly as a person could possibility go with this rather quotidian task. His provocative display of desire disturbs Dr. Tsang, who coughs as a way both to conceal his nervousness and resist his temptation. Then Eric starts a suggestive conversation and tries to push Dr. Tsang to confess his homosexuality, which Eric knows about from one of his fraternity brothers at Brown University, who is also Dr. Tsang's ex-boyfriend. He says, "Sometimes I…have oral sex without a condom" (*Square* 579). At Dr. Tsang's "Uh-huh," which shows his attentiveness to the topic, Eric continues to reveal his personal life, saying that he "couldn't live without" sex and "really [likes]" unprotected oral sex (*Square* 579-80). When Dr. Tsang says he understands Eric's personal sexual preference, Eric chases, "Is that what you feel? You couldn't live without…?" (*Square* 580). No longer able to sidestep Eric's heavy hints, Dr. Tsang admits his gay identity.

In dramatizing transgressive sexual practices, "Examination" differs from "Silent Movie" stylistically. While in "Silent Movie," the artists flamboyantly perform homosexual love-making before the audience, in "Examination," the characters' desires and relationship unfolds in an

[23] In "Gender and Sexuality in Asian American Literature," Sau-ling Wong and Jeffrey Ana provide an overview of representations of gender and sexuality in Asian American literature, including various gay, lesbian, and queer writings. See Espiritu's "Ideological Racism and Cultural Resistance" in *Asian American Women and Men* for a detailed analysis of the racial construction of Asian American manhood and the ideological dimension of Asian American oppression (97-122).

implicative mode. There is no erotic scene in Lucas's play, and, in the playscript, the conversation between Dr. Tsang and Eric is full of ellipses whereby meanings are implied rather than stated, interjections that indicate thinking or pondering, and longer pauses that interrupt sentences. Their fitful dialogue, in which Eric is obviously more proactive and the Chinese American doctor, Dr. Tsang, is more reactive, dramatizes the hesitation, discomfort, embarrassment, and anxiety of openly discussing non-normative sexual relations among Asian Americans. Despite the difficulty of this topic, Dr. Tsang continues his conversation with Eric rather than dropping it off. From answering Eric's questions evasively to frankly acknowledging his gay identity, he breaks the silence surrounding homosexuality in Asian America. In breaking the silence, Lucas also contests the racist construction of Asian American male sexuality. In mainstream images, Asian men have been portrayed as either effeminate, in the image of the "model minority" which mirrors Asian Americans' marginalization in U.S. society, or hyper-masculine, in the image of the "Yellow Peril," which reflects the general society's perception of Asian Americans as a threat in certain historical contexts such as the nativist movement against Asians at the turn of the century (Espiritu, *Asian American Women and Men* 99-104). In Lucas's play, Dr. Tsang, as Eric describes him, is masculine and handsome; he is not afraid to assert his sexual yearning, but at the same time, there is nothing lascivious about his demeanour. With such a character, who is neither asexual nor oversexed, Lucas challenges the disfiguring images of Asian men circulating in today's mainstream media.

In Chinatown, Dr. Tsang and Eric have established bonds which are based on not only erotic desire but shared artistic interest and mutual emotional support. Eric hears about Dr. Tsang from the latter's ex-boyfriend, who has told him about Dr. Tsang's penchant for music

and reading. An artist himself, Eric feels attracted towards Dr. Tsang, and he says excitedly, "I've waited my whole life to meet a guy like that" (*Square* 582). In addition to their love for the arts, Dr. Tsang and Eric also grow closer because they show mutual concern for each other's well-being. Eric already has a family physician, but he feels that the doctor is not responsive and supportive. He complains, "I wanted a doctor I could call on the weekend if I was upset or paranoid about something. I wanted great care" (*Square* 580). For homosexual patients, their relationships with heterosexual doctors are sometimes strained. Many gays and lesbians have experienced some form of bias, subtle or overt, in their interaction with heterosexual doctors, whom they feel are not familiar with the health issues specifically related to their lifestyle, or worse still, are prejudiced against them. In the play, Dr. Tsang, who himself is gay and has patients who are gay, provides Eric with support on both professional and personal levels. He carefully inquires after Eric, respects his sexual practices, introduces him to new medication, and encourages him to adopt healthy living habits. As Dr. Tsang gives Eric appropriate physical and emotional support, trust and rapport develop between them.

If in the earlier part of the play, it is Dr. Tsang who provides care to Eric, as their relationship evolves from that between a doctor and a patient to that between two persons who have a crush on each other, it is Eric who gives emotional support to Dr. Tsang, when, after his parents' unprofessional intrusion into his clinical appointment to bring him lunch, he reveals his difficulty in communicating with them. From the unfamiliarity Eric demonstrates about the generational conflicts between Chinese immigrant parents and their American-educated children which are common, we may guess that Eric is from another racial background. Then the relationship between Dr. Tsang and Eric acquires a complexity of interracial dynamics. In

narratives about interracial gay romance that involve Asian men, they are often eroticized and feminized to fulfill the Orientalist fantasy held not only by white men but also men of other races. As Wei Ming Dariotis observes, Asian gay men are often looked at "as being little more than sexualized 'houseboys' who should be prepared to serve their white masters – similar to the way Asian women are supposed to serve white men with 'oriental' massages and exotic sexual techniques" ("Asian American Queer Folklore and Folklife" 38). Rather than fantasizing Dr. Tsang as submissive, Eric attentively listens to him talking about his difficulty in connecting intellectually and emotionally with his immigrant parents whom he loves dearly, and learns about his family and cultural background. At this moment, an interracial and intercultural connection emerges out of mutual respect, understanding, and support. The romance between Dr. Tsang and Eric contests the prevalent "rice queen" motif in mainstream constructions of Asian gay men. In this "rice queen" interracial relationship, an older and richer white man prefers to date young Asian males, many of whom are less secure in terms of financial status and/or self-esteem and who presumably play out female roles[24]. Luca's dramatization of a masculine and financially stable Asian man and a gay relationship based on an equal power footing disrupts this pattern of relationship and challenges the racial and sexual power of white gay men.

Placing side by side Hagedorn's "Silent Movie" and Lucas's "Examination," I end this section by asking: by what criteria do we choose to include a play in Asian American theatre, and what do our decisions reveal of our conceptualization of Asian American identity? Hwang's

[24] For more discussions of the "rice queen" relationship pattern, see, for example, Patrick S. Cheng's *From Sin to Amazing Grace: Discovering the Queer Christ* (73-74), Chong-suk Han's "Sexy Like a Girl and Horny Like a Boy: Contemporary 'Western' Narratives about Gay Asian Men," and Margaret Rhee's "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Identity" (427), and

work “Jade Flowerpots and Bound Feet” in *The Square* comically dramatizes this thorny issue. In this play, Beth, a publishing house editor, meets Mei-li in Chinatown, who claims to be the mixed race Asian American author who has submitted the manuscript of an ethnic memoir. As it has before happened to the publishing company that some poems attributed to a Japanese A-bomb survivor have actually been written by a white academic in Ohio, it has instituted a policy of meeting all non-white authors face-to-face. Beth demands to check Mei-li’s identity cards for her real name and take blood samples to see whether she has at least one-eighth Asian blood in order to qualify for an “authentic” ethnic publication. Mei-li asks Beth: “You know…has it ever occurred to you – that even a work written by someone who’s one hundred percent non-Asian might be authentic? Or, that one written by a full-blooded Asian might not be? What if the book by the non-Asian was better” (*Square* 578). We can pose similar questions to the “Asian American-ness” of Hagedorn’s and Lucas’s plays. Is “Silent Movie” an Asian American play if its protagonists are white instead of Asian American? Someone may argue that Hagedorn is an established American playwright of Asian descent, and that authorship alone qualifies the short play of hers as belonging to this racially defined genre. But then again, what about “Examination”? Though the play’s protagonist is an Asian American, Lucas himself has no “Asian blood.” Are we to disqualify this piece from being an Asian American play because its writer is not of Asian descent? What about the entire play *The Square*, with half of its sixteen writers coming from non-Asian backgrounds? In other words, as Ling wonders, is an Asian American work defined by the author’s racial heritage, or by its subject matter, or by something else?

Now let’s consider two general questions: How do we deal with a playwright who is racially Asian and nationally American but who chooses not to write of his/her own race?

Conversely, how do we deal with a playwright who is not racially Asian but chooses to write about Asian Americans and creates Asian American characters speaking for them? This dissertation includes works by writers of both kinds. Here, I can't help recalling many instances in which some works were formerly excluded from the Asian American literary and cultural scene but later, due to the changing conception of Asian American identity, have become an important component of the landscape.[25] Therefore, rather than risking making the same mistake of exclusionary practice, I am more interested in explaining why I think scholars of Asian American theatre may benefit from engaging particular plays because they help us rethink the boundaries of Asian American identity and Asian American theatre. In making such suggestions, I do not intend to draw lines that bar certain plays from entering into Asian American theatre. Rather, I prefer to always leave this terrain open for various works that may contribute to the matter in question. Likewise, rather than denying the wishes of the hitherto excluded subjects to be affiliated with the Asian American community, such as mixed-race Asian Americans on which Chapter III focuses, I take their demands seriously, realizing that as the conception of Asian American identity changes the general community may one day grant them membership. In this thesis, particularly in Chapter III and Chapter IV, I study how theatre offers a space for the various claims to Asian American membership that expands the definition of Asian American identity and enriches the Asian American cosmopolitan landscape.

Reconceiving Asian American Identity and Asian American Theatre

[25] For example, Elaine Kim's *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context* (1982), the first book-length scholarly study, stipulates the U.S. as the requisite setting of an Asian American text, excluding works by writers of Asian ancestry who live in the U.S. but set their works elsewhere.

David Hollinger, in his influential book *Postethnic America*: *Beyond Multiculturalism*, identifies a critical tension which ran through much of the 1990s multiculturalist debate: the strain between pluralism and cosmopolitanism. Pluralism, according to Hollinger, has a strong conservative hue. Though pluralism acknowledges the importance of diversity, it tends to grant privilege to already existing communities, defend their status quo, and enforce boundaries. Cosmopolitanism, on the contrary, assumes a more open attitude towards community boundaries; wary of traditional enclosures, it emphasizes the dynamic and changing character of groups and supports the creation of new affiliations. Hollinger therefore suggests that we go beyond multiculturalism and strive for cosmopolitanism. The two plays discussed in this chapter, which have staged Asian America's intersections with other communities in the theatrical space, demonstrate a cosmopolitan scrutiny of established group boundaries and an open stance towards the formation of affiliations, alliances, and partnerships. They have raised questions that I will keep exploring throughout the rest the thesis: how do we reconceive of Asian America and Asian American theatre in contemporary times?

In their dramatization of interracial dynamics, *Kimchee and Chitlins* and *The Square* open up the borders of Asian America and move the process of inclusiveness from the level of pan-ethnicity among Asian Americans to the level of pan-raciality between Asian Americans and other racial groups. They recast Asian American identity by contributing to what Koshy calls "a shift from *strategic essentialism* to *strategic interracialism*" ("Humanities" 1547). In exploring the im/possibilities of strategic interracial collectivity, alliance, and coalition, the two plays embrace a complex racial matrix which cannot be adequately explained by the traditional minority-majority binary. For a long time, the heavy focus on the structural divide between

Asian America and white America largely overshadowed the complex dynamics between Asian Americans and other minority groups and homogenized those between Asian Americans and whites as well. But it becomes increasingly apparent that a mere dualistic approach is not sufficient to "apprehend the full array and complexity of diverse, racialized groups in multiethnic society" (Gold 964) as "emergent racialized and immigrant groups are constantly redefining social relations in ways that move beyond static oppositions such as 'majority' and 'minority'" (Lowe 70). Realizing that the making of "the" Asian American is worked out as much horizontally between Asian Americans and other racially minoritized groups as it is constructed within the frame of Asian American histories and cultures itself, both plays have turned their eyes to interminority relationships. Yet at the same time, they are not abandoning the traditional minority-majority paradigm; instead, they combine the traditional minority-majority perspective and the more recent minority-minority perspective to capture an increasingly diverse and complicated U.S. multiracial landscape.

In these two the theatre pieces, the politics of strategic interracialism, which emphasizes the porousness of Asian American boundaries and Asian Americans' connections with other racial groups, is practiced not only at the level of dramatic content, but also in various other aspects of play-making. In its many full-length theatre productions, and workshops, and readings, *Kimchee and Chitlins* was staged jointly by Asian American, African American, and Caucasian performers. For *The Square*, the interracial alliances not only occurred in the later phase of onstage performance, but in the earlier phase of collaborative scriptwriting. In terms of rehearsal and performance spaces, rather than committing themselves solely to racially specific Asian American theatres, both plays have been actively creating opportunities

in non-Asian-specific theatres to reach wider audiences. *Kimchee and Chitlins*'s first staged reading was at Primary Stages, an Off-Broadway theater company in New York. The play also featured in Los Angeles's primary resident professional theatre Mark Taper Forum's 1992 "Out in Front" mainstage performance series, a four-day festival of local artists from various racial backgrounds focused on dealing with the aftermath of the Los Angeles Race Riots earlier that year. *The Square*, premiered at the Taper, was first developed at the theatre's Asian Theatre Workshop founded by Yew, who devoted himself to promoting new Asian American plays and opening mainstream doors to Asian American artists. Tapping into the Taper's resources and institutional support, Yew developed the workshop into what he called "a pipeline of potential Asian American plays for the main stage" (qtd. in Román, "Los Angeles" 243), producing Asian American works whose theatrical life was not circumscribed within racially specific theatres and whose impact was considerably enhanced after being forwarded to other theatres nationwide.

The efforts of Asian American theatre artists to feature the interracial dimension of Asian American experience in the play and to capitalize on such a dimension to create broad-based pan-racial alliances in theatre production also necessitate a reconsideration of the boundaries of Asian American theatre. The definition of Asian American theatre has been perplexing its practitioners from some time. In writing a history of Asian American theatre, Esther Lee focuses on the locations of production as the primary stipulation of Asian American theatre and considers whoever is associated with Asian American theatre companies as part of Asian American theatre history. Yet as *Kimchee and Chitlins* and *The Square* show, theatrical activity by Asian Americans is not confined to Asian American theatres. To ignore the works emerging out of other artistic and cultural venues would mean to miss a great proportion of

Asian American contribution to the American theatrical landscape. In her study of Asian American theatre, Josephine Lee quotes W. E. B. Du Bois's well-known 1926 definition of "Negro theatre," which she takes as provoking imaginative mappings for Asian American theatre:

> The plays of a real Negro theatre must be: 1. *About us*. That is they must have plots which reveal real Negro life as it is. 2. *By us*. That is they must be written by Negro authors who understand from birth and continual association just what is means to be a Negro today. 3. *For us*. That is, the theatre must cater primarily to Negro audiences and be supported and sustained by their entertainment and approval. 4. *Near us*. The theatre must be in a Negro neighborhood near the mass of ordinary Negro people. (134)

But in referring to Du Bois's vision of "Negro" theatre to configure Asian American theatre, Lee also immediately remarks that "any attempt to describe 'a real Asian American theatre' along these lines is particularly complicated" (8). Indeed, neither *Kimchee and Chitlins* nor *The Square* strictly conforms to the four principles laid out by Du Bois during the early twentieth century. They dramatize the lives of not only Asian Americans but also those from other racial backgrounds; their productions have involved the participation of theatre artists from both within and without the Asian American artistic community; they try to attract attention and support from a variety of audiences besides Asian Americans; and that they have been performed in venues not specifically Asian American. All these facts press on the traditional conceptualization of Asian American theatre as strictly "about us," "by us," "for us," and "near us." In this dissertation, my goal is not to use a few selected plays to work out a so-called contemporary definition of Asian American theatre, which is an impossible task. Rather, I aim to explore how the various innovations by Asian American theatre practitioners, each in its own

way, participate in the process of establishing an Asian American interracial cosmopolitan politics based on a more open and inclusive understanding of Asian American identity.

CHAPTER II

Negative Cosmopolitanism:

Walls (1989) and *The Radiance of a Thousand Suns: The Hiroshima Project* (1995)

If Chapter I operates with an implicit conception that cosmopolitanism and violence are polar opposites, Chapter II aims to complicate this common dualistic understanding from a racial perspective with two war plays co-/written by two Asian American playwrights which present cosmopolitanism and violence as dialectical rather than dichotomous. I focus on *Walls* (1989), written by the Filipina American playwright Jeannie Barroga, and *The Radiance of a Thousand Suns: The Hiroshima Project* (1995) (henceforth referred to as *Radiance*), co-written by the Japanese American playwright Dwight Okita and three other American playwrights, Anne V. McGravie, Nicholas A. Patricca, and David Zak. Both plays show that while violence has often been seen as the antithesis of cosmopolitanism par excellence, the two seeming opposites are dialectically interwoven rather than starkly opposed. Violence can both break and make cosmopolitanism: while it certainly can threaten the very possibility of cosmopolitanism, in its extremity it can also generate seeds for its formation. The understanding that violence and cosmopolitanism are intertwined and dialectical introduces a measure of hope into our precarious existence threatened constantly by violence and brings to surface opportunities of dialogue and coalition building on a common opposition to extreme violence. It is on the basis of such a dialectical conception of cosmopolitanism and violence that Barroga and Okita construct their Asian American imaginings of racial cosmopolitanism in war contexts.

In this chapter, I deploy the notion of "negative cosmopolitanism" to examine the dramatization of the kind of understanding, connection, and support growing out of violent

rupture, or more specifically, war, across various social divides in the two selected plays about the wars that the U.S. fought on Asian soil that loom largest in the American cultural imaginary. Constructing cosmopolitan solidarity from a race-conscious Asian- American standpoint, these two works help me further explore the staging of racial cosmopolitanism in Asian American theatre. I was first introduced to the critical value of the term "negative cosmopolitanism" in the speech "Whose Cosmopolitanism" Galin Tihanov delivered at the festival that launched the Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures at Manchester University in 2009. His talk opens with an unequivocal statement: "The question 'Whose Cosmopolitanism' is also a question about the complex genealogies and dynamic of cosmopolitan discourses and practices" (1). Noting that current theoretical work on cosmopolitanism largely puts aside its "contradictory genealogy," Tihanov contends that instead of examining only the "positive" strands of cosmopolitanism, which emphasize the heritage of the Enlightenment and Kant's ideas of perpetual peace, it is also essential to trace a negative genealogy in which cosmopolitanism emerges out of crisis rather than as a celebration of global diversity and difference. He contends that "the current consensus of understanding cosmopolitanism as a discourse that absorbs and 'rectifies' the unacceptable effects of globalization is only one option in theorizing cosmopolitanism," and that "it would seem equally important to pose the question of the role played by actual conflicts and the idea of violence as potentiality in the construction of discourses of cosmopolitanism" (1). He encourages scholars to consider how cultural productions relate to conflict as a complex form of exchange in the globalized world and whether war can be the vehicle of growing cosmopolitan consciousness.

Inspired by Tihanov's provocation, this chapter aims to contribute to understanding the issues he has raised about negative cosmopolitanism through two plays about U.S. wars in Asia. Over the past hundred years or so, the U.S. presence in Asia has been characterized by its various military engagements and interventions, such as the Philippines-American War (1899-1902), the Pacific War against Japan (1941-1945), the Chinese Civil War (1946-1949), the Huk insurgency in the Philippines (1946-1955), the Korean War (1950-1953), and the Vietnam War (1965-1973). As Peter Nien-Chu Kiang remarks, war is "a fundamental aspect of the Asian American experience," and it largely defines U.S.-Asian relations and American views of Asians as foreigners, aliens, and enemies (34-35). Wei Ming Dariotis and Wesley Ueunten note that the after-effect of war manifests in Asian American individual, familial, and community psyches in various ways such as "post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), legislation relating to such issues as reparations and redress, ongoing family issues related to silences, crises in Asian/Asian American male masculinity, and the violent and violating sexualization of Asian/Asian American women" (748).

America's continuous military presence in Asia has inspired a cornucopia of cultural works in which Americans revisit their wartime experiences, remember the war dead, and develop collective memory of a troubled past.[26] However, most of these memorializations of America's wars in Asia are heavily marked by Eurocentrism and American nationalism, and they articulate U.S. racist, nationalist, and imperialist formations. For example, in order to deal with the confusing relationships with Asian countries in different wars**,** Euro-American writers have

[26] For a list of such works, see, for example, John Newman and Ann Hilfinger's *Vietnam War Literature: An Annotated Bibliography of Imaginative Works about Americans Fighting in Vietnam* (1988), Lester H. Brune's *The Korean War: Handbook of the Literature and Research*, and Philip K. Jason and Mark A. Graves's *Encyclopedia of American War Literature* (1996).

produced a stable repertoire of stereotypical images about "good" or "bad" Asians and Asian Americans, which were employed to manage the change in Asian enemies and allies, and which have persisted long after particular wars have ended (Christopher 135). As Renny Christopher summarizes from his study of the representations of Asians in Euro-American literary constructions of U.S. wars in Asia, when the U.S. has Asian allies, they are constructed as loyal, submissive, and obedient "little brown brothers"; when the U.S. has Asian enemies, they are portrayed as either subhuman or superhuman in possession of uncanny discipline and fighting skill (135-136). She further notes, "the real war […] in American culture is not the historical war fought on the battlefields, but rather the ongoing meta-war" over the social politics of recognition and memorialization (4). In contrast to dominant American war narratives by Euro-American writers, as Bella Adams, Guiyou Huang, and Gayle K. Sato point out, there have also sprung up counter-narratives of these wars by Asian Americans themselves, including, most noticeably, Cambodian and Vietnamese American refugee literature and Japanese American World War II internment literature.[27] This body of work, often materially and aesthetically at odds with dominant discourses of war memorialization in the U.S., creates an alternative space that allows Asian Americans to participate in the process of scripting and re-scripting histories of American wars in Asia which have affected them "in myriad ways that vary distinctly by community" and "on many levels, from the intimately personal to the broadly political" (Dariotis and Ueunten 747). The increasingly pronounced presence of war in Asian American

[27] For discussions of Asian American literary texts focused on war, see: Adams's "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, and Multiplicity, the 1990s" (2008), Huang's "Introduction: Global and Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Asian American Literary Studies" (2005), and Sato's "Asian American Literary History: War Memory, and Representation" (2005).

writing calls for a "deliberate reading of this literary history as a form of cultural memory and counter-memory" (Sato 16).

Walls and *Radiance*, which deal with the aftereffects of the Vietnam War and the WWII Pacific War respectively, are part of the larger effort to produce counter-memories of the U.S. military engagements in Asia that disrupt mainstream patterns of memorialization. These two plays participate in the highly charged politics of memorialization that involves complex decisions about what to remember and how to remember it. Like many other war writings by Asian American writers, they seek to challenge, through the medium of theatrical art, the U.S. racist ideology underpinning the plethora of cultural productions that memorialize American wars in Asia. Bringing forward Asian American perspectives and the effects of the war on Asian American lives, they add a much-needed dimension to public war discourses that have, until recently, been largely framed by the American racist standpoint. But *Walls* and *Radiance* are also unique among plays of the same kind in the sense they carry out their oppositional endeavors of war memorializing within larger interracial and transnational contexts and aim to, as do *Kimchee and Chitlins* and *The Square* in their construction of racial cosmopolitanism, build a broad solidarity beyond the pan-ethnic Asian American community in the war narratives. While most plays by Asian American playwrights about U.S. military activities in Asia and their continuing resonances are concerned with only the lives of Asian Americans, the two plays in this chapter, being non-Asian American-centric, ask us to acknowledge and remember war's impacts on diverse people besides Asian Americans. By giving prominence to and forging cross-racial, cross-cultural, or cross-national bonds between victims who, because of race, gender, and nationality, have rarely been included in the U.S. hegemonic narratives of the two wars, the

two plays contest institutional occlusions that shape social processes of remembrance and forgetting. In the war memorializations they offer, the plays reformulate nationalist, Eurocentric, and male-centered mainstream constructions of post-war solidarity and offer alternative cosmopolitan visions of collectivity in the war remembrance projects. In creating theatrical spaces for war victims of other races beyond Asian America and for those on the side of America's enemy beyond the U.S., the plays dramatize negative cosmopolitanism as a never-ending project of extending humanity to people variously impacted by violence and call for opening up the boundaries of Asian America as Asian Americans try to align themselves with the subordinated, suppressed, silenced, and excluded.

***Walls* (1989)**

In 2002, when Sean Lim, then a fresh graduate from Stanford University, joined the Asian American Theatre Company (AATC) of San Francisco as Managing Artistic Director, he was entrusted with an important mission: to restore the bygone glory of the company. As one of the oldest Asian American theatre companies in the United States, AATC was once the hub of Asian American theatrical talents in the Bay Area, but it declined to the verge of bankruptcy in the 1990s due to financial and administrative mismanagement. When Lim took the helm, he launched the company into a variety of activities which effected an amazing revival, one of which was the 2006 restaging of Barroga's *Walls*, a classic in AATC's production history.

Among the over fifty plays Barroga has written, *Walls*, which premiered at AATC in 1989, is her most produced work. It stages a one-day visit to the newly-dedicated Vietnam Veterans Memorial by a medley of imaginary characters from racially diverse backgrounds. The play also includes a semi-fictional subplot about the intense aesthetic and ideological debates between

1982 and 1984 over the memorial's design by the Chinese American woman architect Maya Lin.[28] This subplot is intertwined with the main plot to provide rich historical background for the play about the memorial as both a physical and conceptual site on which war memories are constructed and reconstructed. Delving into the myriad attitudes the memorial has evoked among people on different sides of political divides who are left to comprehend America's longest war in Asia, Barroga's play explores the possibilities of channeling violence into sources of conversation, connection, and reconciliation and those of turning moments of collapse, catastrophe, and crisis into occasions for healing, hope, and change. Barroga's play shows that violence, rather than always producing more violence, actually contains the seeds that can undo itself. Mass violence of war can evoke a cosmopolitan compassion for the enormous human loss that transcends social divides and generates a cosmopolitan solidarity based on a shared understanding of and respect for the sufferings of others. In deciding who gets remembered and what gets memorialized, Barroga's negative cosmopolitanism demonstrates an acute sensitivity to race and its intersection with gender that shape individuals' experiences of violence: by attending to the particular war stories of racialized and gendered minorities, she challenges the racist and sexist memorializations of the Vietnam War in the mainstream media; and by including racialized people and women in her vision of negative cosmopolitanism, she reformulates Eurocentric and male-centered construction of post-war solidarity. In this section,

[28] When the U.S. finally withdrew from the Vietnam War in 1973, the country also retreated into reticence about its longest war in history. To Americans, this was "an inconceivable kind of war" because it fit no prior image of any war the country had fought, in which America was invariably constructed as a victorious savior of the oppressed (Sturken, "The Wall" 364). For a decade, the American people didn't want to think about the war and "the whole culture together shut down on the subject" (James Reston, Jr. iv). The long silence was broken in the early 1980s by a nationwide competition to select a design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The memorial resuscitated long-suppressed drives to remember the war and became "a focal point for renewed public discussion and deliberation on the meaning of the Vietnam War" (Tal 62).

I also discuss how the series of productions of *Walls* helped translate the cosmopolitan politics of inclusion from the page to the stage through participatory community memory practices and furthered Barroga's project of negative cosmopolitanism as a never-ending endeavor of extending humanity to diverse subjects exposed to and victimized by violence.

In staging negative cosmopolitanism, Barroga's treatment of violence features a dialectic relationship between the universal and the particular, which has recently attracted a growing interest in cosmopolitan studies. As I have mentioned in the thesis's introduction, the past decade has witnessed an emergence of a family of concepts that combine apparently contradictory opposites to capture multiple modalities of cosmopolitanism, such as rooted cosmopolitanism, working-class cosmopolitanism, discrepant cosmopolitanism, ethnic cosmopolitanism, and vernacular cosmopolitanism. These conjunctions attempt to resolve a dilemma that has long troubled the theorization of cosmopolitanism: "whether one's allegiance to humanity should override one's loyalty to one's immediate community" (Baban 105). Scholars have now come to agree that a dogged insistence on a presumed dichotomy between the universal and the particular can only lead to a theoretical impasse and obscure the actual workings of cosmopolitanism. In her introduction to *New Anthropology and the New Cosmopolitanism*, Pnina Werbner reminds us of Paul Rabinow's early description of human life as a state of in-betweenness, which balances local identities and universal ones and his characterization of cosmopolitanism as a "twin valorization" of macro-interdependency encompassing particularities (14). Tania Friedel likewise emphasizes the interrelatedness between the universal and the particular in cosmopolitanism: "A cosmopolitan position implies an overarching and shared concern for humanity that requires an acknowledgement of the

important particularities of local identity claims" (6). She adds, "grounded in cultural multiplicity and democratic principle, cosmopolitanism respects difference while asserting a common ground of equality that mediates between the particular and the universal" (6). We may further argue that cosmopolitanism is a type of particularism, because no cosmopolitanism can "escape its immersion in its field of emergence" (Costas 60) and every cosmopolitanism "must take place somewhere, in specific sites and situations" (Hung 212).

When it comes to the particular mode of negative cosmopolitanism, the interplay between the universal and the particular suggests an acknowledgment of both the commonality and diversity of the experiences of violence. Through a survey of literary representations of wars, genocides, and civil terrors, Mads Rosendahl examines the relationship between the emergence of cosmopolitan sentiments and events of radical denial of life such as war. Thomsen maintains that the literary theme of mass killing can effortlessly draw people from all cultural contexts because the sheer incomprehensibility of the intensity and enormity of human suffering is likely to evoke "the idea of absolutes in an otherwise contingent world" (112). As this kind of literature "conjures up scenarios wherein the key questions are reduced to a matter of life, death, and survival," it enables individuals to transcend local interests and "place contingent historical and social conditions in another light" (Thomsen 113-14). To complicate this line of thought, Étienne Balibar suggests that there is also a need to critique the negative categories of evil, violence, and death. As the extreme violence in such mass phenomena as extermination or genocide is always exercised through the administration of the physical or moral suffering of singular individuals, Balibar cautions against simplifying the extreme diversity of individual experience and advises that a phenomenological perspective be

applied to the often allegorical account of absolute evil. He insists, "it is not only a matter of describing the way in which extreme violence is *lived*, but more generally the way in which it is distributed between the poles of the individual and the collective, or of the subjective and the objective" (10). This is, in Balibar's dialectical reasoning, "a matter of collectivizing individuals and individualizing the members of historical collectives" (12). *Walls* does not focus on the violence of genocide, mass killing, or other massive and sustained human rights violations, nor does it deal with the basic need for survival in the state of emergency, but it does set out to dramatize the enormous human loss and suffering the violence of the Vietnam War has wrought. The idea that violence is at once universal and particular, collective and individual, informs my examination of the play's dialectical dramatization of the heterogeneous character of individualized experiences of violence and the moments of their convergence. The play shows that without an exploration of the communal dimension of the experiences of violence, people may lack a shared ground to establish an overarching concern for humanity, and that without an understanding of the multiplicity of the experiences of violence, the shared ground may become a form of hegemonic universalism that risks suppressing marginalized experiences.

Walls features a racially diverse cast of characters, whose different stories of the Vietnam War dramatize the extensiveness, complexity, heterogeneity, and particularity of war's violence and the fractured rather than coherent nature of war memory. The cast includes a white veteran who lost half of his company in the war; an Asian American veteran plagued by PTSD and his African American buddy; a paraplegic African American soldier; a former stateside African American nurse; a white anti-war protester in the 1960s; a Chinese American news

reporter; Maya Lin; a white promoter for a memorial to Vietnam veterans; and a veteran who opposes Lin's design. Interacting across identity lines, the characters bring forward in a concrete rather than allegorical way the lived experiences of the war and violence's fundamentally heterogeneous character. They transform the Euro-American male-centric discourse of violence from a monologic discourse into a polyphonic chorus that later leads to the emergence of a non-hegemonic negative cosmopolitanism. As Barroga envisages, the stage is a meeting ground where characters of various backgrounds play out different and even conflicting views, interests, and values. She carves out a space for a range of Vietnam War memories that have been systematically erased in the mainstream society because their gendered and racially minoritized voices are not in line with the nationalistic ideology of heroic white masculinity. The engagement of multiple narratives exposes the complexities and ambiguities of the Vietnam War, which by no means can be reduced to one single construction of the past. Barroga explores how different values, interests, and ideologies have shaped people's war experiences and memories and caused divides between them.

The play's inclusion of characters of color and its representation of them as real human beings rather than inferior species calls attention to the racialized dimension of violence and challenges the prevalent Eurocentric racist memorializations of the Vietnam War. Among Vietnam draftees, who came heavily from lower socio-economic groups, mostly poor or unemployed, African Americans were overrepresented in the U.S. armed forces compared to their presence in the nation's population (Kimbrough 63-64). African American soldiers were also more likely to be assigned to combat units, which resulted in their alarmingly high battlefield casualty rates (Longley 29-30; Reef xvi-xvii). In the play, the paraplegic African

American soldier Morris directs the former African American nurse Sarah to look at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Directory of Names and points out the racist reality that a disproportionate number of African Americans served and died in the war. Morris feels bitter about the unspoken belief that African American lives are dispensable during the war, the delusory employment equality military services promised, and the gloomy post-war economic picture for African Americans. Embroiled in a war in which they and the U.S. nation-state's enemy are perceived to look alike, Asian Americans have been traumatized by violence in their own ways. During the war, Vietnamese were racialized by American imperialists as biologically, culturally, and morally unworthy in order to justify the U.S. military invasion as bringing progress, well-being, and salvation to "inferior" human beings. The dehumanization of Vietnamese along racial lines profoundly affected the experiences of Asian Americans in Vietnam, who were used as the enemy to infiltrate enemy lines, mistaken as the enemy, or questioned as the enemy during the war (Kiang). In the war correspondence between two characters, Julie (whom the playwright notes may be played by actors of any race) and her school time Asian American lover Dan, Julie argues with Dan that "he'd be mistaken for the enemy cause he was Chinese," and that "all of them looked alike over there" (*Walls* 15). Stu, another Asian American character and a veteran, tells his African American friend Dave that "Americans like [him] in the hospitals [were] getting operated on last cause they look[ed] Vietnamese" (42). Stu is suffering from PTSD, haunted frequently by his experience of hauling body bags in Hawaii and being ridiculed by fellow soldiers because of his phenotypic affinities with the Vietnamese enemy.

In Barroga's dramatization of the emergence of negative cosmopolitanism, the minimalist setting of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial serves an important function of providing

a communal space for characters from different racial backgrounds to establish a commonality within the diversity of war memories and facilitating the transition of violence that destructs into a consensual power that heals. Josephine Lee offers an informative reading of *Walls*, which she thinks aptly shows that art is a crucial means "not only of addressing difference, but of envisioning ways to move beyond difference" (*Performing*, 213). She argues that this play "leads to considerations not only of building a pan-ethnic identity, but also the formation of alliances across racial, gender, and class lines," and that "such alliances may be able to combat racism, sexism, poverty, and systematic discrimination that hurt society as a whole" (*Performing*, 209). Lee remarks on the dual nature of the Wall: on the one hand, the memorial, as "an indication of physical and emotional barriers between the characters," embodies clashes of interests and values that have divided people over the Vietnam War; but on the other hand, the memorial also functions to "acknowledge such differences and allow a safe space for expression of the pain and anger associated with their enactment" (*Performing*, 211-12). This double function of the memorial also symbolizes the dual nature of violence of being able to both break and make cosmopolitanism: while it is commonly thought that violence threatens cosmopolitan formations, it can also provide seeds for the emergence of cosmopolitanism when it strikes people in all its extensiveness and intensity and evokes the fundamental need for life and safety. Lee is insightful in pointing out that the memorial "leaps over the differences established and frozen in the past by creating a space where people can enter into a variety of more inclusive experiences" (*Performing*, 214), and I would like to further note that the theatrical effect of the memorial in the play depends heavily on the architectural effect of the actual memorial in real life.

In the actual performance of *Walls*, the production crew usually chooses a minimalist set design to represent the actual memorial. For instance, AATC's 1993 production of *Walls* used "a long triangular outline" formed by "a narrow, shiny black strip" at the front of the stage to represent the Wall (Runion). With such an abstract symbolic stage set, the play capitalizes on the audience's knowledge of the real memorial and the general positive reception of it to create a communal theatrical space for characters to build cosmopolitan connections across race, gender, and other differences. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial consists of a V shape of two partly submerged black granite walls, on which are engraved the names of the over fifty-eight thousand American men and women in the chronological order in which they were killed or reported missing in the war. Barroga has done extensive research into the architect Maya Lin's conceptualization of the memorial and has the play's eponymous character explain the design and address the initial opposition it has aroused according to historical facts[29]: the Wall is black because "people should be entranced by its reflective quality"; it is underground because "it's like the earth itself is a wound, and pushing out from it are the names of those who have descended into it and have emerged to remind they were even here"; the names are arranged chronologically because "finding the names by the date they died is like finding the gravestone on the field" (*Walls* 37). The memorial has generated plenty of scholarship since its dedication, and a broad consensus has been reached on its participatory, inclusive, and reflective quality as the architect originally envisioned. Daniel Abramson, for example, notes that Lin's memorial addresses the beholder with "a rhetoric of inclusion and healing," and that

[29] The general discomfort with Lin's design lay in its unheroic tone. The memorial's focus on death and destruction contests the popular cultural productions about the Vietnam War since 1982, which have created the narratives of sacrifice and honor to "[reaffirm] the virtues of martial masculinity and [reinscribe] the validity of U.S. imperialism" (Vuic 162).

the reflexive and tactile quality of the design effectively engage visitors in "profoundly therapeutic acts of communion" (704-05). Ekaterina Haskins and Justin DeRose praise the Vietnam Veterans Memorial for passing an "inclusive test for public art" that requires the work to "create a public space where the experience of seeing is not monopolized by a single artistic or political agenda but offers an opportunity for a plurality of responses" (380). Maureen Ryan finds that many American cultural narratives of the Vietnam War, such as two novels *Let Their Spirit Dance* by Stella Pope Duarte and *The Names of the Dead* by Stewart O'Nan, conclude with "a healing pilgrimage to the Wall," which affirm the actual memorial's expansive and inclusive connotation and solidify its place in American public memory (9).

The important paratextual knowledge of one of the best-known and most visited memorial sites in the U.S. has prepared the audience to watch *Walls*'s racially diverse characters perform before the iconic setting of the Wall in an act of communal remembering of the Vietnam War. They mourn over the loss of human lives, individually and collectively; meditate on the two most fundamental states of human existence, life and death; broaden their capacity to sympathize with others' sufferings and sacrifices; and find a common ground for compassion and support. In the play, Terri, a white Vietnam War veteran and color-bearer at the memorial, at first bitterly resents what he thinks is the arrogance of anti-war protesters (represented by Julie, whom the playwright notes may be played by actors of any race): "[They] really thought [they] knew it all" amid "all of [their] peace signs and beads and flowers" (*Walls* 32). He tries to outmatch Julie by pointing out that he has lost more beloved ones to the war: "You got two on this wall. I got twelve. And I'm doing this for them" (*Walls* 32). Julie refutes Terri by reasoning that each instance of death during the war is an inestimable loss, and that

human life cannot be tallied by quantity. She asks, “Well, so am I. For your twelve, and my two. Does that still put us on opposite sides?” (*Walls* 32). Julie has reread some old diaries she kept while she was at university boycotting the war and feels regretful about her youthful superciliousness. As Julie expresses her gratitude for veterans’ service and a willingness to know more about them, Terri softens towards anti-war protesters and brings Julie’s thanks to his dead buddies when he talks to the names on Wall. The war has also estranged two one-time close friends Stu (Asian American) and Dave (African American) as the former served in the war and the latter didn’t. Dave accompanies Stu to the memorial and hopes to overcome their estrangement. At the memorial, Stu, who has long remained reticent about war, opens up and relates his traumatic experience of hauling body bags in Hawaii for ten months, which brought him so close to death. Entering into Stu’s life, Dave regrets misconstruing veterans as bloodless killing machines and psychological wrecks. When Stu lights a candle at the memorial, he joins other veterans nearby to form a windbreak and says, “I want to thank someone for this day, man. That’s all” (*Walls* 98). The cumulative force of the 58,000 names of the deceased on the memorial holds visitors in awe, overshadows their differences, and brings about a temporary union. At the sight of the overwhelming number of deaths, the tensions and conflicts between people seem inconsequential for the moment. Bonded by the common factor of death, characters enter into a temporary union.

Barroga’s memorialization of the war and dramatization of cosmopolitan solidarity not only explore possibilities of finding common ground across racial lines but also gender and class boundaries. Her negative cosmopolitanism acknowledges diverse divisions instantiated by the war in addition to race and tries to strengthen the foundation of connection from various axes

of social identity. As with *The Square*, Barroga's mode of racial cosmopolitanism not only attends to race but its intersection with other dynamic variables operating in particular contexts. And it seeks to establish provisional alliances that run within and between different identities. In her ground-breaking gender-based treatment of cultural productions of the Vietnam War, Susan Jeffords argues that gender "is the matrix" through which "Vietnam is read, interpreted, and reframed in dominant American culture" (53).[30] "While friends may be uncertain, enemies unidentifiable, and goals unclear", she contends, "the line between the masculine and the feminine is presented in Vietnam as firm and unwavering" (53). In the gendered discourse on the Vietnam War, the whole event has been constructed as a "'man's story' from which women are generally excluded" (Jeffords 49). Although many Vietnam War narratives try to build collective consciousness among people from diverse backgrounds, their claim to collectivity tends to be a masculine one. In *Walls*, Barroga challenges dominant masculinist representations of the Vietnam War by writing women back into the war narrative. On the stage, Sarah challenges Morris's chauvinistic attitude that the war is a male turf that permits no female presence, and she insists that whether women have actually served in the war or not, they, just as men, bear the lasting physical and psychological consequences of violence and need equal and just recognition. Proclaiming that "we got rights to be here, all of us," she tries to foster a collective feminine consciousness as part of the war's important legacy (*Walls* 53). In her envisioning of an all-inclusive sisterhood, she also presses on

[30] Jeffords' landmark study has generated increased scholarly attention to the operations of gender and the roles of women in the Vietnam War, including two works informing this chapter, Vuic's *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War* and Stur's *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era*. See also, for example, Mario Gibson's "The War at Home: Family, Gender, and Post-colonial Issues in Three Vietnam War Texts," Jinim Park's "Women and the War," and Stur's *Dragon Ladies, Gentle Warriors, and Girls Next Door: Gender and Ideas that Shaped the Vietnam War*.

cosmopolitanism's universalizing impulse by attending to the differences within the collective "all of us." She displays an acute sensitivity to racialized class differences among American women and realizes that she is "better off a black nurse than a black maid in some cheap hotel" (*Walls* 92). As she tells the divergent fates of frontline nurses and stateside nurses, she de-essentializes the group of women who took up the nursing profession in wartime, a group often viewed as a homogenous body. Sarah's imagining of the female bond sees women as both occupying a shared marginalized status in war and experiencing war differently because of specific historical, social, and personal circumstances. Her endeavor to forge a sisterhood among "fifty-eight thousand mothers and daughters and loved ones [she stands] with" reflects a grasp of the dialectical interplay between heterogeneity and unity in the creation of cosmopolitan consciousness.

In the play, negative cosmopolitanism develops as connections form not only among the living who are recovering from the wounds of the Vietnam War, but also between the living and the dead. Dramatizing the lives of the dead as inextricably bound up with those of the living, the play explores ethical ways of memorializing and doing justice to the dead. The interweaving of the lives of the living and the dead is effectively realized through the theatricalization of ghostliness, which makes, as Alice Rayner notes in *Ghosts: Death's Double and the Phenomena of Theatre*, the stage "a ghostly place in which the living and the dead come together in a productive encounter" (xii).[31] Sarah tells Morris that she was not sent to the war because she didn't show up the night when she and her fellow nurses agreed to draw straws to decide who

[31] In this book, Alice Rayner examines theatre as a memorial practice continually haunted by the presence of loss. She looks at how the ghostly experience in theatre is created by different aspects of stagecraft, such as the 8:00 PM show time, stage props, chairs, and the curtain.

would volunteer for service; she remains plagued by remorse and guilt. She says, “That's my ghost,” which is difficult to “bury” (*Walls* 94). For Sarah, this inward ghost is the burden of the past, the memory of her avoiding serving in Vietnam, the haunting of the death of her friends at the war front, and the weight of her own survival. The device of the psychological ghost makes her aware and sends her into a self-examination of her own smallness which stands alongside the greatness of her personal sacrifice to the war and which she has yet dared to openly confront.

Ghosts not only exist symbolically in the play, but find corporeal presence in the spirits of two fallen soldiers, Dan (Asian American) and Jerry (whom the playwright notes may be played by actors of any race). Their embodied presence animates a corporeal and affective relationship between the living and the dead and provides a concrete link to the past which defines our conception of the present and shapes our vision of the future. Though invisible to and unheard by other characters, Dan and Jerry engage with others by listening to others’ conversations about the war, and, in their own ghostly chatter, adding details to others’ recollections with their first-hand experiences. They make frequent comments on other characters, whose subsequent words or deeds respond to Dan and Jerry’s remarks as if they have heard the ghosts talking. Dan and Jerry are two of the fifty-eight thousand ghosts on the memorial who come back alive in the theatrical space to substantiate their abstract existence in the form of names with concrete personal stories which they demand to be told, heard, and remembered. At the end of the play, all characters who are alive speak aloud the places of their beloved ones on the memorial, and they stage a grand reunion between the living and the dead and a promise that the dead will not be forgotten. Here we see that Barroga’s negative

cosmopolitanism tries to break the so-called duality of the past and the present. Connecting two temporalities using the technique of the ghost, the play stages that possibilities for negative cosmopolitanism emerge when we make visible the suppressed or unresolved that shatters the past and haunts the present, and when we ethically memorialize the dead in the way that allows their unique experiences of violence, or "ghost stories," to be recollected, reinterpreted, and retold from their own perspectives rather than being erased or distorted by grand narratives of memorialization.[32]

In my subsequent discussion of *Walls*, I will examine the play on the stage rather than on the page. If theatre is a cultural product resulting from its conditions of production and reception (Bennett 106), we can expect to better understand the staging of negative cosmopolitanism in *Walls* by examining the making and experiencing of it as a theatrical event and a memorial practice involving not only the artistic but the general community. The many stage productions of *Walls* worked hard to engage people at the grassroots level in the community-based tradition of Asian American theatre and spread Barroga's message of social connection through community memory practices. Community-based performance, as Jan Cohen-Cruz notes, has four salient features: "communal context," which means the artists' craft and vision are at the service of local communities' desires; "reciprocity," which indicates the genuine appreciation of what others bring to the collaboration; "hyphenation," which emphasizes the intersection between art and religion, or therapy, or education; and "active culture," which refers to the opportunity of making art rather than just seeing the fruits of

[32] There is a small but critical number of works focused on ghostliness in theatre and performance, which brings theatre and performance history into dialogue with the flourishing field of spectrality studies. For specific discussion on representing ghosts on stage, see, for example, Marvin A. Carlson's *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (2003), Mary Luckhurst and Emilie Morin's *Theatre and Ghosts: Materiality, Performance and Modernity* (2014), and Jeanette R. Malkin's *Memory-theater and Postmodern Drama* (1999).

other people's labors (432-435). In short, it features a "deep interaction between artists and constituents grounded in a shared aspect of identity or circumstances" and intends to involve people in "imagining their collective future" (Cohen-Cruz 427, 435). In the case of *Walls*, the play started from a staged reading of Barroga's short 1985 Vietnam play *The Night before the Rolling Stones Concert 1981* in front of a local audience. During the performance, the audience reacted emotionally to a scene where a returning veteran confronts his friends and asks, "why didn't you even write me while I was there?" (Uno 201). Barroga was so encouraged by the intensity of the audience response that she wrote and produced *Walls*, in which characters of diverse backgrounds enter into conversation about their war experiences. This community-based feature of participation and inclusion, which manifested itself at the very inception of *Walls*, was carried all the way down to its many stage productions as part of the effort to realize and accentuate the vision of negative cosmopolitanism that Barroga sets out to create on the page.

In *Walls*, the communal context of the Vietnam War, which concerns both Asian Americans and non-Asian Americans, contributes to the play's broad appeal. Asian American theatre companies used the play to broaden Asian American artists' contact with theatre practitioners from other local communities, whose collaboration and participation have formed an essential part of their productions. For example, in AATC's series of productions of *Walls* in San Francisco (1989 and 2006), Stockton (1993), and Modesto (1994), the company went all out to ensure that the over twenty roles in the play were played by local actors of diverse racial backgrounds. A California local theatre critic, after watching the Stockton production, commented on the multiracial cast: "[Though the play was initiated by an Asian American

theatre company,] the performers span[ned] the American gamut. […] None stands out as the star. As in war, all have important parts to play" (Stuzin). In producing *Walls*, Asian American theatre companies not only aimed at a broad collaboration with theatre artists of diverse racial backgrounds, but also at a wide participation of the audience, who engaged actively in a productive capacity and formed a mutually enhancing partnership with professional theatre practitioners. During the rehearsal period of the Stockton production of *Walls* at the Manlio Silva Auditorium of Stagg High School, AATC approached the city's Vietnam veterans organizations and invited veterans to their first reading. Stockton veterans, greatly moved by the play, supported the production by helping decorate the lobby with war memorabilia such as photos of veterans in Vietnam, letters, and flags. AATC's partnership with the local institution outside the art context stretched the dramatic sphere of *Walls* beyond the performance stage. For those who went to Stagg High School to see the show, their theatrical experience began before they entered the auditorium when they were browsing around the lobby full of war memorabilia. For those who also helped with the lobby display, the theatrical space even expanded to their homes where they went through personal war collections and considered which objects to show to the public. With the enthusiastic participation of members from local communities, the production of *Walls* ceased to be only the theatrical business of a group of artistic professionals, but became a communal event characterized by "a broad sense of cultural ownership" (Cohen-Cruz 438). By involving the public in the production process, AATC also stimulated ordinary people's artistic potential. For example, a Filipino-American Vietnam veteran, inspired by the rehearsal, wrote a poem recollecting his experience, framed it, and placed it in the lobby for all to read (*Entertainment*).

More outreach strategies were deployed by Asian American theatre companies to capitalize on the inclusive and participatory nature of community-based theatre and make *Walls* an event for local communities and beyond. In the 15th Anniversary Production of *Walls* in 2006, three years into the Iraq War, AATC launched "My Wall" Letter Project, inviting audience members to write letters addressed to themselves "about their personal 'wall' about war [and] society" ("AATC Presents *Walls*"). The theatre company promised to seal and mail the letters back to their owners at the end of the Iraq War. Realizing the all too pervasive power of the internet in the new century, AATC also introduced an interactive on-line blog component into their production. The 2006 production under Sean Lim's stewardship won National Endowment for the Arts grant for education outreach that supported daily maintenance of the blog and the theatre's performance tours to Sacramento and Fremont. In elaborating on the principle of hyphenation that underpins community-based performance, Cohen-Cruz contends that rather than being complete unto itself, art may also be "a site for the articulation and expression of a political point of view or vision" (434). In its active community mobilization, AATC attempted to establish ties with not only Asian Americans, the traditional target of Asian American theatres, but also with a wide spectrum of Americans from diverse backgrounds. It tried to foster an inclusive and participatory environment in which people of different backgrounds collectively explore the far-reaching significance of the Vietnam War in relation to America's military global presence that has continued to the present day. It endeavored to translate, from the page to the stage and beyond, the vision of negative cosmopolitanism that Barroga dramatizes in *Walls* about bond-building between people based on the shared experience of war and violence.

Yet we must also consider the degree of inclusiveness in Barroga's vision of negative cosmopolitanism and her take on the important issue in the politics of memorialization: who gets remembered and how they get remembered. Cosmopolitanism has always been a socially inclusive political project to engage with differences and embrace otherness. Negative cosmopolitanism endeavors to include all kinds of experiences of violence and address the sufferings of others which have been hitherto little known and little regarded. Ulrike M. Vieten perceptively argues, "As the notion of the Other is crucial to any utopian all-inclusive vision of cosmopolitanism, a deeper knowledge about the ideological construction of differences and notions of the Other is needed" (91). He further remarks:

> The notions of the cosmopolitan as well as the Other is bound to situated and nationalized perceptions of what actually counts as home, citizenship, social solidarity and belonging. Accordingly, the notion of the Other in discourses on cosmopolitan has to be anchored in particular horizons of knowledge related to historically contingent contexts and patterns of symbolic inclusion and exclusion. (92)

In *Walls*, Barroga establishes the presence of racialized minorities who have been historically categorized in terms of their perceived threat to white America's racial purity and, hence, often excluded from American cultural representations of war organized around nationalist and racist ideas and ideals.

Barroga attempts to build alliances across racial, gender, and class lines, but there is always a surplus of humanness as we try to include more alienated, marginalized, and silenced others in such a cosmopolitan vision. Yet Barroga's imagining of negative cosmopolitanism is spatially bounded within the multicultural American locality, which limits its ability to address "humanness" beyond the boundaries of the nation state. As Uno notes, *Walls*' "point of view is American and its primary focus is the effect of fifty-eighty thousand American lives lost as

opposed to the two million Vietnamese casualties" (202). Though Barroga takes care not to demonize Vietnam and gives a human touch to the country whose name has often been colonized as a metonym for the name of the war in U.S. usage (Christopher 7), she nevertheless focuses the play through the U.S. and its concerns. In the play, Dan asks Jerry, "Weren't you even blown away by the beauty of that place? Didn't it even affect you at all?"; in Dan's memory, "'Nam was always pretty in the spring. Course it looks different, all built up and everything" (*Walls* 29). Despite Dan's recollection on stage, the play mostly passes over the Vietnamese themselves, who were "collaborators, victims, enemies, or simply the people whose land and over whom (supposedly) this war was fought" (Sturken, *Tangled Memories* 62). Furthermore, though Barroga writes a play about a war fought in Vietnam and a war memorial designed by a Chinese American, and creates a pan-ethnic coalition, she offers no visible presence of Vietnamese Americans in this cross-ethnic bond. Yet Vietnamese immigration and settlement patterns in the U.S., compared with other Asian American ethnic groups, have been most profoundly shaped by this war (Do), and their actual bodies "testify to the real effects of terror and exist as secondary inscriptions that point back to what is unseeable" (Kubiak 156). Failing to consider the specific voices of Vietnamese Americans, Barroga risks homogenizing Asian American subjects and suppressing heterogeneous differences within this collective. She also misses an important opportunity to present a fuller and more ethical picture of violence's diverse impacts, especially those on one of the groups most affected by this war.

More questions arise when we consider the play's representation of different groups affected by the war. While Barroga uses Asian Americans, African Americans, and whites to represent the war's racial dynamics, we may also wonder whether it is ethical for a play aiming

at cosmopolitan inclusiveness to not include Latinos and Native Americans, both of whom served in large numbers and suffered significant casualties in the Vietnam War. To be sure, Barroga leaves some characters racially unspecified in the play as a cosmopolitan strategy for the audience to project experiences of other racialized groups onto them. But this strategy also poses a representational risk: is it ethical to subsume highly unique racialized lived experiences under the catch-all umbrella of "any race" as Barroga notes in the character list at the beginning of the play? Finally, while the idea of war as an exclusively male domain has been reconceptualized in *Walls* through the inclusion of women, the stateside nurse Sarah's account of nurses' participation in the war and her talk about "fifty-eight thousand mothers and daughters and loved ones" (*Walls* 53) play a central role in Barroga's representation of women. As women served in the Vietnam War in diverse capacities, including translators, journalists, photographers, and air traffic controllers (Levy 46), do the images of women in the play as nurses, mothers, and daughters also reinforce the masculinist distinction between the female sphere of domesticity and male sphere of power deplete throughout hegemonic war discourses?

Here, one may ask: could we realistically expect a play, with its length limitation, to actually cover the distinctive memory of every group and individual who are bearing the costs of war in one way or another? or is it an inevitable fate for a play aiming at cosmopolitan inclusion to end up only in selective representation? Before we rush to shake our heads "no" to the first question and nod "yes" to the second, and before we hastily conclude the exploration of the possibilities of representing inclusiveness with the impractical proposal of a one-for-one method, I suggest that we take a different and more constructive approach to examine the

dramatization of negative cosmopolitanism in *Walls*. We must be attentive to the complexities of cosmopolitanism's goal of inclusion and realize the issue's open and constructive nature. I suggest viewing what might seem the limitations of Barroga's endeavor to represent different people affected by the violence of war as the play's promise of and invitation to greater inclusiveness. No war play can be a comprehensive index of every impact of violence and every struggle against suffering. But a play can open the conversation up rather than close it down. That *Walls* has left us realizing disputed agency over the ways the past is remembered and thinking about including different versions of memory on the scene is already evidence of its success in communicating the cosmopolitan message of expanding the bounds of humanity. That the play has been repeatedly selected for production and become a classic in Asian American theatre history solidly testifies to the continuing appeal and relevance of its political message, which was effectively implemented during pre-performance, performance, and post-performance. If at the production stage, the play presented only a glimpse of heterogeneous Vietnam War experiences, Asian American theatre practitioners, employing a variety of methods to reach out to artistic and general communities at different phases of the theatrical event, traveled considerably further into the extreme complexity and diversity of the violence of war. And if in the play, the memorial creates a communal space for characters to enter into a variety of dialectical, inclusive experiences, in producing the play, Asian American theatre practitioners greatly expanded such a space for sharing, understanding, and support by involving artists and audiences of diverse racial groups in the unsettled memorializing process. In so doing, the theatrical piece helps open up the borders of Asian America and expand the boundaries of Asian American theatre. It encourages Asian Americans from both artistic and

wider communities to continue to seek out voices hitherto muted or marginalized and to establish connections between groups affected by the violence of war. It also demonstrates that negative cosmopolitanism is never an endpoint but a context and foundation for carrying on its project.

The Radiance of a Thousand Suns: The Hiroshima Project (1995)

Walls's point of view is American and its attention is on the war's impact on American lives. Because of this dramatic focus, there is no mention in the play of America's own ethically questionable practices during the Vietnam War, such as the seven-month campaign of murder against hundreds of unarmed civilians in Vietnam committed by an American fighting unit called "Tiger Force" (Befumo 115-16; Hagopian 406-07) and the extensive use of Agent Orange and other chemical weapons by the U.S. military in Vietnam (A. Young). If an interrogation of the country's official cover-ups of its wrongdoing is wanting in Barroga's vision of negative cosmopolitanism and her construction of war memories, *Radiance*, co-written by the Japanese American playwright Dwight Okita and three other American playwrights, Anne V. McGravie, Nicholas A. Patricca, and David Zak, addresses this absence. A play memorializing WWII in the Pacific, *Radiance*, like *Walls*, seeks to debunk U.S. racist war ideology, redress the distorted construction of racial others, and embrace racialized subjects in the cosmopolitan scene. But different from *Walls*, *Radiance*, in its non-racist memorialization, considers race from a transnational rather than national perspective, which allows for a critique of American imperialism in racial terms. The play looks into the war's costs borne by the Japanese who have been racialized and dehumanized in U.S. war discourse about WWII. It brings a new dimension to negative cosmopolitanism as is staged in *Walls* by expanding its dramatic horizon and

extending humanity beyond U.S. domestic borders. Focusing on atomic bombing, the play builds its vision of negative cosmopolitanism on a shared understanding of the catastrophic effects of nuclear weapons and a joint exploration of the possibilities of turning violence into compassion and solidarity. Within transnational contexts, the work dramatizes the dialectical interplay between national and transnational memories of war and violence. It stresses the need for self-reflexivity and self-critique as it sets out to question the hegemonic U.S. nationalist discourse of violence and push the memorialization of war beyond national divisions towards a broader humanity. I also use *Radiance* to present another mode of cross-cultural collaboration offstage between Asian American and non-Asian American theatre practitioners in exploring racial cosmopolitanism.

Premiered at Chicago's Bailiwick Repertory Theater on 16 July 1995 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Trinity test of the world's first atomic bomb explosion in the New Mexico desert, *Radiance* deals with the human consequences of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima, which happened exactly three weeks after the Trinity test on 6 August 1945. The play makes its mark in American theatre history with its direct interrogation of the bombing of Japan which has long been troubling the nation, and with its outspokenness in the antagonistic political environment in which it was born. In January 1994, the Smithsonian Institution made public a draft of the Enola Gay exhibit scheduled to open in the spring of 1995 to memorialize the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII. Originally entitled "The Crossroads: The End of World War II, the Atomic Bomb, and the Origins of the Cold War," the display was envisioned to tell a fuller story of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima with a balanced representation of two divergent voices in America: the dominant celebratory voice that honored WWII veterans, who

"had been asked to save the world for democracy, had accepted the challenge at great personal risk, and had come through victorious"; and, the much suppressed historical voice that sought to address the broader questions about the consequences of atomic warfare that concern future generations (Harwit, "The Enola Gay"). Like the unveiling of Maya Lin's design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the release of the draft of the Enola Gay exhibit sparked fierce debates across the country over the appropriate representation of historical events within the official national culture (Kenaga 317). While Lin's design survived the storm of protests, the proposed Enola Gay show was cancelled due to fierce opposition from WWII veterans, the American Legion, and conservative members of Congress, who condemned as anti-American the inclusion of pictures and artifacts from under the atomic mushroom cloud, such as photos of seared human bodies and a Japanese schoolgirl's scorched lunchbox containing carbonized food.[33]

Out of such an acrimonious political atmosphere came *Radiance*, which was envisaged to confront American audiences with the complexities and ambiguities of the U.S. atomic bombing of Japan and to usher them into a self-transformation process by engaging with different accounts of the war.[34] In terms of the mode of its creation, the play presents a pattern of interracial collaboration between Asian American and non-Asian American artists that is different from the three plays I have so far discussed. *Kimchee and Chitlins*, *The Square*, and

[33] After over a year's protests from both opponents and supporters, most of which were historians, a new Enola Gay exhibit opened at the Smithsonian in mid-1995. But it was a modified and less controversial display, consisting only of the B-29 bomber that dropped the first atomic bomb, together with the information about the airplane and an upbeat video about the crew.

[34] The play also turned the controversy over how the Enola Gay exhibit should represent history, which was about to become history itself, into one of its interludes.

Walls, to a large measure originated from within the Asian American artistic community,[35] and Asian American theatre artists invited local actors from other races to participate in their endeavors. *Radiance*, by contrast, proceeded the other way around. The genesis of the play came from outside the Asian American theatre circle, and the Asian American playwright Okita was the invitee rather than the initiator of the project. Okita's participation testifies to the fact that besides the dozen of well-established Asian American playwrights by the mid-1990s, such as Chay Yew and David Henry Hwang, emerging Asian American playwrights had also begun to build their recognition beyond the Asian American community. *Radiance* began in 1994 when David Zak, Artistic Director of Bailiwick Repertory, approached the company's then Artistic Associate Nicholas A. Patricca about writing a play to memorialize the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.[36] Patricca readily agreed, and he also invited two other Chicago artists to join the project: the Scottish-born playwright Anne McGravie and the Japanese American playwright Okita. In their collaboration, Patricca studied the scientific fervor that led to the birth of nuclear weapons; McGravie ploughed through letters and poetry about the plight of women during and after WWII; Okita researched a memorable episode in American television history in which a Hiroshima-based Japanese minister and an Enola Gay crew member were brought into a face-to-face encounter on a live program in the 1950s; and Zak assembled testimony from the American military and wove miscellaneous materials into a whole. Out of these collaborative efforts came a dramatic piece that knits together three

[35] *The Square* was originally a joint idea of Yew and Peterson, who is not Asian American, but it was developed in the Mark Taper Forum's Asian Theatre Workshop, one of the half a dozen theatre labs at the Taper "focused on creating work within a specific community of artists" (Peterson 556).

[36] I have not been able to obtain the racial information of Zak and Patricca from either scholarly or popular sources. According to common practices in the U.S., if the individual's race is not mentioned in any context, the person is most probably white because white is often perceived as the "default" race. It may be that Zak and Patricca are both Caucasian.

stories: the first narrative traces the journey of a physicist from the time he joins the Manhattan Project, the top-secret U.S. scientific-military-industrial project that developed the world's first atomic bombs, to the time he visits Japan to see for himself the devastating effects of his work; the second narrative follows the deepening friendship between a Scottish woman, who has spent her childhood in Hiroshima, and her Japanese girlfriend, who has been left permanently injured by the atomic bomb; the third narrative focuses on the unexpected meeting between the Japanese minister and Hiroshima survivor, Reverend Minaga, and the Enola Gay co-pilot, Captain Daniels.

Inspired by the first-hand materials they have gathered about the annihilating consequences of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima, the writing quartet dramatized a vision of negative cosmopolitanism based on a common opposition to extreme violence. Ulrich Beck suggests defining cosmopolitan norms *negatively* rather than *positively*: "The realism of realistic cosmopolitanism is perhaps best grasped if one attempts to characterize it not by what it aims at but what it seeks to avoid at all costs, namely, fascistic conformism […], systematic violation of human dignity, genocide and crimes against humanity" (*Cosmopolitan Vision* 59). Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider advance the idea of "cosmopolitan common sense" to argue that most individuals would be willing to defend a "'universalistic minimum' involving a number of substantive norms that must be upheld at all costs," which include "the sanctity of the body" and "avoidance of unnecessary cruelty" ("Human Rights" 201). Like the Holocaust, which has acquired "the extra-territorial quality of cosmopolitan memory" as a lasting yardstick for abstract notions of good and evil (Levy and Sznaider, "Memory Unbound"), Hiroshima can also facilitate the formation of cosmopolitan memory because the incomprehensible violence of the

atomic bombing evokes a sense of responsibility to safeguard, as Pheng Cheah calls in his examination of human rights in the current global conjuncture, "the most fundamental features and conditions of our humanity" (145). It is based on this logic that the playwrights of *Radiance* dramatize negative cosmopolitanism. Just as in *Walls*, where the overwhelming human loss indicated by the names on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial unite characters from different backgrounds, in *Radiance*, the unparalleled deviation from normality and peace in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima presented by individual accounts arouses a broad sympathy for the sufferings of civilian Japanese and urges a transcendence of the political and territorial specificity of the nation-state. Characters' personal accounts of Hiroshima ground abstract human rights discourse in experiential realities and provide Americans with a vicarious experience of the extreme violence of the atomic bombing, which they fear may one day befall them. Unlike the disaster news on television, which "offers spectators a position of maximal distance from the sufferers and no options for action towards the misfortune that they watch" (Chouliaraki 187), theatre, with the presence of real actors on the stage, turns mediated distant suffering into a more concrete experience for the audience and instills in them a "feeling of immediacy and the urge to act" (Alter 172).[37] The live nature of theatre offers the spectator a position of reflexive identification and contributes to the formation of a committed rather than detached cosmopolitan relationship between the spectator and the distant other. This reflexive identification challenges the American audience to reexamine the individual's and the country's

[37] See Lilie Chouliaraki's "Mediation and Action" for an analysis of the possibility of a cosmopolitan disposition that ethically connects the spectator with the distant sufferer in transnational news flows about sufferings around the world. See Nora M. Alter's *Vietnam Protest Theatre* for a comprehensive study of Vietnam protest theatre as a genre – protest plays made while the war was still being raged – staged political protests against, first, the war in Vietnam and, second, images of that war produced by the mass media.

roles and responsibilities in the suffering of distant others, which I discuss in the subsequent analysis that focuses on Okita's contribution to the play.

The part crafted by Okita dramatizes the formation of a transnational bond between Reverend Minaga and Captain Daniels as they each memorialize the pivotal event of dropping an atomic bomb on Hiroshima during WWII and eventually reach an understanding of their historical and future roles and responsibilities in the face of extreme violence. Entitled "This Is Your Moment," this is a theatrical recreation of the actual episode in the 1950's television program *This Is Your Life* in the 1950s that honored Reverend Kiyoshi Tanimoto, an American-educated Japanese minister who survived the Hiroshima atomic blast and devoted his life to advocating nuclear disarmament and world peace.[38] In 1955, when Reverend Tanimoto was campaigning for international support of Hiroshima survivors in the U.S., he was invited to appear on the American television personality Ralph Edwards's popular reality show *This Is Your Life*. During the show, he was greeted by a surprise guest, Captain Robert Lewis, the co-pilot of the Enola Gay, who recounted his flight to Hiroshima and also donated money to the campaign. After the show, a debate not dissimilar to the one that surrounded the Enola Gay exhibit flared up. While the episode was praised by some for creating a "warm" and "exciting" "human drama," it was severely attacked by many others who thought Lewis "disgraced himself and the armed forces by questioning […] the morality of the Enola Gay mission" (qtd. in Sitz and Geerhar)[39]. This controversy revealed Americans' uneasiness with the national image of a perpetrator of atrocities who had brought nightmares to millions of innocent Japanese**.** Perhaps

[38] Using the word "moment" to replace "life" in the actual title, Okita wants to capitalize on the Zen idea of the moment, which I will discuss in detail shortly.

[39] See Kend Sitz and Bill Geerhar's "Hiroshima: This Is Your Life" for a detailed recount of this particular episode of *This is Your Life* and a list of related resources.

to avoid controversy, later in the 1980s, when Edwards himself selected episodes of *This Is Your Life* for an essential collection, he omitted the Hiroshima episode from the set, hiding the story about Japanese casualties from American public consciousness some forty years after the war.

The omitted Hiroshima episode receives a non-mimetic rerun in dramatic form under the hand of Okita, who has made good use of the historical material to create an opening for the darker narrative of atomic weaponry and explore opportunities for the two sides of the war to reach an understanding of the shared future of humanity under the common threat of nuclear destruction and extermination. In re-enacting the original TV episode, Okita has made a number of important changes. First, while the TV episode, perhaps to please the generally white audience, focuses on Reverend Tanimoto's abandonment of his family's Buddhist tradition and commitment to Christian faith, in *Radiance*, Reverend Minaga is presented as a person in whom Buddhism and Christianity share a harmonious co-existence. Rather than giving up his native Japanese culture to become completely Westernized, Reverend Minaga is dramatized as a cultural hybrid before contemporary audiences sitting offstage, who supposedly have developed a stronger cosmopolitan orientation in an age of increasing globalization. He charms his audiences with a conversance in Japanese and American cultures and communicating with them by appealing to both Buddhist and Christian ideas. As a cosmopolitan Japanese, he troubles the U.S. racist characterization of the Japanese related to WWII and raises doubts about America's denigration of the Japanese and self-proclaimed moral superiority, which has been marshalled to justify the deliberate bombing of Japanese civilians. The second major change Okita has made to the original TV episode is to increase the pilot's presence in the show and his interaction with the reverend. Okita's characterization of Captain

Daniels dramatizes the painful remembrance process of Americans confronting the darker narrative of the decisive event of the atomic bombing that ended WWII and their reflecting on the violence that has been glossed over in the official American WWII memorialization. Thirdly, as **further evidence of the playwright's creative use of the original material,** Okita collaborated with the Chicago composer Chuck Larkin to turn into songs Reverend Minaga's two monologues while participating in the TV show and a long dialogue between Reverend Minaga and Captain Daniels that drives the show to its climax. The songs, rather than interrupting the dramatic movement, help **express the deepest thoughts and feelings of the characters and amplify them to a level above mere spoken words at necessary moments.**

In the play, Reverend Minaga is dramatized as cosmopolitan, compassionate, forgiving, intelligent, and resourceful. This humanized approach directly challenges the racist construction of Japanese during and after WWII in the mainstream media. Laura Hein and Mark Seldon, surveying U.S. official scriptings of the Hiroshima bombing, find that as an indispensable part of U.S. WWII propaganda, the Japanese, like the Vietnamese during the Vietnam War, were constructed as "vicious and even subhuman" to the concomitant glorification of Americans as "kind, generous, decent, and honorable" (11). Mark Seldon points out that the U.S. bombing in Asia, which made no distinction between Japan's leaders and the Japanese people, was shaped by racist assumptions, in comparison with the American bombing patterns in Europe, which distinguished between Nazi leaders and the German people throughout the war. John Dower similarly note the racist dimension of WWII, arguing that the "nonhuman or subhuman representation" of the Japanese as "animals, reptiles, or insects" made it morally and psychologically acceptable for Americans to launch into indiscriminate, mass killings in Japan

(*War without Mercy* 81). Some historians have posed a provocative revisionist argument: the "atomic bomb would never have been dropped on the Germans, because it was much easier for Americans to bomb Asians than 'white people'" (NASM 29). Framed within the larger context of American global invasion and conquest, the racist stereotyping of the Japanese during the Pacific War, as Rey Chow argues, "was simply a flagrant example of an ongoing ideological mechanism that had accompanied Western treatments of non-Western 'others'" (212). Racist demonization of the Japanese continued into the years after 1945 when the U.S. went to great pains to monitor the risk of being accused of barbarity and inhumanity, and spread the ideas that "Japan had no status and was entitled to no respect" and that "any catastrophe that had befallen them was of their own making" (Braw 151). The non-racist characterization of Reverend Minaga prompts Americans to re-consider their anti-Japanese sentiments that have prevented them from remembering and examining the atomic bombing of Japan in more human terms.

Reverend Minaga impresses the audience as an exemplar of cosmopolitan hybridity who negotiates between cultures and draws on both Christianity and Buddhism to help people heal the wounds of war.[40] In Japan, when Reverend Minaga is delivering a sermon as a Christian minister to Japanese listeners, he invites the congregation to join him in singing a Christian hymn. In Bailiwick's production of *Radiance*, the theatre company used the **traditional spiritual**

[40] The characterization of Reverend Minaga reflects the collaborative relationship behind the stage between Okita and Patricca, who come from different religious and cultural backgrounds, but who both view religion as an essential dimension of their lives and artistic quests. An openly declared Buddhist, Okita is an active member of the Soka Gakkai International, a global lay Buddhist organization committed to promoting a sense of connection to global issues such as disarmament through awareness-raising community activities. Patricca, who invited Okita to join the *Radiance* project, received most of his education in Roman Catholic seminaries. Patricca is intellectually interested in the concept of God and considers theatre an extension of theology that enables one to explore the meaning of existence (Patricca, "To Mexico").

"Amazing Grace," which was played and sung on different occasions during the show as the dominant audio mis-en-scene. Penned by John Newton, a former debauched slave trader who later converted to Christianity to become an ordained Anglican priest and a strong advocate for the abolition of the slave trade, the song records the lyricist's transformation from "a wretch" who was once "lost" and "blind" to a progressive abolitionist and celebrates the power of forgiveness that pardons his sins. The Bailiwick tactically employed this Christian song in the stage production to symbolize the Japanese forgiveness of America's war atrocities and to press Americans to ask painful questions about the morality of their country's use of atomic bombs targeting Japanese urban centers densely populated by civilians. In America as a Japanese "ambassador for peace" (*Radiance* 89), the first time Reverend Minaga hears about Ralph Edwards's reality television show "This Is Your Moment," he immediately notes that "the name has a very ZEN-like quality" (*Radiance* 13). The idea of the *moment* occupies a central position in Zen Buddhism, a Japanese Buddhist tradition derived from the Ch'an sect in China in the 6th century and the most popular school of East Asian religion in the contemporary Western world. Okita uses Zen Buddhism to build a cultural bridge for Japanese and Americans to communicate over the sensitive topic of the atomic bombing. Zen Buddhism lays great importance on *satori*, or the moment of enlightenment, which holds that "every moment is an enlightened moment for one who has set out on a path, a way, and so rather than waiting for a blinding and perhaps isolated epiphany, every moment, every now, every flower, scent, and breeze becomes an epiphany, even if on a smaller scale" (Carter 13). Drawing on the Zen idea of the moment of enlightenment which emphasizes self-reflection, Okita intends his audiences to use this live

theatrical moment to contemplate what lessons to draw from the atomic bombing which has brought the world apocalyptic fears of nuclear annihilation.

As a victim of the atomic bombing himself and an advocate for Hiroshima survivors, Reverend Minaga reaches out to Americans with a forgiving spirit, not only because of the Christian tenet which requires him to bear no malignancy against enemies, but also because of the nurture of Japanese culture. In Richard's talk show, Reverend Minaga sings "I'm Not Angry, I'm Japanese." The strategy of putting words into song helps him switch smoothly from conversing with the TV host to addressing the entire audience. In the song, Reverend Minaga expands on the Zen idea of the moment that stresses the transience of time, impermanence of life, and importance of living in the here and now. He uses the song to deliver the message that for Japanese, to make full use of the present moment, as is instructed by *satori*, it is important to move on instead of dwelling on past miseries. He also introduces Americans to a traditional Japanese saying: "'Shikata ga-nai' – it can't be helped" (*Radiance* 63). Rather than suggesting sinking with fatalistic resignation, the Japanese phrase indicates a remarkable resilience of "circumventing adversity […] and maybe even turning it into something positive" (Kuroiwa 193). Such a cultural response to adversity directs Japanese to seek more productive ways to use their time and energy. Reverend Minaga sings, "Think about the lives that were spared / Don't think about the cost / Think of the greater good, not your neighborhood / Not what you…lost" (*Radiance* 64). The song enables the Reverend to communicate with the audience directly and pass on cultural information about Japanese. With the help of refrain lines, one of the most commonly used cumulative methods and repetition techniques in songs, he reiterates "I'm not angry" without sounding tiresome and boring. Presumably, the melody composed by Larkin

also progresses in a way that alleviates the potentially tedious aspect of didacticism. The climactic parallelism the Reverend uses, a rhetorical device in which the second line repeats part of the first and adds something to it, increases the emotional power of his explanation and promotion of the Japanese idea of Shikata-ga-nai. The staircase parallelism in the song – "Don't take it so hard," "Don't take it personally," "Take it in the spirit it was intended," "Take it like an American," and "Take it any way you can" (*Radiance* 63) – develops the uniquely Japanese concept into a more universal approach to the traumatic consequences of war and tactically presents it to ordinary Americans as an option in coping with the war's aftereffects rather than a moral order.

Yet one also notices that Reverend Minaga's introduction of the Japanese idea of "Shikata-ga-nai" is quite palatable to his American audience from whom he seeks support for his campaign. He might be afraid that they have difficulty in dealing with national guilt or responsibility in its fullest sense and hence do not want to lose potential campaign supporters with too harsh criticism. The possible shock to the American audience is also reduced in the way the "Hiroshima Maidens" make their stage appearance. Hiroshima Maidens are a group of young Japanese women who have been burned by the blast and who have been brought to the U.S. by Reverend Minaga for reconstructive surgery. In the reality show, two of them speak to the audience in veils so the audience will not see their badly burnt faces. Rather than directly confronting the American audience with the physical evidence of the U.S. catastrophic bombing of Japan, they speaks about how they have been trying to preserve personal dignity after being disfigured by the atomic blast and express their gratitude for the medical help they have received in the U.S. If Japanese characters only indirectly prick the American public conscience

through gestures of forgiveness and reconciliation about the atomic bombing, the American character Captain Daniels, as Reverend Minaga's antagonist, more directly engages the audience in the interrogation of this international conflict shrouded in ambiguity and contradiction. He stages a painful soul-searching about the U.S. justification dropping an atomic bomb on Hiroshima "in the biblical sense of righteous retribution against a savage enemy" (Dower, "Three Narratives" 72), in which what happened can be alternatively remembered and memorialized.[41]

While the audience does not see the two Hiroshima Maidens behind the veils, Captain Daniels accidentally catches a glimpse of their disfigured faces when they take off their veils in the corridor after exiting the studio. He is shocked, "My God. […] I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. […] Are there a hundred thousand more like that back in Japan" (*Radiance* 72-3). Deeply troubled by conscience, he asks Richards's staff person, "[The Reverend]'s got to hate me, right? I'd hate me – if I were him" (*Radiance* 72). In the show, Captain Daniels recounts what happened at the time of the bombing: "Below us, the city of Hiroshima disappeared. I wrote in my logbook: 'My God, what have we done?'" (*Radiance* 89). At Richards's request to reveal his thoughts about that moment in the sky, he hesitates, "This is hard for me to explain. I mean, I'm not a terrible person. I've had my share of nightmares. But –" (*Radiance* 90). Struck speechless by his ambiguities about the atomic bombing and finding dialogue no longer sufficient, he breaks into a song, which, in its highly condensed form, provides a concentrated expression of his internal

[41] John Dower outlines three different ways in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings have been recounted: "Hiroshima as Victimization," the Japanese official narrative that plays down imperial Japan's aggression and oppression abroad; "Hiroshima as Triumph," the mainstream American narrative which glorifies the atomic bombings as the final blow against an savage enemy; and "Hiroshima as Tragedy," which acknowledges the existence of competing points of view as the Smithsonian's *Enola Gay* Exhibit initially proposed.

turmoil about the historic event in which he played a significant part. On the one hand, he is loyal to America and committed to fulfilling his soldier's duty:

> Do I love America?
> Do you really have to ask?
> I was the pilot of the plane that ended World War II
> That was my task
>
> Do I have regrets?
> None that I can name
> I was just the pilot, after all
> I was only steering the plane (*Radiance* 91)

But on the other, he is deeply troubled by the master narrative "Hiroshima as triumph" (Dower, "Three Narratives" 71-2) and his moral culpability in the bombing:

> Reverend, I thought that you should know
> After the bomb was dropped and a war was won
> I looked down and saw a hole in the world
> …There was a hole in the world…
> I was only protecting my country…
> […]
> I thought I wasn't sorry…
> Well maybe I am (*Radiance* 92-3)

For Captain Daniels, singing his dilemma aloud serves as a cathartic release of the chronic emotional distress incurred by the overwhelming event of bombing Hiroshima. For the audience, the apparent shift in medium from the verbal to the combined musical and verbal quickly catches their attention and engages them to participate in the self-questioning process.

The same song also ushers in the consummate moment of negative cosmopolitanism offered in the play, in which the Reverend and the Captain perform a reconciliation that transcends the lines between enemy and ally. Entitled "Two Men Who Steer" and sung together by Reverend Minaga and Captain Daniels, the song draws parallels between them. The Reverend sings:

Captain, I was the reverend of a church
In Hiroshima, Japan, you know
While you were busy steering above,
I was busying praying down below (*Radiance* 91)

In the form of a duet song, the Reverend and the Captain exchange their thoughts and display their commitment to building relationships based on mutual understanding. In response to Captain Daniels's moral dilemma, Reverend Minaga expresses that it is unfair to lay all historical burdens on a single individual, but that it is equally irresponsible for the individual to evade the process – albeit sometimes painful – of critically examining the moral implications and practical consequences of one's role in history. The Reverend suggests framing the significance of the self within not only the national context but also the broader transnational frame of world peace in the nuclear age. Together, he sings with Captain Daniels:

Yes, here we are
Two men who steer
Nothing to lose
Everything to fear

I'm sorry that our hearts were not bigger
I'm sorry that our countries were unable to hear
I too am a pilot
A steer

And maybe we will find our clearing
And maybe we're not as lost as we seem

Here's to peace everlasting
To peace everlasting
Here's to dreams. (Radiance 93-4).

Strategically positioned at the end of Okita's part of the play, the song creates a marked sense of ending for the audience through the musical heightening of the connections between

Reverend Minaga and Captain Daniels and brings the audience in as part of the negative cosmopolitanism established between them onstage in a contagious musical environment.

This consummation of negative cosmopolitanism does not come naturally but has been brought about by Reverend Minaga and Captain Daniels's meta-interrogation of their commonality and difference as they process the unsettled memory of the war. Their interaction displays what some scholars of cosmopolitanism refer to as a reflexive style of cosmopolitan engagement**.** Reflexive cosmopolitanism, according to Paul Hopper, suggests "we incorporate ideas, images and symbols from around the world into our everyday lives so that they come to inform our outlooks and lifestyles, and in doing so we develop the capacity to think and act beyond our immediate surroundings, encouraging us to ruminate upon our place in the world and [our] actions within it" (167). Zlatko Skrbiš and Ian Woodward contend, "Reflexive cosmopolitanism shows a genuine commitment to living and thinking beyond the local or nation and […to acting] in cosmopolitan ways that are ethically directed" (61). Skrbiš and Woodward's cosmopolitan ethics remind us of Levy and Sznaider's "cosmopolitan common sense," the notion of inalienable and fundamental human rights. They also resonate with Beck's idea about "a shared space of responsibility and agency bridging all national frontiers and divides" with "the conceptualization and recognition of threats on a cosmopolitan scale" (*Cosmopolitan Vision* 23). Despite the historical hostilities between Japan and American during WWII, the annihilative threat of nuclear weapon to all humanity enables Reverend Minaga and Captain Daniels to reach a reconciliation and turn the tragic moment of the Hiroshima bombing into an opportunity of negative cosmopolitanism in which they each examine individual and collective responsibilities in the nuclear age.

At the personal level of individual war remembrance, Reverend Minaga's and Captain Daniels's self-examination during the formation of cosmopolitan bonds growing out of war's devastation is characterized by an anti-deterministic existential emphasis on personal choice, personal consciousness, and personal responsibility. From an existential point of view, one not only engages his/her private existence but that of all human beings, and therefore is responsible for not only him/herself but also others. Harry J. Gensler, Earl W. Spurgin, and James Swindal summarize well the universal ethical implication of individual freedom and responsibility: "the man who involves himself and who realizes that he is not only the person he chooses to be, but also a lawmaker who is, at the same time, choosing all mankind as well as himself, cannot help escape the feeling of his total and deep responsibility" (128). In the play, Captain Daniels's sense of guilt about executing the military order of dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and his confrontation of his personal complicity with the monstrosity of war together display an existential approach to individual responsibility for one's own actions. Rather than seeing himself as a helpless tiny cog in a gigantic war machine, Captain Daniels tries to regain his moral autonomy eroded by the dark forces of an American collective unconscious of the war and questions his moral culpability in committing a major war crime. For Reverend Minaga, individual responsibility takes the form of a strong moral responsibility to "help lost souls" and "guide them to the light" (*Radiance* 91), be they Japanese atomic bomb victims or Americans who are struggling to make sense of the atrocities committed by their country. In singing together "I'm sorry that our hearts were not bigger / I'm sorry that our countries were unable to hear," Reverend Minaga and Captain Daniels highlight the universal reach of their individual responsibility beyond national borders. Calling themselves "two men who steer,"

they feel as if all humankind fixes its eyes on them and is directed by what they do. From here, we see that negative cosmopolitanism precludes fatalism and pessimism in dealing with the destruction of violence. It stresses, rather, human capability to reflect upon the ethics of personal deeds in times of violence and take up the responsibility to bring about positive change. Negative cosmopolitanism does not form automatically as a result of extreme violence, but it requires the person to develop a reflexive dimension of the self, which has often been impoverished by the impersonal nature of extreme violence, and a sense of individual responsibility involving not only the self but all humankind.

At the national level of collective war remembrance, negative cosmopolitanism challenges the nation to reconsider its construction of the history of conflicts with other nation-states. Levy and Sznaider point out, the crisis of territoriality in the era of intensified globalization has brought about "new forms of memory cultures transforming the national premises that hitherto dominated collective identifications, breaking down the dichotomy between local and cosmopolitan solidarities" ("Human Rights" 195). These new forms of memory, or cosmopolitan memories, as Levy and Sznaider call them, do not deny the reality of the nation, but they suggest a re-evaluation of "the contemporary nation-state itself and new forms of nationalism" against the background of "global memory scapes" ("Human Rights" 197). Levy and Sznaider analyze the memorialization of the Holocaust in the U.S. as a mode of dialectical interplay between national and cosmopolitan memories fostered by human rights discourses: on the one hand, the Holocaust has been transformed into "an American morality play," which spreads the messages that it is "wrong" to discriminate against an individual on the basis of his or her origins and that one can save others if one wants to; and on the other,

the Americanization of the Holocaust based on the very American principles of equality, freedom, and justice also contributes to the universalization of the event as the most frightful crime against humanity (Levy and Sznaider**,** *The Holocaust and Memory* 12, 140-141). If America's memorialization of the Holocaust, in large measure, dovetails with its construction of a self-image as "savior nation throughout the world" (Levy and Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory* 207), the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, which has "left a wake of death and rubble as terrible vengeance of Pearl Harbor" (*Indianapolis Star*, qtd. in Chappell 26), poses a huge difficulty for manufacturing national memory along the same lines. Unable to sit back with folded arms as "a liberator or savior who views from a safe distance the traumatic victimization of the 'Other'" (Samuels 44), America is compelled to confront the ambiguities and darkness in its history of violence. What it requires of the individual, negative cosmopolitanism requires of the nation, too: to develop a reflexive and existential sense of responsibility towards its actions. In the case of the Hiroshima bombing, negative cosmopolitanism obligates America to come to terms with the injustices it has committed in the name of justice and the immoralities it has perpetuated in the name of morality. If the memorialization of the Holocaust has been neatly subsumed as part of America's national history, Okita and his fellow Chicago artists' bold attempt to challenge American audiences to engage with a non-nationalist dramatization of the after-effect of the bombing of Hiroshima suggests another mode of interaction between national memory and cosmopolitan memory. It points to the need to open up national memory to embrace not only the kind of cosmopolitan memories which, though originally positioned beyond national borders, can be worked to fit nationalist purposes, but also those which

contradict national memory and therefore demand its self-reflexive transformation directed towards a common humanity beyond national frontiers.

***

Walls and *Radiance* theatricalize a mode of racial cosmopolitanism emerging out of the ruins of violence and help expand the cosmopolitan horizon of Asian American theatre. The alternative cosmopolitan visions they promote both work to challenge America's racist war ideology and extend humanity to racialized subjects. Usually distorted, marginalized, or silenced in hegemonic Eurocentric memorialization narratives about wartime or postwar solidarity, the war experiences of racial others in these plays are humanized and given a central place. From an interracial perspective, *Walls* creates a bond that joins Asian Americans and other racially minoritized groups in the U.S. to collectively heal the wounds of the Vietnam War. Written by a woman playwright, the play dramatizes negative cosmopolitanism as being shaped by the intersection of race and gender. It includes women as part of the cosmopolitan collective and contests the masculinist public memory of the war. Compared with *Walls*, *Radiance* explores race more from a transnational perspective. In staging the impacts of the U.S. atomic bombing of Japan that precipitated the end of WWII, it shifts the conventional dramatic focus of the plays by American playwrights about the U.S. overseas war experiences from American war casualties to the war's destruction to its wartime enemy. Through the interaction of a humanized Japanese character who does not valorize Japan's official victim-narrative and an American character who questions America's official triumph-narrative, *Radiance* stages a transcendence of national divisions through the common opposition to the nuclear threat to all humanity.

In analyzing two Asian American theatrical war memorializations of the complex relationship between violence and the emergence of cross-racial, cross-cultural, and transnational connection, this chapter sheds light on three sets of dialectical relationships in negative cosmopolitanism. First, as the analysis shows, violence is not always and everywhere antithetical to cosmopolitanism; rather, it can make as well as break cosmopolitanism. In circumstances of extreme violence, the enormous human loss and suffering can generate a universal compassion not confined to any particular social group and bring upon the formation of a contingent solidarity based on the shared history of a violent past. But this chapter cautions against wishful thinking about any automatic conversion of violence into cosmopolitanism. It stresses the critical need of self-reflexivity at both the personal and national level for such transformative moments of cosmopolitanism to take place. Second, this chapter highlights the dialectical relationship between heterogeneity and commonality, between particularity and universality, and between concreteness and abstraction in the ethical memorialization of violent history. Attending to individualized experiences of war in the exploration of a common ground through the dialogic interaction of different voices, negative cosmopolitanism avoids sacrificing the particularity of others to a postulate of hegemonic universal collectivity which denies the context of emergence and interests. It is important to note that neither of the two plays is about battlefield violence itself; rather, they are remembrance projects about historicizing experiences of violence and transforming them into ethical memories. Finally, this chapter also draws attention to the dialectical interplay between national and cosmopolitan memories in the complicated memorializing process. The analysis suggests that in considering America's international military engagements across the Pacific,

both Asian Americans and others should broaden their horizon to the sufferings borne by U.S. adversaries in Asia and re-examine from a transnational perspective the American nationalist interpretive frames of the war which lack an interrogation of the nation's own ethically questionable war activities.

CHAPTER III

Mixed-Race Cosmopolitanism:

Six Plays by Two Mixed-Race Asian American Playwrights

As an open and evolving enterprise, cosmopolitan studies continues to expand and enrich itself by drawing upon other disciplines. Yet despite these growing endeavors to enliven the field with new approaches, cosmopolitanism, as Farida Fozdar and Maureen Perkins notice, has so far not engaged with the question of mixed race. For example, Steven Vertovec, a prominent scholar in the field, has coined the term "super-diversity" to describe the "diversification of diversity" of the contemporary cosmopolitan condition, which is characterized by "a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants" (1024-5). But among the range of emergent patterns Vertovec identifies for super-diversity, such as creolization, new migration channels, and new modes of cultural interaction, mixed race does not get a mention. Likewise, when Ulrich Beck, another noted scholar of cosmopolitanism, puts forward the many possible perspectives from which research on cosmopolitanism can be carried out, including cultural commodities, dual citizenship, political intensities, languages, mobility, routes of communication, international travel, activity in transnational initiatives and organizations, criminal activity, transnational ways of life, transnational news coverage, national identities, and ecological crisis, mixed race, again, is not in his proposed agenda. Though neither Vertovec nor Beck make claims to comprehensiveness when identifying variables of contemporary cosmopolitanism, the fact that neither mentions race at all reveals the inconspicuous position of the issue of mixed race in

cosmopolitan studies. While mixed race has yet to attract much attention from scholars of cosmopolitanism, I argue for viewing it as a concentrated expression of cosmopolitanism and featuring it in cosmopolitan studies. As Fozdar and Perkins, two of the few scholars who do consider it, rightly contend, "it is likely that the growing phenomenon of mixed race will produce an intercultural or cosmopolitan identity, as those of mixed backgrounds tend to be more mobile, open to engage with others, and critically aware of their own and other's racial and cultural distinctiveness and yet similarity." For them, mixed-race people "are less likely to have a monocultural monoracial commitment" (139)[42]. Considering that mixed race manifests important features of cosmopolitanism, such as cultural hybridity, openness towards peoples and places, and wiliness to engage self-reflexively with differences, I explore racial cosmopolitanism from this dimension in this chapter.

The chapter studies two women theatre artists of mixed Asian American heritage, Amy Hill and Velina Hasu Houston, whose plays about mixed race contribute to our exploration of racial cosmopolitanism in two important ways. First, the two artists debunk the mainstream celebratory discourse surrounding mixed race which tends to level unequal power dynamics, and instead dramatize a kind of mixed-race cosmopolitanism attentive to entrenched racist realities and deep social cleavages tied to race, gender, and class. Hill reveals the structural

[42] Fozdar and Perkins draw observations from their examination of Antipodean mixed race in Australian and New Zealand, two British settler societies significantly shaped by the interaction between colonizers, other immigrants, and indigenous peoples that often result in mixed offspring. Other scholars have considered mixed race and cosmopolitanism together in different geographical and socio-political contexts. For example, Camilla Fojas writes a literary and cultural history of cosmopolitanism in Latin American. In the conclusion of her book, she explores what racial mixing means for a cosmopolitan Latin America in the early 20th century through Henry James's fiction and José Vasconcelos Calderón's *La Raza Cósmica*. Adrian Carton explores mixed race and its vexed relationship with cosmopolitanism in early colonial India. Julie Matthews analyzes the global media representation of Eurasian women and critiques the cosmopolitan appeal of mixed race. I will refer back to Carton's and Matthews's work later in my discussion.

inequalities between minority and dominant races in the racial mixing of the mixed-race individual and questions the general equation of mixed race with racial equality. Acting from her own working-class family background, she draws attention to the issue of class privilege which tends to be covered up in the consumerist construction of mixed-race people as "the poster children for twenty-first century globalization" (Beech). Highly conscious of the intersection between race, gender, and sexuality, she also exposes how both monoracial and multiracial beauty standards against which her racially ambiguous physical body is frequently measured misrepresent, objectify, and demean mixed-race women. Like Hill, Houston too demonstrates a heightened sensitivity to the unequal power relations at work in the very constitution of the mixed-race social body. In dramatizing her Asian American and African American heritages, she connects mixed-race cultural memory with America's imperialist military presence in Asia and with the country's history of slavery. In restoring the memory of American imperialism and slavery to public consciousness, Houston confronts her audiences with the sharp discrepancy between a proclaimed cosmopolitan interracial harmony in the U.S. and the actual persistence of racist reality and encourages a reconsideration of the overoptimistic discourse on racial hybridity.

As mixed-race subjects, whose "hybrid strangeness" eludes easy racial classification (Valluvan 3), Hill and Houston also question the uncritical reliance on settled indices of racial difference that undermines the supposedly cosmopolitan openness towards diversity and produce new ideas about what is considered "Asian American." In interrogating the existing racial framework held by both whites and racial minorities in fully accounting the lived reality of racial diversity, the artists try to generate a space in theatre which makes visible the

unclassifiable difference of mixed-race subjects and validates their hitherto marginalized existence. They call for an expansion of the definition of Asian American identity and an acknowledgement of the mixed-race experience as an integral part of the American cosmopolitan landscape. They use their plays to create possibilities for building aesthetic and political coalitions between different groups (whether by race or other social identifiers) and broadening the scope of cosmopolitan affiliation.

The Rise of Scholarship on Mixed Race as a Response to Social Changes

In this section, I briefly account the research on mixed race against the demographic, social, and political backgrounds of its emergence and growth, which has set the stage for my analysis of Hill's and Houston's works. In 2000, for the first time in U.S. census history, respondents were given the option of checking off more than one race, whereas prior to 2000, individuals were allowed to identify with only one category on the race question. Behind this modification of census racial categorization are three important changes in American society. First, it marks a growing prevalence and recognition of racial intermarriage (Perlmann and Waters 1). Census data reveal that since the Supreme Court's 1967 *Loving v. Virginia* decision, which ended federal prohibitions against interracial marriages in the U.S., the number of racial intermarriages grew from 310,000 in 1970 to about 3.0 million as of 2000 (Stephens 33). Interracial marriages have spawned what Maria P. P. Root refers to as the "biracial baby boom" ("Biracial Baby Boom"). Working alongside this demographic shift has been a mounting dissatisfaction with what Hollinger refers to as the "ethno-racial pentagon," first created in 1977 by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget in Directive 15 directing federal agencies to classify the population racially as American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander,

Black, Hispanic, and White. Since then, American residents had been routinely asked by public and private agencies to situate themselves within one of the five mutually exclusive major racial categories. Though historically effective in increasing the public visibility of minorities and enforce antidiscrimination and affirmative action policies, this classification system based on the false belief of the purity of race proves increasingly inadequate with growing multiracial births and marriages. The check-all-that-apply option in the 2000 census form was also the result of both these shifts and the active multiracial movement in the 1990s. In the lineage of the civil rights movement (K. Williams), multiracial movement activists in the last decade of the twentieth century sought to challenge the established "one-drop-rule" racial classification system in the U.S. and diligently lobbied for the official acknowledgement of marginalized mixed-race people (Farley, "Racial Identities in 2000").

Scholarly discussions about how the presence of mixed-race people contributes to re-charting the terrain of "race" are no less heated. Since the 1970s, scholarship on multiracial identity has experienced an explosion, including theoretical work, sociological and empirical studies, and research on public policy and law.[43] While these perspectives on mixed race all inform my research, I benefit most from the body of work that studies representations of mixed race in literature and the arts and herein focus on what Michele Elam calls "the humanities' largely overlooked but crucial participation in the production of mixed race's cultural meanings" (xv). Delving into a wide array of expressive works about black-white mixes, including comic strips, novels, drama, art installations, and late-night TV episodes, Elam explores how different

[43] For theoretical discussions of mixed race, see Lewis Gordon; Maria P. P. Root; and Naomi Zack. For empirical sociological and empirical studies of the experience of mixed-race people, see Kerry Ann Rockquemore and David L. Brunsma; Kristen A. Renn; and Marion Kilson. For research on public policy and law concerning mixed race, see Timothy Davis, Kevin R. Johnson, and George A. Martínez; Kevin R. Johnson; and Joel Perlmann and Mary C. Waters.

literary and artistic genres construct "mixed-race identity […] as a performative mode of social engagement" (xix). She argues that literature and art, rather than being ornamental, are part and parcel of politics. In this political aesthetics, literary and art works about mixed race experiment with formal aesthetic structures and "validate mixed-race experiences as opportunities for social insight without administering prescriptive morals or promising emancipatory politics" (Elam 202, xvii). Likewise, Jonathan Brennan establishes a rationale for probing mixed race through creative works, which also confirms my belief in the feasibility of reading Asian American playtexts as important contributions to the dialogue on mixed race. He compiles a collection of essays on the mixed-race literary figure from a wide variety of American racial traditions in *Mixed Race Literature* and points out that though only recently has mass critical attention turned to mixed-race literature, mixed-race writings have long histories in the U.S. In the introduction to the book, he argues that as "mixed-race identity is always negotiated, manipulated, represented, and subject to multiple shifts in meaning," the lives of mixed-race subjects are especially appropriate for a *literary* rather than a *literal* reading" (8 emphasis mine). He also contends that despite his use of the term "mixed-race literature" to designate the field of inquiry, more concrete terminology should be deployed to analyze specific texts (e.g., French Vietnamese literature, African Choctaw literature) and discuss more exactly how multiple racial, cultural, and literary traditions converge and diverge, which I bear in mind in my analysis of Hill's and Houston's works.

With regard to the particular history of mixed-race Asian Americans[44], Teresa Williams-León and Cynthia L. Nakashima argue for three distinct periods: first, before WWII, a time of anti-miscegenation that legally forbade interracial cohabitation and marriage between Asians and whites; second, from WWII to 1967 when *Loving v. Virginia* declared laws forbidding interracial marriages unconstitutional; and, third, post-1965 immigration and the post-1967 biracial baby boom, a period in which Hill and Houston were born (5). Though the history of mixed-race Asian America began as early as the initial arrival and settlement of Asian American immigrants (Omi x), the first significant cohort of mixed-race Asian Americans were born in the Korean War era between WWII and the Vietnam War (Root, "Factors" 61), when the *War Brides Act of 1945* made an exception of anti-miscegenation laws and allowed American G.I.s to marry and bring over "war brides" from Japan, China, the Philippines, and Korea (Korgen 116).[45] Following the landmark *Loving v. Virginia* case, itself part of civil rights agitation and charge, and the *Immigration Act of 1965*, the multiracial Asian American population in the third period has increased exponentially. According to the 2000 U.S. decennial census, of the races reported by individuals who identified with more than one race, "Asian" was reported in about one-fourth of all responses (U.S. Census Bureau); the Asian American population had a higher percentage than most other racial groups reporting more than one race, with around 14 percent identified as multiracial (U.S. Census Bureau). As Le documents, if multiracial Asian Americans are considered as their own "ethnic" group, they would be the fourth-largest group

[44] In opting for the terms "mixed-race Asian American" or "multiracial Asian American," I do not mean to confine Americans of mixed Asian descent to the Asian American community, or to dismiss their other racial heritages, or to stop them from affiliating with other racial groups. Instead, I employ such terms to locate the mixed-race identity of these people within an Asian American context on which this dissertation focuses.

[45] This was the historical background against which Hill's and Houston's mothers immigrated to the U.S. and against which the two artists were born, which I will discuss in later sections.

within the Asian American community. And Lai and Arguelles note that the births of mixed-race Asian Americans have contributed to more than 60 percent of the growth rate of the Asian American population (Lai and Arguelles). Cynthia Nakashima puts it right, to incorporate mixed-race perspectives in Asian American discourses is "not to be on the cutting edge but simply to remain relevant in the twenty-first century" (113).

As part of mixed-race Asian American history, the mixed-race Asian American literary and artistic tradition, though not yet extensively researched, has long roots: from the Eurasian writer Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far), who has been touted as one of the first voices in Asian American literature; to the Belgian Chinese writer Han Suyin, who published a series of autobiographical works exploring his multiracial background during mid-20th century; and to the Irish Vietnamese contemporary dancer and choreographer Maura Nguyen Donohu, whose work revolves around the question of what it means to be a *hapa* ("Donohue" 50). Since the 1990s, the repertoire of creative works about mixed-race people in Asian American literature and arts has begun to grow, and includes, for example, Cynthia Kadohata*'s In the Heart of the Valley of Love* (1992) and Marie Hara and Nora O. Keller's *Intersecting Circles: The Voices of Hapa Women in Poetry and Prose* (1999).This expansion calls for what Brennan refers to as "a literary rather than a literal" examination of the various strategies of intervention Asian American writers and artists have used to negotiate their mixed-race cosmopolitan identity in cultural productions. In the following section, I study Hill's and Houston's six plays about mixed race. Hill and Houston are two prominent voices in the emerging circle of mixed-race Asian American female theatre artists, including Sandra Tsing Loh, Jude Narita, and Paula Weston

Solano.[46] As women are viewed symbolically as the charged gatekeepers of racial boundaries and their bodies are considered the sites of racial reproduction, the exuberant energy of female artists in the Asian American multiracial theatrical scene comes as little surprise. Yet among these playwrights, so far only Hill's and Houston's works are readily available in print form (archived in Alexander Street Press's digital collections) to be studied by scholars like me who do not have the opportunity to attend stage productions or watch live recordings. I look at how the two Asian American women artists use theatre art to explore racial cosmopolitanism by dramatizing racial hybridity as it is experienced by people of multiple racial heritages, how they connect the micro-world of the mixed-race individual with the macro-world of the social and ideological constructions and understandings of racial mixing, and how their integrated race-gender-class perspective complicates their interrogation of mixed-race cosmopolitan identity.

Amy Hill's Solo Plays

Born in Deadwood, South Dakota in 1953, to a Japanese war-bride mother and a Finnish American serviceman father, Hill has made her name as a playwright and performing artist on the Asian American theatrical stage with over thirty productions in both mainstream and racially specific theatres. During her thirties and forties, she produced a series of autobiographical solo plays in which she has been both the performer and the person who has experienced the material being performed. In this section, I study four of her solo plays in which she explores her mixed-race cosmopolitan identity: *Tokyo Bound* (1991), *Beside Myself*

[46] More information about Loh's and Narita's plays can be found in their respective entries in Liu's *Asian American Playwrights*. Cathy Irwin and Sean Metzger offer a detailed discussion of Loh's and Solano's solo performances in which these two artists foreground mixed-race issues.

(1992), *Into the Fire* (1997), and *Deadwood to Hollywood* (1999).[47] In these plays, Hill performs her interracial and intercultural encounters at home and abroad, her scrutiny of the interplay of her mother's Japanese heritage and her father's Finnish heritage, and her wrestling with different standards of feminine beauty simultaneously imposed on her racially ambiguous body.

In her exploration of mixed-race cosmopolitanism, Hill works in at least four important ways. First, she questions the mass media's consumerist celebration of racial and cultural mixing as a marker of elitist cosmopolitanism by exposing the uneven power dynamics at work within her mixed-race self and revealing the class and gender dimensions that complicate the scene of multiracial cosmopolitanism. Second, capitalizing on her very physical presence on the stage, Hill reveals the inadequacy of monoracial categories in fully accounting the lived realities of racial differences and challenges both whites and people of color to expand their conception of "race" and racial diversity. Third, highly conscious of the co-construction of race and gender, she, as a woman playwright and performer, contests the different standards of beauty against which her mixed-race body is constantly measured and calls into question various hegemonic forms of desire that negate or delimit her mixed-race womanhood. Finally, in her staging of cosmopolitanism, Hill positions herself on the margin as a mixed-race individual constantly in

[47] These plays have garnered critical and popular acclaim and toured nationally since their premieres at such diverse locations as Northwest Asian American Theater (Seattle), San Juan Capistrano Regional Library, the AATC, East West Players (Los Angeles), Highways Performance Space (Los Angeles), Mu Performing Arts (Minnesota), New York Public Theatre, and Actors Theatre of Louisville. Notably, *Tokyo Bound* was selected as part of the 1991 "Festival of New Voices" at New York's Public Theater. The play's 1995 production on the International Channel was nominated for a Cable Ace Award. Together with Elizabeth Wong's *Kimchee and Chitlins*, *Beside Myself*, too, featured in the Taper's "Out in Front Festival" as one of the earliest efforts by Los Angeles-based artists to comprehend America's complex multiracial relations brought to the fore by the 1992 L.A. riot.

I study these plays together because there is considerable overlap in their contents. This is necessary because each time Hill performs, she will re-introduces herself to new audiences. But, in each show, she offers new material about her life because of the plays' different points of focus. The four plays complement each other in helping me construct a fuller picture of Hill's mixed-race existence.

want of authentication and acceptance and seeks opportunities to build political alliances with other marginalized subjects through the very form of solo performance.

The genre of Asian American solo performance first emerged in the 1970s and began to grow during the succeeding decades. Its emergence and growth owed to pragmatic as well as political reasons. Compared with collectively produced plays, the solo performance is considerably less expensive to produce because the very person in the show is usually an all-rounder, taking charge of everything from writing, to designing, directing, and performing. The low production cost of solo performance not only increases its accessibility to Asian American artists who look for an affordable form of creative expression, but also adds to its "versatility" because it is a genre that can be performed in all kinds of venues, from school auditoriums to assembly halls (E. Lee 166).[48] Asian American solo performance has flourished not only in response to practical needs, such as low cost, easy personnel management, and locational flexibility, but also as a mode of political intervention. First inspired by feminist solo performance which came into being in the 1960s, Asian American artists sympathize with the feminist axiom that "the personal is political," meaning the very existence of a private sphere has political causes and dimensions that are wider than the individual, and they use autobiographical solo performance as "a powerful mode of representation to expose personal material in public" (E. Lee 161). In addressing the issues of identity and self-representation, Asian American solo performers also face additional tasks: to construct "a narrative and an explanation of why [the Asian American body] is different and strange" and to "[educate] the

[48] In *A History of Asian American Theatre*, Esther Lee devotes a whole chapter to discussing the growth and flowering of Asian American solo performances from the 1970s to the 1990s (154-176). She covers a variety of Asian American solo pieces, with a particular focus on five Asian American solo performers: Winston Tong in the 1970s, Lane Nishikawa, Jude Narita, and Dan Wong in the 1980s, and Denise Uyehara in the 1990s.

audiences about how Asian Americans have been imagined and actualized in history" (E. Lee 161-62).

Usually autobiographical in content and form, Asian American solo performance proves an effective theatrical genre to explore mixed-race experiences. Solo performance is governed by the personal paradigm. Jeanie Forte observes, "The intimate nature of the work, the emphasis on personal experience and emotional material, not 'acted' or distanced from artist or audience, is what most characterizes this alternative, heterogeneous voice" (221). Jonathan Kalb remarks on the immense appeal of the personal into which solo performance taps: "However little we may really be interested in anyone else, we do seem willing to listen to people's individual stories as possible keys to our own individual development – and that is the narrow political opportunity the solo performers exploit" (16). Situated and contextualized, the form of solo performance fits the extremely individualized nature of multiracial experience, which, SanSan Kwan and Kenneth Speirs contend, must not be generalized. Kwan and Speirs oppose simply creating a category of "multiracial" that encompasses all people of racially mixed ancestry. They caution us against ignoring the "varying histories of power and oppression" carried within the mixed-race body and propose that "the personal is the best avenue to understanding that which is necessarily unclassifiable" (7). They argue, "The challenge […] for our children is to understand themselves as not simply 'brown,' but as, for example, Chinese-English-Scottish-German-American all at once – with the various unequal histories that these identities carry" (4).

Handling this particular genre of solo performance with art and integrity, Hill sees her solo shows not as occasions for self-indulgence but as opportunities to produce solid artistic

experiences that are both aesthetically appealing and politically charged. Kalb observes, "solo shows are built on individual stories," but the art's political strength depends on "the choice and handling of those stories" (14). In the plays, Hill uses personal experience to fashion a multiracial identity and validate its legitimacy. What she stages is not an unselective running account of life events but a thoughtful identity construction. The idea of self-construction is a consistent thread through her autobiographical plays, and, as Zack remarks perceptively on the mixed-race individual, is also a central facet of mixed-race lived experiences: "The whole person is supposed to be defined by her racial label, and one is not usually allowed to make up such labels to fit one's individuality. Therefore, when none of the available labels fits, a person is driven to question her identity, to reinvent an identity, to reinvent a self" (*Mixing It Up* x).

In *Beside Myself*, for example, Hill acts out various TV characters, running around the stage and falling to the floor. Living in sparsely populated Deadwood in her early days, where her brother never wants to play with her because she is a girl, and where the nearest children of her age reside far away, Hill finds television her only companion and spends most of her time amusing herself. But rather than merely mimicking television characters, she re-enacts them and uses them as raw material for her own imaginative constructs. She tells the audience, "They answered to me. I had given them their voices. […] I am creating the voices. And, I can make them stop or I can make them my friends" (*Beside* 4, 15). At the age of six, Hill moved to Seattle because her father found a job there as a heavy equipment operator. But in *Beside Myself* she offers a different reason for the relocation, dramatizing her autonomy over her own life: "Growing up, I sensed that our family situation was unique, though not necessarily to be envied, so I made it my job to re-invent who I was. By the time I got to high school everybody

knew me too well, so I had to leave Seattle, start over again somewhere else" (3). In her performances, Hill intentionally breaks the boundary between reality and imagination, and also explicitly comments on this conscious artistic move before the audience. By so doing, she shows that her autobiographical plays are not simply enacting her life events, but creatively re-enacting them for a theatrical creation and presentation of a multiracial identity. She intends to involve the audience imaginatively in the process of identity production and invites them to consider the theatrical dimensions of such a political process.

In dramatizing her various intercultural encounters since childhood, Hill also projects herself as a cosmopolitan with "an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent experiences from different national cultures" (Urry 167).[49] In Seattle, Hill is very popular with an Italian family who lives across the street. Using "the front door as a stage entrance and the front porch as a stage," she often performs before them, who "would sit, as a family, facing the picture window, […] always there watching" (*Deadwood* 3). For Hill, the Italian neighbors serve as a proxy audience who can appreciate her acting from a different cultural background. At the 1962 Seattle World's Fair, Hill gets a "passport to freedom," with which she travels to miniature Spain, France, and Japan. Hill's early forays at the World's Fair are represented as sowing the seeds for her later interest in studying Spanish, French, and Japanese, in which she discovers linguistic manifestations of cultural mingling. In her senior year at Seattle's Franklin High School, she puts Paris on her wishful thinking list: "I had plans to move to Paris and become a bohemian" (*Tokyo* 3). Her curiosity about places, peoples, and

[49] John Urry examines the implications of tourism for forms of social identity by which people organize and live their day-to-day lives. He suggests that extensive real and simulated mobility has initiated what he calls "an aesthetic cosmopolitanism" with the feature as described in this quote. His idea helps us understand Hill's cosmopolitan identity growing out of her intercultural encounters on local and international scales.

cultures is finally substantially gratified when, at eighteen, her mother sends her to Japan, where she studies for six years at Sophia International University in Tokyo (*Tokyo*). In Japan, she develops a close relationship with her Japanese fiancé's mother, a biracial Japanese Indian (*Tokyo*). At twenty, Hill sets out on a round-the-globe trip with Pakistan International Airlines through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe (*Deadwood*).

It might seem, at first glance, that Hill's engagement with "difference" is merely a form of consumerist cosmopolitanism by those, who, with sustained and relatively high levels of economic, social, and cultural capital, acquire a taste for foreign or exotic products, services, and experiences. While the contemporary mixed-race Asian American subject, to be more precise, the Eurasian subject, is en vogue in advertising, film, and fashion as "a cosmopolitan figure with automatic racial, cultural, and national border crossing attributes" (Matthews 41), Hill rejects the easy form of cosmopolitanism built around commodity consumption that often diminishes or even erases the salience of politics and power relations. Her working-class family background sensitizes her to the class and race dimensions of cosmopolitanism that play out in her own and others' mundane everyday life. After moving to Seattle, she finds that "there dads were doctors, lawyers, engineers or owned businesses" while "[her] dad didn't even have a job most months" (*Beside* 6). Her most acute awareness of her family's economic abjection comes when one day the minister from their church visits their house to give them money the congregation has collected for them. Hill describes their impoverished living conditions, "He'd never been to our house before. He didn't know that we lived at the end of a gravel dead end street. That the walkway leading to our front porch was made of rotting lumber. That our front yard was just dirt" (*Beside* 6). The cosmopolitanism Hill demonstrates in her simulated travel in

the World's Fair and her actual journeys around the world is not that practiced by elites or middle-class people in possession of money, power, or prestige. Rather, her story of mobility is an enterprise of the working class, who try to make the most of what little they have to capitalize on globalization and technological advances instead of being merely exploited by neoliberal capitalism. A whole day's fun at Seattle World's Fair costs the only one-dollar entrance fee. Hill's overseas experience in Japan is made possible not by her parents' financial surplus but by "a stash of 'secret money'" that her mother has saved from "laboring long hours over a hot vat of oil for tempura" (*Beside* 13). While in Japan, she works part-time in radio and television to support her studies. Her grand tour with Pakistan International Airlines is a bargain to those who get an itch to travel but do not have enough resources: "Alone. $500 – One way from Tokyo to London. And you could stop anywhere along the route as long as you kept going forward" (*Deadwood* 3).

Of the many cultures with which Hill has come in contact, she is most familiar with her mother's Japanese culture and her father's Finnish culture, and her engagement with these two cultures is characterized by an understanding of the underlying unequal power relations between them. In *Beside Myself*, as Hill begins to tell her story as a multiracial child, she holds her hand up to her face and makes a line right down the middle that marks her face in halves to show that she is biracial. Yet her two racial heritages do not exist on equal terms as the two identical halves of her face seem to suggest. Hill's mother is a Japanese immigrant and her father "a Finnish-American transplant" (*Tokyo* 3). Though both originally hailed from another country, they occupy different positions on the racial hierarchy. While Hill's father has acquired automatic citizenship by virtue of being white, Hill's mother has been viewed as a perpetual

foreigner all along. Until the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act which replaced the 1924 National Origins Act, Japanese were racially excluded as aliens ineligible for admission into the U.S. Hill's mother immigrated to America under the *War Brides Act of 1945* as one of many Japanese war brides who married American servicemen during America's military presence in Japan. As with other war brides, her mother struggled with cultural and language barriers as well as with racial discrimination due to the effects of WWII and the Japanese American internment. In the plays, Hill tells about her mother's isolation from the Japanese community in her first stop, Deadwood: "We had to go to Denver because they didn't sell Japanese food in Deadwood. Mom was the only Japanese person in town – maybe the whole state" (*Beside* 5). In Seattle, where the anti-Japanese sentiment is running high after WWII, the family receives "hate letters and rocks" in the mailbox. Worse still, her mother is jeered by her own children because of her thick accent and broken English. Conscious of her parents' different racial statuses and the disparate power relations between their ethnicities, when Hill marks a line down her face to show her mixed-race background, she says "this half is Japanese, this half is American" instead of "this half is Japanese, this half is Finnish" (*Beside* 4).

Hill complicates our understanding of mixed-race cosmopolitanism also in the way she uses her very physical presence on the stage to challenge the fetishistic attachment to the body that enables the essentialization of racial differences and to protest against a simplistic racial categorization that fails to index racial diversity. Esther Lee notes, for autobiographical solo performers who tell their life stories, "their physical presence on stage was a statement on its own; no one could dispute the authenticity and realness of their bodies and personal histories" (171). Eric E. Peterson similarly stresses the significance of the body in the solo performance of

autobiographical narrative and refers to the performer's body as "the primary site for the construction of narrative identity" (230). He contends, "Narrative is not a cognitive or reflective process for which the body is a container or conduit"; rather, it is "lived through before it is conceived or represented" (44). Usually performing in small theater venues in close proximity to the audience, Hill opts for a minimalist stage setting to capitalize on this feature of the genre. For example, in *Beside Myself*, the stage is empty, except for "a large easel upstage right, a bench stage center and a small table and chair downstage right" (3). In *Tokyo Bound*, on the stage there is only a Japanese wooden center stage shoe and a Japanese hanging curtain upstage against the back wall, which serves as a screen for the slides used throughout the performance to either punctuate or illustrate the text; no props or other set pieces are used, and all location changes are indicated by action. The austere stage focuses the audience on Hill herself, on her theatrical utilization of her own body, without the distraction of elaborate setting.

Capitalizing on the presence of her physical body while performing her life stories, Hill ridicules the tyranny of the visual in reading and designating the limited categories of race and dramatizes the mixed-race individual as unstable and unclassifiable yet required to be pigeonholed into a stable racial or cultural position. She resists what Hollinger calls the ethno-racial pentagon and challenges her audiences to be more inclusive in their conception of racial differences. In *Deadwood to Hollywood*, Hill relates a series of amusing anecdotes about being racially and culturally mistaken because of her confusing physical characteristics. No matter where she is, she is never perceived as "real" anything. With a racially ambiguous appearance, people would never guess Hill's parental lineages. She jokes, "It would be great if people could

tell right off the bat that I was Japanese-Finnish American. But I'd have to wear a kimono and be pulling a reindeer or something before that ever happened" (*Beside* 12)." In an international potluck at their church, Hill's family, except her father, are mistaken as Koreans and chosen to wear the national garb of Korea. In Japan, she is often asked how she has learned to speak English so well, and she becomes used to producing her passport to prove she is American. In the TV and film industry, she has a difficult time getting Asian parts because she doesn't look Asian enough. Once, when Hill is coaching actors on Japanese pronunciation and accents for a TV show, she is told by a white man, "you don't look Japanese" (*Deadwood* 3). She gets a recurring role as a Nicaraguan Nun on the soap opera *Santa Barbara* because the casting director thinks she is Latina, and she is often spoken to in Spanish by other cast members on the show. Once, she is asked by a Swedish woman whether she is black because "[her] lips were so large" (*Deadwood* 3). As Hill performs these funny anecdotes one after another at a rapid pace, the very presence of her racially ambiguous body on stage visually substantiates the stories of her transformations into different races and ethnicities. Seeing the same body metamorphose from Korean to African to Japanese and to Latino, the audiences are challenged to look into their own tendency to use the visual as the definitive signifier of racial differences and to judge mixed-race people from a monoracial perspective. In addition to questioning the arbitrariness and contingencies of racial classification that fail to accommodate individual diversity, the audiences also come to realize the dynamicity, fluidity, and simultaneity of mixed-race identities that destabilize settled racial lines.

In her use of the physical body as a theatrical tool, as woman theatre artist, Hill also infuses a heightened awareness of the co-construction of race and gender into her

dramatization of mixed-race cosmopolitan identity. Dramatizing how she wrestles with different hegemonic female beauty standards imposed on her physical body by whites and Asian Americans, she challenges the hegemonic modes of viewing the mixed-race female body and reclaims her own perspective, body, and voice. In a society where women's bodies are routinely commodified and manipulated for male viewing audiences, Hill, as a mixed-race woman, struggles with three ideal beauty standards – white, Japanese, and Eurasian – and finds herself on a par with none of these preconceived notions of women and womanhood. But rather than subjecting herself to these impossible beauty standards, she deconstructs and rejects various controlling images of femininity that restrain and debilitate women.

First, Hill dramatizes how she is infused from childhood with the white standard of beauty by advertising and the mass media and how she resists this standard from which she deviates. When her sense of gender just begins to germinate in her early years, she learns to take "Barbie or the girls in the catalogues" as her models (*Beside* 12). Later, like her peers, she reads teen magazines and measures herself against their constructed beauty standards: "I'm actually shocked when I look in the mirror. I saw myself in profile when I was nine and all the blood just drained from my face – I just about fainted. My face is flat. It has little bumps for the eyes and the tip of the nose – but it is pretty much just flat!" (*Beside* 10). But rather than focusing enormous energy on molding her body into the closest possible approximation of the female ideal, she shuns such practices which objectify and sexualize women: "I remember some Asian American girls would draw a line. Just a big fat line across the lid. You know, like Connie Chung. Or sometimes they would put a piece of scotch tape on the lids to make a fold. Like they thought that looked natural? Sometimes they'd leave it on for days. Oh, and don't get me

started on the false eyelashes" (*Beside* 11). Consequently, Hill says, "I decided I really had to become a revolutionary," who "didn't wear make-up" (*Beside* 11). Before the audience, Hill picks up a piece of chalk and draws on the black board a profile of an idealized female face she was taught to draw when she was little, from the bridge of the nose, to the lines of the lips, the chin, the neck, the eye, and the forehead. But just as she finishes the drawing, she crosses it out. This symbolic act theatricalizes on stage her resistance to the interpellation of the dominant white standard of female beauty – "blonde and blue-eyed, tall and thin" – which makes her feel inferior (*Beside* 13).

Hill also resists the traditional Japanese conception of female beauty to which she does not measure up. With a big stature and a loud voice, Hill is nothing like the petite and soft-spoken Japanese woman. She not only lacks physical resemblance to the constructed idealized Japanese woman, but also falls short in terms of the "feminine qualities" her mother lives out and tries very hard to instil in Hill, such as "her [the mother's] beauty routines, her tales of 'platnic rub' [platonic love], her attention to my dad's every whim…and her oh so subtle posturing" (*Beside* 13). To give the audience a clearer sense of her mother's conception of femininity, Hill imitates how her mother sits in drizzling Seattle with an aura of so-called Japanese charm which she herself lacks: "My mom sat there, with her knees tight together, her ankles carefully crossed, her toes pointing ever so slightly to the right. Her right hand was covering her left, both gently resting on her lap" (*Beside* 13). While Hill can't measure up to the Japanese sensibilities of beauty, her sister can: "My sister Mary was the lucky one. She took after my mom and keeled over regularly. There was something frail and delicate and beautiful about them" (*Beside* 13). But Hill disapproves of Mary's weak physique: "She had mild form of

epilepsy and was always in the hospital for tests. […] She also broke her leg twice and her arm three times and her kneecap once" (*Beside* 11). In stark contrast with her sickly sister, Hill, large and sturdy, travels around the world and defies the stereotypes of Japanese women as frail, delicate, and home-bound. After high school, she is sent to Japan by her mother to learn some "basic knowledge in the finer points of womanhood," such as tea ceremony, calligraphy, and flower arrangement (*Tokyo* 3). When she is in Japan, she falls in love and marries a man for whom she "cooked, cleaned, washed his clothes and even cut his toenails" like traditional Japanese women do for their husbands (*Deadwood* 3). But eventually, her free spirit gains an upper hand. She picks up the promise she made to herself before she came to Japan: "I refused to have to do all the stuff my mother did. I was pretty bright for a girl" (*Beside* 13). The divorce from her Japanese husband catalyzes Hill's development into what she calls "a woman of the world" and marks her clean break with the Japanese ideal of feminine charms which glorify female submissiveness, passivity, and dependence (*Deadwood* 3).

Hill not only opposes the white and Japanese beauty standards, but also the Eurasian beauty ideal. Developing in tune with global consumer culture, this new beauty model has become much sought after because, as Matthews sharply notes in his critique of the problematic cosmopolitan appeal of mixed race, it plays into the "postmodern admiration for flexible identities, cultural hybridity, diaspora, global mobility, and cosmopolitanism" (44). Craig Reynolds studies the manufacturing and marketing of female beauty as promoted in the media pitched at the global market and finds that that mixed-race women are perceived as "paragon[s] of regional and global personhood" with "the best of both worlds" (C. Reynolds 131). In the plays, Hill recalls that she "learned the word Eurasian" and got to know Nancy Kwan in high

school (*Beside* 12). The Hong Kong-born Chinese-English actress Nancy Kwan, who rose to stardom for her roles in two 1960s films, *The World of Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song*, marked an new global emergence of what Margaret Hunter refers to as "the new global beauty," which was promoted as replacing the "old" standard of beauty (read: Western) and representing the multicultural beauty (57). Yet this new global beauty, Hunter finds in his investigation of the relationship between racism and cosmetic surgery that alter women's facial features, is actually white beauty repackaged with "ethnic" features, for those "beautiful" women in the media could be easily mistaken as European. Matthews, too, remarks that this new mode of beauty is Eurocentric in essence, and that it "plays on sameness as much as difference" (50). Nancy Kwan's global appeal depended on her ability to satisfy Western male aesthetic sensibilities because of her physical likeness to white women and at the same time to fulfill a public longing for exoticism due to her racial indeterminacy.

While "men lusted after" Nancy Kwan and other Eurasian celebrities, Hill tells the audience that "no one ever lusted after [her] in high school," even though she is also a Eurasian, because she fit the Eurasian beauty ideal neither in appearance nor deportment (*Beside* 12). When she walks down the street with her European American woman friend and her baby, people think she is the nanny or the housekeeper. They hear her speak and think her friend is so lucky to have found bi-lingual help. On the stage, Hill bursts into "I Enjoy Being a Girl," Nancy Kwan's hit song in *Flower Drum Song*, which presents women as agents of seduction and celebrates female beauty in terms of attracting men. While Hill is singing, she exaggerates Nancy Kwang's hyper-feminine poses in the musical. Hill tells the audience that she never "[does] the leg thing" in order to attract boys, which Nancy Kwan does as an act of feminine

self-indulgence and seduction, and she resists the fetishized objectification of Eurasian female bodies as sites of male desire and commercial exploitation. With her very presence on stage departing from the ideal of Eurasian beauty promoted by the mass media, Hill protests against the highly feminine construction of Eurasian women which restrains the mixed-race female body through a visuality that turns upon her racialization, sexualization, and commodification.

While the Eurasian beauty ideal, which is popular in the fashion industry, beauty pageants, and the entertainment field, has been frequently associated with social privilege, Hill prefers to reserve mixed-race identity for the underclass, for those who are haunted by the uncertainties of dispossession, or as Carton puts it in his examination of mixed race and colonialism, as "a subaltern category that needs to be reclaimed from the margins" (viii). With her childhood experience of living a life of abject poverty, Hill's sensibilities are heavily influenced by her family's lower working-class background and her sympathies are with those on the periphery of society. As a mixed-race person, she can be considered a marginal individual par excellence in the sense that she is not recognized by others as fitting into the existing racial order. As we see in the preceding discussion, Hill is never seen as a "real" anything: she doesn't look Asian enough; she doesn't look Japanese; she looks African with because of her large lips; she looks like a Latina but doesn't speak Spanish; and, finally, she doesn't even look like Eurasian, or how the mixed-race person is often represented in glossy advertisements in television, magazines, and newspapers. Worse still, she has been stigmatized as a social misfit in the way mixed-race people have historically been pathologized for disturbing the nation's racial order. Hill reveals that a psychiatrist once diagnoses her as clinically depressed for her "oriental mind set," and that some people, like Mrs. Baker in her

elementary school, are actually repulsed by her presence. Having personally experienced this marginalization, stigmatization, and denigration, she tries to reach to other mixed-race individuals who may share her pain and frustration. She dramatizes possibilities of a multiracial political coalition by going beyond her particular mixed heritages and opening up dialogues with mixed-race people of diverse backgrounds. She asks:

> I've got friends who are half-African-American and half Asian. They have dark skin and kinky hair. What if you're half Japanese and half Chinese and you were raised in Brazil? Or half Mexican and half Philippino and shave your head? Or part Cherokee, Irish and Sumatran, really rich and powerful but with a really bad complexion? When they look in the mirror, I wonder what they see. When they walk in the world, I wonder how they feel. What voices do they hear? (*Beside* 15)

Hill treats her solo shows not only as opportunities to speak for people of mixed-race heritage, but also for other people who have been variously marginalized, repressed, and excluded. While asserting the specificity of mixed-race experience, she at the same time tries to generate a universal resonance for her solo performances by creating a collective resistant space that gives visibility to different minority experiences and questions hegemonic power relations. In *Beside Myself*, Hill tells about three girls she encounters in her school days, whose muted experiences long for expression. In fourth grade, Hill befriends a girl who displays cross-gender preferences. Hill describes the girl's frustration with the general intolerance of her transgression of gender boundaries: "When she was told she couldn't get in line with the boys, that she couldn't be a boy…she decided to become a bear" (*Beside* 14). In fifth grade, there is "a developmentally disabled girl" in her class named Vicki. Whenever she is to be discussed, she is asked if she is thirsty and told to get a drink of water from the fountain. Seeing Vicki walking slowly to the door amidst the jeer of her classmates and perhaps giving a forlorn glance back to them as she disappears into the hallway, Hill thinks of her own unwelcome presence in Mrs.

Bakers' eyes, who sees her as an incorrigible problem student and shudders whenever she gets near. Connecting her own experience with that of Vicki, Hill says, "I could feel an anger well up in her […] in direct correlation to my need for approval" (*Beside* 11). In her seventh grade sewing class, a girl takes Hill into her confidence and tells Hill of her sexual abuse by her father, who "[got] into bed with her every night [,…] right into bed" (*Beside* 14). Switching between a child's perspective, which presents the thoughts when she first hears the story from her friend, and an adult's perspective, which comments on the girl's inability to protect herself as she looks back, Hill says: "I think to myself, 'eew!" But I don't say it out loud. I just think I'm lucky my dad doesn't do it. I think she's stuck. She's just a kid – she has no choice" (*Beside* 14). This dual perspective enables Hill to communicate to the audience more clearly what actually happened to her friend and what made her vulnerable at that time, and also to process a childhood compassion into a more articulate social consciousness. As Hill acts out the untold stories of those whose desires have been suppressed, or whose dignity has been wounded, or whose rights have been abused, she enters into an alliance with the silenced and disempowered. Weaving others' stories into her solo performances, she gives a universal appeal to the life of a single person and makes her voice politically relevant to not only the community of mixed-race people but also other marginalized groups.

Stuart Hall points out that the most profound cultural revolution in the past few decades "has come about as a consequence of the margins coming into representation" ("The Local" 34). He goes on to state: "Our lives have been transformed by the struggle of the margins to come into representation. Not just to be placed by the regime of some other, or imperializing eye but to reclaim some form of representation for themselves" ("The Locals" 34).

Hill uses the theatrical form of solo performance to give prominence to mixed-race people who have been marginalized because of their ambiguous racial status outside of recognized racial categories. She stands on the social periphery and asserts her multiracial identity as a matter of resistance against monoracial hegemony. Speaking from a marginal position, she fashions a mixed-race consciousness that pays close attention to class, race, and gender inequalities and constructs a non-elitist mode of mixed-race cosmopolitanism that challenges consumerist representations of mixed-race people in the mass media. When Hill performs her own life events, she always wonders "who cares" and tries to avoid solo performance's tendency to sink into narcissistic indulgence. In dramatizing her own stories, she goes beyond her specific mixed Asian American background to build a broad political alliance with other mixed-race people, and she also broadens this alliance to join other marginalized people who are yet to obtain the opportunity to break silence and speak for themselves. By speaking through and about the collectivity in the communal space of the theatre, Hill demonstrates a dialectical relationship between specificity and universality. She overcomes the dichotomy between specificity and generality and fuses racial particularity with a universal dimension in staging mixed-race cosmopolitanism.

Velina Hasu Houston's *Japanese and Multicultural at the Turn-of-the-Century* (1994) and *The Peculiar and Sudden Nearness of the Moon* (2006)

The daughter of a Japanese immigrant mother and an African Native American father, like Hill, Houston too is the child of an interracial marriage during the U.S. occupation of Japan after WWII. Having experienced firsthand the racial prejudices of Asians, Blacks, and whites since early childhood, Houston, writing in an autobiographical essay entitled "Notes from a

Cosmopolite," says she has turned to theatre as "[a] refuge from the narrow and alienating monoracial perspective of United States society and an escape from the ways in which that perspective constantly [attempts] to challenge, diminish, and denigrate [her] identity as a multicultural, transnational, multiracial Amerasian" (83) [50]. But much more than a passive retreat, theater, just as it helps Hill with self-re/construction, enables Houston to "create a space of precision, power, and confidence that [allows her] to begin to hear [her] muses and to be able to survive, both as an artist and as a human being in general" ("Notes" 83).

In this section, I examine two theatrical works by Houston: *Japanese and Multicultural at the Turn-of-the-Century* (henceforth referred to as *Multicultural*) and *The Peculiar and Sudden Nearness of the Moon* (henceforth referred to as *Moon*). Written in the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s respectively, the two works display a deepening of the playwright's thoughts about mixed race from over-optimistic celebration that collapses race into culture, to a more critical treatment that accounts racist structures of power. Taken together, the plays, on the one hand, point to the potential of mixed-race people to disrupt conceptions of racial difference and foster new possibilities of interracial alliances, and, on the other, cautions against the dominant liberal cosmopolitan discourses about the coming of a raceless or post-racial society which gloss over persistent realties of racism and white supremacy. Putting together two plays in which Houston explores her different racial backgrounds, I also aim to show how the playwright, in trying to sustain affiliations through theatrical art with multiple racial communities with which she simultaneously shares the heritage, contributes to the

[50] In her works, Houston often uses "Amerasian," a term coined by Pearl S. Buck, to refer to Asian Americans of mixed heritage, which includes not only those of white European heritage, or "Eurasians" as they are commonly called, but also those of Latino, African, and Native American origins.

process of pushing members of her constituent racial groups and to overcome racial provincialism from within and reimagine possibilities of cross-racial connection.[51]

Multicultural presents a cheerful and optimistic conversation between an Amerasian mother and her Amerasian son about their mixed-race heritage. In terms of production and form, the play provides another example from Asian American theatre of Asian American artists forging cross-racial alliances and reaching out to wider communities. In May 1994, Houston participated in a symposium named "Out of Asia: Asian American Artists Explore Issues of Identity in America" organized by Asia Society for the Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. The symposium, broadcast on National Public Radio, was a collaborative inquiry into changing U.S. identity politics across racial lines (though the title of the event does not reveal this interracial dimension) and artistic genres. In the one-hour radio program hosted by Filipina American theatre artist and novelist Jessica Hagedorn, Houston performed her new play *Multicultural*, together with Korean American multimedia artist Y. David Chung, Chinese American novelist Maxine Hong Kingston, and Indian American musician Dr. Lakshminarayana Subramaniam, each of whom contributed one piece of work created specifically for the program. Not just an Asian American endeavor, the radio special won passionate support from some dozen Caucasian artists, including award-winning radio producer Mary Beth Kirchner and composer and musician Pooh Johnston, and brought the collaboration of the project from the level of pan-ethnicity to pan-raciality. Moreover, the medium through which *Multicultural* and three other works were presented further helped spread the voices of Asian American artists

[51] Houston's father is a mixed-race African American and Blackfoot Indian, and she acknowledges her Native Indian heritage in essays, interviews, and on various other occasions. But perhaps due to her lack of exposure to and unfamiliarity with this part of her racial background in her personal life, she has yet to make it into her dramatic work which demands a deeper knowledge and experience of it. We can expect Houston to produce plays that speak to her Indian heritage and more thoroughly explore her multiracial identity in future.

and generate wider discussion beyond the Asian American community. Broadcast on National Public Radio and rebroadcast on Public Radio International during the following year's Asia Society celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, two of the largest program producers and distributors of public radio programming in the U.S., *Multicultural* had the potential to reach a considerably larger audience, including those who normally would not pay to watch live performances or patronize racially specific theatres.

With this opportunity to address different communities, in the form of radio drama, Houston drew attention to the intersection between Asian American history and American mixed-race history and invited the audience to consider what mix race means near the turn into the 21st century. As the one-hour radio program was divided evenly among four artists, Houston tailored her play to fit the time restraint by avoiding complicated characters and plot. There are only two characters in the play, an Amerasian mother and an Amerasian son, performed to listeners by the playwright herself and her seven-year-old son. The dialogue between the characters is straightforward, and their exchanges consist of short and snappy conversational bits rather than verbose exchanges. The quick hits with strong and frequently unsubtle dramatic punches help Houston effectively capture the audience's attention and communicate her thoughts within a short time. Houston created the play with a purpose to educate the audience about the history of mixed-race people with Asian heritage. The mother states early in the play that this history began with "American wars with Asia," which have brought about, the son adds, "stateless children, orphans, casualties of war" (*Multiracial* 3). Then they offer a sweeping historical account of U.S. government and military involvement in Asia and the Pacific during the twentieth century:

> Amerasian Mother. World War II.
> Amerasian Son. Japanese Amerasians.
> Amerasian Mother. Korean Conflict.
> Amerasian Son. Amerasians again.
> Amerasian Mother. Vietnam War.
> Amerasian Son. More sisters and brothers.
> Amerasian Mother. The U. S. in the Philippines.
> Amerasian Son. In Hawai'i.
> Amerasian Mother. Guam.
> Amerasian Son. All over Polynesia. (*Japanese* 3-4).

This quick list casts into sharp relief U.S. military intervention and aggression in Asia, which has produced a continuous flow of multiracial Asian American births comprising the largest portion of the nation's multiracial population (Williams-León and Nakashima 5). The very existence of multiracial children born as a result of America's overseas military presence testifies to the violence beneath "the appeal, allure, and persuasions" of mixed race manufactured by the mass media (Matthews) and serves as an embodied reminder of continuous U.S. colonialism and imperialism in Asia.

Despite the dark tone in the play's dramatization of the historical link between mixed-race Asian Americans and U.S. colonial and imperial enterprises, *Multicultural*, on the whole, overflows with optimism about mixed-race people whom Houston celebrates as exemplars of racial and cultural hybridity and harbingers of cosmopolitan harmony. Capitalizing on the auditory immediacy of radio, Houston employs cross-cultural music to build atmosphere. When the play begins, the audience hears the tune of *shakuhachi*, the Japanese end-blown notch flute, a reflection of the playwright's Japanese heritage. When the play ends, the music of *shakuhachi* plays again, then blends into Latin music, and finally moves to African rhythms, symbolizing the fusion of cultures in mixed-race people. Houston also uses the color imagery of the rainbow to dramatize the idea of the coming together of multiple races and cultures in the mixed-race

body. Performed through an audio medium, radio drama naturally relies on voices, music, and sound effects, but this does not mean it is devoid of the visual dimension. On the contrary, the auditory is also capable of creating rich visual experiences in the mental theatre of the audience. As Tim Crook contends, sound drama is by no means a sound phenomenon delineated and separated from image-based narrative; rather, "it is as much about listening as it is about spectating" (7). The play begins with the characters' proud statement: "I was born this way. […] Golden, red, and brown" (*Multicultural* 3). Then the mother affectionately calls the son "rainbow child," and the son replies, "Mommy [is] the color of cocoa powder mixed with rice flour," who is "the daughter of a Matsuyama mother, a green tea girl in an orange pekoe country, more Japanese than the Japanese American, brown and poetry, red and rhythm, golden and thinking" (*Multicultural* 3-4). The mother and the son compare themselves to square pegs which society has been trying to force into the round holes of essentialized monoracial categories. But rather than grinding off their edges to fit the holes, they take pride in being square pegs and are confident about their ability to change the shape of the holes: "The round hole is changing. Oblong, rectangle, bigger, freer, open space. I fit" (*Multicultural* 7). In addition to bringing about changes to racial boundaries to embrace the "diversity that exists within and between monoracial groups of color" (Houston, "Notes" 88), the mother and son also pride themselves on their ability to bridge different races. They call themselves "connective tissue" and claim that "the community cannot be golden or red or brown or white without us" (*Multicultural* 5). Seeing themselves as belonging to a community of Amerasians expanding rapidly after the 1965 Immigration Act, the mother and the son declare enthusiastically: "The hybrid Asian flourishes. […] We are ready for progress, because we are progress" (*Multicultural*

3). Looking ahead, they hopefully predict: "All definitions disintegrating. Labels inappropriate. The comfort zone eradicated. […] Meanings shift" (*Multicultural* 4-5).

For all the uplifting predictions about the racial changes mixed-race people are capable of effecting in theory, the play invites attacks on its unrealistic optimism. In the mother and the son's dialogue, there is a pronounced tendency to equate race with culture. In fact, the concept of race does not appear even once in the play and has been entirely replaced by the word "culture." For example, the title of the work is "Japanese and Multicultural at the Turn-of-the-Century" instead of "Japanese and Multiracial at the Turn-of-the-Century." The Amerasian mother tells the audience that she has three cultures and her son says he has five (*Multicultural* 6). Equating race with culture, the play risks abdicating "any corresponding recognition of unequal, and often untidy, power relations that underpin inequality and limit cultural interaction, however well meaning" (May and Sleeter 4)[52]. Because of this conceptual collapse of race into culture, the play does not adequately explore "the varying histories of power and oppression [that] are carried within the mixed-race body" (Kwan and Speirs 4). When the mother and the son describe a multiracial person who is simultaneously "golden, red, brown, and white" and "Japanese and African and Native American and German and Scottish" (*Multicultural* 3), and when they say they believe "cultures [can] join hands as they have joined in the blood of the hybrid" (*Multicultural* 4), they expose their unawareness that "specific historical influences, racial hierarchies, and power relations […] are not always in harmonious balance," and that "not all mixes are the same" (Kwan and Speirs 3-4). Moreover, when they pronounce, "Feel the century shifting, all the fault lines of our prejudices, our neglect, our

[52] Within the American educational context, Stephen May and Christine Sleeter distinguish between critical multiculturalism and liberal multiculturalism and insist on a sharp distinction between race and culture.

misunderstanding, our disharmony shaking some sense into us" (*Multicultural* 5), they fail to fathom the intractability of systematic racial discrimination in the country that cannot be simply wished away with the mere presence of mixed-race people.

If in *Multiracial*, Houston holds a premature confidence in the transformative potential of mixed-race people, in *Moon*, she cautions against the valorization of them as saviors of America's racist past and avatars of the utopic end of racism. In the latter play, an upper-middle-class white couple, Sydney Spencer and Brad Byrne, have given birth to a black girl because of genetic throwback, which causes an earthquake in the family. As a result, the family is forced into a journey to uncover their mixed-race lineage and confront their African American roots, which have been carefully covered up by Sydney's mother, Jessica Spencer, a mulatta who has passed as white due to her fair skin. Jessica's mother was "brown like cinnamon," and Jessica's mother's great grandmother was a former house slave who fled from the planation where she was enslaved (*Moon* 32). Jessica has moved far away from Alabama to escape the harsh discrimination against mulattoes in the South and married into a conservative white Boston family to which she has never dared to mention her African American background. Compared with *Multiracial*, *Moon* treats mixed-race identity more as a lived experience than some detached realm of theoretical speculation in the way it looks into the historically constituted unequal power relations between different "races" that are actually playing out in the life of the mixed-race individual. By dramatizing the upheaval the family has gone through when they find they may have African American ancestry and their awakened awareness of the racism and white supremacy lying not so deeply beneath the surface of their professions of racial enlightenment, the play disrupts the myth of mixed-race people as symbols of racial

reconciliation and harmony and warns against the over-optimism about so-called "racial hybridity" which covers entrenched racial injustice, inequality, and oppression.

Like the other plays this chapter has so far examined, in *Moon*, women play a prominent part in interrogating the family's mixed-race heritage. Suzanne Bost, in her analysis of representations of mixed-race identity in the U.S. against the history of mixed-race identity in the Americas since the 19th century, points out that "throughout popular culture and literature, debates about the nature of mixed-race identity are mapped out on the body of a woman because thinking about racial mixing inevitably leads to questions of sex and reproduction" (2). In the co-construction of race and gender, mixed-race women not only perform the sociopolitical crossing of racial boundaries themselves, they are also the potential producers of multiracial offspring. In the play, the image of the moon has been used as an effective feminine symbol for its cultural associations with fertility, reproduction, and new life to suggest women's significant role in mixed-race politics. For example, stage directions note that when Sydney's waters break, "she kneels beside the fluid and touches it with her fingertips, staring at it glistening in the intensifying, all-encompassing moonlight" (*Moon* 8). Sydney plays a critical role in unveiling the family secret of the African lineage. Different from Hill's solo plays, which present the playwright's formation of multiracial consciousness as a mode of gradual awakening through a serious of incidents on her passage to adulthood, the awareness of multiracial heritage comes to Sydney as an identity shock and sudden enlightenment afterwards. Her desire to know her African American heritage is profoundly earnest and existential. When Jessica gives her a subtle hint about her mixed-race ancestry, "what I do know is that you are not yourself," Sydney replies, "That's the understatement of the year. Who

am I, Mother? Enlighten me" (*Moon* 29). The fact that Sydney gets to know her unknown African American heritage well after her formative years has greatly shaken her long-held sense of white identity and made her self-interrogation deeply intense.

Dramatizing the family's discovery of and reaction to their hitherto unknown African American heritage, Houston exposes a sharp discrepancy between the racial progress claimed in the U.S. and the reality of racism and white supremacy that persists to the new millennium, which she didn't foresee when she was writing *Multicultural* a decade ago. While quarreling over who is responsible for the child's African American physical features, Sydney and Brad discover their deeply entrenched discriminatory attitudes towards Blacks and their unconscious belief in white racial superiority. At one point, they pride themselves on their enlightened racial views. Sydney says, "It [having a black child] truly shouldn't matter. And most of us would say it doesn't. […] Who cares what anybody else thinks? I know I'm not a racist. One of my best friends in college was African American" (*Moon* 21). Brad echoes, "[It doesn't matter] unless we care what everybody else thinks. […] And I dated a black girl once. […] I don't give a damn about race" (*Moon* 21). At another point, however, they accuse each other of deliberately hiding the source of the child's African features. Brad suspects that Sydney has slept with an African American and cheated on him, while Sydney blames Brad for his "black Irish self," explaining, "That the black Irish evolved from fraternizing during the Inquisition when Moorish monks and military came to Ireland" (*Moon* 19). Their vehement denials of each other's accusation reveal that they consider African American heritage as a threat to the ancestral purity of whiteness and guard "whiteness as treasured property in a society structured on racial caste" (Harris

156)[53]. While Brad comforts himself with the thought of exploiting the "fringe benefits" of being thought "adopting a black girl" – "We'll look P.C. […] We'll be the coolest white people around" (*Moon* 22) –, he admits soon after, "Higher hurdles all her damn life. Just getting through the day is hard enough. Tell the truth. When black people aren't around, you know what can be said about them, even by the best of us. […] Race does matter" (*Moon* 23). Self-reflexively, Sydney concurs, "Yes…I've heard it too. Carefully imbedded in liberal patois. It's a shame" (*Moon* 24).

If in *Multicultural*, mixed race appears rather abstract in the mother and the son's conversation, in *Moon*, it is dramatized more as a personally experienced reality of the unequal power relations between whites and Blacks. In the play, Black university professor Schubert is writing a book about the Black heritage in his family history, and he later turns out to be Sydney's distant Black cousin. He says to Sydney: "You have the luxury of thinking that way about race because you're white. Let me give you an example: you can commiserate with poverty and feel poor people are just the same as you, but if you ever truly became poor yourself, you'd understand what the poor mean when they talk about class prejudice" (*Moon* 47). Jessica, who has experienced firsthand what the worlds are like on both sides of the color line because of her racial passing, pierces through white liberals' claims to racial enlightenment. When Sydney says that she thinks Blacks are cool in the twenty-first century, and that it shouldn't matter "even if [she] was mixed with black" (adding immediately "which I don't think I am"), Jessica criticizes her intellectual naiveté and points out the white hypocrisy of which she

[53] See Cheryl Harris's "Whiteness as Property" for a recollection of her grandmother's struggles passing to work "white" jobs in Chicago, from which she illuminate a set of assumptions, privileges, and benefits that accompany the status of being white.

herself is unaware: “Liar. Before you had your baby, you could look at race from a distance and say ‘What’s the big deal?’ But now the race issue that was nicely theoretical before is viscerally real. Nor more third-party long-distance. No more intellectualizing. Not when you’re looking at it from the other side of the barrel” (*Moon* 31). Jessica then distinguishes between associating with African Americans and actually having African American heritage: “[A white marrying a black] is a conscious decision. Just like whites adopting black kids, which rarely happens. There’s also that generous belief you’re creating a better life for someone. But it’s different when it’s in your blood, when you don’t have a choice” (*Moon* 34). Here, Jessica points to the difference between racial mixing at the level of interpersonal relationships and within the micro-world of the mixed-race individual. While in the former case, it might be possible for one to avoid dealing with people of other races if the person dislikes it, in the latter, one has to confront one’s multiple racial heritages because it is an existential matter of who one is and how one lives.

During the performance, Houston employs the device of darkness and light to theatricalize the family’s initial discovery, subsequent denial, and eventual embrace of their African American heritage. Darkness is realized on stage through the ghost character, the Dark, an African American in his twenties, who from time to time “drifts onto the stage in a cloud of mist” (*Moon* 2). In stage directions, he is described as “attractive and masculine with an earthy openness and warmth of spirit that seduce the curious,” yet also with an “urban elegance [that] possesses just enough of the streets to make him threatening” (*Moon* 2). As an African American, he functions to help the family recognize and explore their African American lineage. The Dark appears as soon as the play begins and drops constant hints at the family’s buried

history during his conversation with Sydney. His early appearance foreshadows the birth of Sydney and Brad's daughter and the discovery of the family's African American heritage. The Dark is a historical ghost, who embodies the experiences of slavery, segregation, and racial subjugation; at the same time, he is a contemporary specter, who reminds the audience of this indelible part of U.S. history of mixed race that tends to be obliterated by the congratulatory cosmopolitan discourse of racial mixing and cultural hybridity. The Dark also haunts the stage as a self-described "tour guide." He instructs Sydney, "You're crossing the border into the unknown" (*Moon* 39). Having made sure that Sydney is not "just a tourist," and that she does not treat the journey as "a curious confection," The Dark grants her the ticket (*Moon* 39). He initiates the characters into a process of awakening from the ignorance of the persistent remnants of the one-drop rule and from their self-content with so-called racial progress. As Brad admits, "I didn't know that I had racist thoughts inside of me until Caitlin was born. It's hard to admit that my Yankee ideals aren't as perfect as I thought" (*Moon* 77).

While the Dark appears frequently in the first act of the play, in the second act, in which the family gradually accepts their African American ancestry and brace themselves for the challenges of being multiracial in the new century, light replaces darkness to become the dominant visual theme. In the final scene, the family goes to church on Sunday for the baby's baptism. The stage direction of the mise-en-scene instructs: "The full, harvest moon – glowing in the vivid hues – hangs low in the sky" (*Moon* 80). During the baby's baptism, Jessica says she would like to have more grandchildren who are mixed-race. While she speaks, she is illuminated by "stained-glass reflections and the divine glow of an altar" (Moon 82). At the end of the play, Sydney holds the baby as moonlight floods the stage, and all other characters come

into the light to study each other until the light fades. This last scene takes place in the church during the baptism, an occasion associated with self-reflection, repentance, and transformation. In this scene, the audience sees a visual transition from darkness to light, which suggests that the characters have gone through an epiphany and achieved an enlightened awareness of America's racist past and present as well as a greater capability to critique their own racist thinking and practice that will lead toward racial harmony. Like the other plays I have so far examined in this project, *Moon* ends on a positive note: the baptization of the girl symbolizes a new start for the whole family who acknowledges their mixed-race background and sees it in a new light. As one character in the play talks to the girl, "No matter what, dear, you forgive them. […] You have to forget and look forward" (*Moon* 83). This rather optimistic ending concludes without concluding. It does not indicate the resolution of the complexities surrounding mixed race, but it does gesture towards the emergence of a mode of mixed-race cosmopolitanism that is based on a clearer awareness of historical and present power relationships and inequalities between races.

In this analysis of *Moon*, I want to close by bringing into focus its production history and discuss its implications for Asian American communities in terms of its conception of racial differences and boundaries. *Moon* was premiered in November 2006 on the Pollock Stage of Sacramento Theatre Company (STC), a mainstream regional theatre company which until that point had produced ten of Houston's plays. While STC's Mainstage is intended to serve patrons who want to see "classic" plays, such as those by Shakespeare and Molière, the Pollock Stage is aimed at the needs of those who want to participate in the process of developing new plays that reflect the changing American society (Houston, Shannon, Henke, and Andrews, "Insight").

Prior to its premiere, *Moon* also enjoyed four staged readings in 2004. In January, it was chosen by West Coast Ensemble, a Los Angeles-based mainstream theatre, as one of the twelve works presented at its New Power Plays Festival. In November, the play was staged at Duke University with the support of its Asian Students Association. Between January and November, the work received two other staged readings, one at Los Angeles's Black Dahlia Theatre and the other at Texas State University as part of the annual Black and Latino Playwrights Conference sponsored by the university's Department of Theatre and Dance. That *Moon* deals with African American passing and Black-White racial mixing, and that it, as a result, has been performed at such a variety of venues and on such a diversity of occasions which are not necessarily or particularly intended for Asian American purposes, raises the question: can we consider the play an Asian American play? If yes, how does the play contribute to the reconception of contemporary Asian American theatre as cosmopolitan?

Here, I argue for the inclusion of works like *Moon* in Asian American theatre, not just as at Houston puts it as "a sidecar freak show" for the status quo of yellowness, but "as part of the pantheon" of Asian American experience ("Notes" 87). If Asian American artistic and wider communities used to relegate mixed-race Asian Americans to invisibility or simply denied their quest for membership because they were regarded as not "authentic" enough, *Moon* presses those communities to embrace the growing heterogeneity and diversity of Asian American groups and expand their visions of what Asian American-ness can be with regard to mixed-race identity. In addition to inscribing mixed-race Asian Americans onto the Asian American cosmopolitan scene, the play pushes Asian Americans to accept mixed-race Asian Americans as whole beings and appreciate their multiple heritages in an intricate interplay rather than only

their Asian heritage. Though Houston identifies herself primarily as an Asian American in the theatre community and refers to herself as a hapa artist, which emphasizes her Asian ancestry, she feels "viscerally connected to all of her ethnicities, particularly in terms of her politics" ("Notes" 88).[54] She considers her African American heritage as part of who is she, and has produced many works which theatricalize African American experience and its intersection with Asian American experience, such as *Asa Ga Kimashita* (1980), *American Dreams* (1983), and *Tea* (1983), a trilogy based on her parents' interracial marriage. In this section, I read *Multicultural* and *Moon* together to show how Houston tries to maintain ties with both Asian American and African American communities and assert a sense of the wholeness of her racial self through dramatic art.

Moon also challenges Asian Americans to confront their own racism towards other people of color. Within the Asian American community, though people with mixed Asian heritage have gradually found a foothold, those of mixed African- and/or Latino-Asian American ancestries are still having difficulty in being accepted. As H. Rika Houston notes about Asian Americans' internalization of the hegemonic racial order that matters to mixed-race Asian Americans, the ideological impact of racial hierarchy has meant that while all Amerasians are not "pure" Asians, in the general mind of Asian Americans, "it appears that Amerasians who have European blood are more suitable as fellow Asians than those who have African blood" (152-53). The sympathetic representation of other racial minorities under the hands of such

[54] Houston's African Indian American father died when she was eleven, so the responsibility of raising children rested solely on the shoulders of her Japanese mother. Because of the greater role her mother has played in her family upbringing, Japanese culture has a stronger influence on Houston's artistic sensibility. The playwright reveals, "The fact that the nurturing parent in my family was and is my mother, a native Japanese born and reared in the provinces of Matsuyama and Imabari, is profound in terms of cultural influence. Had my mother been African American and my father Japanese, perhaps I would have been more culturally African American" ("Notes" 88).

Amerasian playwrights as Houston awakens Asian Americans to their internalization of white racist ideology and compels them to reexamine their prejudices and stereotypes against other groups of color. Finally, *Moon* can help reduce what Houston calls the "tribalism" in the American theatre community, which often thinks of theater "either as mainstream (read White) theater (that can allow for a little color and a little female-ness, but not too much), women's theater (that can allow for a little color, but not too much), and ethnic theater (that allows only for the four traditional ethnic minority factions: African American, Asian American, Native American Indian, and Latino)" ("Notes" 85). The fact that *Moon*, a play written by an Asian American playwright about Black-white racial mixing, can be performed in racially specific Asian American theatres and African American theatres as well as in mainstream theatres suggests that plays like this can serve as what the mother and the son in *Multicultural* call the "connective tissue" that may foster cross-racial artistic and political alliances.

***

This chapter adds six plays to the project's repertoire of Asian American playwrights' dramatizations of racial cosmopolitanism. Like the works we see in the first two chapters, Hill's and Houston's plays about mixed race have expanded our vision of Asian American theatre and Asian American identity while they set out to dramatize racial difference and stage Asian American imaginings of cosmopolitanism from a racial perspective. But the plays analyzed in this chapter, together with those in the next chapter, also differ and advance the first two chapters' interrogation of the conventional conception of Asian American identity. When the plays in the first two chapters work to dramatize interracial and transnational encounters as part of Asian American experience and to further open up Asian American borders, they,

though trying to promote the idea that “us” and “others” are closely interconnected, more or less perceive “us” as straightforward and unequivocal. In this chapter, however, the plays about mixed race suggest that the notion of “us” is not as self-explanatory as it may seem. They question the constructed differentiation between “us” and “others” by problematizing the notion of “us” and offer another social modality of dealing with difference which, correspondingly, gives rise to another modality of cosmopolitanism. The following chapter will keep exploring the intricacies of racial cosmopolitanism by asking the fundamental question about how “us” and “them” are reconceived in Asian American theatre as it moves towards greater cosmopolitanism in the new era.

CHAPTER IV

Post-Racial Cosmopolitanism:

Bondage (1992) and *Yellow Face* (2007)

The previous chapters have analyzed a range of cosmopolitan practices, including ventures to build artistic and political alliances across the lines of the ethno-racial pentagon, and struggles to embrace multiraciality despite the persistence of the hypo-descent rule that works against the recognition and validation of mixed-race identity. These various efforts push forward what Nigel Rapport calls cosmopolitanism's "emancipatory project" of liberating "individuals from the collective and the categorical […] as ascriptions" ("A Cosmopolitan Turn" 225). Rapport argues, if cosmopolitanism offers something new, distinct from the cluster of related terms such as "multiculturalism," "globalism," "diaspora," "transnationalism," "hybridity," and "pluralism," it is its conceptualization of "the individual actor as existing beyond particular communitarian arrangements, capable of authoring personal identity and properly at liberty to exercise this capacity" ("A Cosmopolitan Turn" 225).[55] In diverse ways, scholars of cosmopolitanism draw attention to its emphasis on autonomous selfhood and voluntary attachments. For example, Amanda Anderson posits that while cosmopolitanism is committed to fostering "reciprocal and transformative encounters between strangers variously constructed," it displays a strong individualistic dimension in "its emphasis on affiliation as

[55] In "A Cosmopolitan Turn," Rapport, as an anthropologist, discusses what "cosmopolitanism" has to offer to the discipline of anthropology. As he sees it, cosmopolitanism injects into contemporary anthropology the figure of "Everyone," the individual human being "in possession of general capabilities and liabilities which are lived out in particular sociocultural settings" (224). He refers to as "cosmopolitan anthropology" the kind of anthropology that appreciates both the "ontological, embodied" difference between individuals and the "categorical, rhetorical" difference between groups (224). This double appreciation of the achievement of categorical difference (voluntary attachment) and the fulfilment of ontological difference (individuality beyond attachments) in cosmopolitan anthropology resonates with Hollinger's post-racial argument on which I will shortly elaborate.

voluntary" (269).[56] Citing Steven Vertovic and Robin Cohen's characterization of cosmopolitanism as a mode of managing political multiplicities, "capable of representing various complex repertoires of allegiance, identity and interest" (4), Anne K. Mellor points out that cosmopolitanism has been taken as a political position that "recognizes that the individual is embedded in overlapping affiliations and communities that cannot be confined to specific nation-states, religious or ethnic cultures" (290).[57]

My chapter interrogates this important individualistic dimension underlying the many creative practices of racial cosmopolitanism in Asian American theatre. It brings to the fore Asian American dramatic imaginations of individuals' exercise of desire to be within and without institutionalized racial communities as their own cosmopolitan projects of problematizing contingent taxonomies of identity and engaging with difference. With this thematic focus, the chapter participates in the debates around the notion of "post-racial." Concerning itself with the constructedness, fluidity, and provisionality of racial categories, and with the im/possibilities of individual agency in racial dis/affiliation which destabilize descent-based racial lines, post-racial debates shed light on cosmopolitanism's "constant vigilance against the readily apparent terminologies of difference" through a racial lens (Valluvan 5).

[56] Anderson connects this individualistic dimension with cosmopolitanism' "ethical ideals for the cultivation of character and for negotiating the experience of otherness" (269). She argues that while these ethical values frequently result in a mood of optimism that can "appear at times to shed into cultivated naïveté," it is often an "acutely self-conscious from the prevailing practices of negative critique," and moreover is often "offset by a sophisticated attentiveness to geopolitical and multicultural complexities" (269).

[57] In applying the notion of "cosmopolitanism" to literary texts, Mellor critiques this understanding of cosmopolitanism through examining the writings of Romantic-era British women. She proposes the idea of "cosmopolitan subjectivity," which is "constructed on the basis of a relational, rather than autonomous, self" (292). For me, in emphasizing cosmopolitanism's individualistic dimension, I do not mean to downplay or deny its intersubjective nature. As my analysis of Hwang's plays will show later, the realization of one's autonomous selfhood is always relational to others, burdened and influenced by all kinds of outside pressures. Only through one's involvement in the performances undertaken during social interaction do (im)possibilities of post-racial cosmopolitanism unfold.

Post-racial issues in the U.S. has so far been mostly investigated along the US's unequal, hegemonic, dualistic Black/White paradigm, which has been historically effective in exaggerating racial difference and establishing white supremacy. The frequent assumption that only the Black and White races matter as a result of the dichotomous construction of Blackness and Whiteness simplifies American racial complexities and renders other peoples of color largely invisible on this issue. As the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population, Asian Americans should not be occluded. Yet Asian Americans have long occupied an ambivalent and contradictory status in American racial discourse: they are stereotypically portrayed in the mainstream media either as "honorary whites," who are said to be assimilated socioeconomically in a way that erases their racial status, or as "forever foreigners," who are seen as "inscrutable oriental aliens" and asked continually to prove their loyalty to the United States (Tuan). By establishing Asian American presence in the post-racial scene from Asian Americans' own perspectives and attending to racial dynamics beyond the Black-White matrix, this chapter disrupts the hegemony of Black/White binary thinking in critical post-racial discourses, presents Asian America as a contested and productive site to explore the post-racial cosmopolitan project, and enriches this area of inquiry with Asian American alternative cosmopolitical consciousness of personal racial affiliation.

The chapter first establishes its theoretical framework with a survey of the four major lines of post-racial discussions, and then examines how David Henry Hwang's two plays – *Bondage* (1992) and *Yellow Face* (2006) – engage with and contribute to these conversations. Unlike the previous chapters, which study plays by different artists, this chapter focuses on Hwang alone. This is not merely because Hwang is one of the most distinguished voices on the

Asian American theatre scene, but also because, more importantly, his works, offer creative expressions of and responses to the notion of "post-racial," through which show a particular and consistent interest in the cosmopolitan vision of fluid group boundaries, voluntary group affiliations, and nonexclusive group identities. If the preceding chapter has already ushered us into the realm of racial crossover from the particular perspective of mixed race, this final chapter ventures further into this realm by extending the focus from mixed-race individuals to anyone who aims at cross-racial identification and bonding. If the racial identification of multiracial people is still bound up with and grounded in their descent, Hwang poses a more daring question: what happens if individuals want to identify with the racial group with which they share no racial heritage at all?

From an Asian American perspective, Hwang offers a post-racial cosmopolitanism which is characterized by a dialectic treatment of the possibilities and impossibilities of voluntary racial allegiances as individual freedom. Grounded in Asian American contexts, Hwang's cosmopolitan vision dramatizes the coexistence of social and historical constraints on voluntary racial dis/identification on the one hand, and progressive demographic, conceptual, and structural transformations in the U.S. racial landscape that engender such alternative imaginings of social reality and power on the other. Hwang opposes the neo-liberal claim often promoted in the mainstream media that positions America as a nation transcendent of racial boundaries and free of racial discrimination or inequality; at the same time, he affirms the value of imaginings of racial cosmopolitanism as a way to contribute to the destabilization of racial categories, the reconfiguration of race relations, and the building of communities across racial lines. With his theatrical experiments staging the individual's cosmopolitan undertaking

to associate oneself with or disassociate oneself from particular racial attachments in his plays, Hwang makes visible the ambivalences and ambiguities about the workings of race arising from crossing over color lines in contemporary times and pushes Asian Americans to rethink the Asian American boundary as it is being continually contested by a problematic of "us" and/or "others."

A Review of Post-Racial Debates

With the ascendancy of Barack Obama as America's first president of multiracial and multicultural heritage, the idea of "post-racial" has broken into limelight in both popular and scholarly venues[58]. For all the buzz about this notion, its multiplicity of understandings have rarely been closely examined and clearly clarified. While discussants seem to assume that they have a consensus about the term's denotation and connotation, they in fact often speak to each other from different planets. The following is a synopsis of the different strands of the conversation that have animated this area of inquiry and laid the theoretical basis for my reading of Hwang's two plays.

In the academic and non-academic worlds alike, *post-racial*, as Jessica Wells Cantiello lucidly outlines, has been employed in four major ways, singly or in combination. The first trajectory of inquiry is led by Hollinger, who addressed the post-racial question well before Obama's rise to prominence, and who prefers the term post-ethnicity. Hollinger developed *post-ethnicity* into a highly influential concept in cosmopolitan studies in the 1990s and

[58] For journalistic articles that employ the notion, see, for example, Michael Eric Dyson's "Race, Post Race" in *Los Angeles Times* (2008), Lydia Lum's "The Obama Era: A Post-racial Society?" in *Diverse: Issues* in *Higher Education* (2009), Thomas J. Sugrue's "The Myth of Post-Racial America" in *The Washington Post* (2010), Emma Altschwager's "Obama and A Post-Racial America" in *The Perspectivist* (2011), Susan Heavey's "Election Shines Light on Long Path to Post-racial America" in *Reuters* (2012), and Donna Brazile's Obama a Marker on Post-Racial Path" in *CNN Opinion* (2013).

provided “a ‘cosmopolitan’ model which accepts shifting grouping boundaries, multiple affiliations, and hybrid identities, and which is based on individual rights” (Kymlicka 74). Building upon Werner Sollors’s ideas of descent and consent, Hollinger argues throughout his works for the possibilities for individuals to fashion identities of their own choosing and advocates a brand of open-ended, fluid, and voluntary cosmopolitanism which he originally termed *post-ethnic*. Surveying America’s ethnic narratives in the late 1980s, Sollors identifies two governing tropes – the motif of “descent,” which stresses “our positions as heirs, our hereditary qualities, liabilities, and entitlements”; and the motif of “consent,” which emphasizes “our abilities as mature free agents and ‘architects of our fates’ to choose our spouses, our destinies, and our political systems.” Sollors saw the conflict between the ancestral and the self-made as “the central drama in American culture” (6). Inspired by Sollors’s identification of "descent" and "consent" as the operative metaphors by which Americans articulate their identities, Hollinger proposed a post-ethnic cosmopolitanism which “prefers voluntary to prescribed affiliations, appreciates multiple identities, pushes for communities of wide scope, recognizes the constructed character of ethno-racial groups, and accepts the formation of new groups as a part of the normal life of a democratic society” (*PA* 116). He envisages a post-ethnic society where “individuals should be allowed to affiliate or disaffiliate with their own communities of descent to an extent that they choose, while affiliating with whatever non-descent communities are available and appealing to them” (*PA* 116). In Hollinger’s blueprint of cosmopolitanism as post-ethnicity, there is an emphasis on the need to balance “an appreciation for communities of descent,” “a determination to make room for new

communities," and the promotion of "solidarities of wide scope that incorporate people with different ethnic and racial backgrounds" (*PA* 3).

As Hollinger's post-ethnic cosmopolitan vision becomes increasingly cited and discussed in cosmopolitan studies and beyond,[59] the term post-ethnic has been widely reproduced and conflated with "post-racial," especially in the wake of Obama's 2008 election victory (Millard 13). Hollinger himself prefers *post-ethnic* to *post-racial* because he considers the former broad enough to address all people and communities whose identities are defined not by race but by nation, culture, religion, or other characteristics. However, in the circulation of his post-ethnic proposition, he finds that it has most often been applied to discussing racial identification and affiliation specifically. Consequently, though he began working with *post-ethnic* when he initially articulated his theory in the first edition of *Postethnic America* (1995), he has, as his recent article "The Concept of Post-Racial" shows, begun to use post-ethnic and post-racial interchangeably to participate in broader academic conversations around changing American race relations. In this chapter, I reserve Hollinger's cosmopolitan vision of voluntary group affiliation for the issue of race rather than ethnicity (hence my choice to use *post-racial* rather than *post-ethnic*), for two important reasons. First, Hwang's two plays dramatize the transgressions of racial rather than ethnic boundaries. Second, though extensive overlaps exist between the concepts of race and ethnicity both in academic and everyday situations, the distinctions between them – for example, the stronger constructed correlation between a person's perceived physical difference and his/her racial rather than ethnic identity – suggest

[59] See, for example, Matthew Herman's *Politics and Aesthetics in Contemporary Native American Literature: Across Every Border* (2010), Mike Hill's *After Whiteness: Unmaking an American Majority* (2004), Namsoon Kang's *Cosmopolitan Theology: Reconstituting Planetary Hospitality, Neighbor-Love, and Solidarity in an Uneven World* (2013), Kenneth Millard's *Coming of Age in Contemporary American Fiction* (2011), and Stephanie Li's *Signifying without Specifying: Racial Discourse in the Age of Obama* (2011).

that their collapse into each other can result in a significant loss of the focus on such issues as structural inequalities and power relations that *race* provides.[60]

In academic and ordinary discourses, *post-racial* has also been understood in other ways. The term has, secondly, been used to describe mixed-race identity, as in a *New York Magazine* article, "Despite Mixed Heritage, President Obama Is Hardly Post-Racial" (McWhorter), which points to the fact that Obama's biracial identity is often ignored, especially on the mainland U.S., and, therefore, he is always perceived as the country's first "black" president. Thirdly, *post-racial* has been taken to describe a type of color blindness in which race becomes a neutral element and racial membership plays little role in the way individuals are treated (Jennifer Lee's "A Post-Racial Society or a Diversity Paradox?"). In a related manner, *post-racial* has been frequently understood to mean post-racist, or the end of racism, as we see in Rick Cohen's "A Post-Racial America? Not at Ole Miss" about the racist protest over Obama's re-election victory at the University of Mississippi, which argues against what Cohen understands to be the post-racial claim that racism is no longer a barrier to the socioeconomic achievements of racially minoritized people. In terms of focus, though these understandings of *post-racial* seem to deviate from its original meaning stipulated by Hollinger that specifically probes the individual's choice of racial identity, they offer different articulations of the direction and structure of race relations in the U.S. which are also closely connected to Hollinger's vision. And as my subsequent discussion shows, these different but interrelated problematics of *post-racial*, when brought in dialogue with each another, enable a more critical scrutiny of Hollinger's

[60] See, for example, *Race and Ethnicity: Critical Concepts in Sociology* (2001), in which Harry Goulbourne compiles a set of published articles, papers and book chapters that present the debates and controversies that lead to an informed understanding of the similarities and differences between race and ethnicity.

cosmopolitan vision of an alternative "social order [which] would encourage individuals to devote as much – or as little – of their energies as they wished to their community of descent" by revealing its ambivalences and complexities ("The Concept of Post-Racial" 175). In the following analysis of *Bondage* and *Yellow Face*, I will show how Hwang partakes in these trends in post-racial debates in the theatre form and explores from an Asian American perspective issues at the heart of the collective project of post-racial cosmopolitanism.

***Bondage* (1992)**

David Henry Hwang is undoubtedly one of the most widely recognized Asian American dramatists. As a minority playwright, he has achieved a huge success with mainstream audiences, including his 1989 Broadway hit *M. Butterfly*, which is acclaimed as "finally plac[ing] Asian American theatre on the United States theatrical map" (Lei 301), and his latest Broadway play *Chinglish* (2011), which made its way to *Time* magazine's 2011 list of top ten plays and musicals. He also works closely with regional theatres, Asian American-specific or not, committed to forging mutually beneficial dynamics between artists and local communities in a joint exploration of matters concerning Asian Americans. *Bondage* and *Yellow Face* are two of Hwang's many theatre pieces produced in community-based theatres. The issues the two plays examine accord with a prominent thematic refrain in Hwang's works: in his own words, "fluidity of identity" and "the idea that who we are is the result of circumstance, the result of things that are not necessarily inherent but instead come out of our interaction with our contacts" (Hwang, Interview with Lyons 160). Hwang's belief in "a cosmopolitan construal of liberty," which envisions "the relation between the capacious and the categorical […] as fluid, multiple and diverse, and as voluntary, as possible" (Rapport, "Cosmopolitan Morality" 231), drives him to

produce a series of plays that challenge Asian American theatre to continually reassess what it means to be Asian American and what racially specific theatre really is in contemporary America. But compared with the playwright's other works of this kind, *Bondage* and *Yellow Face* more directly confront a heatedly debated question in the project of post-racial cosmopolitanism: whether and to what degree can racial identity be considered and treated as a matter of personal choice rather than predetermined and externally-imposed obligation, particularly in the Asian American context? In what follows, I start with a discussion of Hwang's earlier one-act play *Bondage*, where he first tried out his post-racial thoughts in theatre in the early 1990s, and then examine his more recent backstage comedy *Yellow Face*, written fifteen years later, where his post-racial thinking culminates.

Premiering in 1992 at the Actors Theatre of Louisville as part of the 16th Annual Humana Festival of New American Plays, *Bondage* staged what would later become a key issue in the theoretical terrain of *post-racial*: the cosmopolitan possibility of individual choice in racial identification and political attachment. This play helps shed light on Hollinger's notion of voluntary racial affiliation in post-racial debates and stands out as one of the earliest voices on the Asian American theatrical scene to express artists' eagerness in the 1990s to test "what a society long accustomed to invidiously ascribing and enforcing ethno-racial distinctions might look like if those abhorrent protocols could be weakened?" (Hollinger, "The Concept of Post-Racial" 175). In *Bondage*, two actors engage in a metaphorical role play and switch between races. They wear masks and hoods to prevent the audience from drawing a convenient link between physical characteristics and racial identity; their non-realistic acting style dramatizes that race is socially constructed rather than naturally given. The play shows that while racial

identity formation is conditioned and burdened by racial norms, it can be disrupted by self-conscious performance, which allows room for individual agency over racial affiliation and gestures towards a cosmopolitan construal of racial liberty.

The play is set in an S&M parlor on the outskirts of Los Angeles, where one day the dominatrix Terri and her frequent customer Mark play out their racial and sexual fantasies. With their identities concealed in full masks and hoods, Terri and Mark go through three sets of role play fuelled by stereotypes of gender, sexuality, and race, and the unequal power relations they script: in the first sketch, Terri plays a blonde and Mark a Chinese man; in the second scenario, Terri plays a black woman and Mark a white man; in the final round, both of them play Asians. As they play these roles, their mutual affection begins to grow beneath the sadomasochistic exchanges. The play ends in a happy dénouement: Terri, a Caucasian woman, and Mark, an Asian man, confess their love for each other and remove their costumes. In an interview, the playwright remarks on this ending:

> Because to some degree the characters are able to get past a lot of those superficial images of one another and realize, perhaps through the process of having played so many races over the years, that the idea of race starts to become blurry. The mythology of race becomes less connected, again, to the particular color of the skin and more connected to the particular hopeful choices that are being made. What the play's trying to do is realize that you have to acknowledge [racial] differences and at the same time that you have to be willing to get past them to the human essence. (Hwang, Interview with Frockt 145)

Hwang's explanation of how he sees his characters taking on different racial identities and engaging in an interracial romance demonstrates his excitement about the post-racial vision of voluntary racial identification in the early 1990s and his keenness to experiment with the possibility of this vision in theatrical form. Three years before Hollinger first articulated his post-

racial vision in 1995, Hwang already staged a theatrical version of such a cosmopolitan blueprint.

The core of Hollinger's post-racial theory is the respect for individuals' choice of separation or attachment to, and affiliation with or disaffiliation from, both "communities of descent" and "communities of consent." As I discussed in Chapter I, Hollinger has teased out two strands of multiculturalism: pluralism, which stresses tolerance and assimilation of difference; and cosmopolitanism, which emphasizes "recognition, acceptance, and eager exploration of diversity" and the need to build broad communities within loose borders (Hollinger, *Postethnic America* 84). He argues that though multiculturalism was historically effective in increasing the public visibility of minorities and enforcing antidiscrimination and affirmative action policies, it has its limits due to its association with pluralism. He contends we should therefore "take a step beyond multiculturalism" toward a post-racial perspective as "the critical renewal of cosmopolitanism" (*PA* 2, 5). Hollinger's proposition applies the gist of cosmopolitanism to the current historical moment, when local connectedness is favored over many universal claims debunked as disguises to advance "the particular interests of historically specific, empowered groups" (Hollinger, *PA* 4). Repeatedly, Hollinger stresses in his book that his post-racial perspective "denies neither history nor biology, nor the need for affiliations, but it does deny that history and biology provide a set of clear orders for the affiliations we are to make" (*PA* 13). For Hollinger, affiliations are "performative" because they entail a willingness to promote communities of consent (*PA* 7).[61] While in the first edition of *Postethnic America*,

[61] Hollinger uses the word "performative" a number of times in his post-racial argument (see also his "From Identity to Solidarity," 24, 28), but he actually mistakenly conflates it with the notion of "performance." I will come back to this point shortly and explain further what Hollinger actually means by his use of "performative."

Hollinger sees *identity* as different from *affiliation* in the sense that the former suggests "a more settled proposition, […] the acceptance of ostensibly primordial ties" (*PA* 107), in the postscript he adds to the tenth-anniversary edition of the book, he revises his thoughts and argues that even identity should not be considered fixed and given. Instead, it is "a code word for solidarity: to prescribe an identity for someone is to tell that person with whom they should be affiliating" (Hollinger, *PA* 220). As an experience of "willed affiliation," solidarity, Hollinger contends, is "performative" (*PA* 220).

In *Bondage*, Hwang uses denaturalizing strategies to expose the particular workings of race, which set the stage for his theatricalization of race as "performative" in Hollinger's sense. To prepare the audience for his post-racial experiment, Hwang first designs that his two actors are covered in face masks and hoods to disguise their racial identities. Susan Smith, in her comprehensive research on the mask in modern drama, groups the functions of the mask into four categories: to caricaturizes people's absurdity, to aggrandize humankind's heroism, to make visible dream images and hallucinations, and to suggest the artificiality of social roles. The last dramaturgical function of the mask informs Hwang's creation of *Bondage*. In the play, the mask obliges Terri and Mark to use a dramatic body language to make up for the loss of facial expression, which in turn directs the audience's attention to the overt artificiality of the actors' role-play activity and demonstrates that race, as well as its intersecting identities, is a fabrication. As Terri and Mark play out racialized stereotypes associated with particular races, such as Asian American study geek, Hong Kong swagger, and over-sexed African American woman, the audience, with an awareness of the non-realistic nature of the performance, examines the essentialist notion of race such stereotypes reaffirm and sees more clearly its

constructed nature. Furthermore, unlike some dramatic masks which are individualized according to the profession and behavior of their maskers, the masks Terri and Mark wear onstage have no identifying features. So when they act out different racialized roles - Caucasian, Asian, and African American – in full masks, the audience is prevented from connecting certain physical features with racist assumptions and is encouraged to question the often taken-for-granted biological grounding of so-called racial differences. As Howard Winant points out, "although the concept of race appeals to biologically based human characteristics (so-called phenotypes), selection of these particular human features for purposes of racial signification is always and necessarily a social and historical process" (x). With the masks disturbing the relationship between physical features and social conceptions of racial identity, Terri and Mark are given the opportunity to play out different "races" and exercise individual agency over racial affiliation.

To further show the audience that the play is conducting a non-mimetic experiment with the complexities of post-racial cosmopolitanism rather than representing the world as it is, Hwang makes Mark and Terri self-reflexively comment on their roles and their meaning-making process about race. In the first round of role play, the masochist Mark asks, "What am I today?," and the dominatrix Terri answers, "Today – you're a man. A Chinese man. […] Me? I'm – I'm a blond woman" (*Bondage* 253). Soon they begin to perform a series of racial associations about Asian Americans, from the nerd to the swagger.[62] When, a while later, Mark asks to play a role

[62] In the dominant cultural construction, Asian men, on the one hand, are portrayed as lacking in sexual capital, "a tendency that stems from the general feminization of Asian cultures" (Nemoto 30); on the other hand, they are also depicted as hypersexual, posing sexual threats to innocent white women, a manifestation of the West's longstanding Yellow Peril fear, (Espiritu 99-101). These two representations of Asian men, contradictory at first glance, are consistent with each other in the way they function to exclude Asian American men from "white-based cultural notions of the masculine" (Espiritu 101).

that is neither a nerd nor a villain, Terri dismisses his request, saying "Look, this is a nice American fantasy parlor. We deal in basic, mainstream images" (*Bondage* 259). In the spirit of post-racial thinking, which is "a form of aspiration rather than a description of society as it is" (Leonardo 676), Hwang invites the audience to join Mark and Terri in the post-racial experiment rather than drawing them into a self-enclosed theatrical world of illusion. He intends them to step away far enough from the emotionally laden issue of race and examine it from a critical distance. Throughout the play, Terri and Mark often openly discuss the playful nature of their activities before the audience. In the first sketch, Terri states, "Now we're pretending something happened in a fantasy" (*Bondage* 256). Immediately, Mark echoes, "Everything we do is pretend!" (*Bondage* 257). Later, Terri restates that she is paid to play a game, the point of which, as Mark adds, is to "[investigate] the burning social issues of our day" (*Bondage* 257). These conversations are not meant to deny the psychological dimension of race, but, in the Brechtian breaking of the fourth wall, to keep the audience from turning to empathy and hence becoming "disempowered from analyzing clearly the social and political forces at work in the fictional world of that character" (Eddershaw 16). Terri's and Mark' self-reflexive comments help demonstrate the artificiality of their onstage performance and show the audience that racial stereotypes are socially produced, perpetuated, and practiced.

Hwang's denaturalizing strategies pave the way for his carefully designed role game in which Terri and Mark theatricalize the idea of racial identity and affiliation as "performative" as Hollinger conceives of it. The word "performative" is so heavily-loaded that it needs some unpacking. In the past decade, this term has often been mobilized to examine race and other social identities in dramatic works. However, it is often confused with the notion of

"performance." Though they are frequently used together or even interchangeably, they differ markedly, as Chris Brickell notes, in the ways they account for social action. Judith Butler, in theorizing the *performative* in her later work such as *Gender Trouble*, drew from J. L. Austin's performative speech acts, or linguistic declarations that bring into being what they name, to analyze how linguistic constructions create our reality through everyday speech acts in which we participate. According to Butler, social identities are "performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be [their] results" (*Gender Trouble* 33). They are not naturally given but continually created "through language, gesture, and all manner of symbolic social sign" (Butler, "Performative Acts" 519). Faced with the confused use of "performative" and "performance" her theory engendered, Butler clarifies in *Bodies That Matter* that performance is distinguished from performativity "insofar as the latter consists in a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer's 'will' or 'choice' (234).

"Performance" is another concept that is often invoked to explore social identities. Though sharing the same cognate base with the word "performative," "performance" has "quite different theoretical antecedents" (Brickell 158). As Chris Brickell establishes, the notion of performance hails from the ethnomethodological tradition established by such prominent sociologists as Erving Goffman, Harold Garfinkel, Suzanne Kessler, Wendy Mckenna, Canace West, and Don Zimmerman. These scholars have helped popularize the idea that social identity is "a performance or accomplishment achieved in everyday life" (Brickell 159). Both the concept of performance in sociology and Butler's performativity agree on the socially constructed nature of identities, but they differ in their treatment of the existence of a performer. While for

Butler, there is no volitional agent that knowingly "does" its social identity (Salih 65), sociologists like Goffman hold that social identities emerge "through an actor's involvement in the performances undertaken during social interaction" (Brickell 171). In Hollinger's post-racial thesis, when he describes racial identity as "performative" in that it emphasizes the person's choice and will in group affiliation, he is actually thinking in line with sociologists who try to "reclaim the social action and interaction central to the term performance" (Brickell 175), and hence mistakenly conflating "performance" with "performative."

If Butler, in her theory of performativity, leaves little room for the volitional subject, the sociological understanding of performance suggests "a much more reflexive process of self-production" in two- (or multi-) way interactions (Brickell 171). It is in this humanist tradition that Hollinger advances his post-racial vision of voluntary racial affiliation and that Hwang dramatizes Terri's and Mark's contestation of racial hegemonies through self-conscious performance. When Terri and Mark play different races, they continually question racial stereotypes associated with their roles through self-conscious performance. Their role play, rather than replicating the real-world race power relations, tries to subvert racial hegemony and gestures towards a more fluid mode of racial attachment. In the first scenario, when Terri, as a white woman, waits for Mark, as an Asian man, to throw himself at her feet, she is shocked by Mark, who states, "Well, for your information […] I never said that I loved you. […] I never finished the sentence. Maybe I was going to say, 'I love…the smell of fresh-baked apple pie in the afternoon'" (*Bondage* 255). Terri cries out and starts to lose her bearings, "[it] hurts a girl's confidence to stumble like that when I was in my strongest position, with you at your weakest" (*Bondage* 256). In the second scenario, Terri, who plays an African American woman, blasts

Mark, who plays a white man, for his racial stereotypes about African American women as sexually loose and tempting to white men. When Mark says to Terri that the way she walks across the room is "sensuous" (*Bondage* 263), Terri flies into a rage. In her dominatrix position, she pushes Mark onto his back, puts the heel of her shoe to his lips, and chastises him: "You want to have little fun, didn't you? With a wild dark woman whose passions drown out all her inhibitions" (*Bondage* 264). As Terri and Mark self-reflexively perform and challenge a variety of stock racial images, they simultaneously launch a critique of depersonalized and dehumanized racial stereotypes for suppressing personal uniqueness and obstructing close interpersonal relationships. When, towards the end of the play, Mark, not as a caricature but as a real person, professes his love for Terri, Terri questions, "I mean, how can you even talk about love? When you can't approach me like a normal human being? When you have to hide behind masks and take on these ridiculous roles?" (*Bondage* 270). With such a realization, Terri and Mark remove their anonymous masks, disclose their racial identity by descent, and begin an interracial romance that defies external racial ascriptions. Through the self-conscious process of refashioning one's racial identity, they highlight the importance of individuality which is at the heart of Hollinger's model of post-racial cosmopolitanism.

At the end of my examination of this play, I would be remiss if I did not remark that while Hwang displays the possibilities of voluntary racial attachments by staging two characters reflexively and transgressively performing different races, he leaves the impossibilities of voluntary racial affiliations under-examined. Before Mark and Terri exit the stage, Mark asks her, as he has already taken off his mask and costume, whether she would like to date him if he comes to her "in simple boxer shorts." Terri replies, "Who knows? Anything's possible. This is

the 1990s" (*Bondage* 279). Terri's answer bespeaks Hwang's over-optimism about the future of race relations in the U.S. at the time the play was written. But the problem is that much as we delight in the promise of the individual's self-determination over the matter of race, realities restraining the individual's autonomy cannot simply be wished away. Hollinger's post-racial vision, which was advanced three years after Hwang's play, is troubled with a similar problem. Hollinger raises important questions about the problematic character of the concept of race, but his examination of economic, political, and cultural obstacles to his post-racial vision needs to be strengthened. Hollinger claims that in rejecting that "history and biology provide a set of clear orders for the affiliations we are to make" (PA 13), he denies neither history nor biology; rather, his project promotes "direct and honest confrontation with economic inequalities" ("The Concept of Post-Racial" 175). But it turns out that Hollinger's argument tips to the side of discussing the opportunities created by the weakening of racial protocols in American society and does not really fulfill his promise of an adequate account of the structural inequalities underwriting the racism that still exists today.

The problem with the imbalance between optimism and realism when it comes to racial affiliation evinces an overt optimism that prevailed during the last decade of the twentieth century when the social constructionist perspective of race began to take hold.[63] The social constructionist perspective does not in any way seek to advocate the idea that race is merely a fleeting social fiction and will disappear on its own sooner or later, but its sometimes insufficient treatment of the historical, social, and political significance of race promotes such a

[63] For representative works, see: Kwame Anthony Appiah and Amy Gutmann's *Color Conscious: The Political Morality of Race*, Daniel Blackburn's "Why Race Is Not a Biological Concept," Nazir Carrim's "Critical Anti-Racism and Problems in Self-Articulated Forms of Identities," and Ian Hacking's *The Social Construction of What?*.

misconception and hence invites attacks. As the social construction theory of identity develops and attempts to "meld a social constructionist and a realistic position in order to integrate ideas about a socially produced reality with a realistic ontology," race scholars too have begun to infuse a "critical realism" to the constructionist perspective on race (Gergen 1049). In paying more attention to the range of material realities that delimit the individual's exercise of agency over racial affiliation, these scholars contribute to moving the post-racial inquiry from the phase of celebration to the phase of critique. In *Bondage*, Hwang engages with Hollinger's post-racial proposition with an overly sanguine outlook, fifteen years later, he brings more nuances to his post-racial dramatization and Hollinger's cosmopolitan vision in *Yellow Face*.

***Yellow Face* (2007)**

Yellow Face was honored with an OBIE Award in Playwriting and shortlisted for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2008. It premiered in Los Angeles at the Mark Taper Forum in 2007 in association with New York's off-Broadway Public Theatre and LA's East West Players. The past few years have seen the play performed in a variety of regional theatres in San Diego (Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company, 2010), Chicago (Silk Road Theatre Project, 2011), Seattle (ReAct Theatre and Pork Filled Players, 2011 and 2012), and Washington, DC (Theatre J, 2014). Beyond the U.S., the play has been produced in Toronto (Hart House Theatre, 2011), Hong Kong (Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and Hong Kong Players, 2012), Seoul (White Box Theatre, 2012), and London (New Park Theatre, 2013), further testifying to its cosmopolitan appeal. As with *Bondage*, Hwang, in the interviews about *Yellow Face*, openly revealed his intention in writing the play, which was inspired by the following questions:

> To what extent do we as Asians play our ethnicity at certain times in our experience? When do we do that? Why do we choose to do that? Can we choose our ethnicity in some sense? Can a white person who is very involved in Asian things and Asian American things be in some sense Asian American? (Hwang, "Asians in *Yellow Face*")

A semi-fictional backstage comedy, *Yellow Face* is about a playwright DHH, named after Hwang himself, who protests against the casting of Caucasian actor Jonathan Pryce as the Eurasian pimp in *Miss Saigon* only to end up accidentally casting Marcus G. Dahlman, a Caucasian, as the Asian lead in his own play *Face Value*[64]. Compared with *Bondage*, *Yellow Face* substantially deepens the post-racial interrogation by, first, adding theatricalism to the play with a more complicated plot that focuses on a white person self-consciously playing Asian not only onstage but offstage; and, second, by framing the story against significant events in Asian American history that expose historically specific obstacles to voluntary racial affiliation. In the dramatic form, Hwang designs a thought experiment about a white person crossing over to identify with a racial minority in his self-reflexive racial performance that disrupts external ascriptions of identity. As the experiment reveals the impossibilities of such an imagined situation in the current racial situation, Hwang questions the humanist claim that a voluntaristic agent is completely free to adopt, or cast off at will, one racial identity or another, thereby reconsidering his own optimism in *Bondage*. But at the same time, Hwang also shows that such a thought experiment, utopian as it is, carries in itself a strong illuminative power. Rather than

[64] *Face Value* was Hwang's failed and never-published Broadway attempt in 1993. It is a farce about two Asian Americans in whiteface trying to disrupt the opening night of a Broadway musical in which a white actor is cast to play an Asian character. William C. Boles attributes the failure to Hwang's awkward management of "disparate elements" and his inability to master "the elements of farce" (136). As Hwang himself understands, one mistake he made was to conceive of it "too much as a physical farce," whereas in retrospect it should be "more of a comedy of manners" about "the way the people behave with one another" (Hwang, Interview with Kondo 213). With over ten years to process this failure, Hwang makes another attempt at writing a comedy of mistaken racial identity and turns *Face Value* into a play within a play in *Yellow Face*.

sending us into a flight of fancy, it walks us through the intricate workings of race and allows new race questions to surface. It provides us with an opportunity to reflect upon how the American racial landscape has been transforming and how we as individuals, Asian Americans or not, contribute to the maintenance and transformation of racist regimes. In an Asian American context, the play provides audiences with a critical post-racial cosmopolitanism, in which a dialectic relationship plays out between "racial reality" and a desired future of voluntary racial affiliation, and which brings to the fore the many difficulties, complexities, and intricacies about race that elude straightforward explication as we strive towards that ideal.

As has been sketched earlier in this chapter, *post-racial* has often been understood and pursued along four main paths in theoretical discussions. In *Yellow Face*, Hwang not only engages with the first trajectory blazed by Hollinger, but also with the other three intertwining trajectories, which adds far more critical depth and range to his exploration of post-racial possibilities in *Bondage*. He theatricalizes cosmopolitanism's preference for voluntary over involuntary affiliations through Marcus's self-conscious performance of racial crossover that unsettles racial lines. In staging Marcus's endeavor to become Asian American, Hwang experiments with Hollinger's "affiliation by revocable consent" (*Postethnic America* 13) and his notion of a cosmopolitan "experience of solidarity" that crosses the "color line" ("From Identity to Solidarity" 24). By "affiliation by revocable consent," I refer to Marcus's choice not only of which community to affiliate with or disaffiliate from, but also of how much energy he wants to commit to the community of his choice. Before being mistakenly cast by DHH as the lead in *Face Value* and beginning to play Asian, Marcus already showed a great interest in Asian and Asian American history and culture. In his audition for *Face Value*, for example, Marcus displays

his knowledge of Chinese culture by expressively retelling a household story in China: once the Taoist master Chuang Tzu dreamt that he was a butterfly, unaware of his individuality as a person; when he awoke, he wondered whether he had been a person dreaming about being a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming about being a person. While in the context of Chinese culture, Chuang Tzu's "Butterfly Dream" is generally believed to exemplify the Taoist aesthetic philosophy of the transformation and unity of things in nature (Chan 160), exported to American soil, it signifies to DHH the fact that racial categories have become increasingly fluid, malleable, and contested. This resonates with the theme of his play *Face Value* and prompts him to cast Marcus as the lead. Marcus's debut in *Face Value* sets in motion his undertaking to transform from an outsider to part of the Asian American community. Offstage, he throws himself into a variety of Asian American causes, including an Asian American fundraiser for Bill Clinton's 1996 presidential campaign designed to gain political clout for Asian Americans; a rally for Wen Ho Lee, an Asian American nuclear scientist unjustly accused of espionage; and consciousness-raising among whites about the racism Asian Americans still face today. At the height of his acclaim, he is honored by the Asian American Artists Association (AAAA) "Most Promising Newcomer Warrior," even stealing the show from DHH, who receives an AAAA award at the same ceremony; he is also acknowledged by the Asian Leadership Council as a role model for promoting collective empowerment.

Marcus's dedication to Asian American causes exemplifies what Hollinger calls "the experience of solidarity." In an expanded discussion of his post-racial blueprint, Hollinger distinguishes between *solidarity* and *community*. Hollinger argues, while "the community of fate" refers to "a collectivity whose members have been subject to a single set of historical

constraints," solidarity entails "a greater degree of conscious commitment, achieved only when parties to an affiliation exercise at least some measure of agency" ("From Identity to Solidarity" 24). Recalling W. E. B. Du Bois's famous line that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line" (281), Hollinger suggests that "the problem of solidarity is shaping up as the problem of the twenty-first century" ("From Identity to Solidarity" 23). While a community of fate can help constitute and sustain a solidarity, the problem of solidarity arises "only when the role of 'fate' is supplemented by the action of forces other than those that created a given 'community of fate' to begin with" ("From Identity to Solidarity" 25). Marcus's full embrace of Asian American causes also demonstrates that Asian Americanness "as a panethnic, self-identified political and social coalition/identity" created in the latter half of the twentieth century (Shimakawa 2) couldn't have taken its present shape without the voluntary affiliation of individuals from diverse Asian ethnic groups and their active and sustained commitment of energies and resources to it at all levels.

If in *Bondage* Terri declares, "Anything's possible. This is the 1990s" (279), and shows every confidence in the coming of a future in which racial belonging becomes a matter of choice rather than bloodline, in *Yellow Face*, Marcus's self-conscious cross-racial performance is theatricalized as fraught with many problems and complexities. Hwang first complicates Marcus's metamorphosis from white to Asian by engaging with the issue of racial color-blindness, an important strand in post-racial debates. The playwright's particular interest lies in the complexities of a color-blind approach to theatre, a form of "non-traditional casting" that assigns roles to actors on a merit basis. The concept of *non-traditional casting* came into wide use in the 1980s largely as a result of the work of the Non-Traditional Casting Project (NTCP), a

not-for-profit advocacy organization established in 1986 to promote the "casting of ethnic, female or disabled actors in roles where race, ethnicity, gender or physical capability are not necessary to the characters' or play's development" (First National Symposium on Non-Traditional Casting, qtd. in Pao 1). The NTCP identifies four types of non-traditional casting and describes *color-blind casting* as the selection of actors without regard to their race[65]. Though this description seems to suggest that color-blind casting entails both minority actors playing traditionally white roles and vice versa, in practice, as William H. Sun points out, it is always "very specific in direction" with the focus on promoting opportunities for minority actors (86-7). No one in theatre wants to broach the subject of casting whites in minority roles for fear of being charged with depriving minority actors of employment opportunities, violating political correctness, and evoking "the painful memories of blackface minstrelsy, a despicable example of racism in the history of American theatre" (Sun 87). However, as Sun notes, in addition to the political position about minority employment, performance across racial lines involves more issues, including "an anthropological perspective as it relates to education" and "aesthetics in relation to professional theatre" (88). In *Yellow Face*, Hwang explores the vexed relationship between color-blind casting, political correctness, and artistic integrity, and processes his own ambivalence towards this casting approach in the *Miss Saigon* controversy, in which he was held up as "the poster child for political correctness" (*YF* 14).

The *Miss Saigon* controversy erupted in 1991 when Broadway decided to reprise the British musical producer Cameron Mackintosh's warmly-received London production of *Miss*

[65] The other three types of non-traditional casting are: societal casting, conceptual casting, and cross-cultural casting. For detailed analysis, see Pao's *No Safe Spaces: Re-casting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater* (2010).

Saigon, in which the Caucasian actor Jonathan Pryce played the Eurasian lead in yellowface[66]. In the Western theatrical convention, yellowface refers to the use of white actors to impersonate Asian characters, who have often been conveniently changed to Eurasians to allow for such a practice (E. Lee 177). Not unlike blackface, yellowface degrades and dismisses people of color through caricatured representations (Ono and Pham 50); it also denies Asian American actors the right to play Asian roles and closes down professional venues in which they can exercise their talents (Witchell, qtd. in E. Lee 185). In the early 1990s, the ripples generated by the casting decision in *Miss Saigon* spread to the entire Asian American community, which fiercely protested against Pryce's appearance in the show. However, Mackintosh refused to replace Pryce based on "principles of artistic integrity and freedom" (qtd. in E. Lee 187). Many members sided with Mackintosh, and the theatre world was sharply divided between support for minority casting and for artistic freedom. Earlier in the event, Hwang wrote to the Screen Actors Guild to complain about Mackintosh's choice of a white actor and the production team's sham effort to find an Asian actor for the role, and was, as a result, pushed to the center of the controversy. However, in the aftermath of the *Miss Saigon* controversy, Hwang confessed his discomfort with the stand he took and the difficulty of having to choose between minority casting and producers' rights to cast whomever they want (qtd. in Minow 11).

Hwang weaves this unease and uncertainty about minority casting in theatrical production into *Yellow Face*. Like the playwright himself, DHH initially supports the Asian American theater community's vehement demand that Pryce be replaced, but subsequently

[66] As Esther Kim Lee (177-199), Kent A. Ono and Vincent N. Pham (100-102), and Helen Zia observe, the *Miss Saigon* controversy involves two essential aspects: first, the content issue of the racist stereotypes about Asian Americans that fill this Orientalist Butterfly Story of a submissive Asian woman dying for a white man; second, the casting issue of who plays what and who has the right to play what, on which *Yellow Face* and my analysis mostly focus.

backs down when he is asked to join the rally protesting against Mackintosh's casting: "I feel we've made our point, and now – […] the artistic freedom thing – between you and me, I think this is starting to make us – look bad" (*YF* 14). The play gains its greatest momentum when DHH himself later casts a white actor as an Asian in his own play *Face Value*. When Marcus is first mistakenly introduced into the Asian American theatre community by DHH as a Eurasian, suspicions do arise about his race. But because of the rules of the Actors' Equity Association which aim to promote diversity, inclusion, and equality and end racism, prejudice, discrimination, and exclusion in the theatre industry, the employer is forbidden to take into account a person's race when making decisions about discharge. To fire Marcus on the basis of his being white would be racial discrimination and hence prohibited by Equity rules. Moreover, there is a crucial difference between traditional yellowface performance and Marcus playing Asian. While the former demeans Asian Americans, the latter arises from the person's sincere wish to be part of the Asian American community. The thorniness of Marcus's case gives birth to a devious solution: DHH first passes off Marcus as an Asian, a Eurasian with Russian Siberian Jewish heritage, and then fires him citing reasons other than his race. In theatricalizing DHH's blunder and his awkward attempt to fix it, Hwang reveals the nuances and problematic basis of color-blind casting, which were reduced by the media to the oversimplified story of siding with either minority rights or artistic freedom in the 1990s *Miss Saigon* controversy, and explores the complex terrain between these two polar positions. Meanwhile, Hwang encourages the audience to consider specific circumstances, as he asks in a video interview about *Yellow Face*: what does it mean for a white person to play Asian onstage? what does it mean for a white

person to play Asian offstage? and what does it mean for an Asian to be in yellowface? ("Asians in *Yellow Face*").

Marcus's performance across racial lines also enables Hwang to explore racial passing, a strategy employed by some multiracial individuals to shed unwanted ascribed social identities, and with this focus, Hwang participates in the strand of post-racial debates about mixed-race people. He explores racial passing from perspectives that are not explored in Chapter III and complicates Hollinger's cosmopolitan thesis of voluntary racial affiliation by considering its many constraints. Different from the more common pattern of passing from "black" to "white" as we see in Houston's *The Peculiar and Sudden Nearness of the Moon*, Marcus's passing is unique because his adoption of an Asian American identity shifts his racial positionality not from "minority" to "majority," nor from one "minority" status to a "more acceptable minority" status (T. Williams, "Race-ing and Being Raced" 62), but from majority to minority. While passing in any direction involves adopting "specific roles or identities from which [the individual] would otherwise be barred by prevailing social standards" (Kennedy 283), there is a crucial difference to which we should attend. For minority subjects, passing is "a means of surviving social inequality," carrying with it "negative associations of its own – danger, isolation, and depression" (Evans 139), but for whites, their cultural impersonation can be "an exercise in privilege" (Bailey 91). As Gayle Wald argues, white people traditionally have enjoyed "a greater liberty than others to play with racial identities and to do so in safety, without permanent loss or costs," and the passing of white people "ensues from a sovereignty over identity rather than from the exigencies of economic necessity or personal safety" (166-67). This calls for a re-examination of Marcus's cross-racial performance and a qualification of Hollinger's post-racial

thesis by adding that the degree of autonomy an individual enjoys in affiliating with communities of consent or disaffiliating from communities of descent is contingent upon the person's original racial status, his/her corresponding ability to manipulate the ontological truth-claims of visibility, and the power that differentially scripts concerns of safety and necessity.

While the initial success of Marcus's cross-racial performance is aided by the fact that he is white, as the play proceeds, it is treated with increasing suspicion by the Asian American community which is vigilant against the passing of whites. The chief opponent of Marcus's cross-racial performance is, ironically, DHH, who fabricates Marcus's Russian Siberian Jewish identity in the first place. DHH admonishes Marcus for being an "ethnic tourist": "You come in here with that, that face of yours. Call yourself Asian. Everyone falls at your feet. But you don't have to live as an Asian – everyday of your life. No, you can just skim the cream" (*YF* 40). Beneath DHH's admonishment is his fear that Asian American culture is "continually commodified and offered up as new dishes to enhance the white palate — that the Other will be eaten, consumed, and forgotten" (hooks 39). DHH's fear also stems from the fact that some whites fraudulently seek to adopt minority identities in order to maximize personal interests, such as using race to gain minority votes in political campaigns and to obtain job opportunities from affirmative action programs (Wright, Jr.). DHH accuses Marcus: "I didn't go through all those protests and hunger strikes just so some white imposter could help himself to our hard-won opportunities" (*YF* 38). As the play gets underway, we see that Marcus is neither an "ethnic tourist" nor a "white imposter." In changing his racial status from white to Asian, he willingly bears the negative consequences of being a minority and undertakes the responsibility to fight for racial justice and equality. However, Marcus's seemingly unawareness of the

privileges automatically conferred on him by his community of descent is enough to cause anxiety. After all, as Alison Bailey frankly admits in her self-scrutiny of her whiteness, like racial discrimination, racial privilege, too, is characterized by its inescapability. With privilege written on their skin, whites who want to dissociate themselves from whiteness can be "stuck with privilege because [they] can't take off the invisible, weightless knapsack that grants [them] privilege" (Bailey 88).

Marcus's passing also raises the question of who has the right and authority to define Asian Americanness, which further limits Marcus's agency over racial affiliation. The Asian American actor Rodney Hatamiya, who has been passed over for the lead in *Face Value,* and who is aware of Marcus's real racial identity, hits home the point. Alluding to Mackintosh's casting of Pryce, Rodney says, "Anyone else would have their balls handed back to them on a plate by our community. But fucking David Henry Hwang - *he* can cast a white guy as an Asian and no one gives a goddamn!" (*YF* 26). These words reveal Asian Americans' undeclared but firm conviction that the final say on who is or is not Asian American should reside only with Asian Americans themselves and by no means with those they consider "outsiders." The same logic applies to Marcus's brief relationship with the Asian American actress Leah Anne Cho, who has absolute discretion to either continue or end this relationship depending on how she perceives Marcus's Asian American identity. Earlier in the play, when DHH tells Leah that Marcus is not Asian, Leah, who has already accepted Marcus as Asian and who thinks DHH is just trying to separate her from Marcus as she is DHH's ex-girlfriend, strongly defends Marcus's "authenticity." Later when Leah realizes that Marcus is actually white, she strips Marcus of Asian American membership, accuses him of lying, and splits with him. It is now clear that

Marcus's successful cross-racial identification is built upon the Asian American community role model DHH's endorsement of him and the whole community's subsequent misconception about him. Without this precondition, Marcus couldn't have succeeded in passing himself off as Asian in the Asian American world, no matter how fascinated he is with Asian American culture and how devoted he is to Asian American causes.

The most immediate threat to Marcus's endeavour to defy descent-based racial prescriptions and practice voluntary racial affiliation comes from racism against Asian Americans in the larger society, which proves that the community's vigilance against whites is not unfounded. Hwang's dramatization of racism against Asian Americans in the play resonates with the cautions about the coming of a post-racist society in post-racial debates. Garry Gerstle, for instance, points to the repression and exclusion of immigrants involved in the U.S. nationalist project and argues that Hollinger and his like-minded colleagues such as Sollors have not adequately addressed structures of class, race, gender, and national power that "[circumscribe] choice and [shape] the identities to which individuals and groups can aspire" (557). Eric Lott criticizes what he sees as Hollinger's apolitical tendency and "bourgeois fantasy to suppose an affirmation of cultural diversity could proceed in any meaningful sense beyond the reach of the 'disadvantage' in and through which many U.S. cultural [factions] have formed" (114). And Jonathan Y. Okamura considers the declaration that the United States is post-racial a neo-conservative strategy deployed to "perpetuate white dominance while obscuring continuing racial inequality and subordination" (136). Okamura asserts, "as long as racial hierarchy, inequality, injustice, and oppression persist, and racial identity continues to be a principle source of meaning, representation and solidarity, especially for racial minorities," the

United States cannot be touted as a post-racial nation (152). These cautions and Hwang's dramatization of racism in *Yellow Face* advise us to acknowledge the fact that race continually structures social divisions and economic disparities when we examine the application of voluntary racial identification. Grounding Hollinger's thesis in the persistent existence of racially stratified inequality, we can avoid falling into utopian visions and give post-racial cosmopolitanism a more nuanced understanding.

Hwang dramatizes racism against the backdrop of Chinagate in the mid-to-late 1990s. Chinagate refers to a variety of fund-raising scandals in which the Chinese government was alleged to have secretly funneled cash to Bill Clinton's 1996 campaign for re-election in order to influence domestic United States politics. It also refers to the 1998-2000 Wen Ho Lee Espionage Case, in which Lee, a Taiwan-born nuclear physicist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, was charged with 59 felony counts of violating the Atomic Energy Act and the Federal Espionage Act in his mishandling of classified nuclear data in order to spy for the Chinese government. Viewed from a broader context of globalization, Chinagate reflected America's anxieties over the growing economic and political power of China and Pacific Asia in general (M. Chang), and gave expression to old Yellow Peril fears. Though the ties between the Clinton Administration and the donations from China were never conclusively established and the prosecution of Wen Ho Lee collapsed with all charges dropped except a minor count of improperly transferring classified files to his own computer, the Asian American community, and the Chinese American community in particular, was seriously affected by the bombardment of representations of them as unassimilable "forever foreigners" whose loyalty is highly

questionable. Using the campaign finance scandal and the Wen Ho Lee Case as the historical background in *Yellow Face*, Hwang dramatizes the Asian American-as-foreigner stereotype.

The climax of the play comes when Marcus is picked up by the government for making a $250 donation to the Clinton presidential campaign under his Chinese-sounding stage name Marcus Gee. In a midnight call from the Committee on Governmental Affairs, which is authorized by the U.S. senate to investigate the fund-raising practices of Clinton's re-election campaign, Marcus is interrogated with questions about his citizenship ("Are you an American citizen?"), origin ("Where are you from?), and racial background ("Is it fair to assume that your ethnicity is actually Asian?") (*YF* 45). In an interview by the *Times* journalist who has penned a series of Chinagate stories fanning nationwide hostility towards people of Asian descent, DHH himself is confronted with the question: "Does your father see himself as more American, or more Chinese?" (*YF* 55). DHH responds with "Do you see yourself as more American or more white?," and is cut off with the journalist's reply, "There's no conflict between being white and being American" (*YF* 55). In the interval between Marcus's interrogation and DHH's interview, Hwang inserts both the FBI's extortion of Wen Ho Lee's confession with the threat that he might be electrocuted, as were the Rosenbergs, if he doesn't "cooperate" with the government, and also Judge James Parker's later apology to Lee for the country's unconstitutional treatment of him. These incidents dramatize the fact that Chinese Americans have been persistently branded as foreigners whose interests are the same as the interests of the people and government of China, whose allegiances are continually perceived to belong not to America but to China. In the end, to help his beloved Asian American community in crisis, Marcus confesses his "real" race to the public, making the federal racial profiling of Asian American campaign

donors a flagrant joke. It is finally made clear to the public that for the millions of taxpayer dollars the government has spent in finding evil Chinese spies, it has ended up going after "a regular American" (*YF* 59), or a white American. Coming to terms with his identity by descent, Marcus ends his post-racial dream. Marcus's difficulties in affiliating with the community of his choice illustrates that racial boundaries are jealously guarded by both mainstream whites and Asian Americans as they each work to maintain their own interests on opposite sides of the 'color line." Crossing over racial lines, therefore, does not simply depend upon the person's "sheer will and determination" (*Yellow Face* 62), but also upon "the social and material realities that result from existing power relations and their impositions on the individual" (Schultermandl and Toplus 12).

While the many complexities and difficulties involved in Marcus's endeavor to become Asian unfold one after another in *Yellow Face*'s dramatic thought experiment, rather than turning into hopelessness, the play ends on a hopeful note. In response to Marcus's request for "a happy ending," DHH sends him to an ancient village in southwestern China where Marcus believes he can find the diasporic roots of his much-longed-for Asian American identity. There in the village live the Dong, who are famous for *da ge*, or "the big song," a form of folk choral music sung by them to record their traditions and mythic histories. Marcus thinks *da ge*, sung for a thousand years, is the Dong's native invention; but to his surprise, instead of being indigenous to the Dong people, it came to China over the Silk Road "from the Carpathian Mountains, through the Middle East, all the way into Asia, covering half of the world" (*YF* 34). Marcus gathers, if *da ge*, which originated from elsewhere, can be adopted by the Dong and become "so much a part of who they are" (*YF* 34), possibilities exist for him to be accepted by

the Asian American community. He further concludes that so-called racial authenticity is a fallacy: no race is pure and static and every race changes with the coming of elements from other races. These epiphanies are emphasized in Marcus's last email to DHH about his journey to China. In this email that closes the play, Marcus describes his singing *da ge* with the villagers, who take him, a foreigner and outsider, as one of them. The name of the song he is singing is "We Close the Village for Rituals." This title seems to imply exclusion, but the lyrics actually gesture towards openness and inclusion: "Taking in voices / From all the lands / And all the peoples, / Who have ever crossed its path. / Though that road has been messy, / It made this song. / From nothing of value, / Nothing which lasts, / Nothing human, / Is ever pure" (*YF* 63). The trip to the Dong village in China renews Marcus's hope in boundary crossing: "I joined the 'big song,' and found the thing I had lost. A reason to hope. And now, I can go home" (*YF* 63).

Yellow Face, which ends in hope rather than despair even as the thought experiment reminds us of the formidable presence of race and the persistent fact of racism, calls into my mind the rather utopian notion of "planetary humanism" that Paul Gilroy proposes in *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture beyond the Color Line*. Gilroy contends that we are experiencing "a profound transformation in the way the idea of 'race' is understood and acted upon" and the "mechanisms that govern how racial differences are seen" (*Against Race* 11). These historic conditions have prompted what he calls "a crisis for raciology" (*Against Race* 11). Gilroy states, in this crisis, "race has lost much of its common-sense credibility, because the elaborate cultural and ideological work that goes into producing and reproducing it is more visible than ever before, because it has been stripped of its moral and intellectual integrity, and because there is a chance to prevent its rehabilitation" (Gilroy, *Against Race* 28-9). As a result,

he calls for a rethinking of race as a critical concept and champions a "planetary humanism" as a "cosmopolitan response" (Gilroy, *Against Race* 8) to eliminate the Enlightenment mentality that racially divides and classifies human beings. Gilroy advocates for this new humanism "in an explicitly utopian spirit to terminate its ambivalent relationship to the idea of 'race' in the interest of a heterocultural, postanthropological, and cosmopolitan yet-to-come" (*Against Race* 334). For him, our challenge today is to bring even "powerful visions of planetary humanity from the future into the present and to reconnect them with democratic and cosmopolitan traditions" that challenge the racialized demarcation of human differences and essentialist understandings of race (*Against Race* 356). If in *Against Race*, Gilroy may sound too sanguine in his expectation of a society free of all racial categorizations in the not too distant future and hence invites attacks for ignoring the "structural and institutional dimensions of racism" (Mills 153), his proposal that we re-examine the authority of race as a classificatory system points to a pressing need in societies structured by racial inequalities. Here, I concur with Molefi Kete Asante, who argues that *Against Race* is not a book against racism, but a book that aims to reconfigure "the idea of race as an organizing theme in human relations" (150). Or as Gilroy himself cautions in the British version of *Against Race*, "deconstructing 'races' is not the same thing as doing away with racism" (*Between Camps* 251). I see great merit in Gilroy's call for a "racialized unmooring" of the West's "very foundations and ways of knowing the world" (Young and Braziel 16), because as an emancipatory cosmopolitan endeavor it gestures towards a breaking of the ontological categories of race and an interrogation of "the readily apparent terminologies of difference" (Valluvan 5).

In the way I value Gilroy's utopian-sounding project of "planetary humanism," I suggest that we give serious attention to the post-racial ideal of voluntary racial identification and affiliation, which has generated heated theoretical discussions and inspired Hwang's dramatic experiments. Such imaginings towards a utopian future can enable a clearer knowledge of our current racial situation. In "The Concept of Post-Racial: How Its Easy Dismissal Obscures Important Questions," Hollinger contests what he considers unfair critiques against of his post-racial proposition that do not attend to what he is actually affirming. While opponents point to the realities of continuing racism in the United States and the still determinative role of the physical marks of descent in deciding a person's identity, his post-racial conception contains a more complicated argument. By post-racial, he does not mean to simply ask "have we transcended racial differences?" or "are we beyond racism?," questions that almost need no second thought to produce a resounding "no." Rather, Hollinger draws attention to the coexistence of the racial hurdles and opportunities in a society both burdened by historically rigid racial divisions and blessed by the weakening of their grip. He contends that "the point has been to confront and examine the contingency of ethno-race in America – past, present, and future – while registering the effects of descent-related experiences that survive the loosening of attributed or chosen connections between an individual and his or her community of descent" ("The Concept of Post-Racial" 175).

Rather than dismissing the Hollingerian post-racial proposition to respect the individual's choice of racial dis/affiliation as unrealistic and hence unworthy of consideration, Hwang tests this proposition against realities through *Yellow Face*'s dramatic experiment of Marcus's transformation from white to Asian and makes visible both the opportunities and

challenges we now face. On the one hand, Marcus's venture made possible by the growing awareness of the constructed nature of race, the acceptance of the increasing heterogeneity within so-called racial groups including multiracial people, and the complex politics about employment in the theatre industry all point to the fact that changing conceptions and operations of race do provide more room for individual autonomy in racial attachment and offer reasons for hope. On the other hand, Marcus's cosmopolitan construal of liberty and self-refashioning of racial identity is fraught with many ambiguities, as we see in DHH's shifting of positions between seeing race as determined by so-called phenotype ("I can tell an Asian when I see one" [*YF* 23)), birth ("In order to be Asian, you have to have at least some Asian blood!" [*YF* 39)), and cultural socialization ("Looks don't matter any longer" [*YF* 31)); Marcus's confusion about who he is after the shattering of his Asian American dream ("My life […] used to have a purpose, a direction I really believed in – but I lost all that" [*YF* 9]); the intricacy of color-blind casting in a theatrical environment policed by political correctness; the complexity of racial passing; and the persistence of old forms of racism. Leonardo puts it perceptively, we exist in a space where racial progress and stasis, or even worse, retrogression coexist and where both phenomena of "race entrenchment and ambivalence" are happening simultaneously (678). It is in this space between the possible and the impossible that *Yellow Face* stands.

While I argue against the easy dismissal of the mapping of a desirable future of voluntary racial affiliation, I also suggest we should neither dismiss those who oppose such utopian racial envisioning and who defend their position with reasoned arguments and supporting evidence. Rather than viewing as polar opposites those who are more interested in delineating desirable racial futures and those who have engaged more with critiquing the

persistent reality of racial inequality, I suggest seeing them in a dialectical relationship in the way Hwang weaves the seemingly diametrically opposite views together in *Yellow Face*. For the supporters, their post-racial blueprints as the critical renewal of cosmopolitanism are always based on the lived realities they want to transform or transcend; for the opponents, their criticism of racialized realities is inevitably directed towards the kind of racial futures they hope to reach. The former prevent the latter from falling into cynicism; the latter indispose the former to totally unfounded cosmopolitan fancies. As the play shows, holding together these two sides offers one the possibility of becoming sensitized to a powerful tension that characterizes our time: the tension between the possibilities of individual choice in racial affiliation enabled by on-going demographic, conceptual, and structural transformations on the one hand, and the varied forms of racism supported by complex structures of power that circumscribe the array of racial identities available to individuals on the other. Where are we in reaching utopian racial horizons amidst various opportunities and constraints? This is the question, I argue, that post-racial explorations such as Hwang's *Yellow Face* ultimately concern.

As Paul Warmington perceptively comments, "We are post-racial in having moved beyond pseudogenetic notions of race; however, we are not 'post-racial' per se" (281). The range of understandings of *post-racial* illustrate the shared difficulty of "conceptualizing a move beyond race and racism without using the language of race and racism" (Cantiello 168). Therefore, our challenge is to "make creative use of the paradox of race-conscious scholarship: working both with and against conceptual tools that have yet to be effectively replaced" (Warmington 281). The significance of various post-racial explorations, in a word, lies in its effort to make sense of race, which is "morphing at a speed with which academic expertise has

not kept pace" (Koshy 1542). As we see in *Yellow Face*, the experiment involving Marcus enables an intense engagement with the different strands of post-racial debates: can multiracial individuals choose to affiliate with one or more communities of descent? are we living in a color-blind society where, in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream, all individuals are judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character? and, have we entered a state in which racial progress has made racism passé? Hwang's plays contribute to the conversations in the way they "[make] race visible, [map] its operations, and [enter] its interpellations" by "going *through* race instead of *around* it" (Leonardo 686, 693). They bring to surface the ambivalences and ambiguities in the transformation of racial orders which are yet to be properly registered by the social-scientific language of race relations. As Susan Koshy points out in "Why the Humanities Matter for Race Studies Today," the sociology of race currently faces the impasse that "the new racial subject must be framed within old disciplinary paradigms or must be acknowledged to be beyond its jurisdiction"; as a result, literary and cultural texts have gained particular salience, which prove capable of depicting a new millennium in which "'ambiguous facts and inscrutable motives' rather than overt barriers shape racial encounters" (1543).

***

Following *Bondage*, which dramatizes the inherently constructed nature of race and the ability of the individual's self-conscious performance to challenge racial norms, Hwang continues his cosmopolitan inquiry into multiple racial identities and voluntary racial attachment in *Yellow Face*. Just as Hollinger's post-racial proposition has stimulated multi-dimensional discussions, Hwang's experiment of a Caucasian's cosmopolitan undertaking to

move beyond his boundaries in terms of race has brought to the surface the many intricacies and problematics in self-identification and social interaction. Hwang enriches the field of post-racial debate by presenting an Asian American vision of post-racial cosmopolitanism which is open-ended rather than closed off. In a dramatic form, he raises a series of thorny questions from a racial perspective about the workings of cosmopolitanism in theatre and society at large, which are meant to generate debate rather than pushing to definite answers. If the traditional yellowface performance in which the white actor caricaturizes and demeans Asians is to be denounced, how would we deal with the situation in which the white actor performs Asian because the person sincerely wants to learn about and integrate into the minority community? How does color-blind casting find a balance between artistic freedom and minority rights? How is the individual's cross-racial identification and affiliation circumscribed or enabled (or both) by his or her "original" racial status? If Asian Americans eliminate "blood" as the primary referent of racial discourse, what makes them turn back to such a biological approach to race in some circumstances? While Asian Americans have won great success in reclaiming their rights to define Asian American identity and in challenging homogeneous and stereotypical images of Asian Americans, does their assertion of personhood and rejection of non-Asian Americans in the meaning-defining process also perpetuate the very exclusionary practice they set out to change?

If *Yellow Face* offers no easy solution to how an individual can freely cross over racial lines to affiliate with communities of non-descent, which, in the last analysis, is an impossible ideal for the moment, its thought experiment does raise provocative questions about the drawing of boundaries and the inscription of categories. Hwang's questions prompt the

audience to consider, on a broader level, how established racial boundaries are simultaneous maintained and transformed by individuals who currently have claims to membership in particular racial communities and those who do not. They also challenge the audience to ask cosmopolitan questions about what a particular racial identity really is as racial boundaries become more blurred and as possibilities of voluntary racial identification unfold in the partial light.

CODA

The End as a New Beginning

One common denominator of the wide array of understandings of cosmopolitanism across time and space is their espousal of "a broadly defined disposition of 'openness' towards others, people, things and experience whose origin is non-local" (Skrbis and Woodward 730). Yet we must also interrogate the grammar of difference that underlies cosmopolitan openness as several scholars in the field have noted. Jackie Stacey is perceptive in pointing out that while "the idea of 'an openness to difference' posits a self that is transparent, accessible and fully intelligible to ourselves and others," the "relational intersubjectivity" involved in the process of differentiating between similarities and differences bring about much ambivalence, confusion, and contradiction (1). What if, Stacey asks, one's own sense of openness appears to be closure to others and the good-intentioned tolerance leads to precisely its opposite? With this undesirable scenario at the back of his mind, Stacey suggests, "perhaps our only hope is to locate such ambivalence within ourselves instead of projecting it onto the undesirable others of non-cosmopolitan cultures" (2-3). Building upon Stacey's insight into the conceptual ambiguities of "difference," Sivamohan Valluvan argues that if we are only content with promoting a neat cosmopolitan vision based on readily apparent but highly problematic registers of difference, we are unfortunately missing much of the complexity cosmopolitanism promises. He contends, "Ultimately, cosmopolitanism is most potent if it retains an ability to critically interrogate the *apriori* premises which render certain differences readily intelligible, absolute, and certain" (4).

This dissertation marks an effort to problematize, from a critical race perspective, the uncritical reliance on "certain knowable and secured indices of difference" that undermines many supposedly cosmopolitan practices (Valluvan 2). It mounts a cosmopolitan inquiry into the contingencies and vulnerabilities of the settled index of racial difference in Asian American contexts. The interrogation is carried out on the site of contemporary Asian American theatre through eleven plays by twelve Asian American playwrights. While the selected plays approach cosmopolitanism from different racial perspectives – interracial propinquity in the racialized urban ghetto (Chapter I "Ghetto Cosmopolitanism"), cross-racial solidarity forged out of the ravages of war (Chapter II "Negative Cosmopolitanism"), the confluence of more than one so-called racial category into a single body (Chapter III "Mixed Race Cosmopolitanism"), and voluntary racial dis/affiliation (Chapter IV "Post-Race Cosmopolitanism"), they collectively demonstrate a set of commonalities shared by various modes of racial cosmopolitanism. First, though all the playwrights seek to bring out some kind of understanding, connection, and coalition that can transcend racial divisions, none of them makes "the erasure of particularity the basis of cosmopolitan unity" (Lowe 83). Instead of attempting to abolish racial distinctions, they acknowledge race as a continuing material reality in the U.S. and employ it as a platform for minority political activism in challenging ideological racial hegemony. Yet acknowledging the fact of race does suggest coming to terms with its status quo. Rather, the playwrights set out to reconceptualize Asian American racial difference and construct alternative visions of racial cosmopolitanism based on their reconceptualizations of Asian American identity. Second, all the plays strive to recast the seemingly contradictory relationship between race and cosmopolitanism and present it as a dialectical rather than dichotomous relation. In their

synthetic visions of racial cosmopolitanism emerging out of Asian American contexts, they, on the one hand, dramatize the social, historical, and political specificities of race, which help curb universalism's homogenous and hegemonic impulse, and, on the other, explore the possibilities of racial crossing and mixing, which help restrain the essentialist, fundamentalist, and isolationist tendency in racialist thinking.

Next, in articulating alternative visions of cosmopolitanism from Asian American perspectives, the plays initiate a double transformation process that simultaneously reconstructs the Other and the Self. On the one hand, they undertake the unfinished task of combating racism from the dominant white society and seek to counter hegemonic constructions of cosmopolitanism that dominate, exploit, distort, marginalize, or exclude racial others. On the other, they also try to bring about a transformation of Asian Americans themselves, which is characterized by a high degree of self-reflexivity and self-critique. They press Asian Americans to reflect on their subscription to and complicity with the dominant racist ideology, interrogate their own racism towards other racial minorities, rethink so-called Asian American racial differences, which are both externally-imposed and self-ascribed, and construct more open and inclusive Asian American cosmopolitan visions. These efforts contribute to the questioning and redefining of the very notion of Asian American identity in which second-phase Asian American studies is fully engaged. Fourth, while this dissertation subsumes the various cosmopolitan imaginings staged in the eleven plays under "racial cosmopolitanism," which is proposed as a summary concept, it should be noted that these diverse instances of racial cosmopolitanism are concerned with not only race but also other categories of difference, such as class, gender, sexuality, and nationality. Recognizing the

complex relationality of these categories of difference and inequality, the playwrights intend their Asian American cosmopolitan visions to be broad enough to embrace not only racial minorities but also other subjects variously minoritized. Their visions help reconceptualize Asian American identity politics articulated in the cultural nationalist phase of Asian American studies in ways that open up opportunities for strategic alliances beyond pan-ethnic coalitions.

Finally, there is what might be called a "utopian" strain running through these plays and their developing Asian American cosmopolitanisms. Considering that the playwrights work hard to reveal the complexities, ambivalences, and contradictions of cosmopolitanism rather than innocently believing in a natural progression toward racelessness, I suggest taking the cosmopolitan ideals articulated by Asian American playwrights as manifestations of "surplus hopefulness in light of the formidable presence of race" (Leonardo). Without such hopeful but cautious imaginings of cosmopolitanism, which are based on earnest examinations of racial and racist realities, we are in danger of resigning ourselves to the world we have inherited. This project is not just about the deployments of compassion beyond the borders of our own kin in the literary imagination; rather, the various forms of coalition building among theatre artists and audiences during the actual productions of the plays demonstrate that theatre is not only a site for expressing views of cosmopolitics, but a site for practicing and realizing such cosmopolitical visions in real life.

I was aware at the outset that this dissertation presents only four of the many variables of racial cosmopolitanism dramatized by Asian American playwrights, and that racial cosmopolitanism is only one of the many modalities of cosmopolitanism staged in Asian American theatre. While I concentrate on the eleven plays and their productions in my project,

I wish to take note of the many other works and practices in Asian American theatre which can be considered cosmopolitan in ways that have not been addressed within the space of the thesis. For example, since its founding in 1992, Mu Performing Arts, a Minneapolis-based Asian American theater company, has been steadily building up a body of work exploring international and transracial adoption in the U.S., with a particular focus on the Korean adoptee experience, such as *Mask Dance* (1995), *Walleye Kid: The Musical* (2008), *How To Be a Korean Woman* (2013), and its latest play *Middle Brother* (2014). The New York off-off-Broadway Pan Asian Repertory Theatre contributes to expanding the boundaries of Asian American theatre with its many intercultural productions of Asian masterworks in translation and innovative adaptations of Western classics, such as *The Legend of the White Snake* (2001), an English performance of the classic piece in Peking Opera of the same namesake, and *Shogun Macbeth* (2008), a transmutation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* to the island of Honshu in Kamakura Japan (1192-1333). While most Asian American theatre companies produce Asian American or Asian plays, the National Asian American Theatre Company (NAATC), another New York-based theatre company, devotes itself exclusively to performing a repertoire of European and American classics as written with all Asian American casts, adaptations of these classics by Asian American playwrights, and new plays written by non-Asian Americans, not for or about Asian Americans, but realized by an all Asian American cast. The NAATC enlivens the Asian American theatrical cosmopolitan scene by creatively superimposing Asian faces on a non-Asian repertory and offering Asian American interpretations of "white" theatre pieces.

As I conclude, I feel that the coda leads to a new beginning rather than an end. Over the course of the project, it has become clearer and clearer to me that this work provides only a

glimpse of the cosmopolitan landscape of Asian American theatre, and that there is far more to explore. As I have mentioned in a note in my introduction, at the play-selection stage of this research, I benefited greatly from Alexander Street Press's digital archive "Asian American Drama," which has collected over 250 published and unpublished plays by established and emerging Asian American playwrights, along with related biographical, production, and theatrical material. This reference database keeps expanding as its editorial crew continues to bring in dramatic works and index various elements of the plays, such as title, date, place, and publisher; first known production, with information about the director, production company, producer, and other elements of production history; scene details and directions; and author biographical details. While I have certainly delved deeply into this database, I definitely have not exhausted it. To further explore how issues of race and cosmopolitanism are engaged in Asian American dramatic and theatrical art, I suggest that scholars continue to explore this extensive play collection as well as any anthologies or single-author publications in this field. In my research, I have tried my best to gather available paratextual information about each playtext, such as newspaper and magazine reviews, publicity material, and video clips of the performance, hoping to augment the traditional literary textual analysis from the two-dimensional page to the three-dimensional world that accounts for diverse theatre practitioners and audiences. However, because of the practical restraints of doing research outside the U.S., I have assembled these materials through online search. Yet I am aware that in the U.S., two university special collections offer such information in a non-digitalized form: University of California, Santa Barbara's Asian American Theater Company Archives and University of Massachusetts Amherst's Asian American Women Playwrights Scripts Collection.

These two archives include materials as diverse as administrative and personnel records, grant applications, production files, correspondence, flyers, audio and videotapes, photographs, and theater artifacts. I hope these materials can be made use of in future research on Asian American theatre.

Certainly, I am also well aware that the majority of Asian American theatrical performances cease to exist entirely once the final curtain falls, and that, despite the presence of the above-mentioned digital and traditional play collections, most playscripts have not been collected and made readily available. Asian American theatre studies can be greatly enriched if scholars who have opportunities to watch live Asian American theatrical productions and interact with artists and audiences in person can record these transient moments in print and subject their first-hand experiences to more thoughtful and more critical reflection than the performances often receive in theatre reviews. With these suggestions offered at the end of my project, I look forward to seeing new efforts at studying the reconfiguration of Asian American theatre and its multifaceted reconceptualization of Asian American identity. Such imagination and critical work can help us to understand the reconstruction of hegemonic cosmopolitan visions in an increasingly multiracial, multicultural, and multinational century.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

Barroga, Jeannie. *Walls*. *Asian American Drama*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street P, 2004. Web. 08 Jan. 2012.

Hill, Amy. *Beside Myself*. *North American Women's Drama*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street P, 2004. Web. 08 Jan. 2012.

---. *Deadwood to Hollywood*. *Asian American Drama*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street P, 2004. Web. 08 Jan. 2012.

---. *Tokyo Unbound*. *Asian American Drama*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street P, 2004. Web. 08 Jan. 2012.

---. *Into the Fire*. *North American Women's Drama*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street P, 2004. Web. 08 Jan. 2012.

Houston, Velina Hasu. *Japanese and Multicultural at the Turn of the Century*. *Asian American Drama*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street P, 2004. Web. 08 Jan. 2012.

---. *The Peculiar and Sudden Nearness of the Moon*. *North American Women's Drama*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street P, 2004. Web. 08 Jan. 2012.

Hwang, Henry David. *Yellow Face*. New York: Dramatists Play Service Inc., 2008.

---. *Bondage*. *Trying to Find Chinatown: The Selected Plays of David Henry Hwang*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2000. 249-279. Print.

Okita, Dwight, Anne V. McGravie, Nicholas A. Patricca, and David Zak. *The Radiance of a Thousand Suns: The Hiroshima Project: A Drama with Music*. Woodstock, IL: Dramatic Pub, 1998. Print.

Wong, Elizabeth. *Kimchee and Chitlins: A Serious Comedy about Getting Along*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street P, 2004. Web. 09 July 2013.

Yew, Chay, Bridget Carpenter, Ping Chong, Constance Congdon, Kia Corthron, Maria Irene Fornes, Philip Kan Gotanda, Jessica Hagedorn, David Henry Hwang, Craig Lucas, Robert O'Hara, Han Ong, Diana Son, Alice Tuan, Jose Rivera, and Mac Wellman. *The Square*. *Version 3.0: Contemporary Asian American Plays*. Ed. Yew. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2011. 555-655. Print.

Secondary Sources

Abramson, Daniel. "Maya Lin and the 1960s: Monuments, Time Lines, and Minimalism." *Critical Inquiry* 22.4 (1996). 679-709. Print.

Actors' Equity Association. "About Equity." *Actors' Equity Association*. Sep. 2010. Web. 7 Sep. 2012.

Adams, Bella. "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, and Multiplicity, the 1990s." *Asian American Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008. 143-176. Print.

Afary, Kamran. *Performance and Activism: Grassroots Discourse after the Los Angeles Rebellion of 1992*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009. Print.

Ahmad, Diana L. "Threats to Body and Behavior." *The Opium Debate and Chinese Exclusion Laws In The Nineteenth-Century American West*. Reno, NV: U of Nevada P, 2007. 36-60. Print.

Alter, Nora M. *Vietnam Protest Theatre: The Television War on Stage*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1996.

Amin, Ash. “Regions Unbound: Towards a New Politics of Place.” *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 86.1 (2004): 33-44. Print.

Ancheta, Angelo N. *Race, Rights, and the Asian American Experience*. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1998. Print.

Anderson, Amanda. “Cosmopolitanism, Universalism, and the Divided Legacy of Modernity.” *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*. Eds. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins. Minnesota, MN: U of Minnsota P, 1998. 265-328. Print.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991. Print.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. “Cosmopolitan Patriots.” *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation*. Eds. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. 91-114. Print.

Appiah, K. Anthony, and Amy Gutmann. *Color Conscious: The Political Morality of Race*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1998. Print.

Asante, Molefi Kete. “Afrocentricity and the Eurocentric Hegemony of Knowledge: Contradictions of Place.” *Race and the Foundations of Knowledge: Cultural Amnesia in the Academy*. Eds. Joseph A. Young and Jana E. Braziel. Urbana, IL: U of Illinois P, 2006. 145-154. Print.

Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center. “Neighborhood Profile: Manhattan’s Chinatown.” *Asian American Federation*. Web. 25 Feb 2013.

Asian American Theatre Company. “AATC Presents *Walls* by Jeannie Barroga.” *Asian American Theatre Company*, 2006. Web. 10 Oct. 2012.

Altschwager, Emma. “Obama and A Post-Racial America” *The Perspectivist*. 22 June 2011. Web. 12 Dec. 2013.

Austin, J. L. *How to Do Things with Words*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1975. Print

Bacalzo, Dan. Rev. of *The Square*, dir. Lisa Peterson. *Performance Review* 54.3 (2002): 489-491. Print.

Bailey, Alison. “Despising an Identity: They Taught Me to Claim.” *Whiteness: Feminist Philosophical Reflections*. Eds. Chris J. Cuomo and Kim Q. Hall. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999. 85-104. Print.

Baker, Donald G. *Race, Ethnicity, and Power: A Comparative Study*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983. Print.

Balibar, Étienne. “Violence and Civility: On the Limits of Political Anthropology.” *Differences* 20 (2009): 9-35. Print.

Barkan, Elliott Robert. *A Nation of Peoples: A Sourcebook on America’s Multicultural Heritage*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1999. Print.

Baum, Bruce. *The Rise and Fall of the Caucasian Race: A Political History of Racial Identity*. New York: New York UP, 2006. Print.

Beck, Ulrich. *The Cosmopolitan Vision*. Trans. Ciaran Cronin. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2006. Print.

---. “The Cosmopolitan Perspective: Sociology of the Second Age of Modernity.” *The British Journal of Sociology* 51.1 (2000): 79-105. Print.

---. “The Cosmopolitan Society and Its Enemies.” *Theory, Culture and Society* 19 (2002): 17-44. Print.

Beech, Hannah. “Eurasian Invasion.” *Time*. 23 Apr. 2011. Web. 26 Aug. 2013.

Befumo, J. P. *A Heritage of Hypocrisy: Why "They" Hate Us*. Mount Pleasant, SC: Mount Pleasant P, 2005. Print.

Besnier, Niko. "Consumption and Cosmopolitanism: Practicing Modernity at the Second-Hand Market Place in Nuku'alofa, Tonga." *Anthropological Quarterly* 77.1 (2004): 7-45. Print.

Bhabha, Homi. "Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism." *Text and Nation: Cross-Disciplinary Essays on Cultural and National Identities*. Eds. Laura García-Moreno, and Peter C. Pfeiffer. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1996. 191-207. Print.

Bidlingmaier, Salma Siew Li. "Spaces of Alterity and Temporal Permanence: The Case of San Francisco's and New York's Chinatowns." *Selling EthniCity: Urban Cultural Politics in the Americas*. Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2011. Ed. Olaf Kaltmeier. 275-286. Print.

Blackburn, Daniel. G. "Why Race Is Not a Biological Concept." *Race and Racism in Theory and Practice*. Ed. Berel Lang. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000. 3-26. Print.

Blau, Herbert. "Universals of Performance; Or, Amortizing Play." *SubStance* 11/12.37-38 (1982): 140-161. Print.

Boles, William C. "David Henry Hwang." *Twentieth-Century Asian-American Writers. Dictionary of Literary Biography*. Vol. 311. Ed. Deborah Madsden. Columbia, SC: Bruccoli Clark Layman, 2005. 123-41. Print.

Bommer, Lawrence. "'Hiroshima' Presents Bailiwick's Nuclear Reaction." *Chicago Tribune*. 14 July 1995. Web. 11 Jan. 2013.

Bost, Suzanne. *Mulattas and Mestizas: Representing Mixed Identities in the Americas, 1850-2000*. Athens, GA: U of Georgia P, 2003. Print.

Braw, Monica. *The Atomic Bomb Suppressed: American Censorship in Occupied Japan*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1991. Print.

Brazile, Donna. "Obama a Marker on Post-Racial Path." *CNN Opinion*. 21 Feb. 2013. Web. 12 Dec. 2013.

Brennan, Jonathan. Introduction. *Mixed Race Literature*. Ed. Jonathan. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2002. 1-56. Print.

Brickell, Chris. "Performativity or Performance?: Clarifications in the Sociology of Gender." *New Zealand Sociology* 18.2 (2003): 158-178. Print.

Brubaker, Rogers. "Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism." *Annual Review of Sociology 35* (2009): 21-42. Print.

Brune, Lester H. *The Korean War: Handbook of the Literature and Research*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1996. Print.

Buckel, Sonjia, and Jens Wissel. "State Project Europe: the Transformation of the European Border Regime and the Production of Bare Life." *International Political Sociology* 4.1 (2010): 33-49. Print.

Burns, Lucy Mae San Pablo. *Puro Arte: Filipinos on the Stages of Empire*. New York and London: New York UP, 2013. Print.

Butler, Judith. *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.

---. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.

---. “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: an Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory.” *Theatre Journal* 40.4 (1988): 519-531. Print.

Cantiello, Jessica Wells. “From Pre-Racial to Post-Racial?: Reading and Reviewing *A Mercy* in the Age of Obama.” *MELUS* 36.2 (2011): 165-183. Print.

Carrim, Nazir. “Critical Anti-Racism and Problems in Self-Articulated Forms of Identities.” *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 3.1 (2000): 25-44. Print.

Carlson, Marvin A. *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*. Michigan, MI: U of Michigan P, 2003. Print.

Carter, Robert E. *The Japanese Arts and Self-Cultivation*. Albany, NY: State U of New York P, 2008. Print.

Chan, Hiu M. “Butterfly and Spinning Top.” *Inception and Philosophy: Ideas to Die for*. Chicago: Open Court, 2011. 159-172. Print.

Chang, Kornel S. “Impact of the Great Depression on Asian Americans.” *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression*. Ed. Robert S. McElvaine. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004. 75-80. Print.

Chang, Michael. *Racial Politics in an Era of Transnational Citizenship: The 1996 "Asian Donorgate" Controversy in Perspective*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004.

Chang, Yoonmee. *Writing the Ghetto: Class, Authorship, and the Asian American Ethnic Enclave*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2010. Print.

Chappell, John D. *Before the Bomb: How America Approached the End of the Pacific War*. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 1997.

Cheah, Pheng. *Inhuman Conditions: On Cosmopolitanism and Human Rights*. New York: Harvard UP, 2007. Print.

Cheng, Patrick S. *From Sin to Amazing Grace: Discovering the Queer Christ*. New York: Church Publishing, 2012. Print.

Cheung, King-Kok. "(Mis)interpretations and (In)justice: The 1992 Los Angeles 'Riots' and 'Black-Korean Conflict.'" *MELUS* 30.3 (2005): 3-40. Print.

Chouliaraki, Lilie. "Mediation and Action." *The Spectatorship of Suffering*. 187-198. London: SAGE, 2006. Print.

Chow, Rey. "The Age of the World Target." *America's Wars in Asia: A Cultural Approach to History and Memory*. Eds. Philip West, Steven I. Levine, and Jackie Hiltz. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997. 205-220. Print.

Christopher, Renny. *The Viet Nam War/The American War: Images and Representations in Euro-American and Vietnamese Exile Narratives*. Amherst, MA: U of Massachusetts P, 1995. Print.

Clifford, James. "Traveling Cultures." *Cultural Studies*. Eds. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler. New York: Routledge, 1992. 96-116. Print.

Cohen-Cruz, Jan. "The Problem Democracy Is Supposed to Solve: The Politics of Community-Based Performance." *The Sage Handbook of Performance Studies*. Eds. D. Soyini Madison and Judith Hamera. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000. 427-445. Print.

Cornell, Stephen, and Douglas Hartmann. "Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World." 2rd ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press, 2007. Print.

Crook, Tim. *Radio Drama*. London; New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.

D'Arcy, Janice. “Parenting through the Non-Post-Racial Post-Election.” *The Washington Post*. 1 December 2012. Web. 7 November 2012.

Dariotis, Wei Ming. “Asian American Queer Folklore and Folklife.” *Encyclopedia of Asian American Folklore and Folklife*. Vol. 3. Ed. Jonathan H. X. Lee and Kathleen M. Nadeau. Santa Barbara, CA, 2010. 35-41. Print.

Dariotis, Wei Ming, and Wesley Ueunten. “Overview of War and Its Effects: Past and Present Issues Unresolved.” *Encyclopedia of Asian American Issues Today*. Vol. 2. Eds. Edith Wen-Chu Chen and Grace J. Yoo. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2010. 747-458. Print.

Davis, Timothy, Kevin R. Johnson, and George A. Martínez. *A Reader on Race, Civil Rights, and American Law: A Multiracial Approach*. Durham, N.C: Carolina Academic P, 2001. Print.

Do, Hien Duc. “The New Migrants from Asia: Vietnamese in the United States.” *OAH Magazine of History* 10.4 (1996): 61-66. Print.

Dong Folk Songs: People and Nature in Harmony. Hong Kong: Mediafusion Creations Publishing, 2007. CD.

Douzinas, Costas. “The Metaphysics of Cosmopolitanism.” Eds. Rosi Braidotti, Patrick Hanafin, and Bolette Blaagaard. *After Cosmopolitanism*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2013. 57-76. Print.

Dower, John W. “Three Narratives of Our Humanity.” *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*. Eds. Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt. New York: Metropolitan Books, 1996. 63-96. Print.

---. “Triumphal and Tragic Narratives of the War in Asia.” *Living with the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age*. Eds. Laura E. Hein and Mark Seldon. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997. 37-51. Print.

---. *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986. Print.

Du, Bois, W. E. B. “Krigwa Players Little Negro Theatre.” *The Crisis* 32 (1926): 134–136. Print.

---. *On Sociology and the Black Community*. Eds. Dan S. Green and Edwin D. Driver. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1987. Print.

Dyson, Michael Eric. “Race, Post Race.” *Los Angeles Times*. 5 Nov. 2008. Web. 12 Dec. 2012.

Eddershaw, Margaret. *Performing Brecht: Forty Years of British Performances*. London: Routledge, 1996. Print.

Elam, Michele. *The Souls of Mixed Folk: Race, Politics, and Aesthetics in the New Millennium*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2011. Print.

Eng, David, and Alice Hom’s *Q and A: Queer in Asian America*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 1998. Print.

Entertainment. "‘Walls’ Recreates Special Moments.” Rev. of *Walls*, dir. Ray Newman. *Asian American Theater Revue*. Web. 16 Oct 2012.

Espiritu, Yen Le. “About Ghost Stories: the Vietnam War and ‘Rememoration’”. *PMLA* 123.5 (2008): 1700-1702. Print.

---. *Asian American Women and Men: Labor, Laws and Love*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008. Print.

Evans, Carina A. "'Fictive Imaginings': Constructing Biracial Identity and Senna's *Caucasia*." *Crossing Lines: Race and Mixed Race across Geohistorical Divide*. Eds. Marc Coronado, et al. Santa Barbara, CA: Multiethnic Student Outreach, 2003. 135-148. Print.

Fairchild, Halford H., and Denise G. Fairchild. "African Americans and Korean Immigrants: Cultures in Conflict." *Challenges of a Changing America: Perspectives on Immigration and Multiculturalism in the United States*. 2rd ed. Ed. Ernest R. Myers. San Francisco: Caddo Gap, 2001. 137-142. Print.

Farley, Reynolds. "Identifying with Multiple Races: A Social Movement that Succeeded but Failed?" *The Changing Terrain of Race and Ethnicity*. Eds. Maria Krysan and Amanda E. Lewis. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004. 123-148. Print.

---. "Racial Identities in 2000: The Response to the Multiple-Race Response Option." *The New Race Question: How the Census Counts Multiracial Individuals*. Eds. Joel Perlmann and Mary C. Waters. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002. Print.

Foard, James H. "Vehicles of Memory: The *Enola Gay* and the Streetcars of Hiroshima." *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place*. Eds. Open Baruch Stier and J. Shawn Landers. Indiana, IN: Indiana UP, 2007. 117-131. Print.

Fojas, Camilla. *Cosmopolitanism in the Americas*. Purdue, IN: Purdue UP, 2005. Print.

Foner, Nancy. "Introduction: New Immigrants in a New New York." *New Immigrants in New York*. Ed. Foner. New York: Columbia UP, 2001. 1-31. Print.

Fore, Jeanie. "Women's Performance Art: Feminism and Postmodernism." *Theatre Journal* 40.2 (1988): 217-35. Print.

Fozdar, Farida, and Maureen Perkins. “Antipodean Mixed Race: Australia and New Zealand.” *Global Mixed Race*. Eds. Rebecca C King-O’Riain, et al. New York: New York UP, 2014. 119-143. Print.

Friedel, Tania. *Racial Discourse and Cosmopolitanism in Twentieth-Century African American Writing*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.

Fumani, Mattia. “‘Virtuous Citizenship’: Ethnicity and Encapsulation among Akan-Speaking Ghanaian Methodists in London,” *African Diaspora* 3.1 (2010): 12–41. Print.

Geografiska Annaler. *The Political Challenge of Relational Space: The Vega Symposium. Geografiska Annaler*: *Series B, Human Geography* 86.1 (2004). Print.

Gensler, Harry J., Earl W. Spurgin, and James Swindal. *Ethics: Contemporary Readings*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Gergen, Mary. “Social Constructionist Theory” *Encyclopedia of Women and Gender: Sex Similarities and Differences and the Impact of Society on Gender*. Vol. 2. Ed. Judith Worell. San Diego, CA: Academic, 2001. 1043-58. Print.

Gerstle, Gary. “Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans.” *The Journal of American History* 84.2 (1997): 524-558. Print.

Gibon, Mario. “The War at Home: Family, Gender, and Post-colonial Issues in Three Vietnam War Texts.” *Gender and Warfare in the Twentieth Century: Textual Representations*. Ed. Angela K. Smith. Manchester, UK: Manchester UP, 2004. 154-173. Print.

Gidwani, Vinay, and Kalyanakrishnan Sivaramakrishnan. “Circular migration and rural cosmopolitanism in India.” Contributions to Indian Sociology 37.1-2 (2011): 339-67. Print.

Gilroy, Paul. *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture beyond the Color Line*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2000. Print.

---. *Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race*. London: Allen Lane, Penguin, 2000. Print.

Glick Schiller, Nina. "Whose Cosmopolitanism?" *Whose Cosmopolitanism? Launch Festival for Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures*. Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures. Jan. 2009. 1-2. Web. 12 Jan. 2011.

Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Woodstock, New York: Overlook, 1973. Print.

Gold, Steven. "From Jim Crow to Racial Hegemony: Evolving Explanations of Racial Hierarchy." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 27.6 (2004): 951-968. Print.

Gonzalves, Theodore S. *The Day the Dancers Stayed: Performing in the Filipino/American Diaspora*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2010. Print.

Gordon, Lewis. "Race, Biraciality, and Mixed Race." *Her Majesty's Other Children: Sketches of Racism from a Neocolonial Age*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997. 51-71. Print.

Gorelik, Mordecai. "An Epic Theatre Catechism." *Brecht Sourcebook*. Eds. Carol Martin and Henry Bial. New York: Routledge. 31-36. Print.

Goulbourne, Harry, ed. *Race and Ethnicity: Critical Concepts in Sociology*. London: Routledge, 2001. Print.

Grant, Bruce. "Cosmopolitan Baku." *Ethnos* 75.2 (2010): 123–147. Print.

Grossman, Mark. "Chinagate." *Political Corruption in America: An Encyclopedia of Scandals, Power, and Greed*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003. 51-53. Print.

Hacking, Ian. *The Social Construction of What?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1999. Print.

Haenni, Sabine. "Filming 'Chinatown': Fake Visions, Bodily Transformation." *Screening Asian Americans*. Ed. Peter X Feng. New Brunswick, NJ, Rutgers UP, 2002. 21-52. Print.

Hagopian, Patrick. *The Vietnam War in American Memory: Veterans, Memorials, and the Politics of Healing*. Amherst, MA: U of Massachusetts P, 2009. Print.

Hall, Patricia Wong. Introduction. *Anti-Asian Violence in North America: Asian American and Asian Canadian Reflections on Hate, Healing, and Resistance*. Eds. Hall and Victor M. Hwang. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2001. 1-28. Print.

Hall, Stuart. "New Ethnicities." *Black British Cultural Studies: A Reader*. Eds. Houston A. Baker, Jr., Manthia Diawara, and Ruth H. Lindeborg. Chicago, IL: U of Chicago P, 1996. 163-172. Print.

---. "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity." *Culture, Globalization and World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*. Ed. Anthony D. King. Minnesota, MN: U of Minnesota P, 1997. Print.

Han, Chong-suk. "Sexy Like a Girl and Horny Like a Boy: Contemporary 'Western' Narratives about Gay Asian Men." *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Reader*. Eds. Gail Dines and Jean M. Humez. London: Sage, 2011. 163-170. Print.

Han, Chong-suk, and Kimberly Goyette. "Asian Americans." *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society*. Vol. 1. Ed. Richard T. Schaefer. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2008. Print.92-95.

Hannerz, Ulf. "Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture." *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996. 102-11. Print.

Hao, Lingxin. *Color Lines, Country Lines: Race, Immigration, and Wealth Stratification in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007. Print.

Hara, Marie, and Nora O. Keller, eds. *Intersecting Circles: The Voices of Hapa Women in Poetry and Prose*. Honolulu, HI: Bamboo Ridge P, 1999. Print.

Harris, Cheryl I. "Whiteness as Property." *Mixed Race America and the Law: A Reader*. Ed. Kevin R. Johnson. New York and London: New York UP, 2003. 155-56. Print.

Harwit, Martin. "The Enola Gay: A Nation's, and a Museum's, Dilemma." *Washington Post* 7 Aug. 1994: C9. Print.

---. Foreword to *The Radiance of a The Thousand Suns: The Hiroshima Project: A Drama with Music*. By Dwight Okita, Anne V. McGravie, Nicholas A. Patricca, and David Zak Woodstock, Ill: Dramatic Pub, 1998. 3-5. Print.

Harvey, David. "Cosmopolitanism and the Banality of Geographical Evils." *Public Culture* 12.2 (2000): 529-64. Print.

---. *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*. New York: Columbia UP, 2009. Print.

Haskins, V. Ekaterina, and Justin P. DeRose

Heavey, Susan. "Election Shines Light on Long Path to Post-racial America." *Reuters*. 1 December 2012. Web. 8 November 2012.

Hein, Laura E., and Mark Selden. "Commemoration and Silence: Fifty Years of Remembering the Bomb in America and Japan." *Living with the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age*. Eds. Hein and Seldon. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997. 3-37. Print.

Hollinger, David A. “The Concept of Post-Racial: How Its Easy Dismissal Obscures Important Questions.” *Dædalus* 140.1 (2011). Print.

---. *Cosmopolitanism and Solidarity: Studies in Ethnoracial, Religious, and Professional Affiliation in the United States*. Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin P, 2006.

---. “From Identity to Solidarity.” *Dædalus* 135.4 (2006): 23-31. Print.

---. *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*. 3nd ed. New York: Basic Books, 2006. Print.

hooks, bell. “Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance.” *Black Looks: Race and Representation*, 1992. Boston, MA: South End. 21-39. Print.

Hopper, Paul. *Understanding Cultural Globalization*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007. Print.

Houston, H. Rika. “Between Two Cultures: A Testimony.” *Amerasia* 23.1 (1997): 152-153. Print.

Houston, Velina Hasu. Introduction. *The Politics of Life: Four Plays*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 1993. 1-31. Print.

---. “Notes from a Cosmopolite.” *The Color of Theater: Race, Culture, and Contemporary Performance*. Eds. Roberta Uno and Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns. London: Continuum, 2002. 83-89. Print.

---. “Velina Hasu Houston.” N.d. Web. 4 Sept. 2013.

Houston, Velina Hasu, and Teresa Kay Williams. “No Passing Zone: The Artistic and Discursive Voices of Asian-descent Multiracials.” *Amerasia* 23.1 (1997): vii-xii. Print.

Houston, Velina Hasu, Peggy Shannon, Saffron Henke, and Susan Andrews. “Insight: Utah Phillips/The Peculiar and Sudden Nearness of the Moon.” Interview with Beth Ruyak. *KXJZ's Insight*. Capital Public Radio. 16 Nov. 2006. Radio.

Huang, Guiyou. “Introduction: Global and Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Asian American Literary Studies.” *Asian American Literary Studies*. Ed. Guiyou Huang. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2005. 1-14. Print.

Hubbard, Bryan, and Marouf A. Hasian, Jr. “The Generic Roots of the *Enola Gay* Controversy.” *Political Communication* 15.4 (1998): 497-513. Print.

Hune, Shirley. Introduction. *Asian Americans: Comparative and Global Perspectives*. Eds. Shirley Hune, Hyung-chang Kim, Stephen S. Fugita, and Amy Ling, eds. Pullman, UW: Washington State University Press, 1991. Print.

Hung, Wu. “Zhang Dali’s *Dialogue*: Conversation with a City.” *Cosmopolitanism*. Eds. Carol A. Breckenridge, et al. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2000. Print.

Hunter, Margaret L. *Race Gender and the Politics of Skin Tone*. New York: Routledge, 2005. Print.

Hwang, David Henry. “Asians in *Yellow Face*.” Interview with the Asia Society. Youtube, 2008. Web. 20 August 2012.

---. *Chinglish: A Play*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2012. Print.

---. “David Henry Hwang.” Interview with Deborah Frockt. *The Playwright’s Art: Conversations with Contemporary American Dramatists*. Ed. Jackson R. Bryer. New Brunsiwik, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1995. 123-146. Print.

---. *Flower Drum Song*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2003. Print.

---. Foreword. *Asian American Drama: 9 Plays from the Multiethnic Landscape*. Ed. Brian Nelson. New York: Applause, 1997. vii-viii. Print.

---. Foreword. *The Square*. *Version 3.0: Contemporary Asian American Plays*. Ed. Yew. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2011. ix-xii. Print.

---. *FOB*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1979. Print.

---. *Golden Child*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1998. Print.

---. "Interview with David Henry Hwang." Interview with Bonnie Lyons. *The Muse upon My Shoulder: Discussions of the Creative Process*. Ed. Sylvia Skaggs McTague. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2004. 160-173. Print.

---. "Interview with David Henry Hwang." Interview with Dorinne Kondo. *About Face: Performing Race in Fashion and Theater.* New York: Routledge, 1997. 211-225. Print.

---. *Jade Flowerpots and Bound Feet*. *Version 3.0: Contemporary Asian American Plays*. Ed. Yew. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2011. 574-79. Print.

---. *M. Butterfly*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1988. Print.

---. "Response." *Yellow Light: The Flowering of Asian American Arts*. Ed. Amy Ling. 222-227. Print.

---. *The Dance and the Railroad*. *Trying to Find Chinatown: The Selected Plays*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2000. 53-88. Print.

---. *Trying to Find Chinatown*. *Trying to Find Chinatown: The Selected Plays of David Henry Hwang*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2000. 281-94. Print.

---. "Worlds Apart." *American Theatre* 17.1 (2000): 50-56. Print.

Ifekwunigwe, Jayne O., ed. *"Mixed Race" Studies: A Reader*. London: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Irving, Andrew. "Response to Provocation: Is it Useful to Talk of a 'Cosmopolitan Method'?" *Whose Cosmopolitanism? Launch Festival for Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures*. Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures. *n.d.* 1-3. Web. 8 Mar. 2011.

Irwin, Cathy, and Sean Metzger. “Keep up Appearances: Ethnic Alien-Nation in Female Solo Performance.” *Mixing It Up: Multiracial Subjects*. Eds. Kwan and Speirs. Austin, TX: U of Texas Press, 2004. 180-197. Print.

Jansen, Stef. “Cosmopolitan Openings and Closures in Post-Yugoslav Antinationalism.” *Cosmopolitanism in Practice*. Eds. Magdalena Nowicka and Maria Rovisco. Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009. 75-92. Print.

Jason, Philip K., and Mark A. Graves, eds. *Encyclopedia of American War Literature*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2001. Print.

Jeffords, Susan. *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1989. Print.

Johnson, Kevin R, ed. *Mixed Race America and the Law: A Reader*. New York: New York UP, 2003. Print.

Jones, Alex S. “2 Weeks’ News: Sizzle over Substance.” *New York Times*. 19 May 1990. Web. May 8 2014.

Joyce, Patrick D. “Comparing New York City and Los Angeles.” *No Fire Next Time: Black-Korean Conflicts and the Future of America's Cities*. New York: Cornell UP, 2003. 53-65. Print.

Kadohata, Cynthia. *In the Heart of the Valley of Love*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1992. Print.

Kalb, Jonathan. “Documentary Solo Performance: The Politics of the Mirrored Self.” *Theatre* 31.3 (2001): 13-29. Print.

Kang, Miliann. “Black People ‘Have Not Been the Ones Who Get Pampered: Nail Art Salons and Black-Korean Relations.” *The Managed Hand: Race, Gender, and the Body in Beauty Service Work*. Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 2010. 165-200. Print.

Kaplan, Randy Barbara. “Elizabeth Wong.” *Asian American Playwrights: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*. Ed. Miles Xian Liu. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2002. 347-360. Print.

Kauanui, J. Kehaulani. “Asian American Studies and the ‘Pacific’ Question.” *Asian American Studies after Critical Mass*. Ed. Kent A. Ono. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005. 123-143. Print.

Kenaga, Heidi. “Public Monuments and Popular Commemoration.” *Material Culture in America: Understanding Everyday Life*. Eds. Helen Sheumaker and Shirley Teresa Wajda. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO. 371-378. Print.

Kennedy, Randall. “Racial Passing.” *Mixewod Race America and the Law: A Reader*. Ed. Kevin R. Johnson. VNew York: New York UP, 2003. 157-168. Print.

Kessler, Suzanne J., and Wendy McKenna. *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach*. New York: Wiley, 1978. Print.

Khader, Jamil. “Subaltern Cosmopolitanism: Community and Transnational Mobility in Caribbean Postcolonial Feminist Writings.” *Feminist Studies* 29.1 (2003): 63-81. Print.

Kiang, Peter Nien-Chu. “About Face: Recognizing Asian & Pacific American Vietnam Veterans in Asian American Studies.” *Amerasia Journal* 17.3 (1991): 22-40. Print.

Kilson, Marion. *Claiming Place: Biracial Young Adults of the Post-Civil Rights Era*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 2001.

Kim, Elaine, H. “Beyond Railroads and Interment: Comments on the Past, Present, and Future of Asian American Studies.” *Privileging Positions: The Sites of Asian American Studies*. Ed. Gary Y. Okihiro et al. Pullman, WA: Washington State UP, 1995. 11-19. Print.

---. “Korean Americans in U.S. Race Relations: Some Considerations.” *Amerasia Journal* 23:2 (1997): 69-78. Print.

Kim, Elizabeth S. “Asian-American Drama.” *The Facts on File Companion to American Drama*. Eds. Jackson R. Bryer and Mary C. Hartig. New York: Facts on File, 2004. 36-42. Print.

Kim, Kwang Chung, and Shin Kim. “The Multiracial Nature of Los Angeles Unrest in 1992.” *Koreans in the Hood: Conflict with African Americans*. Ed. Kwang Kim. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins UP, 1999. Print.

Kimbrough, Natalie. *Equality or Discrimination?: African Americans in the U.S. Military During the Vietnam War*. Lanham, MD: UP of America, 2007. Print.

Knowles, Ric. *The Theatre of Form and the Production of Meaning: Contemporary Canadian Dramaturgies*. Toronto: ECW, 1999. Print.

Korgen, Kathleen O. *Multiracial Americans and Social Class: The Influence of Social Class on Racial Identity*. London: Routledge, 2010. Print.

Koshy, Susan. “Minority Cosmopolitanism.” *PLMA* 126.3 (2011): 592-609.

---. “Why the Humanities Matter for Race Studies Today.” *PMLA* 123.5 (2008): 1542-1549. Print.

Kondo, Dorinne K. *About Face: Performing Race in Fashion and Theater*. New York: Routledge, 1997. Print.

---. Introduction. *Asian American Drama: 9 Plays from the Multiethnic Landscape*. Ed. Brian Nelson. New York: Applause, 1997. ix-xiv. Print.

---. “The Square.” Rev. of *The Squares*, dir. Lisa Peterson. *Asian American Theater Revue*. Web. 20 Feb 2013.

Kraft, Kenneth. *Eloquent Zen: Daitō and Early Japanese Zen*. Honolulu, HI: U of Hawaii P, 1992. Print.

Kurahashi, Yuko. *Asian America Culture Onstage: The History of the East West Players*. New York: Garland, 1999.

Kuroiwa, Kenneth T. "Shikata Ga Nai…: Overcoming Despair and Apathy in Wartime Internment Camps." *Bulletin of Saitama Women's Junior College* 11 (2000): 153-203. Web. 21 Jan. 2013.

Kubiak, Anthony. *Stage of Terror*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1991.

Kurasawa, Fuyuki. "A Cosmopolitanism from Below: Alternative Globalization and the Creation of a Solidarity without Bounds." *European Journal of Sociology* 45.2 (2004): 233-55. Print.

Kwan, SanSan. "Maura Nguyen Donohue." *Asian American Playwrights: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*. Ed. Miles Xian Liu. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002. 49-56. Print.

Kwan, SanSan, and Kenneth Speirs. Introduction. *Mixing It Up: Multiracial Subjects*. Eds. Kwan and Speirs. Austin, TX: U of Texas P, 2004. 1-10. Print.

Kwong, Peter. "Manufacturing Ethnicity." *Critique of Anthropology* 17.4 (1997): 365-387. Print.

Lai, Eric Y. P, and Dennis Arguelles. *The New Face of Asian Pacific America: Numbers, Diversity & Change in the 21st Century*. San Francisco, CA: Asian Week with UCLA's Asian American Studies Center Press, in cooperation with the Organization of Chinese Americans and the National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development, 2003. Print.

Le, C. N. "Multiracial/Hapa Asian Americans." *Asian-Nation: The Landscape of Asian America*. *n.p.* Web. 8 Aug. 2013.

---. “Multiracial Asian Americans: Social Class, Demographic, and Cultural Characteristics.” *Multiracial Americans and Social Class: The Influence of Social Class on Racial Inequality*. Ed. Kathleen Odell Korgen. 115-130. Oxon, UK; New York: Routledge, 2010. Print.

Lee, Esther Kim. *A History of Asian American Theatre*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2006. Print.

Lee, Jennifer. “A Post-Racial Society or a Diversity Paradox?” *Russell Sage Foundation*. Web. 14 Aug. 2012.

Lee, Jennifer, and Frank D. Bean. *The Diversity Paradox: Immigration and the Color Line in 21st Century America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2010. Print.

Lee, Josephine. *Performing Asian America: Race and Ethnicity on the Contemporary Stage*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2010.

---. Introduction. Asian American Plays for a New Generation. Eds. Josephine Lee, Don Eitel, and R. A. Shiomi. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2011. 1-10. Print.

Lei, Daphne. “Staging the Binary: Asian American Theatre in the Late Twentieth Century.” *A Companion to Twentieth-Century American Drama*. Ed. David Krasner. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2005. 301-317. Print.

Lenz, Günther H. “Redefinitions of Citizenship and Revisions of Cosmopolitanism – Transnational Perspectives.” *The Journal of Transnational American Studies* 3.1 (2011): 4-17. eScholarship. Web. 6 Aug. 2011.

Leonardo, Zeus. “After the Glow: Race Ambivalence and Other Educational Prognoses.” *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 43.6 (2011). Print.

Leong, Russell. *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of Gay and Lesbian Experience*. New York: Routledge, 1996. Print.

Levy, Daniel, and Natan Sznaider. "Cosmopolitan Memory and Human Rights." *The Ashgate Research Companion to Cosmopolitanism*. Eds. Maria Rovisco and Magdalena Nowicka. Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011. 199-209. Print.

---. *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2006. Print.

---. "Memory Unbound: the Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory." *European Journal of Social Theory* 5.1 (2002): 87-106. Print.

Levy, Debbie. *The Vietnam War*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner, 2004. Print.

Lie, John, and Nancy Abelmann. "American Ideologies on Trial." *Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and the Los Angeles Riots*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard UP. 148-180. Print.

Lim, Shirley Geork-Lin, John Blair Gamber, Stephen Hong Sohn, and Gina Valentino. Introduction. *Transnational Asian American Literature: Sites and Transits*. Ed. Lim, Gamber, Sohn, and Valentino. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2006. Print.

Lin, Jan. *The Power of Urban Ethnic Places: Cultural Heritage and Community Life.* New York: Routledge, 2011. Print.

---. *Reconstructing Chinatown: Ethnic Enclave, Global Change*. Minneapolis, MN: U of Minnesota P, 1998. Print.

Lin, Maya. *Maya Lin: Systematic Landscapes*. Seattle, WA: Henry Art Gallery, U of Washington, 2006. Print.

Ling, Amy. "Teaching Asian American Literature." *The Heath Anthology of American Literature Newsletter*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University, 1993. Web. 9 June 2014.

Liu, Laura Y. “Black Slates and Disaster Zone: The State, September 11, and the Displacement of Chinatown.” *Indefensible Space: The Architecture of the National Insecurity State*. Ed. Michael Sorkin. New York: Routledge, 2008. 163-176. Print.

Liu, Miles Xian, ed. *Asian American Playwrights: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2002. Print.

Luckhurst, Mary, and Emilie Morin, eds. *Theatre and Ghosts: Materiality, Performance and Modernity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Print.

Lui, Mary Ting Yi. *The Chinatown Trunk Mystery: Murder, Miscegenation, and Other Dangerous Encounters in Turn-of-the-Century New York City*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2007. Print.

Longley, Kyle. *Grunts: The American Combat Soldier in Vietnam*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2008.

Lott, Eric. “The New Cosmopolitanism: Whose America?” *Transition* 6.72 (1996): 108-135. Print.

Lowe, Lisa. *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1996. Print.

Lui, Mary Ting Lui. *The Chinatown Trunk Mystery: Murder, Miscegenation, and Other Dangerous Encounters in Turn-of-the-Century New York City*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2005. Print.

Lum, Lydia. “The Obama Era: A Post-racial Society?” *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*. 2 Feb. 2009. Web. 12 Dec. 2013.

Maffi, Mario. *Gateway to the Promised Land: Ethnic Cultures on New York's Lower East Side*. New york: New York UP, 1995. Print.

Maira, Sunaina Marr. “Planet Youth: Asian American Youth Cultures, Citizenship, and Globalization.” *Asian American Studies after Critical Mass*. Ed. Kent A. Ono. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005. 144-165. Print.

Malkin, Jeanette R. *Memory-theater and Postmodern Drama*. Michigan, MI: U of Michigan P, 1999. Print.

Manalansan, Martin F., IV. “A Gay World Make-Over: An Asian American Queer Critique.” *Asian American Studies after Critical Mass*. Ed. Kent A. Ono. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005. 98-110. Print.

Mayaram, Shail. “Rereading global cities: topographies of an alternative cosmopolitanism in Asia.” *The Other Global City*. Ed. Mayaram. New York: Routledge, 2009. 1-32. Print.

Marshall, Kathryn. *In the Combat Zone: An Oral History of American Women in Vietnam, 1966-1975*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1987. Print.

Massey, Doreen. *For Space*. London: SAGE, 2005. Print.

---. “Geographies of Responsibility.” *Geografiska Annaler*: *Series B, Human Geography* 86.1 (2004): 5-18. Print.

---. “Politics and Space/Time.” *New Left Review* 196 (1992): 65-84. Print.

Matthews, Julie. “Eurasian Persuasions: Mixed Race, Performativity and Cosmopolitanism.” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28.1 (2007): 41-54. Print.

Ma-Yi Theatre Company. “About.” *Ma-Yi Theatre Company*, 2012. Web. 22 Feb 2013.

May, Stephen, and Christine E. Sleeter. “Introduction: Critical Multiculturalism: Theory and Praxis.” *Critical Multiculturalism: Theory and Praxis*. New York: Routledge, 2010. 1-16. Print.

Mayaram, Shail. “Rereading Global Cities: Topographies of an Alternative Cosmopolitanism in Asia.” *The Other Global City*. Ed. Mayaram. New York: Routledge, 2009. 1-32. Print.

Mcwhorter, John. “It's official: America Is 'Post-Racial' in the Age of Obama.” *The Grio*. 14 Jan. 2010. Web. 12 Dec. 2013.

Mellor, Anne K. “Embodied Cosmopolitanism and the British Romantic Woman Writer.” *European Romantic Review* 17.3 (2006): 289-300. Print.

Meloney, William Brown. “Slumming in New York’s Chinatown: Glimpse into Underworld of Mott-Street Quarter.” *New Zealand Herald* 46.14211 (1909): 5. Print.

Memran, Michelle. “Theater; Annals of Asia in America, in Small Bites.” Rev. of *The Square, dir*. Lisa Peterson. *New York Times* 28 Oct 2001. Web. 5 March 2013.

Mendelsohn, Joyce. *The Lower East Side Remembered and Revisited: A History and Guide to a Legendary New York Neighborhood*. New York: Columbia UP, 2009. Print.

Mills, Charles W. *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1997. Print.

Min, Pyong Gap. “Asian Immigration: History and Contemporary Trends.” *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*. Ed. Pyong G. Min. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge, 2006. 7-31. Print.

---. “Koreans: An ‘Institutionally Complete Community’ in New York.” 173-200. *New Immigrants in New York*. Ed. Nancy Foner. New York: Columbia UP, 2001.

Minear, Richard H. Introduction. *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*. Ed. and trans. Richard H. Minear. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1990. 3-17. Print

Minetor, Randi. *New York Immigrant Experience: A Guided Tour through History*. Guilford, CT: GPP, 2010. Print.

Minow, Martha. “From Class Actions to ‘Miss Saigon’: The Concept of Representation in the Law.” *Representing Women: Law, Literature, and Feminism*. Eds. Susan Sage Heinzelman and Zipporah Batsjaw Wiseman. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1994. Print. 8-43.

Motzkin, Gabriel. “The Memory of Crime and the Formation of Identity.” *The Lesser Evil: Moral Approaches to Genocide Practices*. Eds. Helmut Dubiel and Motzkin. London: Routledge, 2004. 296-210. Print.

Moyar, Mark. “Vietnam: Historians at War.” *Academic Questions* 21.1 (2008): 37-51. Print.

Nakamura, Yuka. “Playing in Chinatown: A Critical Discussion of the Nation/Sport/Citizen Triad.” R*ace and Sport in Canada: Intersecting Inequalities*. Eds. Janelle Joseph, Simon Darnell, and Yuka Nakamura. Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press. 213-236. Print.

Nakashima, Cynthia L. “Asian American Studies through (Somewhat) Asian Eyes: Integrating ‘Mixed-Race’ into the Asian American Discourse.” *Asian American Studies after Critical Mass*. Ed. Kent A. Ono. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005. 111-120. Print.

Nashashibi, Rami. “Ghetto Cosmopolitanism: making Theory at the Margins.” *Deciphering the Global: Its Scales, Spaces, and Subjects*. Ed. Saskia Sassen. New York: Routledge, 2007. 243-264. Print.

National Air and Space Museum. “The Crossroads: The End of World War II, The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War.” *Judgment at the Smithsonian*. Ed. Philip Nobile. New York: Marlowe and Company, 1995. 1-126. Print.

Nayak, Anoop. “After Race: Ethnography, Race and Post-Race Theory.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29.3 (2006): 411-430. Print.

Nelson, Brian, ed. *Asian American Drama: 9 Plays from the Multiethnic Landscape*. New York: Applause, 1997. Print.

Nemoto, Kumiko. *Racing Romance: Love, Power, and Desire among Asian American/White Couples*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2009.

Nevius, Michelle, and James Nevius. *Inside the Apple: A Streetwise History of New York City*. New York: Free, 2009. Print.

Newman, John, and Ann Hilfinger. *Vietnam War Literature: An Annotated Bibliography of Imaginative Works about Americans Fighting in Vietnam*. 2nd ed. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1988. Print.

Nguyen, Viet Thanh. "Remembering War, Dreaming Peace: On Cosmopolitanism, Compassion, and Literature." *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 20 (2009): 149-174. Print.

Notar, Beth E. "Producing Cosmopolitanism at the Borderlands: Lonely Planeteers and 'Local' Cosmopolitans in Southwest China." *Anthropological Quarterly* 81.3 (2008): 615-50. Print.

Okamura, Jonathan Y. "Barack Obama as the Post-Racial Candidate for a Post-Racial America: Perspectives from Asian America and Hawai'i." *Obama and Race: History, Culture, and Politics*. Spec. issue of *Patterns of Prejudice* 45.1&2 (2011): 133-153. Print.

Ono, Kent A. "Asian American Studies in Its Second Phase." *Asian American Studies after Critical Mass*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005. 1-16. Print.

Ono, Kent A, and Vincent N. Pham. *Asian Americans and the Media*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2009. Print.

Palumbo-Liu, David. "Assumed Identities." *New Literary History* 31.4 (2000): 765-780. Print.

Pao, Angela C. *No Safe Spaces: Re-casting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater*. Ann Arbor, MI: U of Michigan P, 2010. Print.

Park, Kyeyoung. “Use and Abuse of Race and Culture: Black-Korean Tension in America.” *American Anthropologist* 98.3 (1996): 492-199. Print.

Park, Jinim. “Women and the Vietnam War.” *Narratives of the Vietnam War by Korean and American Writers*. New York: Peter Lang, 2007. 35-75. Print.

Park, Samuel. *The Performance of Race in Asian American Drama*. Diss. U of Southern California, 2006. Ann Arbor: UMI, 2006. Print.

Patricia, Nicholas A. “To Mexico, with Love.” Interviewed with Lucia Mauro. *Chicago Magazine*. Oct. 2007. Web. 13 Jan. 2013.

Perlmann, Joel, and Mary C. Waters. Introduction. *The New Race Question: How the Census Counts Multiracial Individuals*. Eds. Perlmann and Waters. 1-30. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002. Print.

Peterson, Eric E. “Narrative Identity in a Solo Performance: Craig Gingrich-Philbrook's ‘The First Time.’” *Narrative Inquiry* 10.1 (2000): 229-251. Print.

Peterson, Lisa. “Artist’s Statement.” *The Square*. *Version 3.0: Contemporary Asian American Plays*. Ed. Yew. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2011. 556-58. Print.

Powell, John. “New York, New York.” *Encyclopedia of North American Immigration*. Powell. New York: Facts on File, 2005. 207-210. Print.

---. "Post-Racialism or Targeted Universalism?" *Denver University Law Review* 86.1 (2009): 785-806. Print.

Rapport, Nigel. “A Cosmopolitan Turn?” *Social Anthropology* 15.2 (2007): 223-226. Print.

---. “Towards a Cosmopolitan Morality.” *Social Anthropology* 15.2 (2007): 230-231. Print.

Rayner, Alice. *Ghosts: Death's Double and the Phenomena of Theatre*. Minneapolis, MI: U of Minnesota P, 2006. Print.

Reef, Catherine. *African Americans in the Military*. New York: Facts on File, 2010.

Renn, Kristen A. *Mixed Race Students in College: The Ecology of Race, Identity, and Community on Campus*. Albany, NY: State U of New York Press, 2004. Print.

“Reverend Kiyoshi Tanimoto.” *This Is Your Life*. *NBC*. New York, 11 May 1955. Television.

Reynolds, Craig J. *Seditious Histories: Contesting Thai and Southeast Asian Pasts*. Seattle, WA: U of Washington Press, 2006. Print.

Rhee, Margaret. “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Identity.” *Encyclopedia of Asian American Issues Today*. Vol. 1. Eds. Edith Wen-Chu Chen and Grace J. Yoo. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2010. 425-435. Print.

Rockquemore, Kerry Ann, and David L. Brunsma. *Beyond Black: Biracial Identity in America*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002. Print.

Rody, Caroline. *The Interethnic Imagination: Roots and Passages in Contemporary Asian American Fiction*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009. Print.

Román, David. “Log Angeles Intersections: Chay Yew.” *The Color of Theater: Race, Culture, and Contemporary Performance*. Eds. Roberta Uno and Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns. London: Continuum, 2002. Print. 237-252.

---. Introduction. *The Hyphenated American: Four Plays.* Chay Yew. New York: Grove, 2002. xi-xvi. Print.

Root, Maria P. P. “The Biracial Baby Boom: Understanding Ecological Constructions of Racial Identity in the 21 Century.” *Racial and Ethnic Identity in School Practices: Aspects of Human Developments*. Eds. Rosa H. Sheets and Etta R. Hollins. 67-89. Mahwah, NJ: 1999. Print.

---. “Factors Influencing the Variation in Racial and Ethnic Identity of Mixed-Heritage Persons of Asian Ancestry.” *The Sum of Our Parts: Mixed-Heritage Asian Americans*. Eds. Teresa Williams-León and Cynthia L. Nakashima. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001. 61-70. Print.

---. “Within, between, and beyond Race.” *Racially Mixed People in America*. Ed. Maria P. P. Root. Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publications, 1992. 3-11. Print.

Roy, Ananya. “Global Histories: A New Repertoire of Cities.” *New Global History and the City*. Ed. Elliott Morss. Newton Center, MA: New Global History Press, 2004. Web. 7 May 2014.

Runion, Diana. “‘Walls’ Helps Break Down Divisions Between Us.” Rev. of *Walls*, dir. Ray Newman. *Stockton Record* 20 June 1993. *Asian American Theater Revue*. Web. 16 Oct 2012.

Ryan, Maureen. *The Other Side of Grief: The Home Front and the Aftermath in American Narratives of the Vietnam War*. Massachusetts, MA: U of Massachusetts P, 2008. Print.

Ryoo, Hye-Kyuung. “Achieving Friendly Interactions: A Study of Service Encounters between Korean Shopkeepers and African American Customers.” *Discourse & Society* 16.1 (2005): 79-105. Print.

Sakamoto, Arthur, and Yu Xie. "The Socioeconomic Attainments of Asian Americans." *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*. Ed. Pyong G. Min. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge, 2006. 54-77. Print.

Salih, Sara. *Judith Butler*. London: Routledge, 2002. Print.

Samuels, Robert. *Teaching the Rhetoric of Resistance: The Popular Holocaust and Social Change in a Post-9/11 World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print.

Sanders, Ronald. *The Lower East Side: A Guide to Its Jewish Past with 99 New Photographs*. New York: Dover Publications, 1979. Print.

Sato, Gayle K. "Asian American Literary History: War Memory, and Representation." *Asian American Literary Studies*. Ed. Guiyou Huang. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2005. 15-40. Print.

Schultermandl, Silvia, and Sebnem Toplu. "A Fluid Sense of Self: The Politics of Transnational Identity in Anglophone Literatures." *A Fluid Sense of Self: The Politics of Transnational Identity*. Eds. Silvia Schultermandl and Sebnem Toplu. Wien: Lit, 2010. 11-24. Print.

Scruggs, Jan C., and Joel L. Swerdlow. *To Heal a Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. New York: Harper and Row, 1985. Print.

Sedgwick, Eve K. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia UP, 1985. Print.

Seldon, Mark. "The United States, Japan, and the Atomic Bomb." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 23.1 (1991): 3-12. Web. 16 Jan 2013.

Sexton, Jared. "Proprieties of Coalition: Blacks, Asians, and the Politics of Policing." Critical Sociology 36.1 (2010): 87-108. Print.

Shih, Shu-mei. “Comparative Racialization: An Introduction.” Comparative Racialization. Spec. issue of *PLMA* 123.5 (2008): 1347-1362. Print.

Shimakawa, Karen. *National Abjection: The Asian American Body Onstage*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2002.

Sitz, Kend, and Bill Geerhar. “Hiroshima: This Is Your Life.” *Conelrad Adjacent*. 6 Aug. 2012. Web. 12 Jan. 2013.

Skrbis, Zlatko, and Ian Woodward. “The Ambivalence of Ordinary Cosmopolitanism: Investigating the Limits of Cosmopolitan Openness.” *The Sociological Review*. 55.4 (2007): 730-747. Print.

---. “Cosmopolitan Openness.” *The Ashgate Research Companion to Cosmopolitanism*. Eds. Maria Rovisco and Magdalena Nowicka. Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011. 53-68. Print.

Smith, Susan Valeria Harris. *Masks in Modern Drama*. Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1984. Print.

Sobré-Denton, Miriam, and Nilanjana Bardhan. *Cultivating Cosmopolitanism for Intercultural Communication: Communicating as Global Citizens*. New York: Routledge, 2013. Print.

Song, Miri. *Choosing Ethnic Identity*. Malden, MA: Polity, 2003. Print.

Stacey, Jackie. “Whose Cosmopolitanism?” *Whose Cosmopolitanism? Launch Festival for Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures*. Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures. 1-3. Jan. 2009. Web. 8 Mar. 2011.

Stephens, Gregory. *On Racial Frontier: The New Culture of Frederick Douglass, Ralph Ellison, and Bob Marley*. Cambridge, UK: U of Cambridge, 1999. Print.

Stur, Heather M. *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2011. Print.

---. *Dragon Ladies, Gentle Warriors, and Girls Next Door: Gender and Ideas that Shaped the Vietnam War*. Diss. U of Wisconsin-Madison, 2008. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 2008. Print.

Sturken, Marita. *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the Aids Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1997. Print.

---. "The Wall, the Screen and the Image: The Vietnam War Memorial." *The Visual Culture Reader*. Ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff. London: Routledge, 2002. 357-370. Print.

Stutzin, Leo. "*Walls* Cathartic Drama at War Memorial." Rev. of *Walls*, dir. Ray Newman. *Modesto Bee* 18 January 1994. *Asian American Theater Revue*. Web. 16 Oct 2012.

Sollors, Werner. *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture*. New York: Oxford UP, 1986. Print.

Sumida, Stephen H. "Immigration, Diaspora, Transnationalism, and the Native – The Many-Mouthed Bird of Asian/Pacific American Literature in the Early Twenty-First Century." *EurAmerica* 40.2 (2010): 359-92. Print.

Sun, William H. "Power and Problems of Performance across Ethnic Lines: An Alternative Approach to Non-Traditional Casting." *TDR* 44.4 (2000): 86-95. Print.

Suranyi, Anna. "Irish Famine and Starvation." *Disasters, Accidents, and Crises in American History: A Reference Guide to the Nation's Most Catastrophic Events*. Ed. Ballard C. Campbell. New York: Facts On File, 2008. 89-91. Print.

Takagi, Dana Y. "Maiden Voyage: Excursion into Sexuality and Identity Politics in Asian America." Amerasia Journal 23.1 (1997): 1-17. Print.

Tal, Kalí. "Between the Lines: Reading the Vietnam War." *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1996. Print.

Tan, Joël B. Introduction to “Communication: A Collaboration on AIDS.” *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of the Gay and Lesbian Experience.* Ed. Russell Leong. New York: Routledge, 1996. Print

Tarrow, Sidney G. “Rooted Cosmopolitans and Transnational Activists.” *The New Transnational Activism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 35-58. Print.

Tchen, John Kuo Wei. *New York Before Chinatown: Orientalism and the Shaping of American Culture, 1776-1882*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1999. Print.

---. "Quimbo Appo's Fear of Fenians: Chinese-Irish-Anglo Relations in New York City." *The New York Irish*. Eds. Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP. 125-152. Print.

Thompson, Krissah Williams. “I’m Not Post-Racial.” *The Washington Post*. *The Washington Post Company*. 30 November 2008. Web. 14 Aug. 2012.

Thomsen, Mads Rosendahl. Thomsen, Mads Rosendahl. “Ethics and Aesthetics in Traumatic Literature.” *Mapping World Literature: International Canonization and Transnational Literatures*. London: Continuum, 2008. 103-138. Print.

Tihanov, Galin. “Whose Cosmopolitanism?” *Whose Cosmopolitanism? Launch Festival for Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures*. Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures. Jan. 2009. Web. 8 Mar. 2011.

Time. “Top 10 Everything of 2011: Plays and Musicals.” *Time*. Web. 13 Dec. 2012.

Tuan, Mia. *Forever Foreigners or Honorary Whites?: The Asian Ethnic Experience Today*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1998. Print.

Uno, Roberta. “Elizabeth Wong.” *Unbroken Thread: An Anthology of Plays by Asian American Women*. Amherst, MA: U of Massachusetts P, 1993. 261-265. Print.

---. “Introduction: Asian American Theatre Awake at the Millennium.” *Bold Words: A Century of Asian American Writing*. Eds. Rajinia Srikanth and Esther Y. Iwanaga. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2001. 323-332. Print.

---. “Velina Hasu Houston.” *Unbroken Thread: An Anthology of Plays by Asian American Women*. Amherst, MA: U of Massachusetts P, 1993. 155-160. Print.

---. “Jeannie Barroga.” *Unbroken Thread: An Anthology of Plays by Asian American Women*. Amherst, MA: U of Massachusetts P, 1993. 201-205. Print.

---. “Introduction: Asian American Theatre Awake at the Millennium.” *Bold Words: A Century of Asian American Writing*. Eds. Rajinia Srikanth and Esther Y. Iwanaga. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2001. 323-332. Print.

Urry, John. *Consuming Places*. London: Routledge, 1995. Print.

U.S. Census Bureau. “The Two or More Races Population: 2000.” Washington: U.S. Census Bureau. *n.p.* Web. 12 Sept. 2011.

Usui, Masami, and Miles Xian Liu. “Velina Hasu Houston.” *Asian American Playwrights: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*. Ed. Miles Xian Liu. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2002. 103-120. Print.

Valluvan. Sivamohan. “Cosmopolitanism and Intelligibility.” *Whose Cosmopolitanism? Launch Festival for Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures*. Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures. Jan. 2009. 1-5. Web. 26 Sep. 2012.

Vertovec, Steven. “Super-diversity and Its Implication.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30.6 (2007): 1024-1054. Print.

Vertovec, Steven, and Robin Cohen. “Introduction: Conceiving Cosmopolitanism.” *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice*. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 2002. 1-22. Print.

Victory Garden Theatre. “About Victory Gardens Theatre.” *Victory Gardens Theatre*, 2012. Web.

Vieten, Ulrike M. “Situating Contemporary Discourses on Cosmopolitanism in Britain and Germany: Who Is the Other, Anyway?” 89-114. *The Cause of Cosmopolitanism: Dispositions, Models, Transformations*. Patrick O’Donovan and Laura Rascaroli eds. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2010.

Vuic, Kara Dixon. *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2010. Print.

Wacquant, Lois J. D. “Red Belt, Black Belt: Racial Division, Class Inequality and The State in the French Urban Periphery and the American Ghetto.” *Urban Poverty and the Underclass: A Reader*. Ed. Enzo Mingione. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1996. 234–74. Print.

Wald, Gayle. *Crossing the Line: Racial Passing in Twentieth-Century U.S. Literature and Culture*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2000. Print.

Warmington, Paul. “Taking Race Out of Scare Quotes: Race-Conscious Social Analysis in an Ostensibly Post-Racial World.” *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 12.3 (2009): 281-296. Print.

Werbner, Pnina. “Global Pathways: Working Class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds.” *Social Anthropology* 7 (1999): 17-35. Print.

---. “Introduction: Towards a New Cosmopolitan Anthropology.” *Anthropology and the New Cosmopolitanism: Rooted, Feminist and Vernacular Perspectives*. Ed. Pnina Werbner. Oxford, UK: Berg, 2008. 1-29. Print.

---. “Vernacular Cosmopolitanism.” *Theory, Culture & Society* 23 (2006): 2-3. Print.

Werbner, Richard. “Cosmopolitan Ethnicity, Entrepreneurship and the Nation: Minority Elites in Botswana.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 28.4 (2002): 731-753. Print.

---. *Reasonable Radicals and Citizenship in Botswana: The Public Anthropology of Kalanga Elites*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. 2004.

---. “Responding to Rooted Cosmopolitanism: Patriots, Ethnics and the Public Good in Botswana.” *Anthropology and the New Cosmopolitanism: Rooted, Feminist and Vernacular Perspectives*. Ed. Pnina Werbner. Oxford, UK: Berg, 2008. 173-196. Print.

West, Candace, and Don Zimmerman. “Doing Gender.” *The Social Construction of Gender*. Eds. Judith Lorber and Susan A. Farrell. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991. Print.

West, Philip, Steven I. Levine, and Jackie Hiltz. Introduction. *America's Wars in Asia: A Cultural Approach to History and Memory*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997. 3-26. Print.

White, E. B. “Here Is New York.” *Empire City: New York through the Centuries*. Eds. Kenneth Terry Jackson and David S. Dunbar. New York: Columbia UP, 2005. 615-711. Print.

Williams, Kim M. “Linking the Civil Rights and Multicultural Movements.” *The Politics of Multiracialism: Challenging Racial Thinking*. Ed. Heather M. Dalmage. 77-97. Albany, NY: State U of New York P, 2004. Print.

Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 1977.

Williams, Teresa Kay. “The Theatre of Identity: (Multi-)Race and Representation of Eurasians and Afroasians.” *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdivleyersity*. Ed. Naomi Zack. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995. Print. 79-96.

---. “Race-ing and Being Raced: the Critical Interrogation of ‘Passing.’” *Amerasia Journal* 23.1 (1997): 61-65. Print.

Williams-León, Teresa, and Cynthia L. Nakashima. “Reconfiguring Race, Rearticulating Ethnicity.” *The Sum of Our Parts: Mixed-Heritage Asian Americans*. Eds. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001. 3-10. Print.

Winant, Howard. *The New Politics of Race: Globalism, Difference, Justice*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2004. Print. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 1977. Print.

Wong, Elizabeth. “Elizabeth Wong.” Interview with Alexis Greene. *Women who Write Plays: Interviews with American Dramatists*. Greene. Hanover, NH: Smith and Kraus, 2001. 494-515. Print.

Wong, Sau-ling C. “Denationalization Reconsidered: Asian American Cultural Criticism at a Theoretical Crossroads.” *Amerasia Journal* 21.1 & 2 (1995): 1-27.

Wong, Sau-ling C., and Jeffrey J. Santa Ana. *Gender and Sexuality in Asian American Literature*. *Signs* 25.1 (1999): 171-226. Print.

Wright, Luther, Jr. “Who’s Black, Who’s White, and Who Cares: Reconceptualizing the United States’ Definition of Race and Racial Classification.” *Mixed Race America and the Law: A Reader*. Ed. Kevin R. Johnson. VNew York: New York UP, 2003. 181-183. Print.

Xing, Jun. *Asian American through the Lens: History, Representation, and Identities*. Oxford, UK: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998. Print.

Yeoh, Brenda S. A., and Weiqiang Lin. “Cosmopolitanism in Cities and Beyond.” *Routledge International Handbook of Cosmopolitan Studies*. Ed. Delanty Gerard. Hoboken, UK: Taylor and Francis, 2012. 208-219. Print.

Yew, Chay. Introduction. *The Square*. *Version 3.0: Contemporary Asian American Plays*. Ed. Yew. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2011. ix-xxvii. Print.

Yoon, In-jin. *On My Own: Korean Businesses and Race Relations in America*. Chicago, IL: U of Chicago P, 1997. Print.

Young, Alvin L. *The History, Use, Disposition and Environmental Fate of Agent Orange*. New York: Springer, 2009. Print.

Young, Joseph A. and Jana E. Braziel. “Introduction: Cultural Amnesia and the Academy – Why the Problem of the Twenty-First Century Is Still the “Problem of the Color-Line.” *Race and the Foundations of Knowledge: Cultural Amnesia in the Academy*. Eds. Young and Braziel. Urbana, IL: U of Illinois P, 2006. 1-31. Print.

Zack, Naomi, ed. *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdiversity*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995. Print.

---. “Life after Race.” *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdiversity*. Zack 297-307.

---. Preface. *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdiversity*. Zack ix-xi.

---. Preface. *Mixing It Up: Multiracial Subjects*. Eds. Kwan and Speirs. Austin, TX: U of Texas Press, 2004. ix-xii. Print.

---. *Race and Mixed Race*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 1993. Print.

Zhou, Xiaojing. “Introduction: Critical Theories and Methodologies in Asian American Literary Studies.” *Form and Transformation in Asian American Literature*. Eds. Zhou and Samina Najmi. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2005. 3-29. Print.

Zia, Helen. “Gansters, Gooks, Geisha, and Geeks.” *Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2000. 109-130. Print.