MAKING THE AAPI PERSPECTIVES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Remembering a Place-Based Social History of Activism in Santa Clara Valley

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Abstract. This article examines the AAPI Perspectives: Oral History and Activism Digital Archive and Curriculum Project (2021–2024), which redirected county funding from carceral "hate crime" initiatives to community-based oral history. The article proceeds in three parts: first, it contextualizes the project's genesis in the early 2020s; second, it analyzes the project's oral history interviews to show how these AAPI social histories took actual place in Santa Clara Valley (1840s–present); and third, it argues that these overlapping regional histories facilitated an intergenerational, multiethnic spatial politics that catalyzed various activisms, which seeded social movements, advanced Asian American studies, and challenged the model minority myth. Together, these analyses highlight the potential of grassroots organizing and oral history to generate community-centered narratives that echo the founding vision of Asian American studies as a field committed to "serving the people." AAPI Perspectives reframes AAPI pasts while modeling how communities can reclaim, preserve, and mobilize their histories in the pursuit of justice.

INTRODUCTION

Santa Clara Valley and its place-based histories reside at the center of this project.[1] Situated in the southern part of the San Francisco Bay Area, the region is widely recognized today as a multiracial, multiethnic hub. Its various names—the "Valley of Heart's Delight" and later "Silicon Valley"—reflect political economic shifts during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[2] Unsurprisingly, its indigenous histories run deeper, as the region marks the ancestral lands of the Ohlone, Muwekma, Ramaytush, Amah Mutsun, Tamien, and Awaswas peoples.[3] Beginning in the eighteenth century, settler colonialism and racial capitalism transformed the region. In 1777, San José became the first official settlement in Spanish-colonized California.[4] Mexico's declaration of independence from Spain in 1821 began an era of Mexican rule until U.S. conquest in 1848.[5] That same year, the Gold Rush drew an influx of settlers, and in 1850, California entered the Union with San José as its first state capital.[6] Over the following century, successive waves of immigrants—including French, German, Portuguese, and Swiss-Italian settlers from Europe, alongside Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino migrant laborers—shaped the valley's agricultural economy as tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and farmworkers.[7] This agrarian landscape persisted until the mid-twentieth century, when suburban tract housing and urban development began to replace the orchards and other farmland. These demographic shifts have generated a rich body of scholarship on communities of color. For example, Stephen Pitti's study of Latino presence in nineteenth-century Santa Clara Valley reinterprets labor and race relations of that era and offers a comparative frame that situates Asian migration within longer histories of racialized labor and community formation.[8]

Later, the Valley's post–World War II rebranding as "Silicon Valley" offers key insights into Asian American history.[9] San José Japantown's Japanese American population would surpass its pre-war demographics because of the proliferation of mutual aid and housing.[10] Then, the 1965 Immigration Act lifted national quotas and restrictions, opening new flows of migration, especially from Asia: some came with limited resources, reuniting with family members who had been separated by exclusionary laws, while others entered with H1B or development visas, forming part of the professional managerial class that fueled the region's first tech boom. In subsequent decades, the Valley also became a resettlement hub for Southeast Asian refugees, making San José one of the nation's largest Vietnamese diasporas.[11]

Today, Santa Clara County is *hella* Asian and immigrant. In 2021, over 760,000 immigrants—40.6 percent of the county's residents—originated from

India (18.1 percent), Mexico (15.7 percent), Vietnam (13 percent), China (12.1 percent), and the Philippines (6.9 percent).[12] According to the 2020 Census, Santa Clara County has the second largest Asian American population in California (over 750,000), after Los Angeles County.[13] Some families in the region trace their histories back six generations, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI)[14] now comprise more than 35 percent of the county's total population—making them the largest racially minoritized group in the Valley. However, official historical narratives of the region have largely overlooked AAPI experiences and contributions.[15] In the early 2020s, the global COVID-19 pandemic, accompanied by a proliferation of anti-Asian stereotypes and resurgent discourse around anti-Asian violence, brought this narrative scarcity under renewed scrutiny. This moment created new opportunities for local advocates to intervene, using oral history to reshape both educational and historiographical understandings of the region.

In June 2021, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors allocated nearly half a million dollars to launch the AAPI Perspectives Oral History and Activism Digital Archive and Curriculum Project.[16] Emerging from the advocacy of a community advisory board of local organizers and leaders, AAPI Perspectives centers the oral histories of community figures in Santa Clara Valley. The advisory board strategically leveraged county priorities around addressing anti-AAPI "hate" to secure public funding for an educational initiative grounded in community needs.

Building on a growing body of place-specific studies at the intersection of ethnic studies and geography, this article situates AAPI Perspectives within the political economy of Santa Clara Valley—particularly the successive waves of agricultural, urban, and suburban development that reshaped the region across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the roles of AAPI communities in those transformations.[17] This article proceeds in three parts: first by contextualizing the project's genesis in the early 2020s; second, by offering a thematic analysis of its oral histories to narrate a social history of AAPI communities in the Valley; and third, by contending that these overlapping histories facilitated an intergenerational, multiethnic spatial politics that, in turn, catalyzed various activisms that seeded social movements, advanced Asian American studies, and challenged the model minority myth. By memorializing both the violences of dispossession and racialization, as well as the traditions of activism and resistance that have defined AAPI life in the region since the nineteenth century, this project reframes contemporary attention to COVID-era "hate" within a longer genealogy and plurality of structural and interpersonal violence that shape AAPI life chances. These oral histories of placemaking, struggle, and resistance position Santa Clara Valley as a critical site for understanding AAPI community formation from the nineteenth century to the present.

Finally, this article offers a reflection on how this project's place-based activist lessons interrupt reductive, overdetermined "model minority" representations of AAPI communities—a genealogy that traces back to the Cold War era.[18] A particular place-based ideological formation of the model minority myth narrates "Silicon Valley Asian-ness" as a class of highly educated, highly skilled, high-technology professionals, executives, and entrepreneurs.[19] By contrast, the broader historical constellation of AAPI histories in Santa Clara Valley complicates, distends, and problematizes these narrow representations, ultimately repudiating the model minority myth as part of an urgent ideological struggle in the region. Collectively, these oral histories advance a social history of Santa Clara Valley animated by the "serve the people" ethos that inspired the founding Asian American studies. In doing so, the project not only recuperates AAPI histories long excluded from official narratives but also reimagines how these pasts can generate new possibilities for our shared present and future through the principles, values, and commitments of Asian American studies.

MAKING THE AAPI PERSPECTIVES PROJECT

The mass shootings at an Atlanta spa on March 16, 2021, marked a culminating point in the surge of anti-AAPI violence nationwide and across the Bay Area from 2020 to 2021.[20] Between March and December 2020 alone, San José residents reported fifty-eight targeted incidents or crimes to the San Francisco-based organization Stop AAPI Hate.[21] In response, community leaders in Santa Clara Valley sought to amplify stories that challenged model minority stereotypes and the passive "put-your-head-down-and-bear-it" mindset. To that end, Michele Lew, Alette Lundeberg, Connie Young Yu, Paul Fong, Victoria Taketa, Mike Honda, and Alice Kawazoe formed a grassroots community advisory board (CAB) to center AAPIs as protagonists in their own narratives through public education, outreach, and advocacy. Yu, Fong, Honda, Kawazoe, Taketa, and Lundeberg had been community organizers since the 1960s, advancing initiatives such as the founding of touchstone direct service organizations like Asian American Community Involvement (AACI) and advocating for educational and political representation. At the time, Lew, then CEO of AACI, had emerged as a prominent figure in leadership and systemic change across the San Francisco Bay Area. In seeking a primary investigator (PI), the CAB looked for someone whose scholarly expertise and community commitments aligned with the project's mission. Given the author's research experience and longstanding community engagement, she was recruited to lead the project.

Given the staggering loss of life during the pandemic, the CAB began strategizing ways to (1) amplify the experiences of community leaders in the Valley and (2) preserve the voices of elders. Drawing on their prior working relationship with Supervisor Otto Lee, the only Asian American serving on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors at the time, the CAB approached him to explore securing local government funding. This effort culminated in the AAPI Perspectives Oral History and Activism Digital Archive and Curriculum Project, which aligned with the Board's March 2021 recommendations to support education and community outreach in response to the surge of anti-AAPI violence.[22] Those recommendations included community "listening sessions," improved reporting and victim support for hate crimes and incidents, bystander intervention trainings, heightened law enforcement presence "to deter violence against Asian-owned and/or operated businesses," and educational initiatives.[23] Rejecting a reliance on punitive carceral measures, the CAB pressed for a more transformative response grounded in education and collective joy.

In June 2021, the Board approved recommendations for $495,650 to be contracted with San José State University (SJSU), under the guidance of the PI, to lead this project.[24] Importantly, this achievement did not simply reflect a top-down act of government benevolence but rather reflected grassroot organizing strategies. At that time, this mirrored nationwide efforts to advance educational outreach and historical reclamation (e.g., legislating ethnic studies requirements or developing curricular requirements on Asian American history) and stood as one among many local and regional initiatives that sought to humanize lived experiences in the wake of anti-Asian violence in the early 2020s.[25] Notably, AAPI Perspectives inspired related endeavors such as Storytellers of Santa Clara Valley: Asian American Oral Histories at De Anza College, SJSU's Asian American studies Founders Oral Histories, and oral history initiatives spearheaded by the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project (CHCP) in San José.

CONCEPTUALIZING ANTI-ASIAN VIOLENCE IN SANTA CLARA VALLEY

Building on the Asian American Movement's commitments to opposing capitalism, imperialism, and racism, this article frames the AAPI Perspectives oral history project in terms of anti-Asian racial violence and resistance in Santa Clara Valley through three interrelated conceptual lenses: (1) racial capitalism, (2) empire and war, and (3) systemic racism.[26] The thematic analysis of the project's oral history narratives spotlight how these overlapping social histories of AAPI

TABLE 1. TIMELINE FOR AAPI PERSPECTIVES PROJECT

Date	Event
March 16, 2021	Atlanta spa shootings
March 2021	Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors (BOS) issues priorities and recommendations on anti-Asian violence/hate.
March 2021	Community advisory board (CAB) forms. Its members include Michele Lew, Alette Lundeberg, Connie Young Yu, Paul Fong, Victoria Taketa, Mike Honda, and Alice Kawazoe.
March 2021	**REDACTED** at SJSU was recommended as the PI to lead and implement this initiative
April 2021	A proposal from the CAB is sent to BOS for consideration.
June 2021	BOS approves the proposal.
June 2021–August 2021	A few members of the CAB interview Yosh Uchida and Paul Sakamoto because of the narrators' failing health and age.
August 2021	A transfer of funds from the County to SJSU is approved.
August 2021	IRB exemption is granted based on the "oral histories" category.
September 2021	Contract negotiations between the County and SJSU Research Foundation (SJSURF) begins.
April 2022	Funds from the contract are received by SJSURF.
April 2022	Deliverable #1 is completed: Prepare research design and project workplan.
July 2022–March 2023	Deliverable #2 is completed: Administer interviews.
March 2023–May 2023	Deliverable #3 is completed: Analyze compiled data and prepare educational materials and videography.
May 2023–December 2023	Deliverable #4 is completed: Prepare educational outreach plan.
January 2024–June 2024	Deliverable #5 is complete: Launch outreach plan and disseminate videography and educational materials; submit final report to the County.
June 1, 2024	Public launch with the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj)

communities took place in the shifting political economy of Santa Clara Valley. The oral histories offer place-based insights to understand how racial capitalism, empire and war, and systemic racism unfolded in the everyday lives of AAPIs in the Valley and how they identified ways to challenge these structures.

Racial Capitalism

The analytic of racial capitalism frames our discussion of anti-Asian racial violence as geographically and historically specific formations of violence that have shaped the racial politics of Santa Clara Valley since the nineteenth century. To borrow from abolitionist geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore, racial capitalism can be summed up in one central principle: "Capitalism *requires* inequality, and racism *enshrines* it [inequality]."[27] The "racial" in "racial capitalism" should primarily be understood as a reminder that the hierarchies of inequality necessary for capitalist exploitation also require the production of racial difference.[28] A racial capitalist analytic also reminds us to not only consider anti-Asian violence in the totality of its relationships to broader structures of displacement, state violence, and systemic vulnerability but also avoid reductive narratives that confined anti-Asian "hate" to a narrowly defined set of legibly "racist" acts. Critiquing "AAPI hate" as a narrow framing that misconstrues what should be more precisely understood as anti-Asian racial *violence*, Dylan Rodríguez has underscored the distinction between the terms *hate* and *violence*.[29] The term *hate* oversimplifies the complex project of anti-Asian *violence* to individualized racist acts that appear to be aberrations in an otherwise equal, meritocratic, and democratic U.S. society. Rodríguez underscores the importance of focusing on the complexity of *violence*, to make visible the broader scale at which anti-Asian racial violence takes place in structures of displacement, state violence, and systemic vulnerability that are always already linked to chattel slavery, anti-Blackness, colonialisms, imperial war, heteronormativity, white supremacist patriarchy, and racial capitalism.

Empire and War

Formations of empire and war have undergirded the entrenchment and shifts of most major historical eras in the Anthropocene.[30] Specifically, *empire* and *war* offer useful categories of analysis for framing a discussion of how Asians ended up in the U.S. at all. As Sucheng Chan reminds us, "Asian emigration had as much to do with developments in Europe as it did with developments in the Americas or in Asia. Overseas migrations [were] part of their [Europe's] colonizing efforts in different parts of the world."[31] In other words, Asian migrations

cannot be divorced from the global imperial networks that shaped them through colonialism. The late Gary Okihiro articulated *imperialism* as a constellation of economic, political, and cultural discourses and material relations that produce "powers over peoples and, often, occupation of their lands and waters outside the borders of a nation-state."[32] Conceptualizing empire and war in a single analytical frame can disrupt the prevailing narratives of Asian American identity formation in the U.S., illuminating how global processes of imperial state violence undergird Asian American racial formation.[33]

Both racial capitalism and imperialism often work together in producing Asian racial difference. Accordingly, understanding the production of Asian racial difference in the U.S. requires a transnational analysis of the conditions that shaped Asians' arrivals in the U.S. A critical transnational perspective offers a better understanding of how racial capitalism and empire/war have structured migrations in the maintenance of a global system of capital and labor.[34] For Okihiro, Asians entered into the historical consciousness of European Americans long before the Manilamen in Louisiana or the Chinese in California.[35] Through the language of supremacy and mutually constitutive othering of indigenous inhabitants of Africa, Asia, and the Americas, such narratives of difference came to represent particular meanings and functions in a racial and racist context. The capitalist desire for profit and imperial ambitions for power produced the labor migration and exploitation of early Asian migrants.

Systemic Racism

Analyzing anti-Asian violence in Santa Clara Valley requires an understanding of racism at a structural and systemic scale. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva conceptualizes systemic racism as the broad array of social relations that structures racial advantages and disadvantages that constitute the U.S. racial order and all the people who take part in it.[36] Ruth Wilson Gilmore's oft-cited definition of racism reminds us to jump scale and consider "the state-sanctioned and/or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death."[37] For many Asian immigrants in nineteenth- and twentieth-century California, racism could not be reduced to individual, isolated acts of prejudice; rather, it structured everyday life through policies and practices that produced societal disadvantages and group-differentiated vulnerabilities to premature death for people racialized as Asian.

Through an analysis of the oral histories in the AAPI Perspectives project, this article situates AAPI community formations within the entanglements of racial capitalism—inseparable from empire, war, and systemic racism—and argue that AAPI Perspectives offer a significant social history of Santa Clara Valley.

These oral histories offer examples of how Asian racial difference and anti-Asian violence have been historically produced in the Valley and, at the same time, how AAPI communities have found ways to mobilize and resist. Collectively, the oral histories show not only how the interviewees narrate their experiences with racial capitalism, empire/war, and systemic racism—and the ways they manifest in through regimes of labor exploitation (racial capitalism), militarized migrations (war and empire), and structural, group-differentiated disadvantages (systemic racism)—but also how they organized, thought about, and practiced resistance to these violences.

METHODOLOGY

Oral history lies at the heart of the AAPI Perspectives project. Centering lived, place-based experiences, these narratives provide historical insight into how the Valley produced racial difference and violence—and how AAPI communities resisted and forged solidarities. Oral histories are important, especially in Asian American studies scholarship, because they offer a method to document non-hegemonic stories that may not exist outside of the official historical record.[38] However, far from being impartial or objective, oral history is subjective, unfinished, and partial. Indeed, oral histories are narratives shaped by the subjectivities of both sources and researchers.[39] As Portelli notes, "Oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did."[40] More than presenting an objective historical "truth" to replace some previously existing version, oral histories offer crucial insight into sources' subjectivities. Understanding that oral sources are subjective might help us contextualize the particular ways in which AAPI community leaders and activists in Santa Clara Valley reflected on their experiences participating in collective resistance to anti-Asian violence at different historical moments.

The AAPI Perspectives team members also brought in subjectivities that shaped the oral history project. The CAB selected people for interviews, created the interview questions, and framed how the project would be narrated to the public. Additionally, the AAPI Perspectives project's genesis in the early 2020s and its emphasis on resistance to anti-Asian violence shaped the questions, responses, and framing of the project's narratives. Similarly, this article analyzes the interviewees' interpretations to consider how Santa Clara Valley might have shaped their lives and experiences and, in doing so, necessarily takes on what Portelli calls a "partiality" in its search for thematic unity among the project's oral history interviews.[41]

Interviews and Narrators

AAPI Perspectives features nearly seventy hours of footage. From June 2021 through April 2023, the team conducted forty-seven semi-structured oral history interviews with thirty-three narrators. Guided by an interview framework, narrators recounted stories of family migration, hometown life, and activism in ways that foregrounded memory, voice, and interpretation. Research assistants prepared detailed dossiers for each participant, equipping interviewers to engage responsively and elicit layered accounts of activism, community building, and place-based belonging. This approach emphasized narrative depth over data extraction, allowing interlocutors to shape the direction and meaning of their own histories. Participant selection was led by the PI and Ellina Yin (project manager/creative director) in collaboration with the CAB, which identified key AAPI figures in Santa Clara County who had made significant contributions in education, politics, the arts, and community development. These recommendations relied on the CAB's collective networks and expertise. Because the initiative launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, some potential narrators were not included due to safety concerns; scheduling prioritized elders and those with health concerns.

The interview team was led by the PI and Yin. Guest interviewers Taketa, Yu, and Honda were invited to join participants who were particularly elderly, had limited memory recall, or had shared significant past experiences, to elicit unique stories and insights. Video-recorded interviews were conducted by Howard Lui and his staff at Breaking Sky Productions. The interviews with Paul Sakamoto and Yoshihiro Uchida were completed prior to receiving funding due to concerns regarding participant health.

Transcription and Analysis

The oral history interviews were transcribed by project assistant Nina Chuang and a team of high school research assistants. The videographer generated preliminary AI-based transcripts using Adobe, which the team then reviewed and revised for accuracy. The PI conducted an additional review of each transcript and coded the data using a combination of thematic analysis in ATLAS.ti and manual color-coding and labeling in spreadsheets. Four primary codes emerged from the analysis: (1) identity and narrative; (2) systems and power; (3) joy and cultural resistance; and (4) transformation and change. Additional subcodes, including but not limited to "Japanese Incarceration," "Vietnam War," and "Agriculture," were also applied.

TABLE 2. LIST OF SELECTED NARRATORS IN THE AAPI PERSPECTIVES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Narrator	Birth Year	Interviewer(s)	Interview Date(s)	Location
Yoshihiro "Yosh" Uchida	1920	Taketa, Honda	June 1, 2021; June 14, 2021; June 21, 2021; July 15, 2021	Saratoga, CA
Robert Ragsac	1931	PI, Yin, Taketa	August 17, 2022; September 27, 2022	San José, CA
Jeannette Arakawa	1932	PI, Yin, Taketa	July 22, 2022	Los Altos, CA
Loc Vu	1933	PI, Yin	March 7, 2023	San José, CA
Paul Sakamoto	1934	Taketa, Honda, Yu	July 8, 2021; July 19, 2021; July 22, 2021; August 19, 2021	San José, CA
Connie Young Yu	1941	PI, Yin, Taketa	January 24, 2023	Los Altos, CA
Corazón "Cora" Tomalinas	1944	PI, Yin	August 30, 2022	San José, CA
Dale Minami	1946	PI, Yin	February 28, 2023	San Francisco, CA
Victoria Taketa	1947	PI, Yin	April 3, 2023; April 13, 2023	San José, CA
Patti Jo "PJ" Hirabayashi	1950	PI, Yin, Taketa	January 31, 2023	San José, CA
Roy Hirabayashi	1951	PI, Yin, Taketa	March 15, 2023	San José, CA
Richard Konda	1951	PI, Yin	January 18, 2023	[Zoom] San José, CA
Susan Hayase	1956	PI, Yin	November 1, 2022; March 21, 2023	San José, CA
Tom Izu	1958	PI, Yin	November 3, 2022; March 21, 2023	San José, CA
Will Kaku	1960	PI, Yin, Taketa	November 15, 2022	San José, CA
Johnny Cepeda Gogo	1968	PI, Yin	January 16, 2023	San José, CA
Viet Thanh Nguyen	1971	PI	March 25, 2023	San José, CA
Ash Kalra	1972	PI, Yin	February 24, 2023	San José, CA
Betty Duong	1981	PI	March 28, 2023	San José, CA

Curriculum Development

Curricular development efforts were informed by the recognition that oral history recordings and interviews, while often collected and archived, remain underutilized. To address this gap, the team developed packaged modules that teachers across grade levels could readily adopt and adapt for classroom use, much like those made available by the Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Consortium.[42] This approach also built on the PI's earlier collaboration with a theatre company, in which she codeveloped a nine-lesson, culturally responsive unit on AAPI history and experiences for the New York City Department of Education. Locally, the PI partnered with the Franklin-McKinley School District Ethnic Studies Task Force, a think tank working group on K–8 curricular development and implementation, on which she also served, and leveraged her professional network to recruit educators with experience in ethnic studies pedagogy. Ultimately, three teachers and one librarian joined the project to codevelop curricula grounded in ethnic studies epistemologies. On June 1, 2024, the website and curricular materials launched publicly. Prior to that, Chuang systematically identified district leaders and teachers across the county, and the PI invited these educators, along with community members, to review the project. Follow-up meetings with superintendents and teachers further encouraged adoption.

Finding A Project Home

Finding a home for AAPI Perspectives was a place-based, community-grounded process. Rather than house the collection in a university library, the PI explored depositing it with the Densho Digital Repository but ultimately partnered with JAMsj, a mission-aligned local community-based arts, culture, and education organization, to ensure that public funds would directly benefit the local community. The project website was developed by Rasteroids Design, a small business whose owners have deep multigenerational roots in San José Japantown.

AAPI COMMUNITY FORMATIONS IN SANTA CLARA VALLEY

Santa Clara Valley has been distinctly shaped by the pre-1965 AAPI migrant workers, post-1965 immigrants, and post-1975 refugees that define "major" migrations in Asian American history. The overarching narrative of Asian American

history goes something like this. Prior to 1965, early Asian immigrants (Chinese, Japanese, South Asian, and Filipino migrants) arrived in successive waves, recruited primarily as cheap agricultural labor. In the wake of the landmark 1965 Immigration Act, new Asian immigrants transformed the demographic landscape. Then, after 1975, waves of Southeast Asian refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia further diversified Asian America. A regional historical study underscores that these major AAPI migrations took *actual* place in Santa Clara Valley. Indeed, AAPI communities navigated the political economy of the region in often overlapping spatial encounters over time (sometimes across generations) that laid the foundation for various AAPI activisms and solidarities.

This section draws on the project's oral histories to spotlight how AAPI communities in Santa Clara Valley have engaged in activism, solidarity, and resistance to oppose capitalism, imperialism, and racism. Their oral histories provide social historical insights into the place-based formations of anti-Asian violence that shaped the Valley and how communities organized in response. It analyzes three key periods of community formation in the Valley: (1) early waves of Asian migrants settling the area as agricultural laborers beginning in the 1850s, (2) the different generations of Asian Americans in the region from 1942 to 1975, and (3) Southeast Asian refugee communities resettling in downtown San José beginning in 1975.

The "Tri-Cultural Milieu" of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino Communities (1850–1945)

The agricultural history of Santa Clara Valley spotlights a distinctly Asian American story of place that shaped the politics of Asian Americans there. **Robert Ragsac (b. 1931)**, a second-generation Filipino American and retired aerospace engineer who today leads walking tours of San José's historic Pinoytown—where he grew up in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s—uses the expression "tricultural milieu" to refer to the fact that Chinatown, Japantown, and Pinoytown essentially existed in the same space (present-day San José Japantown) across different and sometimes overlapping time periods. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, waves of Asian migrant labor—primarily Chinese (1850s–1890s), Japanese (1890s–1945), and Filipino (1900s–1930s)—contributed to the agricultural development of the Valley.[43] Nevertheless, the capitalist exploitation of Asian migrant workers required the production of racial difference to enshrine that exploitation. Cast as unassimilable foreigners who threatened the livelihoods of hardworking white Americans, Chinese migrant laborers were relegated to low-wage work in agriculture, domestic work, and other service and manufacturing sector jobs. Later, Japanese laborers filled similar niches until their

evacuation and incarceration during World War II. As many Japanese established families and some became owners of lucrative orchards, white competitors targeted them for restrictions (to land ownership), violence, and exclusion. As U.S. nationals (read: imperial subjects), Filipino migrants from the U.S.-colonized Philippines could travel freely within U.S. territorial borders but eventually met racial violence and exclusion like the Chinese and the Japanese before them.

As the first Asian migrants in the Valley, the Chinese built their own communities. In the late 1860s, the Chinese coalesced in downtown San José's Market Street Chinatown, a vibrant community where merchants and laborers from across the region lived, worked, and gathered to restock on supplies, catch a meal, or send letters home.[44] **Connie Young Yu (b. 1941)**—a fourth-generation descendant of a Chinese foreman on the Central Pacific Railroad and a community-based historian—noted that San José and the larger Valley served as a hub for early merchants and laborers because of the region's temperate climate and opportunities for work and commerce.[45] Many employers also preferred Chinese laborers because they would accept lower wages and fewer labor protections. Given that the hiring of lower-wage Chinese workers suppressed wages overall, white laborers saw the Chinese as foreign threats to their livelihoods and sought their exclusion. Paradoxically caught between capital and labor, Chinese migrant laborers in California became indispensable as both cheap workers and economic scapegoats. The owners of capital exploited the Chinese as a cheap, flexible workforce. Organized white labor viewed the Chinese as an "indispensable enemy," whose foreign "Asian-ness" rendered them alien, excludable, and the "other" against which white labor consolidated and unified. In fact, Denis Kearney's 1877 founding of the Workingmen's Party of California on the promise of Chinese exclusion (and the infamous slogan "The Chinese must go!") marked a white populist milestone built on anti-Chinese vitriol.[46]

This widespread racism shaped Chinese life in the Valley—in everyday acts, official discourse, and systemic violence. In her interview, Yu remembered the stories of rock throwing and racist name-calling from her paternal grandfather who, at eleven years old in 1881, came to San José Chinatown to find work.[47] In San José, public officials openly voiced their contempt for the Chinese, who were condemned as an undesirable presence in the city. In March 1887, San José Mayor Charles Breyfogle and the San José City Council unanimously declared Chinatown a public nuisance and shared plans to build the new city hall nearby.[48] A few months later, on May 4, 1887, the Market Street Chinatown in San José burned down in an arson fire.[49] The burning of this Chinatown was one of many similar cases that occurred against the backdrop of widespread state-sanctioned *and* extralegal anti-Chinese racial violence in the 1870s and 1880s.[50] However, the Chinese had little to no recourse against this violence.

In one notable instance, in *People v. Hall* (1854), the California Supreme Court declared Chinese eyewitness testimony against a white man accused of murdering a Chinese miner inadmissible because the Chinese were "a race of people whom nature has marked as inferior."[51] In late nineteenth-century California, the Chinese were racially excludable, legally incompetent, and quintessentially "other."

Beginning in 2021, several California cities officially apologized for racial violence and discrimination against the Chinese in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Antioch was the first, followed by San José.[52] These resolutions and acknowledgments came largely as a result of community advocacy catalyzed by anti-Asian rhetoric and violence during the pandemic. Such initiatives marked strategic symbolic gestures and good politicking: a recognition of past systemic violences and a nod to the 2020 versions of anti-Asian hate, with no substantive actions that would ultimately address ongoing systemic racism. Nonetheless, as one of the authors of the San José apology, Yu noted the importance of connecting the historic violence against the Chinese with the institutionalized racism that persists today. Since then, the CHCP and JAMsj have continued to share that history through exhibits like "On Common Ground," curated by Yu, and continue to develop programming that highlights the interconnectedness of early Asian migrants and communities in the Valley.

The "tri-cultural milieu" of Heinlenville Chinatown, Japantown, and Pinoytown marks a distinct feature of Asian American community formation in agricultural and rural areas like the Valley, where the same place often welcomed various waves of Asian migrant workers. After San José's Market Street Chinatown burned down in 1887, the displaced Chinese residents initially relocated to San Francisco, Pacific Grove, and other nearby regions.[53] As a testament to their attachment to the region, many returned to San José and resettled a few months later in Heinlenville Chinatown—which overlaps with parts of present-day Japantown.[54] Initially a haven for Chinese agricultural laborers and merchants, Heinlenville Chinatown became the gathering place and community hub for Japanese and Filipinos who came to work in the Valley's agricultural economy as the Chinese labor population declined in the aftermath of Chinese exclusion in 1882.[55] These different waves of AAPI communities coexisted in the same geographies—the same neighborhood, and sometimes even the same block. This geographical proximity would have facilitated relationships that gesture toward the place-based multiethnic politics of encounter that historically characterize the Valley's AAPI community activism and advocacy efforts.

The stories of **Paul Sakamoto (b. 1934)** and Ragsac—who were both born on the same city block in San José Japantown/Pinoytown in the 1930s—reveal how the distinct, place-based social histories of Japanese and Filipino agricultural

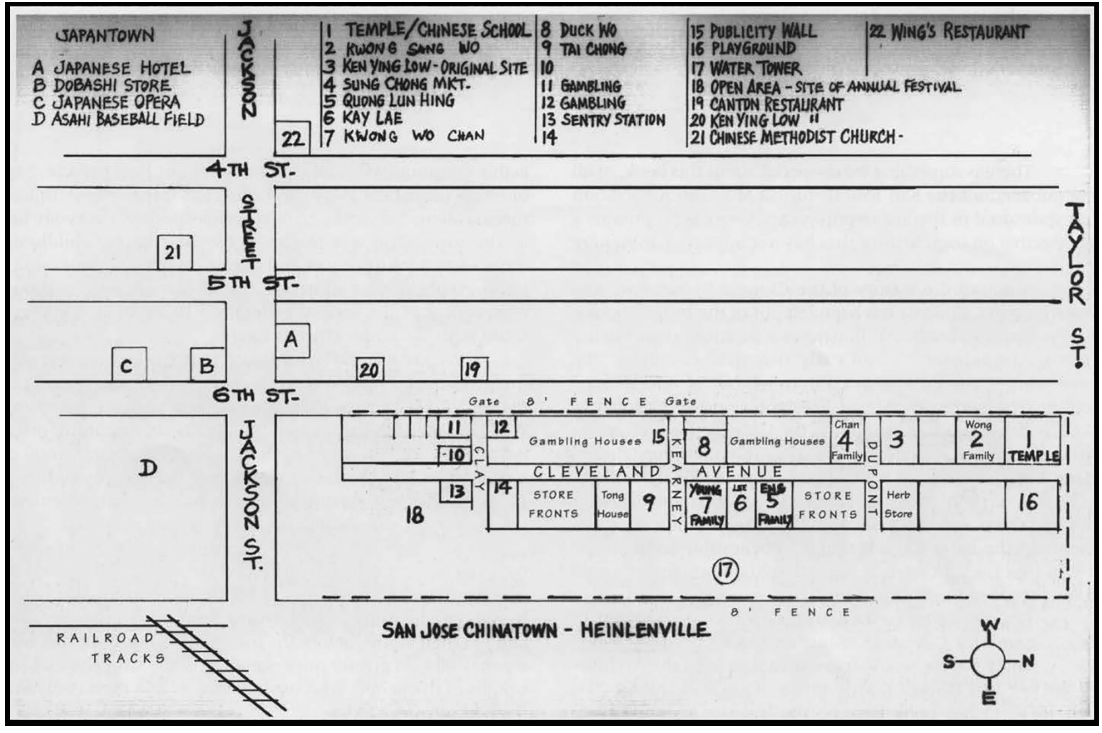

Figure 1. Map of Heinlenville Chinatown, drawn from memory by a former resident. Originally published in Connie Young Yu, *Chinatown, San José, USA*. Photo courtesy of Connie Young Yu.

labor in the Valley facilitated overlapping spatial, intergenerational encounters that in turn made possible moments of solidarity.[56] Starting in the 1890s, Japanese migrant laborers and students arrived in the Valley, following the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate and abolition of Japan's isolation laws in 1885.[57] Sakamoto—a second-generation Nisei born in San José Japantown and later became the first Asian American superintendent of schools in the nation, a founder of AACI, and an associate dean of students at San José State College —recalled, "I can still remember [my mother] having a baby strapped to her back, picking crops and . . . and being the first one to fix dinner for the family and running my father's bathwater to the temperature that he liked. And the last one to go to bed at night. Not being able to speak English and being in a foreign country and raising that many kids at one time."[58] With so many mouths to feed and a farm to sustain, the entire family labored, though the burden fell most heavily on his mother. After his family's wartime incarceration in Jerome, Arkansas, the Sakamotos returned to the Valley only to continue working in the fields under an exploitative sharecropping arrangement. The embodied toll of this labor was profound: Sakamoto could not bring himself to eat strawberries after years of picking them, and he speculated that his exposure to the pesticide malathion contributed to his later development of Parkinson's disease.

In the 1920s, Filipino migrant workers, especially Ilocanos from the northern Philippines, began arriving in the Valley in search of higher-paying agricultural jobs. Ragsac traces these migrations through transpacific labor circuits: After his family completed their *sakada* contracts in Hawai'i, they moved to California in pursuit of new opportunities.[59] Today, when Ragsac leads walking tours of Pinoytown (in present-day San José Japantown), he often highlights a short-handled hoe as a material artifact of Filipino farm labor. This tool, which forced workers to stoop for long hours, epitomized the grueling bodily demands of fieldwork. Notably, it posed such an occupational hazard to farmworkers that a California state agency finally banned it in 1975.[60] Ragsac's recollections of his own youth underscore the normalization of this labor discipline. As junior high students, Ragsac and his brother routinely rose at 4:30 a.m. to work the fields, harvesting string beans, cucumbers, bell peppers, and celery, in addition to short-hoe weeding. His testimony not only documents the physical hardships endured by Filipino agricultural workers but also illustrates how migrant families mobilized children's labor as part of broader strategies of survival and community formation in the Valley's agricultural economy. Working conditions in the Valley were brutal, and the vagaries of the economy made survival precarious for merchants, sharecroppers, and laborers alike. Ragsac recalled that after World War II, when defense plants closed and his father lost work, a Japanese American rancher, Mr. Kawahara, hired him without hesitation—providing a crucial lifeline

that speaks to the overlapping Asian American histories that also made these moments of support and solidarity possible.[61] The Valley became a crucible where overlapping regimes of racial capitalism, labor exploitation, and exclusion shaped Asian migrant communities, even as they forged solidarities across difference.

World War II and Postwar Communities in Santa Clara Valley (1942–1975)

The stories of Japanese Americans returning—from incarceration and military service—after World War II highlight the precarity and resilience of postwar Japanese American life in the Valley. While some returned to homes, businesses, and farms that had been safeguarded by friends, many others returned to dispossession and poverty.[62] Returning to San José with his wife and daughter after his wartime service as a U.S. Army medical technician, **Yoshihiro "Yosh" Uchida (b. 1920)** recalled both the lingering anti-Japanese discrimination and the generosity of people like Sam Della Maggiore, then a local schoolteacher who would later become the first Italian American to serve on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. Uchida could not find housing until Della Maggiore offered his family a place to stay on his prune orchard. That small one-bedroom housed Uchida's in-laws, brother, sister-in-law, and nuclear family while he finished his biology degree at San José State. Uchida, a Nisei born to dairy farmers in Calexico, and whose family was incarcerated in Poston, Arizona, would go on to coach judo at San José State University and popularize the sport nationwide. He later mentored political leaders including Norman Mineta (who would serve as the mayor of San José, secretary of commerce for the Clinton administration, and secretary of transportation for the George W. Bush administration) and Mike Honda (who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2001 to 2017). Uchida's mentorship of Mineta and Honda reveal layered intergenerational connections hint at the place-based networks in the Valley that brought them together and paved the way for different forms of community work and advocacy across different historical moments in the Valley.

Postwar financial hardship was not unique to the Uchidas. **Roy Hirabayashi (b. 1951)**, a third-generation Sansei from East Oakland whose family was incarcerated in Topaz, Utah, remembered his father working weekdays at Bethlehem Steel and weekends as a gardener to make ends meet. Such stories of financial stress and struggle were typical, when agriculture, food service, and other forms of manual labor continued to anchor immigrant and Japanese American livelihoods. Like Ragsac, Hirabayashi and his peers pursued higher education as a pathway to economic stability. Yet, as these narratives reveal, education was not a marker of "natural" achievement but a survival strategy constrained by opportunity. Even with advanced degrees and training, many faced persistent

Figure 2. The Pinoytown Mural, completed February 13, 2024, is located in present-day San José Japantown on the historic Kogura Building at the corner of Jackson and 6th Street. Courtesy of author.

racism, discrimination, and limits to professional advancement.[63] Hirabayashi played active roles in cofounding of San José Taiko, establishing Asian American studies at SJSU, and later continuing to serve as a cultural arts advocate. Like others in the AAPI Perspectives project, Hirabayashi participated in various Asian American advocacy and activism initiatives throughout the Valley at different moments, in the process building relationships with other Japanese American activists but also with other Asian Americans and people of color in the region.

Other Asian communities in the Valley encountered parallel, though distinct, forms of labor exploitation and racial discrimination. As the first Filipina nursing supervisor in Santa Clara County, **Corazon "Cora" Basa Cortes Tomalinas (b. 1944)**—a community leader who served in government boards and commissions and the local PTAs—became the sole breadwinner for her family living in Northern Luzon. Yet in the white-majority Valley of the 1970s, Tomalinas faced overt bigotry even as a registered nurse. She recalled one white patient who refused care from "somebody that's colored," insisting on speaking to a supervisor.[64] Confronted with this demand, Tomalinas explained that she was the supervisor, but the patient responded, "'No, I don't want any colored person.'"[65] Despite her credentials, title, and experience, Tomalinas proved unacceptable to the patient. Such everyday racism compounded exploitative workplace practices for Filipinx nurses, who were often underpaid relative to peers, assigned to

high-risk and labor-intensive tasks, and expected to perform duties beyond their job descriptions.[66] Tomalinas's story also represents new immigration to the Valley that expanded the Asian American demographic landscape after the 1965 Immigration Act, gesturing toward the interlocking nature of the regimes of labor exploitation of Asian migrant labor in the Valley across different periods. This pattern of racialized labor exploitation was not unique to the Valley but reflected national trends that shaped Filipinx nurses' experiences across the U.S. Together, these oral histories reveal how Asian Americans in the Valley confronted shifting but persistent regimes of racialized labor exploitation, illuminating both the continuities of systemic racism and the varied strategies of survival and resistance.

After 1975: Vietnamese Refugees in San José

The historiographies of the global Asian diaspora reveal how imperial networks—built through war, conquest, and capitalist expansion—structured the trade routes and migration circuits that moved Asians across the world. The oral histories in this project underscore how the allure of the "American dream" for one generation often requires the exploitation of a previous one. The wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans under Executive Order 9066 and the post-1975 resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees displaced by U.S. militarism exemplify how imperial violences reverberate across generations and communities and continue to shape memory, community formation, and political life in the Valley.

For 1.5- and second-generation Vietnamese Americans whose families resettled in downtown San José in the 1970s and 1980s, the legacies of war continue to shape family dynamics and community identities. The narratives of **Betty Duong (b. 1981)**, who serves as the first Vietnamese American on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, and **Viet Thanh Nguyen (b. 1971)**, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and professor of Asian American studies and English at the University of Southern California, highlight the enduring social, economic, and political weight of refugee resettlement and memory in shaping Vietnamese American life in the Valley.

As the daughter of Vietnamese refugees who resettled in San José in 1979 (by way of refugee camp in Malaysia), Duong recalls growing up in the 1980s in downtown San José near SJSU, where Vietnamese and Latinx families lived in close proximity: "[W]e were just stacked on top of each other."[67] Duong's reference to stacking here is an insightful spatial metaphor to understand yet another iteration of Asian American community formation, this time by Vietnamese refugees in downtown San José (only a few blocks from Japantown). These

apartments, stretching from Fifth to Tenth Street, became sites of concentrated refugee life in the late 1970s and 1980s, where overcrowding, precarity, and mutual support defined the fabric of community.

By this time, the region has rebranded as Silicon Valley, and this political economic context shaped the lives and labor of Vietnamese refugee families. Like many other Vietnamese refugees in the region, Duong's parents entered the workforce through the burgeoning electronics industry. Assembly lines at companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Atari, Intel, and Apple strategically hired (and exploited) Southeast Asian refugees like Duong's parents, who soldered and processed silicon wafers in hazardous conditions, often without protective gear. Duong has continued to grapple with this legacy as both a daughter and, more recently, an elected county official. "I want to honor my parents . . . honor their experience, their memory, their survival," she reflected, describing the palpable sadness of inherited war memories and survival stories that she herself never directly lived.[68] Her recollections of childhood also include the perils of trauma and violence as well as the instability of housing, such as nights spent huddled under blankets with her sister while listening to violent fights in the apartments above, experiences that crystallized both the vulnerability and resilience of refugee families.

Downtown San José figured prominently in Viet Thanh Nguyen's formative experiences, as a refugee, too. In 1978, Nguyen's family moved to downtown San José from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and his parents opened the second-ever Vietnamese grocery store in the city. While Nguyen's family might have been financially better off than most other refugee families, the refugee mentality undergirded his parents' and his own experiences in downtown San José. Like many refugees, his parents lived with traumas and anti-refugee sentiment in the resettlement era.[69] As Nguyen recalled, "My experience of San José is . . . all wrapped up with the Sàigòn Mớ i ["New Saigon," his parents' grocery store] with the duress, the struggle, the total focus on money . . . My parents were just so paranoid that everything could collapse, and that's the refugee mentality. So I absorbed that refugee mentality. It's never really gone away."[70] This sense of precarity, coupled with feelings of isolation and ambivalence about his Vietnamese identity, became a foundation for Nguyen's later intellectual and creative work. Both his academic scholarship and his literary fiction trace the psychic afterlives of war and displacement, underscoring how refugee subjectivities remain haunted by violence long after physical resettlement.

The political economy of Santa Clara Valley—which had transformed into "Silicon Valley" in the 1960s and 1970s—has shaped the experiences of Vietnamese refugees who resettled there. Today, San José is home to 145,000 Vietnamese people, and it boasts the largest Vietnamese population of any city

outside of Vietnam, according to 2023 U.S. Census data.[71] These place-based histories—grounded in the emergence of "Silicon Valley" in the late twentieth century and its accompanying demands for low-wage assembly line labor—echo the regimes of low-wage labor exploitation in the agricultural economy that defined the region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Additionally, the proximity of downtown San José—where many Vietnamese refugees resettled after 1975—to San José Japantown (and its tri-cultural milieu) gesture toward the overlapping spatial histories of AAPI communities and other communities of color in the downtown area.

PLACE-BASED ACTIVISM IN SANTA CLARA VALLEY

The oral histories in the AAPI Perspectives project reveal regional histories of AAPI communities in the Valley that often converged in the interconnected geographies of the Valley. In turn, these spatial encounters facilitated an intergenerational, multiethnic politics that catalyzed various activisms that seeded social movements, advanced Asian American studies, and challenged the model minority myth. This section considers the oral histories' insights into (1) activism, resistance, and solidarity, (2) the "serve the people" vision of Asian American studies, and (3) challenges to the model minority myth—all in the geographical context of Santa Clara Valley. Taken together, these narratives reveal not only the limitations of dominant framings of Asian American life but also the possibilities of oral history as a methodology for reimagining the relationship between local histories, community activism, and scholarly inquiry.

Activism, Solidarity, and Resistance

A recurring theme across the oral history narratives in the AAPI Perspectives project is multiethnic, multiracial solidarity, anchored in a recognition of shared struggles against structural inequities. In the 1960s and 1970s, activists in the Valley were central to raising social consciousness about institutional racism, war, and poverty. **Patti Jo "PJ" Hirabayashi (b. 1950)**—a founding member of San José State's AAS program, an emeritus member of San José Taiko, and a renowned cultural arts bearer and peacekeeper—came of age in this milieu. As a student at then–California State University, Hayward (now East Bay), she became politicized as an anti-war activist and further radicalized while accompanying then–Asian American studies coordinator Louie Lee to confront university administrators over resources and funding. In that meeting, Hirabayashi recalled a feeling of confidence and an anger rising from within, alongside a stronger

sense of her own Asian American identity. It was in the fight for ethnic studies that she first learned about Japanese American incarceration—knowledge glaringly absent from her prior education and her family history.

Reflecting on that period, Hirabayashi emphasized that Asian American studies was never only about recognition, but about praxis: "Serve the people, power to the people, that those were what we really, what I really felt and what we were being driven as students at that time."[72] With the Vietnam War as a global backdrop, she and her peers identified a "different war" in their own communities: the neglect of poor, elderly, and immigrant populations who lacked access to basic social services, housing, and healthcare.[73] They launched "serve the people" initiatives like the Issei Project, which provided linguistically and culturally accessible services for first-generation Japanese immigrant (Issei) seniors in the East Bay. Similar initiatives also arose in San José, where young people from throughout the region came together to develop mutual aid resources. For example, Yu-Ai Kai Japantown Senior Center (originally Japanese American Community Senior Service) was founded in the early 1970s by SJSU Asian American studies students and local members of "Asians for Community Action" (ACA) support to address older Japanese immigrants' needs. For Hirabayashi and her peers, claiming an Asian American or Japanese American identity was inseparable from political organizing. Their activism reframed identity not simply as pride or recognition, but as a responsibility to build coalitions, practice mutual aid, and resist systemic injustice.

PJ Hirabayashi's now–husband, Roy Hirabayashi, was also a central figure in the Asian American movement in the Bay Area during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Beyond supporting the founding and staffing of the San José State Asian American studies (AAS) program, he collaborated with Sakamoto—then the associate dean of students—to establish an Asian American Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) alongside Black and Brown EOPs. These programs provided admission, academic, and financial support services to historically underserved students across California. Roy Hirabayashi also recalled the inequities that marked ethnic studies at San José State: while Mexican American studies operated as a graduate program and African American studies had departmental status and degree-granting authority, AAS remained limited to a minor. Not until 2024, more than fifty years later, did SJSU approve a bachelor's degree in AAS; the program, however, still lacks departmental status.[74] In recent years, catalyzed in part by the ripple effects of the AAPI Perspectives oral history initiative, the Hirabayashis and other founding students have reengaged with SJSU to secure the program's future. Their efforts led to the creation of the Asian American studies Alumni (+Friends) Network and the graduation of the program's first two bachelor's degree recipients, Aljhecia Alolor and Stacy Lu, in spring 2025.

Filipinx narrators like Ragsac also recalled how wartime racialization as the alien enemy extend beyond Japanese Americans. He remembered that in April 1942, as Japanese Americans were forcibly removed under Executive Order 9066, a police officer violently confronted his godfather, shouting, "Yo, yo, Jap, why are you doing here?"[75] As a child, Ragsac was terrified, witnessing Japanese American friends disappear overnight while realizing that police officers also marked him as an enemy. His experience underscores how wartime hysteria cast a wider net of racial suspicion, positioning other Asian Americans as potential threats to the state. These intertwined narratives highlight how Santa Clara Valley functioned as both a site of racialized exclusion and a crucible for Asian American activism and community resistance.

Santa Clara Valley also became the specific site where Sansei Japanese American activists carried forward the legacy of wartime incarceration into their organizing in the 1970s and 1980s. **Dale Minami (b. 1946)** litigated the 1983 overturning of Fred Korematsu's wartime conviction, while **Susan Hayase (b. 1956)**, **Will Kaku (b. 1960)**, and **Richard Konda (b. 1951)** led local organizing efforts for Japanese American redress and reparations as part of the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (NCRR, later Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress).[76] These activists grappled with the fissures Executive Order 9066 left in Japanese American communities, such as the stigmatization of "no-no boys" who resisted the loyalty questionnaire. To build unity, they founded the San José-based Nihonmachi Outreach Committee, insisting that redress include individual monetary compensation and restitution for the community as a whole. As Hayase reflected, incarceration "was actually a violation of the entire community . . . based on deliberate government policies to cut off the head of the Japanese community and to destroy it and disperse it."[77] Moreover, she noted another principle grounded in the "struggles of other oppressed peoples," not just the Japanese Americans. So, there was extensive outreach and coalition building with both Black and Latinx communities. In the 1980s, **Tom Izu (b. 1958)** exemplified this multiracial orientation, joining the redress movement while also organizing for labor justice as an organizer and grant writer with Alianza and supporting Jesse Jackson's presidential campaigns.[78] From 1988 to 1990, Izu built strike support committees for Watsonville cannery workers and raised funds to sustain cross-racial labor struggles. In 1994, after resigning as executive director at Yu-Ai Kai, Izu continued cross-racial coalition building through his work with leading the California History Center and Foundation at De Anza College.

Other narrators underscored how activism shaped institutions closer to home. As superintendent of the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District in the 1980s, Sakamoto pursued controversial integration efforts. With declining enrollment and budget cuts throughout the district, Sunnyvale High School,

which had the highest number of minority students in the district, was slated to be shut down. Challenged to balance the budget but also integrate the district, Sakamoto sought teacher, community, and school board support to rename Awalt High as Mountain View High and integrate students from Sunnyvale while moving students from Mountain View to Los Altos High. Facing nightly meetings with angry parents, he recalled the exhaustion of defending integration but persisted, recognizing its long-term importance. Sakamoto shared, "I often wondered whether it was worth it because of the energy it took from me, and meeting group after group. And facing this criticism about racial integration."[79]

Sakamoto's leadership and gumption influenced many community leaders, including Duong. For example, in 2013, Duong was asked to serve as an impromptu translator for a non-English speaking Vietnamese family trying to attain a birth certificate for their child. When she was still just a child, Duong had done the same for her own baby sister and her parents. She shared, "It was like decades ago I was here translating for my parents. Today, I'm still translating for other people's parents. That's unacceptable, especially in a county as diverse as ours."[80] With the support of then–Board Supervisor Cindy Chavez, Duong established a language access unit that can understand the county's language, programs, and services, making the translations culturally competent, using words and vernacular that the intended priority audience would be able to understand.[81] Such efforts not only increased language access but also helped challenge English language dominance.

Many interlocutors also specifically advocated for multiracial solidarity. California State Assemblymember **Ash Kalra (b. 1972)**—a Democrat representing the 27th Assembly District, encompassing Downtown and parts of East San José—is the first Indian American to serve in the California State Legislature. He argued that Asian immigration since the mid-1960s was made possible by the Civil Rights Movement, which dismantled exclusionary laws through the sacrifices of Black activists: "A lot of Black people died and fought for the ability for us to come here."[82] Nearly all narrators expressed gratitude for the Black Power Movement and Black activism in shaping their political consciousness, though many also noted the persistent challenges of bridging generational divides and persuading newer immigrants to recognize these interconnections.

Yu observed that many recent immigrants from Asia, who tend to be wealthier and better educated (not by accident but by design due to U.S. immigration policies), are more likely to see themselves as part of a privileged class, aligned more directly with whiteness. In support of affirmative action, Yu has faced backlash when advocating for others to resist the lure of the model minority myth. As seconded by Kalra, there are temptations to fall into the trap of Asian American exceptionalism because "it's very intentionally done . . . to separate

us from other groups that have been oppressed over the generations."[83] These tensions reveal how white supremacy weaponizes racial violence to divide communities of color and obscure the shared structures of capitalism, imperialism, and racism that oppress them. Rather than succumbing to divide-and-conquer logics, however, these narratives call for renewed coalitional politics to confront the intertwined systems of oppression. For example, as raised by Hayase and Izu through their grassroots organizing and the founding of the Neighbors Not Enemies Coalition (NNEC), it is imperative that Japanese Americans and local San José organizations contribute to the fight for reparations for Black Americans and resist anti-immigrant policies rooted in racism and authoritarianism. Instead of fighting against one another, as structures of white supremacy encourage us to do, it is time to work through those misalignments and misunderstandings so that we can fight against power together.

Model Minority Myth

The interlocutors also challenged various versions of the model minority myth, particularly exacerbated geographically by the ways in which Silicon Valley has become the epicenter of these "model minority" representations. Recent dialogues around anti-Asian hate have complicated prevailing understandings of the AAPI experience, but the persistence of ahistorical assumptions and narratives of privilege continues to fuel possessive investments in the model minority myth. For example, Yu has criticized her fellow Chinese Americans who have resisted engaging with social justice initiatives such as affirmative action and Black Lives Matter, reflecting a lack of historical consciousness and a tendency to align with whiteness. Konda, who cofounded the Asian Law Alliance, similarly argued that communities must "battle against the minority myth," noting that the needs of the elderly, refugees, and new immigrants remain unmet despite the perception of Asian Americans as uniformly successful. Moreover, **Victoria Taketa (b. 1947)** pushed this critique further by linking the model minority discourse to attempts to cover up the broader logics of U.S. imperial projects like the War on Terror and the U.S. support for Israel's genocidal occupation of Palestine. She critiqued the use of military nomenclature like "surgical strikes" as it removed "any connection to . . . human beings or humanity."[84]

At the same time, narrators recognized both the limits and possibilities of civic engagement and political power building as arenas where Asian Americans could resist reductive racial framings. Uchida's early strategic support of uplifting Japanese Americans political prospects exemplified a strategic investment in representation that subsequent leaders have carried forward. Narrators such as Paul Fong, Ash Kalra, Evan Low, Betty Duong, and Margaret Abe-Koga have

extended this tradition, ensuring that liberal platforms are represented in local and state politics. Moreover, **Johnny Cepeda Gogo (b. 1968**)—a native Chamorro and long-time Santa Clara County Superior Court judge—has further expanded the scope of representation by raising awareness about the political status of Guam as an unincorporated U.S. territory.[85] As he explained, "Because Guam is not a state and it's, again, a trust territory of the United States, there are certain rights and privileges that don't apply to the citizens of Guam . . . Guam has a congressional delegate, but it's a non-voting delegate to the United States House of Representatives."[86] His 2023 nomination by President Biden to serve as U.S. attorney for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands—which was never confirmed—underscores how the politics of territoriality and representation remain tied to imperial legacies. These narratives reveal how the model minority myth operates not as a benign stereotype of success but as an ideological project that obscures systemic inequities, erases histories of racial violence and imperialism, and constrains the political possibilities of AAPI communities in the Valley and beyond.

Asian American Studies

Asian American studies emerged as a central thread running through the lives and commitments of many interlocutors in AAPI Perspectives, raising the visibility of activists in the Valley in the field's founding and development. Notably, the presence and contributions of the late Gary Okihiro in Santa Clara Valley remind us of the region's significance to the field. As the inaugural director of ethnic studies at Santa Clara University, where he taught from 1980 to 1989, Okihiro not only built the program but also defined the contours of Asian American studies as an interdisciplinary project rooted in histories of racial capitalism, empire, and community struggle.[87] Eiichiro Azuma has noted Okihiro's call for more research on rural Japanese America, citing the historiographical importance of rural and agricultural history to minoritized communities.[88] Okihiro's 1985 study *Japanese Legacy: Farming and Community Life in California's Santa Clara Valley*, coauthored with Timothy J. Lukes, modeled an important place-based analysis of rural Japanese American community formation that continues to resonate nearly four decades later.[89] Returning to these early interventions opens new possibilities for rethinking Okihiro's "Third World studies"—a vision that connected local histories of dispossession and resistance in the Valley to global struggles against imperialism.[90]

The narrators' accounts underscore how Asian American studies is not only an academic discipline but also an activist praxis. For the Hirabayashis, Izu, Hayase, Taketa, and others, the fight for ethnic studies was inseparable from

broader struggles for labor justice, language access, and multiracial coalitions. Betty Duong took her first Asian American studies class at De Anza College and then transferred to the University of California, Berkeley, where she majored in it. She recalls that Asian American studies introduced her to concepts to not just understand what she was going through, but better "create policy that helps people."[91] These narratives reaffirm the founding principle of the field: that scholarship must "serve the people" by amplifying marginalized voices, building solidarity, and contesting structures of systemic racism. Tracking the history of Asian American studies in the Santa Clara Valley thus illustrates how local institutions, community organizations, and political leaders have continuously shaped and been shaped by the field's activist commitments.

Limitations and Possibilities

The AAPI Perspectives project was long overdue, though its eventual funding reflected the reactive nature of public investment. Support for initiatives of this kind often arrives after the fact— in this case, as a belated response to COVID-era anti-Asian violence—rather than as proactive commitments to preserving community memory. Even with funding secured, bureaucratic structures, such as the restrictive practices of the SJSU Research Foundation and County regulations, imposed delays. These challenges revealed the need to balance urgency with sustainability. As the team learned, community-engaged work is a long game that requires avoiding burnout. While the project ultimately actualized its vision, the compressed timeline and concerns about the age and health of many narrators meant that certain voices—especially Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, South Asian, Southwest Asian, and Southeast Asian communities—remain un- or underrepresented. While this project has inspired additional oral history projects and follow-up podcasting initiatives have begun, such efforts must not devolve into a performative "check box" of inclusion. Rather, they should reflect the foundational principle that the diverse experiences of all communities are integral to the collective project of AAPI Perspectives and to the generative, evolving oral history movement this initiative represents.

Ultimately, the lesson of AAPI Perspectives is that communities must be empowered as the experts of their own histories. Training future generations to document, preserve, and narrate their experiences resists erasure and model minority stereotyping from the ground up. In this way, the project continues the spirit of Asian American studies as both an academic discipline and a movement—one that insists on remembering, teaching, and organizing against the intertwined violences of racial capitalism, empire, and systemic racism.

CONCLUSION

The early advocates of this project leveraged their political relationships to sidestep both the spectacle of AAPI suffering and the carceral logics embedded in the "Stop AAPI Hate" framework. Instead, they envisioned AAPI Perspectives as a vehicle for illuminating how AAPI communities are deeply interwoven into the fabric of Santa Clara Valley specifically and the U.S. more broadly. By centering place-specific knowledge, experiences, and memories, the project has crafted a social history and critical geography of AAPIs in the region. Grounded in the "serve the people" ethos of the Asian American Movement, AAPI Perspectives sought to democratize access to knowledge through the community-based Japanese American Museum of San José (of which Gary Okihiro was a cofounder) in the historic district of San José Japantown (also the former site of Heinlenville Chinatown and Pinoytown).

Through its digital oral history archive and publicly accessible K–12 curriculum, AAPI Perspectives departs from dominant reductive narratives of Asian American exceptionalism and the model minority myth. Instead, it offers a promising counternarrative. On the surface, the narrators of this project exemplify quintessential model minorities: most are academically and professionally "successful." However, in examining how they have leveraged the privileges they have been afforded to subvert power and redistribute resources, a more complex narrative about power and coalition building becomes available. By embracing a theoretical commitment to critiquing structures of power, this project recognizes the narrative abundance, joy, and resilience that constitutes the AAPI communities in the Santa Clara Valley. The project insists that AAPI histories in the Valley cannot be reduced to stories of victimization or assimilation but must be understood as dynamic genealogies of struggle, survival, and community building.

As George Lipsitz has noted, "When history takes place, it does so in actual places."[92] As the AAPI Perspectives project demonstrates, one particularly instructive actual place to consider how AAPI history takes place is the Santa Clara Valley. In late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century San José, successive waves of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino migrant workers found community in the overlapping "tri-cultural milieu" of Heinlenville Chinatown, Japantown, and Pinoytown. Japanese Americans resettlement following World War II and new waves of post-1965 migration to the Valley further transformed the region. In the 1970s and 1980s, Vietnamese refugees resettled in downtown San José and became the working class in the nascent Silicon Valley. These overlapping regional histories facilitated an intergenerational, multiethnic spatial politics

that catalyzed various activisms that advanced social movements, started and expanded Asian American studies, and challenged the model minority myth.

Taken together, the two interconnected narratives here—(1) the origin story of the AAPI Perspectives project (2021–2024) and (2) the thematic observations from AAPI oral histories in the Santa Clara Valley (1840s–present)—demonstrate the power of oral history to generate place-based social histories that expand the scope of Asian American studies. In doing so, AAPI Perspectives offers not only a reframing of AAPI pasts but also a model for how communities might continue to reclaim, preserve, and mobilize their histories as resources for present and future struggles for justice.

NOTES

1. For more on Santa Clara Valley, see Anne Marie Todd, *Valley of Heart's Delight: Environment and Sense of Place in the Santa Clara Valley* (University of California Press, 2022); Cecilia M. Tsu, *Garden of the World: Asian Immigrants and the Making of Agriculture in California's Santa Clara Valley* (Oxford University Press, 2013); and Timothy J. Lukes and Gary Y. Okihiro, *Japanese Legacy: Farming and Community Life in California Santa Clara Valley* (California History Center, 1985). Collectively, Todd's environmental history of the Valley, Tsu's multiethnic analysis of Asian workers in the Valley, and Okihiro's seminal study of the Japanese farm-labor market in the Valley constitute very important historical studies grounded in the distinct political economy of Santa Clara Valley.
2. Todd, *Valley of Heart's Delight*. As Todd notes, the "Valley of Heart's Delight" moniker is a nod to Santa Clara Valley's status as the premier fruit-producing region in the U.S. from 1860 to 1960. For studies on rebranding of the region as "Silicon Valley," see Bernard P. Wong, *The Chinese in Silicon Valley: Globalization, Social Networks, and Ethnic Identity* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2005); AnnaLee Saxenian, The New Argonauts: Regional Advantage in a Global Economy (Harvard University Press, 2007); and Willow S. Lung-Amam, *Trespassers?: Asian Americans and the Battle for Suburbia* (University of California Press, 2017).
3. Native Land Digital interactive map, https://native-land.ca/; Monica V. Arellano, Alan Levanthal, Rosemary Cambra, Shelia Guzman Schmidt, and Gloria Arellano Gomez, "An Ethnohistory of Santa Clara Valley and Adjacent Regions: Historic Ties of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area and Tribal Stewardship over the Tupiun Táareštak [Place of the Fox Man Site] (CA-SCL-894)," Ch. 9, https://www.muwekma.org/assets/pdf/Ethnohistory_Section_from_Muwekma_Ohlone_Burial_Site_CA-SCL-894_San_Jose_Chapter_9_April_15,_2014.pdf.
4. Oscar Osburn Winther, "The Story of San Jose, 1777–1869: California's First Pueblo," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (1935): 147–74, https://doi.org/10.2307/25160577.

5. Les W. Field, Alan Leventhal, and Rosemary Cambra, "Mapping Erasure: The Power of Nominative Cartography in the Past and Present of the Muwekma Ohlones of the San Francisco Bay Area," in *Recognition, Sovereignty Struggles, and Indigenous Rights in the United States: A Sourcebook*, ed. Amy. E. Den Ouden and Jean M. O'Brien (University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 287–310, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469602172_obrien.14.
6. Todd, *Valley of Heart's Delight*.
7. Tsu, *Garden of the World*; Stephen J. Pitti, *The Devil in Silicon Valley: Northern California, Race, and Mexican Americans* (Princeton University Press, 2018).
8. Pitti, *Devil in Silicon Valley*.
9. Margaret O'Mara, *The Code: Silicon Valley and the Remaking of America* (Penguin Press, 2019); Keith A. Spencer, *A People's History of Silicon Valley: How the Tech Industry Exploits Workers, Erodes Privacy, and Undermines Democracy* (Eyewear Publishing, 2018).
10. Curt Fukuda and Ralph M. Pearce, *San José Japantown: A Journey* (Japanese American Museum of San José, 2014).
11. David Naguib Pellow and Lisa Sun-Hee Park, *The Silicon Valley of Dreams: Environmental Justice, Immigrant Workers, and the High-Tech Global Economy* (New York University Press, 2002). The Santa Clara Valley is also referred to as "the Valley" as shorthand throughout the article.
12. American Immigration Council, "New Americans in Santa Clara County," September 2023, https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/new_americans_in_santaclaracounty_sept2023_0.pdf.
13. Census Dots, "Santa Clara County Demographics," https://www.censusdots.com/race/santa-clara-county-ca-demographics; and AAPI Data, "San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA Metro Area," https://censusmaps.aapidata.com/pages/san-jose; and AAPI Data, *State of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders in California* (2022), 23, table 3. As one would expect and many scholars and practitioners continue to remind us, disaggregating the data reveals differences in geographic concentration. For example, disaggregating by Asian ethnicity or focusing on detailed NHPI origin reveals important and different insights about where certain communities are concentrated. AAPI Data, *State of AANHPIs in California*, 23–26.
14. In using the term *Asian American and Pacific Islander* (*AAPI*) in this article, I recognize that it is not without its imperfections, and it is not always, and should not always be, interchangeable with *Asian* or *Asian American*. The project uses AAPI aspirationally and with a commitment to moments of unity behind a rubric of "AAPI" and strategic essentialism. Notably, there are Pacific Islander histories in Santa Clara Valley that we begin to spotlight in the oral history project. I hope that this work will invite others to continue to build out that narrative plenitude.
15. Asian Americans constitute an estimated 38.9 percent of Santa Clara County according to 2020 census data and an estimated 35.2017 ACS 5-year data. See AAPI Data, "San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA Metro Area," https://censusmaps.aapidata.com/pages/san-jose; and Census Dots, "Santa Clara County Demographics,"

https://www.censusdots.com/race/santa-clara-county-ca-demographics; and Barry Holtzclaw, "Asian Population Now Dominant Group in Santa Clara County, US Census Reports," *San José Inside*, August 12, 2021, https://www.sanjoseinside.com/news/asian-population-now-dominant-group-in-santa-clara-county-u-s-census-reports/.

16. AAPI Perspectives Oral History and Activism Digital Archive, Japanese American Museum of San José, https://aapi-perspectives.jamsj.org. Throughout this article, it is also referred in simpler terms as "AAPI Perspectives."

17. For some studies at the intersection of ethnic studies and geography that offer place-specific histories in southern California, see Wendy Cheng, *The Changs Next Door to the Díazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013); James Zarsadiaz, *Resisting Change in Suburbia: Asian Immigrants and Frontier Nostalgia in LA* (University of California Press, 2022); and Laura R. Barraclough, *Making the San Fernando Valley: Rural Landscapes, Urban Development, and White Privilege* (University of Georgia Press, 2011).

18. Clement Lai, "Saving Japantown, Serving the People: The Scalar Politics of the Asian American Movement," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 31, no. 3 (2013): 467–84, https://doi.org/10.1068/d1210; Robert G. Lee, "The Cold War Origins of the Model Minority Myth," in *Asian American Studies Now: A Critical Reader*, ed. Jean Yu-wen Shen Wu and Thomas Chen (Rutgers University Press, 2010), 256–71; and Ellen D. Wu, "The Invention of the Model Minority," in *Routledge Handbook of Asian American Studies*, ed. Cindy I-Fen Cheng (Routledge, 2017). Charlotte Brooks, *Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends: Asian Americans, Housing, and the Transformation of Urban California* (University of Chicago Press, 2009), 198–209.

19. Brian Chung's scholarship examines suburban middle- and upper-middle-class Asian American community formations in the Silicon Valley. Brian Su-Jen Chung; "Finding Happiness in the Chinese Suburban Technopolis: White Supremacy in Silicon Valley, California, *Verge: Studies in Global* Asias 2, no. 1 (2016): 58–65, https://doi.org/10.5749/vergstudglobasia.2.1.0058; Brian Su-Jen Chang, "The Making of Chinese Scientists and Engineers: Leisure and Cold War Suburbanization in Silicon Valley," *Journal of Asian American Studies* (October 2024): 253–83, https://doi.org/10.1353/jaas.2024.a953147; and Brian Su-Jen Chang, "Exceptional Visions: Chineseness, Citizenship, and the Architectures of Community in Silicon Valley" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2011), https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/86288

20. From March 19, 2020, to December 31, 2021, a total of 10,095 AAPI-related hate incidents were reported. Aggie J. Yellow Horse, Russell Jeung, and Ronae Matriano, *Stop AAPI Hate National Report (March 19, 2020–December 31, 2021)*, March 2022, https://stopaapihate.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/22-SAH-NationalReport-3.1.22-v9.pdf; Christine Hauser, "Asian-Americans Were Targeted in Nearly 3,800 Hate Incidents in Past Year," *New York Times*, March 17, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/17/us/hate-crimes-against-asian-americans-community.html; Nicole Hong and Jonah E. Bromwich, "Asian Americans Are Being Attacked. Why Are Hate Crimes Charges So Rare?" *New York Times*, March 18, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/nyregion/asian-hate-crimes.html.

21. Lloyd Alaban and Tran Nguyen, "San Jose Slow to Respond to AAPI Attacks, Advocates Say," *San José Spotlight*, March 30, 2021, https://sanjosespotlight.com/san-jose-slow-to-respond-to-aapi-attacks-advocates-say/.

22. Board of Supervisors, Santa Clara County, California, "Board Referral 105224: Consider Recommendations Relating to a Work Plan and Timeline Regarding the Implementation of an Anti-Hate Community Outreach and Education Campaign," *Santa Clara County Board Meeting Minutes*, March 23, 2021, https://sccgov.iqm2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=13209&MinutesItemID=340629&Format=Minutes.

23. Board of Supervisors, "Recommendations." For local news coverage, see Madelyn Reese, "New Hate Task Force in Santa Clara County Launches as Incidents Rise Across Country," *San José Spotlight*, March 1, 2021, https://sanjosespotlight.com/new-hate-task-force-in-santa-clara-county-launches-as-incidents-rise-across-country/; and Kris Reyes, "'Systemic change': Santa Clara County's New Hate Crimes Task Force Unveils Ambitious Plan," *ABC 7 News*, March 1, 2021, https://abc7news.com/santa-clara-county-hate-crimes-task-force-crime-san-jose/10381943/.

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25. Russell Jeung, Annelle Maranan Garcia, Annie Bae, Christina (Krysty) Shen, and Joseph Malasa, " 'Urgently Needed to Protect Asian American Children and Families': The Social Movement for Asian American Studies at K–12 Grades," *Sociological Inquiry* 94, no. 2 (May 2024): 369–90.

26. For notable scholarship on the Asian American Movement, see the work of Diane Fujino and Daryl Maeda. Specifically, see Diane Fujino, "Political Asian America: Afro-Asian Solidarity, Third World Internationalism, and the Origins of the Asian American Movement," *Ethnic Studies Review* 47, no. 1 (April 2024): 60–97, https://doi.org/10.1525/esr.2024.47.1.60; and Diane Fujino, "Rhizomatic Organizing, Collective Leadership, and Community-Centered Pedagogy in the Early Asian American Movement," *Journal of Asian American Studies* (2024): 1–34, online, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021875824000252.

27. Ruth Wilson Gilmore, in "Geographies of Racial Capitalism with Ruth Wilson Gilmore – An Antipode Foundation film," uploaded by antipodeonline on June 1, 2020, YouTube video, 00:05:19, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CS627aKrJI.

28. Notably, Cedric Robinson, Eric Williams, Robin D. G. Kelley, and other scholars have made resonant, widely cited arguments that align with this articulation of capitalism as always already racial at its core. Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 3rd ed. (University of North Carolina Press, 2021); and Robin D. G. Kelley, "What did Cedric Robinson Mean by Racial Capitalism?" *Boston Review*, January 12, 2017, https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/robin-d-g-kelley-introduction-race-capitalism-justice/.

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Movement Became Entwined with Zionism, Policing, and Counterinsurgency," *Critical Ethnic Studies Blog*, April 10, 2024, https://www.criticalethnicstudiesjournal.org/blog/2024/4/10/how-the-stop-asian-hate-movement-became-entwined-with-zionism-policing-and-counterinsurgency.

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31. Sucheng Chan, in *Ancestors in the Americas: Coolies, Sailors, Settlers*, dir. Loni Ding (Center for Asian American Media, 2001), 00:09:15.

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33. Simeon Man, "Empire and War in Asian American History," in *The Oxford Handbook of Asian American History*, ed. David K. Yoo and Eiichiro Azuma (Oxford University Press, 2016), 253–66.

34. Gary Okihiro, *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (Columbia University Press, 2001), 67.

35. Gary Okihiro, "When and Where I Enter," in *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (University of Washington Press, 1994).

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41. Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different," 58.

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at the K–12 level in the U.S., see Russell Jeung, Annelle Maranan Garcia, Annie Bae, Christina (Krysty) Shen, and Joseph Malasa, "'Urgently Needed to Protect Asian American Children and Families': The Social Movement for Asian American Studies at K–12 Grades," *Sociological Inquiry* 94, no. 2 (May 2024): 369–90.

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75. Robert Ragsac, interview by PI, Ellina Yin, and Vickie Taketa, January 1, 2021.

76. See Dale Minami, interview by Ellina Yin and PI, February 28, 2022, AAPI Perspectives Oral History Project, Japanese American Museum of San José, https://aapi-perspectives.jamsj.org/archive/dale-minami/; Susan Hayase, interview by PI and Ellina Yin, November 1, 2022, AAPI Perspectives Oral History Project, Japanese American Museum of San José, https://aapi-perspectives.jamsj.org/archive/susan-hayase/; Will Kaku, interview by PI, Ellina Yin, and Vickie Taketa, November 15, 2022, AAPI

Perspectives Oral History Project, Japanese American Museum of San José, https://aapi-perspectives.jamsj.org/archive/will-kaku/; and Richard Konda, interview, AAPI Perspectives Oral History Project, Japanese American Museum of San José, https://aapi-perspectives.jamsj.org/archive/richard-konda/.

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