

REFLECTION

From Exclusion to Inclusion: An Informal Historiographical Memoir about East Asians in British Columbia

PATRICIA E. ROY*

TODAY, SEVERAL UNIVERSITIES offer courses on Asians in Canada. That would not have been possible forty-five years ago when I began researching the history of the Chinese and Japanese in British Columbia because, at that time, there was hardly any literature on the topic.¹ How, then, did I become interested in the history of East Asians in British Columbia? It was not from personal experience, although I heard my grandmother's stories about a succession of Chinese peddlars – all of whom were named “George” – who traded oranges and bananas for vegetables from her Burnaby garden and root cellar and stayed for afternoon tea. As a child, I did not realize the significance of her mentioning that “George” normally sat at the kitchen table with her, but that if she had other company he took his tea on the porch. Knowing Granny, I like to think this was his choice, not hers. I also have faint early childhood memories of another friendly Chinese man who delivered fresh vegetables. During a visit to Japan on a summer student exchange I realized that the wonderful indoor swimming pool that I vaguely recalled sharing with my cousin one summer was an *ofuro*, the original hot tub. My uncle had largely drained it so we small children would be entertained while our mothers worked on the strawberry farm

* I wish to express my thanks to Tracey Kinney and her team at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, who invited me to give the keynote address at the 2015 BC Studies Conference, “From Exclusion to Inclusion: Forging a Multicultural Identity in British Columbia,” from which this article evolved. I also want to thank my friends Peter Neary and John Price, who read early drafts of the paper and, of course, Richard Mackie, Graeme Wynn, Leanne Coughlin, and their associates at *BC Studies*.

¹ As an update of review articles I published in 1979 and 1998, this article gives relatively little attention to titles published before 1997 and only skims the surface of the increasingly rich store of journal articles. See Patricia E. Roy, “‘White Canada Forever’: Two Generations of Studies,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 40, 2 (1979): 97–109; Patricia E. Roy, “Active Voices: A Third Generation of Studies of the Chinese and Japanese in British Columbia,” *BC Studies* 117 (Spring 1998): 51–61. Books, mainly by participants, about the Redress Movement are not discussed here, although most of them sketch the history of the Japanese Canadians before 1942.

that he was managing for a Japanese friend who had had to leave the coast.² Only later did I make the connection between the *ofuro* and the events of 1942.

The student exchange occurred while I was an undergraduate at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Before we left, I met Japanese Canadians since one of our group was a Nisei law student. Even then I didn't know that little more than a decade earlier he could not have practised law. Despite that trip to Japan and the presence of a strong Asian Studies department at UBC, I took no courses on Asian history, language, or culture. I wanted to be a historian of Canada and I became one.

My interest in the history of East Asians was sparked, serendipitously, in 1968, when Jack Bumsted (recently appointed to teach Canadian history at Simon Fraser University), invited me to contribute to a volume that became *Documentary Problems in Canadian History: Post Confederation*. It is a collection of snippets of documents and brief background notes designed for discussion groups in introductory Canadian history courses.³ He had divided the country regionally and chronologically and asked for something relating to British Columbia since 1914. His only caveats were that it had to be controversial and interesting and that the documents had to be in the public domain as he had no funds for permission fees. I was teaching in Victoria and working on a dry-as-dust dissertation for UBC that dealt with streetcars and electric power.⁴ Somehow along the way I had become aware of the fact that Japanese Canadians had been removed from the coast during the Second World War. It seemed likely that there had been some debate in the press and in Parliament. Finding suitable material turned out to be a very easy task; with the help of primitive photocopiers, scissors, and rubber cement, I assembled a "problem."

As background, I read the available secondary material on what was broadly known as "the Oriental Question" in British Columbia – about three books and a couple of articles. Not wanting to waste this work, I incorporated some of the information into the introductory course in Canadian history. Every teacher knows that good lessons often result from a student asking the "right" question. In trying to explain the powers

² The Japanese farmer told the story to Barry Broadfoot, *Years of Sorrow, Years of Shame: The Story of the Japanese Canadians in World War II* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1977), 118-20.

³ Patricia E. Roy, "The Evacuation of the Japanese, 1942," in *Documentary Problems in Canadian History: Post-Confederation*, J.M. Bumsted, ed., 215-40 (Georgetown, ON: Irwin-Dorsey, 1969).

⁴ Patricia E. Roy, "The British Columbia Electric Railway Company, 1897-1929: A British Company in British Columbia" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 1970).

of reservation and disallowance, I used as examples the laws that British Columbia's Legislature regularly passed early in the twentieth century in an attempt to halt Asian immigration only to have them disallowed or, in one case, reserved. As a postscript, I remarked that, in 1923, the federal government passed an exclusionary Chinese Immigration Act. The student asked the right question: Why did Ottawa change its mind? A vague answer seemed to satisfy the student, but it did not satisfy me.

Curiosity and invitations to give conference papers led me to do some primary research in BC newspapers and in the Mackenzie King Papers and the records of the Department of Immigration and the Department of External Affairs at what was then the Public Archives of Canada. I soon realized that the background of the 1923 Act was more complex than I had thought. Still, my early efforts to explain it, based on preliminary research, were well received.⁵

About that time I met two other historians who were researching similar topics. Hugh Johnston was working on the *Komagata Maru*, the first of his many fine publications on immigrants from South Asia. That meant I did not have to deal with "East Indians," a complicated subject because of their status as British subjects. Peter Ward was writing a dissertation on responses to Chinese and Japanese immigrants before 1914. I hoped to rely on his work as the background for my work on the years from 1914 to 1949 (when British Columbia removed the last legal discriminations against Asians). However, he quickly turned his thesis into the book *White Canada Forever*, which took the story up to 1942. It's an important book, but my research didn't fit his main thesis, which is that "racial beliefs persisted largely independent of social and economic circumstances."⁶ Back to the drawing board. I set aside my work on the years after 1914 and began researching the earlier years to confirm my observations that, while "race" was important, economic and social factors had a significant role. Ward was also responsible for instigating the "class vs. race" debate that long played a significant role in BC historiography.⁷

⁵ The two most important early articles were "The Oriental 'Menace' in British Columbia," in *The Twenties in Western Canada*, ed. Susan M. Trofimenkoff, 243-58 (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1972); and "British Columbia's Fear of Asians, 1900-1950," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 13 (May 1980): 161-72. Both were later reprinted in anthologies designed for students.

⁶ W. Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978), 119. The book is currently in its third edition.

⁷ W. Peter Ward, "Class and Race in the Social Structure of British Columbia, 1870-1939," *BC Studies* 45 (Spring 1980): 17-45; and W. Peter Ward, "Race and Class in British Columbia: A Reply," *BC Studies* 50 (Summer 1981): 52; T. Rennie Warburton, "Race and Class in British Columbia: A Comment," *BC Studies* 49 (Spring 1981): 79-85.

My work on the years between 1858 and 1914 resulted in *A White Man's Province* (1989). New secondary sources eased the task. One of the most important was *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*, researched and written by a team of scholars, including Ed Wickberg, who edited it.⁸ Produced in the face of many difficulties, Ken Adachi's *The Enemy That Never Was* is still the best overview of the Japanese in Canada.⁹ Both volumes were published under the auspices of the federal Department of Multiculturalism as part of their Generations series.

My first major publication after *A White Man's Province* was *Mutual Hostages: Canadians and Japanese during the Second World War*,¹⁰ co-authored with Jack Granatstein and two Japanese historians, Masako Iino and Hiroko Takamura. We had a clear division of labour. The Japanese scholars treated the Japan side of the story. Unfortunately, although Japan looms large in Canadian eyes, the reverse is not true. Moreover, many Japanese government documents were destroyed during the war. Granatstein did the military side of the story, especially the tragedy of Hong Kong. My main contribution was the BC background and the accounts of Canadians who were interned in Asia.

This project led into the sequel to *A White Man's Province*. When I completed the draft, its length shocked me. In the old days, when one typed, the mounting length of the manuscript was obvious as one's stack of paper rose. On the computer, even with numbered pages, it is less apparent. What to do? Appeal to an editor. It took seconds to e-mail Jean Wilson at UBC Press, who had been waiting patiently for my manuscript. I suggested that it might become two volumes, with December 1941, the date of Pearl Harbor and the beginning of the Pacific War, as the dividing point. After consulting her colleagues, Jean agreed. Thus, I put the final touches to *The Oriental Question: Consolidating a White Man's Province*.¹¹

Dividing the manuscript at 1941 left a rather slim third volume. So I went back to the fun part of writing history – primary research in archives and libraries. But I had to find a closing date. Happily, 1967 worked well because it marked the end of a process by which Asians had gradually come to be treated like all other immigrants to Canada and by which time several Asians had served in elected office. It became *The Triumph*

⁸ (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982).

⁹ (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976). The Japanese Canadian Citizens Association papers at Library and Archives Canada document the problems.

¹⁰ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

¹¹ (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003).

of *Citizenship*, a title chosen in consultation with UBC Press. My working title had been “From Exclusion to Inclusion.”

By then, the volume of related secondary sources had grown immensely. Some new material was chiefly important for context. It ranged from diplomatic studies, such as John Meehan’s study of Canada’s relations with Japan between 1929 and 1941,¹² and Marina Valverde’s study of moral reform.¹³ Two major works – James Walker’s study of “race” and the Supreme Court,¹⁴ and Constance Backhouse’s *Colour-Coded*¹⁵ – set the experience of Asians within a more national context and sorted out legal issues. Other publications gave additional information on specific aspects of the subject. Articles by Gillian Creese, Audrey Kobayashi, and Alicja Muszynski on the place of Asians in the workforce,¹⁶ for example, helped to flesh out the economic aspects of the subject, as did two studies of the fishing village of Steveston by Mitsuo Yesaki.¹⁷ A third study, a generously illustrated history by Masako and Stanley Fukawa and the Nikkei Fishermen’s History Book Committee, deals with the entire coast and is especially valuable because, like Yesaki’s work, it uses both English and Japanese sources and has many stories from the fishers themselves, but it appeared after my books.¹⁸

It is always satisfying to see one’s work cited, even if it is to point out that one didn’t get it “right.” Had I been able to read articles by Allan Grove and Ross Lambertson on the Coal Mines Regulation Act, I would have saved myself a lot of angst – and error – as I tried to sort

¹² John D. Meehan, *The Dominion and the Rising Sun: Canada Encounters Japan, 1929–41* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

¹³ Marina Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885–1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991).

¹⁴ James W. St. G. Walker, “Race,” *Rights and the Law in the Supreme Court of Canada* (Toronto: The Osgoode Society, 1997).

¹⁵ Constance Backhouse, *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900–1950* (Toronto: The Osgoode Society, 1999).

¹⁶ Gillian Creese, “Exclusion or Solidarity? Vancouver Workers Confront the ‘Oriental Problem,’” *BC Studies* 80 (Winter 1988–89): 24–51; Audrey Kobayashi and Peter Jackson, “Japanese Canadians and the Racialization of Labour in the British Columbia Sawmill Industry,” *BC Studies* 103 (Autumn 1994): 59–81; Alicja Muszynski, “Shoreworkers and UFAWU Organization: Struggles between Fishers and Plant Workers within the Union,” in *Uncommon Property: The Fishing and Fish-Processing Industries in British Columbia*, ed. Patricia Marchak, Neil Guppy, and John McMullan, 270–90 (Toronto: Methuen, 1987).

¹⁷ Mitsuo Yesaki and Harold and Kathy Steves, *Steveston Cannery Row: An Illustrated History* (Richmond, BC: privately published, 1998); Mitsuo Yesaki, *Sutebusuton: A Japanese Village on the British Columbia Coast* (Vancouver: Peninsula Publishing, 2003).

¹⁸ Masako Fukawa with Stanley Fukawa and the Nikkei Fishermen’s History Book Committee, *Spirit of the Nikkei Fleet: BC’s Japanese Canadian Fishermen* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2009).

out a surprisingly complex subject.¹⁹ I wish, too, that I could have cited David Goutor's *Guarding the Gates: The Canadian Labour Movement and Immigration, 1872-1934* rather than have him cite me.²⁰ His book gave me a much better understanding of the national support for the imposition of the Chinese head tax in 1885 than I had when I wrote *A White Man's Province*. Similarly, some essays in *Calling Power to Account: Law, Reparations, and the Chinese Canadian Head Tax Case* would have drawn my attention to the legal implications of the head tax.²¹

Articles by Norman Knowles, Timothy Nakayama, and Peter Ward provided insight into the attitudes of the Christian churches towards Asians, as did several small books published by the Japanese Canadian Christian Churches Historical Project.²² Although Jiwu Wang's central thesis that opinions about the Asian presence within Protestant churches were divided is not new, my work would have benefited from his book-length study and his observation that "the Chinese community became stronger by resisting the Protestant campaign to evangelize Chinese immigrants."²³

I mention this because it is important to see immigration questions from the viewpoints of both policy-makers and the people affected. While government documents and newspaper reports reveal a great deal, oral histories, biographies, and memoirs can breathe life into them. One of the justifiable criticisms of my work concerns the limited attention I give to the response of the Chinese and Japanese to their situation, attributable to the fact that I do not know any Chinese languages or Japanese.

¹⁹ Alan Grove and Ross Lambertson, "Pawns of the Powerful: The Politics of Litigation in the Union Colliery Case," *BC Studies* 103 (Fall 1994): 3-21; Ross Lambertson, "After Union Colliery: Law, Race and Class in the Coalmines of British Columbia," in *Essays in the History of Canadian Law*, vol. 6, *British Columbia and the Yukon*, ed. Hamar Foster and John McLaren, 386-422 (Toronto: Osgoode Society, 1995).

²⁰ David Goutor, *Guarding the Gates: The Canadian Labour Movement and Immigration, 1872-1934* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007).

²¹ David Dyzenhaus and Mayo Moran, eds., *Calling Power to Account: Law, Reparations and the Chinese Canadian Head Tax Case* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

²² Roland M. Kawano, ed., *Ministry to the Hopelessly Hopeless: Japanese Canadian Evacuees and Churches during WWII* (Scarborough, ON: The Japanese Canadian Christian Churches Historical Project, 1997); Roland M. Kawano, ed., *A History of the Japanese Congregations in the United Church of Canada* (Scarborough, ON: The Japanese Canadian Christian Churches Historical Project, 1998); Chiyokichi Ariga and Shin'ichi Kimura, *The Rev. Frank Cassillis-Kennedy: Elder to the Japanese Canadians* (Scarborough, ON: The Japanese Canadian Christian Churches Historical Project, 1998).

²³ Jiwu Wang, *"His Dominion" and the "Yellow Peril": Protestant Missions to Chinese Immigrants in Canada, 1859-1967* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier Press for Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, 2006), 148.

I did use two published collections of oral histories, as well as some translations and interviews generated by research for *From China to Canada*, that form part of the Chinese Canadian Research Collection in Special Collections, UBC Library.²⁴ Since then, more published interviews have appeared, such as those of twenty-eight women who came from South China and Hong Kong between 1950 and 1989 that Vivienne Poy, herself an immigrant from Hong Kong, collected and analyzed in *Passage to Promise Land: Voices of Chinese Immigrant Women in Canada*.²⁵ Thanks to the work of Denise Chong and May Q. Wong, the Canadian-born children of immigrant parents, we have poignant accounts of the impact of the head tax and exclusionary legislation, and how they separated families for years and created “paper relatives.”²⁶ Both books also have fascinating accounts of return visits to China. The several volumes published under the auspices of the Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia include a collection of family stories; a delightful annotated cookbook, *Eating Stories*; the memoirs of Larry Wong, who grew up in Vancouver’s Chinatown; and Lily Chow’s history of the Chinese labourers who helped to build the Canadian Pacific Railway.²⁷

When I was writing, I had access to only a few first-hand Japanese sources, such as the writings of Muriel Kitagawa and the *New Canadian*, the Japanese Canadian newspaper that began publishing in the late 1930s.²⁸ I would have benefited from access to the edited diary of Kosaburo Shimizu, who, as a fifteen-year-old schoolboy, recently arrived in New Westminster from Japan, began keeping a diary in 1909. His daughter

²⁴ Women’s Book Committee, Chinese Canadian National Council, *Jin Guo: Voices of Chinese Canadian Women* (Toronto: The Women’s Book Committee, Chinese Canadian National Council, 1992); Evelyn Huang with Lawrence Jeffery, *Chinese Canadians: Voices from a Community* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1992).

²⁵ Vivienne Poy, *Passage to Promise Land: Voices of Chinese Immigrant Women in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2013).

²⁶ Denise Chong, *The Concubine’s Children: Portrait of a Family Divided* (Toronto: Viking, 1994); May Q. Wong, *A Cowherd in Paradise: From China to Canada* (Victoria: Brindle and Glass, 2012).

²⁷ Brandy Liên Worrall, ed., *Finding Memories, Tracing Routes: Chinese Canadian Family Stories* (Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia, 2006) (there is also a bilingual edition, Chinese and English); Brandy Liên Worrall, ed., *Eating Stories: A Chinese Canadian and Aboriginal Potluck* (Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia, 2007 [2014]); Larry Wong, *Dim Sum Stories: A Chinatown Childhood* (Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia, 2011); Lily Siewsan Chow, *Blood and Sweat over the Railway Tracks: Chinese Labourers Constructing the Canadian Pacific Railway, 1880–1885* (Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia and Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies, University of British Columbia, 2014).

²⁸ Muriel Kitagawa, *This Is My Own: Letters to Wes and Other Writings on Japanese Canadians, 1941–1948* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1985).

and son-in-law arranged the translation and publication of the diaries from then through 1926, a year before Shimizu, who had graduated from UBC, was ordained as a minister of the United Church.²⁹

While important work has been done in putting the history of the Chinese and Japanese in Canada into a broader context, some very specific studies of issues, individuals, or communities have added to our knowledge. Some are well known; others have been privately published or published by small presses. Two examples of the latter type and of very specific works are David Sulz's translation of *Phantom Immigrants*, the story of a Japanese entrepreneur who, in 1906, smuggled some eighty villagers out of Japan and brought them to an island in the Fraser River; and Tatsuo Kage's fascinating study of the Japanese Canadians who returned to Japan after the war.³⁰ A number of scholars in Japan have written about the Japanese in Canada. Alas, little of their work has appeared in English.³¹

Few Nisei or Sansei, the Canadian-born children and grandchildren, respectively, of Japanese immigrants, acquired a good knowledge of the Japanese language. Michiko Midge Ayukawa, the author of *Hiroshima Immigrants in Canada, 1891-1941*,³² is an exception. Unlike many Nisei children, who preferred to play games after regular public school, Midge attended the Japanese Language School in Vancouver, where she was a prize-winning student. Unfortunately, her Japanese-language education rudely ended in December 1941 when she was eleven years old. Nevertheless, she had acquired a working knowledge of the language. After a career as a mother and chemist, she retired to Victoria, where she followed her interests in Japan and completed a BA, a MA, and a PhD in Japanese history. Her dissertation on Hiroshima immigrants to British Columbia benefited from her knowledge of the language and from her mother, who, as a Hiroshima immigrant, gave Midge entrée to

²⁹ *Kosaburo Shimizu: The Early Diaries, 1909-1926*, trans. Tsuguo Arai, ed. Grace Arai (Anchorage: AT Publishing, 2005).

³⁰ Jiro Nita, *Phantom Immigrants*, trans. David Sulz (Shawnigan Lake, BC: privately printed, 1998); Tatsuo Kage, *Uprooted Again: Japanese Canadians Move to Japan after World War II*, trans., Kathleen Chisato Merken (Victoria: Ti-Jean, 2012).

³¹ A notable recent exception is Masumi Izumi of Doshisha University, who has written on the postwar Japanese community in Vancouver. Among her articles are: "Reclaiming and Reinventing 'Powell Street': Reconstruction of the Japanese Canadian Community in Post-World War II Vancouver," in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds., 308-33 (Seattle: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest and University of Washington Press, 2005); "The Japanese Canadians Move: Migration and Activism before and after World War II," *Amerasia Journal* 33 (2007): 49-64.

³² (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).

interviewees and translated words in local or archaic dialects. Somewhat revised, the thesis was published as a book in 2008. Alas, Midge, who published many articles on Japanese Canadians and who had a wealth of stories, not all of them perhaps suitable for publication, died in 2013.

Studies of Chinese and Japanese communities in particular locales have been a significant growth area. They follow on the fine example set by Paul Yee's *Saltwater City*, a history of the Chinese in Vancouver.³³ The extensive research of geographer Kay Anderson into Vancouver sources confirms research that I had already conducted, but had not then published.³⁴ Unlike my work, Anderson's book is rooted in the concept of "cultural hegemony" as she uses "historical material with a view to presenting a sociological argument" rather than a "conventionally conceived history" of Vancouver's Chinatown, which, she argues, is partly a "European creation." Her overriding interest is an examination of how "'race' was constituted as fact." Like me, Anderson relies only on English-language sources. A step towards a useful corrective is Wing Chung Ng's study of aspects of the internal politics of Vancouver's Chinese community from 1945 to 1980.³⁵ It certainly helped me in trying to untangle that story.

For Victoria, the geographer and Hong Kong native David Chuenyan Lai, best known for his book *Chinatowns in Canada* (with its very large section on Victoria), recently published a detailed history of Victoria's Chinese Benevolent Association in order to document leadership within a Chinatown and the functioning of a Chinatown within a municipal government.³⁶ Combining social theory and Historical Geographical Information Systems, a group of historians and geographers have demonstrated that, at least in 1891, not all residents of Chinatown were Chinese and that not all of Victoria's Chinese lived in Chinatown.³⁷ Shelly D. Ikebuchi has used a Victoria institution, the Chinese Rescue Home (later the Oriental Home and School), that was physically located between the Chinese and white settlements, to explore power relations, notably the role of women in operating the home, and the themes of race,

³³ Paul Yee, *Saltwater City: An Illustrated History of the Chinese in Vancouver* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1988 [2006]).

³⁴ Kay Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 19, 9, 4, 246.

³⁵ Wing Chung Ng, *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999).

³⁶ David Chuenyan Lai, *Chinatowns: Towns within Cities in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1988); and David Chuenyan Lai, *Chinese Community Leadership: Case Study of Victoria in Canada* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2010).

³⁷ Patrick A. Dunae, John S. Lutz, Donald J. Lafreniere, and Jason A. Gilliland, "Making the Inscrutable, Scrutable: Race and Space in Victoria's Chinatown," *BC Studies* 169 (Spring 2011): 51-80.

including “whiteness,” morality, and domesticity. Created initially to save Chinese women from prostitution, the Home operated under the auspices of the Methodist Church and eventually also served Chinese children and Japanese women and children.³⁸ A Victoria incident, the refusal of Chinese parents in Victoria to send their children to a segregated school in 1922, led Timothy Stanley to make a wide-ranging exploration of what he calls “anti-racism.”³⁹ Like Jiwu Wang, Stanley concludes that “racist oppression” led the Chinese to build a collective identity as Chinese Canadians.

Former Chinatowns have also drawn attention and provide insights into social and economic life in smaller Chinatowns. Chilliwack’s Chinatown faded after a fire in 1934,⁴⁰ New Westminster’s exists only in the memories of some Chinese families and of such New Westminster old-timers as myself, whose only personal recollection of the Second World War is of the Chinese setting off firecrackers on Columbia Street on V-J Day.⁴¹ Lily Chow, an immigrant from Malaysia, has done some original work on the Chinatowns that were once located in such northern centres as Barkerville, Prince George, Quesnel, Smithers, and Prince Rupert. She demonstrates that, although these Chinatowns are no more, new immigrants from the Chinese diaspora have a presence in northern British Columbia.⁴² Since Chow wrote her pioneering work, Lily Hoy Price, one of the twelve children of a Quesnel merchant, has published her memoir of a happy childhood. In spite of chores, she and her siblings had lots of fun among themselves and their school friends. There were a few Chinese “married bachelors” in the town; theirs was the only Chinese family. “Overall,” she “did not experience racial discrimination.”⁴³ Apart from the studies of Steveston, the only recent work dealing with pre-war Japanese in a particular community is Ann-Lee and Gordon Switzer’s,

³⁸ Shelly D. Ikebuchi, *From Slave Girls to Salvation: Gender, Race, and Victoria’s Chinese Rescue Home, 1886-1923* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015).

³⁹ Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 188.

⁴⁰ Chad Reimer, *Chilliwack’s Chinatowns: A History* (Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia and Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies, University of British Columbia, 2011).

⁴¹ Jim Wolf and Patricia Owen, *Yi Fao: Speaking through Memory: A History of New Westminster’s Chinese Community 1958-1980* (Surrey, BC: Heritage House, 2010).

⁴² Lily Chow, *Sojourners in the North* (Prince George: Caitlin, 1996); Lily Chow, *Chasing Their Dreams: Chinese Settlement in the Northwest Region of British Columbia* (Prince George: Caitlin, 2000).

⁴³ Lily Hoy Price, *I Am Full Moon: Stories of a Ninth Daughter* (Victoria: Brindle and Glass, 2009), 80.

Gateway to Promise: Canada's First Japanese Community, a detailed history of the Japanese in Victoria and vicinity.⁴⁴

The story of the Chinese and Japanese in Canada is not confined to British Columbia. Alison Marshall, for example, recovers some of the experiences of the Chinese in Manitoba and Saskatchewan;⁴⁵ Hing-Min Chiang relates the history of the handful of Chinese in Prince Edward Island.⁴⁶ Shortly after the 1988 Redress settlement, the Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association of Manitoba produced a history of the Japanese in that province.⁴⁷ Particularly in writing *The Triumph of Citizenship* I was able to use a number of articles about the Chinese and Japanese in Ontario and Quebec.

References to my publications still appear in footnotes and bibliographies, but my work seems somewhat old-fashioned beside more recent studies that embrace broader settings or that are imbued with theory. Several important works draw on the concept of transnationalism. In a sweeping study, *Orienting Canada: Race, Empire, and the Transpacific*, John Price explores aspects of race and empire, focusing on the years between 1919 and 1956.⁴⁸ Trans-Pacific studies are also the subject of Andrea Geiger's *Subverting Exclusion: Transpacific Encounters with Race, Caste, and Borders, 1885-1928*, in which she compares the legal constraints faced by the Japanese in Canada and the United States and shows how caste and status in Japan affected immigrants to North America.⁴⁹ Immigration is also a theme of *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945*, by Lisa Rose Mar. While concentrating on Vancouver, Mar describes how "Chinese-Anglo brokerage relations involved local contexts, but also ties to the larger Pacific world where Canada strived to make its mark."⁵⁰ These works illustrate the advantages of looking beyond Canada, not only across the Pacific but also south of the border.

⁴⁴ Ann-Lee and Gordon Switzer, *Gateway to Promise: Canada's First Japanese Community* (Victoria: Ti-Jean Press, 2012).

⁴⁵ Alison R. Marshall, *The Way of the Bachelor: Early Chinese Settlement in Manitoba* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011); and Alison R. Marshall, *Cultivating Connections: The Making of Chinese Prairie Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).

⁴⁶ Hung-Min Chiang, *Chinese Islanders: Making a Home in the New World* (Charlottetown: Island Studies Press, 2006).

⁴⁷ MJCCA History Committee, *The History of Japanese Canadians in Manitoba* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association, 1996).

⁴⁸ (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011).

⁴⁹ Andrea Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion: Transpacific Encounters with Race, Caste, and Borders, 1885-1928* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

⁵⁰ Lisa Rose Mar, *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 7.

Looking south of the border inspired comparative studies such as Stephanie Bangarth's examination of the divergences between Canada and the United States, particularly among human rights activists, in the defence of the rights of Japanese residents during and immediately after the Second World War. Greg Robinson's work on the wartime confinement of North American Japanese uses Canadian examples as a counterpoint to his study of experience in the United States. In sum, recent scholarship effectively reinforces the fact that the Asian question in British Columbia can be seen not only in a provincial or national context, but also in an international one. The advantage of a wider perspective is also evident in Julie F. Gilmour's study of the 1907 anti-Asian riot in Vancouver. When she told me she was working on the subject I wondered if she could find anything new to say. She did. Her use of British sources shows how Canada, as a "fledgling nation," tried to exercise power in London, Washington, and Asia.⁵¹

The wartime experiences of Japanese Canadians have generated a small library of books and articles; scholars are now approaching that history in new ways. Several Sansei scholars have recently drawn on sophisticated theories, especially from memory studies, as well as the usual documentary and secondary sources, interviews, and their own observations, to produce new interpretations of the internment, particularly as experienced by women.⁵² The sociologist Pamela Sugiman uses stories from her own family, interviews with Nisei women (and a few men), and the wartime letters of Nisei and Issei women that were intercepted by the censor to relate their multiple stories and their range of emotions, from resistance to despair.⁵³ Kirsten Emiko McAllister explores how building the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre in New Denver, a museum portraying the wartime experiences of the Japanese Canadians who resided there during and after the war, "changed not

⁵¹ Julie F. Gilmour, *Trouble on Main Street: Mackenzie King, Reason, Race, and the 1907 Vancouver Riots* (Toronto: Allen Lane, 2014).

⁵² Technically, in Canada only about eight hundred men of Japanese ancestry were interned, mainly for protesting their removal from the coast and separation from their families. However, the term "internment" has come to be used to describe the whole process of what happened to Japanese Canadians between 1941 and 1949 and was used in 1988 in the Canadian government's official acknowledgment of the injustices they suffered. A rare example of "collective memory studies" involving men is Lyle Dick, "Sergeant Masumi Mitsui and the Japanese Canadian War Memorial," *Canadian Historical Review* 91 (September 2010): 435-63.

⁵³ Pamela Sugiman, "Passing Time, Moving Memories: Interpreting Wartime Narratives of Japanese Canadian Women," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 37 (May 2004): 50-79. See also Pamela Sugiman, "'These Feelings That Fill My Heart': Japanese Canadian Women's Memories of Internment," *Oral History* 34 (2006): 69-84; Pamela Sugiman, "'Life Is Sweet': Vulnerability and Composure in the Wartime Narratives of Japanese Canadians," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, 1 (2009): 186-218.

only the terrain of memory but also the community itself.”⁵⁴ Building in part on McAllister’s work, Mona Oikawa interviewed twenty-one women and set their stories – including poignant accounts of the loss of property, of networks of friends and kin, and of language – within the very large framework of the internment process and its continuing effects. The whole is informed by theory, especially Foucauldian concepts of power, the “carceral,” punishment, and surveillance.⁵⁵ Oikawa’s title, *Cartographies of Violence*, sharply contrasts with “A Blessing in Disguise,” the title of Ken Adachi’s concluding chapter.⁵⁶ A systematic study of changes in nomenclature, such as from “evacuation” to “internment” or “incarceration,” would be informative.⁵⁷

Oikawa is critical of several studies of the wartime experiences of Japanese Canadians written by other than Japanese Canadians, including the previously mentioned *Mutual Hostages: Canadians and Japanese during the Second World War*. Admittedly, the title has problems, but Oikawa’s attack on our goal of explaining events without condoning or condemning them seems excessively harsh. As historians, we sought to understand the past in the context of its time. Another effort to do this is Daniel Heidt’s essay which argues that sincere concerns about security as well as racism inspired Howard Green, a Vancouver Member of Parliament, to oppose the presence of the Japanese in British Columbia.⁵⁸

Transnational studies such as those by Bangarth and Geiger suggest the value of comparative studies. There is a rich American literature upon which to draw, but Chinese and Japanese also immigrated to other countries. Some Australian and New Zealand scholars briefly refer to Canadian parallels with Asian immigration and foreign policy,⁵⁹ the

⁵⁴ Kirsten Emiko McAllister, *Terrains of Memory: A Japanese Canadian Memorial Project* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 124. My contribution to knowledge of New Denver is: “If the Cedars Could Speak: Japanese and Canadians Meet at New Denver,” *BC Studies* 131 (2001): 81–92.

⁵⁵ Mona Oikawa, *Cartographies of Violence: Japanese Canadian Women, Memory, and the Subjects of the Internment* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 7, 13, 30, and 216.

⁵⁶ Ken Adachi, *The Enemy That Never Was* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), chap. 15.

⁵⁷ The American historian Roger Daniels has written a useful article on nomenclature. Although he deals with the United States, many of his observations apply to Canada. See Roger Daniels, “Words Do Matter: A Note on Inappropriate Terminology and the Incarceration of the Japanese Americans,” in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds., 190–214 (Seattle: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest and University of Washington Press, 2005).

⁵⁸ Daniel Heidt, “Howard Charles Green and Japanese Canadians,” *BC Studies* 164 (Winter 2009–10): 31–50.

⁵⁹ Sean Brawley, *The White Peril: Foreign Relations and Asian Immigration to Australasia and North America, 1919–78* (Sydney: NSW Press, 1995).

demise of the White Australia policy,⁶⁰ parallels between New Zealand's poll tax and Canada's head tax, the apologies for such, and the influence of the Canadian "points system" on New Zealand immigration policy in the 1980s.⁶¹ Canadian historians could profit by looking at Australasia and might extend their gaze to Latin America, especially Brazil, Mexico, and Peru.⁶²

Scholars are also taking new approaches to ways of doing historical research, such as that being undertaken by the Landscapes of Injustice project, which is examining the fate of the property owned by Japanese Canadians before the Pacific war. An early result of that project is an article by Jordan Stanger-Ross, the leader of the project, on Kishizo Kimura, who had the unenviable task of acting as a liaison between the Custodian of Enemy Property and Japanese property owners.⁶³

Yet many topics await further investigation. We need studies of the inner workings of the Chinese and Japanese communities. What, for example, explains tensions within the Japanese community in 1942 between the well-to-do (represented by Etsuji Morii) and the majority of the Japanese? The literature hints at generational conflict generally, but the subject invites research.⁶⁴ How did the experiences of Asians in small towns or rural areas compare with those of residents of larger places? The handful of published memoirs suggests differences. Within British Columbia, Asians, First Nations, and Doukhobors shared discrimination and the handicap of disfranchisement. Yet many of the arguments for discrimination were quite different. A major complaint against Asians, for example, concerned fear of unrestricted immigration. That worry certainly did not apply to the First Nations. Another complaint against Asians was that they were not "white." The Doukhobors were very white. The larger society objected to what it called "unfair" economic competition from Asians and Doukhobors, but not from First Nations.

⁶⁰ Gwenda Tavan, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia* (Melbourne: Scribe Publications, 2005).

⁶¹ Manying Ip, ed., *Unfolding History, Evolving Identity: The Chinese in New Zealand* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003). See, in particular, the essays by Elsie Ho and Gilbert Wong.

⁶² I made a very limited attempt at this in "From Sojourners to Settlers: The Chinese and Japanese in the Trans-Pacific World, 1850s-1960s," in *Shifting Regional Order in East Asia: Proceedings*, Kimie Hara, ed., 81-110 (Waterloo, ON: Keiko and Charles Belair Centre for East Asian Studies, 2010).

⁶³ Jordan Stanger-Ross, "Telling a Difficult Past: Kishizo Kimura's Memoir of Entanglement in Racist Policy," *BC Studies* 181 (Spring 2014): 39-62. An earlier study of the unique case of a Japanese Canadian getting his property back is found in Peter Neary, "Zennosuke Inouye's Land: A Canadian Veterans Affairs Dilemma," *Canadian Historical Review* 85 (2004): 423-50.

⁶⁴ A helpful start is M. Ann Sunahara, "Historical Leadership Trends among Japanese Canadians, 1940-1950," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 11, 1 (1979): 1-16. Because it draws on interviews conducted in the 1970s, today it almost counts as a primary source.

A comparative study of the variables affecting responses to Asians, Doukhobors, and First Nations in British Columbia or to enemy aliens in wartime could be revealing both for an understanding of British Columbia and for the broader issue of prejudice.

A first step towards such comparative studies is *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-1921* by the sociologist Renisa Mawani. Informed by the work of Foucault, Ann Laura Stoler, and other theorists, it examines the anxieties created by “colonial contacts and proximities between aboriginal, Chinese, European and mixed-race populations,” and the resulting governing actions. Mawani rightly points to a major difference between attitudes and policies directed at the aboriginal people and the Chinese, namely a belief that the former could be assimilated whereas the latter could not.⁶⁵

What did the Chinese and Japanese in British Columbia think about their place in local society? Newspapers, though often biased, can be a useful source of opinion. Chinese- and Japanese-language newspapers have been published in British Columbia since at least 1907. Fortunately for researchers who can read the languages, two long-running journals, the *Chinese Times* (Vancouver, 1915-92) and the Japanese-language *Continental Daily Times* (Vancouver, 1907-41), have been digitized. The former is available through the Multicultural Canada website;⁶⁶ the latter, through Rare Books and Special Collections, UBC Library.

We also need more research into the interactions between Chinese and Japanese and other British Columbians at the level of individuals. From the work of Jean Barman on the relations between Chinese men and Indigenous women, particularly in the nineteenth century,⁶⁷ and the film *Cedar and Bamboo*,⁶⁸ we know that there were such liaisons. How common were they? Because gender ratios among the Japanese in British Columbia were not skewed in the same way as they were among the Chinese, Japanese men were less likely to mix with Native women, but it would not be surprising if some did. We know from anecdotal evidence and statistics produced by the Registrar of Vital Statistics that Europeans and Asians occasionally intermarried before the Second

⁶⁵ Renisa Mawani, *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-1921* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 34 and *passim*.

⁶⁶ Several other Chinese language newspapers are also available through the website <http://multiculturalcanada.ca/collections>.

⁶⁷ Jean Barman, “Beyond Chinatown: Chinese Men and Indigenous Women in Early British Columbia,” *BC Studies* 177 (Spring 2013): 39-64.

⁶⁸ Diana Leung and Kamala Tod, directors, *Cedar and Bamboo* (Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia, 2010).

World War, but were there unions that were not registered? In the last six or seven decades, marriages of individuals of Japanese ancestry with those of European and other backgrounds have become common. This no doubt reflects the general rejection of racial prejudice, but were other factors at work? Why were the Japanese more likely than the Chinese to marry outside their own communities? Is it simply a matter that, after the war, members of smaller Japanese communities had fewer opportunities to marry within their own group?

We need more biographies of individuals. Has anyone made use of the diaries of Reverend Kosaburo Shimizu? He continued his diaries in Japanese until 1942 and in English until his death in 1962. The original diaries are housed in Special Collections, UBC Library. He would be a fine subject for a biography since he was intimately acquainted with the Japanese Canadian community, which he served at various centres of the province. During the war he was in Kaslo, where he had a major role in promoting good relations between the Japanese newcomers and old-time residents.⁶⁹ At least two scholars abandoned work on a biography of Thomas Shoyama, a leader in the pre-war Nisei community who eventually became deputy minister of finance in Ottawa. His career was so varied, however, that his biographer would have to be familiar both with the Japanese Canadian community and the intricacies of national finance. Many of his papers are in Library and Archives Canada. A sampling of possible Chinese subjects would include Foon Sien, of whom little is known apart from his advocacy of civil rights and immigration reform. A biography of the Cumyow family could almost read like a history of the Chinese in British Columbia. Such books would complement the existing biographies of prominent Chinese such as Hong Kong immigrant David Lam and Vancouver native Tong Louie.⁷⁰ Lam praised Louie for paving the way for the business success of himself and other Chinese in British Columbia.⁷¹ How common was that feeling of good will between different generations of Chinese immigrants? That question begs for study. It, of course, is more than just a BC subject. And that is what we British Columbians must always remember: we are but a part of a large nation and an even larger world.

⁶⁹ Some evidence of his work in Kaslo may be found in my "A Tale of Two Cities: The Reception of Japanese Evacuees in Kelowna and Kaslo, BC," *BC Studies* 87 (Autumn 1990): 23-47.

⁷⁰ Reginald H. Roy, *David Lam: A Biography* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1996).

⁷¹ E.G. Perrault, *Tong: The Story of Tong Louie, Vancouver's Quiet Titan* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2002), 188.