THE PATHOS OF TEMPORALITY IN MID-20TH CENTURY ASIAN AMERICAN FICTION

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ABSTRACT

Lack of understanding regarding the role that temporality-pathos plays in Asian American literature leads scholars to misread many textual passages as deviations from the implied authors' political critiques. This dissertation invites scholars to recognize temporality-focused passages in Younghill Kang's *East Goes West*, Carlos Bulosan's *America is in the Heart*, and John Okada's *No-No Boy*, as part of a pathos formula developed by avant-garde Asian American writers to resist systemic alienations experienced by Asian Americans by diagnosing and treating America's empathy gap. I find that each of pathae examined – the pathos of finitude, the pathos of idealism, and the pathos of confusion – appears in each of the major primary texts discussed, and that these pathae not only invite similitude-based empathy from a wide readership, but also prompt, via multiple methods, the expansion of empathy. First, the authors use these pathae diagnostically: the pathos of finitude makes visible American imperialism's destruction of prior ways of life; the pathos of idealism exposes the falsity of the futures promised by liberalism; and the pathos of confusion counters the destructive nationalisms that fractured the era. Second, the authors use these temporality pathae to identify the instrumentalist reasoning underlying these capitalist ideologies and to show how they stunt American empathy. Third, the authors deploy formal and thematic complexities that cultivate empathy-generating faculties of mind and cultivate alternative forms of reasoning.

DEDICATION

To those who have lost their hours
and labored in vain.

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I thank my supportive family and friends, particularly my mother and father, Louise and Richard Gardam, my aunt Mary Jane Junge and my uncle Bergen Junge, my grandmother Annabel Junge and my grandfather Bill Junge, and my friends Michelle Martin and Philip Mahoney, all of whom have helped me get by over the last few years as I finished this project.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PATHOS OF TEMPORALITY IN MID-20TH CENTURY ASIAN AMERICAN FICTION

Scholarship on Asian American literature tends to evaluate texts' meaningful communications of suffering – their *pathos* – in terms of their realistic depiction and critique of Asian Americans' oppression. These interventions advance knowledge of Asian American history and expose the ugly faces of U.S. imperialism, neoliberalism, racism/ethnic nationalism, and the exploitative capitalist system these ideologies justify. In recent decades, an increasing number of scholars also have begun to explore less realism-based methods of political resistance performed by under-analyzed aesthetic features of Asian American texts.[i] My project illuminates one such neglected feature: a preoccupation with modern temporality which manifests both thematically and formally in several major mid-20th century Asian American narratives.

Drawing on the work of American empathy theorists such as William James and Candice Clark and pathos theorists such as Martha Nussbaum and Robert Buch, I define pathos in general as a temporal process of making and communicating meaning around pain. Whereas *suffering* refers to physical and psychological anguish, the term *pathos* includes both the rhetorical means (temporality-related words, images, thematics) and the durational process (connecting rhetoric to meanings shareable by the reader) by which that anguish is communicated. The cognitive empathy invited by these texts' complex uses of temporality rhetoric is temporality-dependent – an outcome of durational learning processes described and prompted in these narratives. In other words, *pathos*, unlike *rhetoric*, points to the multivalence of these texts' engagements of temporality.

My project identifies and describes three major forms of modernist pathos which express some of modernity's most defining attitudes toward the past, the present, and the future: a past-oriented pathos of finitude, a future-oriented pathos of idealism, and a present-oriented pathos of confusion. In brief, the modern pathos of finitude depicts the past mythically, grieving idyllic past temporalities fractured by modernity, whereas the pathos of idealism involves imaginative escapes into seemingly timeless, idealized realms, such as utopian futures, as a way of coping with the jarring modern present. Lastly, the pathos of confusion expresses the dissonance of multiple, conflicting ideologies and temporalities in the modern present. These three popular expressions of modern alienation in terms of temporal experience pervade much late-19th to mid-20th century literature and philosophy.

I posit that Korean American novelist Younghill Kang's use of modern temporality pathos as a frame for communicating suffering in *East Goes West* (1937) inspired several other mid-century Asian American men writers to use similar pathos. Closely examining Kang's novel and two additional texts – Carlos Bulosan's 1946 autofictional *America is in the Heart*, and John Okada's 1957 novel, *No-No Boy*, I explore how each of the modern temporality pathae just mentioned is politically repurposed in mid-century Asian American literature. In short, the pathos of finitude is used to register and grieve the damage of American imperialism, the pathos of idealism, to expose the lies of American liberalism, and the pathos of confusion to counter the divisiveness of 20th century nationalisms. I argue that each of these forms of pathos resists, on four levels, the alienations mid-20th century Asian Americans experienced in the modern present. Each form of pathos elicits similitude-based empathic concern;

diagnoses the instrumentalist reasoning underlying America's lack of empathy for its marginalized members; highlights the resulting oppressions and their compounding of Asian Americans' temporal alienation; and encourages an empathy-expanding form of reasoning that counters instrumentality. I suspect that Asian American writers turned to temporality-themed modern pathos formulae because they saw temporality rhetoric's potential for such versatile uses. Through the four functions just mentioned, temporality rhetoric allowed these writers to emphasize the relatability, the seriousness, and the unfairness of the depicted suffering of Asian Americans in these texts – emphases which prove necessary for eliciting compassion in the context of an American culture plagued by empathy-stunting perceptual shortcuts.[ii]

Although general Western forms of modern temporality pathos tend to posit the losses incurred by the linear march of time itself as the cause of suffering, the temporal experiences I am calling "modern" are not at all universal or inevitable, but rather, are consequences of the widespread denaturalization, commodification, and acceleration of time from the late-19th to the mid-20th century, a period of increasingly rapid technological, economic, and geopolitical change. Although much 19th century popular discourse optimistically touted modernity's arrival as a time of liberation from the backward past, modernity theorists from Karl Marx to Max Weber to Emile Durkheim to Georg Simmel to Ulrich Beck to Hermann Lubbe have theorized a variety of profound alienations that characterize the era.[iii] German scholar Hartmut Rosa, summarizing early Marx, explains, "the capitalist mode of production resulted in man's fivefold alienation from his *actions* (work), from his *products* (things), from *nature*, from *other human beings* (the social world) and, finally, from *him- or herself*" (83). While alienation is

ultimately an unstable concept, Rosa argues that the profoundly alienating effects of social acceleration demonstrably render the modern world "silent, cold, indifferent, or even repulsive" for many moderns (100). Rosa declares this "'silencing' of the world, the 'deafness' in the relationship between self and world", as "the most persistent and most threatening concern in all the diagnoses of 'pathology' that we find in critical social analyses of modernity" (100). What Reinhart Koselleck calls the "denaturalization" of temporality plays a central role in this alienation, for technology, capitalism, and other social acceleration factors have increasingly separated human beings from nature's organic temporalities (104). In Koselleck's words, "We are dealing with a long-term process of increasing acts of abstraction designed to remove humans from what was naturally pregiven to them […]. One can also call this the denaturalization of the division of time and of the experience of time included in it" (104).

I argue that the denaturalization, commodification, and acceleration of temporality severely alienated many moderns by discouraging the reflection process that allows for the integration of past, present, and future into a meaningful narrative. As the narratives I discuss illustrate, capitalism's instrumentalist regime tends to render meaning either overdetermined, by ideologies that spare modern individuals from the time-consuming process of making meaning for themselves, or underdetermined, through an outright rejection of meaning that renders experience a series of meaningless, fragmented moments. In both cases, one's experience of the present is impoverished, in the sense that the denaturalization, commodification, and acceleration processes just described constantly thwart the reflection-based process of integrating past, present, and future meanings. Empathic connections with others in the present are also constantly thwarted,

as meaning is instead pushed backward or forward into simplistic fantasy pasts or futures prepackaged by capitalist ideologies.

The suffering depicted in these texts cannot be categorized as purely modernity-based or purely Asian American identity-based, for it occurs at the complex intersections of these experiences. Accurate parsing of this nature is neither possible nor purposive, in my view, as it is already obvious to my audience that a majority of the depicted suffering in mid-century Asian American fiction is attributable to racism, imperialism, capitalist labor exploitation, and other social forces. Therefore, rather than attributing the depicted suffering to the passage of time itself, my project attends to how the fictions at hand use temporality to highlight the largely materially- and socially-based suffering of Asian Americans. I identify four levels by which each modern temporality pathos form resists the alienations Asian Americans experience in the modern present.

The first level of resistance manifests in deliberate depictions of characters' alienation in terms of familiar modern temporal experiences. Although not a radical gesture by today's standards, this technique establishes potentially empathy-inducing appearances of common ground between readers and characters in disparate social locations. For example, Kang's *East Goes West* features two main characters who evoke an unmistakably modernist pathos of finitude that grieves past, pre-modern temporalities. Meanwhile, the protagonist of Bulosan's *America is in the Heart*, discussed in chapter three, summons a modernist pathos of idealism in his struggle (and ultimate failure) to transcend the jarring modern present via imaginative escapes into a vision of true egalitarian democracy, a familiar appealing yet ever-deferred promise of 20th century liberalism. Lastly, chapter four's discussion of Okada's *No-No Boy* explores a pathos of

confusion elicited by the familiar dissonance of multiple, conflicting ideologies and temporalities experienced by many 20th century people.

Meanwhile, the authors deliberately adapt each temporality pathos formula to highlight how the unique exigencies faced by Asian American characters further complicate their relationships to time. These characters not only suffer from the denaturalization, commodification, and acceleration of time that accompanies modern Western capitalism, but also from exilic grief over a lost homeland, as well as from race-based legal, economic, and social discrimination in the United States. More specifically, this second, particularizing pathos function demonstrates how exilic conditions endured by Kang's Korean American characters intensify their sense of loss in the alienated present; how particular experiences of racial violence and poverty endured by Bulosan's Filipino American characters fuel their intense longing for transcendence of the alienated present; and how the choice between identities forced upon Okada's Japanese American "no-no boys" by the U.S. government drastically compounds these young men's confusion in the alienated present.

The third function of temporal pathos manifests in exposure of the instrumentalist reasoning underlying the era's alienating systems and ideologies. As I explain in my introduction, the overweening dominance of instrumental reasoning in America – born of the longstanding tendency of Western rationalism to reduce reality to legible terms, and compounded by perceived time scarcity under modern capitalism – leads to mental and emotional short-cuts that limit Americans' empathy for those outside their own circle of concern. Rationality is often useful, and when in proper consort with other faculties it can expand empathy; however, when exploitative systems such as capitalism allow

instrumentality to dominate and reduce all other ways of life, cruel exploitation ensues and temporal alienation occurs. Through temporality pathae that point up these alienations, Kang and other Asian American writers expose the cruel effects of extreme instrumentality on American society. By focusing on profoundly alienated temporal experiences, the texts at hand show how capitalism takes instrumentality beyond the tempered reason of pragmatism and into an absolutism that is no longer even rational by rationalism's terms. Capitalism produces ideologies which attempt to justify their extreme instrumentality upon a perceived lack of time; however, because time scarcity is itself a product of capitalism, capitalism's "logic" becomes tautological – even if one were to accept its privileging of profit over widespread human thriving.

These texts' fourth form of resistance offers a partial antidote to this rationalist instrumentality by using thematic and formal confusions to encourage the time-consuming reflection and imaginative perspective-taking needed for cognitive-based empathy. Not only do the characters grapple with relatable thematic modern confusions concerning past, present and future, but the texts also use formal confusions, such as inconsistencies in voice, narrative structure, and imagery systems, to invite readers to share a fraction of the character's confusion and to cultivate the faculties of mind which generate empathy. Adding the literary theory of Martha Nussbaum and Alan Singer to the empathy theories of William James and others, I argue that literature's formal densities potentially enhance empathic capacity by cultivating empathy-generating faculties of mind. Arguing that Asian American literature encourages empathy does not make for a particularly surprising thesis; however, the argument that this body of literature does so by creatively repurposing major temporality tropes of literary

modernism breaks new ground in Asian American literary scholarship and furthers scholarly understandings of Asian American literary aesthetics, modernisms, and political methodologies.

No one has yet offered a comprehensive discussion of mid-century Asian American literary temporality. This dearth may derive in part from the field's dominant tradition of reading, informed by New Historicism and identity politics, which values realistic representations of historical suffering over other textual features. Sue-Im Lee articulates the origins of this trend in her introduction to *Literary Gestures: The Aesthetic in Asian American Writing*: "The parallel beginnings of Asian American studies in the academy and of Asian American political activism in the late-1960s have meant that, by and large, Asian American literary criticism has primarily sought to 'speak' the material realities of hitherto 'invisible,' 'disenfranchised,' or 'silent' subjects" (2). This burden of representation often generates what Lee calls an "immanentist" understanding of literature as "a symbolic embodiment that bears the historical and material forces of its production" (Lee, *Literary Gestures* 1).

However, in the context of postmodernity's increasing skepticism about representability and its caution against negating difference, the field of Asian American literary scholarship has begun to shift in recent years. Lee describes this shift in another of her essays, where she observes how, by "[t]argeting the textual means by which realist storytelling generates a coherent, stable, and classifiable notion of Asian American identity, the critical turn against the realist narrative form in Asian American discourse takes part in the larger postmodern suspicion of representational and narrative accessibility" (Lee, "Suspicious Characters" 228). The politics of realist fiction become

particularly tricky when fiction seeks to represent subaltern experience, as Joseph Keith extrapolates from David Lloyd's work on race and representation: "attempting to represent subaltern individuals and political expressions within cultural and political forms that have rendered them unassimilable or anomalous poses an inevitable representational crisis for both the nation-state and the realist novel" (40). Consequently, "when considering the represented content of the realist novel, we must also examine what is "constitutively negated in its representational regime" (Keith 40).

These scholars, along with Kandice Chuh, Viet Thahn Nguyen, and others, recognize that even radical forms of social realism motivated by liberation agendas and seeking to recover erased experiences can fall prey to master narratives of history that simplify historical cause and effect and omit any material that troubles the narrative. The field's activist bent has been accused of flattening the cultural, political, and aesthetic diversity of the literature and its analyses. Chuh, in her landmark work *Imagine Otherwise: on Asian Americanist Critique*, notes that "the dominant narrative of Asian American Studies consistently foregrounds political activism" and argues that "the vitality of this narrative… has tended to overshadow other possible narratives of the field's emergence" (5). Relatedly, Nguyen's *Race and Resistance* accuses Asian American critics of an unwillingness to read for "ideological heterogeneity" which he sees evident in the field's often-hasty conflation of resistance (to assimilation) as positive and accommodation as negative (7). Without denying the importance of political concerns, scholars like Chuh and Nguyen examine the limitations of the traditionally identity-based focus of Asian American studies, trying to shift the focus of the field

toward greater recognition of cultural and ideological diversity within a group often lumped together in relation to majority culture.

My project's focus on the role of temporal pathos in expanding reader empathy not only contributes to scholarship on Asian American literary form, but also makes these texts' political complexities visible in new ways. My intervention is important because lack of understanding regarding the role that temporality-pathos plays in eliciting and expanding empathic concern leads scholars to misunderstand many pathos-bearing passages, reading them as defections from -- rather than enrichments of -- the political tasks of attributing the characters' suffering to oppressive systems and challenging those systems. As the literature reviews in my chapters demonstrate, my lens allows readers to understand these passages as part of a pathos formula developed by avant-garde Asian American writers to diagnose and treat America's empathy gap. My reading thereby offers a corrective to much existing scholarship which reduces such passages either to instances of aesthetic and/or political weakness or to purely ironic instances of false consciousness designed to enhance the implied authors' political critique.

Although irony is surely sometimes at play, I argue that the texts' intermittent attribution of suffering to temporal causes often constitutes a genuine attempt to establish some common ground of shared experience with a wide American readership. Such an effort is neither naive nor assimilationist, for while the texts' modernist temporal rhetoric does use similitude to trigger the flow of empathy, the texts also adapt this rhetoric in ways that invite readers to widen their empathic concern to less familiar forms and causes of suffering. As Audrey Wu Clark explains in her book *The Asian American Avant-Garde: Universalist Aspirations in Modernist Literature and Art* (2015),

> The convergence of bourgeois domination and universalism since 1968 has […] provoked considerable backlash against universalism among anticapitalist and anti-imperialist theorists as well as cultural producers who have, in turn, favored deconstruction and a politics of difference as solutions to the inequalities of capitalism and imperialism. […However,] before the solidified dominance of bourgeois ideology, early Asian American literary texts critiqued U.S. industrial capitalism in which Asian immigrant laborers were exploited and barred from citizenship by embracing universalist ideologies. (14)

Clark makes clear here that while universalizing moves that come from the political right or center are often part of corrupt ideologies, mid-century Asian American writing often uses a strategic universalism to elicit greater acceptance of society's excluded members. Furthermore, while not every passage in these mid-century narratives identifies focused, concrete targets for blame or change in the way later-stage social movement rhetoric does, even seemingly apolitical passages often contribute to the early-stage social movement work of developing metaphors, narratives, and other rhetorical strategies that express the feelings and ideas of the discontented. For these reasons, I read the texts' seemingly less political temporality-focused passages as neither purely assimilationist nor purely ironic, but rather, pragmatic and ingenious, particularly given their pre-civil rights context.

I focus on mid-century texts because of I share Audrey Wu Clark's interest in Asian American contributions to literary modernism, particularly in their role as what sympathy sociologist Candice Clark would call "sympathy entrepreneurs" – those who attempt to "call forth and direct our altruistic impulses" and thereby "increase[] the societal supply of moral worth (including their own)" (24). Due to their pre-civil rights context, Asian American writers of this period had to become particularly adept at creating hybrid pathos formulae that would both elicit and expand empathy, for their cultural work predates the rights-based arguments and activism which dominate the latter

part of the 20th century. Therefore, although my dissertation conclusion briefly observes some general ways in which contemporary Asian American texts such as Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* (1976), Teresa Hak Kyung Cha's *Dictee* (1982), Wendy Law-Yone's *The Coffin Tree* (1983), Chang-Rae Lee's *A Gesture Life* (1999), and Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being* (2013) adapt and develop the mid-century Asian American avant-garde's temporality lineage, a thorough study of temporality in late 20th and early 21st century Asian American fiction has been left for future scholars.

1. The Problem: Instrumentality, Time Scarcity, and its Effects on American Empathy

According to scholar of exile Maria Zambrano, in Western cultures, rationalism is often taken to extremes, becoming absolutism "when it seeks to extend the principles of reason to reality as a whole" (Galdon 63). Indeed, "Rationalism at its roots contains the desire that reality be clear to thought, that reality and reason show total equivalence to each other, like two sides of a pane of glass" (Galdon 63). This desired equivalency denies and/or suppresses dimensions of reality deemed irrelevant, worthless, or unreal – dimensions which cannot be easily or quickly translated into thought. In a fundamental sense, rationalism's projects are inherently instrumentalist, in that they simplify and reduce reality to thought for purposes of various kinds. As Candace Clark explains in *Misery and Company: Sympathy in Everyday Life* (1997), this privileging of rationality and a related distrust of emotion in America may be traced back to "centuries-old ideas stemming from the Greeks (Averill 1974) and the Puritans (Franks 1985). The cognitive

bias of the modern workplace reinforces these feelings (Clark, Kleinman, and Ellis 1994a). We lack both a vocabulary for and practice in conversing about emotions" (30).

Through temporality pathae, Kang and other Asian American writers expose how rationalism's instrumentality, when taken to profit-driven extremes by capitalism, produces systemic cruelty in America. For those who value widespread human thriving over the acquisition of wealth, capitalism appears particularly absurd, for its time scarcity discourages empathy-generating reflection and thereby enables any number of social evils which rely on the numbing of empathy. Given that most Americans suffer under some form of American racism, sexism, labor exploitation, imperialism, or war, American ideologies which support capitalism (such as individualism, exceptionalism, neoliberalism, nationalism) prove illogical, even based on the teleological, instrumentalist strains of reasoning that shape American pragmatism and its precursor, utilitarianism.

Although in-group prejudice, selfishness, trauma, isolation, ideology, and many other factors obstruct and limit empathy, contemporary empathy research confirms the prescience of 19th century pragmatist philosopher William James' identification of time scarcity as a primary factor limiting empathy. Although James used the term "sympathy", his characterization of it is indistinguishable from the term "empathy" as I have been using it. While James' attribution of empathy's limits to time scarcity and its attendant pragmatic constraints doubtless reflects the increasingly fast-paced, industrial capitalist America in which he lived and wrote, these exigencies remain highly relevant in mid-20th century America described in these fictions.

Although James himself disliked wasting time and was, as a pragmatist, not immune to instrumental reasoning, his heightened awareness of the pervasiveness of

instrumentality in the American mind (which is generalized, in his work, to the human mind), led him to consider deeply instrumentality's pitfalls and antidotes. Indeed, James stressed the importance of compassionate reflection, understanding, feeling, and action, to such an extent that he even worried about the risk of divorcing sympathetic feelings from sympathetic action incurred by passive consumption of sympathy-invoking fiction. I disagree with James on the damaging effects of fiction to one's sympathies, yet his articulation of instrumentality's relationship to time proves illuminating and relevant to the fiction explored in my project.

In his lecture "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings", James identifies practical absorption in our own concerns over those of others as a natural yet unfortunate "blindness" that blocks empathic concern in human beings:

> We are practical beings, each of us with limited functions and duties to perform. Each is bound to feel intensely the importance of his own duties and the significance of the situations that call these forth. But this feeling is in each of us a vital secret, for sympathy with which we vainly look to others. The others are too much absorbed in their own vital secrets to take an interest in ours. (630)

As Kory Sorrell observes, in James' understanding, lack of time to reflect is the factor that most frequently limits our empathic concern, for "we are practical creatures subject to such pressing demands that we are apt to dismiss others out of hand or judge them precipitously" (77).

This feeling that modern Americans lack time to reflect or act empathically is drastically exacerbated by the advances of capitalism and technology, which have accelerated the pace of American life to the point that many Americans experience time instrumentally, as a limited commodity which should not be "wasted" on reflections that do not contribute to direct forms of profit valued by capitalism. As Maria Prodromou

puts it, “modernity projects the future, capitalism programmes it”, in the sense that, “[u]nder capitalism’s demand for development and performativity, the system aims to control time so as to foreclose the possibility of the unexpected happening which would threaten its performance and so the present is subordinated to the future, a future that must be controlled and predicted and as such predetermined” (Prodromou 42). In other words, in addition to producing and narrating our future goals and desires, capitalism propounds a supposedly universal, objective understanding of linear time as countable and measurable into minutes, hours, days, and years, thereby rendering time the abstract and exchangeable means by which we are to fulfill those programmed desires.

Indeed, according to scholars such as Alexander Brown and Maria Prodromou and major theorists such as Marx, Lyotard, and Negri, it is time, rather than energy, money, or material goods themselves, that becomes the valuable unit of exchange under capitalism. As Brown explains, “Labour is subsumed within capital through the measurement of labour-time. Marx’s labour theory of value [...] is based on the reduction of the various forms of human labor to abstract labor and the measurement of discrete quantities of labor time” (177). Similarly, for Lyotard: “work is not an expenditure of energy, but an expenditure of time” (qtd. in Prodromou 44). As Prodromou explains, money measures not the value of the goods themselves, but the time spent to produce those goods: “Capital does not just capitalize, capital temporalizes by capitalizing time: money is not just time, time is money” (44).

Antonio Negri identifies the most frightening consequence of this abstraction: namely that, as Alexander Brown summarizes, “when time becomes a measure of value the diverse forms of human labor are reduced to a single, homogenous substance”

(Brown 177). In other words, the homogenizing forces of capitalism reduce human labor and time to universally measurable and commodifiable entities, thereby allowing the wealthy to purchase the time of the working class with money. For Lyotard and others, this exchange proves far from fair: "The time spent 'earning a living' is radically incommensurable with the abstract time that is gained, i.e. money", because "'real' time cannot be recuperated" (Prodromou 45). As Lyotard points out, this "insoluble *differend*" between real time lost and abstract time gained gives rise to "the feelings (sadness, anger, hatred, alienation, frustration, humiliation) that accompany the [...] working conditions" of the exploited laborer (qtd. in Prodromou 45).

Recalling Zambrano's premise about rationalism again here, one can see how the profit-centered values of capitalism limit empathy by encouraging rationalism's oversimplification of reality and reducing human reason to something "understood only in instrumentalist terms that le[aves] aside other aspects which [a]re also essential to man i.e. moral aspects and feelings" (Galdon 63). This instrumentality particularly limits American compassion for the disenfranchised. Candice Clark's sociological examination of compassion in America finds that "many Americans feel no compassion for the poor, who they believe bring poverty upon themselves through laziness and lack of effort" (Nussbaum, *Political Emotions,* 143). Martha Nussbaum calls the lack-of-sympathy phenomenon "moral obtuseness, in which people see the other as a remote and distant being whose possibilities and vulnerabilities are utterly unlike those of the spectator" (*Political Emotions*, 262). She explains that "such distancing is a constant possibility in societies divided by class, race, gender, and other identities" (262).

Clark sees the causal relationship between modern capitalism's alienation of labor in America and what Nussbaum calls "moral obtuseness": "In the United States, the extensive division of labor and substantial geographic, residential, occupational, and age segregation means that people located in a circumscribed social world may have little contact with people from other classes, regions, ethnic groups, religions, or ages" (41). Our empathy gap is further widened by the fact that "our social institutions (e.g., hospitals and sheltered workshops) often isolate people precisely because they have problems that might warrant empathy" (Clark 41). These features of capitalist modernity render it "hard for moderns to imagine the difficulties of dissimilar others, even when they involve such universal problems as death and loss" (Clark 41).

An accelerated capitalist society which treats time as a scarce commodity thwarts the expansion of empathy because "Empathizing takes effort and skill. It is often easier not to try but to rely, instead, on perceptual shortcuts, such as stereotypes, projections of what our own feelings would be, or constructions that make other people and their situations un-sympathy-worthy" (Clark 39).

Each of the texts I discuss uses temporal pathos to pose a unique critique of instrumental reasoning's cruelty-inducing shortcuts. Kang uses the pathos of finitude to express grief over the losses wreaked by a Western imperialism enabled by instrumental reasoning. Meanwhile, Bulosan's pathos of idealism highlights the sharp contrast between his narrator's idealized future visions and the exploitative reality of an American capitalism that reduces time and human beings to mere means for producing profit. Lastly, Okada's narrative engages a pathos of confusion that exposes how instrumentalist nationalist ideologies in Japan and America alienated WWII era Japanese Americans

from the present. Before describing these specific modern temporal pathae in detail, however, I offer a general theory of pathos as a durational meaning-making process and explain how this process elicits cognitive empathy via "sympathetic reasoning" – the Jamesian antidote to the instrumentality just outlined.

2. The Solution: The Durational Processes of Pathos and Cognitive Empathy

Temporal duration – the perceived passage of time – has multiple potential effects on meaning, for it simultaneously obstructs, demands, and enables meaning-making. On the one hand, temporal duration brings change, and thereby often undermines the stable meanings human beings attempt to construct for themselves. At the same time, because survival requires a degree of consistency, temporal duration makes necessary the construction of an adaptive, meaningful identity. Lastly, temporal duration enables the reflection time needed for creating, communicating, and comprehending meaning. All three of these dimensions intersect with one another in the temporally-based meaning-making processes of literary pathos.

There is no doubt that the acute suffering depicted in mid-century Asian American fiction threatens identity and meaning-making in some ways. The word pathos has been used since Aristotle to refer to suffering, and/or the representation of suffering, and/or the response to suffering, all of which are inherently temporality-based. While pain is immediate, suffering involves a temporal remove (the endurance of pain and/or loss over time), representation of suffering involves a second temporal remove, and response, a third. As I do not have the reader response data to examine response

satisfactorily, I focus on the dimension of *pathos* which attempts to communicate meaning – the representation of suffering.

As Robert Buch usefully explains, the task of pathos is "to endow the spectacle of pain and suffering with any kind of transcendence, to 'dignify' it with some meaning or purpose" ("Pathos of Resistance", 241). According to Buch, pathos involves an element of self-possession over one's pain which inspires the audience:

> It is the appeal of compassion triggered by the sight of suffering but also of awe in light of the self-possession on the part of those struck by misfortune. For as much as páthos stands for the irrepressible, spontaneous reaction in the face of suffering, by articulating their pain, the dramatis personae must have managed to remove themselves, at least somewhat, from the experience that threatens to overwhelm them. In this respect, páthos also implies the distance and control somebody is able to maintain over his or her pain. (*Pathos of the Real* 20)

I point out here that this self-possession evidences a retrospective reflection process that requires time – the communicator of suffering appears to repurpose time to her/his own ends by turning it into a tool for learning, for self-recognition and change, and other forms of meaning-making. This making and communicating of meaning involves the creation of narratives which retrospectively render pain meaningful, turning it into suffering and communicating it to others.

As I shall demonstrate, the texts' writers, protagonists, and readers engage the pathos-bearing processes of giving individual suffering a wider meaning and inviting empathy expansion. Although basic forms of empathy have seemingly automatic, reflex-based aspects, the process of expanding the circle of one's empathic concern, like suffering and like pathos, is a temporally-based, cognitive and emotional process. This process typically involves what American pragmatists William James and John Dewey called "sympathetic reasoning", a durational process which integrates reason and emotion

and thereby cultivates and educates empathy. Sympathetic reasoning is central to what clinicians such as Natalie Trent call cognitive empathy, a form of empathy generated by considering another's perspective based on their perceived emotions (63). This form of empathy differs from affective empathy, which involves feeling the same (perceived) emotions as another.

C. Daniel Batson's review of empathy research usefully points out that the term "empathy" may refer to at least eight related but distinct phenomena: 1) "knowing another person's internal state"; 2) "adopting the posture or matching the neural responses of an observed other"; 3) "coming to feel as another person feels"; 4) "intuiting or projecting oneself into another's situation"; 5) "imagining how another is thinking or feeling"; 6) "imagining how one would think or feel in another's place"; 7) "feeling distress at witnessing another person's suffering"; and 8) "feeling for another person who is suffering" (4-8). The last on the list constitutes what many call "empathic concern", an "other-oriented emotional response elicited by and congruent with the perceived welfare of someone else" (8). This other-oriented emotional response to another's suffering is what I refer to when I use the term empathy, first because this empathic concern involves a genuine feeling distinguishable from mere projection, emotional-contagion, or self-oriented distress.[iv]

Along with Jeremy Rifkin and many others, I take the education and expansion of empathy to be a psychological means of achieving civilization, which Rifkin defines as "the detribalization of blood ties and the resocialization of distinct individuals based on associational ties" (24). As Kory Sorrell summarizes, the growth of inclusive, global-level forms of empathy "helps us set aside local ties and provincial loyalties, which often

lead to violence and cruelty, in favor of wider association and shared consciousness of common fate" (67). Maia Szalavitz and Bruce Perry concur, asserting that "[e]mpathy underlies virtually everything that makes society work – like trust, altruism, collaboration, love, charity. Failure to empathize is a key part of most social problems—crime, violence, war, racism, child abuse and inequity, to name just a few" (4). The success of radical economic or political arrangements such as socialism, communism, or anarchism, also depends largely on the radical extension and expansion of empathy.

Happily, although cultural forces can limit empathy, they can cultivate it as well, a fact evident in the discrepancy in degrees of empathy found cross-culturally.[v] Indeed, while it has long been assumed that lack of empathy derives from innate human selfishness, recent empirical research on empathy reveals such explanations to be incomplete. Although a Darwinian view of human nature held sway for many years, recent studies "support a different picture, a kinder one, in which persons are naturally attuned to one another, cannot help feeling what others feel, and spontaneously reach out to others in need" (Sorrell 66).

Unfortunately, even empathy champions such as Jeremy Rifkin and Franz De Waal will acknowledge that our species' "natural" empathic potential evidences some significant limitations. These limitations have caused some thinkers to question the effectiveness of empathy in eliciting social change. Steven Pinker, author of *The Better Angels of Our Nature* (2011), cites studies showing empathy to be limited and biased by mood, experience, and level of familiarity. In Pinker's view, "[t]he problem with building a better world through empathy, in the sense of contagion, mimicry, vicarious emotion, or mirror neurons, is that it cannot be counted on to trigger the kind of empathy we want,

namely sympathetic concern for others' well-being" (qtd. in Sorrell 67). Paul Bloom seconds Pinker's critique, arguing that reason, being more reliable and fair than empathy, is the crucial ingredient to the survival of the human race. As he explains, we need "to take into consideration the welfare of people not yet harmed—and, even more, of people not yet born. They have no names, faces, or stories to grip our conscience or stir our fellow feeling. Their prospects call, rather, for deliberation and calculation […]" (qtd. in Sorrell 68). Such critiques of empathy are valuable, and actually echo William James' own concern about what he calls "a certain blindness in human beings" (75).

It is precisely the short-sightedness of empathy that caused William James to underscore the importance of the durational process sympathetic reason, which cultivates and educates empathy into compassion and thereby allows it to potentially overcome the limitations identified by Pinker and Bloom. James knew that sympathy is not sufficient by itself, that reflection "as pause, as a calling up of other instincts, emotions, and specific memories of past occasions—is also needed" (Sorrell 73). This reflection process takes place, not in an isolated instant of time, but over several moments, and sometimes over hours, days, weeks, months, and years, as it involves integration of past, present, and future experience and information. The temporally-based nature of sympathetic reasoning becomes clear in James' description of how the process works. James acknowledges that "Man has a far greater variety of impulses than any lower animal; and any one of these impulses, taken in itself, is as 'blind' as the lowest instinct can be", but that "owing to man's memory, power of reflection, and power of inference, they [human impulses] *come each one to be felt* by him, *after* he has once yielded to them and experienced their results, in connection with a *foresight* of those results" [italics

mine] (*Principles* 1029). In James' account, human beings' more instantaneous impulses are heavily influenced by the time-based, shaping capacities of memory, reflection, and inference, as evident in the integration of past, present, and future alluded to in his explanation.

Significantly, James's response to Pinker's and Bloom's skepticism of empathic feeling would be that the rejection of hostile impulses based on their irrationality would not be desirable or effective – partly because "reason can inhibit no impulses; the only thing that can neutralize an impulse is an impulse the other way" (*Principles* 1013). In other words, hostile emotion and impulse cannot be cancelled out by reason alone, but rather, must be overcome by a counter impulse to love others. This desire to love others is typically necessary in motivating one to make habitual the processes of reasoning that combat hostile impulses. Consequently, the interplay between impulse and reasoning is, for James, essential to generating an intelligent form of genuine empathy – namely, an empathy grounded in both real emotion and clear thinking. This sympathetic reasoning takes time – it counters impulsive reactivity in the moment, instead engaging time-based processes of memory, imagination, perspective-taking and reflection to expand empathic concern and discern appropriate compassionate action.

Knowing that many Americans do not automatically feel empathy for unfamiliar types of suffering, Younghill Kang and his writerly heirs saw in modern temporal pathos a means of making multiple bids for the kind of sympathetic reasoning just described. First, the authors' description of suffering in temporal terms prompts memories of similar modern temporal experiences in the reader, which elicits a similitude-based flow of empathy. Second, by highlighting the severity of the characters' alienation, each form of

temporality pathos encourages a process of perspective-taking reflection prompted by possible differences in severity of suffering experienced by character and reader. Third, this pathos educates the reader's empathy by identifying the callous instrumental reasoning propounded by various ideologies as a root cause of the depicted suffering. Such an understanding invites reflection on the role of instrumental reasoning in the reader's own empathy life. Lastly, the often-contradictory temporality rhetoric in these texts invites a struggle to understand which cultivates the faculties and activities of mind involved in sympathetic reasoning.

Although each of my three literary analysis chapters focuses primarily on one form of modern temporal pathos in one primary text, the remainder of this introduction allows me to demonstrate that each form of pathos is part of a pattern discernible in multiple mid-century Asian American narratives. The first form discussed, the Asian American modern pathos of finitude, elicits similitude-based empathy by emphasizing human frailty, which is equalizing in the most ultimate sense (death), while also making clear that mid-century America is largely defined by inequity. More specifically, these texts' protagonists express familiar modern nostalgia for the lost past while also while also expressing particularized exilic loss and grief.

3. The Pathos of Finitude

Finitude pathos in general typically grieves the inevitability of loss, aging, and death as the root cause of suffering. Martha Nussbaum cites literature's power to express common human experiences of "mortality and longing, loss and intense beauty" as an

effective empathy-generating strategy because "Humans learn, fairly early, that there are some forms of vulnerability that human life contains for all: bodily frailty and disease, pain, wounds, death" (*Political Emotions,* 12; 154). Nussbaum quotes a powerful passage from Rousseau to reiterate this point: "Human beings are not naturally kings, or lords, or courtiers, or rich people. All are born naked and poor; all are subject to the miseries of life; to sorrows, ills, needs, and pains of every kind. Finally, all are condemned to death. This is what truly belongs to the human being. This is what no mortal is exempt from" (qtd. in Nussbaum, *Political Emotions,* 154). As chapters two and three will explain in more detail, this "universal" pathos of finitude reflects death anxieties rooted in the linear and commodified temporality of Western capitalist countries.

This Enlightenment-era finitude pathos persists and escalates in the literary modernism of the late 19th and early 20th century, where it expresses increasing anxiety about time scarcity, as well as grief over an irrevocably lost, pre-modern past characterized by a slower pace of life and more meaningful and integrated relationships to self, others, work, and the world. Modernists often figure time in the modern present as a limited commodity and a pressuring force, in contrast to the leisure and integration of a utopian past. The pathos of finitude becomes increasingly pervasive in modernity partly because, as Russell West-Pavlov points out, the secularization that attends modernity undermines faith in a divine infinite, and the rise of capitalism in modernity commodifies time and accelerates the pace of life (35). As Maria Zambrano explains, Western modernity features an alienation from traditional values based in nature, community, and religion:

> Modern man, as an exile, feels a terrible emptiness. While the emptiness of the exile is that of leaving one's country, the hold found in the heart of contemporary

> man is the lack of traditional values. These are values in which modern man can no longer believe, beliefs that come undone in his hands [...]. Both are beset by an absence, both feel that the ground beneath their feet has disappeared. (Galdon 65)

Modernism appropriates exilic experience to communicate the alienated feelings of separateness and finitude which accompany modernity's obscuration of connectedness and continuity. While Bruno Latour claims that modernity's supposed alienation from nature is largely a construct (*We Have Never Been Modern*), and while Alain Badiou discredits the pathos of finitude as a bogus remnant of Romanticism which belies the actual mathematical infinity of existence (*Theoretical Writings*), my aim is not to critique the philosophical assumptions underlying the pathos of finitude. Instead, I attend to Asian American textual strategies that engage the pathos of finitude – strategies which work because so many modern Americans conceive of and experience time in terms of scarcity, limitation, and loss.

The lyrical style used by mid-century Asian American authors to describe the past invokes modernist nostalgia for the slow time of an irrevocable golden age. Narrator Chung-Pa Han of Kang's *East Goes West* relates that "once the men, the women and children, the plants, fruits, gardens and animals, all traveled together in forgotten leisure. They sang songs, made love and ate heartily, because there was always time" (4). Here Han figures pre-modern Korean village life as harmonious and organic, characterized by a leisurely approach to time now "forgotten", become almost a fairy tale occurring "once" upon a time. Similarly, Carlos of Bulosan's *AIH* remembers his Philippine childhood as a time of organic connectedness with the natural temporalities of nature and one another – a time characterized by a "boundless affinity for each other, this humanity that grew in each of us, as boundless as this green earth" (10).

Lyrical longings for a lost mother or motherland invite the pathos of finitude in Asian American writing, expressing grief over lost belonging, real or imagined. Ichiro of John Okada's *No-No Boy* imagines a past of golden connectedness, in the form of a now-forgotten Japanese childhood bequeathed by his mother:

> There was a time when I was your son. […W]hen you used to smile a mother's smile and tell me stories about gallant and fierce warriors who protected their lords with blades of shining steel and about the old woman who found a peach in a stream and took it home and, when her husband split it in half, a husky little boy tumbled out to fill their hearts with boundless joy. I was that boy in that peach and you were the old woman and we were Japanese with Japanese feelings and Japanese pride and Japanese thoughts because it was all right then to be Japanese and feel and think all the things Japanese do even if we lived in America. (15)

Okada's Ichiro describes this seemingly harmonious, integrated youth as irrevocably lost – part of "a time that I no longer remember" – as his relations to both his mother and his mother country, the United States, are now severely estranged by the Japanese internment (15).

Meanwhile, the narrator of Filipino American writer Bienvenido Santos' short story "Scent of Apples" also expresses longing for golden pre-war days, as he likens leaves on the pavement to "the ghost feet of a thousand autumns long dead, long before the boys left for faraway lands without great icy winds and promise of winter early in the air, lands without apple trees, the singing and the gold!" (21). Oftentimes the lost mother or motherland is an Asian homeland which becomes the exiled writer's charge to remember. Santos narrator explains how young Filipino Americans "wanted me to tell them things about [the Philippines] because my country had become a lost country" (22).

Although these representations of Asian culture sometimes appear to replicate the widespread mythic past fantasies and the Orientalism characteristic of Western literary modernism, mid-century Asian American literary pathos of finitude differs in its longing

for a real Asian past experienced by the characters or their parents – a past lost to modern imperialism. Kang indicates this violence, explaining that "the heart-broken death of the old traditions" have been "irrevocably smashed" by Japan, and "Korea, a small, provincial, old-fashioned Confucian nation, hopelessly trapped by a larger, expanding one" has been "called to get off the earth. Death summoned" (8). Bulosan's Carlos, too, alludes to the "unseen enemy" of colonialism that fractures his family. He contrasts the lost unity of the past with the fearsome years of hardship and alienation to come: "[My father and brother] were like two strong walls protecting me from the attack of an unseen enemy (moving into my life to give me the warm assurance of their proximity, and guiding me into the future that was waiting with all its ferocity)" (21).

Japanese American writer Toshio Mori's *Yokohoma, California* utilizes the pathos of finitude as well, although Mori moves away from preoccupation with the past, focusing instead upon the finitude or ephemerality of moments as they pass. The first story of his collection, "Tomorrow is Coming, Children" is narrated by a grandmother who teaches her grandchildren about time, saying: "when I pass away and the days roll by, you will find life goes on" (16). She tells them, "I am old. This is where you come in. […] Tomorrow is coming, children" (21). Mori's fiction manages to recall both Whitman and Japanese haiku as it inviting his readers into the intimacy of tenderly painted moments that model a gentle, empathic gaze. Although Mori's short fiction does not track the pathos-bearing struggle of meaning-making over time in the same way the longer narratives of his contemporaries do, his method does resist instrumentality and encourage empathy in the face of the increasingly alienating denaturalization, commodification, and acceleration of temporality characterizing the 20th century present.

As the next section indicates, these conditions often prompt longings for mythic futures and/or timeless ideals which resemble, in origin and function, the longings for lyrically-described mythic pasts or rapidly disappearing moments just discussed.

4. The Pathos of Idealism

The temporal pathos of idealism involves fantasies of escape into idealized fantasy realms beyond the temporal and spatial limits of the alienated modern present, manifesting in lyrical rhetoric and imagery of mystical, transcendent or cyclical, nature-based continuities which resist finitude. The pathos of this idealism rhetoric lies in the temporary nature of the escape – the often-painful return to the exigencies of material reality. This pathos has roots in the 19th century idealisms that countered restrictive Enlightenment epistemologies of rationalism and empiricism. In mid- and latter 20th century America, this pathos is visible in dreams of an egalitarian future for the nation, as well as in burgeoning countercultural mysticisms often appropriated from Asian cultures.

The Asian American protagonists of mid-20th century fiction often propound humanitarian values that transcend constraints of time and place, for these values offer a means of surviving the inhumanities of the present. The glaring contradiction between America's democratic ideals and its social realities leads many scholars to dismiss such passages as instances of false consciousness or irony, while others emphasize that the idealized America over which these protagonists rhapsodize describes idealized (rather than actual) American values. However, I contend that many passages which appear to distract from or compromise the text's political critique are used to model the use of

imagination needed to expand empathic concern to those distant in space, time, or social location.

Although sometimes cloaked in American exceptionalism rhetoric, the democratic ideals espoused have intentionally global implications. For example, Younghill Kang's narrator sometimes uses transcendent imagery which has little to do with New York City itself, but rather, expresses the narrator's longing for a state of spiritual, global integration and unity:

> New York, with the returning autumn, was shot through and through with vague intimations of fabulous, delicate worlds beyond my bounds of thought, of life reaching out and up in a scope unrestricted, north and south to the Poles, east, west, to a meeting place of divided hemispheres… life coiling and spiraling, intellectually rather than physically… broad, cosmopolitan, fresh, a rich spiritual emanation from material wealth. (87)

Although the cosmopolitanism Han describes seems to emanate from New York City, his reference to poles and hemispheres deliberately imagines communion with something larger, as he envisions a transcendent, global interconnectivity. Bulosan's narrator, too, imagines himself transcending time and place, and explicitly connects his individual experience to a larger collective:

> [R]eading widened my mental horizon, creating a spiritual kinship with other men who had pondered over the miseries of their countries. Then it came to me that the place did not matter: these sensitive writers reacted to the social dynamics of their time. I, too, reacted to my time. […] I plunged into books, boring through the earth's core, leveling all seas and oceans, swimming in the constellations. (246)

The collapse of space and time boundaries in these passages is quite explicit, making the narrators' idealistic striving for transcendence of limitation very clear.

Such visions of transcendence should be recognized as not only a private escape of an individual from his harsh reality, but also a means by which human beings transform their relationship to finitude itself, by becoming part of a collective of shared

human values that resists the erasures of time. As John Dewey explains, sympathetic experience must be grounded in an understanding and experience of oneself as simultaneously distinct from, yet part of, a collective. True sympathy, in Dewey's framework, "enables us to realize our true nature, which is universal personality, by widening our life till it becomes as comprehensive as humanity, and at the same time deepens our own distinct individuality" (74). This kind of sympathy, constituted by "full self-realization in company with others", "recognize[s] no distinction of social rank, wealth, or learning, or anything that tends to cut off one person from another" (Dewey 74). This empathic recognition of the individual as part of a collective constitutes the ultimate challenge to time's constraints by connecting individuals to a world that extends before and after our individual lifetimes.

At the same time, the texts at hand adapt the pathos of idealism to make visible the special insight, investment, and contribution of marginal and multicultural Asian Americans in the creation of a more ideal future. As my chapter on *East Goes West* elucidates, Kang's multicultural experience gives him a lived familiarity with both Eastern and Western time conceptions that provides him a special path into the future. His narrator, Chung-Pa Han, explicitly claims a special relationship to temporality, saying,

> The Westernized Oriental is the child of the nineteenth century, and yet a curious detachment is possible for him such as neither truculent old-timers nor their sophisticated modern children can normally expect. His own elders were neither Atheists nor Believers, Fundamentalists nor Scientists -- but so widely remote as to be classical Confucians. In vast perspective he sees three different times -- not only intellectually but sympathetically. Nor can the nineteenth century be either accepted as final or spurned in inevitable reaction toward the new, for in his struggle to reach the faraway boundaries of modern thought, the recapitulation of an eternal embryo is necessary for him, and the past becomes his transient stepping stone…. (128)

In this passage, Han explicitly claims for multicultural Asian intellectuals a more "vast perspective" and more mobile relationship to temporality than those available to more mono-cultural people.

Bulosan's narrator, Carlos, also articulates the special investment and insight of the dispossessed in creating an expanded, cosmopolitan empathic consciousness, explaining, "It's much easier for us who have no roots to integrate ourselves in a universal ideal. Were we not exiles, were we not socially strangled in America, we would never have understood the significance of the Civil War in Spain" (241). Relatedly, when Carlos's brother Marcario goes to fight in Spain, he tells Carlos, "Maybe dying under a fascist bomb doesn't necessarily mean that Filipinos would have the right to become naturalized American citizens. But it means that there are men of good will all over the world, in every race, in all classes. It means that the forces of democracy are found in all times, ready to rally behind a cause of worldwide significance" (241). Carlos' and Marcario's experience as exiles gives them access to a global awareness that emerges from but also transcends their particular moment and location, making them capable of acting empathically on behalf of strangers across the world.

In a similar way, Ichiro's unique marginalization as a no-no boy allows him to see the importance of expanding empathic consciousness across difference, as he imagines an empathic society that would transcend ethnic loyalties. Considering the Chinese custom of welcoming, as family, Chinese strangers who share the same last name, Ichiro reflects, "it was a fine thing in some ways. Still, how much finer it would be if Smith would do the same for Eng and Sato would do the same for Wotynski and Laverghetti would do

likewise for whoever happened by" (157). Due to his own marginal location, Ichiro easily sees that empathy based in similitude is not sufficient to create a harmonious world, as "Eng for Eng, Jap for Jap, Pole for Pole, and like for like meant classes and distinctions and hatred and prejudice and wars and misery" (157).

Unfortunately, as often as these characters uplift themselves through a unique perspective that articulates restorative visions of an empathic global culture, they are brought crashing back down again by the harsh realities they face. As Han leaves New York for Nova Scotia, he says of the city: "I was taking nothing from her away with me but endless fascination. I could point to no victory. I came away with no gain, except some poor Korean friends who had pulled me out of an outcast's starvation" (87). Bulosan's Carlos also struggles with frequent feelings of defeat, as he faces continual marginalization by the nation to which he so wished to become a part:

> I had tried to keep my faith in America, but now I could no longer. […] In the senseless days, in the tragic hours, I held tightly to the gun and stared at the world, hating it with all my power. And hating made me lonely, lonely for love, love that could resuscitate beauty and goodness. For it was life I aspired for, a life of goodness and beauty. But I found only violence and hate, living in a corrupt corner of America. (164)

Like Kang's Han and Bulosan's Carlos, Okada's Ichiro frequently expresses deep discouragement, reflecting, "One only had to look about to see all the hatred in the world. Where was all the goodness that people talked about, the goodness of which there was never quite enough to offset the hatred?" (229). These expressions of deep disappointment prevent readers and characters alike from drifting into timeless realms or fantasy futures, and thereby losing touch with present reality. However, as the following brief introduction to the pathos of confusion explains, the present also has become a

fraught site, due to the fragmented meaning systems and accelerated conditions of the 20th century.

5. The Pathos of Confusion

Modern hankering for utopian pasts and futures derives in part from a desire to escape the confusing alienations of the modern present. The modern temporal pathos of confusion emphasizes the painful difficulty of understanding and decision-making in a moment of rapidly destabilizing meaning systems and multiple, conflicting identities. Recall, here, Zambrano's observation that 20th century people face an overwhelming accumulation of fractured values, "values in which modern man can no longer believe, beliefs that come undone in his hands" (Galdon 65). This loss of values, compounded by the acceleration and commodification of time in the 20th century, pressures moderns to act despite having insufficient time to understand.

This pathos of confusion operates on both thematic and formal levels in mid-20th century Asian American fiction. Thematically, the pathos of confusion becomes visible in the characters' related struggles to understand, to reconcile contradictory perspectives, to feel a sense of coherent identity, and to take meaningful action in the context of 20th century complexities. Perhaps because the ability to shape one's identity often assists survival, the oppressed protagonists of mid-20th century Asian American fiction devote themselves almost obsessively to a process of reflection on past actions that potentially assists them in coming to know themselves as sufferers – to recognize the causes of their suffering, and to observe in their own responses, identifiable features of their characters. The cultivation of interiority enabled by action, reflection, and learning in the face of

confusion allows the protagonists to construct identities distinguishable, in their internal complexity, from the external markers of identity determined by the racist society in which they live.

Although not set in America, Diana Chang's *The Frontiers of Love* (1956) is worth mentioning for its excellent rendering of the alienation and confusion of the wartime temporality. Describing protagonist Sylvia Chen's group of Shanghai friends, Chang writes:

> All of them […] were waiting, trying not to expend too much life now, lest they have less to give to their futures. They took small breaths and husbanded their heartbeats. Some day the weather would life, the Japanese occupation would shatter and evaporate, releasing them. Each one felt that some day he would come into possession of a heritage – himself. (21)

Chang's use of temporal pathae highlights the ways in which capitalism and imperialism have alienated her modern characters from themselves. Meanwhile, in Kang's novel, modern ennui and confusion find their most direct mouthpiece in Han's friend and fellow intellectual Korean exile Tu Wan Kim, who "regard[s] the future dubiously" and mourns the death of the past: "In the twentieth century on the cold hard pavement, worlds and centuries away, what of it? Here we are in the agony of the dreadful night, dream-haunted, solitary, as the babe that has never smiled, yet filled with the lonely experience of weary old age. Empty grumblings, rhythmic rumblings. Sight may not come again" (255; 252). Kim characterizes modernity as an era of alienation and deep confusion, obscured by darkness, and facing an unknown future in which "The next act is unnamed --" (166).

Although an incredibly cultured scholar who comprehends far more than most people, Kim grapples with deep confusion and alienation in the face of the modern

present. Han describes Kim's life as "a life that had lived in the ego and in the inner dream, that did not know if it was in inner dream or in outer reality, […] did not know if it came once to be transplanted or was hopelessly in exile, did not even know if it felt real grief that its Helen of the new age of time had been lost" (359). Han is confused by the mercurial, hybrid confusion of Kim, whom Han describes as "Neither sceptic nor believer, neither optimist nor pessimist, neither a yea-man nor a nay-man, he was one in one moment and another in another moment. He would be wise, then foolish, an old sage once, and next a helpless child. Now most egoistic, now most humble. At all times wistful and unsatisfied. What are you going to do with a man like that?" (363).

Although he sometimes echoes Kim's enervated ennui, Han still clings to hope for understanding and self-creation, evident when he recalls how, "More and more I intellectualized my instinctive purpose in coming to the West. On my own cultural heritage, I wanted to ingraft the already ancient tree of the Renaissance, to make from that something different, something new...my own rebirth" (190). Han explicitly expresses his desire for understanding and self-generation here, and he seems to believe that comprehensive knowledge will allow him to understand human history as "poetry and creative life in process […] not subject to the common laws of mortality" (190). Han implies that knowledge, if he can get enough of it flowing "in an unbroken stream […] through [his] heart-blood", will offer him a kind of immortality in the face of finitude (190). However, as a modern intellectual, Han inherits far too much past history to comprehend: "there was no course of study in college so general, so comprehensive as to give it to me" (190). Han, who both mourns the irrevocable past and longs for an exciting modern present and future, ultimately remains unable to really access either.

Bulosan's Carlos, too, responds to 20th century ills with an intense longing for understanding which he describes as a constant "hunger for the truth" (144). His self-education and experience do eventually enable him, retrospectively, to achieve some understanding of events through the lens of radical politics – "to take an historical attitude […] to understand and interpret this chaos from a collective point of view, because it was pervasive and universal" (144). However, Bulosan's narrator's retrospective understanding remains rather unsteady, as he vacillates sharply between the systematic analyses of his retrospective, narrating voice and the constant confusion he faces as a young man in the narrating present. Indeed, although the young Carlos clings to hope in the future, he feels confused as to whether or how that future will come into being: "Listening and watching attentively, I knew that it was the dawn of a new morning. I did not have to wait for the birth of a new world, because what I had been told to fight for was here with its brilliant promises. How was I to understand it? Could I help?" (194). Unfortunately Carlos's assertion that a better world has arrived proves wishful thinking, as the difficult realities of the present continue to assert themselves.

While Carlos's chaos-and-revolution rhetoric expresses a different form of modern confusion than does Kim's eloquent modernist melancholia, both men's relationships to the modern present are characterized by uncertainty about the future and how to move forward – an uncertainty shared by Okada's Ichiro, who longs for understanding in the face of the 20th century's confusing present and future. Although at times he waxes nihilistic, saying, "No, I don't understand, but it doesn't matter", Ichiro spends much of the narrative struggling to understand the complex causes of his suffering (41). In the process, he often expresses perplexity and despair over the global conditions

of the 20th century as reflected in the trend toward divisive and destructive nationalism. He grieves bitterly over "the world which is made up of many countries which fight with each other and kill and hate and destroy but not enough, so that they must kill and hate and destroy again and again and again. It is so easy and simple that I cannot understand it at all" (16). Here Ichiro attempts to make sense of the impenetrable complexities of the modern present by attributing them to general, cyclical hatred and violence; however, his "easy and simple" explanation fails to reduce his confusion.

Although the characters' confusions over the fractured 20th century present and unknown future are deliberately expressed in ways familiar to a general readership, these narratives also use the pathos of confusion to deliberately reveal how, for these narratives' characters, general, modern conditions of confusion are drastically compounded by the complexities of multicultural worldviews, by oppressive race- and class-based labor exploitation that leaves little time for processing experience, and by the related difficulty of taking effective action and assessing personal responsibility in the context of the limited agency that attends oppressive circumstances. Kang's Chung-Pa Han implies a connection between his friend Kim's eventually fatal state of confusion and his multicultural intellectual hybridity, for Kim functions in the narrative as a kind of palimpsest of both Eastern and Western knowledge – lost knowledge deemed irrelevant by the instrumental mindset of modernity:

> But the greatest loss to me, Kim's friend, was himself, his brain which bore in its fine involutions our ancient characters deeply and simply incised, familiar to me. And over their classic economy, their primitive chaste elegance, was scrawled the West's
> handwriting, in incoherent labyrinth, and seamy Hamlet design. To me -- to me almost alone -- a priceless and awful parchment was in him destroyed. Could it not have been deciphered, conveyed to the world?" (364)

Kim's and Han's positions as exiled Korean intellectuals drastically compounds modern uncertainties over identity and action, for these exiles can neither return to their homeland nor be granted citizenship in their new context, an impasse evident in Kim's despairing questions: "what now is to be our fate? being unable to go back to that previous existence, being unable to label ourselves in this new world...becoming lost within another lost world?" (166).

Meanwhile, Bulosan's Carlos, a working-class migrant laborer who faces even more violence, poverty, and capitalist exploitation than Kang's scholar exiles do, expresses constant frustration over "the confusion and the utter futility of my own life" (294). Carlos names how his particular experiences as an exploited worker, confined to monotonous labor and poverty, render his experience of the present moment particularly painful: "It was a planless life, hopeless, and without direction. I was merely living from day to day: *yesterday* seemed long ago and *tomorrow* was too far away. It was *today* that I lived for aimlessly, this hour – this moment. It gave me an acute sense of time that has remained with me" (169). Overwhelmed as he is with constant confusion, Carlos often longs to understand, and to simplify the paradoxical, complex, and unjust present he faces. Carlos wonders, "Why was America so kind and yet so cruel? Was there no way to simplifying things in this continent so that suffering would be minimized? Was there no common denominator on which we could all meet? I was angry and confused, and wondered if I would ever understand this paradox" (147). The narrative makes clear here that the confusion Carlos faces is not merely a generalized, 20th century confusion related to the upset of traditional values or the complexities of globalization, but rather, a

particular confusion surrounding the violently confusing mixed messages America sends to its marginalized residents.

Like Carlos, Ichiro of *No-No Boy* experiences a powerful and frequent "sense of futility which came back to him again and again" (82). Ichiro's confusion, like Carlos's, is intensely emotional as well as mental, as evident when the narrator tells us how "Ichiro leaned over the bar, the fury inside of him seething uncontrollably, and shame, conceived of a great goodness momentarily corrupted by bitterness and the things he did not understand, deprived him of the strength to release the turbulence" (75). Okada frequently makes clear that it is Ichiro's overdetermined identity as a no-no boy that leaves him feeling particularly empty and bereft of identity: "He did not have to ask himself where he was or why because it did not matter. He was Ichiro who had said no to the judge and had thereby turned his back on the army and the country and the world and his own self" (40).

The pathos of confusion plays perhaps the most significant role in these texts' potential expansions of empathic consciousness, for this form of pathos functions not only thematically, in the relatable confusions voiced by the characters in passages such as those above, but also formally, in the confusing instability and multiplicity of meaning evoked by these texts' inconsistencies in voice, narrative structure, and imagery systems. These formal perplexities potentially facilitate empathic connection between character and reader by inviting the reader to share a fraction of the character's confusion, and by cultivating the faculties of mind used in sympathetic reasoning.

Alan Singer and others argue convincingly that genuine pathos, as distinct from the pathetic, involves the understanding and communication of some shared meaning,

and that textual density can instigate a struggle to understand that elicits empathy rather than sentiment. Singer points out that the cognitive struggle to understand constitutes a pervasively shared form of experience. I will add that confusion and meaninglessness are so prevalent in 20th century modernity that even mere attempts to understand and communicate can expand capacity for empathic response, partly because the reflection time involved even in a "failed" effort to understand invites the sympathetic reasoning process which expands empathy.

While it is difficult to state authoritatively and precisely how a given text's formal confusions evoke empathy because much depends on the individual reader, the work of James, Singer, Nussbaum and others allows me to claim with some confidence that the reflection time invited by literary complexity can, in many cases, develop capacities and habits of mind that encourage empathic response. Recall that in James' understanding, it is lack of reflection time, rather than innate selfishness and competition, that most frequently limits our empathic concern, for "we are practical creatures subject to such pressing demands that we are apt to dismiss others out of hand or judge them precipitously" (Sorrell 77). Current empathy research, as reviewed by C. Daniel Batson, corroborates James' understanding by finding that vivid imagining is effective in generating and expanding empathy (Nussbaum, *Political Emotions*, 146). This research suggests that a reservoir of empathic potential lies within us, waiting to be tapped, and that the imagination and other mental faculties can be a means of opening and proliferating channels of empathic concern.

If time-related preoccupations most frequently limit our empathic concern for others, then the potential antidote is to find time to exercise the faculties of mind capable

of extending one's circle of concern. James describes the importance of reflection to this process:

> Man has a far greater variety of *impulses* than any lower animal; and any one of these impulses, taken in itself, is as "blind" as the lowest instinct can be; but, owing to man's memory, power of reflection, and power of inference, they come each one to be felt by him, after he has once yielded to them and experienced their results, in connection with a *foresight* of those results." ("What is an Instinct", 359)

As James explains, special features of the human mind, such as its advanced capacity for remembering, reflecting, imagining, inferring, and predicting, are what make it possible for humans to extend our empathic impulses into a more structured code of ethical behavior and thereby resist operating on blind instinct.

Literature can do much to cultivate capacities which expand empathy. According to Alan Singer, in the cognitive struggle to understand elicited by literature, one can find a basis for both agency and empathy ("Literature is History"). Locating agency in perception and resisting readings that reduce texts to historical artifacts or testimonials, Singer posits the cognitive struggle to understand a text or an experience as a crucial means of exercising agency: "it is not the sheer differences confronted in thick descriptions of historical moments that matter so much as the reason-giving resources we can discern in such confrontations: thus rendering those differences intelligible as features of an abiding creative process" ("Literature is History", 60). Singer suggests here that literature's power to enhance our capacity to reflect, understand, and know, and thereby to creatively transform our actions, matters even more than its power to offer specific historical knowledge. Although an accurate ranking of the valences of a text's social justice potential really depends on the text and situation and would require large amounts of hard-to-gather reader response data, I concur with Singer that the text's

formal dimensions do at least inform its political impact by exercising the faculties of the mind essential to generating and expanding empathic concern.

For Singer, the cognitive struggle to understand not only enhances agency, but also enables empathy. Singer sees empathy as deriving particularly from the shared experience of struggling to communicate with and understand oneself, others, and the world. He explains:

> [I]f history and literature must be understood […] as an empathic rapport between past and present, between one mind and another, then this rapport is like any protocol of reason giving. It presupposes an empathic reserve of rational intent: the shared goal of mutual intelligibility – even where there is no presumption of mutual affection. Empathy is not a topos of sentiment. ("Literature is History", 67)

Singer's ideas suggest that pathetic suffering, in which meaning is not successfully communicated, typically evokes a more superficial, sentimental sympathy that affirms the sympathizer's identity as a sympathetic person but does not actually challenge the status quo, whereas pathos-bearing literature, on the other hand, potentially evokes a more powerful emotional response from readers, making it more difficult for them to others as different from themselves in any essential way. Although the shared experience of embodiment is at least as fundamental and central a factor in empathy as is the shared experience of meaning-making, the fact that humans seem to be capable of more sophisticated empathy than animals suggests that empathy is rooted in capacities of mind as well as shared experiences of embodiment.

Singer's emphasis on the importance of reflection and understanding to empathy overlaps significantly with that of the pragmatists, in the sense that the pragmatists also saw mutual intelligibility as part of the development of empathic concern and conscience. According to John Dewey, conscience, formed partly through the habitual extension of

empathy, is made possible through mutual intelligibility: "We foreknow how others will act, and the foreknowledge is the beginning of judgment passed on action. We know *with* them; there is conscience [...]. *Our thoughts of our own actions are saturated with the ideas that others entertain about them*" (216-17). Kory Sorrell extrapolates from Dewey and supports with empirical research the fact that "'Conscience' is possible because we know so much about the feelings, thoughts, intentions, and goals of other persons" and that "we *really are able* not only to infer the feelings, thoughts, and intentions of others from our and their point of view, but also value their perspective as much as (or more than) our own" (76).

The experience and development of conscience that Dewey describes both relies on and encourages the effective balancing of the human faculties of emotion and reason. Sorrell articulates the Deweyan understanding of this interplay between sympathy and reason, explaining that: "To check the influence of hate there must be sympathy, while to rationalize sympathy there are needed emotions of curiosity, caution, respect for the freedom of others—dispositions which evoke objects which balance those called up by sympathy, and prevent its degeneration into maudlin sentiment and meddling interference" (68). Significantly, for the pragmatists, reason is not a mere cold, logical opposite of passion, but rather, "the happy cooperation of a multitude of dispositions, such as sympathy, curiosity, exploration, experimentation, frankness, pursuit—to follow things through—circumspection, to look about at the context, etc., etc." (Sorrell 75). Consequently, sympathetic reason in the pragmatists' framework is not a specific activity of mind, but rather, a more holistic "disposition" that involves the balancing of a variety of mental activities (Sorrell 75). As Sorrell explains, "In this combination, sympathy is

harnessed (or directed), but the motive force, the passions that move us (empathic concern), remain as drivers of individual and collective conduct" (75). Although sympathetic reasoning and its function in the expansion of empathic concern remains somewhat imprecise in the pragmatists' articulation, their emphasis on the importance of reflection time in expanding empathic concern is hard to dispute, particularly now that their reasoning has been substantiated by empirical research. Let us take a look at some examples of these operations within the fiction at hand.

Narrator Chung-Pa Han of Younghill Kang's *East Goes West* shifts frequently between multiple, conflicting conceptions and experiences of time without presenting any one of them as authoritative. This narrative feature asks readers to attempt to make sense of these inconsistent representations of time. Furthermore, the mixed imagery systems used when characterizing time add a layer of confusion, pointing to paradoxes that inhere in and between modern temporality. Lastly, the narrative ends with an ambiguous dream sequence containing deeply irreconcilable elements that challenge readerly sense-making.

Meanwhile, Carlos Bulosan's *America is in the Heart* fluctuates between two often conflicting voices, one more political and historical and the other more personal, leaving readers unsure of how to reconcile the seemingly contradictory analyses of events that these voices sometimes offer. In addition, both the plot and the narrator's trajectory of self-discovery appear to be highly repetitive, characterized by a confusing vagueness of place and time that lends to readers a fraction of the narrator's feeling of being alternately trapped and pursued. These plot features, which communicate the difficulty of attaining clear and consistent self-knowledge even as the narrator strives for it, also confound readers' expectations that the narrative follow the more conventional,

progressive-structure of the bildungsroman. Furthermore, the narrative ends suddenly, on a note of rhapsodic appeal which jars against the bleak events described a few pages earlier and leaves the reader unsure of the text's final import.

Lastly, Okada's *No-No Boy* features rhetorical questions and confused, loose sentences which serve as formal reflections of the narrator's confused and sometimes frantic internal debate over the uncertain causes and meaning of his refusal to fight against the Japanese in World War II. Relatedly, when considering the causes of his own suffering, the narrator fluctuates widely and rapidly between explanations, trying them on, but finding that each fails to convey the complexity of his fractured life. Similarly to Kang's and Bulosan's texts, the last scene of the narrative features a disturbing contrast between oppression-related violence, on the one hand, and serene hopefulness, on the other. These fluctuations and conflicts confront the reader with the difficulty of establishing clear meaning concerning suffering. The chapters to come provide more precise illustrations of how the formal and thematic elements of Asian American temporality pathos work in concert to elicit sympathetic reasoning and expand empathy in readers.

6. Temporality Pathos and Modern Masculinity Performance

All three of the mid-century writers I discuss are men, for although Asian American women writers notably predominate as the most sophisticated users of temporality pathos in post-1960s fiction, the preoccupation with modern temporality in mid-20th century Asian American writing may have originated in part as a feature of masculinity performance. Indeed, while mid-20th century literary modernist Chinese

American women writer Diana Chang utilizes modern temporality rhetoric in ways somewhat similar to her male counterparts, other Asian American women's narratives of the period such as Pardee Lowe's *Father and Glorious Descendant* (1943), Jade Snow Wong's *Fifth Chinese Daughter* (1950), Monica Itoi Sone's *Nisei Daughter* (1953), or Hisaye Yamamoto's *Seventeen Syllables and Other Stories* (1988, but written earlier), do not feature the pronounced and politicized fixation on temporality found in the men's writing.

One could attribute this disparity to many factors, including a history of immigration laws restricting Asian women's migration and thereby reducing the number of Asian American women writers in mid-century; the unequal educations and time-consuming childcare and domestic work that often limit women's writing; or the obedience socialization of women that can deter them from making overt public political critiques. However, I suggest an additional possible cause: perhaps masculinity was so definitional to modern American nationalism that even Asian American men critical of the nation felt that they must prove their manhood and their modernity to be considered part of America at all, and modern temporality pathos seemed to offer a means of claiming these valued identity features.

The modern men writers discussed here should not be taken as representative of all men, all modern men, all Asian American men, or even all Asian American literary men of this period, as gender identity and expression are varied spectra. Responsible scholarship also dispenses with monolithic treatments of modernist subjectivity, emphasizing instead what Sonita Sarker calls "a range of subject-positions that are based upon locational and ideological (dis)affiliations" (473). However, the patterns shared by

Kang, Bulosan, and Okada do illuminate one strain of modern Asian American literary masculinity performance which is premised upon figurative transcendence of temporal and spatial limits.

Pablo Dominguez Andersen and Simon Wendt, in their book *Masculinities and the Nation in the Modern World* (2015), point out the enmeshed geneses of modern masculinity, modern racism, and modern nationalism:

> The period between the early nineteenth century and World War II […] saw the simultaneous emergence of new forms of masculinity as well as the emergence of modern nation-states. Similarly important, it was during this period that exclusionary ideologies such as scientific racism, imperialism, and eugenics became part and parcel of these gendered nation-building processes (2).

As feminist scholar Cynthia Enloe observes, nationalist ideologies are most often generated by "masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope" (qtd. in Andersen and Wendt 1), and as Sonita Sarker explains, such ideologies are typically implemented via white patriarchal violence: "The violence of history gives birth to both modernism […] and late colonialism -- the political infrastructure of modernism that provides material resources as well as particular forms of the racialized, sexualized and gendered 'other'" (474).

One might wonder why, given hegemonic Eurocentric modernism's exclusionary brand of universalism, Asian American men writers would express their suffering using modern temporality rhetoric that derives in part from that lineage. I suspect that they saw the potential versatility of temporality rhetoric – that it could be used to disrupt the unexamined authority of modern Western temporality conceptions while also allowing these writers to demonstrate their status as modern men worthy of shaping the more democratic America they wished to build. Even as the texts' temporality rhetoric

highlights how social location increases the frequency and intensity of Asian American characters' painful experiences with temporality, the rhetoric also describes literal and figurative movement associated with modern masculinity performance.

Both hegemonic masculinity and mid-century modernity are often characterized by temporal and spatial travel. As Katarzyna Kosmala observes, dominant conceptions of masculinity associate it with isolation, dislocation, and travel: "Ideas about men and masculinities and categories attach[…] them to travel", perhaps because "a sense of detachment from others facilitates mobility" (1; 156). Furthermore, "Such movements of ideas, images and representations, through communication or migration, are both spatial and temporal", in the sense that travel moves one out of one's embeddedness in a communal history and increasingly disrupts the natural rhythms of daily life (Kosmala 1).

Hegemonic modernism, like hegemonic masculinity, is deeply linked to movement. As Pamela L. Caughie explains, literary modernism was "produced by writers and artists who literally moved from one geographic location to another", and is "often described in terms of dislocation, exile, liminality, and migration" (379). Although modern men of color are often marginalized and feminized within the dominant discourses of masculinity and modernity (and the related violence of imperialism, men writers of color also sometimes embrace a "mobility and transnationalism [that] have been gendered masculine, [as] a way for men to evade the parochialism and racism of national and regional identities" (Caughie 380). Even modern writers critical of geopolitical imperialism often participated in "the search for the new, the foreign, the unknown", which Caughie describes as "almost a moral obligation,' whether that search was directed outward to new lands and new peoples or inward to unconscious desires"

(379). This search frequently manifest as a "nostalgic yearning for an indeterminate 'elsewhere'" that Rita Felski observes to be "a foundational trope within the modern itself" (qtd. in Caughie, 379).

Patricia Chu and other scholars of gender in mid-century Asian American writing observe that Asian American men authors tend to use Asian and Asian American women as signifiers for an Asian past often represented as nostalgic but restrictive by the distanced male narrator, while white American women sometimes serve as symbols of a deferred American future. Chu's illuminating work in *Assimilating Asians: Gendered Strategies of Authorship in Asian America* (2000) explains how "the temporal disjunction in narratives of nationalism (in which the nation is imagined as both rooted in tradition and endlessly transformed by progressive forces) is often represented as a gender difference (52). Chu quotes a relevant point from Anne McClintock to describe this pattern:

> Women are represented as the atavistic and authentic body of national tradition (inert, backward-looking and natural), embodying nationalism's conservative principle of continuity. Men, by contrast, represent the progressive agent of national modernity (forward thrusting, potent and historic), embodying nationalism's progressive, or revolutionary principle of discontinuity. Nationalism's anomalous relation to time is thus managed as a natural relation to gender. (McClintock 3)

Passages cited from Kang, Bulosan, and Okada in the chapters to come will bear out the rather painful accuracy of Chu's and McClintock's descriptions here, for these men writers conform to a widespread American modern "idealization of America as a woman, and the rhetoric of transcendence used to describe her" (Chu 34). These representations are consistent with the longstanding American literary tradition (well-articulated by

Annette Kolodny[vi]) of gendering the American continent as feminine and as existing for men to discover and "cultivate."

Although mid-century Asian American men's narratives sometimes replicate hegemonic masculinity as they seek to establish themselves in American literature, one can discern, in the multivalence and ambivalence of their temporal pathae, evidence that they were pulled between two competing impulses: that of aligning themselves with dominant Anglo-American masculinity through replication of its gendered American metaphors, and that of identifying with the exploited lands and peoples often feminized by Western imperialist discourse. This dissonance inflects their temporality pathae, which expresses both faith and skepticism regarding notions of progress, and both excitement and horror in the face of modernity's accelerated, commodified temporality.

7. Chapter Summaries

I begin with Younghill Kang's examination of the pathos of finitude in *East Goes West*, not only because it is the founding text in this lineage of Asian American temporality pathos, but also because *EGW*'s grief over a lost, pre-industrial and pre-imperial Korean past communicates the global magnitude of modern problems generated by the instrumentalist reasoning of Western capitalist imperialism. The narrator's depicted suffering over both modern and exilic dissonances and losses is made tangible to readers through Kang's use of temporal paradoxes and mixed imagery systems in a shifting and blending array of time conceptions, inviting empathic response by asking readers to grapple with a small measure of Han's confusion.

My analysis of the pathos of idealism in Carlos Bulosan's *America is in the Heart* adds a related critique of capitalist liberalism as an ideology which commodifies suffering and advertises a false future, thereby ultimately replicating capitalist imperialism while claiming to restrain it. The circularity of the narrative offers a formal expression of this paradox, highlighting the inability of Carlos's future-oriented pathos of idealism (characterized by romantic cosmic and natural imagery) to liberate him from the harsh, instrumental realities faced by Filipinos in America. Meanwhile, the narrator's switching between contradictory voices (one an analytical historian, the other a personal, emotional individual) is a formal indicator of a related dialectic between the text's macropolitical analysis of time-as-history and its micropolitical representation of lived temporal experience. Although the former voice is given more credence in existing scholarship, I contend that the latter resists liberalism's abstract reduction of suffering to injury and capitalism's related reduction of time to an abstract, objective measure by illustrating the living, durational nature of both suffering and temporality.

Whereas Kang's pathos of finitude mourns the past and Bulosan's pathos of idealism glorifies the future, Okada's pathos of confusion emphasizes the breakdowns of meaning caused by a 20th century modernity that promised progressive self-determination but instead delivered instrumentalist, capitalistic nationalist ideologies that alienate people from one another and the present. Rhetorical questions and loose sentences invite the reader to share in protagonist Ichiro's confusion in the face of Japanese and American nationalisms that vie for narrative control of his reality. While agreeing with scholars' arguments that the text's refusal to resolve this confusion indicates the difficulty of integration for Ichiro in a bigoted society, my analysis identifies a previously-overlooked

positive bi-product of Ichiro's confusion: an ongoing reflection process (cognitively-based mindfulness, a contemporary equivalent to James' sympathetic reasoning), which allows him to begin relocating his identity in present connections (over shared confusion and suffering) instead of in nationalism's false pasts and futures.

CHAPTER 2

MODERNIST FINITUDE AND TEMPORAL PARADOX IN YOUNGHILL KANG'S *EAST GOES WEST*

Younghill Kang (1898-1972) published *East Goes West* in 1937, six years after his first novel, *The Grass Roof* (1931) – the first Korean American novel, and the one which established Kang as the "father" of Korean American literature (Oh 149). However, whereas *The Grass Roof* depicts an idyllic traditional Korea on the verge of destruction by Japanese occupation, *East Goes West* is set in the United States and Canada, and portrays both cultures critically. This critical perspective may explain why *EGW*, although more than equal *The Grass Roof* in literary merit in its kaleidoscopic erudition, astute observation, and lyricism, was received with less enthusiasm by American readers. The semi-fictional first-person narrative of *East Goes West* continues the story of *The Grass Roof*'s young, idealistic Korean American scholar Chung-Pa Han, detailing his arrival and first difficult years in North America. Han's initial enthusiastic awe at New York's fast pace wanes as his education and intelligence fail to spare him from race-based labor discrimination, forcing him to work in a variety of low-wage jobs that steal and impoverish his time. Han's narrative also bears witness to the tragic struggle of his sensitive, erudite compatriot Tu-Wan Kim, whose drama is framed as one of exilic alienation from both past and present cultures. Eventually Kim commits suicide, no longer able to bear the accumulated grief of cultural displacement, his own obsolescence in an instrumentalist culture, and the romantic heartbreak he experiences when his beloved Helen is forbidden him by her racist family. After reflecting on the

forces that destroy Kim, Han closes his narrative with a dream that highlights the unlikelihood of success for non-white immigrants.

As the literature review to come illustrates, much existing scholarship on *East Goes West* attends to the text's critique of America's systemic racism and exploitative capitalist system, with opinions diverging primarily regarding Kang's and Han's relationships to these systems. Generally speaking, early scholarship conflates the identities of Han and Kang and then deems Kang's text assimilationist and/or unrepresentative of Korean American experience, on account of Kang's and his narrator's scholarly backgrounds or the narrator's intermittent individualism[vii], whereas more recent *EGW* scholarship more often reads Han's individualism as deliberate irony.[viii] However, both approaches typically gloss over the text's ubiquitous fascination with temporality, failing to realize the essential role that *EGW*'s modernist kaleidoscope of temporal perspectives plays in its political critiques.

I argue that Kang recuperates a nostalgic modernist pathos of finitude in ways that elicit similitude-based empathy from mid-century readers while also resisting the acute losses suffered by Korean exiles displaced by imperialism. More specifically, this chapter analyzes four distinct but related functions of Kang's pathos of finitude: firstly, it exposes how American instrumentality curtails the perspective-taking necessary to empathy by rendering time a seemingly scarce commodity; secondly, it forges a bridge of relatable similitude between Korean American exilic grief and modernist longing for a mythic past; thirdly, it testifies to the unique temporal experience of Korean exiles; and lastly, it uses conflicting systems of imagery to create temporal paradoxes that elicit from

readers a struggle to understand and thereby cultivate empathic-generating faculties of mind.

The Western modernist iteration of finitude-pathos adapted by Kang originally derives from a long-standing Western tendency to understand Earthly time and life as linear phenomena defined by death. As Russell West-Pavlov explains, the pre-modern Western precedents for finitude-pathos may be traced from classical antiquity's "confrontation with the notions of change and impermanence", through Augustine's early medieval "associat[ion of] change with death and decay", on to the "rising preoccupation with time as a scarcity, with the shortness of life" that accompanied the increased mercantile bustle of the 14th and 15th centuries (30). The denaturalization, commodifying homogenization, and acceleration of temporal experience by 18th-19th century Western imperialism and industrial capitalism further fomented this pathos by the 20th century, as modernist writers grieved and resisted the degradation of temporal experience by rejecting standardized, industrial clock time "in favor of subjectivity, […] lived experience […], the workings of memory, the pathos of finitude, and the intensities of fugitive moments" (Tung 95). Charles M. Tung describes this "heightened preoccupation with time" as "a fascination with the "nonsynchronous", with "the strange and uneven coexistence of different times" (95).

As the few scholars who do discuss *EGW*'s modernism attest, Younghill Kang was not a newcomer to the fascinations of modernism when he arrived in the U.S. in 1951. Walter Lew notes that Kang's sensibility was "formed from the 'beginning' at the confluence of many shifting cultural and historical currents" (172). Hyungji Park corroborates that Kang's demonstrated facility with Western thought and literature

substantiates the notion that for Korean and Korean American intellectuals in the 1930s, "the West already *is* their past, their philosophical and literary heritage" and therefore they "act[] within the already globalized world in which a European cultural tradition is readily available" (140). Asian American writers experimented with and adapted these traditions, as Audrey Wu Clark explains: "Asian American authors were deploying high modernist forms to sociopolitical ends different from those of other modernists. They rearticulated modernist forms to critique Asian American racialization and exclusion" (10). My project's attention to temporality in *EGW* and other mid-century texts demonstrates how Kang and others "rearticulated" common modern temporal pathae into layered political critiques, a strategy that remains popular in Asian American fiction today.

East Goes West, the founding text of this lineage, ingeniously repurposes the pathos of finitude to resist the very Western imperialism that generates it. The first method of resistance may be seen in Han's acute observations regarding the commodifying effects of Western capitalist imperialism on temporal experience. A close reading of Han's commentary reveals that he sees quite clearly how instrumentalist, scarcity-based approaches to time thwart the reflection and perspective-taking often needed in generating empathy across social differences. My examination of *EGW* shows that Kang traces this shortcoming back to Western imperialism's "modernizing" standardization of time across the globe. Characterizing modernism itself as a temporal phenomenon, as "a pluralization of time's speed, shape, and lines of occurrence", Charles Tung explains how Western imperialism threatens the diverse multiplicity of time conceptions that fascinated modernist writers (96). Speaking to the ironic double-ness of

global modernity, Tung observes, “modernism is the name for [modernity’s] own multiplication of itself and that which underwrites it” (96). This temporal paradox functions almost as a structural principle throughout Kang’s text, as he continually juxtaposes conflicting imagery systems that point to the paradoxical nature of modernity.

This dialectic between generalized and particularized modernisms shows up in the second form of resistance Kang enacts via finitude-pathos: his juxtaposition of Koreans’ exilic experience and a more general modern dislocation from older systems of thought. Kang’s invitation of similitude-based empathy via appeals to a universalizing modern pathos of finitude will appear to some as an assimilationist gesture that obscures the particularities of Asian American suffering. While these concerns are understandable, Audrey Wu Clark points out that “before the solidified dominance of bourgeois ideology” corrupted universalism into a hegemonic ideology around 1968, universalism served as a tool with which early Asian American writers resisted dehumanization (14). She honors how writers like Kang used “the spiritual themes of death and rebirth” to imagine a future uncorrupted by discrimination and cultural imperialism (134).

Concerns about universalism dissipate further when one considers the claims Han makes to a unique relationship to temporality based on his Korean American multiculturalism. Han declares his exceptionality thusly: “with my own life [I] have skated upon the great time arena. I seem to have traversed much time, more than most men, although I am still in my early thirties” (*EGW* 4). Han explicitly attributes this detached fluidity (in skating across time) to his marginal position: “The Westernized Oriental is the child of the nineteenth century, and yet a curious detachment is possible for him such as neither truculent old-timers nor their sophisticated modern children can

normally expect" (*EGW* 128). In creating a narrative that records the diverse mixture of temporal concepts that shape Han's and Kim's experiences, Kang testifies to this particularity and resists imperialist erasure.

The third and last way that Kang's modern finitude-pathos resists Western capitalist imperialism is via mixed systems of temporality which create paradoxes that highlight what West-Pavlov calls the "dynamic processuality" and multiplicity of temporality. Furthermore, Kang's paradoxes invite from readers temporally-based cognitive processes that defy instrumental reasoning and cultivate empathy-generating faculties of mind, engaging readers with shared and distinct temporal experiences simultaneously (10). In this way, these formal complexities add to the text's pathos-bearing properties, complimenting Han's thematic struggle to understand (and bear) the ravages of finitude under modern capitalist imperialism.

I. Literature Review

Much *East Goes West* scholarship focuses on the interesting tension between the narrator's naïve enthusiasm for America and his critique of American racism and labor exploitation, rather than on the temporal pathos used to critique these oppressions or the imperialism that precipitates Han's journey to the West. Wolf D. Kindermann claims that "the magic city of modernity attracts [Han] like the Futurist Manifesto of 1909 come alive in a dynamic sculptured organism which once and for all shatters the time-worn traditions of his Korean background" (247). Meanwhile, David S. Roh detects an underlying critical awareness in Han: "beneath the surface of Han's wonder lies a quiet acknowledgment of the individual sacrifice needed for the New York building to rise—

the worker and designer must labor in anonymous tedium" (84). This voice channels what Joanne Kim calls "Kang's sobering recognition of the limits and boundaries within the U.S." (55).

Many posit that the ongoing tension between Han's naive and critical voices reflects Kang's attempt to censure American culture without completely alienating his American readership. Kindermann and others remind us that Kang complied with some of his publisher's Orientalizing suggestions (J. Kim 55), a history which perhaps contributes to the text's contradictory elements. For example, Klara Szmanko argues that "*East Goes West* is a critical view of race relations in the United States of the 1930s" in which "the narrator becomes entangled in essentialism himself. The portrayal of the east and west smacks of stereotyping and of Kipling's 'East is East and West is West'" (118). This school of thought focuses on what Joanne Kim calls Kang's "balancing act" between Korean and American identities: "in his efforts to bridge the dichotomous elements of being a Korean and an American in the days when the two were widely believed to be mutually exclusive, Younghill Kang exemplified the universal 'balancing act' that defines many Asian American experiences: the difficulty of reconciling 'two warring ideals' -- an Asian, an American -- in one body" (57). Relatedly, David Hsin-Fu Wand sees Kang's narrator as seeking to reconcile two positions represented by two of Kang's friends, the refined melancholic aesthete Tu Wan Kim and the jovial materialist playboy George Jum: "By learning American pragmatism, yet retaining his Oriental humor and perseverance, [Han] survives to tell the story of both men, one who could not compromise with American values and another who compromised too easily" (43).

More recent *EGW* scholarship reads Han's ambivalence as a strategic construct, used either to assist Kang's request for citizenship, or to enhance the text's political critique through irony. Sunyoung Lee, voicing the former theory, argues that "the dissonance between Chung-Pa Han's persistent idealism and his clear-eyed observations of the hypocrisy around him is not mere inconsistency, it is a carefully constructed conceit, with Younghill Kang as its master architect and principal beneficiary" (389). Lee claims that "Kang played off the assumption that his book is autobiography to prove to his audience -- the American public -- that he was citizenship-worthy. He manipulated the misperception that he and Han are the same person" (390). Hyungji Park, meanwhile, reads Han's naiveté as a deliberately ironic mask that enhances the text's political critique:

> Han's schoolboy eagerness to learn about Western literature is compromised by his own sophisticated appreciation of the great (greater?) value and richness of Eastern learning; his faux-naif description of his time as a domestic servant masks a ferocious critique of the racism and, indeed, the absurdly 'mannered' lifestyle of the white upper-middle class; his respect for his literature teachers, later in the novel, barely veils his own greater sophistication as a reader of literature (132-33).

While Park may err in assuming complete dissonance between Han's and Kang's views, astute readers of *EGW* can hardly miss some of the ironies to which Park alludes. Park's argument testifies to the importance of reading Asian American texts as what Kindermann calls "palimpsests" – of "acknowledg[ing] the protective masks these writers sometimes had to put on consciously or unconsciously in order to satisfy their publishers' demands, and at the same time send out their covert messages for those who bothered to read the texts not only as exotic autobiographies but as reflected images of American reality" (246). Indeed, as Karen Kuo has pointed out, if Han's ambivalence toward

America does reflect Kang's own, then this very ambivalence constitutes perhaps the most powerful critique of all. Arguing that "*East Goes West* expresses very consciously Kang's own ambivalences over class and privilege, race and exclusion, often exploiting these contradictions through a naive narrator and a picaresque style", Kuo concludes convincingly that "[m]ore than any Asian American novel at this time, *East Goes West* invokes how this 'racial caste system in the greatest democracy on earth' forces its protagonist into becoming an ambivalent racial subject" (764).

Although reading irony-based resistance into seemingly assimilationist moments in mid-century Asian American fiction is a popular and interesting scholarly approach in the field, it can also lead to oversight of these texts' other significant features and alternative resistance methods. For example, relatively few Kang scholars take up literary modernism as a lens for understanding *EGW,* even fewer discuss temporality at any length, and none offer a thorough treatment of the pathos of finitude that pervades the text. Walter Lew's study of *EGW*'s modern hybridity briefly mentions the text's "tension between vitalistically seizing one's time [...] and drifting like innumerable predecessors across its great indifferent manifold", yet Lew veers away from a full examination of the text's treatment of time, focusing instead on the text's organic metaphors of grafting (172). Meanwhile, Audrey Wu Clark credits Kang and other early Asian American writers as critical contributors to an Asian American modernist avant-garde. Wu seeks to counter the fact that "Asian American literature has carried its cultural nationalist legacy of functioning as mimetically realist ethnographies of Asian American culture to the burdensome degree to which its experimental and avant-garde forms are overlooked or invisible to its sociological aims" (174). Clark's chapter on *EGW* observes that Kang

deploys in *EGW* a nonlinear temporality that "attempt[s] to transcend national horizons and the capitalist commodification of linear time" and to summon "an inclusive universalism that is, by definition, utopian and temporally 'not yet'" (136). Clark distinguishes herself by recognizing modernist temporal elements as integral, rather than antithetical, to the political portent of the text. However, she focuses on the role of Buddhist non-linear time conceptions in envisioning a future "inclusive universalism" rather than on the role that Kang's past-oriented finitude pathos plays in paving the way for the universalism she discusses.

As the above literature review illustrates, scholarship on *EGW* tends to neglect its participation in literary modernism, its fascination with temporality, and the way these elements enable the text's critique of imperialism. My analysis emphasizes the inseparability of these phenomena, showing how Kang's pathos of finitude resists imperialism by highlighting alternative temporalities threatened by what Adam Barrows calls the "one, true, 'cosmopolitan' time of modernity," which is, in Charles Tung's words, "imperialism and the informatics that makes it possible: the time of modernism and the time of empire" (68; 96).

II. The Pathos of Finitude and Kang's Critique of Instrumentality

One of the functions of finitude-pathos in Kang's *East Goes West* is to highlight how the instrumental reasoning of American imperial capitalism commodifies and accelerates temporal experience in ways that discourage the time-consuming process of

expanding empathy. While David S. Roh's discussion of Taylorism[1] in *EGW* has already demonstrated the text's critique of efficiency over humanism, my analysis places this efficiency obsession within the larger frame of Western temporality trends and explains the threat efficiency poses to human empathy.

American instrumentality derives not only from simple capitalist greed, but also from Western linear time and death anxiety and from an Enlightenment-era hubris associated with gaining control over nature through science. Kang's protagonist, Chung-Pa Han, directly alludes to the long-standing Western struggle against impermanence, describing his arrival in America as an entry into "the arena of man's fight with death" (9). Indeed, many of Han's Western literary quotations and allusions reflect conceptions of time as linear, limited, and limiting, and of death as a threatening force one longs to conquer. Early in the narrative, Han quotes Dryden's MacFlecknoe, which reads, "All human things are subject to decay: / And when Fate summons, monarchs must obey…." (15). Dryden's 17th century lines exemplify a widespread understanding of time as the inevitable bearer of earthly loss, death, and other negative changes that pervades the canons of Western literature. Another of Han's quotations, from Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Adonais," acknowledges a positive concept of eternity and transcendence, but death remains, at least on the plane of earthly life, a force of inevitable and irrevocable destruction: "Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,/ Stains the white radiance of eternity/ Until Death tramples to fragments…" (qtd. in Kang 4). This persistent sense of

[1] Frederick Winslow Taylor's popular late 19th – early 20th century scientific management approach that broke work time and work activities into units, to measure and coordinate them in ways that would increase productivity.

our limited time on Earth haunts nearly the entirety of the Western canon, as Kang well knew.

This sense of powerlessness temporarily lessened for some as 18th-19th scientific and technological developments instilled a newfound sense of power over nature and a confidence that "future-oriented 'productive labor' offered the possibility of an open-ended future of ever-increasing wealth and progress" (Shleifer 4). As Lewis Mumford famously explained, the clock is "the key-machine of the modern industrial age", because its division of time into small units takes the focus away from "eternity [. . .] as the measure and focus of human actions" (qtd. in Tung 115). Charles Tung explains how the clock moved society "toward the single metric necessary for the coordination of nation and empire, as well as for the quantification, regulation, and 'work-discipline' of capitalism" (116). Indeed, the Newtonian absolute time that prevailed from the Enlightenment through the 19th century assisted the imperialist projects of global travel and trade by paving the way for the standardization and commodification of time in modernity.

Han's initial awed enthusiasm for modernity seems to overlook the dark side of imperialism and capitalism, instead celebrating an optimistic figuration of progressive temporality popular in 19th century America. Envisioning America as "the country of the present and the near future" (*EGW* 153), Han initially privileges the swift motion of modernity over an allegedly stagnant Korean past, declaring, "'I want neither dreams nor poetry, least of all tradition, never the full moon.' Korea even in her shattered state had these. And beyond them stood waiting – death. I craved swiftness, unimpeded action, fluidity, the amorphous New. Out of action rises the dream, rises the poetry. Dream

without motion is the only wasteland that can sustain nothing" (*EGW* 6). Han's evident fascination with speed reflects the 20th century fascination with temporality described by Tung: "The heightened interest in temporality from the end of the nineteenth century onward is […] marked from the beginning by a new attention to the speeds, shapes, and number of times" (99). Han's wonder over New York architecture also expresses these fascinations: "All is the work of a short time, in a small space. It would have taken men in different ages hundreds of years to accomplish this. See what man has done, the changes made, here. Could nature herself with all her sweeping storms above and bursting volcanoes below affect earth so much?" (245).

Han's enthusiasm for modern efficiency appears to contradict the implied author's critique of instrumentalist, capitalist, imperialist Western modernity; however, Han's admiration for the "Machine Age" is qualified by his questioning of whether the exciting, "liberating" changes brought on by modernity, technology, and global exchange are worth the exploitations and losses of natural and cultural diversity that accompany Western modernity. As Roh points out, Kang's presentation of these two contrasting perspectives constitutes "an admonition of all that can be achieved through efficiency, both beauteous and terrible" (84). Even as Han marvels over the near instantaneousness of synthetic creation, he acknowledges industrial modernity's profane disregard for nature, expressing this anxiety through images of unnatural birth: "Buildings sprang white from the rock. No earth clung to their skirts. They leaped like Athene from the mind synthetically; they spurned the earth" (*EGW* 6). The city of New York embodies, for Han, a "gigantic rebellion" against nature, a "savagery which piled great concrete block on concrete block," a "lavishness which, without prayer, pillaged coal mines and

waterfalls for light, festooning the great nature severed city with diamonds of frozen electrical phenomena" (*EGW* 7). Han explicitly juxtaposes this rapacious, audacious subordination of nature with the organic shapes of Korean dwellings described as "low, weathered, mossed, abhorring the lifeless line -- the definite, the finite, the aloof -- loving rondures and an upward stroke, the tilt of a roof like a boat always aware of the elements in which it is swinging" (*EGW* 7). In contrast, New York buildings are linear abstractions "materialized by those hard, cold, magic words -- opportunity, enterprise, prosperity, success" (*EGW* 7).

American values of efficiency and productivity shape internal as well as external structures, changing the way people experience time. Chung-Pa Han's observations again fluctuate between excitement over rapid change and trepidation over its attendant losses. On the one hand, Han calls the American "a good salesman, amidst scientific tools", with a mind "like Grand Central Station": "It is definite, it is timed, it has mathematical precision on clearcut stone foundation. There may be monotonous dull repetition, but all is accurate and conscious. Stupid routine sometimes, but behind it, duty in the very look. Every angle and line has been measured. How solid the steel framework of this Western civilization is!" (*EGW* 152). Scholars such as Chungmoo Choi[ix] and K.W. Lee might identify this enthusiasm for New York as evidence of the postcolonial false consciousness that Lee calls "Yankee Disease" – a popular 1940's South Korean "perception that all things American were good" (Park 124). However, my analysis contends that Kang uses Han's paradoxical perspective to highlight the temporal multiplicity of modernity.

Just beneath Han's nominal praise of the solidity, accuracy, and deliberateness of Western civilization lies his deep critique of American capitalism's commodified temporality and instrumentalist reasoning. Han describes the difference between traditional Asian village life and 20th century New York life as a temporal one, noting how New Yorkers "have no time, even for gossiping, even for staring" because they treat time as a commodity that must be spent efficiently. What increasingly disturbs Han is how American instrumentalist rationality devalues and neglects the intellectual, artistic, and spiritual dimensions of human experience. As Han explains of U.S. culture, "Free, factual, man is reasoning from cause to effect here all the time – not so much thinking" (*EGW* 152). While reasoning based on cause and effect may be practical, dimensions of human experience that are not as easily reducible to clear cause and effect relationships will be lost on such a culture. As Han himself acknowledges, "Prophets of hereafter, poets of vision...maybe the American is not so much these" (*EGW* 152). A culture that does not value "thinking" – using imagination and reflection to expand one's understanding beyond one's own perceptions of cause and effect – may produce many concrete objects, but not so much prophecy and poetry.

Worst of all, American practicality has a narrowing effect on the human heart as well as the human mind. American pragmatist philosopher William James helpfully articulates the causal chain that connects finitude, practicality, and the narrowing of empathic concern, explaining, "we are but finite, and each of us has some single specialized vocation of his own. And it seems as if energy in the service of its particular duties might be got only by hardening the heart toward everything unlike them"

(*Writings,* 634). According to James, this practical hardening of heart unfortunately reduces human experience and potential drastically. As he explains,

> Our deadness toward all but one particular kind of joy would thus be the price we inevitably have to pay for being practical creatures. Only in some pitiful dreamer, some philosopher, poet, or romancer, or when the common practical man becomes a lover, does the hard externality give way, and a gleam of insight into the ejective world, […] the vast world of inner life beyond us, so different from that outer seeming, illuminate our mind (*Writings*, 634).

This "vast world of inner life" capable of illuminating the mind becomes a casualty of excessive practicality. Quoting an autobiographical passage from Richard Jeffries describing an hour he spent communing with nature, James observes: "Surely, a worthless hour of life, when measured by the usual standards of commercial value. Yet in what other *kind* of value can the preciousness of any hour, made precious by any standard, consist, if it consist not in the feelings of excited significance like these, engendered in some one, by what the hour contains?" (*Writings,* 637). Highlighting the tension between two conflicting value systems – the public, commercial values of the marketplace, and the private values of reflection and self-knowledge – James suggests that the latter system is the one that tends to render life valuable and meaningful to the individual.

The perceived need to conserve time and energy by focusing on practical matters often has the unfortunate effect of hardening the heart against other people, particularly the most distant ones. As James explains, "We are practical beings, each of us with limited functions and duties to perform. Each is bound to feel intensely the importance of his own duties and the significance of the situations that call these forth" (*Writings,* 630). James suggests that the need to perform individual functions and duties, presumably in a limited amount of time, leads human beings to value their own concerns over those of

others: “this feeling is in each of us a vital secret, for sympathy with which we vainly look to others”, as “the others are too much absorbed in their own vital secrets to take an interest in ours” (*Writings*, 630). This habitual separation between self and other is what leads to empathy failure, as evident in unfair judgments and prejudices: “Hence the stupidity and injustice of our opinions, so far as they deal with the significance of alien lives. Hence the falsity of our judgments, so far as they presume to decide in an absolute way on the value of other persons’ conditions or ideals” (James, *Writings*, 630).

James’ universalizing diagnosis of human beings largely reflects his own American culture, afflicted as it is with chronic busyness, for the time-saving empathy-narrowing tendency he observes is most prevalent in modern Western societies like America’s, which has commodified and accelerated temporality to an alarming degree. As American psychologist Robert Levine found in his study of 31 cities around the world, “People are prone to move faster in places with vital economies, a high degree of industrialization, larger populations, cooler climates, and a cultural orientation toward individualism” (9). As Lukasz Kamienski explains, technology and globalization, the “two main catalysts of the acceleration of time and lifestyle in post-industrial societies” are part of an instrumentalist 20th century capitalism that “enforces the utmost effective use of time” and “is marked by the unprecedented dynamics of acceleration” (229). This acceleration, evident in the “zealous summary glibness of Japan, fast-Westernizing” threatens to “smash” Korean tradition to forward Japan’s imperialist pursuit of a more modern future (*EGW* 8).

Kang’s uses finitude pathos to illustrate how the widespread perception that we lack time creates the empathy blinders described by James. Indeed, the correlation

Kang's text identifies between lack of time, lack of reflective thought, and lack of empathy constitutes a deep layer of cultural critique offered by *East Goes West*. Early in his narrative, Han, commencing this critique rather subtly, cites a story of a man who earned a free ride on a ferry by pointing out to the ferryman that they are both human beings, carried and born from the same "boat" (synonymous with "womb" in Korean). Han then points out the ineffectiveness of such pleas in America: "My only plea for a planet-ride among the white-skinned majority of this New World is the same facetious argument. I brought little money, and no prestige, as I entered a practical country with small respect for the dark side of the moon. I got in just in time, before the law against Oriental immigration was passed" (*EGW* 6). A "practical" country whose culture values only the capitalist instrumentality of people and things – their "money" and "prestige" – will consequently have "small respect" for those even temporarily bereft of material and social assets.

Han ironically refers to his own argument as "facetious", when the real facetiousness lies in America's "practical" valuation of superficial assets over shared humanity. Indeed, beneath Han's irony is Kang's deliberate implication that the linear, accelerated and commodified temporality of an instrumentalist capitalist culture fosters discrimination. Recall this point from my introduction, where Delbir Sehnby observes that "Stereotyping, as well as the lack of differentiation and the discrimination that results from it, stems from a linear, chronological view of time" and is an instrumentalist shortcut derived in part from time scarcity, for "hasty generalizations save time, binding a community together through imagined fears" (120). The following section explains in

more depth how the limiting temporal assumptions of imperialist historicism pave the way for prejudice and violence.

III. Exilic Temporality and Kang's Critique of Imperialism

In hopes of circumventing the previously discussed empathy-limiting perceptual short-cuts that pervade America's instrumentalist culture,[x] Kang's finitude pathos carefully frames the exilic losses of Koreans displaced by Western and Japanese imperialism within the sophisticated modernist sensibility of Han's friend Tu-Wan Kim, whose preoccupation with finitude creates a deliberate pathos bridge between the temporal experience of exile and that of modernity. Although Han's idyllic imaginings of pre-modern Asia reflect the influence of Western imperialist historicism, Kang's adept use of the pathos of finitude also succeeds in highlighting the damaging effects of imperialist global capitalism on temporal diversity.

Extending Korean American exilic experience into a signifier for modernity's losses, Kang figures Kim as a human treasure-trove of rapidly disappearing historical and cultural pasts. To make the symbolism explicit, the narrator informs us that the lamp in Kim's apartment bears the inscription "The Exile, Man". By including the word "Man", Kang deliberately extends his Korean American character's grief over his geographical and cultural dislocations into a signifier for the general modern dislocations of human beings from nature, from their labor, and from a sense of shared traditions and values. Interestingly, philosopher of exile Maria Zambrano has drawn this parallel as well, claiming that:

> Modern man, as an exile, feels a terrible emptiness. While the emptiness of the exile is that of leaving one's country, the hole found in the heart of contemporary

> man is the lack of traditional values. These are values in which modern man can no longer believe, beliefs that come undone in his hands [...]. Both are beset by an absence, both feel that the ground beneath their feet has disappeared. In the case of the first, the ground is indeed in the literal sense his country; whereas for the other, the earth is in the figurative sense the foundations that has supported his beliefs. (Galdon 65)

This passage bespeaks the modern temporal paradox that rejection of the past ultimately disconnects one from the new present one endeavors to embrace. As Paul de Man explains: "modernity invests its trust in the power of the present moment as an origin, but discovers that, in severing itself from the past, it has at the same time severed itself from the present" (qtd in Schleifer, 5). Tu-Wan Kim is an exiled Korean intellectual, but when he says things such as, "I have given up one world and cannot accept another," his melancholy also expresses a larger modern sensibility that conceives of itself as both severed from the past and alienated from present and future (*EGW* 211). Kim further expresses these simultaneous alienations when he says to Han, "You and I came to the West to find a new beauty, a new life, a new religion. But is there any? Alas! we have come at the wrong time. It is too late. Too late to be saved by Dante's Beatrice, too late to love like Shakespeare in the sonnets, too late to be with Shelley a Plato-republican, too late even to be a Browning individualist or a Tennysonian sentimentalist. The next act is unnamed --" (*EGW* 166). Kim sees in each past era a coherent point of view, but declares it "too late" to return to the ideological certainties of the past.

Mourning the irrevocability of both Eastern and Western cultural losses, Kim's pathos bespeaks the cosmopolitan alienation of the modern exile: "What inconsistency is going back! Christianity! Buddhism! Confucianism! All are like milestones on a road that is past. How impossible for me to go back" (*EGW* 238). Again, in a similar moment a few pages later, Kim mourns, "Buddhism and I both died in the land that gave us birth

[...]. In the twentieth century on the cold hard pavement, worlds and centuries away, what of it? Here we are in the agony of the dreadful night, dream-haunted, solitary, as the babe that has never smiled, yet filled with the lonely experience of weary old age" (*EGW* 252). The weary babe Kim imagines symbolizes the ennui, alienation, and belatedness of a modernity which appears new but is really the worn and hollow phase of dying civilizations. Kim's comments on T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* express the terrible loss of meaning attending an era in which even death has fallen from its former status: "Death and the something that once was, greater than the death that is now" (*EGW* 238).

Kang's representation of Kim as a kind of portal into time travel, a link between past and future, also appears in Han's eventual grief over Kim's death, when Han mourns the loss of Kim's brain, "which bore in its fine involutions our ancient characters deeply and simply incised, familiar to me. And over their classic economy, their primitive chaste elegance, was scrawled the West's handwriting, in incoherent labyrinth, and seamy Hamlet design" (*EGW* 364). Given the rapid imperialist exportation of Western modernity, Han is one of the few who still finds Kim's hybridity at all legible: "To me -- to me almost alone -- a priceless and awful parchment was in him destroyed. Could it not have been deciphered, conveyed to the world?" (*EGW* 364). The fact that Kim's death marks a loss of ancient knowledge, combined with the fact that the significance of this death itself is lost on others, rings a familiar knell of modern finitude pathos.

Han's and Kim's pathos-bearing finitude rhetoric reiterates, but with a crucial difference, a widespread modernist cultural extinction narrative. The modern pathos of finitude can oversimplify and distort reality by nostalgically positing a timeless, mythic

past, now irrevocably and completely lost. For example, Han's lyrical descriptions of pre-modern Asia paint it as wholesome, beautiful, timeless, and mythical:

> Up to a short while ago, the other side of this earth was like the turned face of the moon to people of the West. But there once the men, the women and children, the plants, fruits, gardens and animals, all traveled together in forgotten leisure. They sang songs, made love and ate heartily, because there was always time. There life grew in manifold harmony, careless, free, simple and primitive. It had its curved lines, its brilliant colors, its haunting music, its own magic of being (*EGW* 4).

In the Asian villages of Han's memory, time is considered so plentiful that people "drift up and down aimlessly and leisurely!" (*EGW* 152). These lyrical figurations of pre-modern Asia register Kang's authentic grief over the very real homogenization of alterative temporalities, now "forgotten" by capitalist imperialism, while also indulging the familiar modernist fantasy of once-upon-a-time, utopian pasts.

One encounters a similar nostalgia in Han's description of some Himalayan jades in a Chinatown shop window: "Time could not wrinkle or stain such pieces and on them was always to be seen the dead jade carver's pains, intense as lovers' pains. Only an old, old culture could have produced such gems" (*EGW* 28). Seeing these gems and hearing the sound of a flute, Han muses further, "[T]he flute had a touch of magic sound, recalling memories of long ago, some ancient Cheung Chow night, some distant idyll, in a landscape weirdly different from that I saw before me now" (*EGW* 28). Han whimsically describes this imagined landscape as "a world of nature, green and gray harmonies, houses irregular and ever curved -- not straight -- a world where human feelings were patterned otherwise, the human heart more shy, Pan-toned, and clear" (*EGW* 28). Han imagines the gems as anachronisms from a "long ago", "distant", "weirdly different" "ancient" Asian culture, in which human feelings and hearts followed patterns unfamiliar to Western moderns.

Such characterizations of the past perhaps do more to highlight Han's modern historical consciousness than to represent the past. As historian Dipesh Chakrabarty explains, anachronism is the "hallmark" of modern consciousness in that "Historical evidence (the archive) is produced by our capacity to see something that is contemporaneous with us […] as a relic of another time or place. The person gifted with historical consciousness sees these objects as things that once belonged to their historical context and now exist in the observer's time as a 'bit' of that past" (238). Objectification of the long ago and far away is, of course, a familiar staple of both modernism, and reflects Han's intermittent experience of what Chakrabarty calls "the desire on the part of the subject of political modernity both to create the past as amenable to objectification and to be at the same time free of this object called 'history'" (244).

One reason to be cautious of nostalgic fantasies about the past and progressive promises of a better future is because, according to Justin Mueller, both are on the list of "particular structures of time […] such as eternal divine sanction, progressive civilizing teleology, revolutionary eschatology, or the restoration of a people's lost Golden Age" that are used to justify imperialist projects (429). As Slavoj Zizek has observed, "Colonization was never simply the imposition of Western values, the assimilation of the Oriental and other Others to European Sameness; it was always also the search for the lost spiritual innocence of *our own* civilization" (*Buddhism*). However, as Clark has pointed out, although Euro-American modernists who "looked to the East for self-discovery during the modernist period of alienation and estrangement often seemed innocuous enough […] They were nevertheless complicit in Orientalism […] insofar as

the East was represented as something static and utilitarian in their literary endeavors" (3).

This myth of an objectified and static Eastern past facilitated colonialism and imperialism, as Dipesh Chakrabarty makes clear in *Provincializing Europe*. Imperialism itself is premised on a European Enlightenment-based historicism that "made modernity or capitalism look not simply global but rather as something that became global over time, by originating in one place (Europe) and then spreading outside it" (19; 20). This conception of temporality, which "posited historical time as a measure of the cultural distance (at least in institutional development) that was assumed to exist between the West and the non-West", almost single-handedly "legitimated the idea of civilization" and relegated "the inhabitants of the colonies [… to] a place 'elsewhere' in the 'first in Europe and then elsewhere' structure of time" (22; 23; 25). The actual coevality and multiplicity of modernity are concealed by a historicist narrative positing Westernization (and colonization) as part of the "progress" needed for non-Western cultures to access modernity.

Although Kang's use of modernist finitude-pathos does invite similitude-based empathy, Kang knew the limits[xi] of this type of empathy (described in my introduction) and pushed his readers to expand their empathic concern. To this end, Kang makes clear that Korean exiles' colonization and cultural displacement intersects with and compounds their modernist grief, giving them a unique relationship to temporality. Indeed, while their multicultural perspective renders their temporal experiences more fluid and diverse, this multiplicity comes at a high cost, for the "curious detachment" it creates includes feelings of severe alienation. This alienation is most evident in Kim, as Han observes:

"The Oriental exile of Kim's generation is really a new character in history. His break with his kind is so profound, by reason of the abnormal expansion of his knowledge and experience; he is at the same time so outside the alien worlds he travels in, so isolated and apart, he gives a new interpretation of the solitariness of the human soul, its essential curiosity and dauntlessness" (*EGW* 218). Han's reasoning here is interesting, for he suggests that the extremity of Kim's double exile gives it symbolic as well as concrete meaning. Kim's compounded exile illustrates the conditions of modernity taken to their extreme, rendering him a super-alienated figure capable of making the destructiveness of those general conditions visible.

Meanwhile, Kang's finitude pathos deliberately clarifies the fact that his exiles' alienation has severe geopolitical causes and effects from which most of Kang's readers are protected. Indeed, the text makes clear that these Korean exiles' geographical and cultural displacement leaves them with a unique sense of rootless drifting through time and space. Han describes a continual feeling of being painfully suspended between two worlds, first between traditional Korea and colonized Japanese Korea, and eventually between Korea and the United States. As he explains, "The military position of Japan – intrenched in Korean in my own lifetime – forced me into a dilemma: Scylla and Charybdis. I was caught between – on the one hand, the heart-broken death of the old traditions irrevocably smashed not by me but by Japan (and yet I seemed to the elders to be conspiring with Japanese) – and on the other hand the zealous summary glibness of Japan, fast-Westernizing" (*EGW* 8). Hence, although Han expresses excitement at coming to New York City, the passage above suggests that he perceives his choice to have been somewhat forced. This fact, combined with the U.S. government's refusal to

grant Korean exiles citizenship, leaves Han with the sense of being a homeless drifter, not able to fully invest himself in the present time and place he occupies. In his words, he and the other exiles he meets "floated insecurely, in the rootless groping fashion of men hung between two worlds" (*EGW* 69).

Han also highlights the particularly acute levels of temporal monotony and alienation experienced by Korean exiles as a result of racial, linguistic, and cultural barriers in the U.S.. Even before he begins working, Han, in his "first endless and helpless period" in New York City, finds that time drags, and that "sunny hours were few, evenings seemed to be cold, dreary, long" (*EGW* 31; 30). While monotonous working conditions are also familiar to working class whites in the US, Han highlights that disenfranchised Korean exiles faced agonizing monotony in leisure hours as well:

> Summer was coming on, with one day like another for us all, at Hsun's, marking time, never inching out of desperate poverty […]. His place remained the meeting place of the flock of homesick birds flying back from their classrooms, or from the scorned and unwelcomed labor from house to house. They felt they were coming home. Yet there was no home. There was no comfortable chair to sit on, yet still they came as if they had to be somewhere. Perhaps all they got was only the sound of a tongue that had been heard since the day of the cradle until they left their native land. Day after day, late afternoons and evenings, prisoners of the eternal time, waiting, waiting… for what… the Judgment Day? (*EGW* 70).

Han's description communicates how Korean exiles experience a particularly severe combination of dislocation and entrapment, alienated not only from the past, but from the present and future as well. Even these exiles' limited time off is strained and comfortless, and time stretches ahead without any definite promise of improvement or escape.

Zambrano's ideas make clear that these characters' painful experience of time passing is genetically linked to their exilic identity. According to Zambrano, exilic loss produces nothing short of "a sort of dissolution of one's identity" – an experience Han

communicates when he wonders: “what now is to be our fate? being unable to go back to that previous existence, being unable to label ourselves in this new world...becoming lost within another lost world?” (Galdon 66). According to Zambrano, exile involves a significant sense of loss and abandonment that threatens identity (Galdon 66; 64). This feeling of abandonment, which she calls “walking outside of oneself”, derives from the fact that the exile “remains trapped outside of what is essentially him (the place that was his home and had made him human. […] Thus, the exile no longer has a place in the world, living in utter helplessness” (Galdon 64). This exilic loss is particularly painful because time renders obsolete the version of home that the exile left behind, leaving the exile with only a haunting memory: “The exile does not know where to belong, and he tries to project into reality the memory of the country which he left behind and cannot find it anywhere because it ceased to exist when he left” (Galdon 64).

Han’s exilic feelings of homelessness take on cosmic proportions, as he imagines himself positioned outside of the earth itself. Long aware that traditional Korea is rapidly disappearing, Han articulates a vantage point above the planet: “I know that as I grew up, I saw myself placed on a shivering pinnacle […]. I felt I was looking on death, the death of an ancient planet, a spiritual planet that had been my fathers’ home” (*EGW* 4). Even after arriving in New York, Han feels himself alien “on soil strange as Mars, seeking roots, roots for an exile’s soul” (*EGW* 4). Han’s exilic sense of loss confuses his experience of his own human identity, a confusion he expresses in terms of time. He ponders, “My own life in actual books still extant in my Korean village was traced far back in this way to ancestors with the bodies of men and heads of cows. This lifetime, threaded to theirs over the mellow-gold distances of time, can it be the same which now

sees New York City? -- And I ask myself, did I fall from a different star?" (*EGW* 4). Han's experiences of time in Korea and in New York differ so markedly that they feel irreconcilable, leaving him feeling like he belongs to neither.

Although Han claims that his sense of exile allegedly wanes after being in the U.S. for years, a closer look at such claims unravels them. As Sunyoung Lee explains, the first title Kang considered before writing the book was "Death of an Exile", perhaps to describe the eventual end of Han's exile; however, it is just as possible that the title referred to Kim's tragic end (380). On the level of the plot, Han's exile does not seem to have a definitive endpoint. Consider Han's perception of his state of belonging by the end of the narrative:

> My exile seems as if ended. But I have never gone back. The opportunity has not come. My father's family is all dead or scattered. My own beyond-time, time traveling ties have been made on American soil. There are, besides, political difficulties besetting the Korean who returns to the native shores. Perhaps spiritually, it would be difficult to return wholeheartedly, and I would be there as an exile from America. The soul has become molded to the Western pattern, the whole man has become softened somewhat by the luxuries of Western living (*EGW* 367-68).

Han's use of the tentative verb "seems" creates uncertainty of meaning, leaving readers wondering whether his exile has, in fact, really ended. Additionally, even as he nominally claims to have achieved belonging in the United States, each of the several distinct reasons he lists for staying in the U.S. illuminates some dimension of his exile. His first reason, that "the opportunity has not come", may suggest that his toils in the land of opportunity have not afforded him sufficient resources to cover the expense and time of real travel. Furthermore, the fact that his father's family has died or scattered echoes Zambrano's point that the exile loses his homeland as soon as he leaves, as the homeland becomes a different place while he is away. Han's third reason, the confusing,

paradoxical claim that his "beyond-time, time traveling ties have been made on American soil", disrupts itself by raising the question of how one possibly could be beyond time, traveling through time, and tied to a place at the same time. The critical reader must question here whether Han really feels a sense of belonging. Han's fourth reason, an allusion to political difficulties that would attend a returning Korean exile, further adds to the impression that his exilic status persists.

The above tension, between Han's nominative claims of belonging and the words and phrases which reveal his continual exclusion, is one of many instances in which the narrative bears pathos, inviting readers to share (to a small degree) in the characters' struggle to understand by confronting us with paradoxical, mixed systems of temporal imagery. As the remainder of this chapter explains, this struggle for understanding not only invites greater empathic understanding of the characters' painful navigation of multiple, unstable meanings, but also exercises the faculties of mind required for a cognitively-based empathy not dependent on preexisting empathic sentiments.

IV. Sympathetic Reason as Antidote to Instrumentalist Reason

While pathos requires the communication of some shared meaning, the experience of *attempting* to understand and communicate in the face of unstable meaning also constitutes a form of shared meaning. Indeed, fragmentation and lost meaning become their own form of meaning in modernity, eliciting a struggle to understand shared by many modern people. This shared struggle potentially transcends social differences and extends empathic response beyond similitude by encouraging the sophisticated forms of cognition involved in sympathetic reasoning. For these reasons, Younghill Kang uses

paradoxical temporal imagery that invites the reflection and cognitive effort ultimately necessary for his largely American audience to be able to meaningful receive and respond to his critiques.

The experience of struggle is a widely shared one, capable of inviting similitude-based empathy. William James used the shared experience of struggle as ground for a notion of universal human dignity inclusive of human diversity and encouraged reflection on this shared experience as a means of expanding empathic concern. James asks his readers to reflect on "the common fact that here we are, a countless multitude of vessels of life, each of us pent in to peculiar difficulties, with which we must severally struggle by using whatever of fortitude and goodness we can summon up" (*Writings,* 650). According to James, people of the upper classes lack sympathy, understanding, and respect for poorer people because the ideals of the poor are not always visible to other classes. However, as James points out, specific ideals do not determine one's human dignity, since "ideals are relative to the lives that entertain them. To keep out of the gutter is for us here no part of consciousness at all, yet for many of our brethren it is the most legitimately engrossing of ideals" (*Writings,* 656). As Sorrell explains, according to James, "[t]he point is not which ideals one has, but that one existentially struggles, endures, and suffers in realizing them. Every person is capable of this, which calls for a cautious and tolerant attitude. Where manifest, it invites admiration and further demands our respect, or even 'grudging recognition' when we don't identify with them (or their pursuits)" (Sorrell 78). As James makes clear, similarity of identities or values will not ensure expanded empathic concern, while recognition of the struggle itself may.

Aesthetics scholar Alan Singer makes a distinct but related argument that the cognitive struggle to understand constitutes a potentially powerful basis for empathy. As Singer explains, "if history and literature must be understood […] as an empathic rapport between past and present, between one mind and another, then this rapport is like any protocol of reason giving. It presupposes an empathic reserve of rational intent: the shared goal of mutual intelligibility – even where there is no presumption of mutual affection" ("Literature is History", 67). Both James and Singer highlight the important insight that if we premise our empathic concern on similarities of circumstance, identity, or values, our empathy will remain sorely limited. According to both Singer and James, taking the time to reflect proves crucial to the cultivation and expansion of one's empathic faculties. Celebrating the fact that confusing texts ask us to make time – to employ the "unique temporality that close attention to composition entails" – Singer posits confrontations with textual complexity and ambiguity as containing "reason-giving resources" which can "render[…] differences intelligible as features of an abiding creative process" ("Literature is History", 60).

It is important to understand that Singer's understanding of reason differs from the instrumental reason critiqued by Zambrano, James, Kang, and others. At first brush, Singer's self-acknowledged assumption that "what history and literature have most urgently in common is the demand each makes that all circumstances of life yield to means of human understanding" might be dismissed as Western absolutist rationalism, which "seeks to extend the principles of reason to reality as a whole" and to make "reality be clear to thought, that reality and reason show total equivalence to each other, like two sides of a pane of glass" (Singer, "Literature is History", 65; Galdon 63). However,

Singer rejects the notion that reality can be reduced in this way, and emphasizes instead the mind's frustrated struggle to understand as a ground for cultivating creativity and empathy. He explains, "The act of reading illuminates a capacity for creativity manifested in the modifications of mind that the formal constraints of the text promulgate. […] the compositional density of the literary event depends upon the author's/reader's formulations and reformulations of a conceptual substance that most vitally sustains its meaningfulness in its elaboration" ("Literature is History", 62-63). Singer does not see historical or literary events as reducible to a few dominant forms of meaning, but rather, as occasions for the struggle for meaning itself, a struggle which can generate empathy. Summarizing Steven Turner's understanding of empathy, Singer explains that "empathy is instantiated wherever our capacity for making things intelligible is challenged", and that such challenges constitute "an occasion for reasoning differentially with respect to the apparent irrationality of the text" ("Literature is History", 72).

While access to and taste for experimental artistic forms tend to be determined by class and education, Singer's general point that the struggle (rather than the ability) to understand constitutes a potential ground for connection across such difference remains salient, and correlates with previously discussed research on the importance of the temporal process of cognition to genuine empathy. Recall, from my introduction, Daniel Batson's observation that empathy requires emotional regulation to transcend mere "emotional contagion or emotional distress" (qtd. in Sorrell 73). Recall also that perspective-taking is "balanced toward higher, slower cognitive function instead of lower, faster automatic response in order to capture a more accurate grasp of the other's point of view" (Sorrell 73; 71). Taken together, these findings lend correlational support

to Singer's argument that the exercise and development of cognitive powers can develop empathic capacity.

The cognitive struggle to understand literary complexity resists homogenizing imperial temporality both by inviting time-consuming reflection that resists rapid consumption of the text and by fostering diverse temporal experiences. As Russell West-Pavlov explains, encounters with literature immerse the reader into "the dynamic processuality of immanent temporalities" (11). In consonance with Singer's distinction between textual literariness and textual historicism, West-Pavlov argues that "the text in its dynamic interaction with critic and reader is understood as a generative material process, not an inert artefact. As a creative process, the text forges new relationships between human and non-human actors, establishing connectivities whose material effects make up the future vector of time" (11). These dynamics are discernable in *East Goes West*, when Kang uses irreconcilable temporal conceptions from differing cultures to evoke temporal paradoxes and thereby invite a durational, cognitive struggle that compliments the text's critique of instrumental capitalist imperialism.

The first temporal paradox introduced in the text is the tension between the linear concept of time passing and the reality that forms of matter, rather than time, are what actually move and change. Opening with a lyrical passage that introduces this paradox, the narrator explains that, "Time never passes. We say that it does, as long as we have a clock to calculate it for us. The two hands go, the iron tongue tells hours, we sense the experience of our own duration… we are illusioned. It is not time that passes, but ourselves" (*EGW* 3). Kyhan Lee minimizes the significance of this opening frame, dismissing it as merely a way "[t]o maintain the novel's thematic integrity", since six

years have elapsed since he wrote *EGW*'s prequel, *The Grass Roof*" (70). However, as I have illustrated, the juxtaposition of temporal conceptions continues throughout the narrative and is central to its political project.

The opening passage continues with further elaboration of the notion that time is largely a human construct, a conceptual frame we have placed around life itself: "Time is always there… as long as there is life to use it. Only if no life existed, there would be no time. Time was because life was… as it is the mortal life to travel over the immortal time" (*EGW* 3). However, even as he tells us that time is an illusion, Han brings time to life in imagination and language, figuring it as an "immortal", traversable space, a kind of backdrop over which life flies like a bird "on and on". These conflicting imagery systems blend Han's "Taoistic belief in the continuity of living and of time" – which posits time and life as inseparable and cyclical – with a Newtonian-based, Enlightenment-era conception of time as "always and everywhere the same", a more neutral "container of events that in no way affects or is affected by the events that make up its 'content'" (*EGW* 5; Schliefer 37). Time becomes a vast, uniform space that transcends the human, yet also a human illusion imposed on the constantly cycling transformation of matter: "In the perpetual merry-go-round of the universe, suns, moons, planets, stars, the whole body of all ten thousand things shift with the shifting space and the eternal time that Orpheus asserted was in the beginning, but had itself no beginning" (*EGW* 4). While the inconsistencies in these representations of time may be mistaken for evidence of the aesthetic shortcomings often attributed to *East Goes West*, the tension between time as concept and time as experience invites productive reflection in readers as they wrestle with Kang's paradox.

Kang often juxtaposes Eastern and Western time conceptions to reveal that time is both a constructed human concept and an experience that feels real. A poem by Su Tung P'o, translated by the narrator's friend Kim, captures most explicitly this paradox that time is at once illusory and real, and life at once permanent and impermanent, depending on the perspective from which one looks. In the poem, a friend says to the poet, "We pass through this life like two gnats in a husk of millet on a boundless ocean. I grieve that life is but a moment in time, and envy the endless current of the Great River…" (*EGW* 237). P'o replies,

> Do you understand the water and the moon? The former passes by, but has never gone. The latter waxes and wanes but does not really increase or diminish. For, if we regard this question as one of impermanence, then the universe cannot last for a twinkling of an eye. If, on the other hand, we consider it from the aspect of permanence, then you and I, together with all matter, are imperishable. Why, then, this yearning? (*EGW* 237)

P'o suggests that if one looks at the entire scope of the universe, one can see that while particular forms do not stay in the same shape, they do not really "die" either, but rather, are recycled into other forms. This transformation occurs on a cellular level every moment, which means that the forms of familiar things change constantly, even as they appear (somewhat) constant to the human eye. Meanwhile, the apparent inconstancies brought by loss and death are also an illusion, for matter is merely changing form, rather than disappearing. In this sense, things are both radically impermanent and radically permanent. P'o's question, "Why, then, this yearning?" points to the fact that challenges to conventional human understandings of time are challenges to human suffering itself, as suffering results from the desire to make pleasant experiences last, to avoid or end unpleasant experiences, and to control time and life thereby.

While this paradox may seem largely existential in the context of P'o's poem, whether a culture conceives of time as limited or not has far-reaching political implications as well, and Kang's use of P'o's poem is part of the text's larger complex, subtle, and brilliant illustration of several overlapping causalities – of how capitalism limits time, how limited time limits time for reflection, how limited time for reflection limits empathy, and how limited empathy limits justice. As my previous sections have demonstrated, the commodification of time under capitalism not only exacerbates the feeling that time is limited, but also leads to a related devaluing of the activities and faculties of mind necessary for the expansion of empathic concern that motivates social justice efforts.

Significantly, even as Han, in a reflective moment towards the end of his narrative, claims a spiritual, soul-level assimilation to "the Western pattern" and the "luxuries of Western living", a significant part of the dream sequence that concludes his narrative reinforces the text's critique of Western capitalist imperialism and instrumental reason (*EGW* 368). Han relates a dream of climbing a tree and encountering a bridge back to a mythical and rustic Asian "paradise of wild and flowery magic, with mountains and waterfalls and little gushing streams on which as in an old Chinese landscape could be discerned the scholars with their brush-pens or tranquil fishing rods" (*EGW* 368). As he begins to cross the bridge, however, symbols of American prestige and prosperity – his "money and keys, contracts and business letters" – fall from his pockets "all in a moment" (*EGW* 368). Overcome with "the urgency of finding the car key, of recovering all the money", he turns away, both from the aesthetic beauty of the scene and from his beckoning, childhood friends, and descends the tree (*EGW* 368). Han's pursuit of his

dropped valuables leads him directly "down the steps into a dark and cryptlike cellar [...] under the pavements of a vast city", where he encounters the deplorable consequences of American capitalist society – an underclass of "frightened-looking Negroes" who are about to be attacked by a racist mob of whites (*EGW* 369). Kang reminds us none-too-subtly here that American capitalism was built on the backs of American slaves, and that the instrumental thinking which informed and justified that system survives into the 20th century, manifesting in a profound and often actively malignant lack of empathy for disadvantaged groups.

However, this clear political message is complicated in the text's final lines which, paradoxically as ever, ask the reader to struggle between two irreconcilable understandings of Han's dream of death-by-fire. Just as the angry mob is beginning to torch the cellar, Han wakes:

> I awoke like the phoenix out of a burst of flames. I have remembered this dream, because, according to Oriental interpretation, it is a dream of good omen. To be killed in a dream means success, and in particular death by fire augurs good fortune. This is supposed to be so, because death symbolizes in Buddhistic philosophy growth and rebirth and a happier reincarnation. (*EGW* 369)

Han's "Oriental interpretation" of these murderous flames seems wildly decontextualized and inappropriate, yet his tentative language – evident when he declares that "This is supposed to be so" – invites readers to doubt that this dream is really an omen of good fortune for a member of a racial minority living in a society capable of the mob scene in his dream.

Some have interpreted Kang's ending negatively, as evidence of racialized Americans' constant "danger of falling down" at the hands of "outside forces" or of a fall that has already happened – what Walter Lew sees as Han's fall into "a life of obsessive

materialism and the loss of [his] psychic relationship with Korea" (Szmanko 117; Lew 182). Meanwhile, others read Kang's ending somewhat more positively as signifying the death of Han's romantic soul and his new readiness to "fac[e] life in the real sense, pragmatically", having realized that "the spiritual home he had come to America to find would by necessity be a place of his own making, not an impossible ideal" (*EGW* 65; SY Lee 383). While the former reading is more convincing on the level of the plot, my attention to Kang's use of paradox shows that Han's perplexing dream interpretation is also an invitation for readers to share in Han's pathos-bearing struggle for meaning between the seemingly unbridgeable East-West gap conjured by his narrative. Indeed, in this final passage, Kang brings to a head the tension between the Buddhist conception of time's passage – as a series of cyclical transformations in form – and Western conceptions of temporality as tragically defined and limited by definitive death. By emphasizing the violent and unjust nature of the deaths featured in Han's dream, Kang challenges what some may see as an apolitical Buddhist view of death as illusory. Indeed, Han's dream suggests that death by racist mass murder is a terrible way to die, regardless of whether one is reincarnated to a better life as a result. However, Han, by ending his narrative with the dissonance of perspectives that characterizes it throughout, suspends his readers between two ways of conceiving of life and death, asking them to take the time to engage their cognitive capacities and thereby expand their empathic concern beyond the limiting parameters of shared value, identity, or experience.

CHAPTER 3

RECONSIDERING PATHOS AND IDEALISM IN *AMERICA IS IN THE HEART*: CARLOS BULOSAN'S MICROPOLITICAL CRITIQUE OF CAPITALIST LIBERALISM

My critical reading of Kang's use of temporality pathos in *East Goes West* has revealed the corruption and danger inherent in many nostalgic fantasies about the past. As Dipesh Chakrabarty demonstrates, the myth of an objectified and static Eastern past facilitated colonialism and imperialism in that it was used to "legitimate[] the idea of civilization" and relegate[] "the inhabitants of the colonies [… to] a place "elsewhere" in the "first in Europe and then elsewhere" structure of time" (22; 23; 25). The actual coevality and multiplicity of modernity are concealed by a historicist narrative positing Westernization (and colonization) as part of the "progress" needed for non-Western cultures to access modernity. Chapter three takes up a relatedly corrupt temporality narrative – liberalism's "progressive civilizing teleology", which promises of a better future and functions to justify or mask the imperialist destruction (Mueller 429). As I shall demonstrate, Bulosan's use of the pathos of idealism in *America is in the Heart* evokes and interrogates this false future.

The first major narrative to detail Filipino experience in the United States, *America is in the Heart: A Personal History* (1946), by Carlos Bulosan (1913-1956), is estimated by Bulosan's friend Morantte to be approximately 30% autobiography, 40% Filipino immigrant case history, and 30% fiction (31). First published in 1946, *AIH* initially gained attention for its allegedly "pro-democratic, pro-American" stance, whereas those who rediscovered the text in the 1970s gave more attention to the "plethora of textual events that exemplify racism" which predominate in the text (Alquizola and

Hirabayashi). The first section of *AIH* describes protagonist-narrator Allos's often lyrically remembered childhood years in the Philippines, where Bulosan himself was born in 1913, and where his peasant farmer family was exploited by a colonialism-based absentee landlord system, while the remaining majority of *AIH* describes Allos's adult years in the United States, where Bulosan himself migrated in 1930, and where Allos and his brothers Marcario and Amado encounter unbelievable racism, poverty, and labor exploitation in northwestern fisheries, California fields, and other rural locales in the American West. The American Federation of Labor's 1928 proposal to exclude Filipinos offers historical evidence of a widespread anti-Filipino movement which posited the *Pinoy* (Filipino emigres) as drunks, savages, and sexual predators. Labor competition during the Great Depression further exacerbated the anti-Filipino racism and violence ubiquitous to Allos's American experience.

However, against a bleak background of violence, starvation, and despair, Allos's persistent idealism and heroic resistance to these harsh conditions sparkle all the more brightly. With the help of Filipino American friends and mentors, as well as a series of idealized white women who bring him books and care for him, Allos manages to educate himself through reading, writing, and participation in the labor movement. Euphoric over any sense of personal or political progress, Allos frequently declares victory over his adversity, despite being repeatedly crushed again by hunger, racist persecution, worsening tuberculosis, and other bitter realities of Filipino life in America. Perhaps partly as a means of coping with these unrelenting brutalities, Allos passionately and persistently devotes himself to aesthetic, romantic, and political ideals described with

mystical and cosmic or cyclical and nature-based imagery that transcends his own harsh time and space.

Bulosan's pathos of idealism invites similitude-based empathy from modern readers through its similarity to liberalism's fantasies of a mythic future free of suffering. Meanwhile, Bulosan's pathos of idealism pushes empathic concern beyond the limits of similitude by highlighting how Allos's social location engenders his unique terror of time (he characterizes "the years" of his life as pursuing and entrapping predators) and his related urgency to birth a more inclusive democracy. My study of Bulosan's modern temporal pathos of idealism argues that *AIH* exposes liberalism as an ideology which advertises a false future by commodifying both suffering and temporality, thereby replicating capitalist instrumentality while claiming to restrain it. I argue that *AIH* resists the pacifying reductionism of liberalism, partly by highlighting the active meaning-making efforts of Bulosan's suffering narrator, and partly by inviting readers to actively construct meaning out of the text's circular and bi-vocal narrative.

Recall from my introduction that what distinguishes pathos-bearing from pathetic suffering is the former's active engagement with the suffering at hand, often via characters' and/or readers' efforts to learn. This process elicits a deeper, more emotionally transformative experience than the often superficial, ephemeral pity elicited by sentimental, pathetic representations. Readers of pathos-bearing literature take away the insight that pain, even when paralyzing and unjust, can be converted into suffering through narratively-based meaning. In other words, within the very process of suffering, which involves interior reflection on events, actions, and emotional responses to those

events, lies the formula for both artistic creation and the potentially liberating processes of social and individual change.

Bulosan invites this discovery process by featuring a character who uses his excruciating suffering as a means of learning and fueling his efforts to create a better world. Indeed, Allos's pathos, like that of Kang's and Okada's characters as well, resembles what Robert Buch refers to as "the pathos of resistance":

> The "pathos" of resistance is not just the suffering of the resistance but also its "passionate" perseverance, its persistence. It is a persistence not only in the face of the tremendous amount of suffering it has incurred in its course, but one that appears to draw its strength precisely from this strange capital. This is the ambiguity of the pathos of resistance and hence of the pathos that sustains and animates the novel itself. ("Pathos of Resistance", 117)

Part of what makes Allos's narrative so pathos-bearing is its continual juxtaposition of Allos's tremendous suffering with his effort to use that suffering as fuel for his political and creative efforts. As Buch explains, the pathos of resistance involves an element of self-possession over one's pain:

> It is the appeal of compassion triggered by the sight of suffering but also of awe in light of the self-possession on the part of those struck by misfortune. For as much as páthos stands for the irrepressible, spontaneous reaction in the face of suffering, by articulating their pain, the dramatis personae must have managed to remove themselves, at least somewhat, from the experience that threatens to overwhelm them. In this respect, páthos also implies the distance and control somebody is able to maintain over his or her pain. (*Pathos of the Real* 20)

Allos's persistent idealism invites this kind of pathos, as he actively processes his painful experiences into a narrative that articulates oppressions which violate and necessitate ideals of democracy, equality, and freedom. I argue that the narrative elicits this pathos via a bi-vocal, dialectical narrative that interrogates liberal idealism by juxtaposing its

commodification of suffering and future-premised idealism with ideals generated directly from the lived experiences of sufferers actively processing their suffering.

Bulosan's subtitle, "a personal history," is apt, in that when the narrator recalls his life, he frequently switches between an emotional, personal voice which re-immerses itself in the remembered present, and a more explicitly retrospective analysis that contextualizes remembered events within a larger Filipino history. By pursing both the novelist's aim of revealing emotionality of character *and* the historian's aim of portraying a whole person in his/her historical context,[xii] Bulosan creates a pathos-bearing bridge between private and public meaning. However, many critics have found the text's double-voicedness unsettling, primarily because the personal voice, which is prone to naive confusion, effusive idealism, and delusional hope, periodically propounds American exceptionalism and a related ideal of patriotic self-sacrifice that jars against the historical voice's critique of 20th century American racism. This dissonance explains the first wave of *AIH* scholarship, much of which "valu[ed] the narrative's insistent critique of labor exploitation and racism, while questioning its seeming 'affirmation' of America in the concluding pages" (Ponce 51). Indeed, as recently as 1995, Reiko Sugisawa dismisses the text's bi-vocal narration as evidence that "the book was rewritten in order to be accepted by white readers for the sake of publication" (3).

However, more recent, postcolonial and transnational readings trace the personal voice's rapturous idealism back to Filipino literary tropes, genres and aesthetic conventions, with Reynaldo Ileto discerning the *payson* of Christ trope, Martin Ponce noting popular "lyrically-rendered pastoral descriptions of the homeland" (55), and E. San Juan, Jr. reading the novel's formulaic closure as a concession (albeit an ironic one)

to the romantic conventions expected by Bulosan's desired Filipino readership ("Reclaiming", 451). Marilyn Alquizola also sees irony in the text: "a probing of *America*'s structure will disclose an ironic counterpointing of voices or masks, with numerous didactic passages and exempla critical of the system undercutting the naïve professions of faith" (qtd. in San Juan, *Philippine Temptation*, 119).

My analysis of the representation and functioning of temporality in *AIH* reframes the alleged irony of the text's counterpointing voices as a dialectic between public and private meaning, designed to elicit and expand readerly pathos. My temporal lens reveals that in addition to the more obvious dialectic between personal and historical voices, the narrator's personal voice proves dialectical in and of itself, for while this voice's euphoric pathos of idealism appears tainted by facile liberal idealism, its subjective temporality emphasizes the living, durational reality of suffering and time in ways that resist both liberalism's abstract reduction of suffering to injury and capitalism's related reduction of time to an abstract, objective measure. This subtler dialectic complicates the larger, and undermines existing scholarship's privileging of the historian voice as the more subversive of the two.

Although the historian voice's macropolitical account of race, class, and cultural exploitation provides some context for the narrator's emotional vicissitudes, some phenomena – including the narrator's intense fear of time's limits and his intense euphoria over realms seemingly beyond those limits – remain opaque until one understands that Bulosan is using temporal experience to register the costs of capitalist imperialist liberalism to human meaning. For example, as I shall demonstrate, the narrator's intense fear of time derives from the ways that these systems hamper the

meaning-making enabled by the durational processes of suffering and time, while his euphoria results from temporarily escaping these restrictions, via his imagination. Although these pathos passages expressing fear of time – or euphoria over the transcendence of it – are often skipped over or dismissed in *AIH* scholarship, they are crucial to a micropolitical critique which strikes at the very heart of the systems devastating the narrator's life. My analysis aligns Bulosan's political gesture with those of contemporary thinkers such as Dipesh Chakrabarty, Asma Abbas, Antonio Negri, Gilles Deleuze, and others who extend the radical tradition of Marx in their efforts to recuperate suffering, temporality, and revolution as living, durational experiences in the present moment, rather than abstract, commodifiable concepts and superficial pathae relegated to the past or future of Western liberalism's linear temporality.

1. Literature Review:

Perhaps because of the seeming dissonance in political awareness between the text's two voices, scholarly assessments of *AIH*'s political import differ considerably. Early critics of *AIH*, expecting assimilationist "success stories" from immigrant writers, often took Bulosan's subtitle, "a personal history", at face value, treating the text as autobiography and overlooking its deeper countercurrents (Sonza 84). Even some scholarship as late as the 1980s continued this trend, with Elaine Kim's *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context* (1982) calling *AIH* "part of that inclusive and characteristic Asian American genre of autobiography or personal history dedicated to the task of promoting good will and understanding" (47). If

one believes the narrator's frequent claims of progress over the injustice, rage, and despair that plague him recurrently throughout the narrative, one can read *AIH* as a kind of American success story – an extraordinary individual's journey up and out of ignorance, poverty, oppression, and violence, and toward historical and aesthetic knowledge of self and world, by means of self-education, political struggle, and creative writing. Scholars who read the text as a *kunstlerroman* or *bildungsroman* also tend to prioritize the text's progress narrative over the deep sense of failure and frustration that pervades *AIH*[xiii]

However, others recognize that many features of *AIH* resist the bildungsroman trajectory. As Sau-ling Wong points out, "whatever redeeming bildungsroman features the author advances in the form of announced resolutions," are ultimately "[cast]into doubt" by the text's "mind-numbing proliferation of place names in parts two to four" (qtd. in Ponce 72). For Wong, the text does *not* follow "a linear *bildungsroman* trajectory from innocence to experience, ignorance to enlightenment, silence to voice" (ibid). Lisa Lowe also takes issue with those who read the text as *bildungsroman* because such a reading creates "a telos of development that closes off the most interesting conflicts and indeterminacies of the text", thereby "reduc[ing] the novel to an approximation, a low-rate mimicry of a nineteenth-century European genre" (45). Lowe asserts that we should instead privilege the "novel's discontinuities with the genre" (45). Scholars like Gabriel Jose Gonzales and Joseph Keith follow Lowe's suggestion by attending to the ways that Bulosan adapts the bildungsroman genre, and while Gonzales and Keith still posit a progress narrative of sorts, their analyses do acknowledge the text's counter-cultural elements.[xiv]

Aside from this bildungsroman debate, much post-1950s scholarship on *AIH* treats the text as autobiographical history and/or neglects discussion of genre as such. As Martin Ponce has pointed out, most Bulosan scholars understandably value the text primarily as an accurate record of the oppressive conditions against which Filipinos struggled during the 1920s-1940s as peasants in the colonized Philippines and as "national wards" in the United States (51). Indeed, unlike other mid-century autobiographies which follow the "Asian-American 'success-story' tradition" (Kindemann 260), *AIH* is now recognized by San Juan Jr. and others as offering a strident socialist, anti-imperialist, and anti-racist critique of hypocrisy and oppression in America, the Philippines, and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, postcolonial scholars work against depictions of Bulosan as primarily an immigrant writer negotiating his position in the mainland American scene, positioning him instead as an exilic, diasporic figure whose writing responded to the violent forces of imperialism in the Philippines.[xv] San Juan, Jr., the most vocal and prolific of these scholars, argues "for a literature of exile and emergence rather than a literature of immigration and settlement whereby life in the US serves as the space for displacement, suspension, and perspective" ("Reclaiming", 449). San Juan asks that "the schematic periodizing of Allos's itinerary as an exiled native endeavoring some kind of homecoming be considered as a heuristic departure for the project of decentering the multiethnic archive and a metropole-centered, hegemonic criticism" ("Internationalizing", 136). San Juan is quite candid here about his desire to use *AIH* as a means of redistributing power, academic and otherwise. However, while his approach is palatable politically, it leads him to suppress aspects of *AIH* and to prefer Bulosan's more

unequivocal political writings over the problematic *AIH*. As Sue-Im Lee has pointed out, San Juan's or Marilyn C. Alquizola's understanding of Allos's pro-American rhetoric as instances of intentional dramatic irony largely "relies on Bulosan's biographical details and political commitments", rather than on the text itself ("It's Badly Done", 202).

It is because of the field's general commitment to the text's autobiographical and historical realism[xvi] (a commitment shared by most of the camps described above), that scholarly debate over both the aesthetics and the politics of *AIH* often circles around the two paradoxical features that most threaten to disrupt the text's realism: the dissonance between the "childlike" personal voice and the "almost academic" historian voice, and the conflict between the narrator's idealizing, patriotic rhetoric and the "repetitive" or "circular" plot that catalogues a litany of injustices (Gonzales 213). As I have explained above, scholars have often handled these dissonances by dismissing the personal voice's seeming American patriotism and claims of progress as either deliberately assimilationist or intentionally ironic.

However, there are still others who deem the text's inconsistencies accidental flaws, a result of poor or hasty writing. Formalist critic Edilberto K. Tiempo, perhaps the loudest in the latter camp, lists a host of what he interprets as accidental inaccuracies and distortions and excoriates Bulosan's writing as "offensive melodrama" characterized by "lack of restraint", "absence of balance and symmetry and refinement", and "gooey sentimentalism" (36). However, Tiempo's critique makes the same mistake as those who read the text as a failed *bildungsroman* simply because it does not meet the conventional expectations of the genre: Tiempo mistakenly equates the text's coherence or consistency with its effectiveness. Sue-Im Lee calls this equation into question as she outlines a new

criterion for evaluating texts like Bulosan's *AIH* and Richard Wright's *Native Son*. Lee argues that "the excellence of a work lies in its ability to generate its own terms of craft", and that the distance between Allos's "experiencing self" and his "narrating self" "is intentionally crafted to highlight the naiveté of the narrating self" and thereby "undermine the optimism, hope, and desire that the protagonist cultivates in his vision of America" (203).

I agree with Lee that Bulosan deliberately crafted the dissonance between the narrator's experiencing and narrating selves (which I am calling his personal and historical voices); however, my analysis of temporality in *AIH* suggests that the apparent irony between these voices is merely a bi-product of a larger dialectic between the text's macropolitical analysis of history and its micropolitical attention to lived experience in time. While I am not the first to note the dialectical nature of Bulosan's double-voiced narrative[xvii], my unique understanding of the narrative's dialectic as an ongoing tension between contrasting relationships to time allows me to bring into view the text's micropolitical critique of how liberalism's complicity with imperialism and capitalism impoverishes human experiences of suffering and temporality.

2. Bulosan's Critique of Western Liberalism's Imperialist Temporality

Examining the text through the lens of temporality reveals an illuminating difference between the text's two voices: whereas the narrator's historical voice characterizes time and history as public, linear, objective phenomena measurable by clocks, calendars, and chronological events, the personal voice experiences time as a subjective, durational process within Allos's mind and body. It is through this difference

that the text delivers its first critique of Western liberalism, in revealing the ideology's evidently imperialist time conceptions. Disrupting the usual resistance/assimilation binary applied to these voices, I contend that the allegedly radical, historian voice is tainted by the imperialist assumptions of Western liberalism, while the seemingly naïve, liberal, personal voice contributes to a previously overlooked critique of that liberalism. Taken together, these insights reveal an unrecognized complexity in the communication between public and private meaning that is essential to pathos in *AIH*.

The historian voice seems at first to be the more trustworthy, given its educated, analytical, cause-and-effect account of history as a drama of class struggle. Describing the disastrous modern history of the Philippines, this voice explains how "peasants were the victims of large corporations and absentee landlords", and how "obscure men with ample education exploited it to their own advantage, thus slowly but inevitably plunging the nation into a great economic catastrophe that […] obfuscated the people's resurgence toward a broad national unity" (5; 23). However, even as the historian voice clearly outlines a familiar political, chronological, and causal chain of historical events, the voice's rhetoric reveals that he has internalized 19th century liberalism's imperialist understanding of history and temporality. This rhetoric manifests when he tells his reader, "Popular education was spreading throughout the archipelago and this opened up new opportunities. It was a new and democratic system brought by the American government into the Philippines, and *a nation hitherto illiterate and backward was beginning to awaken*" [italics mine] (14). In a similar moment, later in the narrative, the narrator aspires to "go back to the Philippines with a torch of enlightenment" and to "help liberate the peasantry from ignorance and poverty" (228). While the narrator's intentions

seem noble, the liberal assumptions about temporality, suffering, and progress evident in his rhetoric are dangerous[xviii] in ways made familiar by postcolonialism's critiques of Western modernity's linear, progressive understanding of time and history. (Postcolonial thinkers excoriate this time conception's privileging of the future over the past and present, its reductive simplicity, and its enabling of global capitalism, racism, and imperialism.[xix] Of these critiques, 19th century liberalism's gullible faith in the future[xx] is particularly relevant for this chapter, and will be discussed at more length later).

Fascinatingly, the narrator attempts to impose a linear progress narrative on his personal history as well, and although the plot frequently undermines his claims of progress, his persistence itself bears pathos, as he struggles to make sense of what befalls him. When recounting his story, Allos frequently recalls moments experienced as beginnings, endings, and turning points – moments that marked a clean transition from a confused, past self and an enlightened, future self. In such moments, he asserts that his struggle is easing and that a new day is dawning, as when he speaks of his newfound writing powers: "[…] I knew surely that I had become a new man. I could fight the world now with my mind, not merely with my hands" (225). In such moments, he declares the past behind him, saying, "I felt that it was the end of another period of my life. […] It was the end of a strange flight" (180).

However, the narrator's assertions of progress over time are frequently disrupted by recollections of the terrifying monotony and chaos that characterize temporal experience under oppressive circumstances. Dislocated from his past and precluded from a better future, he frequently experiences time as a terrifying present in which "Every dawn" feels like "the opening of a cavern of starvation and exile [...]. And every hour [...]

a blow against the senses, dulling all impulses toward decency" (137). Even after undergoing what feel to him like a series of emotional and intellectual transformations, the narrator's violent emotional and physical responses to his suffering recur, suggesting that each transformation proves not as entire or permanent as he so fervently wishes. After flying into a rage and nearly stabbing the man sent to retrieve his sick brother for work, the narrator mourns: "I had come to the end of the road; in spite of my reading and my association with educated people, I had only become more confused and desperate" (289). As the narrator's suffering accrues, he finds it increasingly difficult -- and increasingly important -- to find some means of escape, as his past weighs increasingly heavily on his present: "Wherever I went memories crowded my mind, and sometimes my heart was heavy. But I could run away or forget. I was pursued by my own life" (222). Oppressive conditions have shaped his whole life, turning both past and present into frequent sources of pain and dread for him.

Allos's painful experience of time elicits various attempts at escape, some of which are self-destructive, such as drinking and violence. Interestingly, the more powerless and frustrated the narrator feels, the more action-oriented his language tends to become, as he grapples with the systems that have reduced his temporal experience to a manhunt across the American West. Urgent, powerful verbs describing movements in space, such as "driving" (121, 134, 164, 179, 205, 219, 236, 261), "plunging" (246, 305), and "bursting" (29, 236), convey both his feeling of being passively swept along by time and his longing to blast through the trammels impeding him. Indeed, despite the vast spaces he traverses as he migrates around the American West, he constantly chafes at the narrowness of his life as it has been restricted by his social position. The contraction of

the narrator's life into an endless moment frequently leaves him desperate, ready to risk death rather than endure more of the daily torture of his "planless life" (303).

Out of desperation, the narrator sometimes takes dangerous risks, preferring immediate violence to the protracted endurance of ongoing humiliations and privations. In moments like these, the narrator refuses to flee from time's chase any longer and turns to attack the present moment itself, diving directly toward physical death:

> I decided that I would live under any compromise with death. To laugh and shout and sing in the world, facing ultimate death, was dramatic and violent. I had what I wanted at last: a physical violence that evoked the cruelest mental violence. From now on, death or life, I would squeeze every minute to the last drop of activity, rushing toward millions of moments of death in the world (299).

Because the violent, transient, and impoverished circumstances of his life obfuscate any meaningful mental or emotional integration of past, present, and future, Allos claims his right to respond in kind, with bold, violent, physical resistance. Labeling death itself a kind of violent "moment", the narrator frames his struggle, yet again, in terms of time, and the accumulation of these oppressive experiences over time leads him to sometimes prefer a violent form of escape over endless, monotonous suffering. The brutality he endures in America has seeped into him: "As time went by I became as ruthless as the worst of them, and I became afraid that I would never feel like a human being again" (109). On one occasion, when fired yet again, he snaps: "*You are fired!* How many times did I hear these words? Why did they pursue me down the years, across oceans and continents? A nameless anger filled me, and before I knew it I was screaming: 'I'll kill you, you white men!'" (163). This endurance of the same oppressions time and again culminates in rage against this life of maddening repetition and protracted suffering.

Even this present-based fight response, this diving toward death, constitutes a kind of flight, in its attempted escape of capitalist temporality's bleak monotony. The forces of capitalism and imperialism have dislocated the narrator from his past and precluded his future, narrowing his life to a terrifying present. As the narrator explains, "It was a planless life, hopeless, and without direction. I was merely living from day to day: *yesterday* seemed long ago and *tomorrow* was too far away. It was *today* that I lived for aimlessly, this hour – this moment. It gave me an acute sense of time that has remained with me" (169). As he realizes that America has denied him the future it supposedly promises to all, he finds himself forced to live in the moment. This is neither the savoring moment of mindfulness meditation nor the exhilarating, self-actualizing moment of *carpe diem*, but rather, a terrifying stretching out of empty moments that leave him veritably trapped in an endless *today*.

Allos is especially prone to violence when he experiences moments of beauty and connectedness, only to lose them shortly afterward to the forces of change and oppression. When his beloved friend Mary disappears, he is heartbroken, and longs "to crush all life into tiny fragments of hate" (303). He feels "ready for violence again" and "afraid that [he] might kill" (303). At another point, when police break in and destroy an inspiring dinner for an honored Filipino guest, he feels "the old anger inside me. I jumped to my feet and rushed outside, running blindly toward my hotel. I wanted my gun. With it I could challenge our common enemy bullet for bullet. It seemed my only friend and comfort in this alien country – this smooth little bit of metal" (307). Like his friend Max Smith, he feels that "he would rather die than witness the humiliation of a respected countryman" (307).

These failed attempts to contain suffering make visible liberalism's reductive understanding of it. As Asma Abbas explains, liberalism reduces the sensuous and durational complexity of suffering to "an object with cause, origin, and explanation, that can also be made to go away", thereby rendering it consumable as either "an object of political action or a resource harnessed as injury, identity, or other currency in liberal politics" (6;11). While nominally attempting to reduce the amount of suffering in the world, liberalism often actually increases the suffering of marginalized people by conceptually (from a distance) reducing their suffering to a kind of meaningless, erasable currency exchanged in public discourse.

America Is in the Heart exposes liberalism's reduction of suffering to a commodified injury and its complicity with capitalism's commodification of temporality, and it is through the pathos of the narrator's personal voice that Bulosan registers these related thefts of meaning. This personal voice bears pathos precisely because it fails to contain Allos's suffering, for it is really his continued persistence, which "appears to draw its strength precisely from this strange capital [suffering]" that produces the "ambiguity of the pathos of resistance" of which Robert Buch spoke in my introduction ("Pathos of Resistance", 117).

Politically-minded scholars Alexander Brown, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Karl Marx, Antonio Negri, Maria Prodromou write about temporality because they recognize that *time* (rather than energy, money, or goods themselves) becomes the most valuable unit of exchange under capitalism,[xxi] and that the undervaluation of the time of the poor (and the related distortions of their temporal experience) proves perhaps the most pervasive form oppression within a capitalist system. Temporality, reduced to a series of measurable

units, becomes an abstract and exchangeable means to the end of fulfilling the programmed desires of capitalism. Negri identifies the most frightening consequence of this abstraction: namely that, as Brown summarizes, "when time becomes a measure of value the diverse forms of human labor are reduced to a single, homogenous substance" (Brown 177). By reducing human labor and time to universally measurable and commodifiable entities, capitalism enables the wealthy to purchase the time of the working class with money. This exchange proves far from fair because: "The time spent 'earning a living' is radically incommensurable with the abstract time that is gained, i.e. money", because "'real' time cannot be recuperated" (Prodromou 45). As Lyotard points out, this "insoluble *differend*" between real time lost and abstract time gained gives rise to "the feelings (sadness, anger, hatred, alienation, frustration, humiliation) that accompany the [...] working conditions" of the exploited laborer (qtd. in Prodromou 45).

These are precisely the feelings plaguing Bulosan's narrator's personal voice as capitalism distorts his temporal experience. An unmistakable terror of violence recurs, as does claustrophobic imagery of entrapping, disorienting, and dangerous spaces. He characterizes his life as "a long flight that carried me down the years, fighting desperately to find peace in some corner of life" (101). Frequently fired from jobs for resisting abuse, he feels "pursue[d…] down the years, across oceans and continents", only to find himself going in circles (163). Recalling the feeling of being victimized by time, he describes how time's "sudden, sweeping years" drove him hither and thither like a powerful wind, "push[ing him] into the unknown, the vital, negative years of hard work and bitter trials" (21). These spatial metaphors and prepositions make visible how, in the

context of exploitative imperialism and capitalism, temporal experience is reduced to a single meaning, a menacing amalgamation of privation and danger.[xxii]

Bulosan's pathos also makes visible the complicity between capitalism and liberalism, exposing the ways that both attempt to conceal, behind false promises of an ever-deferred golden future, the devastating consequences of their commodification of suffering and temporality. Indeed, as Maria Prodromou puts it, "modernity projects the future, capitalism programmes it", in the sense that, "[u]nder capitalism's demand for development and performativity, the system aims to control time so as to foreclose the possibility of the unexpected happening which would threaten its performance and so the present is subordinated to the future, a future that must be controlled and predicted and as such predetermined" (Prodromou 42). Bulosan deliberately illustrates these ideas by showing that the brighter future promised the underprivileged as a reward for capitalist and liberalist labor is a ruse. To those whose relationship to temporality has been the most distorted by oppressive systems, the American-dream, bootstrap rhetoric propounded by the bourgeoisie eventually becomes visible as a lie, and Bulosan's narrator is a case in point. Although he sometimes voices the hope that things will improve, he senses the truth: that for the oppressed poor, the future is an "unseen enemy" "waiting with all its ferocity" (21; 4-5). As he realizes that America has denied him the future it promises to all, he finds himself trapped in a kind of endless moment, deprived of the meaning-making narrative that temporal duration typically provides.

The monotony and meaninglessness that characterize the narrator's suffering and his experience of temporality reflect the "genetic" relationship Asma Abbas identifies between capitalism's commodification of temporality and liberalism's commodification

of suffering. She writes, “It is in the ‘nature’ of injury as value to lack a dynamic temporality and dialectic, since time, in capitalism (and liberalism), allows the exchange of labor (in commodities and as commodity) by rendering it congealed and redirecting its life away from life” (130). Abbas illustrates here that liberalism’s fetishization of injury and capitalism’s commodification of time turn both suffering and temporality into abstractions, thereby obscuring their truly dynamic, dialectical, durational, sensuous nature. However, the narrator frequently attempts to escape capitalism’s empty present via various “lines of flight”, to use Deleuze and Guattari’s terminology. As Alexander Brown explains, “In precarious times we are continually confronted with capitalist timepieces that drive us to work harder and faster yet we simultaneously engage in a multitude of lines of flight and moments of liberation” (180). I argue that while the narrator’s imaginative flights seem to fall prey to the traps of liberal idealism, they also contribute to the text’s creative, micropolitical evasion of capitalist time.

3. Deterritorialization, Lines of Flight, and Idealism’s Alternative Temporalities

As we have seen, Allos’s pathos-bearing persistence manifests in repeated fight and flight scenarios, as he seeks some escape from a time and place rendered monstrous for exploited Filipino laborers. Not only does Allos physically fight and flee through the American West, but he also flees in his imagination, transcending the horrors of his temporal location via escape into realms of aesthetic, political, and romantic ideals. However, in contrast to liberalism’s abstract fantasy of a suffering-free future, Bulosan’s idealism springs directly from his suffering itself, and is a present-based, micropolitical revolutionary activity.

As we have seen, the text's pathos identifies the narrator's enemy – racist capitalism and its hollowing of Filipino laborers' temporal experience – with spatial metaphors, as a predator that chases and traps him. Given this context, I argue that his various imaginative flight responses may be best understood as instances of what Deleuze and Guattari call "deterritorialization", "the movement or process by which something escapes or departs from a given territory, where a territory can be a system of any kind: conceptual, linguistic, social, or affective" (Patton 208). According to Deleuze and Guattari, deterritorialization occurs via "lines of flight" – acts of eluding, flowing, leaking, or disappearing, by which an individual or group eludes the capture of ruling systems by cutting across multiple, coexisting realities. These concepts illuminate that the narrator's frequently expressed "feeling of flight", and his resulting imaginative forays, contribute to (rather than distract from) the text's political gesture.

Although Deleuze has been accused by Zizek and others of being "a highly elitist author, indifferent toward politics", the French philosopher envisions philosophy as an intrinsically political occupation, in that "the creation of concepts serves the larger project of bringing about new earths and new peoples" (Zizek, qtd. in Patton 198; Patton 216). Both philosophy and literature have the power to deterritorialize older conceptual territory and to envision new possibility -- to contribute to what Deleuze and Guattari call "becoming minor"[xxiii], a process that happens as one resists becoming fascist along with the state (*Plateaus* 105). These philosophers consider the state an "apparatus of capture"; yet they do differ from traditional Marxism in arguing that "the impetus for social change [is] provided by movements of deterritorialization and lines of flight rather than by class contradictions" (Patton 207, 202). The activities of becoming minor and

deterritorializing via lines of flight are "subterranean movements of sensibility, affect, and allegiance" which enact "qualitative changes in individual and collective identities that occur alongside or beneath the public domain" (Patton 208). These micropolitical, "qualitative changes" prove critical to fomenting the revolutionary culture necessary for concrete change.

While Carlos Bulosan's labor organizing and macropolitical analyses doubtless were his most urgent methods for improving the lives of his Filipino American contemporaries, it may well be the subtler complexities of Bulosan's pathos of idealism that have enabled the text to endure beyond the span of Bulosan's life and to speak to multiple generations of Americans. Deleuze's analytical concepts prove particularly useful in unpacking the micropolitical resistance of literary texts such as *AIH*, revealing the deeper currents of political energy running through them. Deleuze's ideas allow me to demonstrate that the narrator's brief escapes into alternative temporalities are complimentary, creative, political acts of deterritorialization, rather than defections from his radical politics.

Allos flees the monotonous menace of Western imperialist capitalist temporality by exploring, often through his imagination, alternative temporal realms of natural, literary, romantic, and democratic ideals. Periodically relocating himself in a rich, aesthetic experience of the land, rather than in the oppressive sociopolitical landscape, helps the narrator to cope with the impoverished conditions he faces in America. Allos's imagination responds powerfully to beauty and the ideals he associates with it, manifesting in euphoric, lyrical descriptions. Looking out a bus window, he sees "familiar scenes that evoked poetry in me" (270). Dislocated, in this moment, from the

measured time of clocks and calendars, he loses himself in his own personal experience of time, wondering, “When was it that I had first seen this broad land?” (270). Through such experiences of beauty he finds some of the joy and connection missing in his life. “Trembl[ing] with joy passing the familiar scenes”, he locates himself, not in the space of the land itself, but in his own subjective, aesthetic experience of the land: “It was where I belonged – here in the color of green, the bitter taste of lemon peels, the yellow of ripe peas; in the pleasure, the beauty, the fragrance” (270). This feeling of belonging comes to him rarely, and is made inestimably precious by the constant marginalization he experiences.

Cosmic beauty also becomes an inspiring line of flight for Allos’s imagination. As he explains, “I was obsessed with looking across vast lands and staring into the sky. In vast spaces I found a nameless relief from the smallness of my world in America” (294). In a similar passage, he relates that “I was in flight again, away from an unknown terror that seemed to follow me everywhere. […] But there was a clear sky and the night was ablaze with stars” (119). Consider further how, when chafing against the “stifling narrowness of Temple Street”, he longs to run away into the fields because, “There in the broad fields, under the wide skies, there in the wide world of grass, trees, and stars my mind would stir and radiate with a new light” (294). Although the narrator may not use explicitly temporal language in such passages, in the context of the capitalist temporality which cramps his life, his cosmic words (“worlds”, “eternities”, “stars”, and “vast[ness]”) make clear that such moments stand out because of the psychological space they offer – the feeling they give the narrator of being momentarily above and beyond the confines of space and time as shaped by capitalism.

Literature, another line of flight for the narrator, elicits even more explicitly supra-temporal and supra-spatial imagery. He writes, "I plunged into books, boring through the earth's core, leveling all seas and oceans, swimming in the constellations" (246). Although imaginative escapes into literary cosmos at first may appear solipsistic, such moments bear pathos for, as Deleuze and Guattari point out in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, even the most seemingly personal moments in minor literature have a "collective value" (17). As Reda Bensmaia explains in his introduction to that text, this truth is evident "not only in the sense in which one speaks of politics, but specifically in the sense in which further activity is no longer related to a unified instance, to an autonomous subjective substance that would be the *origin* of the choices we make, of the tastes we have, and of the life we lead. In that sense, *each and every gesture takes on a quasi-cosmic dimension*" [italics mine] (Bensmaia xviii). As I demonstrate throughout this chapter, even something as seemingly personal as one's experience of time passing has a larger political significance for those whose suffering and temporality are devalued by the objectifying, commodifying regimes of liberalism and capitalism. In this sense, the narrator's cosmic imaginings constitute micropolitical lines of flight by which he, like other writers and artists before him, temporarily transcends the grid that otherwise determines his life.

These complexities may be better understood by noting that writing deterritorializes on multiple levels, and often functions as a threshold between the realms of matter and concept. According to Deleuze and Guattari, deterritorialization can be both relative, concerning "movements within the actual realm of embodied, historical events and processes", and absolute, concerning "the virtual realm of becoming and pure events"

(Patton 209). Writing in general, and texts like *AIH* in particular, show the way these two realms coexist and interpenetrate. In "Literature and Life", Deleuze speaks to the revolutionary potential of writing to bring into being new worlds and peoples. He declares that writing is "inseparable from becoming", that it creates lines of flight through becomings, and that it "invent[s] a people who are missing" (qtd. in Bogue 301). Like philosophy, which opens the way for new formations on the material plane by creating new possibilities on the conceptual plane, literature allows for "both becoming and fabulation, the prolongation of lines of flight and the invention of a people, through which possibilities of life are set free and health is restored" (Bogue 302). As I show in the following section, Bulosan's project, of rewriting America in terms of his own experience, exemplifies the ways in which writing can contribute to the overlapping activities of becoming minor, becoming revolutionary, and becoming democratic.

Reading and writing provide a central means by which Bulosan's narrator escapes the spatialized, constraining time of capitalism and creates new possibilities for himself and his people. At first, the narrator's writing and reading seem to serve as a more private means for him to find "escape in books, and also discovery of a world I had not known before" (162). Reading Hart Crane's *The Bridge*, Allos's imagination moves with Crane's in an "intense frenzy": "I leaped with him across the magnificent steel arc over the river, flew into the dizzy heights of fire, plunged into the sea and peace" (245). The narrator's movements clearly transcend mundane laws of time and space, as his imagination allows him to fly with a long-dead author through the realm of the literary present, without fear of being physically burnt or drowned by the "fires" and "seas" they encounter together.

Ultimately it is Allos's love of others – his highest ideal – that provides him with his most enduring alternative temporality and generates the most pathos-bearing meaning around his suffering. Much of his motivation to read and write derives from the love he feels for Kafka, Gorki, Lorca, Kang, Noguchi, and others who "suffered the narrowness of the world in which they lived", yet "succeeded in inspiriting a universal brotherhood among men" (238). Through experiencing love and being loved, the narrator realizes that "The human heart is bigger than the world" (215). This overwhelming love is often expressed in cosmic terms, as when he relates his feelings for Eileen, a white woman who befriends him: "my hunger for affection, because of the lack of it in America, had driven me blindly to Eileen, and my long-denied urge to feel a part of the life about me *burst forth like a blazon of burning stars*" [italics mine] (236). Cosmic language appears again when his brother Marcario calls the narrator by his native name, *Allos*, at which point his sense of their shared history makes him feel "vast and immortal", beyond the limitations of space and time (261).

Relatedly, love's spaciousness and immortality (in sharp contrast to the claustrophobic, limiting temporality of capitalism), also bloom inside the narrator as he becomes increasingly involved in collective efforts on behalf of his fellows. As I shall demonstrate in the next section, the narrator deploys similarly cosmic language when imagining an alternative world where people are no longer alienated from one another by race and class oppression. Although the pathos of idealism evoked by the conjuring of this alternative world at first appears to be tainted by liberalism's facile idealism, I contend that Bulosan manages to deploy his pathos of idealism in ways that deterritorialize liberal capitalist temporality.

4. Becoming Democratic, and Present-Based Revolution vs. Liberalism's Pathos

The narrator's pathos of idealism conjures sometimes starry-eyed visions of a future world of equality, liberty, and fraternity that doubtless resonated with the imaginations of liberal readers. This resonance makes more critical readers nervous, as liberalism's transcendent idealism and fixation on the future are some of the escapist characteristics which hamper the effectiveness of that ideology in enacting radical or timely social change. However, a closer look reveals that the narrator's pathos of idealism simultaneously contributes to Bulosan's deterritorialization of imperialist, capitalist, liberal temporality. Marx, Negri, Abbas, and Deleuze come to my aid in illuminating how the narrator's visions recuperate temporality and suffering as meaningful processes by articulating a revolutionary process of becoming democratic that is located as much in the present as in the future.

Readers not fully attentive to the more complex temporality dynamics of the text will likely notice only the more conventional, future-oriented elements of the revolutionary rhetoric voiced by the narrator and his brother Marcario. Both characters emphasize a major revolutionary shift between old and new worlds, as when Marcario states his hope that "The old world will die so that the new world will be born with less sacrifice and agony on the living…" (188). He also declares "find[ing] in our struggle that which has a future" to be "the greatest responsibility of literature" (188). Allos latches onto Marcario's future rhetoric, and uses it to encourage an ethos of sacrifice: "we must not demand from America, because she is still our unfinished dream. Instead we must sacrifice for her: let her grow into bright maturity through our labors. If necessary

we must give up our lives so that she might grow unencumbered" (312). Marcario's words stoke Allos's already existent faith in his people, daring him to extend it toward the future: "I felt my faith extending toward a future that shone with a new hope" (313).

The characters' pathos of idealism – their expressed faith in the "unfinished dream" of America, their faith that the dream will be realized at some future date, and their willingness to suffer and sacrifice their lives to this dream – doubtless evoked similitude-based empathy from mid-century liberals; however, Asma Abbas and others familiar with the ineffectuality of liberal idealism and the limits of liberal empathy will find these forms of pathos suspect. Liberalism, pairing its reduction of suffering to abstract injury (discussed earlier) with "philanthropic and humanitarian recitation of stories of salvation and redemption", tends to reduce both suffering and temporality to abstract and superficial pathae which appeal to the senses only enough to "nourish empathy and sympathy in a narrow way" (Abbas 6).

Interestingly, the future-oriented pathos of idealism differs in degree but not in kind from the past-oriented pathos of finitude discussed in chapter two, in the sense that both derive from liberalism's longing for idealistic transcendence. As Abbas explains, the "romance of finitude" is "inherited from idealisms of various sorts", from a fascination with "the dialectic between the terror of life and the enlightenment and pleasure of human transcendence and overcoming" (7; 158). Citing the "outmoded genre of tragedy" as illustrative of this dramatic dialectic and claiming the "potential fascism of all idealism", Abbas argues that the objectification of suffering enabled by idealism not only obscures the complexity of reality while claiming to reflect it, but also hampers our ability to cope with suffering (7), leaving us in a state of "precariousness premised on boundedness,

separation, and the climatic voluntarist communion of our beings, bodies, and realities within bourgeois liberal morality" (6).

Such critiques must be heeded, and Bulosan's rhetoric is admittedly redolent of liberalism's delusions of taintless idealism; however, not only do the harsh events of *AIH*'s plot obviously undermine such delusions (as others have demonstrated), but a close look at Bulosan's language in these passages suggests that he offers something deeper than liberalism's pathos. A close examination of these passages reveals that they illustrate the Deleuzian process of "becoming democratic", an ongoing, present-based activity and experience, rather than a future potentiality. The process of becoming democratic defies the linear, claustrophobic, commodified temporality of modern Western, imperialist, capitalist liberalism. Deleuzian becoming challenges conceptions of time and history that plot events as points along a timeline, for, "Becoming is the movement by which the line frees itself from the point, and renders points indiscernible" (Deleuze, *ATP*, 324). In other words, much that is becoming remains invisible to mainstream historical accounts of past and present, cause and effect, and Deleuze's concept of becoming-democratic renders democracy "a virtual movement, as a dynamic transformative process, democracy as event" (*ATP* 83).

Pregnancy, a repeated metaphor of Allos's, serves as an apt analogy Deleuzian becoming, in that pregnancy has future implications in the new birth to come, but also occurs now, through all kinds of micro-activity going on beneath the surface. In addition to Allos's constant reference to a new world being "born", he imagines that he feels this new world – a world of love, heroism, and faith in the common man – "growing inside" him. For example, he reflects that, "the most forlorn man, in those rootless years, was he

who knew that love was growing inside him but had no object on which to bestow it" (194). While observing his friend Jose communicating Allos's political ideas to other laborers, Allos says he "felt something powerful growing inside me. It was a new heroism: a feeling of growing with a huge life" (196). Again later, while writing for his friend Ganzo in San Pedro, he says, "I felt something growing inside me again. There was the same thing in each of them that possessed me: their common faith in the working man. I sat with them and listened eagerly. Sometimes I participated in the discussions. Then it came to me that we were all fighting against one enemy: *Fascism*. It was in every word and gesture, every thought" (311). This interesting passage suggests that the struggle against fascism occurs on both macropolitical and micropolitical levels - that it takes shape in words, gestures, and thoughts, as well as in more macropolitical deeds or events.

The Deleuzian idea of becoming democratic clarifies the difference between democracy as a historical, future ideal/concept (ala liberal pathos) and democracy as an immanent, present process of becoming – the exact distinction that Bulosan's character Marcario makes in his redefinition of America:

> America is not bound by geographical latitudes. America is not merely a land or an institution. America is in the hearts of men that died for freedom; it is also in the eyes of men that are building a new world. America is a prophecy of a new society of men: of a system that knows no sorrow or strife or suffering. America is a warning to those who would try to falsify the ideals of freemen. America is also the nameless foreigner, the homeless refugee, the hungry boy begging for a job and the black body dangling on a tree. America is the illiterate immigrant who is ashamed that the world of books and intellectual opportunities is closed to him. We are all that nameless foreigner, that homeless refugee, that hungry boy, that illiterate immigrant and that lynched black body. All of us, from the first Adams to the last Filipino, native born or alien, educated or illiterate – *We are America!* The old world is dying, but a new world is being born. It generates inspiration from the chaos that beats upon us all. (188)

Marcario's imagining of "a system that knows no sorrow or strife or suffering" admittedly resembles the liberal fantasy of suffering as a set of injuries that will be eliminated in the future; however, his use of present tense verbs in this passage communicates his belief that the disenfranchised *already* constitute a revolutionary, alternative America – an America that has generated its idealism from shared experiences of "chaos", hardship, and oppression, rather than from the fantasies of privileged liberals. Marcario explicitly states that the America he refers to is shaped by, but not restricted to, geographical or macropolitical realities – a belief that initially shapes his decision to go overseas to join the fight against fascism. As he explains, "the forces of democracy are found *in all times*, ready to rally behind a cause of worldwide significance" [italics mine] (241).

Marcario understands democracy as a force existing in all times and places because he understands it as an always already immanent force (as opposed to a future-oriented, "imminent" revolutionary moment in linear time). Allos often seems even more certain than Marcario of the immanence of revolutionary democracy. Feeling "tears of joy" in his eyes, the narrator declares the workers' "awakening" to be "spontaneous", derived from "our experiences and our responses to them" (314). Describing the labor movement, he says: "Listening and watching attentively, I knew that it was the dawn of a new morning. I did not have to wait for the birth of a new world, because what I had been told to fight for was here with its brilliant promises" (194). His words suggest that the emotional experience of democracy that he feels through participation in something larger than himself is already a form of democracy. Observing fellow laborers at a labor meeting in Los Angeles, the narrator says, "It seemed to me that they were bound by a

common understanding that shone in the room. I was slowly becoming a part of their thoughts and hopes. Here at last was the configuration of my labors and aspirations" (311). The narrator explicitly uses the word "becoming" to describe the process of connecting to others and of becoming aware of already existing connections. This becoming and connection obviously stands in sharp contrast to the alienation – expressed so often elsewhere the text – experienced by the worker exploited by capital. These revolutionary moments of becoming and connection are immanent moments of what Alexander Brown calls "liberated time" -- time "stolen from capitalist work, from the production of surplus value", and devoted to "the collective activity of the proletariat directly producing other values" (182).

This creation of other values and alternatives takes place in the present moment and is crucial to immanent revolutionary activity (which includes becoming democratic). Deleuze and Guattari explain that "Becoming-revolutionary remains indifferent to questions of a future and a past of the revolution; it passes between the two. Every becoming is a block of coexistence" (*ATP*, 322). In other words, for Deleuze and Guattari, revolutionary becoming is not restricted to one time and space, but rather, takes place across multiple, coexisting realities. These ideas resonate in interesting ways with postcolonial scholars who have long questioned the restrictive nature of historical time as conceived in the West. Dipesh Chakrabarty, observing that "Imaginations of socially just futures for humans usually take the idea of a single, homogeneous, and secular historical time for granted", calls for the development of multiple, alternative conceptions of time – for "introducing discontinuities, ruptures, and shifts in the historical process" that will pluralize "the history of power in global modernity and separate it from any universalist

narratives of capital" (17; 15; 299). Chakrabarty, like the many other theorists and authors discussed in this project, is interested in disrupting mainstream history by exploring multiplicities obscured by Western capitalism.

The revolutionary conceptions of history and time called for by Chakrabarty and theorized by Deleuze also synchronize with the ideas of Antonio Negri, in his articulation of the temporal implications of Marx's ideas. Firth and Robinson explain that, for Negri, revolution involves "seeing space as well as time as being located in a process of becoming" (35). As Negri explains, "time cannot be presented as measure, but must rather be presented as the global phenomenological fabric, as base, substance and flow of production in its entirety" (29). Negri sees revolutionary potential in Marxist theory, where "time itself becomes substance, to the point that time becomes the fabric of the whole of being, because all of being is implicated in the web of the relations of production: being is equal to product of labour: temporal being" (34). Time thereby becomes "a before and not an after" - the existing stuff of life itself, rather than a mediating and abstract measure (35). Deleuze's articulation of deterritorialization and his belief in the power of words to create a "collectivity that is not yet constituted" obviously overlaps with the views of Negri, who, rather than restricting the concept of revolution to the future overthrow of a given economic system or government, looks instead for various forms of revolutionary activity occurring in everyday life, for places where people are bringing revolution to life now through various practices (qtd. in Bogue 301).

As my analysis of temporality in *America is in the Heart* has illustrated, Bulosan's use of the pathos of idealism to rewrite suffering, temporality, and democracy as immanent, durational, emotional processes constitutes such revolutionary practice.

Bulosan's subversive, dialectical text deploys liberal idealism against itself in generating versions of suffering, temporality, and history that run counter to those common to Western imperialist, capitalist, liberal regimes. Although full-scale revolution is nominally deferred to the future at times in the text, my analysis highlights the ways that *AIH* portrays revolutionary moments of liberation as emotional experiences in the present moment, and illustrates that much revolutionary activity happens in the present moment, in the heart and on the page.

CHAPTER 4

HEALING THE CONFUSED PRESENT THROUGH SYMPATHETIC REASONING IN JOHN OKADA'S *NO-NO BOY*

My earlier chapters have made clear how capitalist instrumentality dictates that time taken to reflect on the contradictions and complexities of one's own or others' lives is wasted unless it generates profit. By commodifying the time of human beings and discouraging the use of their more sophisticated meaning-making faculties (creativity, imagination, empathic understanding of others), this instrumentality reduces people to useable props or objects and makes their exploitation appear justifiable. As my earlier chapters point out, these instrumentalist ideologies depend for meaning upon seductively simple temporal narratives of fantasy pasts and futures. Younghill Kang and Carlos Bulosan use the pathos of finitude and the pathos of idealism to show how instrumentality's temporal distortions underpin the commodifying exploitation evident in American imperialism and liberalism. *No-No Boy* (1956), by John Okada (1923-1971) completes the trinity, by using the pathos of confusion to highlight how instrumentalist nationalisms confuse and alienate Americans from one another and from meaningful experience of the present.

No-No Boy appeared one decade after Carlos Bulosan's *America is in the Heart* and about two decades after Younghill Kang's *East Goes West*. Due to its critical portrayal of the post-war United States, Okada's novel did not gain much public attention[xxiv] until it was rediscovered by later Asian American writers and republished in 1979. Set in a Japanese American community in 1946 Seattle, the novel uses third person omniscient narration to follow 25-year-old Japanese American protagonist Ichiro Yamada through the first two weeks of his return home from four years of incarceration

by the U.S. government. Once a promising engineering student at the University of Washington, Ichiro's formal education was cut short when, a year after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. government began forcefully uprooting Japanese American families from their homes and livelihoods and relocating them to concentration camps.

Although nearly two-thirds of those interned were American citizens and although the internment has since been widely acknowledged as a mistake,[xxv] the xenophobic, racist United States government viewed Japanese Americans as a potentially treasonous population and thereby justified their ban from enlistment and their internment. In 1943, the U.S. War Department began testing Japanese Americans' loyalty using questionnaires, partly to determine which young men could safely be enlisted to meet the war's growing need for bodies. The two final questions on the questionnaire for service-age Japanese American men read as follows: 27) "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty wherever ordered?" and 28) "Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, to any other foreign government, power or organization?" (Takenzawa 98). These questions created anger and confusion, and about 12,000 "no-no boys" answered negatively to both questions. Although many said no for "constitutional or moral reasons" rather than out of support for Japan, their negative responses earned these young men two years in prison and the outcast status under which Ichiro suffers throughout the novel (Yogi 238-39).

The community tension surrounding the post-war return of no-no boys like Ichiro often manifested in ostracism or persecution, sometimes by other Japanese Americans

who hoped to avoid persecution themselves by showcasing their American loyalties. Ichiro is reviled and bullied by Japanese American veterans (Eto, Bull, and others) and betrayed by his own brother, Taro, who is deeply ashamed of Ichiro's no-no boy status. Meanwhile, although Ichiro's Japanese nationalist mother is proud of Ichiro's no-no answers, his relationship to his parents remains strained over "Ma" Yamada's ideological fanaticism, evident in her delusional belief that Japan won the war and that she and other loyal Japanese will soon be rescued from America. When Ma's dream of a future return to victorious Japan is thwarted she commits suicide, unable to bear her present reality. Meanwhile, the internment's total disruption of Japanese Americans' lives, combined with other instances of systemic white racism depicted in the text, convince Ichiro that the happy future promised by American dream rhetoric is almost as unlikely for him as a glorious return to Japan is for his Ma. Fortunately, Ichiro encounters a few sympathetic individuals along the way who model and encourage sympathetic reasoning that provides him a sense of belonging which is not ideologically-based. Indeed, these interactions, with family friends the Kumasakas, with the wounded veteran Kenji and his friend Emi (who becomes Ichiro's love interest), and with potential employer Carrick, help Ichiro to reflect on and process past suffering in ways that reconnect him to others in the present.

Of the three forms of modern temporal pathae discussed in my introduction, the pathos of confusion predominates in Okada's *No-No Boy*. This pathos highlights the suffering caused by conflicting 20th century ideologies that alienate people from one another, and is described in terms of a fragmented, alienated relationship to time itself. As I shall demonstrate, Okada uses the pathos of confusion to expose how the nationalist ideologies of the period proffer seductively simple narratives which depend upon false

pasts and futures for meaning. By connecting the spectacle of Ichiro's individual suffering to an ideologically-alienated mid-century American culture in this way, Okada's confusion pathos actively generates meaning as well as potentially eliciting similitude-based empathy. Meanwhile, rhetorical questions, loose sentences, and an ambiguous ending, the defining formal features of *No-No Boy*, assist in showing how nationalist ideologies ultimately confuse rather than clarify meaning by alienating people from one another and from the present moment.

Okada's pathos also invites expansion of the scope of readers' empathic concern (beyond the limits of similarity) by highlighting the acute devastation of these nationalisms on Japanese American lives particularly. Versions of ethnic nationalism lurk beneath the U.S. government's internment of its Asian citizens as well as beneath the Japanese government's lies to loyalists such as Ichiro's mother (the Japanese government writes letters to loyal Japanese saying that Japan won the war and will soon rescue its loyal citizens). As Ichiro realizes how the nationalist nostalgia surrounding him is premised on mythical pasts and futures that never existed (in Japan or the U.S.), he is able reject these nationalisms and repurpose his confusing past as a means of connecting with others in the shared suffering of the present. Through this process, Ichiro creates an alternative sense of belonging that relies neither on false temporalities nor on a nation-based identity. Through Ichiro's struggle to understand and to actively share the suffering caused by human ideologies such as nationalism, Okada reclaims the humanity of all involved and invites pathos. As Robert Buch explains, pathos is "the means by which we relate to another's pain and by which the suffering other is recognized and affirmed as human, precisely at the point of radical crisis" (*Pathos of the Real*, 23).

Meanwhile, previously mentioned formal features in the text invite readers to share in an active meaning-making process that cultivates empathy-generating habits of mind. By modeling and encouraging cognitively-based empathy in these ways, *No-No Boy* offers at least a partial antidote to the confusions and alienations endemic to its era.

My analysis is important, first because although Seongho Yoon has examined *No-No Boy* as "a story of competing spatial logics and desires" (47) and Apollo Amoko's essay on the text briefly notes that nations are constructed temporally as well as spatially (35), no scholars perform a thorough, systematic examination of temporality in *No-No Boy*. Furthermore, as the following literature review illustrates, my reading breaks with existing *No-No Boy* scholarship in suggesting that Ichiro's internal trajectory is neither a strictly ironic appearance of progress nor an assimilationist attempt at an immigrant bildungsroman. While what Shirley Lim calls "the burden of double-consciousness" doubtless influenced the presentation of Okada's critique, and while the text's valuation of empathy does dovetail with the self-serving "'empire of feeling' that America is attempting to institute in this period both abroad and at home" (Lim 33-34; D. Kim 77), I resist the field's observed tendency to privilege what Viet Thanh Nguyen calls the "bad subject" by arguing that the text's encouragement of empathy across difference deepens rather than contradicts its critique of instrumentalist ethnic nationalism.

By highlighting how Okada uses temporal pathos to foreground a sympathetic reasoning process that supports meaningful integration of past, present and future and resists the alienating temporalities of ethnic nationalism, I read Okada's work as participating in what Chu has identified as "the task of anti-racist literary work throughout most of the twentieth century": "to establish the idea that racialized people are

not at the mercy of their classification" (531). While my project does not prove the text's effects on readers empirically, it is not far-fetched to suggest that its pathos assists the healing of ideology-based suffering and prejudice and cultivates perspective-taking abilities useful to social justice work.

My study of temporality in *No-No Boy* reveals another variant of the pathos-bearing recipe for resisting anti-instrumentality discernible in the mid-century Asian American writing. Like Kang and Bulosan before him, Okada uses temporal experience to deconstruct the distortions of a capitalistic, instrumentalist ideology (nationalism, in Okada's case, imperialism in Kang's, and liberalism in Bulosan's) while simultaneously encouraging a durational, cognitively-based mindfulness via thematic modeling of reflection and formal densities (in Okada's case rhetorical questions, loose sentences, and an ambiguous ending). These practices process the suffering repressed by ideology, reintegrate alienated sufferers into the present, and generate empathy.

I. Literature Review

Generally speaking, existing scholarship aptly focuses on the text's historical context, attending to the ways in which the oppressive post-war environment curtailed the agency and resistance of the entire Japanese American community, from no-no boys like the fictional Ichiro, who is explicitly persecuted for disloyalty; to loyal veteran characters like Ichiro's friend Kenji, who eventually dies from a war-related wound; to John Okada himself, whose novel was largely ignored when first published. As Seongho Yoon points out, returning internees faced "growing pressure to blend into a post-war America steeped in consensus politics and conformist sentiment" (47). Relatedly, according to

Ling, "The question that faced Okada [...] was how to convey the severity of the World War II rupture in Japanese American life within the limited cultural space allowed for Asian American literary expression" (362).

Many scholars concur with Ling's assertion that the conservative cultural climate of the 1940s and 50s cramped Okada's artistic freedom and led him to concede to the American mainstream by periodically inserting patriotic, assimilationist rhetoric, and by ending the novel on a falsely conciliatory and hopeful note. Daniel Y. Kim has pointed out that in the "forgive and forget" rhetoric of characters like Ichiro's love-interest, Emi, one can identify the "sentimental rhetoric of integration" that underpinned the aggressive globalization of the period (77). Relatedly, Katja Sarkowsky argues that Okada's "strategy of inscribing the ethnic community - with its experiences of exclusion on the basis of ethnicity - into the national narrative by claiming the status of 'good citizens,' […] dominates much of Japanese American and Japanese Canadian writing about internment and redress to the present" (104). And yet, the text's allegedly assimilationist rhetoric failed to earn it a wide audience, perhaps partly because the novel also exposes the inconvenient truths of egregious racial injustice and ideological hypocrisy that pervaded the era. As the introduction to the 1979 edition informs us, the very first copies of the novel never sold out, and John died believing that America had rejected his work (Okada 257). Consideration of this reception history has led Daniel Y. Kim to assert that "*No-No Boy* is a text that reveals as much about the period in which it was published, the 1950's, as it does about the one it depicts, the late 1940s" (65-66).

Discussions of the text's participation and adaptation of the bildungsroman genre also frequently play into assessments of the text's politics. Several scholars read the novel

as an ethnic coming-of-age-story and/or a catalogue of Ichiro's progress toward a more whole, mature identity (Yogi 234; Gribben 31; Inada 263; Storhoff; Arakawa 192). Daniel Y. Kim, offering a more skeptical version of the bildungsroman reading, argues that "By the end of *No-No Boy*, Ichiro has become ready to serve as a loyal subject of what might be termed an "empire of feeling" that America is attempting to institute in this period both abroad and at home" (77).

Meanwhile, another strain of scholarship resists this assessment of the novel as a bildungsroman, declaring the appearance of progress in the latter part of the novel to be an illusion which further points up the impossible demands made of Japanese Americans during this period. These scholars suggest that Okada's rather ambiguously "hopeful" ending is ironic – that Ichiro may not actually be happily on the way to life as an upstanding and loyal American citizen, but rather, off on another of the violent mood swings that characterize his volatile emotional reality at this difficult time. Lisa Lowe argues that the novel resists the conventional bildungsroman - a genre tied up in narratives of national belonging - by being "antidevelopmental in the sense that it is a condensed, almost static portrait that takes place within the small period of several weeks" (50). Relatedly, in Jinqi Ling's words,

> Okada's novel appears to tell a story of the return of the prodigal, one who comes to recognize his "error" and to embrace the promise of 'America.' But within this conventional form, Okada created a protagonist who fails to piece together his fragmented past and whose predicament epitomizes the consequences of the racism that had fueled the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II and continued to condition their lives and identities in the postwar years. (360)

Floyd Cheung and Bill Paterson's examination of *No-No Boy* in terms of the "life-story" model of identity comes to a related conclusion, arguing that, "by the end of the novel,

Ichiro does not seem to have negotiated an identity that provides unity and purpose" (205).

Joseph Entin, who traces resonances of mid-century noir in *No-No Boy*, also finds optimistic readings of the text unconvincing, arguing that the persistently noir-ish elements in the text undermine any apparent progress or integration on Ichiro's part. Borrowing Sianne Ngai's notion of "ugly feelings" as "speak[ing] to conditions of blocked or stunted agency", Entin posits noir "as a discourse of negative affect" in the text (87). This discourse points up feelings of "existential emptiness, masochistic self-loathing, and a deep-seated sense of social exclusion" which remain at odds with the sets of affirmative feelings expressed (87). For Entin, these unresolved strains of opposing feeling "result[] in a persistent, and at times vertiginous, pattern of textual and ideological circularity in which optimistic assertions about American inclusiveness, upward mobility, and social possibility articulated or endorsed by Ichiro and other characters are disrupted and placed in suspension" (88). The ending of the novel, in Entin's hands, is ultimately an unhappy one, "suffused with the tinge of noir" which suggests that "the promise of America is elusive indeed" (101).

Entin offers valuable insight into how the deeply disturbing feelings evoked by racial injustice are expressed through modes other than the assumed realism implicit in most scholarly analyses of Asian American novels; however, is it possible that Entin's reading of the novel, in resisting the tidy optimism sometimes associated with the bildungsroman, swings too far to the other side? Is it possible that his reading (as well as Ling's, Lowe's, and Cheung and Peterson's readings) overstates the stasis, circularity, and hopelessness in the latter half of the text? Should we entirely dismiss all of Ichiro's

reassessments, insights, attempts at forgiveness, thereby relegating his apparent assertion of hope at the end of the text an instance of completely ironic illusion and/or conciliation?

My attention to temporal alienation and ideological confusion in *No-No Boy* corroborates, to some extent, the notion that Okada's refusal to resolve Ichiro's ideological confusion illustrates the impossibility of full integration in the hypocritical, polarized, and racist post-war era. However, I emphasize a previously-overlooked positive bi-product of Ichiro's confusion: namely, the robust reflection process that detaches his identity from ideologies premised on false pasts and futures and grounds it instead in present-based empathic connection with others, via the experience of confusion itself. In exposing the alienation caused by instrumentalist nationalism and in modeling a practice of cognitively-based mindfulness that expands both cognitive and affective empathy, Okada's pathos of confusion resists the ideological confusion and attendant temporal alienation that plagued his mid-20th century milieu.

II. Confusion, Nationalism, and Temporal Alienation in the Post-War Present

Although Ichiro's experience as a no-no boy should not be equated with more general and subtle forms of modern alienation, juxtaposition of the two forms of alienation reveals that these experiences have the same root cause. Indeed, the Japanese interment derives from the same instrumental ideologies responsible for the large-scale temporal acceleration, commodification, and alienation of the 20th century. A characterizing feature of instrumentalist ideologies is the way they give rise to reductionism and poor decision-making by dictating that there is no time to "waste" on

time-consuming processes, such as gathering and deliberating multiple points of view, which do not generate the desired outcome or profit. As Harmutt Rosa's analysis explains, "The thorough analysis of relations of communication and the reflection of norms, good arguments and sense often are too slow to criticize the accelerated processes of political deliberation" (Spatscheck 263). The hasty decision-making common to those invested in instrumentalist ideologies gives rise to all sorts of dystopian scenarios (such as the internment) and generates an atmosphere of confusion that proves the lie to these ideologies' specious explanations. This instrumentality, by commodifying the time of human beings and discouraging the use of their more sophisticated meaning-making faculties (creativity, imagination, empathic understanding of others), reduces people and time to commodities and makes their exploitation appear justifiable.

Rather than evaluating each situation, person, and choice as complex and unique, nationalism demands prioritization of the nation and thereby simplifies decision-making (often for the worse). Unfortunately, nationalist narratives often distort reality by attempting to simplify it as well. Andersen and Wendt explain that although nations are in fact "imagined communities", nationalists passionately cling to the belief "that a unique and sovereign nation exists, that its members have a common destiny as well as a national 'homeland,' and that loyalty to the nation trumps all other collective and individual loyalties" (4). As John Kenneth Noyes explains, nationalism tends to be "obsessed with the idea that subjectivity can find fulfilment in a particular place", manifesting in the imagination as "a place where life comes into being, as the place of being born. The dream of nation is the dream of returning to the place of one's birth" (24). Although nationalistic pathos tends to be spatial in the sense that it relies on a

perceived belonging to an exceptional place, the emphasis on common past and future destiny indicates that nationalism also involves temporally-based narrative. Unfortunately, such narratives often obscure the complexities of past and future and alienate people from the lived present.

Okada's text offers a great illustration of how nationalist ideology's seemingly clarifying simplifications require an estrangement of competing parts of oneself that ultimately breeds confusion. For example, the reductive nationalisms of the period have forced young Japanese American men like Ichiro to make a hasty, unfair choice between two identities – an absurd choice no one should be expected to make. This forced choice reflects the intense confusion of the era, described in Ichiro's friend Kenji's father's recollections of his son's enlistment: "It was not a time for clear thinking because the sense of loyalty had become dispersed and the shaken faith of an American interned in an American concentration camp was indeed a flimsy thing" (121).

Although Ichiro made the opposite choice, the confusion and "lack of clear thinking" Kenji experiences resembles Ichiro's own, and is registered formally in the rushed pace of passages nearly devoid of punctuation. Consider, for example, the following internal monologue Ichiro addresses to his mother:

> I wish with all my heart that I were Japanese or that I were American. I am neither and I blame you and I blame myself and I blame the world which is made up of many countries which fight with each other and kill and hate and destroy but not enough, so that they must kill and hate and destroy again and again and again. It is so easy and simple that I cannot understand it at all. And the reason I do not understand it is because I do not understand you who were the half of me that is no more and because I do not understand what it was about that half that made me destroy the half of me which was American and the half which might have become the whole of me if I had said yes I will go and fight in your army because that is what I believe and want and cherish and love. (16)

Ichiro's loose sentences deny readers the pauses for reflection and sense-making that punctuation facilitates, thereby creating a formalistic parallel to the rushed choice forced upon the characters by instrumental, nationalistic ideologies. The formal and thematic confusions depicted bear a pathos that highlights the absurd contradictions embedded in ideologically-based identities, in which "easy and simple" cycles of retributive justice and violence permeate individuals and tear them apart from the inside. Such ideologies "cannot be understood" by Ichiro because they fail to synchronize with his lived temporal experience.

The forced alienation of parts of themselves leaves young Japanese Americans fractured from and suspended between temporalities as well as identities. Both Japanese and American nationalist ideologies fixate on idealized, mythical pasts and futures sharply disconnected from the complex, painful lived present. For no-no boys like Ichiro, caught between a lost past and a deferred future, the present feels strained and empty of meaning. As Ichiro's artist acquaintance and fellow no-no boy, Gary, explains, "This is a bad time. Bad for us, that is. The atmosphere is full of emotion. Too much of the heart and not enough of the mind. Makes bastards out of good guys. Later on, things will soften down" (227). Gary's description speaks to the reactionary climate of wartime, in which both sides ("loyal" and "disloyal" Japanese Americans) blame the other and avoid acknowledging complex causation and culpability.

While Gary's statement that the time has "too much of the heart" can be misleading, since it is really a *lack* of heart that has enabled the oppression he experiences, his insight that the mind should inform the heart resonates with the cognitively-based mindfulness (sympathetic reasoning) promoted by *No-No Boy* and the

other mid-century Asian American narratives I discuss. For Asian Americans such as Ichiro Yamada, the feeling of national belonging is thwarted by the exclusionary reality of the American nation and must be replaced with an alternative means of belonging that transcends nation, an inclusive "America" of the heart created in the imagination and stretching far beyond the nation itself. For Kang, this alternative place and time manifests as a way of being with others in the present that overflows the separating compartments propagated by ideology. As the last section of my chapter will demonstrate, Ichiro's reflection process allows him to integrate his alienated heart and mind by the end of the narrative. However, first Ichiro must work through and reject the oversimplifying and conflicting Japanese and American ideological narratives alienating him and his community.

III. Japanese Nationalism's Temporal Alienations

As Hans Loewald has explained, experiences that disrupt or fragment meaning can affect one's sense of time: "In the experience of fragmentation, meaning, i.e., connectedness, has disappeared, each instant is only its empty self, a nothing…" (qtd. in Moulyn 137). From the first page of *No-No Boy*, Ichiro's confusion over the recent past is often framed in terms of a fragmented, alienated relationship to time. Although the text locates him in objective, clock time, "[t]wo weeks after his twenty-fifth birthday", after being gone "four years, two in camp and two in prison", Ichiro feels "like an intruder in a world to which he had no claim", who has "stopped living two years ago" (1). The temporal continuity by which one usually knows oneself and the world has been severely disrupted for Ichiro, causing him to feel disconnected from his present life. His

sense of meaning gone, he finds himself trapped by time, “dead but still alive and contemplating fifty or sixty years more of dead aliveness” in a “prison of forever” (73; 40).

Uncertain whom to blame for his “dead alive” present, Ichiro’s frequent rhetorical questions are used by Okada to elicit a pathos of confusion, as Ichiro poses his unanswerable questions to himself and the reader. Fluctuating between denying and claiming personal agency, Ichiro exclaims: “Christ, he thought to himself, just a goddamn kid is all I was. Didn’t know enough to wipe my own nose. What the hell have I done?” (1). Note that he simultaneously declares himself “just a goddam kid” as well as the one who has “done” the deed. Ninety pages later he has moved no closer to resolving his conundrum: “I've ruined my life and I want to know what it is that made me do it” (91). His situation seems nightmarish to him that he can hardly grasp its reality, asking himself and the reader again and again if it is real: “Was it possible that he, striding freely down the street of an American city, the city of his birth and schooling and the cradle of his hopes and dreams, had waved it all aside beyond recall?”

In hopes of restoring agency and purpose to his alienated present, Ichiro initially pursues a clear, simple explanation for his past. Unfortunately, this desire for clarity initially drives him to replicate the oversimplified ideological narratives surrounding him, as when he attempts to blame Japanese nationalists like his mother for his alienation from the American present:

> [She] cursed me with her meanness and the hatred that you cannot see but which is always hating. It was she who opened my mouth and made my lips move to sound the words which got me two years in prison and an emptiness that is more empty and frightening than the caverns of hell. She'd killed me with her meanness and hatred and I hope she's happy because I'll never know the meaning of it again. (12)

Ichiro attributes his Ma's hatred to an ideological fanaticism that alienates her from the present, for although she has lived in the United States for decades, Ma Yamada still lives her life entirely for the sake of a future in Japan. She expects Ichiro to resume school upon his return from prison, to prepare for this bright future. Listening to her expectations, Ichiro wonders incredulously, "Did she mean to sit there and imply that the four intervening years were to be casually forgotten and life resumed as if there had been no four years and no war [...]?" (14).

Ma's monomaniacal focus on her Japanese past and future has a precedent, for, according to the plot of the narrative, the Japanese government encouraged Japanese Americans to cling to delusions of a utopian future by sending letters claiming that Japan won the war and was sending ships to repatriate loyal Japanese Americans. A letter Ichiro's mother receives from the Japanese government promises that "The day of glory is close at hand. The rewards will be beyond our greatest expectations" (14). Ichiro attributes his mother's madness to this delusional nationalist ideology, which premises itself on a false and ever-deferred future and rejects the realities of the living present. He sees her as one of the absurd "Japanese who breathed the air of America and yet had never lifted a foot from the land that was Japan" – temporally suspended men and women who "still felt like transients even after thirty or forty years in America" (11; 25).

Okada uses loose sentences to communicate the alienating results of instrumentalist ideologies which rob us of the pauses necessary for the pathos-bearing questioning, reflection, and learning that makes suffering meaningful. Ichiro says of the *nissei*: "It did not matter when they discovered that fortunes were not for the mere seeking or that their sojourns were spanning decades instead of years and it did not matter

that growing families and growing bills and misfortunes and illness and low wages and just plain hard luck were constant obstacles to the realization of their dreams" (26). Ichiro's mother's mind is particularly infected with the divisive instrumentalist reasoning that pervaded wartime culture – the kind of reasoning which posits a single, narrow notion of future success and devalues reflection and empathy as wastes of time. Ma's efficient body and actions embody a business-like instrumentality that treats time as capital, for use in pursuit of single-minded aims, not for frivolous activities such as reflecting, perspective-taking, imagining, enjoying, or creating. As Ichiro's Pa says of her, "Like a clock you are. Not a second wasted" (177). Ichiro bitterly recalls how Ma's instrumentality prompted her to smash his record player, just to prevent him from "wasting time on foolish pursuits" (204). This instrumental approach also manifests in her treatment of her present life in America as a mere means to an end: "All she wanted from America for her sons was an education, learning and knowledge which would make them better men in Japan" (205). Ichiro sees this approach as delusional – "it was like denying the existence of America" – and wishes that his mother took the time for reflection: "If only she had tried to understand, had attempted to reason out the futility of her ways [...]" (205).

Her refusal to reason sympathetically – to reflect on, understand, and appreciate the perspectives of her children – sorely limits her connection to her family and contributes to Ichiro's confusion. As Ichiro explains, "much as he wished to know where and how the whole business had gone wrong, he could not, for he had never been close enough to his own mother" (205). Ichiro's father, too, identifies this unfortunate limitation in his wife, reflecting to himself, that "he was a man of natural feelings and

that, he felt, had always been the trouble with his wife. She tried to live her life and theirs according to manufactured feelings" (212). These "manufactured feelings" are generated by ideologically-based responses premised on past conditioning and beliefs, rather than by mindful attention and sensitivity to present context. Although Ichiro manages to reject the manufactured Japanese nationalist identity his mother attempts to impose on him, he still grapples with the ideologies of individualism, exceptionalism, and nationalism instilled in him by his mother country, the United States.

IV. American Nationalism's Temporal Alienations

While at times Ichiro blames his mother and other Japanese Americans for his troubled circumstances, at other times he blames his own failure of faith in the American belief that anyone who works hard and takes personal responsibility for their mistakes will attain a bright American future. According to the dictates of the signature blend of individualism and exceptionalism that thinly veils American nationalism, it was a personal character failing that caused Ichiro to "forget" the loyalty he allegedly owes the U.S.. Ichiro muses, "I remember a lot of people and a lot of things now as I walk confidently through the night over a small span of concrete which is part of the sidewalks which are part of the city which is part of the state and the country and the nation that is America. It is for this that I meant to fight, only the meaning got lost when I needed it most badly" (34). By intentionally reflecting his presence on American soil, Ichiro attempts to believe "that subjectivity can find fulfilment in a particular place", a trademark of nationalism articulated by Andersen and Wendt earlier (Andersen and Wendt 25). However, the repetitious phrasing and lack of punctuation evident in the

passage above highlight the unsteadiness of place-based nationalist identity and reasoning.

Meanwhile, Ichiro's frequent experiences of racism also expose America's beloved ideologies and their accompanying temporal alienations. Reliant on false pasts and futures, these ideologies reduce the present to an alienated, means-to-an-end experience. Individualism emphasizes personal responsibility for past choices in ways that render the present and future nightmarish for Ichiro, making time a harsh teacher that reveals the truth of his "mistake." Ichiro, under the sway of this ideology, deems the no-no boys' reasons too "flimsy and unreal" to save them from prison, "where the months and years softened the unthinking bitterness and let them see the truth when it was too late" (33). Judging his own reasoning harshest of all, Ichiro adds: "My reason was all the reasons put together. I did not go because I was weak and could not do what I should have done. It was not my mother, whom I have never really known. It was me, myself. It is done and there can be no excuse" (34). Hanging his entire identity on one past action, Ichiro berates himself: "He was Ichiro who had said no to the judge and had thereby turned his back on the army and the country and the world and his own self" (40). Even now that he has been released from prison, American individualist ideology makes Ichiro feel as if he is still incarcerated because of his past "mistake": "The prison which he had carved out of his own stupidity granted no paroles or pardons" (40). The instrumentalist, simplistic, black-and-white reasoning characteristic of individualism leaves Ichiro feeling trapped in an eternal cell of despair.

Recognizing the pain of this damning logic as unmanageable, Ichiro periodically attempts to temper his individualism with another ideology in which he has been steeped

– American exceptionalism. Privileging the future over both past and present, exceptionalism promises a future harvest-time to those who embrace self-efficacy and faith in a democratic capitalist society. Post-war forgive-and-forget rhetoric used by the government to justify the internment dovetails with this narrative, suggesting that only time (rather than radical social change) is needed to overcome past harms. Consider, for example, where Ichiro muses:

> Was there no hope of redemption? Surely there must be. He was still a citizen. He could still vote. He was free to travel and work and study and marry and drink and gamble. People forgot and, in forgetting, forgave. Time would ease the rupture which now separated him from the young Japanese who were Americans because they had fought for America and believed in it. […] In time, he thought, in time there will again be a place for me. […] it will not matter about the past, for time will have erased it from our memories and there will be only joy and sorrow and sickness, which is the way things should be. (52)

However, the pathos-bearing rhetorical question which opens the passage prompts readers to question the likelihood of the future being presented, as does the second half of the passage: "as his heart mercifully stacked the blocks of hope into the pattern of an America which would someday hold an unquestioned place for him his mind said no, it is not to be, […] for time might cloud the memories of others but the trouble was inside of him and time would not soften that" (52). Okada makes explicit here that Ichiro, actively trying to build and believe the ideological "pattern" of an America to which he might belong, cannot stack up sufficient evidence to substantiate simplistic, nationalistic accounts of identity and temporality.

Desperate to assuage his own and others' pain, Ichiro periodically reverts to this time-heals-all narrative, even though he is aware of its reductive nature. For example, he encourages Taro not to drop out of high school by advising, "Think it over [...] give it time" (67). When Emi expresses grief over her husband Ralph's decision to stay

overseas rather than return to her, Ichiro reassures her, “Takes time to work these things out” (99). Ichiro also reassures his father that his mother will recover from her depression if given time. His father agrees, saying, “Ya, time. We have plenty of time” (111). Ichiro continues to endorse time’s healing effects after her death, reassuring himself, “I will eventually learn to laugh a little because I shall want to laugh for feeling good all over. Time, how slowly it passes. I will hope and wait and hope and wait and there will come a time. […] Time has swept her away and time will bury my mistake” (196). However, the plot ruthlessly reveals that time alone does not ameliorate the novel’s ideologically-based exclusions and betrayals. Taro, tormented and ashamed to live under the same roof as his Japanese loyalist parents and no-no boy brother, runs off and enlists in the army. Meanwhile, Emi’s Ralph refuses another furlough, attempting to make up for his no-no boy brother, Mike. Ichiro’s Ma, whose suffering may be the most egregious in the novel, definitively rejects time’s healing power by removing herself from it entirely (via suicide), and Ichiro himself shows no signs of forgetting his mistake.

Okada uses pathos-bearing rhetorical questions to communicate to readers nationalism’s confusion-inducing ideological contradictions and imagination-based nature. As my discussion of Andersen and Wendt pointed out earlier, nationalism is not just premised on a common origin, a place-based common homeland, but also on a temporally-based “common destiny” or future (4). Ichiro’s reflective questioning of this premise invites readers to reflect and question as well. He wonders, “Where is that place they talk of and paint nice pictures of and describe in all the homey magazines? [...]” where “life is like living in the land of the happily-ever-after? […] Or is it just that it’s not for me? Maybe I dealt myself out, but what about […] the poor niggers on Jackson

Street […]? They're on the outside looking in, […] just like me and just like everybody else I've ever seen or known" (160). The answer Ichiro hints at how the "American dream" is undermined by the competitive, instrumentalist mindset of a capitalist society: "Maybe the answer is that there is no in. Maybe the whole damned country is pushing and shoving and screaming to get into someplace that doesn't exist, because they don't know that the outside could be the inside if only they would stop all this pushing and shoving and screaming, and they haven't got enough sense to realize that" (160). He assures himself of his analysis: "That makes sense. I've got the answer all figured out, simple and neat and sensible" (160). However, as soon as he thinks of his loved ones, he finds that "there was no more answer", recognizing that his explanation contradicts lived experiences which indicate that healing injustice in America will require more than a change in attitude (160).

Even when attempting to reassure his father about his mother's catatonic despair, Ichiro suspects that time may not cure all: "Things like this take lots of time. Look at me. Two years, Pa, two years I've thought about it and I'm not through it yet. Maybe I'll spend the rest of my life thinking about it" (115). Indeed, perhaps due to accumulating evidence to the contrary, Ichiro's optimistic reassurances that time heals dwindle as the story progresses, and by the last third of the narrative, Ichiro seems aware of the emptiness of the time-heals-all platitude: "'It takes time,' he said, knowing that it meant nothing" (207). Visiting Gary towards the end of the narrative, Ichiro expresses more skepticism: "You really think there will come a time when what we've done will be forgotten?" (227). Gary replies that "Time will make them forget", but admits that he is "not so sure that we will" (227). As Dorothy Ritsuko McDonald points out, both Ichiro

and Gary seem aware that "despite the demonstrated patriotism of the Nisei, the attitude towards them has not truly changed and that the No-No boys for an indefinite present are merely the scapegoats of the Japanese community" (20). Ichiro cannot fully believe the dictates of America's national ideologies (which suggest that he alone is responsible for his fate, and that his dreams will come true in time), perhaps because the unjust external circumstances precipitating his hopelessness persist.

By framing Ichiro's confused suffering in relation to nationalism's distorted narratives of time, Okada's plot-based contradictions, rhetorical questions, and loose sentences push Ichiro as well as the text's readers to look beyond Ichiro's frenzied mother-blaming and self-blaming, to discern the hard, American truth that Ichiro's alleged "crime" is merely that of being an Asian American. Ultimately, no right answer was available to young Japanese Americans facing the loyalty questionnaire, for neither answer would include Ichiro and his fellows in the "common destiny" promised by nationalism (4). Okada highlights this double bind by showing that Ichiro's veteran friend Kenji, who supposedly made the correct choice, remains mired in confusion and temporal alienation similar to Ichiro's. Jinqi Ling notes, "Kenji's terminal physical wound will eventually deprive him of his life, while Ichiro's festering psychological wound is robbing him of the moral ground for self-respect. The price for either complying or failing to comply with the pressures exerted by the dominant discourse on Americanization was high indeed" (367).

Kenji's father's reflection on his son's enlistment further troubles American nationalism's false binary between loyal and disloyal Japanese Americans.

> …his son was a man who had gone to war to fight for the abundance and happiness that pervaded a japanese household in America and that was a thing he

> himself could never fully comprehend except to know that it was very dear. He had long forgotten when it was that he had discarded the notion of a return to Japan but remembered only that it was the time when this country which he had no intention of loving had suddenly begun to become a part of him because it was a part of his children and he saw and felt it in their speech and joys and sorrows and hopes and he was a part of them (120).

Kenji's father's musings reveal that he has not thought critically about the American paradoxes troubling Ichiro and seems confused himself, with a U.S. loyalty that crept in one "long-forgotten" day, and is premised on a prosperity he "could never fully comprehend" (120). Okada's use of loose sentences again undermines the rhetoric at hand, signaling the ideological slipperiness and superficiality of the American dream narrative.

Kenji is nearly as disturbed by America's evident ethnic nationalism as Ichiro, evident in the unanswerable rhetorical questions he poses. These questions contribute to the text's pathos of confusion, demanding that American readers reflect on the hypocrisies that pervade their society. After witnessing African Americans being refused admittance at the Club Oriental, Kenji leaves the club in a kind of fugue: "He drove aimlessly, torturing himself repeatedly with the question which plagued his mind and confused it to the point of madness. Was there no answer to the bigotry and meanness and smallness and ugliness of people?" (134). Like Ichiro, Kenji cannot make meaning from the inadequate ideologies available, and remains in confusion: "[he] tried to organize them in his mind so that the pattern could be seen and studied and the answers deduced therefrom. And there was no answer because there was no pattern and all he could feel was that the world was full of hatred" (136). Kenji's struggle to make meaning – to find an "answer" or a "pattern" – echoes Ichiro's, as both men bear witness to the even more profound exclusion and persecution of African Americans. Gary's memory of

the murder of his African American friend, Birdie (226), and Ichiro's memory of a white church congregation's incredibly cold rejection of an African American visitor (231), add to the series of racist exclusions that prevent Ichiro and Kenji from putting stock in the ethnic white nationalism that American ideology attempts to pass off as civic nationalism. The annihilating feelings of meaninglessness prompted by racist exclusion leave these young Japanese American men unable to create a meaningful present or to believe in the deferred, mythical future America promises; however, attempts to simply accept the meaninglessness of the present also prove untenable.

Ichiro briefly considers the salience of his friend and fellow no-no-boy Freddie's counterapproach – of treating life as a largely meaningless present to be spent in the pursuit of instant gratification. Freddie's approach, while seemingly less ideological and more frivolous than the nationalisms described above, springs from the same capitalistic instrumentalist logic, and illustrates how the commodification of temporality compounds the alienation plaguing these young men even when they are unemployed. In embracing a careless approach to the present that includes drinking, fighting, womanizing, disregarding traffic laws, and other troublemaking, Freddie (and to some extent Kenji, Ichiro, and Bull as well) is resistant in that it defies the model minority temporal prescription of working hard in the present to create a meaningful future. Indeed, rejecting the meanings imposed on the present by his parents' future-fixated Japanese nationalism, Freddie propounds a rebellious, "good-time" approach to life instead. Explicitly encouraging Ichiro to stop wasting the present obsessing about the past, Freddie remonstrates, "You been stewin' about it for two years. How much time you need? Wise up, Itchy, wise up" (49).

At first, Ichiro sees the logic in Freddie's critique of their parents' delusional approach to time, admitting, "You make a lot of sense, Freddie" (178). However, as Ichiro increasingly processes his own suffering through empathetic connection with others in the present, he begins to see that both Freddie's reasoning and his engagement with the present are rushed, confused, and superficial:

> He looked at Freddie grinning broadly, and felt sadly cheated. On the surface, there was wit and understanding and even a rough sort of charm, but one made a mistake in probing underneath. He understood now why Freddie was so constantly concerned with living, as he called it. It was like being on a pair of waterskis, skimming over the top as long as one traveled at a reasonable speed, but, the moment he slowed down or stopped, it was to sink into the nothingness that offered no real support. (201)

The disappointed Ichiro also notes that Freddie, "drove like a man possessed with a desperate urge to move fast, covering ground in a frantic pursuit which was being conducted for the sole purpose of running from reality. To stop and sit still would mean to think" (202).

Freddie flees from the specific ideological meanings that inform his no-no-boy past; however, Okada's description of Freddie's frantic movement also reflects the alienating acceleration of time increasingly afflicting late modernity in instrumental capitalist countries. As Hartmut Rosa explains, in late modernity, "the impression of random, episodic or even frantic change replaces the notion of progress or directed history, social actors experience their individual and political lives as volatile without direction, i.e., as in a state of hyper-accelerated standstill" (46). This increased pace produces a time hunger – a "desire or felt need to do more things in less time" and a feeling that one is "running out of time", as if time were "a raw-material which is consumed like oil and which is, therefore, getting more and more scarce and expensive"

(Rosa 20). This pace derives, of course, from the capitalist system discussed in earlier chapters, a system in which "the principle of competition by far exceeds the (growth-oriented) economic sphere" to become "the dominating mode of allocation in virtually all spheres of social life" (Rosa 27). Rosa's concept of social acceleration suggests that while Freddie rejects competition in the job market, saying he "Ain't got time" to work, he remains vulnerable to a widespread time hunger and competitiveness, as these cultural phenomena no longer necessarily derive directly from actual exigencies one faces (202).

As evident by the discussions above, both the breathless pursuit of a meaningless, good-time present and the canned past- and future-oriented narratives of nationalist ideology (embodied in tumbling loose sentences) can be traced back to the same unreflective, instrumental mindset that produces and perpetuates racist capitalist modernity. This mindset can only further compound, rather than cure, Ichiro's confused alienation from the present. However, the alternative power of internal reflection, which Ichiro increasingly brings to bear in response to his confusion, leads him to an alternative, anti-instrumental form of meaning that makes of his suffering a communicable pathos.

V. Cognitively-Based Mindfulness, Empathy, and Temporal Reintegration

Finding no durable meaning in past- and future-fixated Japanese and American nationalist ideologies or in frenzied pursuit of a hedonist present, Ichiro eventually cultivates a more satisfying form of meaning-making inspired by others' compassion and facilitated by his own reflection. Although it does not resolve confusion ideologically, Ichiro's reflective perspective-taking, of what psychology research calls "cognitive-based mindfulness," increases his tolerance of ambiguity and complexity, deepening and

complicating his awareness of his own and others' suffering. This empathy-expansion trajectory reorients Ichiro temporally, shifting him from isolating, past-based obsession toward mindful, present-based connection with others facing confusion.

As we have seen, the nationalist ideologies plaguing Ichiro earlier in the narrative have a mind*less* quality to them, in the sense that they prescribe behaviors based on uncritical adherence to pre-packaged, past ideas. As Natalie Trent et al. observe, mindless behaviors "operat[e] largely on past conditioning, […] as if being on 'automatic pilot" (63). As the narrative progresses, however, Ichiro increasingly resists the reductive mindlessness of instrumental ideologies by exercising "socio-cognitive mindfulness", a present-oriented practice involving "cognitive flexibility and reappraisal" and "drawing novel distinctions, which leads to greater attention to the present moment and sensitivity to context" (Trent et al. 63).

Empirical research suggests that this practice of mindfully studying the present tends to produce empathy. As Trent et al. explain, empathy "requires hallmark elements of mindfulness: attention and flexibility. That is, being empathic requires an individual to direct attention toward another while being cognitively and emotionally flexible regarding the other's potential inner state" (62). Up until recently, only correlations between *meditative* mindfulness and empathy had been studied; however, a recent study finds a correlation between *cognitively-based* mindfulness and empathy. Furthermore, the study by Trent et al. finds that whereas meditative mindfulness correlates with affective empathy, socio-cognitive mindfulness correlates with both cognitive and affective empathy.[xxvi] Trent's study suggests that activities associated with cognitive-

mindfulness such as “noticing how context and other people change” are “required for cognitive empathy” (65).

Given the above research, it is not surprising that Ichiro’s empathic progress is rooted in the empathy and compassion he receives from others, several of whom have suffered greatly themselves. The Kumasakas, family friends of the Yamadas whom he and his mother visit shortly after his return, have recently lost their son Bob in the war. Unknowingly asking after Bob, Ichiro suddenly realizes the loss reflected in Mrs. Kumasaka’s white hair and “in the engaging pleasantness of the father which was not really pleasantness but a deep understanding which had emerged from resignation to a loss which only a parent knows and suffers” (28). The Kumasakas’ suffering gives them deep feelings that extend beyond the ideological differences dividing their community, for Mrs. Kumasaka weeps with a grief that “made no distinction as to what was wrong and what was right and who was Japanese and who was not” (30).

The Kumasakas’ empathic depth is shockingly absent from Ichiro’s ideology-driven Ma, whom the narrator characterizes in this scene as “the other mother with a living son who had come to say to her you are with shame and grief because you were not Japanese and thereby killed your son but mine is big and strong and full of life because I did not weaken and would not let my son destroy himself uselessly and treacherously” (30). This unpunctuated sentence signals the rushed, mindless pace of instrumental ideology, offering a formal reflection of the unreflective, unhinged mental state of a person consumed with nationalism’s mythic past and future to the extent that her capacity for empathic connection in the present is completely stunted, enabling her to deliberately taunt her bereaved former friends right in the face of their grief. Ichiro’s witnessing of

the Kumasakas' suffering and compassion immediately triggers several pages of internal reflection in which conjures perspectives of a series of imagined no-no boys. Although he still critiques the no-no answer, his evident process of reflection constitutes a growing interest in deep feelings, rather than the ideological surfaces that distort them (31-34).

Kenji, the second character to show (and thereby prompt) compassion in Ichiro, accepts Ichiro immediately despite his no-no boy status, openly telling Ichiro, "I like you", and establishing common ground between them: "We've both got big problems, bigger than most people. That ought to mean something" (64). Kenji's offering of empathy enables an exercise in perspective-taking in which they share and compare their respective sufferings. Ichiro says he would still trade places with Kenji, whereas Kenji says of their problems, "Mine is bigger than yours in a way and, then again, yours is bigger than mine" (65). This practice of perspective-taking, combined with the compassion offered by Kenji, seems to enhance Ichiro's capacity for looking past hostile behaviors to the causes behind why people do what they do. Two pages later, in response to his brother Taro's hostility and decision to enlist, Ichiro reflects that "If he were eighteen and in Taro's shoes he would probably do the same thing" (67). A few pages after that, when considering the causes behind the persecution he experiences from Bull, a Japanese American veteran, Ichiro relates, "He could understand Bull's subjecting him to the indignity in the Club Oriental" because "the meanness which had prompted [Bull] to make a spectacle of him was less to blame than the dull, beastly desire to feel the approval of the crowd, which had laughed with him for a moment instead of at him. The blond was a compensation for his lack of acceptance also (80-81). Ichiro's perspective-

taking enables him (and invites readers) to understand the historical causes of behavior and thereby to feel cognitively-based empathy.

Ichiro's empathy journey is further advanced by his love interest and empathy-maven, Emi, whose advanced perspective-taking abilities enable her to communicate a deep compassion that invites Ichiro back into the present. She tells him that she thinks she knows how he feels, and when he challenges her, saying, "You can't. No one can", she replies, "I thought about it while you were sleeping. I put myself in your place and I know how you feel. It's a very hopeless sort of feeling" (95). Like Kenji and the Kumasakas, Emi's capacity for compassion springs in part from her own deep suffering over her Japanese American soldier husband Ralph, who, like Taro, refuses furlough out of shame over his no-no boy brother. Whereas the novel's conflicting nationalisms would package Ralph's extended service as either patriotic or treasonous, Emi's emotional intelligence allows her to grieve and connect with others in the present. While many scholars cite Emi's influence on Ichiro as largely assimilationist in that she allegedly signifies "the universal humanism of the era" (Ling 363) and introduces forgiveness as a bridge between the Japanese American community and the nation (Sokolowski 69) my analysis highlights how her emotional intelligence contributes to Ichiro's personal reintegration into present-based relationships with others, including the Japanese nationalists demonized by America's nationalist ideologies.

Ichiro brings some of Emi's skill at perspective-taking and empathic presence back with him to the city, where he feels his first real moment of compassion for his mother, whom he has previously described only with contempt. Ma immediately criticizes him for hanging out with a disloyal Japanese like Kenji, yet Ichiro finds his

feelings toward her changing, nonetheless: “Through his anger crept up a sudden feeling of remorse and pity. It was an uneasy guilty sort of sensation which made him want almost to take her into his arms and comfort her, for he saw that the sickness of the soul that was Japanese once and forever was beginning to destroy her mind” (104). His reaction to her has changed markedly here: he has not only shed the almost physical disgust he previously felt in her presence, but he feels an opposite urge to embrace her in the present. He feels cognitively-based empathy toward her now, after reflecting that, “Right or wrong, she, in her way, had tried harder than most mothers to be a good mother to him” (104).

Using rhetorical questions that further demonstrate how confusion can generate empathy via perspective-taking reflection, Ichiro begins to question his previous blame of his mother:

> Did it matter so much that events had ruined the plans which she cherished and turned the once very possible dreams into a madness which was madness only in view of the changed status of the Japanese in America? Was it she who was wrong and crazy not to have found in herself the capacity to accept a country which repeatedly refused to accept her or her sons unquestioningly, or was it the others who were being deluded, the ones, like Kenji, who believed and fought and even gave their lives to protect this country where they could still not rate as first-class citizens because of unseen walls? (104)

As Ichiro’s line of questioning puts reflection on the past to the service of better understanding the present, his punctuating question marks offer a rhetorical counter to the previously mentioned loose-sentences Okada uses to signal hasty, half-baked ideological narratives.

In stark contrast to his previous isolating fixation on his own past “mistake”, Ichiro suddenly really sees his mother and wishes to use past knowledge to connect with her in the present, in an act of collaborative meaning-making: “Tell me, Mother, who are

you? What is it to be Japanese? There must have been a time when you were a little girl. You never told me about those things. Tell me now so that I can begin to understand. There is time now […]" (105). Ichiro's shift toward cognitively imagining others' pasts, rather than obsessing over his own, assists him in understanding others and fuels his new desire to connect with them. Unfortunately, his longing to connect with her is interrupted by her sneer over what she dismisses as another "fake" letter for help from hungry relatives in Japan, so Ichiro does not end up making his request for connection aloud. However, as he delivers the letter to his father for her, Ichiro again demonstrates an unprecedented capacity for sympathetic reasoning as he suddenly ponders his father's past, "what it must have been like for the young Japanese new to America and slaving at a killing job on the railroad in Montana under the scorching sun and choking dust" (106).

Ichiro's compassionate understanding and reintegration in the present is further supported by Mr. Carrick, an engineer who disregards American nationalism's disdain for no-no boys and offers him a job. Mr. Carrick shows genuine sympathy for Ichiro, saying, "I am sorry, Ichiro, sorry for you and for the causes behind the reasons which made you do what you did. It wasn't your fault, really. You know that, don't you?" (153). Mr. Carrick's compassionate understanding and generosity opens portals of compassion in Ichiro's own heart: "as he thought about Mr. Carrick and their conversation time and time again, its meaning for him evolved into a singularly comforting thought. There was someone who cared. Surely there were others too who understood the suffering of the small and the weak and, yes, even the seemingly treasonous, and offered a way back into the great compassionate stream of life that is America" (153). Mr. Carrick's existence suggests to Ichiro that some Americans have managed not to internalize the greed and

competition of America's capitalistic, instrumentalist culture, a realization that helps restore his faith in humanity: "Under the hard, tough cloak of the struggle for existence in which money […] had ostensibly overwhelmed the qualities of men that were good and gentle and just, there still beat a heart of kindness and patience and forgiveness" (153).

As he considers the job offer, Ichiro again feels a new capacity for facing his own and others' suffering in the present, with compassionate understanding. No longer wishing to run from his past, he reflects of his family:

> They were not to be ignored, to be cast out of mind and life and rendered eternally nothing. […] the past had been shared with a mother and father and, whatever they were, he too was a part of them and they a part of him and one did not say this is as far as we go together, I am stepping out of your lives, without rendering himself only part of a man. If he was to find his way back to that point of wholeness and belonging, he must do so in the place where he had begun to lose it. Mr. Carrick had shown him that there was a chance and, for that, he would be ever grateful. (155)

Ichiro realizes here that he cannot reintegrate himself in the present without integrating the past and connecting with others. Seeing the temporal violence committed by ideologies and other forms of frenzied avoidance, he senses that rendering his family and past "eternally nothing" by chasing a false future will alienate him further, leaving him "only part of a man" rather than part of a larger "wholeness and belonging."

It appears Ichiro's temporal integration has happened a few minutes too late when, upon refusing the job offer and returning to his family in the city, Ichiro finds his father drunk and his mother dead of suicide. However, as he processes her death, unprecedented levels of compassion for his mother arise in him. He addresses her memory silently: "sorry for the happiness you have not known. So, now you are free. Go back quickly. Go to the Japan that you so long remembered and loved, and be happy. […] Too late I see your unhappiness, which enables me to understand a little and, perhaps,

even to love you a little" (187). Ichiro thinks that he only feels this compassion for her because she is dead: "Had you lived another ten years or even twenty, it would still have been too late. If anything, my hatred for you would have grown. You are dead and I feel a little peace and want very much for you to know the happiness that you tried so hard to give me" (187). However, Ichiro might well have loved his mother more in time, for he has come to love his father more as his (Ichiro's) compassion expands. Although initially annoyed at his father for being giddy from the attention at Ma's funeral, Ichiro, upon reflection, again feels compassion for his father: "Enjoy yourself, Pa […]. If this is what makes you happy, I guess you've had it coming for a long time. […] Maybe, the grief is waiting. Or is it that the grief has finally come to an end for you? It has for me in a way, her being gone. We'll have to talk about it" (204). Ichiro's words signal a hopeful change, as his process of reflection, combined with the kindness and empathy offered him by others, yields a newfound compassion and openness to deeper relationships with others in the present.

Ichiro's developing compassionate awareness allows him to release his obsessive quest for ideological clarity regarding his past. He reflects that "It wasn't his fault. Neither was it the fault of his mother, who was now dead because of a conviction which was only a dream which blew up in her face" (229). Ichiro sees how the instrumentality of widespread and destructive ethnic nationalisms systematically limit empathy and thereby wreak havoc on the lives they touch: "It wasn't the fault of the half a billion Chinamen who hated the ninety million Japanese and got only hatred in return" (229). He also expresses compassion for his friend Freddie, feeling "deeply sorry for his friend who, in his hatred of the complex jungle of unreasoning that had twisted a life-giving yes

into an empty no, blindly sought relief in total, hateful rejection of self and family and society" (241). The narrator explicitly identifies the process of understanding taking place inside Ichiro: "And this sorrow, painfully and humanely felt, enlarged still more the understanding which he had begun to find through Ken and Mr. Carrick and Emi and, yes, even his mother and father" (241-242). As Ichiro transcends the limits of alienating ideologies by practicing cognitively-based mindfulness, his capacity for empathy continues to increase, culminating in a powerful moment of mindful, empathic presence in the novel's final scene.

VI. The Moment of Meeting and Community Healing

Much has been made of the novel's final scene, in which Freddie is gruesomely cut in half by a car crash as he flees the fight he and Ichiro have been having with their bully, Bull. Freddie's death prompts a dramatic shift in the dynamics between survivors Bull and Ichiro: not only does Bull suddenly break down into tears, but Ichiro suddenly feels compassion for Bull and is awash in positive feeling by the last lines of the narrative, as he leaves the scene:

> A glimmer of hope – was that it? It was there, someplace. He couldn't see it to put it into words, but the feeling was pretty strong. He walked along, thinking, searching, thinking and probing, and, in the darkness of the alley of the community that was a tiny bit of America, he chased that faint and elusive insinuation of promise as it continued to take shape in mind and in heart. (251)

Scholars tend to describe Ichiro's final walk as either a continuation of his confusion and alienation, or as a symbolic journey back to faith in America's phony and sentimental mythos. Joseph Entin, when discussing the novel's participation in the noir genre, argues that the final scene remains "unresolved and unsettled", as Ichiro "walks off into the dark,

alone, his destination unknown, without the familial or romantic bonds that might signify his return to social normalcy" (101). William Yeh also reads the final scene as continuous with Ichiro's previous isolation and confusion: "Although Ichiro interacts with friends, foe, and family alike, he eventually discovers that he alone must create a distinct character and personality for himself", he still "remains definite, yet undefined" at the novel's end (129).

Meanwhile, other scholars highlight the unnaturalness of Ichiro's peaceful and hopeful feelings, attributing the distortion to the rising sentimentalism of the Cold War era. Daniel Y. Kim, citing Klein's argument that this sentimentalism "translated the ideology of international capitalist integration into a system of feeling", argues that Ichiro's capacity to forgive the extremely aggressive Bull marks Ichiro's full transformation into "a subject of sentimental power" easily capable of learning "to forgive America for its 'big mistake'" (77). According to Klein, all of this is evidence of how "postwar culture often decentered masculinity and violence in its construction of a globalized American national identity and gave pride of place to feminized narratives of international love, friendship, domesticity, and peaceful exchange" (qtd. in Kim 77). Both Klein and Kim dismiss this feminization as a superficial masking of capitalism in the sheep's clothing of sentimentalism.

Jinqi Ling, too, reads Okada's ending as disturbingly conciliatory, arguing that "Ichiro has come to admit his 'crime,' accept his punishment as just, and thus unconsciously subject himself to yet another form of the dominant ideology – 'forgiveness' earned by self-chastisement" (372). Ling argues that whether conscious or not, Okada's "tendency to gloss over the contradictions and historical consequences of

racism with images of healing love is actually part and parcel of the overall cultural climate of his time and reflects the way in which the particular historical conditions under which he was writing limited his response to racial injustice" (374).

While Kim, Klein, and Ling's critiques of superficial post-war sentimentality have legitimacy, I contend that Okada's text models and potentially elicits the deeper and more transformative response of empathy. The larger trajectory I have outlined – tracing Ichiro's journey from temporal alienation to integration, and from isolating fixation on the past to connection in the present – allows for a symbolic understanding of the narrative's final scene in relation to the community's and the text's larger dynamics. I argue that Ichiro's strong feelings of relief signal neither a concessionary ending nor (merely) a cathartic expression of the painful communal division symbolized in Freddie's severed body, but rather, a glimpse of the freedom accompanying the momentary breakdown of ideological walls dividing Japanese Americans.

The novel's final powerful moment of empathy takes place in a potentially transformational "now" moment that marks Ichiro's increasing temporal reintegration. Freddie's unpredictable death brings Ichiro and Bull together in a long, transformational moment similar to what Daniel Stern describes as a "moment of meeting", in which one's common state of divided temporal attention – of "hovering in the past, present, and future" – suddenly ceases, and one finds oneself "stand[ing] with both feet in the present" as "[p]resentness fills the time and space" and "[t]here is only now" (3). Stern characterizes the long, transformational now of the moment of meeting as "a shared feeling voyage […] a kind of journey, lasting seconds, taken by two people, roughly

together through time and space" in which "two people traverse together a feeling landscape as it unfolds in real time" (5).

Given that "we are subjectively alive and conscious only now" – that "[t]he only time of raw subjective reality, of phenomenal experience, is the present moment" – it is no surprise that, as Stern observes, such "[u]npredictable encounters in the Now" tend to be "at the heart of change" (1). The moment of meeting is notable for the significant shift it creates in personal relationships: "The participants have created a shared private world. And having entered that world, they find that when they leave it, their relationship is changed" (Stern 5). New information floods into the moment, potentially shifting the preexisting perceptions, roles, and boundaries: "There has been a discontinuous leap. The border between order and chaos has been redrawn. Coherence and complexity have been enlarged. They have created an expanded intersubjective field that opens new possibilities of ways-of-being-with-one-another" (Stern 5).

Freddie's unexpected death prompts such a moment between Ichiro and Bull, shifting them from past enemies (based on differing ideological choices from years before), to present co-sufferers and co-witnesses of a shared community riven by violence. Bull defiantly denies responsibility at first, but soon finds himself overcome by grief: "the eyes, the frightened, lonely eyes, peered through a dull film of tears and begged for the solace that was not to be had" (250). As Bull's emotional confusion reaches a breaking point, he lets out a "throaty roar […] mixed with streaks of agonized screaming verging on the hysterical" followed by loud sobbing, "not like a man in grief or a soldier in pain, but like a baby in loud, gasping, beseeching howls" (250). Echoing Ichiro's scream of anguish from earlier in the novel (6), Bull's cries seem to give

cathartic voice to the accumulated suffering of the novel's characters. The post-war Japanese American community, having lost several members to the era's extreme ideologies (Ma, to Japanese nationalism, Kenji, to his American war-heroism, and Freddie, to his frenzied escapism), shows signs of uniting in grief toward the novel's close. Hearing the fear, loneliness, and hopelessness behind Bull's bullying, Ichiro looks past ideological differences to connect wordlessly with Bull's suffering humanity in the present moment: "Ichiro put a hand on Bull's shoulder, sharing the empty sorrow in the hulking body, feeling the terrible loneliness of the distressed wails, and saying nothing. He gave the shoulder a tender squeeze, patted the head once tenderly […]" (251). In this moment of meeting, Bull, facing his own violence, loses his urge to persecute Ichiro and thereby transforms from perpetrator to victim in Ichiro's perception.

This glimpse into Bull's terrible pain prompts Ichiro to recall those who have contributed to his expanded state of compassion: "He wanted to think about Ken and Freddie and Mr. Carrick and the man who had bought the drinks for him and Emi, about the Negro who stood up for Gary, and about Bull, who was an infant crying in the darkness" (251). Fittingly, these reflections on compassionate acts of community prompt the positive feeling that fills Ichiro as he leaves the scene. As Harold Bush has pointed out, "the true nature of hope…is always communal" (172). Ichiro's moment of meeting with his enemy in the present has loosened the grip of the Japanese and American forms of ideological madness that have confused the Japanese American community and divided it from access to its own present.

Okada makes clear that Ichiro's reintegration is *not* an integration into the Ameriacn nation or its various ideologies. As Andersen and Wendt explain, national

pathos traditionally "gains form ultimately through a distinct opposition to the experience of wandering" and "gains meaning by virtue of its disparity from the promise of fulfilment on which the narration is founded" (26). Okada's ending firmly refuses to resolve the narrative's ongoing troubling of national pathos as Ichiro remains a wanderer even within his alleged homeland, with the text's final lines describe him walking off, "thinking, searching, thinking and probing […] in the darkness of the alley of the community that was a tiny bit of America" (251).

Ichiro's "glimmer of hope", "faint and elusive insinuation of promise", and strong feeling "taking shape in his mind and heart" are not a deferred hope of social integration in the larger America which has so profoundly marginalized him, but rather, a growing feeling of connection to the lived present he has just shared with a member of his Japanese American community. This reintegration is not premised upon conciliation to American ideologies of exceptionalism, individualism, or nationalism, for his empathic connections with members of his own community are grounded instead in a practice of cognitively-based mindfulness that expands both cognitive and affective empathy.

Okada's strange final scene illustrates the tension between dehumanization and reclamation that Robert Buch identifies as central to pathos (*Pathos of the Real*, 22). One the one hand, Freddie's grisly death and Bull's wordless screams of grief express pathos as "[…] the name of unsalvageable pain and misfortune, radically immanent, […] that cannot be sublated or converted into something else, some higher meaning or cause, a pain, in other words, that shatters the symbolic economy that would allow us to make sense of it" (22). On the other, *No-No Boy* powerfully illustrates pathos as "the name of compassion. […] the means by which we relate to another's pain and by which the

suffering other is recognized and affirmed as human, precisely at the point of radical crisis" (23). As we have seen throughout this discussion, in Okada's hands, the pathos of confusion becomes "a medium in which a shared humanity comes to realize itself" (Buch, *Pathos of the Real*, 23).

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

As I hope my analyses have indicated, the evident difficulties the characters face in locating themselves in the present time – difficulties communicated in the temporal pathae of finitude, idealism, and confusion I have outlined – reflect their difficulties in placing themselves in a 20th century American culture infected by capitalist instrumentality and the racist imperialism, liberalism, and nationalism bred by it. My chapters have made clear how capitalist instrumentality disintegrates 20th century Americans from temporal experience by dictating that time taken to reflect on the contradictions and complexities of one's own or others' lives is wasted unless it generates profit. By commodifying the time of human beings and discouraging the use of their more sophisticated meaning-making faculties (creativity, imagination, empathic understanding of others), instrumentality reduces people to useable props or objects and makes their exploitation appear justifiable. The ideologies underpinning America's destructive imperialisms, neo-liberalisms, and nationalisms proffer seductively simple instrumentalist narratives, all of which depend for meaning upon correspondingly simplistic linear timelines involving false pasts and futures.

As we have seen, because the feeling of belonging is thwarted for mid-century Asian Americans by their experiences of American racist exclusion, they are often left mourning their original nation, fixating on a future, inclusive vision, and searching for alternative means of belonging with other marginalized people in the present. Consequently, the endings of these narratives do not constitute homecomings to national place, but rather, suggest a sense of wandering and a vague hope of belonging to a wider community of sufferers beyond the temporal and spatial limits of the 20th century U.S..

Resourcefully countering the exclusionary reality of the American nation with an inclusivity of imagination, Kang, Bulosan, and Okada forge alternative temporalities that challenge the narrow parameters of linear, commodified, accelerated American temporality.

1. Contemporary Examples of Temporality Pathos in Asian American Fiction

Contemporary Asian American fiction, like its mid-century predecessors, troubles Western linear understandings of temporality, excoriates the violent temporal alienations performed by capitalism, and posits connection with others as an antidote to alienation from the present. However, unlike mid-century writers' often explicit temporality metaphors (as when Kang describes time as both a container and a bird, when Bulosan figures it as a predator, or when Okada imagines it as a healer), contemporary Asian American fiction tends to evoke temporality pathos more subtly, by emphasizing the alternative temporalities of story-telling, dream, and memory. As I shall briefly sketch out in the texts discussed below, post-1960s fiction evidences an increased remembering of traumatic pasts in its pathos of finitude; a taste for dream and fantasy timelessness rather than idealized political futures in its pathos of idealism; and an increasingly metafictional blending of reality and story in its pathos of confusion.

Maxine Hong Kingston's 1976 *The Woman Warrior*, the inaugural text of the Asian American literary renaissance of the last few decades, offers an apt starting place for discussing temporal pathos in contemporary Asian American fiction. This semi-autobiographical, four-part narrative tells stories of the women in the narrator's family, embellishing them with imaginative, exoticized adaptations of her mother Brave Orchid's

Chinese stories. Like its predecessors, *The Woman Warrior* sometimes elicits finitude pathos via a juxtaposition of pre-modern and modern temporalities that shows how denaturalized, commodified and accelerated temporality is in the 20th century United States. As Brave Orchid tells the reader, "Time was different in China. One year lasted as long as my total time here; one evening so long, you could visit your women friends, drink tea, and play cards at each house, and it would still be twilight", whereas America "is terrible ghost country, where a human being works her life away […]. Even the ghosts work, no time for acrobatics. I have not stopped working since the day the ship landed" (106; 104).

Perhaps partly in response to this alienating present, both Brave Orchid and the narrator turn to alternative temporalities of story for escape. Consider the following supra-temporal vision experienced by narrator Maxine's fantasy warrior self:

> I saw two people made of gold dancing the earth's dances. They turned so perfectly that together they were the axis of the earth's turning. They were light; they were molten, changing gold – Chinese lion dancers, African lion dancers in midstep. I heard Javanese bells deepen in midring to Indian bells, Hindu Indian, American Indian. Before my eyes, gold bells shredded into gold tassles that fanned into two royal capes that softened into lion's fur. Manes grew tall into feather that shone – became light rays. Then the dancers danced the future – a machine-future – in clothes I had never seen before. I am watching the centuries pass in moments because suddenly I understand time, which is spinning and fixed like the North Star. (27)

This sublime, cosmic vision seems to occur beyond conventional time and space boundaries, in a fantasy realm where many of Asian American literature's characters take refuge.

Relatedly, cyclical Asian temporalities also function therapeutically in the plots of these texts, often offering the characters a more comforting temporality narrative than the

linear, commodified temporalities of the 20th century U.S.. In Wendy Law-Yone's *The Coffin Tree* (1983), the esoteric myth of a rare coffin tree functions as a refuge for the nameless narrator's brother Shan, promising him a better future: "prepare for the moment/ To be born again./ Now visions of your new birth place/ Will shine upon you,/ Staining your skin/ With the color of the future" (190). This myth becomes particularly important to Shan when he and his sister are sent away from Burma, by their revolutionary father, to the allegedly safer but much bleaker United States. Although safe from political execution in the U.S., the characters face poverty, racism, and other profound alienations which culminate in Shan's worsening schizophrenia and sudden death, followed by the narrator's depression and suicide attempt. Law-Yone's narrator almost becomes a casualty of instrumentalist reasoning, insisting that "the only safe refuge was reason" and scorning Shan's mythical stories and other creative delusions to such an extent that she has no adequate coping mechanism for surviving the bleak life of the poor in instrumentalist America (14).

Law-Yone's narrator resembles Kingston's, who, frustrated with the multicultural dissonance of her childhood, yells at her mother: "I don't want to listen to any more of your stories; they have no logic. They scramble me up. You lie with stories" (204). Even as an adult, when she has come "to see the world logically" and "to think that mysteries are for explanation", Kingston's narrator says she must "continue to sort out what's just my childhood, just my imagination, just my family, just the village, just movies, just living" (205). As she gets older, Maxine retrospectively demystifies Chinese myths and uses Western rationalism to correct her mother's perception of China's timelessness, saying, "Time is the same from place to place […]. There is only the eternal present, and

biology" (106). Nevertheless, the narrator's creativity persists, an enduring testament to how multicultural ambiguities have taught her "to make my mind large, as the universe is large, so that there is room for paradoxes" (29). Similarly, by the last lines of the narrative, Law-Yone's skeptical narrator comes to acknowledge, via the experience of a beautiful but painful dream about her brother, the necessity of "some illusion to shape the future, some dream to lighten the days" (192).

Asian American fiction from the 1990s shows greater interest in characters' longing to forget their traumatic pasts than in their longing to remember mythic pasts. One sees this trend in Korean American writer Chang Rae-Lee's *A Gesture Life* (1999), a novel which serves as a kind of self-imposed trial of first-person narrator Franklin "Doc" Hata, an aging Korean-born, Japanese-raised, American immigrant, who has begun to reexamine his past in response to a growing awareness of profound alienation from his present. Hata, a long-term resident and astute observer of the chilly, upper-middle class American town of Bedley Run, is beset with the uncanny feeling that he must sell his valuable house and leave the town, not because he has somewhere else he particularly wishes to go, but because he increasingly feels like a ghost in his own life. He writes, "more and more the time feels right to me, not so much from a financial viewpoint but from one's sense of one's time in a place, and that time being close to done" (21). Although he claims that he has "always been fortunate to be in a certain provident time and place, which must be my sole skill, and worth, and luck", he now has "the peculiar sensation […] that I am already dead and a memory and I am walking the hallways of another man's estate […]" (139). The first-person narrative gradually reveals the profound fissures between Hata's genteel model minority persona and the nightmares and

repressed memories of his traumatic youth as a Japanese war medic, when he assisted in the Japanese army's systemic rape of Korean "comfort women." Lee's skillful use of temporal pathos throughout the narrative demonstrates how systemic imperialist violence (both Japanese and American) has disintegrated Hata from past, present, and future, precluding him from experiencing emotional investments and losses that he can fully grieve.

By the end of the novel, however, the eruption of Hata's repressed past seems to have helped him connect with others in the present, bearing out an observation made by the narrator of Teresa Cha's *Dictee*: "Without the past, without the dismembered history to be remembered, the child of the present cannot redeem future or past. [...] The very act of retelling and re-membering the past emancipates her from the prison of stony and immobile silence" (93).

Contemporary Asian American increasingly elicits its pathos of confusion via blurring conventional lines between the past and the present, between reality and story, through complex metafictional strategies. Ruth Ozeki's novel *A Tale for the Time Being* (2011), the most explicitly and pervasively temporality-obsessed Asian American narrative I have read thus far, illustrates contemporary fiction's ever more sophisticated uses of temporal confusion for pathos. The novel has two alternating narrators, a Japanese teenage girl named Naoko (Nao) and a Japanese Canadian writer named Ruth, who finds Nao's diary. The diary, embedded inside a repurposed vintage cover of *A la recherche du temps perdu* and wrapped in plastic, has washed up on the beach of Vancouver Island, where it has traveled from the Japanese tsunami eleven years before.

Ozeki's novel begins with the poem "For the Time Being" by Zen Buddhist Dogen Zenji, followed by the first entry of Nao's diary, in which she asks the reader directly to "give me [Nao] a moment" to explain what a time being is ("someone who lives in time") (3). Nao is listening to a song, "playing sometime in your past, which is also my present, writing this and wondering about you, somewhere in my future", and planning to "drop out of time. Drop out. Time out. Exit my existence" through suicide, telling us that she is "counting the moments" and inviting us to "count the moments together" with her (3; 7). Before she dies, however, Nao is determined to write the story of her great-aunt Jiko, the fascinating Zen Buddhist anarchist nun and novelist whose pre-modern approach to time involves "do[ing] everything really slowly in order to spread time out" (24). Ruth spends much of her narrative mulling over the diary and researching the Yasutani family, for she cannot shake the urge to save Nao and Nao's father, a suicidal man broken by the boom and bust cycles of American capitalism, even though both probably died in the tsunami. Like Okada's *No-No Boy*, Oseki's *A Tale for the Time Being* keeps characters and readers empathetically engaged in a struggle to understand the shifting and multiple nature of temporality narratives, although Oseki's emphasis on connection across increasingly permeable boundaries between fact and fiction, past and present, offers her readers a pathos of confusion updated for a globalized and technologized 21st century.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

Should any future graduate students ever wish to study temporality in Asian American fiction, I can offer a few ideas for additional research. The first is a

comparative study between temporal pathos in Asian American literature and African American literature. Such a study could sharpen and particularize understandings of temporality's political significance and functioning in both bodies of literature. The subject matter of my dissertation also merits at least three focused, book-length studies on Asian American modernisms: one on modern exilic temporality in Asian American writing; one on Asian American contributions to modern utopian literature and thought; and one on confusion, catharsis and anagnorisis in Asian American literature.

I am most drawn to the latter, for much of these texts' pathos derives from the belated nature of knowledge of both self and world in an alienated society, as well as from the evident reality that belated knowledge cannot recover lost time or erase past suffering. As Jonathan Kertzer explains, "We are maladroit [...] because knowledge comes as an after-thought. The pathos of understanding is that it is belated: it falters behind experience, and usually arrives too late to render justice to it" (65-66). One can sense this pathos throughout these Asian American fictions in which self-knowledge often comes late, and justice, not at all. Under the conditions in which they lived, mid-century Asian American characters and writers, as Carlos Bulosan so poignantly articulates, "could only pick up fragments of our lives and handle them fearfully, as though the years had made us afraid to know ourselves" (132). I hope that my work has demonstrated that time becomes so terrifying under capitalism precisely because in robbing worker's time, capitalism threatens to rob that human being of the creative temporal processes of pathos itself – reflection, narratively-based meaning-making, and communication.

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[i] This line of critique may be found in Lisa Lowe's *Immigrant Acts*; Kandice Chuh's *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique*; Betsy Huang's *Contesting Genres in Contemporary Asian American Fiction*; Sue-Im Lee and Rocio Davis's *Literary Gestures: the Aesthetic in Asian American Writing;* Viet Thanh Nguyen's *Race and Resistance: Literature and Politics in Asian America*; and Xiaojing Zhou and Samina Najmi's *Form and Transformation in Asian American Literature.*

[ii] Candice Clark, in her research on American empathy, finds that "the other person's *characteristics* may […] affect how much we empathize", and that "empathy comes more easily for others who are similar to us in nationality, ethnicity, and social status" (40). As Clark explains, for this and other reasons, more privileged people often "make little effort to empathize with the problems of the poor, drug addicts, prostitutes, and others to whom our society accords low esteem" (40). In fact, if a situation is unfamiliar enough to us, we may fail to feel empathy altogether because "we may read [the situation] cognitively but fail to view it as a problem" (Clark 41). Clark notes that "empathizing with another's troubles -- especially empathizing emotionally -- may be easier if one has experienced a *similar problem* oneself" (40). Feeling empathy for those facing problems we have ourselves experienced is easier because it requires less of the time and cognitive and emotional effort involved in perspective-taking. Sympathy and empathy require "effort and skill", "energy and time", and are "often painful, involving both distressing emotions and inconsistent cognitions of injustice befalling an innocent person" (Clark 23; 49). Due to the time and effort sympathy and empathy often require, it is easier and faster, "to rely, instead, on perceptual shortcuts, such as stereotypes, projections of what our own feelings would be, or constructions that make other people and their situations un-sympathy-worthy" (39). In fact, as Nussbaum observes, "Lack of blame and the idea of similar possibilities actually go together closely, for a spectator will think, 'I myself might suffer that,' only if it is clear that the cause of misery is not badness or laziness on the part of the suffering person" (*Political Emotions,* 283).

[iii] Hartmutt Rosa reviews each of these alienation theories in his book *Social Acceleration: A New Theory of Modernity.* New York, NY: Columbia UP, 2013.

[iv] Technically, even a sociopath can be empathetic in the senses described in definitions 1, 4, 5, and 6; indeed, the sociopathic individual is often highly adept at reading people and manipulating them to his own advantage. Consequently, I make the actual *feeling* of empathy an essential criterion for my understanding of the term. Furthermore, again consistent with number 8 above, I understand empathy to be an *other*-oriented emotional response to suffering, not to be confused with numbers 2 or 3, which might merely involve contagious mimicry of a feeling (e.g. feeling sudden anger arise when exposed to another's anger), or with number 7, a kind of self-oriented stress that sometimes arises in the face of another's pain. In other words, while feeling genuine empathy may coexist with, and is often cultivated and expanded by, the activities/
experiences described in 1-7 above, empathy as I define it must include an other-oriented emotional response to suffering.

[v] This phenomenon is demonstrated repeatedly in *Born for Love: Why Empathy is Essential --*
and Endangered, by Maia Szalavitz and Bruce D. Perry. New York: Harper Collins, 2010.

[vi] The European discovery of America spoke to early modern male fantasies of a return to a primordial past, gendered feminine. As Annette Kolodny explains, "America's oldest and most cherished fantasy: a daily reality of harmony between man and nature based on an experience of the land as essentially feminine -- that is, not simply the land as mother, but the land as woman, the total female principle of gratification -- enclosing the individual in an environment of receptivity, repose, and painless and integral satisfaction" (4). For early British and European settlers, America was special precisely because of its seeming promise of a spiritual reunion of human beings with nature. This harmonious place, the "soul's home", "is that place where the conditions of exile -- from Eden or from some primal harmony with the Mother -- do not obtain; it is a realm of nurture, abundance, and unalienated labor within which all men are truly brothers. In short, the place America had long promised to be [...]" (4). Meanwhile, Kolodny insightfully wonders whether the metaphor derived in part from the European arrivals' "need to experience the land as a nurturing, giving maternal breast because of the threatening, alien, and potentially emasculating terror of the unknown" (9). The noticeably gendered nature of this fantasy may have been the most telling predictor its future, for the fantasy of a welcomed, peaceful return to paradise was disrupted, not only by the dangers of the land and its Native peoples' resistance, but by the persistent violence with which Anglo men exploited both.

[vii] Robert Lee, for example, conflates author and narrator when he claims that "Kang leaves little doubt about how much he relished his life as a neophyte New Yorker" (par. 10). Relatedly, Elaine Kim, for example, argues that although Kang "became something of a spokesman for Koreans in America almost by default", he was ultimately a privileged and somewhat assimilationist scholar, and was therefore "completely unrepresentative of his people" (32).

[viii] See, for example, Sunyoung Lee's "The Unmaking of an Oriental Yankee," or Hyungji Park's "The Cosmopolitan Intellectual in Younghill Kang's *East Goes West.*"

[ix] Chungmoo Choi argues that "(post)colonial South Koreans have continued to mimic Western hegemonic culture, and have reproduced a colonial pathology of self-denigration and self-marginalization, which have long blinded the South Koreans from critically assessing their 'liberator-benefactor' as a colonizing hegemon" (466).

[x] Kang's use of modernist temporal rhetoric invites empathy from modern readers because perceived similitudes between a sympathizer and a sympathizee tend to enhance empathy in the sympathizer. Candice Clark, in her research on American empathy, finds that "the other person's *characteristics* may […] affect how much we empathize", and that "empathy comes more easily for others who are similar to us in nationality, ethnicity, and social status" (40). As Clark explains, for this and other reasons, more privileged

people often "make little effort to empathize with the problems of the poor, drug addicts, prostitutes, and others to whom our society accords low esteem" (40). In fact, if a situation is unfamiliar enough to us, we may fail to feel empathy altogether because "we may read [the situation] cognitively but fail to view it as a problem" (Clark 41). Clark notes that "empathizing with another's troubles -- especially empathizing emotionally -- may be easier if one has experienced a *similar problem* oneself" (40). Feeling empathy for those facing problems we have ourselves experienced is easier because it requires less of the time and cognitive and emotional effort involved in perspective-taking. Sympathy and empathy require "effort and skill", "energy and time", and are "often painful, involving both distressing emotions and inconsistent cognitions of injustice befalling an innocent person" (Clark 23; 49). Due to the time and effort sympathy and empathy often require, it is easier and faster, "to rely, instead, on perceptual shortcuts, such as stereotypes, projections of what our own feelings would be, or constructions that make other people and their situations un-sympathy-worthy" (Clark 39). In fact, as Nussbaum observes, "Lack of blame and the idea of similar possibilities actually go together closely, for a spectator will think, 'I myself might suffer that,' only if it is clear that the cause of misery is not badness or laziness on the part of the suffering person" (*Political Emotions*, 283).

[xi] As my dissertation introduction explains, similitude-based empathy has significant limitations. While it takes less time to elicit than empathy generated by perspective-taking, similitude-based empathy often relies on projection – on the assumption that others' "feelings, opinions, attitudes, judgments, behaviors, desires" correlate with one's own (*Political Emotions* 45). Indeed, while it can contribute to genuine empathy, projection often devolves into hasty, inaccurate assumptions or mere self-oriented empathic distress.[xi] Unlike projection, genuine empathy requires emotional regulation that includes awareness of the boundary between self and other: "Empathy...necessitates some level of emotion regulation […]. Without such control, the mere activation of the shared representation, including the associated autonomic and somatic responses, would lead to emotional contagion or emotional distress" (Sorrell 73). In other words, genuine empathy is not feeling exactly what another feels, but rather, recognizing that another's suffering is painful, meaningful, and worthy of compassion, even when it differs from one's own. This recognition requires a durational process of reflection not found in affective or projection-based forms of empathy, which tend to be more automatic and immediate. As Kory Sorrell explains, the perspective-taking that generates cognitively-based empathy involves "higher, slower cognitive function instead of lower, faster automatic response in order to capture a more accurate grasp of the other's point of view" (71). Perspective-taking plays a primary role in the larger process of what William James called "sympathetic" reasoning, a form of reasoning which tempers impulse by integrating one's faculties of imagination, memory, and inference: "The role of reason is to shape native propensity. It makes inferences regarding relations, calls up memory, and sets Imagination loose – in this case, to educate sympathy – so that various impulses may come into play, conflict, modify one another, and ultimately result in desirable action" (Sorrell 73-74). According to James, intelligent conduct depends on a sympathy that has been educated "in light of other considerations", and occurs "after this kind of inclusive deliberation" (73-74). Imagination plays a particularly crucial role in generating empathy

for those experiencing suffering different from one's own. Daniel Batson's empathy research suggests that, "other things held constant, the key variable distinguishing those in whom a story of woe elicits compassion from those in whom it does not is the experience of vivid imagining" (*Poetic Justice* 146). As Batson explains further, "If the other's situation is unfamiliar or unclear, then imagining how you would think and feel in that situation may provide a useful, possibly essential, basis for perceiving the other's state […], a necessary precondition for experiencing other-oriented feelings" (Batson 11). Research by Galinzky and Moskowitz substantiates Batson's claim, for they have found that "imagining how one would think and feel in the other's place can lead directly to a more sensitive response to the plight of members of stereotyped out-groups" (Batson 11).

[xii] Andrew Moulyn makes this distinction between the novelist and the historian in *The Meaning of Suffering: An Interpretation of Human Existence from the Viewpoint of Time* (180).

[xiii] While Gonzales acknowledges *AIH*'s adaptations to the genre, he nonetheless maintains that "an underlying forward movement in the narrative may be gleaned beneath the superficial circular movements" (213) allowing him to label the text a *kunstlerroman*, "a tale of the orientation of an artist" (Buckley, qtd. in Gonzales 213). Wolfe D. Kindemann also posits progress and awakening for Allos: "Bulosan's literary awakening after his journey through the nightmare world of Depression-ridden California made him recognize the historical dimension of his writing" (258). According to Reiko Sugisawa, "*America Is in the Heart* deals with Bulosan's maturity as an artist as well as the spiritual awakening of the narrator/protagonist", and is therefore a *bildungsroman* (2). Sugisawa claims that Allos moves from an emphasis on his experience in Parts One and Two to an emphasis on knowledge in Part Three, and eventually to unification of experience and knowledge in Part Four. Tracing the influences of Whitman, Hart Crane, and Thomas Wolfe on Bulosan, Sugisawa explains that "[Allos] must write in order to fulfill his faith in America", and that his education of laborers is what brings together his knowledge and experience and thereby transforms knowledge into wisdom by using it "to improve people's lives" (9). However, Sugisawa does identify a politically problematic compromise demanded by the genre and context, arguing that the two voices of the narrator suggest that "the book was rewritten in order to be accepted by white readers for the sake of publication" (3).

[xiv] Gonzales argues that "the seeming failure of the plot to provide a coherent narrative of development is in itself the literary manifestation of the frustrating socio-economic realities in which the first Filipinos in America lived" (213). Gonzales chooses to see the text as "not so much a failed Bildungsroman but a twentieth-century Filipino American engagement of a nineteenth-century form in which the encounter not only uncovers the myth of universality of the form but also asserts the self-representation of the heretofore unrepresented" (213). Joseph Keith, author of *Unbecoming Americans* (2013), acknowledges that Bulosan had an Americanized education and loved "the idealized bildungsroman of American self-formation: that is, through hard work and struggle the heroic individual can overcome any obstacle to achieve a seemingly limitless upward mobility" (28). And yet, Keith sees *AIH* as an "alternative bildungsroman founded on a

reading practice that transforms [Allos's] *alienage* from the nation into a standpoint from which to integrate himself into a non-national and ever-widening, and ultimately *cosmopolitan* form of community and collectivity that enables politics" (31).

[xv] Sheila Wong Kong Luong, for example, criticizes "the narrator/protagonist's unending quest for an idealized America", understanding it best in terms of the "colonial and neocolonial relations between the Philippines and the United States" (149). For Luong, "American colonialism has instilled a national political amnesia no doubt because it is in such violent conflict with American values and ideals" (148). Danilo Victorino Manarpaac also examines Allos's predicament in terms of the dynamics between colonizer and colonized (77). Jean Gier, departing somewhat from the Philippines-centered exilic narrative, differentiates between "local-archipelagic space" and "mainland/exilic space", and underscores the text's paradoxical tension between the assimilation mythoi of "America as a homeland, a place to settle" on the one hand and "America as place of freedom and mobility" on the other (15; 6). Jeffrey Arellano Cabusao draws on texts like *AIH* to advocate a new form of "Filipino Cultural Studies" that "is not strictly ensconced in the academy" and which "might provide useful and timely suggestions for alternative and transformative ways of knowing and being" (Decolonizing x).

[xvi] Elaine Kim has described *AIH* as "a composite portrait of the Filipino American community, a social document from the point of view of a participant in that experience" (qtd. in Ponce 51). Susan Evangelista calls *AIH* "a collective history … of the West Coast Filipino migrant workers during the Depression" (qtd. in Ponce 51). Carey McWilliams considers the book "the first and best account in English of just what it was like to be a Filipino in California and its sister states in the period, say, from 1930-1941" (qtd. in Ponce 51).

[xviii] Western cultures have famously justified colonialist and imperialist interventions by arguing that "primitive" cultures relying on "traditional" knowledge stand to benefit from modernization. Dalbir Sehmby explains that the large-scale stereotyping of "developing" countries as backwards and primitive derives from the West's linear conception of time: "Stereotyping, as well as the lack of differentiation and the discrimination that results from it, stems from a linear, chronological view of time, where the culturally progressive is contrasted with the primitive" (120). Firth and Robinson, summarizing Amanda Conroy, observe how the "Western right-wing movements responsible for much of this hate and stereotyping attempt to create an alternative historical trajectory based on nostalgic nationalism, essentially reversing time and characterizing themselves as the saviors of history" (xi). Relatedly, many seemingly benevolent efforts toward "racial uplift" or "enlightenment" obviously rest on a questionable privileging of modern Western knowledge, and Bulosan's historian voice replicates this privileging.

[xix] Whereas Western modernity sees itself as constituted by a series of welcome and radical breaks from the past, many non-Western cultures revere traditional knowledge and conceive of their history in continuity with their past. African time, for example, differs markedly from Western time, according to Mickie Mwazia Koster. Citing Mbiti,

Koster explains how, unlike the Western, future-oriented conception of time, "African time emphasizes the past and present, placing little value on the future, especially the intangible distant future" (316). As several of the essays in Firth and Robinson's collection point out, many of the alternative understandings of time found within non-Western cultures defy the constraints of linearity. For example, "Indigenous cosmologies [...] portray time as cyclical, while Buddhism separates time into tiny moments or even offers possibilities of transcending time" (Firth and Robinson xi). John Streamas, discussing alternative time-senses frequently found among communities of color, describes "CPT", or "colored people's time", as "a parallel time, an alternative time that is not necessarily either linear or cyclical, that may be discontinuous, even contingent and strategically atomistic and particularized" (29). Streamas cites as an example a Blackfoot Indian woman who depicts her culture's sense of time as a sphere rather than a line, explaining that, "On a sphere a person, and that person's time, can be linear and circular at once […] A person may experience concurrent events in parallel temporalities" (Streamas 30). More complex time senses such as these pose an inherent challenge to Western ways of perceiving, measuring, and evaluating time and history.

[xx] M.F.N. Giglioli observes that the 19th century's most significant belief systems, such as liberalism, socialism, and evolutionism, "all focused on processes of change in society, on stages, shifts, mutations, progress. All conceived of the present as an essentially new age with respect to the past, all expected the future to be profoundly and importantly different from the present" (200). As Bruno Latour and others have pointed out, the modern experience of progress is characterized by "epistemic ruptures so radical that nothing of the past survives in them" -- by movement from a dark, primitive, superstitious past, toward a brighter, more civilized, and more scientific future (68; Savransky 268).

[xxi] As Brown explains, "Labour is subsumed within capital through the measurement of labour-time. Marx's labour theory of value [...] is based on the reduction of the various forms of human labor to abstract labor and the measurement of discrete quantities of labor time" (177). Similarly, for Lyotard: "work is not an expenditure of energy, but an expenditure of time" (qtd. in Prodromou 44). As Prodromou explains, money measures not the value of the goods themselves, but the time spent to produce those goods: "Capital does not just capitalize, capital temporalizes by capitalizing time: money is not just time, time is money" (44).

[xxii] Bulosan's use of temporality bears pathos in that it connects seemingly private feelings to a larger public meaning, making visible a longstanding reduction of time to space in Western conceptualizations of time. This spatialization of time, which pervades both older, spiritualist and newer, materialist theories of time in the West, persists in the "contemporary logic of time" and fixes it "spatially in accordance with the criteria of a physical ontology" (Negri 34). Capitalism, of course, compounds this reduction of time to a measurable and measuring entity by rendering time "synchronic and structural" by reducing it to a series of measurable units, an abstract and exchangeable means to the end of fulfilling the programmed desires of capitalism (Negri 34).

[xxiii] Furthermore, while Deleuze and Guattari do not conflate minority with race and gender categories -- instead defining minoritarian becomings more generally as "the variety of ways in which individuals and groups fail to conform to the majoritarian standard" -- the philosophers do note that the process of becoming minor tends to be particularly prevalent within minority groups, as these groups tend to occupy the kinds of constricted social spaces that usually instigate the process of becoming minor (*ATP* 105-6). For these reasons, Deleuze and Guattari's attention to micropolitical dimensions can assist readers in understanding the dynamics of literature written by writers like Bulosan, who writes from a marginal location.

[xxiv] Jinqi Ling observes that dominant U.S. culture was loath to acknowledge class divisions or address grievances injustice during this period (360), and Viet Thahn Nguyen argues that this cultural climate "meant that *No-No Boy* would disappear almost immediately" (159). Meanwhile, as June Pulliam points out, Okada's novel also upset many Japanese Americans, not only because it reminded them of events they wished to forget, but because it disrupted a protective, model minority image of Japanese Americans that many wished to retain (260).

[xxvi] Recall here that cognitive empathy, generated by considering another's perspective based on their perceived emotions, differs from affective empathy, which involves *feeling* another's perceived emotions (Trent et al. 63).