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Bridging Thought and Action: History, the Digital Humanities, and Building the Foundations of Asian/American Political Thought

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Abstract: This article argues that understanding the historical contours of Asian American electoral engagement provides an essential foundation for studying Asian/American political thought. However, historians have tended to adopt a broad understanding of "politics" beyond traditional civic and electoral politics, due to limited historical sources on Asian American electoral engagement and the longstanding interest among Asian Americanist scholars in alternative politics. I reintroduce Asian American electoral history as a vital and viable subject of study by exploring how scholars can use digital humanities tools and methods to build the archives of Asian American politics and to explore new insights and questions.

Introduction

I wish to begin with a simple, and probably uncontroversial, statement: that history matters. This seems very obvious, given that the historical foundations of our scholarly fields continue to shape our work today. Practitioners of Asian American Studies remain deeply engaged with the original mission of Ethnic Studies as it was founded in 1968 by student activists at San Francisco State College: to "provide relevant education on all levels to peoples of the communities they are supposed to represent and serve."[1] In 2022, scholars writing on the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Association for Asian American Studies "return[ed] to a question of relevance" as they reflected on "the ways in which the field has and has not lived up to its founding activist engagements and progressive promises."[2] The study of Asian/American political thought likewise

pursues the spirit of relevance by challenging Eurocentrism in political theory—much as the founding scholar-activists of Ethnic Studies sought to challenge the Eurocentrism of their own education. Yet even as historical *memory* inspires and informs our work, we have at times neglected the raw materials of history—that is, the people, events, and ideas that populate the chaotic and messy world of the past. If the project of Asian/American political thought seeks to represent and serve Asian American communities—to bridge thought and action—then it must be grounded in the complexity and diversity of Asian American material realities and histories.

Why is this historical grounding necessary for Asian/American political thought, and what risks do we run without it? Let us consider the gap between the political orientation of the field of Asian American Studies, and the political behavior of the Asian Americans it seeks to serve. In 2002, Viet Thanh Nguyen noted that "mainstream" Asian American academics, artists, activists, and political leaders—a group he termed the "Asian American intellectual class"—exhibited a high degree of "ideological homogeneity" and "rigidity" in its politics. Nguyen argued that these individuals' commitment to opposing the historical racialization of Asians as alternately a dangerous yellow peril or docile model minority had produced a "political consensus" favoring radical, anti-capitalist views.[3] Yet as Nguyen recognized, the left-leaning consensus in political thought and culture among this class did not reflect a consensus in the political behavior of Asian Americans writ large. Asian American voters largely supported the Republican Party well through the 1990s, even as the GOP shifted rightward and African American and Hispanic voters left its ranks.[4] Only by the early 2000s—shortly before the publication of Nguyen's book—did the Asian American vote split evenly between the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates.[5] Twenty years later, a clear majority of Asian Americans regularly support the Democratic ticket. But the unexpected increase in Asian Americans who voted for Donald Trump—from seventeen

percent in 2016, to twenty-nine percent in 2020—underscores that Asian Americans still do not cohere in any "consensus," left or right.[6] Despite the field's desire to speak to our current needs, the scholarship in Asian American political and intellectual history has struggled to provide context and understanding for this long conservative trend until recently. The result, to paraphrase historian Nic John Ramos, is that we are left "without a true assessment of power."[7]

This article explores how the methods, findings, and insights of historical research can address two key factors that have contributed to the gap between Asian American scholarly thought and political action. Briefly put, these factors are a lack of source material about Asian American electoral behavior, caused by the historical exclusion of Asian Americans from US civic life; and a lack of political will among Asian American knowledge producers to investigate those electoral engagements, caused by the ideological investments of the Asian American intellectual class. I address the first contributing factor by using digital history tools and methodologies to excavate and analyze historical Asian American voter registration data. Specifically, I analyze a limited sample of data from the California Great Registers, which are collections of voter registration records from counties throughout California for elections from 1866 to 1968. I revisit early methodologies developed by Asian American political scientists, present the data and format of the Great Registers in more detail, and discuss the feasibility study I conducted using these records to construct a small-scale database, map, and analysis of Chinese and Japanese American voters. The outlines of the temporal, geographical, and thematic contours and flashpoints of Asian American political life that emerge from this work reveal a complex and messy past. This history, in turn, addresses the second contributing factor by pushing scholars to adjust our theories in accordance with new evidence. I analyze my findings in tandem with other historical sources and contexts to explore how this project can produce new questions and insights for Asian American

political history. I thus show that the study of Asian American electoral politics is both viable and vital to achieving a relevant analysis of Asian/American political thought.

Contexts and Challenges for Studying Asian American Political History

To better understand the two methodological and ideological factors that have limited our scholarship, it is useful to begin with the history of white American attitudes towards Asian American political activity. As historian Gordon H. Chang argues, Asian Americans did not move linearly "from [political] apathy to activism," but have instead been impacted by their perception as alternately hyperpolitical or apolitical.[8] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, nativists feared that Asians were hyperpolitical beings who would maintain loyalties of race to their countries of origin, and thereby use their votes to undermine the United States' sovereignty and security. A core goal of the anti-Asian movement, then, was to prevent the emergence of an electorate of Asian descent. Laws restricting immigration and naturalization on the basis of race—as well as legislative and judicial efforts to strip citizenship from those who did manage to naturalize—successfully suppressed the growth of a sizeable Asian American constituency until recent decades. As a result, most Asians, except for birthright or derivative citizens, were disenfranchised until their right to naturalize was legalized piece by piece from 1943 to 1952, with some earlier exceptions for veterans. In 1950 in California, the state with the highest number of residents of Asian descent (until the admission of Hawai`i in 1959), Chinese and Japanese Americans composed just over one percent of the entire population; the number of voters would have been even smaller.[9] With such a limited electoral footprint, few journalists or scholars found it worthwhile to survey or study Asian American voters. Thus as sociologist Douglas S. Massey noted in 1981, "There is no information on patterns of Asian political participation."[10] The first national exit poll to consider Asian American voters was the NBC News/Associated Press survey

in 1982, which included a category for "Oriental."[11] Recognizing the historical exclusion of Asian Americans from the franchise, political scientist Don T. Nakanishi argued that researchers must examine "politics" using a broad lens to encompass electoral and non-electoral engagement, domestic and transnational activities, and multiple political and social groups.[12] Scholars took up Nakanishi's call, shedding new light on Asian American engagements with state power in areas such as labor, culture, and revolutionary and anti-colonialist diasporic politics.[13]

Yet histories of Asian American engagement in "traditional" politics—specifically, civic and electoral politics—have been slower to emerge.[14] Disciplined by the US exclusionary regime and by the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans in World War II, midcentury Asian Americans worked to present themselves as respectable, non-threatening, and well-assimilated "model minorities."[15] Although many took pride in voting as a demonstration of good citizenship and civic belonging, activist movements of the late 1960s critiqued the perceived political apathy of the "passive Oriental stereotype."[16] The Asian American intellectual class that emerged from these movements therefore lacked the political will to analyze Asian American electoral engagement, due to their "interest in alternative politics and in establishing an activist identity for themselves."[17] Moreover, if many scholars "invest[ed] in the idea of Asian America as a place of resistance to capitalist exploitation,"[18] yet Asian Americans not only willingly participated in the political system but often to favor the Republican Party and its neoliberal program, then the work of highlighting Asian American radicalism and resistance might be jeopardized by investigating that phenomenon. This political concern continues to shape the direction of our scholarship today, especially as many people question the relevance and reliability of Asian Americans as partners in the struggle for racial justice.[19] In 2018, historian Madeline Y. Hsu again highlighted the urgency of analyzing ideologically diverse and morally messy stories, and called on scholars "to move

beyond advocacy projects and redouble efforts to research narratives that do not simply produce two-dimensional Asian American victims and heroes."[20] New histories of Asian American religious life, suburbanization, respectability politics, entanglements with empire, and more have risen to meet Hsu's challenge.[21] This article continues the work of uncovering the Asian American political past to develop a relevant analysis for our present.

While some Asian Americanists have taken a broad definition of the digital humanities, drawing on media studies to examine Asian and Asian American engagement and racialization in media and technology cultures and infrastructures, here I focus on the interdisciplinary field of digital humanities scholarship that uses computational and web-based tools and platforms for analyzing, presenting, and distributing research and educational material.[22] Digital history projects in Asian American Studies have predominantly focused on producing public-facing resources that "decolonize the archive" by digitizing historical materials to increase access for non-scholarly audiences.[23] Well-known examples of online archives include Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project, founded in 1996; the South Asian American Digital Archive, established in 2008; and collections of the Southeast Asian Archive at the University of California, Irvine, such as Viet Stories: Vietnamese American Oral History Project, created in 2011. Such archives have also been used as innovative teaching resources that generate critical in-class discussions of historical content and methods as well as new sources, particularly oral histories, for scholarly research and broader community engagement.[24] Other projects, like the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford University, have used maps and audiovisual media to present original research and teaching materials in innovative and accessible ways.[25] Asian Americanist digital humanities practitioners also use computational tools such as mapping, text analysis, and network analysis to conduct research by building new datasets and by visualizing, analyzing, and

interpreting sources.[26] Digital tools are particularly promising for Asian American history by offering new ways to create archives and approach sources, to discover new knowledge, and to develop and answer new questions. These advantages can help researchers to address biases in the archival record that have historically favored the stories of East Asian Americans along the coasts, and to trace those individuals who may not have left behind personal written records. By integrating digital tools with traditional historical methods, we can see into the past in new and vital ways.

Voter Registration Records as a Historical Source

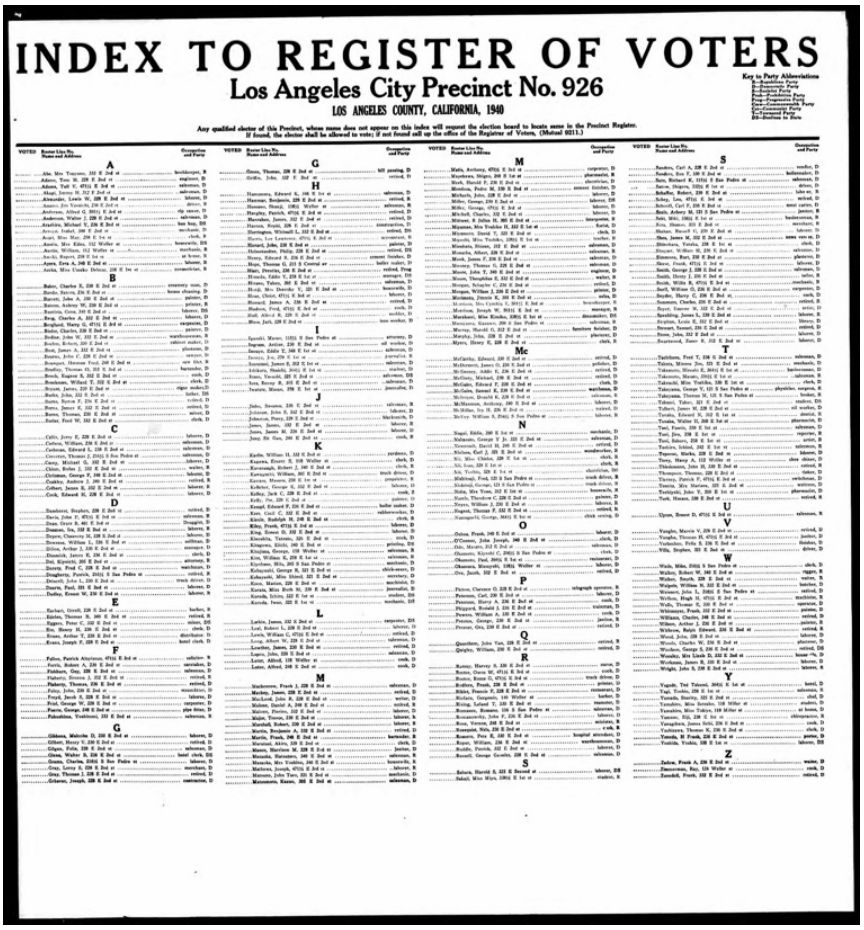
The first scholars to develop systematic attempts to identify and analyze data on Asian American voting were political scientists in the 1980s who often relied on voter registration lists as a source base. While some data existed on Asian American voters in Hawai`i, where their electoral impact was far stronger, very little data was available on Asian Americans on the mainland.[27] Grant Din led one of the earliest efforts to analyze Asian Americans using voter registration lists, using the San Francisco County official voter registration lists from November 1983 to identify and analyze Chinese and Japanese voters in the Chinatown, Richmond, and Sunset districts.[28] Working around the same time, Don T. Nakanishi led a team of researchers at the UCLA Asian Pacific American Voters Project to identify Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, Samoan, and Asian Indian voters in twenty cities in Los Angeles County using the county's official voter registration lists for the June 1984 primary.[29] Individuals were not asked to identify their ethnicity when they registered to vote, which posed a challenge to scholars narrowing their focus to individuals of Asian descent. As a result, both studies relied upon sight recognition of ethnic surnames—a pragmatic, although deeply problematic, methodology. In essence, researchers browsed through voter registration rolls and picked out people whose surnames looked like AAPI names. Despite

the limitations of this method, Din and Nakanishi were able to create the first empirical data on Asian American voters of various ethnic groups in specific geographical regions.[30] This was a key breakthrough for the study of this politically marginalized population. Yet the information produced on Asian American voters remained limited to the 1980s and after, offering little in the way of source material for scholars seeking to understand a broader scope of Asian American politics over time. After all, voters of Asian descent in the United States have been participating in elections and organizing as citizens and voters since at least the 1880s, and likely earlier.[31]

Nonetheless, the innovative and trailblazing work of these political scientists presented a potential path towards building a unique archive of Asian American political history, highlighting not only a viable methodology but also a valuable source base: historical voter registration records. Such records exist for many counties throughout the United States and are often held in county or state archives. In California, these county clerk voting registers are known as the Great Registers. Records exist from many counties throughout the state for every two years from the 1860s to 1960s, although materials are missing for various years and localities; as a result, the records are most complete through the 1940s. The rolls include individual information for each registrant at the precinct level, such as name, address, occupation, and political party affiliation. The original books are held at county-level archives, historical societies, libraries, and museums, while some microfilm copies are available at the California State Library in Sacramento. Genealogical research companies like Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org also offer digitized and searchable scans with optical character recognition (OCR) capability.[32] A sample of one page from the Great Registers is reproduced in Figure 1, showing registrants from precinct 926 in Los Angeles's Little Tokyo from the 1940 elections. Figure 2 provides a close-up of the page.[33] Adapting and applying the sight recognition methodology developed by Din and Nakanishi to the digitized records on a large

scale could turn the Great Registers into the basis of incredibly valuable historical information previously unavailable to researchers.

Figure 1. A sample page from the Great Registers, showing precinct 926 in the city of Los Angeles from the 1940 elections.



INDEX TO REGISTER OF VOTERS

Los Angeles City Precinct No. 926

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, 1940

Any qualified elector of this Precinct, whose name does not appear on this index will request the election board to locate same in the Precinct Register. If found, the elector shall be allowed to vote; if not found call up the office of the Registrar of Voters. (Mutual 0211.)

Key to Party Abbreviations
D—Democratic Party
R—Republican Party
A—American Party
Prog.—Progressive Party
Soc.—Socialist Party
Com.—Communistic Party
Proh.—Prohibition Party
T—Townsend Party
Ill.—Declines to State

VOTED | Roster Line No. Name and Address | Occupation and Party

A

..... Abe, Mrs Tsuyuno, 331 E 2nd st ..... bookkeeper, R
..... Adams, Tom M, 228 E 2nd st ..... engineer, D
..... Adams, Vail V, 1127 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Alagi, Jack, 312 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Anderson, Lewis W, 228 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Angelo, Jos Venardo, 216 E 2nd st ..... driver, D
..... Anderson, Alfred G, 2011½ E 2nd st ..... dip saucer, D
..... Anderson, Walter J, 228 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Anselmo, Michael V, 216 E 2nd st ..... bus boy, DS
..... Arnold, Isabel, 208 E 2nd st ..... merchant, D
..... Asari, Mrs Mary, 250 E 1st st ..... clerk, R
..... Austin, Mrs Ellen, 342 Wolfer st ..... housewife, DS
..... Austin, William, 342 Wolfer st ..... mechanic, R
..... Averbi, Rupert, 250 E 1st st ..... at home, R
..... Ayers, Eva A, 340 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
..... Azuka, Miss Yuoko Delmar, 228 E 1st st ..... researcher, R

B

..... Baker, Charles S, 228 E 2nd st ..... creamery man, D
..... Banks, Steven, 234 E 2nd st ..... house cleaning, D
..... Barrett, John A, 108 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Batson, Andrew W, 216 E 2nd st ..... painter, R
..... Batson, Andrew W, 216 E 2nd st ..... laborer, DS
..... Bauer, Charles A, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Berglund, Harry G, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... carpenter, D
..... Bixby, Charles, 228 E 2nd st ..... painter, D
..... Bodine, John W, 332 E 2nd st ..... warehouseman, R
..... Bodley, Richard, 330 E 2nd st ..... cabinet maker, D
..... Bost, James A, 332 E 2nd st ..... plasterer, D
..... Bowles, John C, 228 E 2nd st ..... weaver, D
..... Bourgeat, Herman Fred, 240 E 2nd st ..... saw filer, R
..... Bradley, Thomas O, 332 E 2nd st ..... bartender, D
..... Brock, Eugene S, 332 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Brockman, Wm C, 332 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Bryan, James, 228 E 2nd st ..... cigar maker, D
..... Bryan, Lawrence, 228 E 2nd st ..... lather, DS
..... Burns, Byron F, 234 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Burns, James E, 332 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Burns, Thomas, 332 E 2nd st ..... miner, D
..... Butler, Fred W, 332 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D

C

..... Callo, Jerry E, 228 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Carlson, William, 234 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Carlsson, Edward L, 228 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Carreiro, Thomas J, 2101½ E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Carey, Michael G, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Chinn, Rufus J, 332 E 2nd st ..... waiter, R
..... Civitanna, George F, 106 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Coakley, Andrew J, 240 E 2nd st ..... retired, R
..... Colbert, James S, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Cook, Edward H, 228 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D

D

..... Danielsen, Stephen, 228 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Davis, John F, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... salesman, R
..... Dean, Grace B, 401 E 2nd st ..... housewife, R
..... Deamer, Tex, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
..... Dearen, Thomas, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Dearen, Wilfred L, 228 E 2nd st ..... milkman, D
..... Dillon, Arthur J, 330 E 2nd st ..... manager, D
..... Dimmick, James E, 332 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Dol, Kiyoichi, 305 E 2nd st ..... attorney, R
..... Dorsey, Fred C, 228 E 2nd st ..... watchman, D
..... Dougherty, Patrick, 2012½ S San Pedro st ..... retired, R
..... Driscoll, John L, 330 E 2nd st ..... truck driver, D
..... Duarte, Paul, 231 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Dudley, Ernest W, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R

E

..... Earhart, Orrell, 228 E 2nd st ..... barber, R
..... Edelen, Thomas B, 340 E 2nd st ..... retired, R
..... Eggers, Peter C, 332 E 2nd st ..... miner, DS
..... Ein, Henry H, 230 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Evans, Arthur T, 230 E 2nd st ..... distributor, D
..... Evans, Joseph P, 230 E 2nd st ..... hotel clerk, D

F

..... Fallon, Patrick Aloysius, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... solicitor, R
..... Farris, Robert A, 230 E 2nd st ..... mercahnt, D
..... Fishburn, Guy, 230 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Flaherty, Steven J, 332 E 2nd st ..... retired, R
..... Flaherty, Thomas, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Foley, John, 230 E 2nd st ..... researcher, D
..... Freyd, Jacob S, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Friel, George, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Fuess, George, 106 E 2nd st ..... pipe fitter, D
..... Fukushima, Yoshitomi, 231 E 2nd st ..... salesman, R

G

..... Gibbons, Malcolm D, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Gilbert, Henry V, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Gilpin, Felix, 230 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Glenn, Walter S, 230 E 2nd st ..... hotel clerk, DS
..... Goode, Charles, 2101½ S San Pedro st ..... laborer, D
..... Gray, Leroy S, 230 E 2nd st ..... merchant, D
..... Gray, Thomas J, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Grieves, Joseph, 230 E 2nd st ..... contractor, D

G

..... Gross, Thomas, 230 E 2nd st ..... bill posting, D
..... Griffin, John, 330 E 2nd st ..... retired, D

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..... Hamilton, Thomas, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, R
..... Hannan, Frank, 1021 Wolfer st ..... salesman, R
..... Harpley, Patrick, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Harraden, James, 332 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Harson, Ryan, 230 E 2nd st ..... construction, D
..... Harrington, Wilmoth L, 332 E 2nd st ..... retired, DS
..... Harris, Lee Lawrence, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... accountant, R
..... Hassel, John, 230 E 2nd st ..... painter, D
..... Helmstetter, Philip, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, DS
..... Henry, Edward S, 230 E 2nd st ..... cement finisher, D
..... Hope, Thomas G, 215 S Central av ..... boiler maker, D
..... Hunt, Preston, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Hunsaker, Carl, 230 E 1st st ..... manager, DS
..... Hunsaker, Fred, 332 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
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..... Hyun, Chris, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Hyssell, James A, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Hudson, Fred, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... cook, D
..... Hull, Alice S, 230 E 2nd st ..... worker, D
..... Hyss, Jack, 230 E 2nd st ..... box worker, D

I

..... Ignotti, Mario, 1121½ S San Pedro st ..... attorney, D
..... Ingram, Arthur, 230 E 2nd st ..... oil worker, D
..... Inman, Eddie T, 340 E 1st st ..... salesman, D
..... Inman, Jos, 230 E 1st st ..... journalist, R
..... Insomni, James S, 332 E 1st st ..... salesman, D
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..... Iwasaki, Mineo, 250 E 1st st ..... journalist, D

J

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..... Johnson, John S, 342 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
..... Johnston, Percy, 228 E 2nd st ..... blacksmith, D
..... Jones, James, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
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..... Jung, Ho Gun, 340 E 2nd st ..... cook, R

K

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..... Kavanaugh, Robert J, 340 E 2nd st ..... clerk, R
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..... Kazian, Warren, 230 E 1st st ..... laborer, D
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..... Kelly, Ira, 230 E 2nd st ..... painter, D
..... Kempf, Edward F, 230 E 2nd st ..... boiler maker, D
..... Kew, Carl C, 332 E 2nd st ..... embalmer, R
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..... Kiley, Frank, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... King, Ernest D, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Kinsella, Tarsem, 332 E 2nd st ..... cook, D
..... Kingston, Elich, 340 E 2nd st ..... printer, DS
..... Kinghan, George, 318 Wolfer st ..... salesman, R
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..... Kono, Marion, 230 E 1st st ..... merchant, D
..... Kuraia, Miss Ruth Ito, 108 E 2nd st ..... journalist, D
..... Kuroda, Kiyito, 332 E 1st st ..... student, DS
..... Kuroda, Isao, 332 E 1st st ..... mechanic, DS

L

..... Larkin, James, 332 E 2nd st ..... carpenter, DS
..... Leal, Robert L, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Lewis, William L, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Long, Albert, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Lopez, John, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Lopez, John, 230 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Lozier, Alfred, 138 Wolfer st ..... cook, D
..... Lutes, Alfred, 340 E 2nd st ..... cook, D

M

..... Mackeown, Frank J, 228 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Mackey, James, 228 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... MacLeod, John R, 228 E 2nd st ..... waiter, D
..... Mahler, David A, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Malers, Pierino, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Mandel, Jack, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
..... Marshall, Robert, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
..... Martin, Benjamin A, 332 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Martin, Frank, 230 E 2nd st ..... bartender, R
..... Marutani, Akira, 228 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Mason, Marlowe M, 230 E 2nd st ..... janitor, D
..... Matsuda, Harunaro, 340 E 2nd st ..... salesman, R
..... Matsuda, Mrs Yoshiko, 340 E 2nd st ..... housewife, R
..... Mathews, Joseph, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
..... Matsuno, John Taro, 321 E 2nd st ..... mechanic, D
..... Matsumoto, Kazuo, 302 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D

M

..... Mata, Anthony, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... carpenter, D
..... Matthews, Hugo, 230 E 1st st ..... pharmacist, R
..... Mark, Harold V, 230 E 2nd st ..... electrician, D
..... Mendosa, Pedro M, 230 E 2nd st ..... cement finisher, D
..... Michaels, John, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Miller, George, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Miller, George, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Mills, Mrs Ruth, 230 E 2nd st ..... housekeeper, R
..... Minton, F Dallas B, 302 E 2nd st ..... interpreter, R
..... Miyamoto, Miss Yoshiko H, 332 E 1st st ..... florist, D
..... Mizokawa, David, 321 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Mojeski, Miss Yoshiko, 2001½ E 1st st ..... teacher, D
..... Monahan, Dennis, 332 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Monacha, Albert, 228 E 2nd st ..... salesman, R
..... Monk, James F, 230 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Mooney, Thomas C, 228 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Moore, John T, 340 E 2nd st ..... engineer, D
..... Moore, Theophilus E, 332 E 2nd st ..... waiter, D
..... Morgan, Schuyler C, 230 E 2nd st ..... painter, D
..... Morgan, William J, 230 E 2nd st ..... painter, D
..... Morrison, Mrs Cecelia, 2011½ E 2nd st ..... housekeeper, D
..... Morrison, Mrs Cecelia, 2011½ E 2nd st ..... housekeeper, D
..... Morrison, Joseph W, 2011½ E 1st st ..... manager, R
..... Murakami, Miss Kimiko, 2001½ E 1st st ..... dressmaker, DS
..... Muscarino, Eustace, 208 S San Pedro st ..... salesman, R
..... Murray, Harold G, 332 E 2nd st ..... furniture finisher, D
..... Murphy, John, 228 E 2nd st ..... plasterer, D
..... Myers, Henry E, 228 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D

Mc

..... McCarthy, Edward, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... McDermott, James O, 230 E 2nd st ..... polisher, D
..... McGeorge, Addie L, 234 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... McGinty, Michael, 106 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... McGuire, Edward F, 230 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... McGuire, Samuel E, 230 E 2nd st ..... watchman, D
..... McIntyre, Donald S, 228 E 1st st ..... laborer, D
..... McMahon, Anthony, 106 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... McMillan, Ira H, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... McVay, William S, 2041½ S San Pedro st ..... laborer, R

N

..... Nagai, Eddie, 240 E 1st st ..... mechanic, D
..... Nalbandian, George T Jr, 332 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Nemmeth, David H, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Nielsen, Carl J, 332 E 2nd st ..... watchman, R
..... Nii, Miss Chiyo, 230 E 1st st ..... clerk, R
..... Nii, Yoshio, 230 E 1st st ..... clerk, R
..... Nik, Yoshio, 230 E 1st st ..... electrician, DS
..... Nishinal, Fred, 120 S San Pedro st ..... truck driver, R
..... Nishinal, George, 122 S San Pedro st ..... truck driver, R
..... Noble, Mrs Vera, 332 E 1st st ..... housewife, R
..... North, Theodore C, 228 E 2nd st ..... painter, D
..... Noyes, William J, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
..... Nugent, Thomas F, 332 E 2nd st ..... retired, R
..... Nunnagehl, George, 3001½ E 1st st ..... clock setting, D

O

..... Oaton, Frank, 106 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... O'Connor, John Joseph, 106 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Ohi, Morato, 312 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Okamoto, Kiyoshi C, 2041½ S San Pedro st ..... clerk, D
..... Okamoto, Paul, 2041½ S 1st st ..... restaurant, D
..... Okamura, Masayuki, 1001½ Wolfer st ..... laborer, D
..... Ono, Jacob, 332 E 2nd st ..... retired, D

P

..... Patron, Clarence O, 228 E 2nd st ..... telegraph operator, R
..... Peterson, Carl, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Peterson, Harry A, 236 E 2nd st ..... cook, D
..... Phippard, Ronald J, 235 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Powers, William A, 230 E 2nd st ..... cook, D
..... Preston, George, 230 E 2nd st ..... janitor, D
..... Prosser, Ora, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D

Q

..... Quarthers, John Van, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, R
..... Quigley, William, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D

R

..... Ramey, Harvey S, 230 E 2nd st ..... nurse, D
..... Rankin, Owen W, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... cook, D
..... Rankin, Rimie O, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... truck driver, D
..... Rathbun, Frank, 230 E 2nd st ..... printer, D
..... Rehm, Francis P, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Rickles, Gasparini, 116 Wolfer st ..... barber, D
..... Rivera, Ramon, 230 E 1st st ..... carpenter, D
..... Robertson, Rosario, 108 S San Pedro st ..... salesman, D
..... Romanovsky, John F, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Ross, Vernon, 340 E 1st st ..... musician, R
..... Rosquist, Nels, 230 E 2nd st ..... cook, R
..... Rosero, Pete R, 230 E 2nd st ..... hospital attendant, D
..... Ruse, William, 236 E 2nd st ..... warehouseman, D
..... Ruddle, Patrick, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Russell, George Goodin, 230 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D

S

..... Salem, Harold S, 321 E Second st ..... laborer, DS
..... Sakai, Miss Mary, 330½ E 1st st ..... student, R

S

..... Sanders, Carl A, 228 E 2nd st ..... roofer, D
..... Sanders, Roy F, 108 E 2nd st ..... boilermaker, D
..... Sato, Richard K, 1121½ S San Pedro st ..... salesman, D
..... Satow, Shigeru, 1121½ S 1st st ..... cook, D
..... Schafer, Mrs Ruth, 230 E 2nd st ..... tailor ess, R
..... Schaub, Carl F, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Schaub, Carl F, 236 E 2nd st ..... meat cutter, D
..... Seals, Aubrey M, 121 S San Pedro st ..... janitor, R
..... Sein, Miki, 2001½ E 1st st ..... barber-saleman, R
..... Sein, Shozo, 321 E 2nd st ..... merchant, R
..... Shelver, Harrell C, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Shen, James M, 332 E 2nd st ..... mess ves se, D
..... Shinohara, Yoshio, 230 E 1st st ..... clerk, D
..... Shroyer, Wilbert H, 230 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Simmons, Bart, 230 E 2nd st ..... plasterer, D
..... Skow, Frank, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Smith, Charles, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Smith, Percy J, 230 E 2nd st ..... waiter, R
..... Smith, Willie R, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... mechanic, R
..... Snell, William G, 236 E 2nd st ..... carpenter, D
..... Snyder, Harry C, 236 E 2nd st ..... cook, D
..... Sommers, Charles, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, R
..... Soper, Emerse M, 332 E 2nd st ..... artist, D
..... Spalding, James L, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R
..... Srigley, Louis E, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Stewart, Samuel, 230 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Stone, John, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Szarkowski, Isaac S, 332 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D

T

..... Tachihara, Fred T, 236 E 1st st ..... salesman, D
..... Takata, Mineo Jos, 321 E 2nd st ..... mechanic, D
..... Takemoto, Hiroshi E, 2041½ E 1st st ..... hairdresser, D
..... Takemoto, Hisao, 2041½ E 1st st ..... salesman, R
..... Takeuchi, Miss Yoshiko, 230 E 1st st ..... clerk, D
..... Takeyama, George Y, 121 S San Pedro st ..... physician, surgeon, R
..... Takeyama, Kenji, 121 S San Pedro st ..... broker, R
..... Talanni, Take, 321 E 2nd st ..... student, DS
..... Talbert, James M, 236 E 2nd st ..... oil worker, D
..... Tanaka, Edward S, 332 E 1st st ..... dentist, D
..... Tanaka, Walter H, 230 E 1st st ..... pharmacist, D
..... Tani, Fumio, 230 E 1st st ..... salesman, D
..... Tani, Jiro, 236 E 1st st ..... reporter, R
..... Tani, Saburo, 236 E 1st st ..... waiter, D
..... Tashiro, Ichisi, 242 E 1st st ..... taximan, R
..... Tegeros, Marka, 228 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Terry, Harry A, 132 Wolfer st ..... shoe shiner, D
..... Thielmann, John H, 228 E 2nd st ..... salesman, D
..... Thompson, Thomas, 228 E 2nd st ..... waiter, D
..... Tiscornia, Miss Ida, 332 E 2nd st ..... switchman, D
..... Tiscornia, Mrs Mariam, 332 E 2nd st ..... waitress, D
..... Tomlyuki, John Y, 230 E 1st st ..... pharmacist, D
..... Tosh, Hasan, 236 E 2nd st ..... retired, R

U

..... Upton, Homer D, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... salesman, R

V

..... Vaughn, Marvin V, 236 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Vaughn, Thomas H, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Verbeiden, Felix S, 236 E 2nd st ..... finisher, D
..... Vila, Stephen, 332 E 2nd st ..... driver, D

W

..... Wade, Mike, 2041½ S San Pedro st ..... clerk, D
..... Walker, Robert W, 340 E 2nd st ..... rigger, R
..... Walker, Sarah, 230 E 2nd st ..... waiter, D
..... Walpole, William N, 332 E 2nd st ..... butcher, D
..... Walsh, Thomas J, 2041½ S San Pedro st ..... retired, D
..... Walton, Hugh G, 4711½ E 2nd st ..... machinist, R
..... Wells, Thomas C, 230 E 2nd st ..... operator, D
..... Weinmann, Frank, 332 E 2nd st ..... painter, D
..... Williams, Charles, 236 E 2nd st ..... retired, D
..... Wilson, Arthur J, 236 E 2nd st ..... painter, R
..... Wilkens, Ralph Edward, 236 E 2nd st ..... retired, R
..... Wood, John, 236 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Woods, Charles W, 236 E 2nd st ..... plasterer, D
..... Woolson, George S, 236 E 2nd st ..... retired, DS
..... Wunsky, Mrs Linch D, 230 E 2nd st ..... housewife, D
..... Wythers, James R, 230 E 2nd st ..... laborer, D
..... Wright, John S, 236 E 2nd st ..... laborer, R

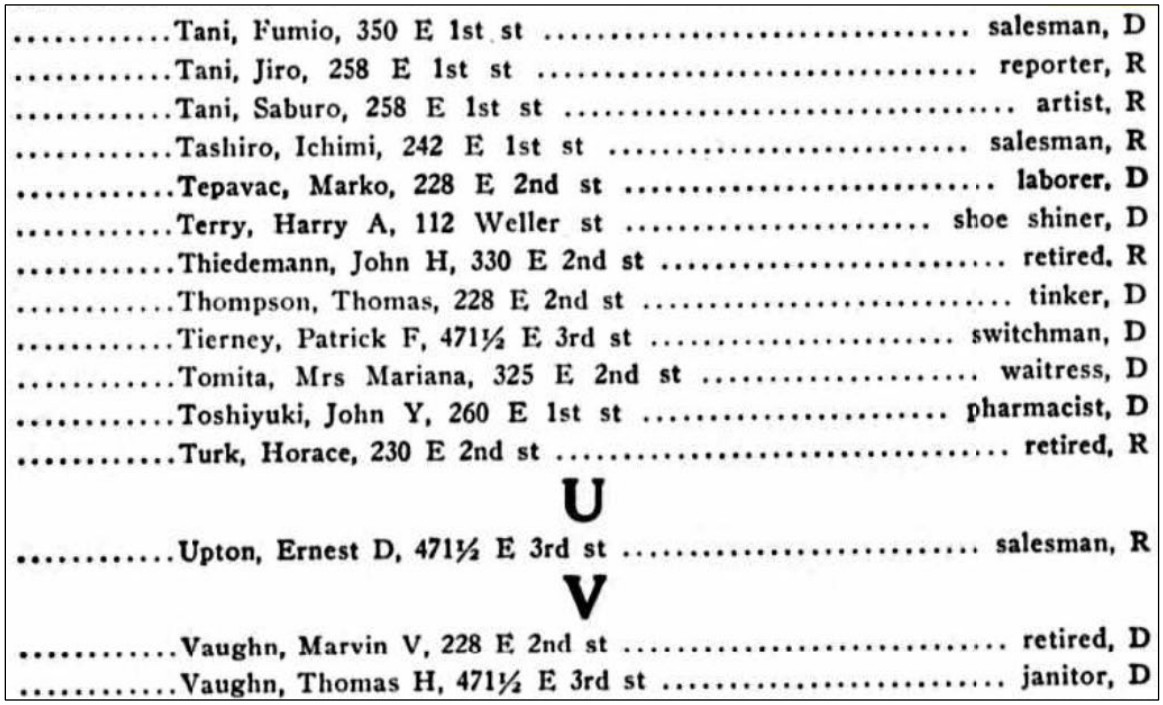
Y

..... Yagade, Tsi Talami, 3001½ E 1st st ..... hotel, D
..... Yagi, Toshio, 236 E 1st st ..... salesman, D
..... Yamada, Stanley, 332 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Yamaoka, Miss Tokiye, 230 E 1st st ..... student, D
..... Yamato, Mrs Tokiye, 116 Wolfer st ..... at home, D
..... Yamato, Rik, 236 E 1st st ..... chiropractor, R
..... Yanagihara, James Seki, 236 E 2nd st ..... cook, D
..... Yashiroa, Thomas K, 236 E 2nd st ..... clerk, D
..... Yenda, H Frank, 236 E 2nd st ..... painter, D
..... Yoshida, Yenko, 336 E 1st st ..... laborer, DS

Z

..... Zalow, Frank A, 236 E 2nd st ..... waiter, D
..... Zamorano, Rac, 126 Wolfer st ..... cook, D
..... Zandell, Frank, 332 E 2nd st ..... retired, D

Figure 2. A close-up of Figure 1.



Conducting a Feasibility Study with the California Great Registers

In this section I discuss a feasibility study I conducted from 2018 to 2021 at Stanford University with various computational tools to evaluate the potential uses and research value of the California Great Registers. Several challenges were immediately apparent to the goal of making these records viable for historical research. The first hurdle is the incredible amount of data that the Great Registers offer. Despite gaps in the record for various counties, the size of the collection—estimated by one study to be some 735,000 pages in more than 600 volumes—offers incredible opportunities for historians working across large, medium, and small scales.[34] Researchers could address questions as broad as contrasts across regions or time periods, or they could conduct narrow inquiries such as tracking specific individuals through the years. For instance, I conducted a search for Chinese American attorney and community leader Y. C. Hong in Los Angeles, and found his registration information for roughly every two or four years from 1920 to 1956, during

which he identified as a Republican each time except for one registration as a Progressive in 1934.[35] But to process and analyze this scale of information would require dedicated funding and training to support a team of researchers. Furthermore, there were contractual issues that limited the application of digital tools to efficiently analyze the Great Registers. The Ancestry Library Edition, which I used for this study with access provided by my university library, could not be scraped for contractual reasons. The platform also could not support mass downloads. Even if I adopted a strategic approach that focused on key years, elections, or precincts, I would need to rely on manual transcription, which posed a major time hurdle to creating a workable database of even a smaller electoral district. Some scholars have negotiated licensing deals with Ancestry.com to build such databases,[36] but this option was not available to me due to limits of time and training.

Keeping these restrictions in mind, I embarked on a small-scale project using the digitized collection from 1900–1968 held on Ancestry.com to create a database and map using Google Sheets and ArcGIS Online. Google Sheets is an easy-to-use spreadsheet software program, while ArcGIS Online provides a mapping and analysis tool with additional features for collaborative work and interactive storytelling. I searched for a few common Chinese and Japanese surnames in the years 1920 and 1940 to pinpoint precinct records with Asian voters. I selected 1920 to represent the emergence of an early generation of Asian voters, the majority of whom were probably Chinese men. For instance, the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, a fraternal organization that admitted only male citizens and promoted their political participation, enjoyed a period of nationwide growth in the 1910s.[37] Japanese Americans were a generally younger electorate, with many Nisei or second-generation individuals born in the 1920s; the Japanese American Citizens League, which similarly admitted citizens only (but accepted both men and women) was formed in 1929.[38] The gender distinctions among Chinese and Japanese American voters were shaped by legal barriers

that excluded more Chinese than Japanese women, allowing Japanese American communities to develop a more balanced gender ratio, as well as different Chinese and Japanese cultural and economic attitudes towards the emigration and settlement of women and families.[39] I selected 1940 as my second date of comparison to include the maturation of some of these young voters, as well as to consider the country's dramatic social, political, and cultural changes from the end of World War I to the eve of World War II, including the growth of women voters after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

I then used the sight recognition method developed by Din and Nakanishi to identify Chinese and Japanese American voters in the selected precincts and years. Most results came from San Francisco, Los Angeles, and a handful in Oakland, while a smaller number of results were based in Stockton, Sacramento, and San Jose. I manually transcribed the data into a spreadsheet on Google Sheets and noted when I was less confident in an individual's ethnic or racial background. I also entered more Chinese than Japanese names. In total, I collected about 1,000 entries. Figure 3 provides a screenshot of the resulting spreadsheet.

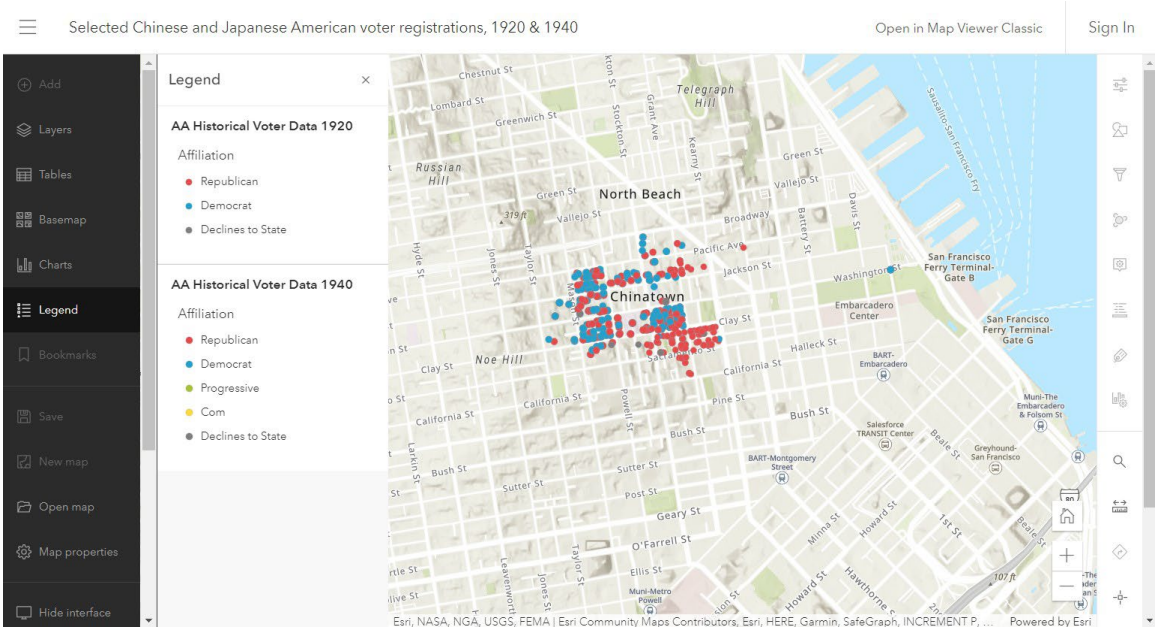
Figure 3. A screenshot of the spreadsheet created in Google Sheets.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Year	Last	First	Street address	Occupation	Affiliation	Precinct	City	County	Ethnicity (presu	Date on docum
234	1920	Wong	Kin Wing	746 Grant Ave	Clerk	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
235	1920	Wong	Wy	15 Waverly Place	Cook	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
236	1920	Wun	Lung Way	754 Grant Ave	Merchant	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
237	1920	Wong	Chong	39 Waverly Place	Cook	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
238	1920	Wong	Yung	739 Commercial	Merchant	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
239	1920	Wong	Len Fong	885 Clay	Cook	Democrat	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
240	1920	Yip	Sing	701 Grant Ave	Clerk	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
241	1920	Yee	Yow Wing	717 Grant Ave	Cook	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
242	1920	Yee	Fook Sing	717 Grant Ave	Laundryman	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
243	1920	Yee	Gum Chung	20 Waverly Place	Porter	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
244	1920	Yep	Hung Suey	737 Clay	Merchant	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
245	1920	Young	Wing	721 Clay	Laborer	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 April 3
246	1920	Chin	Ah Len	823 Sacramento	Merchant	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 October 2
247	1920	Chew	William Franklin	770 Commercial	Ironworker	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese	1920 October 2
248	1920	Hook	Look	611 Grant Ave	Clerk	Republican	24	San Francisco	San Francisco	Chinese-maybe	1920 October 2

Once I had that data, I used Geocodio (geocod.io) to identify the latitude and longitude coordinates of the collected addresses. With that geocoded data, I then used ArcGIS Online to create a custom

map upon which I plotted voter's addresses and color-coded each point according to the individual's political party preference. I split the spreadsheet into two documents, one for the year 1920 and the other for the year 1940, to create two layers of data on the map that can be contrasted. I also created two charts in ArcGIS Online to summarize reported partisanship for each year. The resulting map and charts can be seen by the public at the following URL, and Figure 4 also provides a screenshot.

Figure 4. A screenshot of the map created in ArcGIS Online.



Streets, neighborhoods, and place names have changed in the century since 1920, so not all data points could be mapped, and not all the points that appear on this map can be guaranteed to be correctly placed. Nonetheless, there is enough general overlap in historical and contemporary regions where data was plotted and where Asian American communities have lived, such as Chinatown, to say that this map is fairly accurate. For this reason, I chose not to overlay historical

maps from 1920 or 1940 onto the current map. Viewers can toggle the two layers for 1920 and 1940 data on and off, alter the size and appearance of plotted points, and view the charts indicating trends in partisanship in 1920 and 1940.

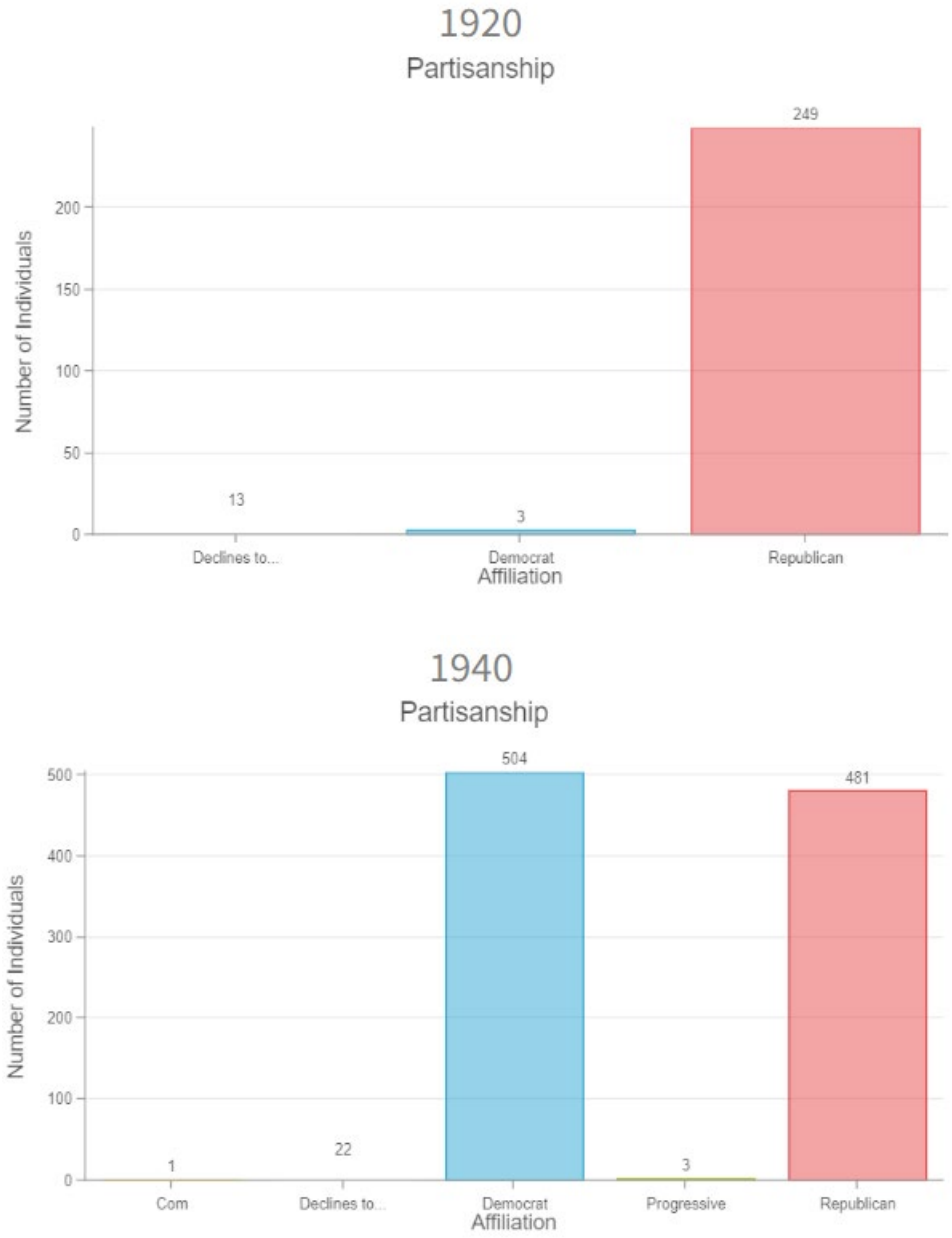
Findings and Paths for Further Research

While keeping in mind the limitations of its methodology and sample size, this feasibility study offers critical glimpses into key questions for Asian American political history. The first major insight is simply a better understanding into the facts of who voted, when, where, and which political parties they preferred. There are several advantages to using voter registration records to locate this information over other sources. First, while the decennial census records before 1950 compiled some state- and county-level data on the potential voting population of Asian descent, these figures represent a project of state surveillance conducted due to the government's fears that such individuals posed a racial threat to American democracy and sovereignty.[40] This data dehumanizes the people it tabulates, treating them as racialized subjects of suspicion rather than as individuals with rights. For many years these figures also overcounted the potential Asian American electorate without including their citizenship status, shoring up fears of the purported "yellow peril." The figures do not accurately reflect the number of Asian American citizens who registered to vote in an election, which would have been much smaller. Second, research on Asian American political history has relied primarily on print materials and archival collections, but this approach tends to identify a limited subset of politically active individuals who had the time, money, or status to have their names printed in ethnic or mainstream newspapers.[41] These were typically men and elites within their communities such as professionals or businessmen.

In contrast, the Great Registers offer scholars an opportunity to understand Asian American political engagement at both the macro and micro levels using data that is more precise, inclusive,

and holistic. My samples from just the years 1920 and 1940, for instance, show that we can analyze large-scale shifts in the number of Asian American voters and in their political views. By comparing partisanship between these years (see Figure 5), we see evidence of a leftward shift among Asian Americans over the New Deal era. In 1920, Republican registrants were overwhelmingly dominant (249 of 265 entries, or 94.0%). But in 1940, Democrats and Republicans were evenly split, with 504 Democrats (50.0%) to 481 Republicans (47.6%). The dramatic shift documented in this feasibility study may not reflect a comprehensive picture of all Asian American voters, but documenting this contrast allows us to raise important questions about the appeal of the New Deal to Asian American voters, the speed of their realignment, and how long it lasted.

Figure 5. A comparison of partisan affiliations among selected Chinese and Japanese American voters from 1920 to 1940.



We may also adopt smaller scales of analysis to study particular demographic groups. To what extent did class or gender relate to a voter's political preferences? My data for Chinese American self-identified cooks in 1940 shows that 58 were Democrats and 45 were Republicans (see Figure

6). They were almost evenly split within this class and occupation, which is particularly interesting when we consider the strong support among workers for the New Deal. While cooks may not have been organized workers, Chinese Americans were no strangers to the general rise in labor militancy. In 1938, for instance, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union had helped to organize a 105-day garment workers' strike in San Francisco's Chinatown.[42] Considering that many garment workers were women, how might Chinese American women in San Francisco have identified politically? In 1940, women were recorded with "Miss" or "Mrs." before their names. Of 91 Chinese American women voters in San Francisco, 56 were Republicans, 32 were Democrats, one—student Pearl Fong—was a Progressive, and 2 declined to state (see Figure 6). These results may reflect the persistence of a class bias among those women who had the time and resources to register and vote. An even more detailed breakdown by city, occupation, or even marital status could be possible. From these brief examinations of class and gender, we can see how the richness and malleability of the data offers previously unimaginable opportunities for scholars to explore Asian American history in a new light.

Figure 6. Selected Chinese American cooks, 1940.

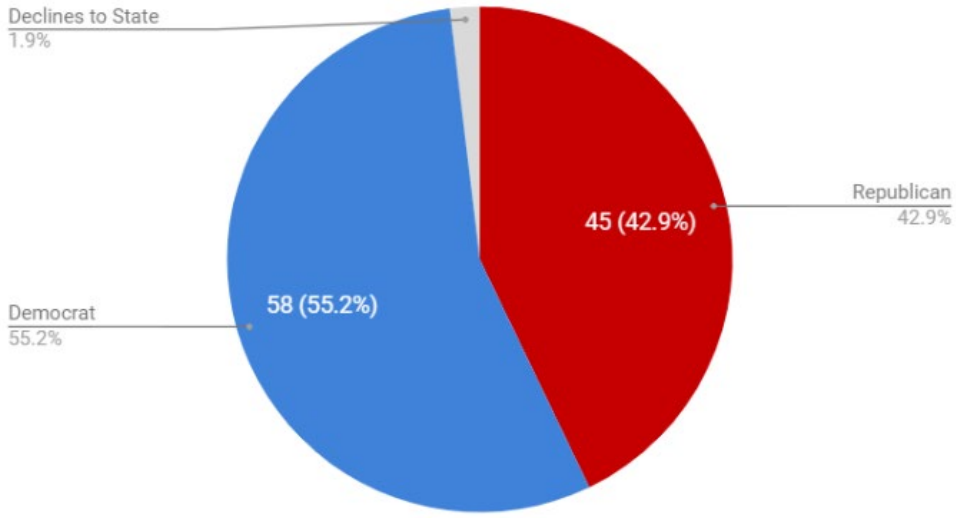
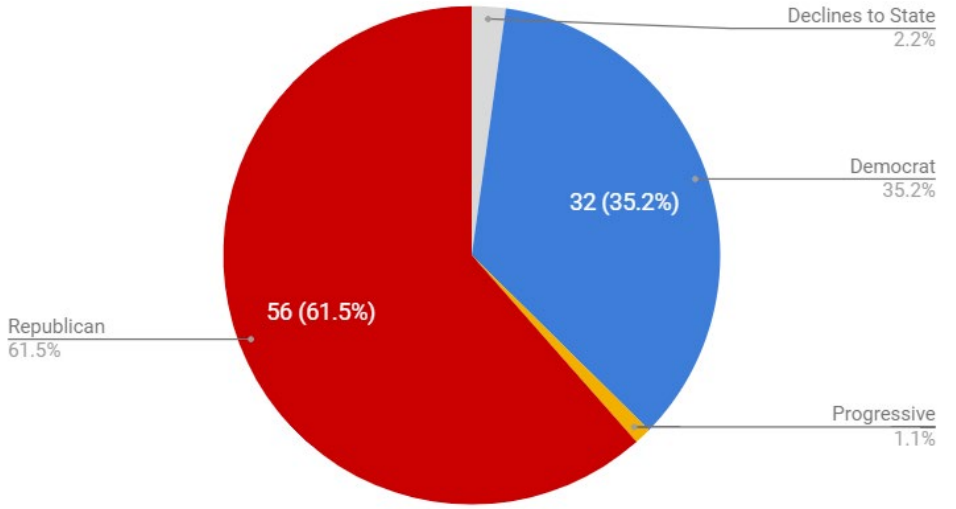


Figure 6. Selected Chinese American women in San Francisco, 1940.



With this data, we can incorporate Asian Americans into narratives of US political history where they have been previously overlooked, and we can also consider how we might retell Asian Americans' experiences of key historical moments. Asian Americans in the Great Depression, for instance, have been primarily studied in social, labor, cultural, and art history, but rarely in political history.[43] The New Deal's political impact on racial minorities, meanwhile, has been mainly

understood through the realignment of African American voters, whose support for the "Party of Lincoln" collapsed. In 1932, Roosevelt received only twenty-three percent of the Black vote, and in 1936 that figure leapt to seventy-one percent. African Americans became an essential component of the New Deal coalition, a powerful electoral bloc that included urban political machines, farmers, labor, Southern Democrats, and racial, ethnic, and religious minorities such as Catholic and Jewish immigrants. But the dramatic change at the ballot box did not entail immediate changes in partisan identity. In 1936, forty-four percent of Black voters registered as Democrats, thirty-seven percent as Republicans, and nineteen percent as independents; and they were evenly split between the two parties in 1940, at forty-two percent, and again in 1944, at forty percent.[44]

It is highly unlikely that either political party viewed Asian Americans as a meaningful constituency, yet comparing Asian American views to other minority groups can still yield important questions into race, citizenship, and partisanship. My feasibility study shows that Asian American support for the GOP also fell dramatically, leading to roughly equal affiliation with the Democratic and Republican parties by 1940. Historians have argued that the New Deal's economic impacts on African Americans were key drivers of their realignment. But as Judy Yung has noted, non-citizens were excluded from many New Deal programs, so that in 1940, "only 7 percent of unemployed Japanese in California, 12 percent of Chinese, and 14 percent of Filipinos were employed by [the] WPA [Works Progress Administration], as compared to 60 percent of all unemployed blacks in the state."[45] When contrasting African American and Asian American partisanship, what might explain their similar shifts despite contrasting political and economic experiences? Historical scholarship can provide some insights while provoking more questions about how voters weighed foreign policy and domestic issues, economic concerns and civil rights, and citizens' perspectives and diasporic contexts. Charlotte Brooks, for instance, has argued that

Chinese Americans began shifting towards the Democrats in response to the Roosevelt administration's Asia policy as well as its New Deal relief and housing programs.[46] On the other hand, Japanese Americans not only debated Roosevelt's record at home and abroad, but also worried over the implications of his unprecedented campaign for a third presidential term for their own civil liberties.[47]

We might also use voter registration data to ask about change and consistency in Asian American politics over time, revealing watershed moments that the markers of mainstream US political history may overlook. The New Deal helped remake the relationship between African Americans and the two parties, beginning a shift that has lasted to the present day. It is unclear whether the era also introduced a new phase in Asian American politics (albeit one characterized by strong two-party competition). On the other hand, the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, or fears among Chinese Americans that they would likewise face incarceration during the Korean War, may have been more influential. A Democratic administration carried out the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans, drawing on the federal agencies and resources established and expanded in the New Deal to build and administer the camps.[48] This intimate experience with coercive state power caused many Japanese Americans to turn their backs on the Democratic Party. Even Norman Y. Mineta, a political trailblazer and leading Japanese American Democrat, recalled that for many years after the war he and many of his friends felt, "It was the damn Democrats that stuck us in those damn camps, and why the hell should I register as a Democrat?"[49] Mineta's views shifted by 1960, but anecdotal evidence from my research suggests such sentiments have persisted among some Japanese Americans to the present day.[50] Geraldo Cadava has traced the emergence of a loyal Hispanic Republican constituency that solidified during the Nixon administration.[51] It may be possible to explore whether a similar Japanese American Republican core formed in the

wake of the incarceration, and if so, how consistent and durable it was. While gaps in the timespan of the Great Registers may not allow us to see the full shift of how, when, and where Japanese Americans became one of the most reliably Democratic Asian subgroups, these records can nonetheless offer critical glimpses into the issues and moments that defined Asian American politics.

Indeed, even fragmentary data and sketches can allow us to imagine new research questions. For instance, we might inquire to what extent the Asian American Movement and other social upheavals of the late 1960s and early '70s affected Asian American political thought as well as political behavior. Movement activists radically transformed the way that Asian Americans understand themselves as a demographic, social, and political minority. In the half-century since activists first critiqued the "passive Oriental stereotype," the call to "end the silence" has suffused all areas of Asian American political culture.[52] Yet in an unexpected twist, people across the political spectrum have all found power and purpose in recognizing that Asian Americans have been repeatedly marginalized. In 1972, Japanese American William "Mo" Marumoto, a White House aide in the Nixon administration, advised the bipartisan Nisei Voters League to abandon the "traditional stereotyped role of the 'Quiet American' . . ."[53] Chinese American Republican fundraiser Anna Chennault urged cooperation among Asian communities in her speech to the Congress of Filipino American Citizens in 1980, advising, "the Asian Americans have a long way to go in the political arena because in the past we have been the silent minority."[54] Shortly after the 2016 election, David Wang, founder of Chinese Americans for Trump, explained that "[w]e are the silent minority. We never talk about politics, and this is why politicians usually sacrifice Chinese-Americans for other ethnicities."[55] Even if those invoking the critique of the model minority myth may not fully appreciate its meaning and implications, the powerful rhetoric that

Asian American radicals introduced has undeniably reshaped the languages and cultures of Asian American politics. The significance of that transformation at the ballot box, however, remains unclear and ambivalent. Activists interested in alternative politics may have ironically contributed to the electoral success of conservatives as voter turnout declined in the 1970s, driven in part by the new phenomenon of the "dropout," or "the one-time voter who no longer votes."[56] Social scientists Michael Roskin and Moon H. Jo similarly speculated in 1978 that "the only political success that Asian-American radicals have contributed to is the rise to prominence of [Senator] S. I. Hayakawa . . . and his subsequent election to the Senate as a conservative."[57] Such questions and insights challenge us to rethink how Asian American experiences with state power, citizenship, democracy, and activism can contribute new perspectives and challenge old understandings in political history and political theory.

Conclusion

As this project expands from the feasibility study to a larger-scale dataset and analysis, the insights and suggestions discussed here will continue to evolve. It is important to note that the historical task of contextualization will be vital throughout the work. Asian Americans lived, worked, and voted alongside their neighbors, but they also faced unique pressures and influences that others did not. Thus the Great Registers' data on Asian Americans must be compared to broader political trends from other demographic groups and other regions, and analyzed within local, national, and international developments. These comparisons will make Asian American trends more meaningful, allowing historians to consider when and where convergences and contrasts occurred, and why. It is also essential to disaggregate data and contextualize findings within the diversity of Asian American experiences. As Nakanishi emphasized, scholars must remember the unique factors that have shaped distinct Asian American communities and their political activities: specific

histories of immigration and refuge, legal and social exclusions from citizenship and civic life, the persistence of diasporic and transnational politics, and more.[58] Aggregate data that lacks such nuance has been used time and again to argue that Asian Americans are a model minority by highlighting averages rather than unpacking socioeconomic differences within the group.[59] A digital humanities approach that emphasizes both elements of the term—both the digital tools to create and analyze data, as well as the humanities methods to contextualize and interpret findings—can help scholars push back against misinterpreted and misleading data.

Moreover, the Great Registers can tell us much about Asian American voters at both the micro and macro levels, but we must also note two significant absences that should affect our interpretation of this source: the perspectives of non-citizens and the undocumented. The inability of Asian immigrants to naturalize placed a weighty burden upon the first generation of Asian American voters, who sometimes felt the need to vote not only as individuals but on behalf of their disenfranchised communities. One Nisei reflected during the 1936 election that many Issei parents pressed their political views upon their children. "I don't know whether we should be so obedient to our parents since we, citizens of America, are the voters and should use our judgment," they pondered. "Again we realize the situation our dear parents are in, so we have two sides of the question to face. I hope I voted wisely."[60] This context raises thorny interpretive and methodological questions. What did it mean, on a psychic and emotional level, to feel the burden of representation in the casting of a ballot? How might that consideration have influenced an individual's vote? How else might non-citizens have tried to express their political views during elections?[61] We must also consider how the ambiguous legal status of many Chinese Americans might have produced biased data. Chinese Americans created "paper son" networks in order to circumvent the Chinese exclusion laws, producing extended and even multi-generational families

with insecure legal status.[62] This likely discouraged many Chinese Americans who claimed to be citizens from participating in formal politics in order to avoid exposing themselves or their families to suspicion. After Chinese were granted the right to naturalize in 1943, a political skew emerged that favored comparatively wealthy recent immigrants who were not embedded in paper networks and could therefore register and vote with confidence.[63]

Thus while the study of voter registration records may seem to be a nation-bound project, centering individuals with legal citizenship participating in formal civic and electoral activities, it also speaks to questions of citizenship, empire, and the transnational that are driving scholarship in Asian American Studies, US political history, and Asian/American political thought.[64] By the 1940s, US-born individuals began to outnumber immigrants in the Asian American population. Yet historians have also found that about twenty-five percent of US-born Japanese Americans and between twenty-five to fifty percent of their Chinese American counterparts at some point migrated to their countries of ancestry.[65] Many of these same individuals also registered to vote and cast their ballots in US elections, and their community newspapers often featured news and editorials about US politics alongside updates from Asia. Their experiences speak to the interplay of US power in the Pacific, race and citizenship, and surveillance and migration. They challenge us to reexamine traditional political concerns from the perspectives of the racialized, marginalized, and transnational. How might an election, a campaign contribution, the two-party system, or even the meanings of liberal and conservative look different in these communities, and how might those perspectives reorient our understanding of US politics and power?

More critically for Asian American Studies and the study of Asian/American political thought, this project asks us to grapple with the historical diversity of Asian American engagements with power. Asian Americans today are the fastest-growing demographic in the US electorate, as well as the

only major racial or ethnic group dominated by naturalized citizens.[66] As such, media and scholarly analyses have often turned their attention to these new voters, examining how diasporic contexts have translated into conservative US positions in unexpected and surprising ways.[67] Yet from a historical perspective, diasporic and transnational concerns are not new to Asian American electoral politics. Conservative politics are not new, either, whether among naturalized or native-born voters. For over a century, Asian Americans have struggled over issues of citizenship, race, and empire not merely in their extra-electoral activities and cultural production, but at the ballot box as well.

As Fred Lee and Kevin Pham write in the introductory essay of this symposium, "The ultimate wager of AAPT is that *Asians exist politically, hence think politically.*" Using digital humanities tools and methods to create and analyze data on Asian American voters substantiates our long existence as active participants in US politics—a role that the state had deliberately suppressed and that Asian Americanists later forgot. While this data must be interpreted carefully, in context, and with caveats, it nonetheless offers important glimpses into how Asian Americans have grappled with the ideas and debates of our time, and how the most mundane and everyday of us have acted on them. Recognizing this history is vital to developing a robust foundation for the study of Asian/American political thought.

Notes

[1] Third World Liberation Front, "The List of 15 Demands," 1968, San Francisco State College Strike Collection, Special Collections, San Francisco State University, https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187915.

[2] Cathy J. Schlund-Vials, Lily Anne Y. Welty Tamai, and Paul Spickard, "The Why and Whither of Asian American Studies: Toward a Reckoning," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 25, no. 2 (June 2022): viii.

[3] Nguyen notes this class is particularly defined by its emphasis on "the value of an Asian American identity," in contrast to intellectuals of Asian descent who disagree with the importance of race and racial classifications. Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Race and Resistance: Literature and Politics in Asian America* (New York: Oxford UP, 2002), 3–32. Geraldo Cadava has noted a similar phenomenon in the emergence of "a left-leaning Latino punditocracy" (Geraldo Cadava, "Republicans and Race: Perspectives from African American, Asian American, and Hispanic American Politics," Organization of American Historians annual conference, 2021).

[4] I use the term "Hispanic" to reflect its historical dominance at the time.

[5] Karthick Ramakrishnan, "How Asian Americans Became Democrats," *The American Prospect*, July 26, 2016, https://prospect.org/civil-rights/asian-americans-became-democrats/.

[6] Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, "In AALDEF's Election Day exit poll of close to 14,000 Asian American voters, Clinton favored over Trump by wide margin," November 9, 2016, https://www.aaldef.org/press-release/in-aaldefs-election-day-exit-poll-over-14400-asian-american-voters-clinton-favored-over-trump-by-wid/ and "AALDEF Exit Poll: Asian Americans Favor Biden Over Trump 68% to 29%; Played Role in Close Races in Georgia and Other Battleground States," November 13, 2020, https://www.aaldef.org/press-release/aaldef-exit-poll-asian-americans-favor-biden-over-trump-68-to-29-played-role-in-close-races-in-georgia-and-other-battleground-states/.

[7] Nic John Ramos, @ NicJohnRamos, May 9, 2022, https://twitter.com/NicJohnRamos/status/1523760057875570688.

[8] Gordon H. Chang, "Asian Americans and politics: Some perspectives from history," in Gordon H. Chang, ed., *Asian Americans and Politics: Perspectives, Experiences, Prospects* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2001), 14–15.

[9] *Seventeenth Census of the US*, Vol. 2, Pt. 5 (Washington, DC: US Census Office, 1952), Table 14, 57 and Table 47, 179. Filipinos were not separately enumerated, unlike in previous decades.

[10] Quoted in Don T. Nakanishi, "Beyond Electoral Politics," in *Asian Americans and Politics: Perspectives, Experiences, Prospects,* ed. Gordon H. Chang (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2001), 117. Some researchers conducted their own interviews and surveys of Asian American voters, including Bessie Mae Ferina, "The Politics of San Francisco's Chinatown" (MA thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1949); Ralph E. Bunch, "The Political Orientation of Japanese-Americans" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1968); George Kagiwada, "Ethnic Identification and Socio-Economic Status: The Case of the Japanese-Americans in Los Angeles" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1969).

[11] NBC News/Associated Press, *NBC News/Associated Press Poll: National Election Day Voter Poll* (November 2, 1982), distributed by Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, https://doi.roper.center/?doi=10.25940/ROPER-31094629.

[12] Don T. Nakanishi, "Asian American Politics: An Agenda for Research," *Amerasia Journal* 12, no. 2 (1985): 3.

[13] For a sampling of these excellent contributions, see Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese immigrants and the shaping of modern immigration law* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderlands* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012); Valerie J. Matsumoto, *City Girls: The Nisei Social World in Los Angeles, 1920–1950* (New York: Oxford UP, 2014); Moon-Ho Jung, *Menace to Empire: Anticolonial Solidarities and the Transpacific Origins of the US Security State* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2023).

[14] See, for example, Charlotte Brooks, *Between Mao and McCarthy: Chinese American Politics in the Cold War Years* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); Judy Tzu-Chun Wu and Gwendolyn Mink, *Fierce and Fearless: Patsy Takemoto Mink, First Woman of Color in Congress* (New York: New York UP, 2022).

[15] Ellen D. Wu, *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2015).

[16] Larry Kubota, "Yellow Power!", *Gidra* 1, no. 1 (April 1969): 3–4; Brooks, *Between Mao and McCarthy*; Vivian Yan-Gonzalez, "A Spectrum Apart: Chinese and Japanese American Republicans and Conservatives, 1920–1990" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 2022).

[17] Chang, "Asian Americans and politics," 30–31.

[18] Nguyen, 5.

[19] Claire Jean Kim analyzes Asian Americans as a wedge group on affirmative action and police brutality to argue that the Asian American Movement's "half-finished critique" of the US racial order has produced an "ethical and interpretive crisis in Asian American thought and politics." Claire Jean Kim, *Asian Americans in an Anti-Black World* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2023), 244.

[20] Madeline Y. Hsu, "Asian American History and the Perils of a Usable Past," *Modern American History* 1, no. 1 (March 2018): 71.

[21] Wu; Candace Fujikane and Jonathan Y. Okamura, eds., *Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008); Eiichiro Azuma, *In Search of Our Frontier: Japanese America and Settler Colonialism in the Construction of Japan's Borderless Empire* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019); Helen Jin Kim, *Race for Revival: How Cold War South Korea Shaped the American Evangelical Empire* (Oxford UP, 2022); James Zarsadiaz, *Resisting Change in Suburbia: Asian Immigrants and Frontier Nostalgia in L.A*. (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2022); "Conservatisms and Fascisms in Asian America," Adrian De Leon and Jane Hong, eds., special issue, *Amerasia Journal* 48, no. 1 (2022).

[22] Anne Cong-Huyen, "Asian/American and the Digital|Technological Thus Far," *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 100–108; Konrad Ng and Lori Kido Lopez, "Asian American Studies and/as Digital Humanities," in *The Routledge Handbook of Asian American Studies,* ed. Cindy I-Fen Cheng (New York: Routledge, 2016).

[23] Public history and digitization were some of the earliest digital history projects. See Stephen Robertson, "The Differences between Digital Humanities and Digital History," in *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2016,* eds. Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).

[24] See, for example, A/P/A Voices: A COVID-19 Public Memory Project, https://wp.nyu.edu/apavoices/. On Densho and SAADA, see Brian Niiya, Tom Ikeda and Roger Daniels, "Japanese American Incarceration—Densho.org," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 33, no. 4 (Summer 2014): 49–55; and Amber H. Abbas, "The Pedagogy of the Archive: South Asian America in the Classroom," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 33, no. 4 (Summer 2014): 61–66.

[25] The Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford University, https://web.stanford.edu/group/chineserailroad/cgi-bin/website/. See also A Different Asian American Timeline, https://aatimeline.com/intro, and *Foundations and Futures: Asian American and Pacific Islander Multimedia Textbook* (forthcoming, 2025).

[26] See John Cheng, Kent Schull, and contributors, *World War One Draft Registration: Asian Americans*, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/d9a759cdc6a845d9bf8e2800c6f6ee49; Saara Kekki, "Going, But Where? The Resettlement of Japanese Americans from the Heart Mountain Relocation Center," *Western Historical Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (Autumn 2022): 223–244; Heather R. Lee, Hong Deng Gao, and Sarah Tahir, "The Chinese Restaurant Boom: A Data-Driven History of America's First Ethnic Restaurant Industry," March 1, 2022, https://crd.heatherruthlee.com/story/

[27] Daniel W. Tuttle, Jr., *Hawaii voting behavior: A background guide to some significant characteristics of Honolulu's (Oahu's) 138 precincts* (Honolulu: Hawaii Education Association, 1965).

[28] Grant Din, "An Analysis of Asia/Pacific American Registration and Voting Patterns in San Francisco" (MA thesis, Claremont Graduate School, 1984).

[29] Don T. Nakanishi, *The UCLA Asian Pacific American Voter Registration Study* (Los Angeles: Asian Pacific American Legal Center, 1986).

[30] These limitations, as outlined by Nakanishi (1986), included: Women with English names who married outside of their ethnic group and adopted their husbands' surnames could be overlooked or mis-identified. Mixed race or adopted children without AAPI-appearing first or last names could be missed, while subjective decisions over how to classify the mixed race or adopted children who could be identified also posed a problem. There are many AAPI surnames which overlap with surnames for other ethnic and racial groups, which could create additional identification problems. Researchers adopted various checks and adjustments to address these problems and avoid an overcount, such as implementing conservative rules to handle intermarriage and cross-referencing overlapping surnames with census tract data.

[31] In 1884, Wong Chin Foo and about 50 other naturalized Chinese Americans formed a voters' association in New York City. Qingsong Zhang, "The Origins of the Chinese Americanization Movement: Wong Chin Foo and the Chinese Equal Rights League," in *Claiming America: Constructing Chinese American Identities During the Exclusion Era,* eds. K. Scott Wong and Sucheng Chan (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1998), 41–63; Glory Liu, "The Politics of the Excluded: the political thought of Wong Chin Foo" unpublished manuscript. Chinese were also reported to have cast ballots in 1863 in the first election held in British Columbia, although the gold commissioner there invalidated their votes. Quan Lim, "Early Chinese Settlers Voted in First B.C. Election," *Chinatown News*, August 3, 1958.

[32] See Ancestry.com, *California, U.S., Voter Registers, 1866–1898* (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011), https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2221/; Ancestry.com, *California, U.S., Voter Registrations, 1900–1968* (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2017), https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61066/.

[33] The records are formatted slightly differently from county to county.

[34] Bradley Spahn, "Before the American Voter" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 2019), 9.

[35] Based on a search for You Chung Hong in Los Angeles County in Ancestry.com, *California, U.S., Voter Registrations, 1900–1968*, performed on April 12, 2021.

[36] Spahn, vi.

[37] New lodges formed in Los Angeles and Oakland (1912), Fresno and San Diego (1914), Chicago (1917), and Detroit, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Portland (1921). Sue Fawn Chung, "The Chinese American Citizens Alliance: An Effort in Assimilation, 1895–1965," *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 2 (1988): 35.

[38] Lon Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival, 1934–1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 30.

[39] Sucheta Mazumdar, "What Happened to the Women? Chinese and Indian Male Migration to the United States in Global Perspective," in Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura, eds., *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology* (New York: New York UP, 2003), 58–74; Yuji Ichioka, "Amerika Nadeshiko: Japanese Immigrant Women in the United States, 1900–1924," *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (May 1980): 339–357.

[40] The 1900 and 1910 censuses grouped Chinese and Japanese of voting age along with "other" groups including Native Americans and African Americans. Chinese and Japanese of voting age were disaggregated by ethnicity in 1920, 1930, and 1940; Filipinos and "Hindus" of voting age were also disaggregated in the 1940 census.

[41] Brooks, *Between Mao and McCarthy*; Yan-Gonzalez, "A Spectrum Apart."

[42] Judy Yung, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 209–222.

[43] Yung; Peter Kwong, *Chinatown, N.Y.: Labor and Politics, 1930–1950* (New York: The New Press, 2001); John Modell, *The Economics and Politics of Racial Accommodation: The Japanese of Los Angeles, 1900–1942* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1977); David K. Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture among Japanese Americans of California, 1924–1949* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Dawn

Mabalon, *Little Manila is in the Heart: The Making of the Filipino American Community in Stockton, California* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2013); various essays in Gordon H. Chang, Mark Johnson, and Paul Karlstrom, eds., *Asian American Art: A History, 1850–1970* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2008); Greg Robinson and James Sun, "Eddie Shimano and Gerald Chan Sieg: Asian American Writers in the FWP," in Sara Rutkowski, ed. *Rewriting America: New Essays on the Federal Writers' Project* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2022).

[44] Leah Wright Rigueur, *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2016), 15-16.

[45] Yung, 185.

[46] Brooks, *Between Mao and McCarthy*, 22-34.

[47] Vivian Yan-Gonzalez, "Left or Right, Loyal or Disloyal: Ideology, Partisanship, and Empire in the Construction of Interwar Japanese American Politics," *Pacific Historical Review* (forthcoming summer 2025).

[48] Jason Scott Smith, "New Deal Public Works at War: The WPA and Japanese American Internment," *Pacific Historical Review* 72, no. 1 (February 2003): 63–92.

[49] David S. Broder, *Changing the Guard: Power and Leadership in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980), 54.

[50] Norman Y. Mineta, interview by Russell Riley, March 4, 2014, George W. Bush Oral History Project, https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-oral-histories/norman-y-mineta-oral-history.

[51] Geraldo Cadava, *The Hispanic Republican: The Shaping of an American Political Identity, from Nixon to Trump* (New York: Ecco, 2020).

[52] Larry Kubota, "Yellow Power!" *Gidra* 1, no. 1 (April 1969).

[53] "Marumoto Draws 200 to NVL Dinner" *Pacific Citizen,* April 7, 1972.

[54] Anna Chennault, letter to Gonzalo A. Velez, August 18, 1980, Folder "Ethnics / Nationalities – General, 8/1980," Box 308, 1980 Presidential Campaign Papers, 1964–1980, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

[55] Mike O'Sullivan, "Many Asians, Latinos in Shock After Trump's Victory," *Voice of America,* November 10, 2016, https://www.voanews.com/a/many-asians-latinos-in-shock-after-trumps-victory/3590413.html.

[56] Thomas E. Cavanagh, "Changes in American Voter Turnout, 1964–1976," *Political Science Quarterly* 96, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 53–65.

[57] S.I. Hayakawa was a Japanese American academic who was elected to the US Senate in 1976, riding on the fame he gained as Acting President of San Francisco State College during the 1968 Third World Liberation Front strikes. He became the first Asian American Senator from the US Mainland and the first non-white Senator from California. Michael Roskin and Moon H. Jo, "Asian-American Political Participation," in *Political Participation of Asian Americans: Problems and Strategies*, ed. Yung-Hwan Jo (Chicago: Pacific/Asian American Mental Health Research Center, 1980), 121. See Vivian Yan-Gonzalez, "Model Minority or Myth? Reexamining the Politics of S.I. Hayakawa," *Amerasia Journal* 48, no. 1 (2022): 24–43.

[58] Nakanishi, "Beyond Electoral Politics."

[59] Ng and Lopez.

[60] C.I., "An Afterthought," *Rafu Shimpo*, November 15, 1936.

[61] For instance, Japanese immigrants and the Japanese consulate in Los Angeles urged sympathetic whites and African Americans to oppose a 1920 ballot initiative that strengthened California's Alien Land Law. Lon Kurashige, *Two Faces of Exclusion: The Untold History of Anti-Asian Racism in the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 128–129.

[62] "Paper sons" (and less frequently, "paper daughters") claimed to be the blood relative of someone who had already gained US residency or citizenship, so as to circumvent immigration law and enter the country with false papers.

[63] Brooks, *Between Mao and McCarthy*, 107, 135, 167–168.

[64] Brent Cebul, Lily Geismer, Mason B. Williams, eds., *Shaped by the State: Toward a New Political History of the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).

[65] Michael R. Jin, *Citizens, Immigrants, and the Stateless: A Japanese American Diaspora in the Pacific* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2022); Charlotte Brooks, *American Exodus: Second-Generation Chinese Americans in China, 1901–1949* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019). I use "country" of ancestry here, but it does not fully encapsulate the phenomenon Jin documents of migration within the Japanese empire.

[66] Abby Bundiman, "Asian Americans are the fastest-growing racial or ethnic group in the U.S. electorate," *Pew Research Center,* May 7, 2020, https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/05/07/asian-americans-are-the-fastest-growing-racial-or-ethnic-group-in-the-u-s-electorate/.

[67] See, for instance, Yucheng Bai, "United by Fear: The Rise of Trumpism Among First Generation Chinese Christian Immigrants," *Amerasia Journal* no. 1 (2022): 58–73; Yuanyuan Feng and Mark Tseng-Putterman, "'Scattered Like Sand': WeChat Warriors in the Trial of Peter Liang," *Amerasia Journal* 45, no. 2 (May 2019): 238–52.