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"GENTLEMEN, IS THIS REAL AMERIKEY?": MARGINALIZATION AND RACISM IN YUNG WING, SUI SIN FAR AND YONE NOGUCHI

"BEYLER, GERÇEK AMERİKA BU MU?": YUNG WING, SUI SIN FAR VE YONE NOGUCHI'DE ÖTEKİLEŞTİRME VE IRKÇILIK

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ABSTRACT

Asian immigrants came to the United States in great numbers from mid- to late-nineteenth century due to the California Gold Rush, and they faced an immediate backlash by white Americans. The Asian immigrants' experiences of exclusion and racism appear in fictional and non-fictional works of the period. This paper focuses on Yung Wing's *My Life in China and America* (1909), Sui Sin Far's (Edith Maud Eaton) "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Euroasian" and published journal articles (1910), and Yone Noguchi's *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl* (1901). These three works are important as they represent the Americanization of an Asian subject at a time of prejudice against people of Asian ancestry in America. This article discusses that the experiences of the Chinese American and Japanese American characters suggest whiteness to be unattainable by the characters in these works. Moreover, in the article it is argued that these experiences operate on a conundrum of inclusion to the society vs. marginalization. By examining the language of inclusion/exclusion adopted by some of the fictional and non-fictional characters studied here, this paper claims that racism, citizenship and whiteness are integral parts of their Americanization journey. It is also discussed that these three narratives offer a glimpse into the lives of Chinese and Japanese immigrants in America when they were treated as marginalized others incapable of assimilating into the white society.

Keywords: *Asian American; Yung Wing; Sui Sin Far; Yone Noguchi; Marginalization; Whiteness*

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ÖZ

Birçok Asyalı göçmen Kaliforniya Altın Hücumu nedeniyle on dokuzuncu yüzyılın ortalarından sonlarına doğru Amerika'ya varmış ve doğrudan beyaz Amerikalıların tepkisi ile karşılaşmıştır. Asyalı göçmenlerin dışlanma ve ırkçılık deneyimleri dönemin kurgusal ve kurgusal olmayan edebiyatında karşımıza çıkar. Bu makalede Yung Wing'in *My Life in China and America* (1909), Sui Sin Far'ın (Edith Maud Eaton) "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Euroasian" ve bazı yayımlanmış köşe yazıları (1910) ile Yone Noguchi'nin *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl* (1901) eserlerine odaklanılmaktadır. Bu üç eser Amerika'da Asyalılara karşı önyargının hâkim olduğu bir dönemde Asyalıların Amerikanlaşmasını temsil etmeleri açısından önem taşımaktadır. Bu makalede, Çinli Amerikalı ve Japon Amerikalı karakterlerin deneyimlerinin, beyazlığın bu eserlerdeki karakterler tarafından elde edilemez olduğunu öne sürdüğü tartışılmaktadır. Dahası, bu makale bu deneyimlerin topluma dahil etme ve ötekileştirme ikileminde işlediğini öne sürmektedir. Burada incelenen eserlerin bazılarında kurgusal olan ve olmayan karakterlerin kapsayıcı/dışlayıcı dili nasıl benimsedikleri incelenerek, makalede ırkçılık, vatandaşlık ve beyazlığın bu karakterlerin Amerikanlaşma süreçlerinin ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğu iddia edilmektedir. Ayrıca, Amerika'daki Çinli ve Japon göçmenlerin beyaz topluma asimile olamayan ötekileştirilmiş kişiler olarak muamele gördükleri bir dönemde, bu üç anlatının göçmenlerin yaşamlarına küçük bir pencere sunduğu da tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Asyalı Amerikalı; Yung Wing; Sui Sin Far; Yone Noguchi; Ötekileştirme; Beyazlık*

Yone Noguchi's disillusioned character Morning Glory barely sets her foot on the American soil as she exclaims "Gentlemen, is this real Amerikey?" (1901/1902, p. 35). When she looks around her in great confusion to devour in the country she has dreamed of for so long, she cannot hide the first frustration of the immigrant upon arrival. Her "Meriken dream" becomes a "complete failure" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 35). Indeed, even though the heaven of opportunities promised the American Dream to immigrants, it did not protect them from the engrained racism in American society and the marginalization that accompanied it. Asian immigrants came to the United States in great numbers from mid- to late-nineteenth century due to the California Gold Rush, and they faced an immediate backlash by white Americans. The Asian immigrants' experiences of exclusion and racism also appear in fictional and non-fictional works of the period. This paper focuses on Yung Wing's *My Life in China and America* (1909), Sui Sin Far's (Edith Maud Eaton) "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Euroasian" and published journal articles (1910), and Yone Noguchi's *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl* (1901). In the three works that are analyzed in this paper, the experiences of the Chinese American and Japanese American characters suggest that acceptance by Americans into the society works on a conundrum of inclusion vs. marginalization. Moreover, this paper suggests that the language of inclusion/exclusion adopted by these fictional and non-fictional characters displays how racism, citizenship and whiteness become an integral part of their Americanization journey. In Yung Wing's autobiography this two-sided language

demonstrates how citizenship transforms into an essential element of an immigrant's Americanization process. In Far, this language focuses on the integrality of whiteness to Americanization and in the fictional diary written by Noguchi this language points at how racism becomes a central component of the immigrant's acculturation.

The research on Yung Wing mainly treats his life narrative as a semi-historical text that proves his contributions to the educational mission in China. Some of the works on Wing focuses on his American naturalization and his efforts to Americanize China in terms of education. Noguchi's novel, which is written in the form of a diary, is studied more in depth when compared to the studies on Wing's autobiography. Many of the articles focus on the element of mimicry in Noguchi's novel, as well as the contested subject of gender. The scholarship on Far, however, is quite the vastest among the three. Her novels, short stories and life narrative have been analyzed by many scholars. "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Euroasian" and her other essays published in journals are based on her life narrative. Scholars have studied her work in terms of otherness-both as an ethnic subject in a white society and as a woman. Transnationalism, multiculturalism, and progressivism are some other topics that have been analyzed in Far's essays. These three works are important as they represent the Americanization of an Asian subject at a time of prejudice against people of Asian ancestry in America. Yung Wing's life narrative is peculiar in transmitting a life dedicated to Americanize himself and his homeland with complete omission of his American naturalization and the annulment of his citizenship. As the person who first coined the term Chinese American, Far's work extensively questions whiteness as a condescending power that directs its gaze on Asian subjects in North America. Wing and Far are Chinese Americans, and *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl* by Noguchi offers an insight into a text produced by a Japanese American. These three texts are analyzed together to better understand the racialization and Americanization of their Oriental characters with different backgrounds. Even though the Chinese and Japanese were categorized both as Asian Orientals under the Page Act, the Chinese Exclusion Act targeted the Chinese immigrants specifically. The Japanese also faced segregation in California schools, as well as in their manual jobs where they worked as farm hands, miners, domestic servants and railroad builders alongside other immigrants and blacks. The Gentlemen's Agreement between the United States and Japan seemed to tranquilize the strain between the relations of these countries for a short while. Nevertheless, treating these three texts as narratives imitating the real-life experiences of the authors in this chaotic milieu offers a glimpse into the lives of Chinese and Japanese immigrants in America when they were treated as marginalized others incapable of assimilating.

The Rise of Anti-Asian Sentiments Amongst White Nationalist Americans

As the nineteenth century was coming to an end, the demographics of immigrants coming into the United States of America underwent a drastic change. The nineteenth century United States dealt usually with the incoming flow of immigration from Western and

Eastern European countries. On the home front, this immigration pattern was followed by internal and mostly forced migrations and removal of black, Native American, and Mexican people. Moreover, the Gold Rush on the West Coast provided job opportunities to Asian immigrants starting with the mid-nineteenth century. However, Asian immigrants constituted a challenge to the white American values with their different culture and beliefs. These immigrants were the embodiment of the Orient in the minds of Americans, who were both enchanted with the authenticity of the Oriental Asia and alarmed at the "degeneration" and unemployment it caused. As a result, the American government banned the entrance of certain Asian immigrants to the United States in 1875 under the Page Law and in 1882 under the Chinese Exclusion Act.

By this time, the United States already had laws that controlled immigration into the United States based on the immigrant's mental and physical health as well as economic conditions to bar the ones that would most likely become a public liability. For instance, the Alien Friends Act of 1798 gave the President the authority to deport an alien if deemed dangerous to the country's welfare, and the Naturalization Act of the same year limited citizenship registration to ""all white aliens residing or arriving" in the United States" (Constitution Annotated, n.d.). The Steerage Act of 1819 required the captains to submit authorities lists of immigrants aboard their ship. This measure led the authorities to keep the captain and the steerage company liable for immigrants who proved to be public charges. These laws represent the anti-immigrant attitude of the government to prevent the financially destitute from burdening the public health and correctional facilities. In this regard, Roger Daniels' "three discreet phases of anti-immigrant activity" offer an insight to the legal prevention of immigration from some countries (1990, p. 265). According to Daniels, the first phase is the anti-Catholic activity between 1830s and mid-1850s, followed by the anti-Asian activity that occurred from the early 1870s to the 1882 Exclusion Act, and the last phase was the anti-all immigrant activity from the mid1880s to the Immigration Act of 1924 (1990, p. 265). Every phase had its own victims, and the white Americans and the whitened immigrants who wanted to preserve their status supported these laws. The European immigrant pursued whiteness as a tool for social empowerment and the Asian immigrant followed suit; however, the Asian immigrant was rejected not only by white native-born Americans but also by the European immigrant who just discovered his whiteness. *The Emerald*, a renowned Irish American newspaper published in New York in the nineteenth century, reflects the general sentiments of its readers:

> Among native Americans the disinclination to manual labor is very marked and suggestive. Its effect has been to throw the burden of the labor of the country on the Irish and Germans… We have no animosity against the poor Chinamen themselves. … But we have very different feelings towards the greedy speculators who import the Chinamen, and swindle their poor victims while swamping the labor market of the country. … Let the Chinese stay in China until we are ready to receive them (The Extinction of Blue Eyes, 1870).

This passage demonstrates how the whitened Irish immigrants judge the newcomers as undesired marginals about to steal the jobs of naturalized Americans. Encapsulating the race-based rhetoric of the post-California Gold Rush period, the article in *The Emerald* demonstrates the distance between the Asian immigrants and the whitened Irish immigrants in the1870s. This racial distance was further reinforced with the questions regarding the morality of Asian immigrants. When the California Gold Rush started in mid-nineteenth century, the incoming Asians were predominantly Chinese; however, there were also laborers of Japanese ancestry. The rise in Asian immigrants led to a fear of moral declination amongst white Americans, who associated the Oriental women with opium dens and prostitution. As a result, the Page Act of 1875 enacted that "the immigration of any subject of China, Japan, or any Oriental country, to the United States" shall be regulated to prevent these immigrants from committing "lewd and immoral purposes" (Immigration History, 2019). When this Act prohibited the entry of Oriental women from entering the country, many Asian immigrant men were forced into an isolated life.

Moreover, the turmoil of the Chinese immigrants was even harsher when compared to that of the Japanese immigrants. By the time the Chinese Exclusion Act appeared in 1882 and prohibited the Chinese immigration into the United States for a decade, some of the European immigrants had completed their evolution process to whiteness. This led them to label the Chinese as "yellow" to secure their whiteness. As Karen Brodkin claims, scientific racism approved of the origins of the real white people as north-west Europe by the 1920s. This was the reason why '[w]idespread racism led to closing the immigration door to virtually all Asians and most Europeans between 1924 and 1927" (Brodkin, 1998, p. 30). These exclusive immigration acts were reflections of the mainstream population on the legal stage. The hatred towards the "degenerate" Chinese also surfaces at the representations of the Chinese in Jacob Riis's photojournalism book *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York*. Riis is rather skeptical about the Chinese and he criticizes them for their pagan ways of worshipping. According to him the Chinaman cannot fully assimilate into the American way of life, especially to Christianity. What the Chinese adopts as American is just performance: clothes, religion, a Christian wife (Riis, 1890/1997, p. 73). Riis adds that the Chinese immigrants bring filth and immorality to their tenements through their opium habits: "The Chinaman smokes opium as Caucasians smoke tobacco… But woe unto the white victim upon which his pitiless drug gets its grip!" (Riis, 1890/1997, p. 76). The Chinese in his narrative are not only unassimilable but also a danger to the white man, threatening to make them "white slaves" of his oriental habits (Riis, 1890/1997, p. 76). Riis has different ideas on the Exclusion Act, though. He says that "the Chinese are in no sense a desirable element of the population, that they serve no useful purpose here" but "rather than banish the Chinaman, I would have the door opened wider—for his wife" so he will not be a "a homeless stranger among us" (Riis, 1890/1997, p. 81). Riis's solution for keeping the Chinese out of the white woman's range, then is to allow the entry of Asian women into

the country. In this context, the Page Act of 1875 leads to the amalgamation of races, and endangers the white woman and hence the patriarchal authority of the white society.

The inclusion of Chinese and other Asians to the racial discourse as non-whites affected their citizenship status immensely. According to Lisa Lowe, the way Asian immigrants formed their identity in the United States was shaped "by the U.S. state through the apparatus of immigration laws and policies, through the enfranchisements denied or extended to immigrant individuals and communities, and through the process of naturalization and citizenship" (1996/1998, p. 7). However, she argues that Asians were one of the groups that were racialized and "constituted" as "non-whites ineligible for citizenship'" (Lowe, 1996/1998, pp. 26-27). The racialization procedure was the construction of the mainstream white American. As David Roediger mentions "many immigrants practiced racism while being victimized by it, and had experience with in-between racial positions in Europe" (1985/2006, p. 116). When the immigrants understood that getting involved with the racial discourse would render them into the white American society, they took this advantage. In other words, the attitude towards the newcomers followed a circle of imposition; not only on the newcomers but also on the already existing/admitted members of the white race.

The attitude towards a possible threat to the white nation's integrity—as well as to this threat's access to the labor market—created a mechanism. This mechanism acted as an extension of nationalism. National ideals of the American society were controlled by the white hegemony. At all times, this hegemony had to control whom to accept into the society and whom to expel from it. This process needed policing; many immigrant, ethnic and racial groups were visibly white, which made it easier for them to pass into the white ranks of the society. The white laborer and the immigrant, even if they did not own property, won the right to vote if they were free (Painter, 2010/2011, p. 201). This is one of the reasons why whiteness was so valuable to the immigrants, because it was their property, they could attain the benefits that came along with the white race. Cheryl Harris, who looks at the relationship between property and race, says, "[p]ossession - the act necessary to lay the basis for rights in property […] laid the foundation for the idea that whiteness - that which whites alone possess - is valuable and is property" (1993, p. 1721). That is why many immigrants filed lawsuits to claim whiteness. Just like Japanese Takao Ozawa in 1923, many wanted to become a part of the white race and use the advantages that came with membership to it. But courts had disputes over who was white and who was not. For instance, after long years of lawsuits, Ozawa was declined the right to become white. His point in claiming whiteness was his Caucasian ancestors. The court decided that being Caucasian did not mean that one was white, or vice versa (Jacobson, 1999, pp. 235-236). Therefore, the legal system decided that culture, nationality, status, and religion composed the core of whiteness. This helped secure the whiteness of many European immigrants under the judicial forces, but led to the marginalization of Asian immigrants for they lacked the basic tenets of whiteness in the eyes of the majority.

"My Adopted Country": Marginalization while seeking Integration

The three books that will be analyzed here belong to three different genres and three authors with different backgrounds, but all of them are fueled by the autobiographical incidents of their authors. The ideas of these authors on American citizenship reflect their position as Asian immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the United States. They have different views on America, and they have distinct experiences in the States. These texts deal with the American citizenship, passing, and the acculturation of the Asian immigrant in the United States. They also display how Asian immigrants were involved with racial oppression both as victims and perpetrators of the racial hegemony. The existing racial stereotypes presented "the Chinese as mysterious, evil, nearby, and threatening, while the Japanese were exotic, quaint, delicate (or manly, as the samurai), and distant" (Solberg, 1981, p. 31). Moreover, the Americans perceived the Japanese to be unable to accustom themselves with the American way of life (Seethaler, 2011, p. 191). The texts below will address these stereotypes and demonstrate how the rhetoric surrounding Asians is accepted or questioned in the three examples of Asian immigrant literature below.

First of these authors is Yung Wing, whose immigration to America was on educational grounds. Wing was an important diplomat who strived to improve the relationships between his mother country and his adopted country. He was born in the Portuguese colony of Macao in 1828 and arrived in New York in 1847. Yung Wing's story is a constant battle of acceptance and rejection from the American government. He became a naturalized citizen in 1852 but his citizenship was revoked after the Naturalization Act of 1870 (Museum of Chinese in America, n.d.). When in China, Yung Wing goes to the American minister to China—Charles Denby for help on his status. The State Department, however, makes a decision regarding Wing's citizenship:

> Inasmuch as Yung Wing appears to have been granted his certificate of naturalization previous to the passage of the acts prohibiting Chinese naturalization, a refusal to admit now his right to privileges which he has apparently exercised for many years would on its face seem unjust and without warrant. Nevertheless, in view of the construction placed upon the naturalization laws of the United States by our highest courts, the Department does not feel that it can properly recognize him as a citizen of the United States (Worthy, Jr., 1965, p. 283).

What makes Yung Wing's autobiographical *My Life in China and America* (1909) interesting is that he mentions neither becoming a naturalized citizen nor being denied that title later. In fact, there is no mention of the Chinese Exclusion Act or the Naturalization Act of 1870 in his book; Wing skips that particular period of American history and the incidents related to it in his narrative. No longer an American citizen, he

omits the whole experience, erasing the memory of becoming an American citizen and losing that citizenship altogether from his life narrative. This selective narration leads him to preserve an appreciative tone towards the opportunities of his adopted country in his life narrative.

Even though Yung Wing avoids narrating his problematic citizenship status, he elaborates on his American education. Wing was the first Chinese man to get a diploma from Yale University, and in his life narrative he is proud of his Alma Mater since "to graduate from Yale College was considered a great honor, even to a native American, and much more so to a Chinese" (1909, p. 18). Even though at the time of this narrative he had already become a naturalized citizen, he still refers to himself as Chinese, and draws the line between him and the native-born American. His life after his return to his motherland shows how torn apart he was between the two sides of his identity. Since he went to the United States at an early age and spent eight years there, Wing is unable to speak Chinese upon his return to China. He dresses and behaves like an American, and he does not recall racist actions towards him except for the curious looks he met upon his first arrival to the United States and at his graduation at Yale.

However, there is one scene that shows how his self-narrative does not reconcile either with his legal status as a citizen or with the American government officials' perception of him as a citizen. Wing comes back to America to buy some machinery in the name of the Chinese government. He arrives in 1864, around to the close of the Civil War, and all machine shops are busy fulfilling government orders. Seeing that his orders will take time to be completed in this condition, he decides to enlist in the army as a volunteer for six months. Wing says that he "*felt* as a naturalized citizen of the United States, it was my bounden duty to offer my dispatches … simply to show my loyalty and patriotism to my adopted country" (1909, p. 55) (emphasis added). He does not directly say that he is already a naturalized citizen for twelve years by that time. He only mentions that he feels like one, and leaves the reader perplexed. Nevertheless, his offer to serve as a volunteer is rejected by James Barnes, the general in charge of the volunteer department:

> "Well, my young friend," said he, "I thank you very much for your offer, but since you are charged with a responsible trust to execute for the Chinese government, you had better return to Fitchburg to attend to it. We have plenty of men to serve, both as couriers and as fighting men to go to the front." Against this preemptory decision, I could urge nothing further, but I felt that I had at least fulfilled my duty to my adopted country" (Wing, 1909, p. 55).

Wing is not accepted into the Union Army, and the reason given by General Barnes points to Wing's loyalties to the Chinese government. Although a naturalized American citizen, he is still viewed as a Chinese. And no matter how much he wants to serve his adopted country to show his loyalty, he is left out of the national discourse of the Civil War. Unlike some of the European immigrants who served in the Civil War to be accepted into the

American nation, Wing is not given an opportunity. European immigrants created cheap labor force for the growing capitalist industry of the nineteenth century United States, however, the Asian immigrant was marginalized on racial terms, which ended in their complete exclusion from the country. And although Yung Wing never talks negatively about the United States, his constant discussion about his loyalties to China enforces the idea that he already felt estranged to his adopted country, even if he does not mention his denaturalization.

Another immigrant of Chinese origin is Sui Sin Far (Edith Maud Eaton), who was born in England in 1865 to an English father and a Chinese mother. Her family immigrated to the United States, for a short period of time, when Far was a child. Later, they moved to Canada, and following the footsteps of her parents Far continued immigrating between the United States and Canada for the rest of her life. Sui Sin Far is known for coining the term Chinese American for the first time; moreover, her works on Chinese Americans present an important insight to the life of Chinese Americans in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although Mrs. Spring Fragrance is one of her best stories, here I will focus on some of her journal articles and "Leaves From The Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian," in order to focus on her experiences as an immigrant in the United States. Similar to Frantz Fanon's description of a "revolutionary literature," in these articles she "turns herself into an awakener of the people" (1961/1963, p. 223). In order to demonstrate the everyday struggles of marginalized Chinese Americans, she displays the racism and ostracization Chinese immigrants encountered in the United States.

Far's work criticized the prejudiced reception of the Chinese Americans by white Americans. Her journal articles reflect on this subject and her 1895 article "Half Chinese-Children: Those of American Mothers and Chinese Fathers," which was published in *Montreal Daily Star* mirrors the white society's attitude toward the Chinese. According to her informant (an American lady married with a Chinese merchant) these mixed-race children have disadvantages both on the American and the Chinese sides of their identity. These half Chinese children are neither American nor Chinese since "white people with whom they come in contact that is, the lower-class, jibe and jeer at the poor little things continually, and their pure and unadulterated Chinese cousins look down upon them as being neither one thing nor the other—neither Chinese nor white" (Far, 1910/1995, p. 187). Interestingly, her informant does mention Americans by calling them "white," whereas the Chinese is left out of the white race in her narrative. Moreover, these children are scorned and viewed as an Oriental attraction. Far mentions a Chinese American girl who does not want to go to the house of a particular Mrs. G—, as she does not want to be turned into a "show": "It is just because I'm Chinese that she likes to have me there. … --and they examine me from head to toe as if I was a wild animal—and just because father is a Chinese. I'd rather be dead than be a 'show.'" (Far, 1910/1995, pp. 188-189). This attraction and curiosity towards the Chinese American child are just different forms of the gaze on Hottentot Venus—Sarah Baartman, as the white woman's Occidental gaze is turned towards the Oriental other to examine the latter part by part. When Far talks about

a similar event from her own childhood, she "recognizes that her family is transformed into entertainment, akin to zoos or anthropological displays" (Jirousek, 2002, p. 29). Although Far did not have distinctive Asian features, she was also subjected to these examinations and judgments. In "Leaves from The Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian," which was published in 1909, she describes her first encounter with a Chinese person in New York. She is shocked, since the only Chinese person she knows was her mother; then she questions who she and her brother Charlie are when a group of children harasses them:

> The two men within the store are uncouth specimens of their race, drest in working blouses and pantaloons with queues hanging down their backs. I recoil with a sense of shock.
>
> "Oh, Charlie," I cry. "Are we like that?"
>
> "Well, we're Chinese, and they're Chinese, too, so we must be!" returns my seven-year-old brother."
>
> "Of course you are," puts in a boy who has followed us down the street, and who lives near us and has seen my mother: "Chinky, Chinky, Chinaman, yellow-face, pig-tail, rat-eater" (Far, 1910/1995, p. 219).

When Far is confronted with racist slurs, she takes pride in her Chinese ancestry and screams that she would "rather be Chinese than anything else in the world," but later states that "the white blood in our veins fights valiantly for the Chinese half of us" (Far, 1910/1995, p. 219). This shows that she is aware that she is within the white racial domain as she recollects this memory. This childhood experience is a precursor of other racial experiences she will be subjected to unintentionally. Since Far did not have Asian features, she was not viewed as one in social environments. For example, she remembers a dinner with her boss from the time she worked as a stenographer. Her employer says that he has trouble with accepting Chinese people to be "humans like ourselves," to which a town clerk replies "[a] Chinaman is, in my eyes, more repulsive than a nigger" (Far, 1910/1995, p. 224). This conversation leads to a comparison between the African American and the Chinese immigrant, and labels the Chinese with epithets that were generally used to subjugate the black man. Annette White-Parks states that the stories of Far are challenging the whole root of racism" (1995, p. 31), for she decenters whiteness as the standard of "human" (Diana, 2001, p. 160). The American clerk's negative attitude towards the Chinese man in this sentence shows how Asian immigrants pose a threat to the integrity of the white race. Her employer's and the town clerk's statements demonstrate that race is a shifting category that is shaped by the interests of the majority. In this dialogue, it is demonstrated that the ostracization of the black man can be put aside to marginalize the Chinese, as long as it assigns the white man to a rightful position. Far, in this sense, is determined to reveal the absurd requirements surrounding membership to a certain race; since race itself is a fabricated phenomenon.

Far declares herself a Chinese at that dinner table and accepts the apology of her employer; however, she later mentions that she has no nationalities and is not interested in claiming one. Nevertheless, her journal articles focus not only on her identity development as a Chinese after her time in America, but they also focus on the lives of Chinese immigrants. She presents them as scholars, as cooks, as laundrymen, and as 'normal' people like white Americans. One of the sketches she demonstrates to her readers in her 1909 article "The Chinese in America" published in *Westerner*, talks about Go Ek Ju, who wants to write a book on Americans. Like, Mrs. Spring Fragrance, this character also desires to return the Occidental gaze because he believes that the Americans write on Chinaman without observing them in China. Nonetheless he thinks that the Chinese have all means to learn about Americans; "*We go into the American houses as servants; we enter the American schools and colleges as students*, […] Where is there the American who will go to China and enter into the service of a Chinese family as a domestic?" (original emphasis) (Far, 1910/1995, p. 236). Go Ek Ju says that the Chinese in America have access to the American household due to their lack of financial means, unlike the proud Americans who do not have the resources of observation the Chinese domestics have.

Although Far's discourse does not criticize people other than the prejudiced white Americans, she mentions that Americans have treated the Japanese with more respect than the Chinese. This, according to her, is why some young Chinese people "thinking to advance themselves, both in a social and business sense, pass as Japanese" (Far, 1910/1995, p. 228). Far tries to break down those prejudices to understand the reasons underlying this passing. The prejudice against the Chinese and Chinese Americans Far talks about in her journal articles would not fade until 1920s, when large numbers of immigrants from other nationalities and ethnic origins were arriving at the United States. This xenophobic panic against the immigrant ended with the Immigration Act of 1924. The Immigration Act of 1924 (also known as the Johnson-Reed Act) exhorted the power of the United States as a nation state. As Dominick LaCapra in *History, Literature, Critical Theory* (2013) argues, the nation state had the power to pass and terminate a law according to the interests of the state and the public:

> Most important, sovereignty of the nation-state, with its putative monopoly on legitimated uses of violence, derived from the sovereign status of God, with its implication that, like the radically transcendental, willful God of certain variants of Christianity, the secular sovereign was the one who declared both the onset and the termination of states of emergency and of exception that suspended the constitution and the rule of law (p. 123).

LaCapra's main argument focuses on the history of violence used by the Nazi regime and its reflections on literature. Thinking Hitler's law-like-will under this light of sovereign power, he explains that the powerholder, either the state or the person in charge, can turn that authority into an absolute power by presenting it as an apparatus for the good of the people in general. Indeed, immigration restriction laws show how the United States

regulated the immigrants, as Lowe says, in regard to its and the white man's interests. Although the scope of this paper does not extend to the 1940s to talk about the Japanese internment camps, as another form of forced immigration or exile, it keeps in mind that the favored people of one race could also be the subject of another ban or segregationist law under the sovereign power of the United States.

The Japanese were safe from the Exclusion Act of 1882, but they were not free from prejudice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The following book reflects on the acculturation of a Japanese girl in America, and gives interesting insights on how racial formation takes its toll on the book's narrator, Morning Glory. *The American Diary of A Japanese Girl* was published in 1901 under the pseudonym Miss Morning Glory to make it look like an authentic diary of an immigrant girl. The book, in fact, was a fictional diary written by Yone Noguchi, who immigrated to the United States in 1893. Noguchi became one of the central Japanese-born figures in America in introducing Japanese culture to the American literary scene through his poems. According to Cathyrn Halverson, Noguchi created Miss Morning Glory as a way "for conceptualizing his own American life" (2007, p. 67). Upon arrival to the United States, Noguchi's life formed around the racial stereotypes which were usually fashioned according to the jobs available to Japanese immigrants. In the late nineteenth century, Japanese men, who usually arrived at the United States for education, started inheriting domestic work from their Chinese predecessors (Halverson, 2007, p. 66; Franey, 2007, p. xvi). These domestic jobs reinforced the stereotypes that effeminate the Asian men "from a long-standing association of the Orient with femininity" (Halverson, 2007, p. 74). The discourse of femininity ascribed to the Japanese men by white Americans is an extension of the white hegemony. Since domestic work was associated with slavery, those who worked as domestics even long after the abolishment were stigmatized. Noguchi offers interesting perspectives on the role of gender and labor for the inclusion of Japanese men and women into the American society. He is also quite successful in demonstrating the participation of his immigrant character Morning Glory to the racial discourse.

In the book, Noguchi displays the importance attributed to the stereotypical appearances of minorities, immigrants and people of color. Although Morning Glory is not fond of being pictured as the stereotypical Geisha, she has a tendency to judge others according to racial stereotypes. African Americans and the Chinese are the two main groups that are exposed to the racial discourse in her diary. According to her "[t]he negroes are horrid," (p. 44), they are "darkeys" (p. 63) with a "midnight face" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 78). She also learns from her milieu the racial slurs attributed to the African Americans. When she hears that the African Americans were called "coons," she looks up the word and feels unsatisfied with its definition. She says, "[t]he ever-so-kind Americans don't consider them, I am certain, as 'animals allied to the bear'" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 45). Contrary to what Morning Glory thinks, S. F. Davis in *Mississippi Negro Lore* (1914)

explains how the word coon implies the animalistic characters attributed to the African American man and goes on to explain the "similarities" between the two "coons":

> Whenever it becomes necessary to catch a negro, or a "coon" for any purpose, the same methods are employed in each case. There are three ways by which either can be caught, namely: by traps, by still hunting, and with hounds. If a trapper wants to catch a "coon" in a trap, he either baits it with sardines, salmon or some other kind of loud smelling canned fish; or he baits it with some bright object, say a piece of broken plate about the size of a silver dollar, or a little piece of new tin, and if a "coon" passes that way, he will most likely fall a victim of either his appetite, or his curiosity. He simply cannot resist the temptation (Davis, 1914, p. 14).

Davis, then, does not forget to state that the "the negro has long since been aptly termed a coon" (1914, p. 15). In contradiction to Morning Glory's assumption, the "ever-so-kind American" believed in the aptness of the used word. The Chinese is the other group that gets its share from the racially loaded adjectives in Noguchi's fictional diary, in this regard the Sino-Japanese War between 1894-1895 should be kept in mind as a reason for enmity between the two races. Chinese immigrants in this narrative are stereotypical characters. Morning Glory talks about Chinese laundrymen; deformed feet of Chinese women, which she renders as savage; and the mundaneness of the Chinaman. When she intends to name her doll Charley, she gives up the thought saying that she "was disgusted at the thought, because every Chinese—ten thousand Mongols in all—is named one Charley" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 129). She also talks about the "famous Jewish noses" (p. 172), and the "simple," "poor Italians" with "hungry eyes" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 259). She also notices that "New York ladies discard their babies to leave them in the hands of European immigrants (very likely they want them to learn an ungrammatical hodge-podge)" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 258). She adopts the racial discourse of the turn-of-the-century United States as a faithful member of the habitus she lives in. The Jewish, the Italian and the other European immigrants become discernible from the American crowd she encounters. Through this narrative Noguchi displays that not only Asians but also Europeans are peculiar and distinct from the white society they all struggle to fit in.

Morning Glory, on the other hand, feels uncomfortable with the image of the Oriental Japanese woman in the American mind. She especially dislikes *Madame Butterfly*: "Your oriental novel, let me be courageous enough to say, is a farce at its best" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 239). She thinks characters in *Madame Butterfly* are unrealistic with half-American half-Japanese appearances. Throughout the book, she questions "where 'Mericans get the conception that Jap girls are eternally smiling puppets" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 76). She is also aware of the racism directed at her countrymen who are "dashed" with the word "Jap" "from every corner" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 153). Besides, Morning Glory talks about the limited number of Asian women in the US, when she has a conversation with her uncle about the "brown" Japanese men who does not have

female companions. She questions "[w]hy not make love with Merican musume[1]? I said I would petition the Tokio government to transplant her women" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 153). The satirical tone of the book offers a naïve resolution, reminding the reader the Page Act of 1875, which limited the entrance of Asian women into the country on grounds of their supposed immorality. Even though Morning Glory judges the Oriental's perception by the Occidental, she becomes a part of the racial hierarchy with her own perceptions of the other that are supported by the racial discourse of the period. She even gets involved in the color politics and starts to identify herself and other Japanese women as "brown" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, pp. 59, 65,160). Noguchi's text shows how the newcomer indulges in the racial discourse by being exposed to it herself.

Morning Glory is a privileged immigrant with financial means to support her life in 'Amerikey.' That is why she feels insulted when they arrive at San Francisco and are disillusioned by the city's invasion by Chinamen and dirt. She distances herself from the "empty-stomached tramps rapping the kitchen door for a crust of bread" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 36). Although she disassociates from the poverty-stricken working-class immigrants, she has romantic ideas about labor and the laborer. In a love letter, she mentions some laborers "breaking massive stones" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 175), and imagines herself as the wife of such a man and her dream ends with being beaten by him. Controversial in her dreams and deeds, Morning Glory decides to work as a laborer in New York "'[t]oiling my daily bread,' does ring an American sound, doesn't it?" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 261). Unlike many working-class immigrants that are mentioned in her seemingly authentic autobiography, she decides to work to mimic the American way of life. Her extracted labor is not a produce of necessity, but an outcome of a rather touristic experience.

When Morning Glory arrives at the Brooklyn Bridge on March 13, 1900; she asks, whether the bridge is "built for Americans or Europeans […] People crossing here use no English" (Noguchi, 1901/1902, p. 257). This observation summarizes her impressions about the turn of the century United States in general, as the controversial diversity was part of the American culture. In fact, the foreigners were everywhere, and the chaotic atmosphere of poverty, labor, and the American Dream enriched the American culture as it gained new narratives via the immigrant community, of which Morning Glory was now a member. *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl*, as well as the other works analyzed in this article focus on Americanization, racial discourse and the racial prejudice in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They show that hyphenated American identities are not enough to pass into the invisible ranks the white of society as long as they bear the physical Asian features that can be "detected" by the policing gaze of the Occidental other. The hegemonical aspect of the immigration and naturalization laws, as well as the embedded racial discourse these immigrant authors have found themselves in, are evident in their narratives. They are marginalized; Wing chooses to leave out that marginalization

[1] Musume is the Japanese word for 'girl'.

from his life narrative to an extent, Far presents the marginalization on the basis of whiteness in almost all her works, Noguchi displays the standpoint of a wealthy Japanese woman and her observations of America to distort the racial discourse surrounding brown and white bodies. The language of inclusion/exclusion in the three works discussed above displays the unfair treatment of these Chinese and Japanese Americans at an anti-Asian white American milieu, highlighting the status of Asian immigrants as the unassimilable other. Even though Emma Lazarus' poem "The New Colossus" on Lady Liberty claims to be a welcoming image with the opportunity of a prospective future, the immigrant's American Dream of equality dissipates as she asks whether this is the "real Amerikey."

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