Introduction

In the opening scene of John Okada's 1957 novel, *No-No Boy,* the main character, Ichiro Yamada, descends from a bus that has pulled into his hometown of Seattle, Washington. World War II has recently ended, and along with nearly 120,000 other Japanese Americans, Ichiro has endured a most harrowing ordeal, memories of which haunt him throughout the novel. Over the last four years, Ichiro's travails included internment and jail time, and while in "camp," he broke with the majority of the Japanese American internees by refusing to pledge unqualified allegiance to the United States, an act of disloyalty leading to his imprisonment. After his time away from home, Ichiro returns to the streets of downtown Seattle, but he feels "like an intruder in a world in which he had no claim."[1]

A fellow resident of Japanese ancestry he encounters tells him, "The smart [former internees] went to Chicago and New York and lotsa places back east,"[2] suggesting that Seattle, although once home to many Japanese Americans, is no longer a place where they ought or want to be.[3] Exploring his old stomping grounds on Jackson Street, which runs through Japantown and is adjacent to the vice district and Chinese and black neighborhoods, only compounds Ichiro's feelings of alienation:

> The war had wrought violent changes upon the people, and the people, in turn, working hard and living hard and earning a lot of money and spending it on whatever was available, had distorted the profile of Jackson Street. The street had about it the air of a carnival

> without quite succeeding at becoming one. A shooting gallery stood where once had been a clothing store; fish and chips had replaced a jewelry shop; and a bunch of Negroes were horsing around raucously in front of a pool parlor. Everything looked older and dirtier and shabbier.[4]

Jolted by the cacophonous sounds, unfamiliar faces, and air of inauthenticity he detects around him, Ichiro pines for the comfort of familiarity, but to no avail. Instead, a group of black residents heckles him to "Go back to Tokyo, boy," and later some whites also tell him to "Go back to Japan."[5] Though Ichiro was born in and grew up in America, his "Oriental" face marks him as a foreigner, and perceptions of his individual "otherness" are steeped in broader perceptions of Japan's cultural and geographic otherness, not to mention memories of the recently concluded war against Japan. In the context of war, the construction of Japan as an enemy nation and race whose people, values, and culture were vastly different from, even antagonistic to, those of Americans galvanized U.S. troops against the wartime foe. Domestically, however, this construction also established the impossibility of full American citizenship for persons of Japanese ancestry in the United States, even those who held legal U.S. citizenship. This impossibility was doubly so for those who would not commit their unqualified allegiance to the United States and renounce Japan during the war.

The taunts he endures to go "back to Japan" signal to Ichiro that, even in his hometown of Seattle, once the site of a bustling Japanese American community and major port of trans-Pacific commerce, he is out of place. *No-No Boy* only hints at his prewar life, and, in one such instance, a walk down Jackson Street sparks sobering realizations of how much he and his city have changed:

> Was it possible that he, striding freely down the street of an American city, the city of his birth and schooling and the cradle of his hopes and dreams, had waved it all aside beyond recall? Was it possible that he and Freddie and the other four of the poker crowd and all the other American-born, American-educated Japanese who had renounced their American-ness in a frightening moment of madness had done so irretrievably? Was there no hope of redemption?[6]

Although Seattle is the backdrop against which Ichiro's postwar odyssey plays out, it is also a reflection and projection of his angst. It is the home to which he returns, initially with hopes of losing himself in the familiar

and forgetting the trials of the past, but the city offers no such solace and is anything but the setting of a happy homecoming. As noted above, it has changed too much, as has Ichiro. Furthermore, seeing and interacting with other persons of Japanese ancestry provide no comfort or sense of belonging, as he has internalized his outsider status as a racial "other" and "disloyal" subject. Yet memories of Ichiro's prewar life in Seattle haunt him and sustain his hope, however faint, that he might one day find redemption and restore his fragmented postwar self.

Although *No-No Boy* is a fictionalized account of the struggles of Japanese American resettlement in Seattle, the novel does, nonetheless, powerfully channel the sudden and tumultuous changes in fortune that West Coast Japanese Americans experienced over the first half of the twentieth century. Most of the memories Ichiro grapples with in the book come from the war years, but at various moments, Okada alludes to his prewar life, inviting the reader to speculate about what changed and what was lost to the tidal wave of mass removal and incarceration. When Ichiro wonders, for example, whether it was possible that the "hopes and dreams" he nurtured during his childhood had been swept aside by the tumult of internment, Okada alludes to, but gives little detail about, a time that the reader is left to imagine as only an idyllic prelude to the traumatic and dislocating war years.

Although they are relatively minor aspects of the book, these moments of reflection on the past, prompted by Ichiro's encounters with his urban surroundings, conjure up images of a pre–World War II Seattle when Japanese Americans' relationship with the city inspired much less dreary sentiments. For example, in 1930, the *Japanese-American Courier,* an all-English weekly targeted at members of the second generation (Nisei), depicted conditions in Jackson Street that contrasted greatly with Okada's bleak postwar visions. Rejecting then-dominant impressions of the area as a seedbed of vice and racial deviancy, Seattle Nisei lawyer and ethnic community leader Clarence Arai reclaimed the neighborhood's reputation and sought to instill residents' pride by describing it as a center of "international" culture that was enhanced—rather than degraded—by the presence of Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos. Members of these ethnic groups, he said, so crucially defined that section that it might as well be called the "Far East of Seattle City":

> As one saunters down one of the main streets, one finds that a Japanese restaurant caters to the group by a prominent sign, "Philippine Dinners." Glancing thru the new phone book one will run across the word "Filipino" added to the firm name of one of the oldest Japanese

> business firms. The South End is no longer Seattle's "Little Tokio" [*sic*] or "Chinatown" but Seattle's "Far East."[7]

In Arai's depiction, likely aimed at deflecting nativist and racist hostility toward Japanese people and assuring coethnic readers of their rightful place in the city, the Asian and Asian American presence is such as integral part of Jackson Street's landscape that the lines between the United States and Asia seem to blur. The moniker "Seattle's 'Far East'" confers upon people of Asian ancestry a special claim to the area while also calling forth an imagined geography in which the United States and East Asia are—contrary to the logic of Orientalism—neighboring, even overlapping, places.

That such Japanese Americans as Arai viewed and wrote about Seattle in such ways grew out of a set of historical dynamics that brought the American West Coast into close encounters with the "Far East" over the early twentieth century. Flows of goods, people, and ideas across the Pacific transformed coastal cities into crucial nodes in the emerging "Pacific world," which then made it possible for the residents of those locales to imagine themselves as inhabitants of an expansive space in which the United States and Asia came together. Furthermore, the Japanese government's encouragement of emigrants to promote the state's international and economic position by creating semiautonomous "New Japans" in the United States enhanced the perception among some Japanese settlers in North America that their immigrant communities were less transplants in Seattle and other West Coast cities than bridges between their countries of origin and settlement.[8] White American leaders also embraced visions of a Pacific-centered world that might serve their long-standing objective of reaching the markets of Asia and bolstering the geopolitical position of the United States in that part of the world. But this Pacific imaginary also threatened to destabilize the enduring Orientalist pillar of Western thought that the "twain" could never meet. According to Arai, in "Seattle's 'Far East,'" the East and West did more than just "meet"; the East had settled in the West and in the process became a critical part of it.

The experiences of Japanese Americans in Seattle, Washington, from their early settlement around the turn of the twentieth century until the outbreak of World War II, provide a window into this contradictory set of conditions, which, among this population, fostered flexible identities, fueled aspirations for belonging, and ultimately dealt crushing disappointment in a locality that was alternately and simultaneously American and Pacific. To focus this examination, *Claiming the Oriental Gateway* pursues two main questions: (1) What was the impact of U.S. Pacific expansion and Japanese

migration on Seattle's urban development, and (2) how did Seattle's pursuit of status as a major Pacific port affect Japanese American experience? The title of the book underlines the city's pursuit of status as a "gateway to the Orient" as an ever-present backdrop to Japanese American history in Seattle. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, white commercial and civic boosters consistently promoted Seattle in these terms. Meant to encourage growth and to enhance urban prestige while supporting the nation-state's larger endeavor to become a major power in the Pacific region, this effort always hinged on the U.S. relationship with Japan, a key partner in trade and diplomacy and a major source of immigrants to the West Coast from the 1890s to 1920s. In this context, locals would also claim that Seattle embodied "cosmopolitanism," thereby framing domestic diversity as a phenomenon of international networks and a worldly embrace of difference. And to the extent that people endeavored to actualize this claim in concrete terms, Japanese Americans took up the mantle of cosmopolitanism, becoming highly visible in the urban landscape, participating in the local culture, and envisioning themselves as members of "cosmopolitan Seattle."

Although the city's bid for distinction as the "gateway to the Orient" and Japanese Americans' efforts to secure inclusion yielded significant forms of visibility for this minority group, Seattle—like other West Coast ports—remained a racially volatile place, so whatever acceptance Japanese Americans attained in white society was always tenuous and transitory. West Coast cities may have attached their priorities and identities to the Pacific and, thus, in meaningful ways, bound their destinies to Asia, but they were also the settings of—if not ground zero for—anti-Asian politics. Moreover, the societies that emerged within the boundaries of Seattle and other West Coast cities became more, not less, racially stratified through the early twentieth century. Although Seattle elites' claims of cosmopolitanism underscored collaboration and mutual interests among Pacific Rim nations as factors reflected in local conditions, the ups and downs in the relationship between the United States and Asian countries and on-the-ground anti-Asian racism belied those ideals and exposed their limits. A city touting its ties to the Pacific and claiming to be a "gateway to the Orient" was one thing; the symbolic appropriation of a people opening the way to substantive steps toward full inclusion and racial equality was quite another.

Mindful of the fact that Japanese Americans' inclusion was tenuous and stemmed from a view of them as stand-ins for their country of origin, conduits to trans-Pacific markets, or objects within a larger "cosmopolitan" mosaic, as opposed to self-determined actors and fully vested members of *American* society, this book also explores how Japanese Americans

were resourceful and active agents in Seattle's sociocultural landscape. Specifically, the local discourse about Seattle as cosmopolitan, which entailed fetishizing differences, reifying groups of people as racial and cultural types, and glossing over entrenched racial hierarchies, nonetheless opened the possibility for Japanese residents to adapt the concept for their own ends and to make cases for their civic belonging. In addition to participating in city events and contributing in other ways to the "local color," Japanese Americans drew on the imaginings of Seattle as a cosmopolitan "gateway to the Orient" to reenvision and to make claims to spaces as small as city parks and as large as the Pacific world.

Seattle, the Pacific Rim, and the Trans-Pacific West

This book uses the "Pacific Era" as a broad historical frame for thinking about the relationship between Japanese American history and Seattle history during the early 1900s. As the turn of the twentieth century approached, the United States stretched its "empire of liberty" to the ends of the continent and, it seemed, conquered the wilderness in the West. Although for some observers, this territorial expansion spelled the closing of the frontier and, thus, the end of the first phase of American history, it also marked the beginning of a sustained period of U.S. imperialism and expansionism in the Asia-Pacific region. The Pacific Era thus captured this recognition of a phase in American history during which the United States would push further west beyond the continental border to realize its national destiny in the Pacific world. In this context, the notion of the "Pacific Rim" became salient. Expounding on this concept, Arif Dirlik argues that the Pacific Rim is less a fixed physical place than an ideological construction of Euro-American origin and design.[9] As he explains, the idea of the Pacific Rim has existed for scarcely more than two hundred years, stemming from and rationalizing the forward march of Western capitalism around the world. Deployed as an ideology, the Pacific Rim concept has served two main functions, explains Dirlik: "to set up a domain of economic activity and power for those who play a hegemonic role in the Pacific"; and "to contain within it relationships that in and of themselves are not confined to it."[10] In the last century and a half, the United States has played a leading role in this process, with its control of or involvements in Alaska, Hawaii, the Marianas, Guam, Wake, Midway, the Philippines, China, Taiwan, South Korea, and Vietnam.

Underscoring dynamics of U.S. imperialism and expansionism, the Pacific Rim concept also draws attention to Seattle's geographic position in

a transoceanic region bounded by the U.S. West Coast and Asia. In the last few decades, scholarship emphasizing Pacific Rim and trans-Pacific approaches to the study of the American West and Asian American history has solidified our understandings of the West's ties to Asia and the Pacific.[11] Indeed, at one time or another between the mid-nineteenth century and the present, each major U.S. West Coast city has harnessed its future to the Asia-Pacific region and proclaimed itself the nation's "gateway to the Orient." Inklings of these aspirations were evident as early as the 1840s, when, during the Mexican-American War of 1846–1848, Captain John Fremont predicted that San Francisco would eventually become the nation's headquarters for Pacific military operations. A few years later, at the 1849 California constitutional convention, a delegate linked his dreams for the new state to the "resources of the East":

> No other portion of the globe will exercise a greater influence upon the civilization and commerce of the world. The people of California will penetrate the hitherto inaccessible portions of Asia, carrying with them not only the arts and sciences, but the refining and purifying influence of civilization and Christianity; they will unlock the vast resources of the East, and, by reversing the commerce of the world, pour the riches of India into the metropolis of the new State.[12]

Because access to overseas markets was a key factor in the capitalist development of the American West, the largest cities on the coast—San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle—owe much of their growth to their historical orientation to the Pacific.[13] In the Pacific Northwest, major incentives for the early-nineteenth-century push into that region were the potential profits to be drawn from extending the fur trade into China. Subsequently, coal, lumber, and wheat joined the list of key regional goods extracted from the region and exported through Western ports.

Asian American historians have further illuminated the deep connections between the U.S. West and Asia. Gail Nomura, for instance, observed that as the United States moved beyond the continent to pursue its interests in the Pacific, "the Far East became the Far West," a statement that underscores how the transition from continental to extraterritorial expansion blurred the conceptual boundaries between the "East" and "West."[14] Nomura's remark also highlights a unique relationship between American culture and Orientalism. In their respective discussions of U.S. imaginings of China and India, historians John Tchen and Vijay Prashad have elaborated on how

Americans, although inheritors of European Orientalism, often had a more intimate relationship with the "Orient," showing, for instance, a willingness to emulate and to incorporate aspects of the "East" into their ideological sensibilities and cultural practices.[15] In the American imagination, the boundaries between the "East" and "West" were further challenged with large-scale Asian immigration from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. These circumstances in effect modulated the East-West dichotomy, an enduring pillar of Western identity, but rather than leading to its disavowal, it was continually reconfigured and asserted through immigration restrictions, miscegenation laws, alien land acts, and other measures that maintained what in practice was a yellow-white color line in America. This simultaneous blurring and reasserting of the Orient-Occident boundary in American law and culture has been a striking paradox in Asian American history, and this paradox is reflected in Japanese American history in Seattle during the early 1900s. On the one hand, the city itself was deeply invested in relationships with Japan and sought to capitalize on the presence of residents of Japanese ancestry, yet racialized notions of citizenship and superficial interpretations and practices of cosmopolitanism limited Japanese Americans' lives and precluded their full belonging in the city and the nation.

The United States and New Internationalism

Toward explaining how and why Seattle's white elites embraced the "gateway to the Orient" idea, this book understands the city's urbanization against what diplomatic historian Akira Iriye has called the "new internationalism," which reached its apex just after World War I but had been several decades in the making. Around the turn of the twentieth century, American political and business leaders agreed on the need to expand beyond the continent, and the Spanish-American War of 1898 signaled a decisive shift in U.S. foreign policy in this direction. Justifying its actions abroad, however, required some ideological finesse, so by fusing the rhetoric of universalism with economic interests, the United States could export its commodities and ideas and extract the world's raw materials without assuming the explicit posture of a colonial power.[16] Framing the acquisition of the Philippines and China Open Door Notes, for example, in terms of spreading liberal capitalism, enlightened civilization, and self-determination allowed the United States to disavow nationalism and empire as motivations.[17]

With the end of World War I, a "new internationalism" reached its zenith, achieving perhaps its highest expression in the League of Nations and the

foreign policy of Woodrow Wilson.[18] This outlook purported to replace the excessively competitive national rivalries of earlier times, encouraged extensive international contact and cooperation, and gestured a measure of equality among all nations.[19] The new internationalism fueled movements for cosmopolitanism and cross-national communication, which took on particular momentum during the 1920s and 1930s, as they were aided by technologies of modern communication and transportation. "It was widely recognized," states Iriye, "that ultimately internationalism must be built upon the education of more cosmopolitan, less narrowly nationalistic, individuals of all countries."[20] Accordingly, international relations encompassed a broader range of activities, such as academic and cultural exchanges and scholarly endeavors sponsored by nongovernmental organizations with the express purpose of building bridges and fostering intercultural understanding.[21]

Although internationalism and Pacific Rim ideology were deployed to cast U.S. expansion in a benign, even benevolent, light, these logics were rife with contradictions. For the United States, nationalism and internationalism were not distinct but intersecting, and "internationalism," particularly under the foreign policies of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, was too often merely the projection of Americanism to other parts of the world.[22] As Charles Bright and Michael Geyer have noted, despite the long-standing official U.S. opposition to imperialism and regard for the sovereignty of nations, its foreign policy through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could be aptly captured by the phrase "irremediable entanglement." They further observe that the United States was mired in an "unceasing effort to seek out the world and pull it in—people, territory, goods, knowledge—and the equally insistent efforts to put the world off and to negotiate a separation that would define the nation, its territory and its culture from and over against the world."[23] This was especially the case when it came to how the United States dealt with East Asia and Asian immigration. On the one hand, it aggressively pursued economic or political influence in Japan, China, and the Philippines during the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. On the other hand, it made strenuous efforts to severely limit, and eventually to prohibit, the migration of people from these parts of the world across its borders.

If delineating the Pacific Rim as a geographic domain rationalized and lent purpose to a global vision of discrete regional identities and enabled Europeans and Americans to justify their economic and military incursions abroad, this most certainly was the case during the U.S. expansion into the Pacific. This movement was incorporated into the nation's overarching narrative of spreading civilization and progress, but it disregarded, and at

times openly disdained, the aspirations of the societies it encountered in the process. Returning to Dirlik's ruminations on the Pacific Rim, a striking but intentional blind spot in Westerners' conception of the Pacific was that Asian people had always been important to the region and its activities, not only in populating and traversing it but also in pursuing their own imperial designs. In the twentieth century, Japan was the most obvious contradiction and, thus, threat to the U.S. fantasy of Pacific domination. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Japan had made a dramatic and unexpected rise in the global arena, with its rapid economic and political modernization and military victories over China in 1895 and Russia in 1905. And as the world's attention shifted from the Euro-American Atlantic to the Pacific, it was clear that the United States and Japan would be the key players of the Pacific Era. Yet from the U.S. perspective, it was also growing evident that Japan would be a rival that commanded respect in the region rather than a complacent partner in trade and passive recipient of American influences.

Claiming the Oriental Gateway

Mindful of this international backdrop, of central concern to this study is explaining how intersecting dynamics of American expansion, Asian trans-Pacific migration, and internationalism manifested locally and impacted people's relationships with one another and their surroundings. A significant development of recent Asian American history has been the heightened attention to the ways that dynamics of international relations and trans-Pacific ties inform Asian American lived experience.[24] Although these transnational and international turns have expanded the scope of the field and recast a number of topics of long-standing importance, much space remains to examine issues of place and scale and to bring those considerations to our broader understanding. *Claiming the Oriental Gateway* focuses on the intersections of urbanization, ethnic identity, and internationalism, exploring how these factors gave rise to a distinct set of local practices and experiences in which Japanese Americans were integral. As a window into the dynamic and mutually constitutive dimensions of the broad, abstract "Pacific" and a smaller scale, more concrete locality, Seattle is a prime location for examination due to its self-proclaimed status as the nation's "gateway to the Orient" and its long history of Japanese settlement dating to the 1890s.

If the Pacific Era would be a defining theme of the twentieth century and a constituent element of the U.S. rise to global hegemony, this development certainly casts a new significance on the role of West Coast urban hubs. Their geographical location made them crucial points of contact between

the United States and its Pacific possessions and partners. Furthermore, the cities themselves had much to gain from the economic and diplomatic relationships being forged between the United States and Asia. Enthralled by the possibilities of Pacific encounters in terms of local development as well as the broad sweep of human history, elites in Seattle would celebrate each stride that signified the closing of the distance between the United States and Asia. For example, in 1935, well into this process, Seattleites celebrated the completion of telephone lines between their city and Tokyo. Extolling the significance of this milestone, University of Washington Professor of Oriental Studies Robert Pollard declared that Rudyard Kipling's famous dictum "East is East and West is West and Never the Twain Shall Meet" had been "relegated to the ash heap."[25]

Such developments were also significant because they lent material legitimacy to Seattle's claim of being a "gateway to the Orient." Along these lines and toward the larger objective of modernizing the city, local elites touted Seattle as a "cosmopolitan" port. That they invoked this particular term is noteworthy. Historian David Hollinger offers a useful explanation of cosmopolitanism in which he differentiates it from closely related ideologies such as pluralism. Although pluralism and cosmopolitanism promote tolerance for ethnic diversity, they differ in their relationship to and investments in cultural heterogeneity and the possibility that a society can transcend the ethno-racial boundaries that otherwise divide it. "If cosmopolitanism can be casual about community building and community maintenance and tends to seek voluntary associations of wide compass," Hollinger says, "pluralism promotes affiliations on the narrower grounds of shared history and is more quick to see reasons for drawing boundaries between communities."[26] In short, a pluralistic outlook is more provincial and focused inward on the group than a cosmopolitan one, which embraces difference but works from a broader vantage point and is, thus, able to place a premium on thinking and relating across boundaries. In practice, this meant that "cosmopolitanism" carried a more sophisticated, worldly, and modern connotation than "pluralism."

We also tend to think of cosmopolitanism as a social/political philosophy and personal disposition, whereby "cosmopolitans" are people who regard themselves as "citizens of the world" because they travel, possess knowledge of and facility with different cultures, and/or think globally and expansively instead of locally and narrowly.[27] In political and philosophical discourse, the subject often prompts interrogations of the historical conditions by which this outlook becomes a possibility and the potential for geographically unbounded communities of obligation to emerge. Calling Seattle

"cosmopolitan," however, focuses the dynamism and possibilities of international crossings explicitly on *place.* Additionally, Seattleites often folded the city's burgeoning ethnic diversity into this discourse; that is to say, as noted earlier, "immigrant Seattle," which included Europeans and Asians, was a phenomenon of "gateway Seattle." Such an imagining called on people to view the city as an entity that existed and functioned on several scales, which furthered its case that it was a modern urban metropolis of the twentieth century.

Nationally, interest in cosmopolitanism resurged with the expanding U.S. presence in world affairs and in response to the rise of nativism in America in the late 1800s to early 1900s. Early-twentieth-century cosmopolitanism is commonly associated with the American intellectual Randolph Bourne, who laid out its basic concepts in relation to debates about immigration to the United States in his 1916 essay, "Trans-national America," which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly.*[28] Reflecting primarily on European migration to eastern cities, Bourne observed that foreign immigration had turned American centers in the United States into international communities writ small and argued that this was a development to be embraced, not feared. Rather than dividing Americans, ethnic difference ought to be valued as a resource that enlightens and strengthens the collective national body. Further, America's ethnic diversity was merely a mirror of a world whose people and components were becoming rapidly interconnected, and whether the United States could accommodate its demographic diversity would prove not only the soundness of its democratic principles and institutions but also its fitness to lead the modern world.[29]

In describing Seattle as cosmopolitan, boosters appropriated extant understandings of the term at the time but also gave it an unconventional, even radical, twist by including Asians and a West Coast city in the discourse. In several ways, they exhorted, Seattle was an exemplar of modernity and cosmopolitanism in the Pacific Era. As a West Coast port, it facilitated international trade and exchange, but it was much more than a mere transit point through which goods, people, and ideas passed en route to other places. The city itself embodied cosmopolitanism, in its spirit, heterogeneous population, and particular sites within its limits. To be sure, these were exaggerated claims that were not always supported by material conditions and, thus, better reflected the insecurities and desires of residents eager to shed the vestiges of the frontier past and to set their city apart from rival urban centers.

As offshoots from Japan and members of a sizeable local ethnic community, Japanese American residents of Seattle embodied cosmopolitanism in several ways. Large numbers of Japanese immigrants began settling on the

West Coast during the 1890s. By 1930, about nine thousand lived in Seattle, where they clustered in Jackson Street, a minority-concentrated neighborhood located just south of the downtown business district. Members of Seattle's Japanese American community understood that if international connections and a diverse population were the touchstones of the city's claims to cosmopolitanism, then they—as representatives of the Asian side of the Pacific Rim and a part of the fabric of American heterogeneity—could play a pivotal role in its development into a major urban center. They thus embraced aspects of cosmopolitanism to articulate their place in the city, to build relationships with other communities, and to argue for their local and national belonging. For example, local civic celebrations, such as the International Potlatch festival of the 1930s, brought Japanese cultural displays and Japanese American residents to the foreground of the urban landscape; schools with high Japanese enrollments were characterized as "cosmopolitan"; and Japanese artists who achieved international acclaim further bolstered Seattle's claims to world preeminence. Basketball competitions between second-generation Japanese and Chinese teams in the 1920s and 1930s became occasion to imagine Collins Fieldhouse as a battleground for Asian athletic supremacy. With their black, Chinese, and Filipino neighbors, Japanese Americans in Jackson Street, before and after World War II, adapted cosmopolitanism to defy negative images of minority enclaves and to argue that such multiracial areas exemplified true Seattle cosmopolitanism.

Cosmopolitanism was a powerful concept that appealed to Seattle's ambitions and resonated with broad forces transforming the nation and the world during the early 1900s. Although embraced by the city's elites and deployed in a top-down fashion, it still held out the possibility for Japanese Americans, an otherwise marginalized minority, to make arguments for their importance to the city at large and to thereby shore up their claims to belonging. However, it was also a very tenuous concept, and the advantages people drew from cosmopolitanism relied on its ambiguities. It capitalized on Seattle's geography, but cosmopolitanism was also constrained by it, for as much as Seattleites insisted that theirs was an international city, its location within U.S. national boundaries meant that cosmopolitanism would always have an American accent. It brought an international frame to discussions of racial and ethnic inclusion and explicitly eschewed crude expressions of cultural chauvinism, but in Seattle, cosmopolitanism was always linked to a national ambition for Pacific influence. The city's history, moreover, points out a general shortcoming in cosmopolitan thought during this period. The vision of a diverse society finding and embracing a common ground, which Bourne wrote so optimistically about, was not, in fact, the domain of the world,

but of the United States, and it presumed that the United States was the center and guiding hand of transnational exchange and cross-cultural understanding.[30]

Also, as an outlook that embraced heterogeneity, cosmopolitanism implicitly relied on the maintenance and consciousness of group differences, thus engendering a curious situation in which Japanese Americans achieved a degree of local acceptance and membership but remained racialized "others" denied the full privileges of citizenship. Although elites pursued close relations with Japan and celebrated moments when local conditions manifested the closure of the distance between the "East" and "West," Orientalism maintained a stubborn hold on the city's politics. United States–Japan relations and Japanese immigration to the United States might have signified the breaching of the "Orient-Occident" divide, but the persistent framing of these developments as East-West encounters upheld underlying Orientalist assumptions. Further adding to the precarious position of Japanese Americans was that they came from a country that was important to Seattle's development yet was also a rival for power in the Pacific region. Their standing would, thus, depend on the acceptability of group differences and whether United States–Japan relations were alternately characterized by harmonious internationalism or nationalistic competition, a balancing act that decisively broke on December 7, 1941.

Examining the varied meanings of Seattle's claims to cosmopolitanism and pursuit of gateway status also underlines the significance of scale and how local and international dynamics intersect and shape each other. Although the city linked its growth and modernization to visions of an expansive Pacific world, legitimizing these global visions called for turning local sites and actors into embodiments of cosmopolitanism. In other words, the dynamics of international relations and foreign immigration were made concrete and meaningful at the local level, and this was evidenced, for instance, in discourses about Seattle public schools, neighborhood identities, and city celebrations. A consideration of the centrality of scale in the charting and conceptualization of Seattle's modernization also highlights fluid understandings of space that abounded among white and Japanese Seattleites. Spaces as confined as classrooms and baseball diamonds and as expansive as the entire city and the Pacific Rim became crucial terrains for negotiating national and ethnic identities and on which individuals inscribed meaning, exemplified, for example, in Arai's description of Jackson Street as "Seattle's Far East." Accordingly, this book considers how Japanese Americans channeled local and global concerns to understand and to articulate their surroundings and the particular roles they played within them. For

Japanese photographers in Seattle in the 1920s, accessing and traversing the Puget Sound terrain was a critical aspect of their artistry and legitimacy in the art world. Schools, parks, playgrounds, and streets became sites where Japanese Americans could argue for their vitality in Seattle's physical and social landscape. They also negotiated the meanings of invented and intangible yet equally meaningful spaces, such as the "gateway to the Orient" and the Pacific Rim. Indeed, these abilities to connect and to navigate between scales and to appropriately articulate space proved to be key aspects of Japanese American strategies for belonging in the decades before World War II, when internationalism and Americanism appeared to be complementary, and not conflicting, values.

As a contribution to Japanese American history, *Claiming the Oriental Gateway* urges for a greater consideration of issues of place and interethnic relations, which, with few exceptions, have largely elided the field. In the last few decades, scholarship on Japanese Americans has branched out beyond the traditional concerns of victimization and internment.[31] Reflecting a general shift in American ethnic history, scholars of Japanese America have rightly focused much attention on minority agency, yielding rich understandings of the multifaceted nature of ethnic communities and the choices that immigrants and their descendants made within the constraints of a society structured by racial, gender, and class inequalities.[32] Although such work has contributed nuanced perspectives on internal community dynamics, comparatively little scholarship has examined interethnic encounters and Japanese Americans' relations with the cities or communities in which they resided, leaving intact the impression, first argued by sociologist S. Frank Miyamoto in 1939, that Japanese Americans' most "conspicuous characteristic" was their unusually strong ethnic solidarity.[33] Miyamoto said this trait developed as a strategy for coping with their rejection by the dominant white society, although he also attributed it to a predisposition toward "group action." By studying the relationships that Japanese formed with groups and entities outside the local ethnic community, this book clarifies some of the ways that Japanese Americans, even with their strong group solidarity, were far from isolated from the rest of Seattle.

Scholars presenting Japanese American history in a transnational frame have persuasively emphasized the duality of ethnic identity among members of this group in terms of American and Japanese nation-building projects. "Dualism," "two-ness," and "in-betweenness" are common tropes in American racial and ethnic history, which speak to the immigrant's or minority's partial sense of belonging and feelings of being suspended between two cultures. As historian Eiichiro Azuma points out, Japanese Americans' dualism

stemmed from their being in "between two empires"; in other words, the parallel—at times competing—nation-building projects of their countries of origin and settlement shaped and delimited their lives.[34] Although this condition of dualism afforded significant flexibility in the lives and identities of the Issei (first-generation immigrants) and Nisei, it also eventually made them vulnerable to accusations of being agents of Japan and subjected them to pressure to identify as either American or Japanese. *Claiming the Oriental Gateway* builds on the literature exploring Japanese American duality while bringing to the discussion a consideration of place, proposing that Japanese Americans residing in West Coast cities developed unique and pronounced investments in Japan's international standing while viewing themselves as inhabitants of and players in the Pacific world.

This book's interest in issues of place goes beyond concerns exclusive to Japanese American history, although, to be sure, its focus on Seattle addresses a deficit in regional perspectives in Asian American history, a field that generally remains steeped in research on California and Hawaii.[35] *Claiming the Oriental Gateway* also situates itself in relation to an expanding literature in American history that understands West Coast cities as paradoxes. On the one hand, for much of the last two centuries, these places have been viewed from within and without as "promised lands" boasting brighter opportunities and fewer obstacles compared to other parts of the United States. Yet they were also battlegrounds where struggles for racial privilege, economic resources, and social status took on a particular intensity. Finally, this book joins a growing corpus of works in American urban ethnic history that examines the historical experiences of minorities against the contingencies of geography and place, thereby yielding rich insights about the relationships between racialized communities and the development of particular cities. Recent works by historians Gabriela Arredondo, Coll Thrush, Robert Self, and Scott Kurashige, for example, not only provide new knowledge and perspectives on Mexicans in Chicago, Indians in Seattle, blacks in Oakland, and Japanese and blacks in Los Angeles, respectively, but also substantially recast how we view these cities' histories altogether.[36] In shedding light on the dynamic and complex relationships between the cities and some of their most disenfranchised inhabitants, they focus our appreciation of how the given configuration of urban space and politics have limited and created possibilities for racial minorities' civic engagement and broad visibility.

How people described, employed, and claimed space are underlying concerns through each chapter. As such, it should be emphasized that this book is not about "hidden transcripts" or what was deep in the hearts and minds of Japanese American people and somehow inaccessible to others. Rather, it

examines what Japanese Americans in Seattle did and said in public, as public and semipublic actors. Admittedly, these interests make this book chiefly about white and Japanese American elites who had the privilege of engaging in public rituals and making public commentaries through newspapers, books, radio, and other media. Because of this, I make no claims about the broad representativeness of the ideas and statements of the individuals who appear in this book, although they often claimed they spoke for their communities. Most ordinary and working people, after all, did not have the time or inclination to dwell on such issues as urban identity, whether Seattle was truly cosmopolitan, or how best to position the city as a "gateway to the Orient." These sorts of questions are, as they would be in other times and places, preoccupations of elites. That said, they remain important perspectives, because the political, economic, or cultural authorities in the city—and those who had an audience with them—had the greatest power to set the terms and to shape the structures of life in Seattle. Accordingly, most of the sources used in this study come from agencies, organizations, and individuals representing the leadership strata of the city and its Japanese American community: city office records, school archival records, yearbooks and newspapers, city and ethnic newspapers, booster literature, and personal correspondences.

Chapter 1 describes Japanese American settlement in Seattle from the turn of the twentieth century to the 1930s and details the formation of Jackson Street. In this neighborhood, Japanese businesses clustered on streets crowded with Chinese, Filipinos, and, increasingly, African Americans. Members of these groups lived and worked in this small area, and, by the early 1920s, Jackson Street was widely regarded as Seattle's "ghetto." Jackson Street was not only a neighborhood where people of varied backgrounds encountered one another but also eventually a site of contested meanings; white Seattle called it a dangerous slum, while residents claimed that Jackson Street better represented Seattle cosmopolitanism than any other part of the city.

The rest of the book discusses various facets of day-to-day life to reveal the interplay of international and local dynamics in Japanese Americans' experience and their relationship to Seattle's urban development and identity. Chapter 2 discusses the political and commercial origins of Seattle cosmopolitanism and how it was performed in city celebrations, commenting on how a wide cross-section of the local population exalted the city's impressive ethnic diversity for the overriding purposes of urban boosterism. Chapter 3 describes the Seattle Camera Club, a small organization of amateur pictorial photographers active during the 1920s. Photography opened up wide

networks of association spanning oceans and continents, and the visibility of Japanese immigrants whose work made an American city famous complicated and brought to the fore questions about race, nationality, and legitimacy in art. Chapter 4 concerns the Seattle public school system. Officials and outside observers touted the public schools as exemplars of cosmopolitanism and the ability of institutions to "Americanize" Japanese immigrants. Rather than being imposed upon by teachers and school officials, Japanese parents forged a two-way relationship as they frequently pressed their wishes upon teachers and school board members. Chapter 5 discusses the many roles that sports played in the Japanese American community during the 1920s and 1930s. Far from being mere vehicles of Americanism and Anglo-conformity, organized sports reinforced ethnic solidarity, heightened international consciousness, cemented Japanese Americans' relationships with other minority communities, and deepened respect in the wider community for their prowess and dedication on the baseball diamond, basketball and tennis courts, football field, and bowling alley. Chapter 6 describes life in the Jackson Street neighborhood immediately before and at the start of the U.S. entry into World War II. A brief epilogue discusses the return of Japanese Americans to Seattle and the revival of a neighborhood-based but still tenuous "cosmopolitan" coalition in 1946 with the formation of the Jackson Street Community Council, which was led by Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Jews, and African Americans.