

Call for Papers: Transnational Circuits of Asian Religio-Philosophy: Reception and Racialization in the US; Special Forum for *Journal of Transnational American Studies*

This special forum links processes of Asian American racialization with the reception and circulation of Asian religio-philosophy in the US. In doing so, this forum builds on the foundation laid by a previous special forum titled *Redefining the American in Asian American Studies*, published in *JTAS* in 2012. That issue was part of a shift toward transnational perspectives in Asian American Studies that, in turn, influenced the development of the concept of “global Asias.” Meanwhile, scholars of comparative philosophy and comparative religion have begun to draw attention to how Asian American philosophical and religious practices in the United States are often obscured by the imprint of a binary racial politics upon religious discourse in the US. *Transnational Circuits of Asian Religio-Philosophy: Reception and Racialization in the US* brings together these two academic trends in order to consider how the reception of Asian religio-philosophy, broadly construed as religious and/or philosophical, in the US has shaped the meaning of both “Asian” and “American” as racial, cultural, political, and economic signifiers.

Tracing Asian thought over American cultural movements reveals apparent contradictions between the status of Asian religio-philosophy as countercultural and the racialization of Asian subjects as docile and assimilable. These contradictions demand critical investigation into a larger question of how Asian religio-philosophy and its reception can reveal points of imbrication between “global Asias” and transnational American studies. Relatedly, how and under what circumstances do Asian ideas and bodies travel to and in the Americas? How are ideas and bodies abstracted from one another and reified into American ideals of non/conformism, and what are the political stakes of restoring their relations?

We understand “Asian religio-philosophy” expansively as ontoepistemology, thereby allowing us to consider not only traditional schools of thought (e.g., Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism) but also more recent Asian intellectual and political movements such as Maoism, Gandhian non-violence, or the work of Byung-Chul Han.

We invite contributions that further scholarship on the transpacific and transimperial contexts in which Asian thought circulates. Submissions might consider a variety of critical topics, including, but not limited to:

- Asian religio-philosophy and American civil rights movements (e.g., Gandhi & Black American movements, Asian American antiwar efforts, Buddhist monks as protest figures)
- Asian religio-philosophy in or contra American political theory (e.g., Benjamin Franklin and Confucianism, Confucius Institutes and foreign relations)
- The links between Asian religio-philosophy, imperialism(s), and political economies (e.g., critiques of/participation in capitalism, state religion and nationalist paradigms)
- Asian American and BIPOC literary and artistic engagements with Asian ontoepistemologies (e.g., Ruth Ozeki, Tuan Andrew Nguyen, Agha Shahid Ali, Wu-Tang Clan, Alice Coltrane)

- The commodification and abstraction of Asian religio-philosophy in global circulation (e.g., martial arts/qi/chakra, fengshui, popular science and philosophy)
- The deracination and/or racialization of sound in American music and spiritualism (e.g., yoga, gongs, Hindustani and Carnatic music, John Cage, The Beatles)
- The transnational investments of American literary movements (e.g., Transcendentalists, Beats, Golden Age Science Fiction)
- The reinscription of disciplinary boundaries and the role of Asian religio-philosophy in shaping the definitions of “religion,” “philosophy,” and “thought”

Please submit a 250-word abstract by June 1, 2024. The editors will review abstracts and invite full-length essays of 5,000 to 8,000 words. Please email abstracts and questions to Bowen Du (bwndu@ucdavis.edu) and Varun Rangaswamy (varunrangaswamy26@gmail.com).