



# Chinese American Literature since the 1850s (Asian American Experience)

By Xiao-huang Yin

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"Chinese American Literature since the 1850s" traces the origins and development of the extensive and largely neglected body of literature written in English and in Chinese, assessing its themes and style and placing it in a broad social and historical context. This essential volume, a much-needed introduction and guide to the field, shows how change and continuity in the Chinese American experience are reflected in the writings of immigrants from China and their descendants in the United States. Using a fresh approach that combines literary and historical scholarship, Xiao-huang Yin covers representative works from the 1850s to the present. These include journalistic and autobiographical texts from nineteenth-century Chinese authors; writings on the walls of Angel Island, the main Asian immigrant arrival point on the West Coast; writings of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century "cultivated Chinese," students and scholars who came to America to advance their educations; and the work of more recent authors who have entered the canon, including Sui Sin Far, Jade Snow Wong, Frank Chin, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Amy Tan. As the only volume that covers the literature written by immigrant authors in the Chinese language, Xiao-huang Yin's book significantly enlarges the scope of Chinese and Asian American studies. This body of literature, including works by immigrant writers such as Chen Ruoxi, Yu Lihua, and Zhang Xiguo, reflects the high percentage of Chinese Americans for whom the Chinese language remains an integral part of everyday life. A core text for students and scholars of Asian American studies, "Chinese American Literature since the 1850s" is an important resource for literary critics, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists interested in diaspora studies, transnationalism, cultural studies, race and ethnicity, and the immigrant experiences in which Chinese American literature is embedded.

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## **Chinese American Literature since the 1850s (Asian American Experience) By Xiao-huang Yin** **Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

"A careful study of Chinese-Americans seen through a fascinating reading and documentation of their writing over the past 150 years... It embraces the entire world of Chinese-American literature in both English and Chinese ... [and] demonstrates that bilingual and transnational research is not only most fruitful, but a necessity." -- USA Today "A thought-provoking study of works written in Chinese or English by Chinese American immigrants. The author employs new historicist techniques in offering a detailed historical backdrop for the pieces he examines and at the same time develops a 'social history' of Chinese American life." -- Choice "Yin's literary historical survey ranges from previously unknown to very well known Chinese American writers, detailing a spectrum of vastly diversified Chinese American sensibilities... Non-Chinese-speaking scholars of Asian American literature will appreciate the two chapters on Chinese-language literature in America... Meticulously researched." -- Noreen Groover Lape, College Literature "A much-needed introduction and guide to the field, Yin's book examines how change and continuity in the Chinese American experience are reflected in the writings of immigrantss from China and their descendants in the United States, assessing its style and placing it in a broad social and historical context." -- Occidental Magazine "The text, with its marvellous illustrations, is a useful resource for and a valuable contribution to Chinese American scholarship." -- Colleen Lye, American Literature "By focusing on the writings of one ethnic group during the course of 150 years, Yin is able to offer important insights that trace transformations in immigrant mentalities over time and under varying conditions of law, economic opportunity, and social acceptance, as well as across differences in class, gender, and immigration status. ... Overall, however, this monograph provides newcomers to Asian American history with a lively and wide-ranging introduction to its main themes and some of its most important primary sources, while developing illuminating comparative insights for more informed scholars." -- Madeline Y. Hsu, Journal of Interdisciplinary History ADVANCE PRAISE "This is an impressive work of ethnic history and literary history, uncovering a vein of literature, in English and Chinese, which is certainly part of American literature but which has only risen to general notice in the last few decades. Aside from telling us a story that very few of us know, this distinguished work of ethnic history demonstrates how common and parallel are the experiences of ethnic groups in the United States, how similar are the complex reactions of the second generation, even if they come from a culture apparently remote from those from which most Americans come." -- Nathan Glazer, coeditor of Ethnicity: Theory and Experience "Xiao-huang Yin has provided us with a broad survey of Chinese American literature informed by original and illuminating insights... Without question, he has set a new standard for the sociohistorical analysis of Chinese American literature, and scholars of Asian American studies will be indebted to his careful and imaginative scholarship." -- Franklin Ng, author of The Taiwanese Americans "This descriptive study of Chinese literature in America ... is one of the first to explore the uncharted literary map of voices in Chinese between the 1850s and WWII, and as such introduces a new field of study for the serious student." -- Alex Kuo, author of Chinese Opera "Xiao-huang Yin discovers that while Chinese American writers use American writing techniques, artistic forms, themes, and subject matter, they differ from other ethnic and immigrant authors in their sensitivity regarding racism, prejudice, and strong influence of their rich Chinese cultural heritage." -- Sue Fawn Chung, author of The Silver Mountain: A History of the Chinese in Nevada "A truly pioneering and often surprising study of its subject." -- Werner Sollors, author of Beyond Ethnicity

### **From the Inside Flap**

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#### About the Author

Xiao-huang Yin, chair and associate professor of the American Studies Program at Occidental College, is a contributor to *Multilingual America: Transnationalism, Ethnicity, and the Languages of American Literature*, *The Outlook for U.S.-China Relations*, *The Multilingual Anthology of American Literature*, *Asian American Encyclopadia*, and many other books.

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