Journey of Resilience: A Review of Asian Canadian Voices: Facets of Diversity

Veronica Fu
University of Virginia

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jeal

Part of the Asian History Commons, Canadian History Commons, and the East Asian Languages and Societies Commons

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation
Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jeal/vol2024/iss178/5

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of East Asian Libraries by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
Book Review

Journey of Resilience: A Review of Asian Canadian Voices: Facets of Diversity

Veronica Fu
University of Virginia

Presented by the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library and edited by Hana Kim, Asian Canadian Voices: Facets of Diversity stands as a compelling anthology that artfully intertwines remarkable stories from diverse Asian Canadians across various fields. The book's overarching aim is to honor and celebrate the joined contributions of Asian Canadians throughout their two-century journey, offering insights into their past and present achievements. In a poignant twist, the narrative also provides readers with a timely moment for reflection, prompting contemplation on the surge of anti-Asian racism fueled by COVID-19 and the broader spectrum of racial discrimination and violence.

Before embarking on the exploration within its pages, the captivating cover image of the book beckons readers, offering a visual prelude to the richness of stories that await. Adorned with a profusion of maple leaves predominantly in shades of red, the image subtly communicates the concept of diversity. The maple leaf, a national symbol of Canada, appears in a spectrum of colors, symbolizing the multicultural essence of the country. These various hues mirror the rich array of ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds contributing to the collective tapestry of Asian Canadian voices. The accentuation of red, a prominent color in the Canadian flag, serves to highlight the integration of Asian communities within the broader Canadian identity. Moreover, the dark background creates a striking contrast, enhancing the vibrancy of the leaves and accentuating their significance. This dark backdrop serves as a canvas, allowing the maple leaves to shine forth with a heightened intensity. Additionally, the title letters, in a luminous golden-red hue, add a touch of brilliance, symbolizing the radiance and significance of the narratives encapsulated within.

Structured into ten insightful chapters, the anthology serves as a robust platform for research and reflections on critical themes such as diversity, diaspora, migration, and acculturation. Notably, Hana Kim sets the tone for the book in her enlightening introduction, emphasizing the broader significance of these narratives. The authors, hailing from both Canada and Asia, skillfully blend personal experiences into the fabric of the narrative. Their firsthand accounts infuse the stories with authenticity and relatability, offering a genuine quality that resonates with readers. Beyond the personal narratives, the book goes a step further by incorporating academic insights. This scholarly dimension enriches the mosaic of the narrative, providing readers with a well-rounded exploration that combines personal authenticity with academic depth.

Throughout the chapters, a common thread of resilience, cultural pride, and the ever-evolving nature of identity runs, creating a cohesive and thought-provoking exploration. As readers traverse each chapter, they will find each contributes a unique layer. For instance, the profound stories, such as the compelling journey of Chinese immigrants in “Being Canadian”
(Chapter 4) and the captivating life of artist Janet Lumb in “My Remarkable Journey” (Chapter 5), shed light on the struggles, sacrifices, and joys embedded in the Asian Canadian narrative. At the same time, the scholarly inquiries, like the historical exploration of Chinese American literature studies in “From the Margin to the Centre” (Chapter 6) and the insightful analysis of cultural identity construction among East Asian Canadian young women in “Cultures, Identities, and Voices of East Asian Canadian Young Women in Toronto, Canada” (Chapter 10), add a scholarly depth, enriching the overall narrative. Beyond these, readers can also immerse themselves in the profound exploration of resilience, survival, and the fascinating intersections of Jewish history and Chinese culture (Chapter 7) as well as that of racialization shaping the arrival and treatment of Chinese immigrants in Toronto, highlighting their challenges, resilience, and contributions to the city’s vibrant cultural landscape (Chapter 8).

While the anthology is a celebration of achievements, it doesn't shy away from addressing the socio-political issues that continue to impact the community. The narratives not only offer readers a poignant lens through which to comprehend the complexities of their struggles and triumphs but also serve as a powerful reminder to reflect on the urgent issues of anti-Asian racism and various forms of racial discrimination and violence. In other words, beyond the celebratory aspect, the anthology becomes a compelling vehicle for fostering empathy and awareness. Its strength lies in the delicate balance it achieves – acknowledging achievements while providing a platform for a thoughtful examination of the pressing issues. In doing so, it becomes more than a collection of stories; it emerges as a powerful call to action, inviting readers to engage with the complexities of the Asian Canadian experience and sparking meaningful conversations surrounding these crucial societal issues.

Beyond the borders of Canadian communities, *Asian Canadian Voices: Facets of Diversity* holds global significance, resonating with readers worldwide, particularly within the Asian American community. While rooted in the Canadian experience, the stories within this anthology touch upon universal themes of identity, migration, and resilience that transcend geographical boundaries. Asian Americans, though possessing distinct narratives, can undoubtedly find common threads in the challenges and triumphs depicted by the diverse voices in this book. The shared experiences of navigating cultural intersections, confronting discrimination, and celebrating cultural heritage create a bridge that connects Asian Canadians and Asian Americans, fostering a sense of solidarity. In an era where global conversations about diversity and inclusion are more vital than ever, the stories within this anthology contribute to a broader dialogue on the shared human experience. This anthology becomes a testament to the power of storytelling to build bridges of understanding across diverse communities, fostering empathy and connection on a global scale.

In conclusion, this book is a testament to resilience, a mirror reflecting the journey of a community navigating challenges, overcoming adversity, and leaving an indelible mark on the Canadian tapestry. *Asian Canadian Voices: Facets of Diversity* is a commendable contribution to literature, fostering understanding, dialogue, and a shared appreciation for the diverse voices that shape the Canadian narrative.