

tists sought to understand the widespread hostility against Asian immigrants in the United States. By the 1960s, the rapid upward social mobility of Asian Americans transformed the characterization of their communities from problematic places to those where scholars looked for solutions to the nation's urban crisis.

The selling point for Ling's collection is that it examines recent Asian American communities and does so through geographical frameworks unique to the historiography. The book, edited by a historian, consists of eleven essays written principally by sociologists. Its goal is to get beyond the older scholarship to reveal the communities that have emerged with the post-1965 waves of Asian immigrants and refugees. Ling's selection of chapters reveals a distinct preference for understudied groups (Vietnamese, Koreans, and Filipinos) and locations (Chicago, St. Louis, Phoenix, Canada, and even cyberspace). A good example of that preference is the editor's own idea of "cultural community," which she outlines (with some redundancy) as a vehicle for ethnic solidarity formed in places that do not have a geographic concentration of immigrants and ethnic institutions. Ling has a flexible, postmodern view of ethnic formation that can—but does not need to—be rooted in physical space.

The book succeeds in revealing the unique characteristics of post-1965 communities—namely, their high proportion of professionals and broad variety of locations and types compared to earlier Asian migrations. But those familiar with the historiography will be disappointed that neither Ling nor the other authors analyze the intriguing continuities between the old and new communities. For example, the generational tension highlighted in essays by Angie Y. Chung, Linda Thinh Vo, Ling Z. Arenson, and Allyson Tintangco-Cubales reminds the reader of the situation that second-generation Japanese and Chinese Americans faced before World War II. Ethnic leadership, then and now, centered on unstable negotiations between the immigrant "old guard" and Americanized "young Turks." In addition, the ideological conflict between communists and anticommunists featured in essays by Wei Zhang and Wei Li, Arensen, and Vo has roots in pre-1965 Asian American communities.

My point is not that little has changed in the new communities; much has indeed. Rather, my point is that this book does not allow contextualization of the changes because the authors miss a golden opportunity to situate their work within a century of historiographical developments. This lack is also reflected in the book's title. It is a misrepresentation to call it *Asian America* when seven of the book's eleven chapters focus on Chinese immigrant communities. A well-known historian made this mistake when he used the same title to characterize the experience of only Chinese and Japanese American history. In this way, too, Ling has lessened the value of her collection by ignoring the historiography.

Lon Kurashige
University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California

Memphis and the Paradox of Place: Globalization in the American South. By Wanda Rushing. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. x, 259 pp. Cloth, \$59.95, ISBN 978-0-8078-3299-8. Paper, \$21.95, ISBN 978-0-8078-5952-0.)

Wanda Rushing's work disputes the notion that Memphis remains a town enmeshed in the traditions of the Old South. Using an interdisciplinary case study to trace the history of the Bluff City, Rushing argues that contemporary Memphis is a paradox in relation to traditional assumptions about globalization, localism and southern identity, and the concept of place.

Each chapter explores a different paradox that Rushing sees in Memphis's history and contemporary milieu. She asserts that Memphis represents a unique place that emerged from the seemingly contradictory city that retains its local impulses and culture but that positions itself—thanks to a unique geographical location—as a globally connected business and transportation hub. Rushing perceives this local-global dialectic as part of a larger pattern in Memphis that blends tradition with innovation, biotechnology with agriculture, and elite rule with democracy. Infamous as the location of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination and a brutal strike involving black sanitation work-

ers, Memphis's two most recent mayors have been African Americans. In essence, Rushing believes that Memphis is an amalgamation of all of those apparent contradictions.

To illustrate her assessment of Memphis as a paradoxical place, Rushing uses numerous local historical examples. The city that continues to house a statue of Confederate general and Ku Klux Klan co-founder Nathan Bedford Forrest also named its library after long-time civil rights activist and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People executive director Benjamin L. Hooks. Over the last century, yellow fever epidemics, the crumbling of the city's downtown, and a population traditionally characterized as poor and undereducated posed challenges. But those disruptions were also opportunities for renewal, resulting in the presence of the country's leading research facility for children's cancer (St. Jude Children's Research Hospital), a renaissance of the downtown area as a tourist attraction, and recent efforts to reinvigorate a Memphis public school system to focus on a math and science curriculum. Memphis, in Rushing's opinion, did learn from its mistakes.

Her sources include the standard works on the history of Memphis, and she also utilizes the resources of the Memphis/Shelby County Library's local historical repository, the Memphis Room. Although Rushing mentions the 1968 sanitation workers' strike at several points throughout her narrative, she neglected to explore the vast document collection housed at the University of Memphis's McWhorter Library. Her primary source for this seminal moment in post-World War II Memphis history is Joan Turner Beifuss's *At the River I Stand* (1985), which, albeit an extensive and well-researched narrative of the event by a witness and participant on the periphery of the strike, still falls short of the rich documents available in the larger collection.

Rushing's book adds to the work of Memphis history scholars David Tucker, Michael Honey, and Laurie B. Green by assessing the impact of Memphis's historical journey on its contemporary reality in the South and in the world. Rushing astutely identifies Memphis's ability to maintain its unique identity while

being shaped by and operating within an increasingly global economic, political, and cultural world.

Kimberly K. Little
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio

Small Wonder: The Little Red Schoolhouse in History and Memory. By Jonathan Zimmerman. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. xii, 233 pp. \$26.00, ISBN 978-0-300-12326-5.)

Through history and memory, Jonathan Zimmerman presents the little red schoolhouse as an icon of a lost world of American education. Yet he also shows that the meaning of that symbol varies widely among its interpreters and has been put to a range of different uses. For some, the image of the schoolhouse represents respect for authority, but it was also the site of misbehaving boys who kept from being "feminized" by such antics as filling the (female) teacher's whipping hose with pieces of chalk that would fly around the schoolroom during an attempted punishment. The meaning of the little red schoolhouse was and is open to interpretation.

Zimmerman presents many examples of educators and parents finding support for programs by citing the ideal of the one-room school. For example, the charter school movement supports individualized learning in small settings. New, large schools often divide their students into clusters, grouping separate classrooms around a shared space. Mixed-age classrooms, the open classroom, and forms of group learning in which older students work with younger ones are also products of this imagined past.

When African American parents in the 1970s demanded community control over schools and the right to select curriculums and staff, they too harked back to the one-room school. One Chicago parent said, "our great grandparents with extremely limited education taught in one room schools . . . so we know that we can teach our own" (p. 140).

Zimmerman points out that conservatives who were part of the "back to basics" movement in the 1980s noted that the one-room