The Problem of Identity in Asian-American Drama:

A Cultural Study

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Abstract

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The Asian-American of identity has become an important issue that Asian-American dramatists tackle in their plays. Those dramatists attempt to settle this issue by encouraging the establishment of a distinct Asian-American identity distinguishing this minority group from the mainstream society. The sought Asian-American identity allows Asian-Americans to demand equal social, economic, and political rights as the ones mainstream individuals manifest. This study aims to present the problem of identity in Asian-American drama through discussing three representative plays. The plays to be discussed are *And the Soul shall Dance* (1974) by the Japanese-American playwright Wakako Yamauchi, *The Sound of a Voice* (1983) by the Chinese-American playwright David Henry Hwang, and *Ballad of a Karaoke Cowboy* (2007) by the Korean-American playwright Sang Kim. The plays are analyzed from a cultural perspective emphasizing the social, the economic, and the political aspects of the Asian-American problem of identity.